

The Good News

September-October 2007

A MAGAZINE OF UNDERSTANDING

God's Plan to End Evil and Suffering

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Christ Will Return—But Why?



Many people believe that Jesus Christ will return to earth. In a 2004 *Newsweek* poll, just over half of those Americans polled expressed belief that He will come again. Fifteen percent said they thought that event would take place soon, in their lifetime.

But while many believe Jesus *will* return, things get considerably fuzzier on *why* He will return or what He will do *when* He returns.

For the record, Scripture states clearly that Christ will come again. It's a constant thread of Bible prophecy from Genesis to Revelation. But while some aspects of that return are clear, others are not so clear.

For example, what exactly will He do when He returns? Is there a time sequence, an order to His actions? What will those actions be? What is their intent, the goal He has in mind? Who will be affected, and how and why?

Although they're unknown to most people, the Holy Days or festivals of the Bible help provide us with many of the answers. Though

While many believe Jesus will return, things get considerably fuzzier on why He will return or what He will do when He returns.

few realize it, they actually reveal, in step-by-step sequence, Jesus Christ's role in God's plan for humankind.

Sometimes those connections are so obvious we wonder how we could have missed them! Consider Jesus Christ's crucifixion on the day of Passover when, as the true Passover Lamb of God, He died to take away our sins (John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7). Or how He started His Church, composed of the firstfruits of God, on the Feast of Firstfruits, also called Pentecost (Acts 2:1-41; Romans 8:23; Revelation 14:4).

Sometimes those connections are not as obvious, and we have to put together a number of scriptures to connect the dots. That's what we're trying to help you do in this issue—connect the dots about why Jesus Christ will return, and what He'll do when He does.

A key purpose of Jesus Christ's return will be to literally *save us from ourselves*—to save the human race *from extinction*. In a major prophecy shortly before His death, Jesus described the condition of the world to which He would return:

"It will be a time of *great distress*, such as there has never been before since the beginning of the world, and will never be again. *If that time of troubles were not cut short, no living thing could survive*; but for the sake of God's chosen it will be cut short" (Matthew 24:21-22, Revised English Bible, emphasis added).

Considering the dangerous times in which we live, with international tensions on the rise seemingly everywhere and with weapons of mass destruction spreading to terrorists who see suicide attacks as a sure path to paradise, we should sit up and take notice of Christ's words. Only in recent decades has humanity had the capacity, with modern weapons, to exterminate human life.

Another key purpose for Christ's return is to establish the Kingdom of God, a key theme of His teaching (Mark 1:14-15). This Kingdom will govern the entire world (Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 19:28; Revelation 11:15). In the Lord's prayer, Jesus urges His followers to pray, "Your kingdom come"—focusing their minds on this coming time of world peace when that Kingdom will be a reality.

These are only the beginning of the story. You'll discover much more about God's plan and what Christ's reign will be like in this issue. It spells out a fascinating future—a future in which He wants you to play a major part!

—Scott Ashley, Managing editor

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God's Plan to End Evil and Suffering

Is God blind to evil and human suffering? Why doesn't He intervene to put a stop to it? Or could it be that it's we who are blind to what God is doing and that humankind must learn some major lessons before He puts an end to evil?

by Roger Foster

How well I remember the report! During a severe drought in South Africa a distraught farmer nailed a bucket to a fence post beside the road. Above it he nailed a sign: "Donations accepted to buy God glasses so He can see what's going on down here."

Why does God allow evil things to happen? Why doesn't He just end all the suffering and sorrow that we see all around us?

These questions have perplexed humanity since the beginning of our existence. Even the world's greatest philosophers have struggled to find the answers.

Actually, the answer is clear and easy to understand—if we would only believe all that God explains about His *great plan* for solving this most troubling human problem. We find that plan explained in His written Word, the Bible.

Yes, God has a plan, an excellent plan. And His plan includes a permanent solution to evil. That solution will exceed our greatest hopes and dreams. But for it to succeed, God has made *our willing participation* a necessity. That is why each phase of His plan takes so long to complete.

God is now allowing us to experience fully the results of human vanity, pride and greed. When the time of His direct intervention to change how we think and behave arrives, He will be able to present us with a complete record of our failures.

Human failure started in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve had the opportunity to choose for mankind an easier path, one filled with direct contact and assistance from God. Instead, on behalf of themselves and their posterity, they chose to trust their own perceptions of good versus evil. That choice put the human family on a path of suffering, of having to endure all the evils we bring on ourselves. Man has walked that path ever since.

Will we learn to listen?

Through personal experience, God is allowing the human race to learn how



Human failure started in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve had the opportunity to choose for mankind an easier path, one filled with direct contact and assistance from God. Instead they chose to trust their own perceptions of good versus evil.

destructive and deadly our bad choices can be. At the end of the day, the most important lesson God wants us to learn is *to really listen to Him*.

Collectively we have not learned that lesson. But we will! That is God's promise! And that promise will be fulfilled because He plans to help us learn that lesson.

While revealing the right way to live to ancient Israel, God advised the people to choose carefully: "This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that *I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life*, so that you and your children may live and that *you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him*" (Deuteronomy 30:19-20, New International Version, emphasis added throughout).

For life to have real meaning, we must

learn that lesson. Our human tendency is to use the freedom God gives us to make our own choices. Yet we complain about the terrible effects our foolish choices produce. We tend to blame God for those disturbing results—even suggesting He needs glasses to improve His vision so He can sympathize with our plight.

God sees our plight quite clearly. He wants to shower blessings on all who listen to Him!

Notice God's promise when He freed the Israelites from slavery and began to form them into a nation: "If you follow my decrees and are careful to obey my commands, I will send you rain in its season, and the ground will yield its crops and the trees of the field their fruit. Your threshing will continue until grape harvest and the grape harvest will continue until

planting, and you will eat all the food you want and live in safety in your land. I will grant peace in the land, and you will lie down and no one will make you afraid" (Leviticus 26:3-6, NIV).

But God wants us to learn how much we need His help, then simply to understand and choose the right path. So His plan includes *time* for all of humanity to learn critical lessons from personal choices, both the good and the bad. That also is why He has not rushed to end the consequences of our many wrong choices.

God's most important intervention into human affairs will be to change the *leadership* of every nation on earth. To completely remove the curse of evil that we have brought on ourselves, God will put in charge a righteous leader who clearly understands every distinction between good and evil.

But who will that be? Who is qualified to teach all of mankind about God's way of life?

The only clear choice for that assignment is *Jesus Christ*. He alone has always understood and followed every right path. He alone is capable of leading the whole world down that same path.

As the apostle Paul explained, God has "made known to us *the mystery of his will*

according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, *to be put into effect* when the times will have reached their fulfillment—*to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ*" (Ephesians 1:9-10, NIV).

Coming: a time of worldwide restoration

Concerning Jesus Christ's present role, Peter explained that He "must remain in heaven *until* the time comes for God to *restore everything*, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets" (Acts 3:21, NIV). Only then, during that future *time of restoration*, will Jesus begin to eliminate the evils and curses of sin throughout the whole earth.

Jesus has already cleared one gigantic hurdle for us. He has become *our atonement* (translated from the Hebrew word *kaphar*, meaning *covering*). By His sacrifice all the evils we foolishly have committed can be forgiven—covered by His blood. His sacrifice for us was essential in God's plan to eliminate evil and bring righteousness to all nations.

As Hebrews 2:17 tells us concerning Jesus, "Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful

high priest in the service of God, to make a *sacrifice of atonement* for the sins of the people" (New Revised Standard Version).

Our English word *atone* is a verb formed by joining two words—*at* and *one*. It means to become *at one with* or to be *reconciled with* another. *Atonement* means to be in a state of oneness or reconciliation with another.

Sin cuts human beings off from God. As Isaiah 59:2 says, "Your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear." Only through Jesus Christ can humanity be reconciled to God again. But how will that happen?

On the biblical calendar used by the Jews, the *Day of Atonement* occurs five days before the commencement of the *Feast of Tabernacles* (Leviticus 23:27, 34). Both of these sacred occasions have an enormous symbolic meaning for the time of restoration the Bible foretells.

Many prophecies explaining how Jesus will reverse the worldwide ignorance of and resistance to God's plan are scattered throughout the Scriptures. When that time of restoration is completed, those Scriptures tell us, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, *for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the*

The Binding of Satan Pictured on the Day of Atonement

Jesus Christ's second coming (Revelation 19:11-16) will be followed almost immediately by the devil being bound by one of God's angels: "He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished" (Revelation 20:2-3).

Every year in ancient Israel one segment of the solemn ceremonies held on Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) pictured the time when Satan's deception of "the whole world" (Revelation 12:9) would be stopped. The people were instructed: "Do no work on that day, because it is the Day of Atonement, when *atonement* [as a sacrificial cleansing] is made for you before the LORD your God. Anyone who does not deny himself [by fasting] on that day must be cut off from his people" (Leviticus 23:28-29, NIV).

The events of that day were rich in symbolism. The main feature of that day's ceremonies was the selection of two goats, the first to serve as a type of Christ's atoning sacrifice for cleansing Israel of her sins committed in ignorance and the second to represent the removal of Satan.

"The LORD said to Moses: Tell your brother Aaron not to come just at any time into the sanctuary inside the curtain before the mercy seat that is upon the ark . . . Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place . . . He shall take from the congregation of the people of Israel *two male goats for a sin offering* . . . He shall take the two goats and set them before the LORD at the entrance of the tent of meeting; and Aaron shall cast lots on the two goats, *one lot for the LORD and the other lot for Azazel* [to represent Satan's role in promoting sin]" (Leviticus 16:2-8, NRSV).

Verses 15-16 state: "He shall slaughter the goat of the sin offering [representing the shed blood of Christ] that is for the people and bring its blood inside the curtain . . . sprinkling it upon the mercy seat and before the mercy seat. Thus he shall make *atonement* for the sanctuary, because of the *uncleannesses* of the people of Israel, and because of their *transgressions, all their sins*" (NRSV).

This goat symbolized Jesus Christ's atoning sacrifice for the sins of all humanity. But additional spiritual cleansing must be done. Satan's evil influence, not only over the Israelites but also over all of humanity, must also be removed before Jesus Christ can fill the earth with true righteousness.

Therefore we read in verses 21-22: "Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it *all the iniquities* of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, *and sending it away* into the wilderness by means of someone designated for the task. The goat shall *bear on itself all their iniquities* to a barren region; and the goat shall be set free in the wilderness" (NRSV).

Like Satan, this goat is sent to an uninhabited location where he can do no harm. The ceremonial banishing of this male goat, with all the blame for the deception and sin of Israel (and the whole world) placed on him, was intended as a portrayal of the banishment of Satan when Jesus Christ returns to set up His Kingdom.

To learn more about Satan and his influence on the world, and how it will finally be brought to an end, download or request our free booklet *Is There Really a Devil?*

waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9).

To ensure that this will happen, Jesus Christ, after returning to earth, will see to it that the nations will go up to Jerusalem “year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles” (Zechariah 14:16, NIV).

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ as mankind's atonement for sins is featured prominently throughout the Bible, though mostly symbolically through animal sacrifices in the Old Testament. To this day among the Jewish people the Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*) is their most sacred occasion. Yet, few of them now recognize Jesus as their *atonement* Sacrifice.

Let's now examine prophecies that sketch a verbal picture of how Christ will bring peace and righteousness to all nations during His millennial reign. Let's also see how knowledge and understanding of His *atonement sacrifice* is to be made available to all of humanity.

Christ's administrative staff

Jesus plans to install competent administrators to help Him rule all the nations of the world effectively. And preparation for that administrative staff has long been underway.

For example, to His 12 apostles Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matthew 19:28, NIV). “Judging” in this context refers to their appointment as *decision makers* over Israel.

Also, Jesus promises to His “called, chosen, and faithful” servants (Revelation 17:14) of this present age, “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (Revelation 3:21). This isn't some promise of a nebulous future in heaven, as some suppose. It is a promise of literal rulership in Christ's Kingdom!

And what will His chosen and faithful servants do in His Kingdom? Jesus' answer is, “To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations” (Revelation 2:26, NIV). This is talking about the physical nations of the earth!

To enable His faithful followers to fulfill that awesome responsibility, God will first give them immortality (1 Corinthians 15:51-55). Then they will serve as Christ's top administrative aides forever.

Yet even this staff won't be large enough

to accomplish all that is needed in God's plan for righteous renewal. God intends to set up a *model nation* so that all other peoples will have a realistic, functioning example to copy.

The restoration of all Israel

God gave the ancient Israelites the opportunity to become the world's model nation (Deuteronomy 4:5-8). He also gave them choices, making their success conditional. But like Adam and Eve, they habitually failed to make the right choices.

Through later prophets, God revealed that at a future time—when the Kingdom of God has been firmly established under the rule of the promised Messiah—the 12 tribes of Israel will be *restored* as one people. Together they will become *the model* that the world needs of a truly righteous nation.



Jerusalem has become the center of global conflict, just as God foretold. And it will become even more so as Christ's return draws nearer.

How will God, through the reign of Jesus Christ, accomplish this? Notice this biblical promise to the descendants of Israel at the time of Christ's coming reign: “The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a *righteous* Branch [Christ], and *he shall reign as king* and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days *Judah will be saved* and *Israel will live in safety* . . .

“Therefore, the days are surely coming, says the LORD, when it shall no longer be said, ‘As the LORD lives who brought the people of Israel up out of the land of Egypt,’ but ‘As the LORD lives who brought out and led the offspring of the house of Israel out of the land of the north and out of all the lands where he had driven them.’ Then they shall live in their

own land” (Jeremiah 23:5-8, NRSV).

Something remarkable will happen to the restored Israelites under Christ's rule as He turns them into a truly righteous people. Here is the promise: “I will restore Israel . . . and at that time, says the LORD, *the iniquity of Israel shall be sought, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and none shall be found; for I will pardon the remnant that I have spared*” (Jeremiah 50:19-20, NRSV).

This is describing the spiritual conversion of all surviving descendants of Israel—Jews included—by Jesus Christ following His return.

A time of reconciliation

The apostle Paul was enthusiastic about Israel's future reconciliation to God. He wrote: “There is a divine secret here, my friends, which I want to share with you . . .

the whole of Israel will be saved, in accordance with scripture: From Zion shall come the Deliverer [Jesus Christ]; he shall remove wickedness from Jacob.

“And this is the covenant I will grant them, when I take away their sins . . . Judged by his choice, they are dear to him for the sake of the patriarchs; *for the gracious gifts of God*

and his calling are irrevocable” (Romans 11:25-29, Revised English Bible).

But before Jesus Christ can turn them to repentance they first must be *humbled* through a time of “great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matthew 24:21). Those who survive will be much more willing to listen than they have been in the past.

God has several reasons for allowing that time of global upheaval to occur, especially in reference to Jerusalem. He says: “I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling. *Judah will be besieged as well as Jerusalem*. On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, *I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations*. All who try to move it will injure

themselves” (Zechariah 12:1-3, NIV).

Jerusalem has indeed become the center of global conflict, just as God foretold. And it will become even more so as Christ’s return draws nearer. The prophecy continues, “On that day I will set out to destroy [by destroying their armies] all the nations *that attack Jerusalem*” (verse 9, NIV). How will this come about?

God explains: “I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city.

“Then the LORD [Jesus Christ] will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley . . . The LORD will be *king over the whole earth*. On that day there will be one LORD, and his name the only name” (Zechariah 14:2-4, 9, NIV).

Isaiah 58:1-4 describes what Jesus Christ will make clear to them at that time: “Declare to my people their rebellion and to the house of Jacob their sins . . .

“They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them. ‘Why have we fasted,’ they say, ‘and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?’ Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please . . . Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife . . . You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high” (NIV).

No doubt, the tenor of these verses will be included in the messages that Jesus Christ will give to the surviving Jews of Jerusalem after He returns. He will make sure that the survivors of all the tribes of Israel understand who He is. He also will explain to them the terms of the New Covenant and confirm it with them (Jeremiah 31:31-33).

God’s special purpose for restoring them as His people was foretold centuries ago in Ezekiel 36:24-28: “I will take you from the nations and . . . I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your uncleanness and your idols. Also, I will teach you to respect me completely, and I will put a new way of thinking inside you.

“I will take out the stubborn hearts of stone from your bodies, and I will give you obedient hearts of flesh. I will put *my Spirit* inside you and *help you* live by my rules

and *carefully obey my laws*. You will live in the land I gave to your ancestors, and *you will be my people, and I will be your God*” (New Century Version).

Jesus is accepted as Israel’s atonement

When the descendants of the Jews and the other tribes of Israel grasp that Jesus really is their Lord and Messiah, they then will sincerely repent.

Notice how the sudden realization of the enormity of their sinfulness will affect them. “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem *a spirit of grace and supplication*. They will look on me, *the one they have pierced*, and they will *mourn for him* as one mourns for an only child, and *grieve bitterly* for him as one grieves for a firstborn son” (Zechariah 12:10, NIV).

God will take away their hardness of heart and blindness of mind so they can see their sins and turn to Him with their whole heart. This time of correction, repentance and forgiveness is what the Day of Atonement, which has always been a sacred *day of fasting*, has been pointing to since the days of Moses.

Notice what Hebrews 9:7-8 tells us: “But into the second part [of the temple, the Holy of Holies] the high priest went alone once a year [on the Day of Atonement], *not without blood*, which he offered for himself *and for the people’s sins committed in ignorance*; the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing” (Hebrews 9:6-8).

The blood taken into the holiest part of Israel’s tabernacle or temple on the Day of Atonement always represented the shed blood of Jesus Christ as the only possible *covering* for the sins of Israel committed in ignorance.

As part of the future fulfillment of the Day of Atonement, all the end-time survivors of the 12 tribes of Israel, including the Jews, will weep with repentance and be forgiven in the very presence of Jesus Christ. They will wholeheartedly acknowledge Him as their Savior and King. They will begin helping Him to reach out *from Jerusalem* to all other nations and peoples to repent.

Jerusalem as the city of truth

“This is what the LORD says: ‘I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the

LORD Almighty will be called the Holy Mountain”” (Zechariah 8:3, NIV).

The impact on the rest of the world of a spiritually converted example nation, Israel, ruled by Jesus Christ from Jerusalem, will be enormous.

“Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: . . . When I have brought them back from the nations and have gathered them from the countries of their enemies, I will show myself holy through them *in the sight of many nations* . . . I will gather them to their own land, not leaving any behind. I will no longer hide my face from them, *for I will pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel*” (Ezekiel 39:25-29, NIV).

At that time, “*many nations will come* and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.’ The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore” (Micah 4:2-3, NIV).

The direct intervention in world affairs by Jesus Christ will begin and finish the process of defeating evil. God has never needed glasses to see the suffering we’ve brought on our world; He’s known it all along. The problem is that we have never had the eyes to see God’s plan for us and a heart willing to sincerely follow and obey Him.

Thankfully, God is working out His plan according to His timetable, and the time is fast approaching when mankind will at last be reconciled with Him. God speed that day! **GN**

Recommended Reading

Though few are aware of them, the Bible reveals a series of special sacred observances that teach us about God’s great plan for humanity. The Day of Atonement, discussed in this article, is but one of them. Did you realize that Jesus Christ died on Passover, one of these biblical festivals? And that the New Testament Church began on Pentecost, another of these days? What’s the connection? And what do the others teach us? Request or download your free copy of *God’s Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind*.



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The World Beyond Today: What Lies in Store?

“The world has never had it so good.” This is how one prominent editor and writer described the current human condition in a recent editorial. Is he right, or should we be looking beyond today’s world for a fabulous utopian age long foretold in the pages of the Bible?

by John Ross Schroeder

The author cited above, *Foreign Affairs* managing editor Gideon Rose, anticipated the way many would view his statement:

“‘Naïve claptrap,’ many will respond. Don’t I understand that radical Islam is a grave and continuing danger, both to the stability of the Middle East and to the security of the West itself? That weapons of mass destruction are about to fall in the hands of angry lunatics in Iran and elsewhere? That the globe is overheating and China will soon dominate everything?” (*Newsweek*, Aug. 6, 2007).

The fundamentals of the debate

Actually Mr. Rose touched on only a few of the great problems afflicting our planet. Consider the growing world population, troubled global immigration, national and civil wars, persistent crime and violence, political chaos and division, extensive family breakdown, steadily declining moral character and seriously chronic health problems such as AIDS, cancer and heart disease. The list is endless.

Rose counters with the statement that “the most advanced countries are allies [of the U.S.] and are generally devoted to the betterment of their own and other peoples. More than a third of humanity lives in countries growing at about 10 percent annually. Living standards have never been higher, lifespans longer or politics freer, *and there is every reason to expect such trends to continue*” (emphasis added throughout).

You will, of course, have to analyze world conditions and come to your own conclusions. *The Good News* is here to assist by pointing out some relevant and crucial facts. We regularly publish often-underreported material about the declining state of the world. Our staff of editors and writers agree with the apostle Paul that we need to be rescued from “the present evil age” (Galatians 1:4, New International Version throughout unless otherwise noted).

In what may have been his last letter, Paul warned the evangelist Timothy about what the human condition would be like at the time of the end: “*But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money . . . slanderous, without self-control, brutal . . . treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God*” (2 Timothy 3:1-4).

Does this insightful prophetic passage describe our world today? Clearly, on the whole, it does. But what are some of the contributing factors creating this sad situation?

. . . He will *take* a tenth of your grain and of your vintage . . . He will *take* a tenth of your flocks” (verses 11-17). Here he is warning of another inclination of rulers once they have power over the citizenry—the power to tax and tax and tax some more.

Clearly Samuel’s words still apply! Governments today, at all levels, are in the business of taking what they think they need, principally by taxing their citizens to the hilt. They usually practice the *get* way—not God’s contrasting *give* way of life. Jesus Christ said that it was better to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).

Reeducation in all fields of learning will be the order of the day. As Isaiah 11: 9 tells us, “The earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.”

Let’s consider a benchmark passage in the Old Testament.

Foundational shortcomings afflicting all worldly governments

More than 3,000 years ago, the prophet Samuel represented the Creator God to the people of ancient Israel. The Israelites were at the point of rejecting God and His government, desiring instead to be ruled by a human king like the other nations around them (see 1 Samuel 8:1-9).

God allowed them to have what they asked for. But first He solemnly warned the nation of what would inevitably happen: “This is what the king who will reign over you will do. He will *take* your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses . . . Some he will assign to be commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties . . . and still others to make weapons of war and equipment for his chariots.” This, of course, is describing military conscription and support of war-making capability.

Samuel continued: “He will *take* the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves

King Solomon’s son and successor to the throne, Rehoboam, when urged to lower the burden of government taxation, responded by telling the people: “My little finger is thicker than my father’s waist. My father laid on you a heavy yoke; I will make it even heavier. My father scourged you with whips; I will scourge you with scorpions” (1 Kings 12:10-11).

Today’s democratic government leaders are a little more subtle. They have to be.

Foundational principles of God’s government

In sharp contrast to the sometimes cruel and inhuman political leadership of many of today’s governments, particularly dictatorships, the Bible paints a picture of judgment and justice for all during God’s coming utopian age—a period known as the Millennium because it will last 1,000 years (Revelation 20:4, 6).

Notice what the prophet Isaiah foretells: “The law will go out from Zion, the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem [to become the world’s capital city]. He [Jesus Christ, the

Messiah] will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples” (Isaiah 2:3-4). Meanwhile, we are still waiting in vain for the “road map to peace” to work in the Middle East.

Here is how Jesus and His saints will rule the world during the Millennium: “He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing it and upholding it with justice and righteousness” (Isaiah 9:7). “With righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth” (Isaiah 11:4).

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). During His millennial reign, He will still be the

age: “The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, *the Spirit of knowledge* and of the fear of the LORD” (Isaiah 11:2-3).

Reeducation in all fields of learning will be the order of the day. As verse 9 tells us, “The earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.” The fundamental basis for all education and reeducation will be God’s Word as revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

The long-sought-after world peace will finally come. Military academies like West Point and Annapolis will pass into history. War and military tactics will no longer be

new age. The peoples of tomorrow’s world will learn to diligently practice the biblical laws and principles promoting radiant health.

As a direct result, sickness will experience a freefall reduction. Perhaps in place of today’s hospitals there will be teaching academies promoting prevention of disease—rather than having to cope with the inevitable effects of wrongheaded living.

But particularly at the beginning of Christ’s millennial reign, supernatural solutions will be needed for the survivors who have lived through the worst period of human history. “‘I will restore you to health and heal your wounds,’ declares the LORD” (Jeremiah 30:17).

Christ’s healing power will be in abundant evidence as the instruction in James 5:14 finds universal practice. Today it is only known and understood by a relatively few Christians. But tomorrow’s millennial citizens will soon comprehend and believe that Jesus Christ not only died to save people

from their sins, but was willing to suffer bodily so their illnesses could be divinely healed (Isaiah 53:4-5).

As time passes, “No one living in Zion will say, ‘I am ill’; and the sins of those who dwell there will be forgiven” (Isaiah 33:24). The sufferings and sacrifice

of Christ are for all time.

Instantaneous divine healings will be commonplace. “Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear” (Isaiah 65:24). The Bible foretells: “Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy” (Isaiah 35:5-6).

Geographical and weather restructuring

Physical healing will spill over to a severely damaged planet as well. Isaiah continues the story: “Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts, where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow” (Isaiah 35:6-7).

Imagine if the Kalahari, Sahara and Gobi deserts were consigned to history. The 10

Continued on page 27



same caring leader He was when He walked the earth as a human being. Notice this prophecy about Christ recorded in Isaiah 40:11: “He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.”

Then we will have an end of ruthless, cruel dictators barking out orders and imprisoning and executing political enemies.

Reeducation in the true values

Much of higher education today is secular and primarily atheistic in its approach and foundation. Most modern education is based on the theory of evolution. God is left out of the classroom. But that won’t be so forever.

This is the true educational vision Isaiah saw of the new utopian age: “Many peoples will come and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD . . . *He will teach us his ways*, so that we may walk in his paths’” (Isaiah 2:3).

Notice the sterling character traits and qualities that will motivate the Messiah when He teaches mankind during the millennial

taught. Former soldiers will beat their swords into plowshares as they reap the harvest of an abundant agricultural bonanza. “The plowman shall overtake the reaper” (Amos 9:13, New King James Version).

Health and healing in God’s utopia

The high cost of health care is one of the most contentious political footballs going. According to *The Economist*, in many Western nations “between 1990 and 2005, per capita health spending, from public and private sources, grew by more than twice as much as per capita GDP . . . America is the biggest spender, devoting 15.3% of national income to health” (July 21, 2007).

In the long run, national governments will simply have to raise taxes to cope. But there is a much better way.

Our destructive lifestyles—often characterized by poor eating habits, lack of proper sleep and exercise, and harmful addictions like smoking, drugs and alcohol abuse—will be consigned to the dim past during God’s

What Will Christ's Reign Be Like?

The Bible makes it clear that Jesus Christ will return to the earth as King and Messiah. But how will He rule? Does Bible prophecy give us descriptions of His reign?

by Vince Szymkowiak

The Bible contains many prophecies of Jesus Christ's return, the time when He will intervene in the affairs of mankind in a way that this world has never before experienced.

For example, Revelation 11:15 tells us that He will return to reign over the entire 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!'" (emphasis added throughout)

Zechariah 14:4 reveals that when He returns, "in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives," the mountain that looms over Jerusalem on the city's east side. Verse 9 shows that "the LORD shall be King over all the earth" after His return.

So how will He reign at that time? What will His rule be like? Let's focus on one aspect of His coming rule—the compassion, care and concern of the coming Christ.

Help to the poor and needy

In Amos 9:13 we read the promise that He is returning to end famine and hunger. "Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed; the mountains shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it."

Countless people around the world go to bed every night hungry and thirsty. Often this famine and thirst is caused by other human beings. In many places resources such as food and water are available, but political corruption and greed prevent supplies from reaching the poor and hungry. Thus, millions have been treated as pawns in power struggles among the high and mighty.

When Jesus comes, the poor and needy of this world will finally be rescued! Indeed, "the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Isaiah 35:10).

In Psalm 9:9 we read that Jesus

the Messiah will be "a refuge for the oppressed." Psalm 72:4 promises that "He will bring justice to the poor of the people; He will save the children of the

No longer will families and children suffer the consequences of war. The coming King "will reign in righteousness" (Isaiah 32:1). The result of this



He will even tame the wild beasts so that they will never again attack people. Safety and security will be commonplace in Christ's Kingdom.

needy." Yes, the rule of Jesus Christ will be characterized by care and compassion for every human being.

In Isaiah 9:6 we read of both the first and second comings of Christ. Some of His names and titles listed here are "Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God." As Mighty God, He will assure that "of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end" (verse 7).

His coming will guarantee that the unavoidable cruelty associated with warfare will no longer exist. Under His reign mankind "shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore" (Micah 4:3-4). The Bible promises that peace will flow "like a river" (Isaiah 66:12).

righteousness will be "peace . . . quietness and assurance forever" (verse 17).

Safety and peace for children

And regarding children, He promises, "Great shall be the peace of your children" (Isaiah 54:13). No longer will anyone be abducted, kidnapped and molested. Jesus is coming to assure their safety and protection. He will personally enforce peace and security (Revelation 2:27).

Families and young children will be able to camp "safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods" (Ezekiel 34:25). Families "shall be safe in their land" (verse 27). Today horrible crimes take place in the most beautiful and supposedly peaceful settings on the face of the earth. These crimes will cease after Jesus returns.

He will even tame the wild beasts (verse 25) so that they will never again attack and devour people. Safety and security will be commonplace in Christ's Kingdom.

God's Word draws the comparison of a loving and caring mother in describing the compassionate rule of Jesus Christ. When He reigns as King, He will comfort His subjects as a mother comforts her own children (Isaiah 66:13).

In fact, the entirety of Isaiah 66 is quite instructive. His compassionate rule will start in Jerusalem (verses 10, 13) before spreading to all nations of the earth (verse 18).

Compassion for the prisoners

Scripture also shows that Jesus Christ is coming to show compassion to prisoners. He is coming "to bring out prisoners from the prison," and "those who sit in darkness from the prison house" (Isaiah 42:7).

His coming will usher in the ultimate fulfillment of the prophecy that He will "proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound" (Isaiah 61:1).

Christ will deal with several general classes of prisoners in the world today. One large group will be those whose nations will have been decimated by war in the horrible times leading up to Christ's return, with the defeated survivors having been imprisoned in slave-labor camps like those of World War II.

The largest group of prisoners is the human race as a whole—held captive under the rule of Satan and sin. Christ is coming to set the world free.

Another group is those who are unjustly incarcerated, having committed no crime yet suffering at the hands of an imperfect and often brutal system—as in the story of Joseph (see Genesis 39:19-23). Those who oppose the tyrannical governmental

system that will exist at the time of the end will be persecuted, with many likely unjustly imprisoned.

Regardless of their circumstances, all will have the opportunity to build new lives in a new society governed by God's knowledge in which "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9).

Righteous government at last

The world of today is characterized by decisions too often based on prejudice, racism, sexism and hearsay. Not so in Christ's Kingdom. "He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity [fairness] for the meek of the earth" (Isaiah 11:3-4). The day is coming when all the cares of the poor and needy will at last be addressed.

Righteousness will permeate all aspects of government. Jesus will stand as "our Judge," "our Lawgiver" and "our King" (Isaiah 33:22). This is the familiar three branches of government (judicial, legislative and executive) found in the United States and in other nations. All too often, human governments' service to their constituents is woefully inadequate.

The difference with Jesus Christ's government, this verse tells us, is that "He will *save* us." In other words, His government will not ignore or fail to address the needs of people, but it will consistently care for them and bring them to salvation.

God's Word uses the most picturesque of terms to describe the mission of Jesus Christ. He is described as the gentle Shepherd who gathers "the lambs with His arm," and who will "carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young" (Isaiah 40:11). Jesus the King will teach, exemplify and put into practice a tenderness that has never before been seen on a worldwide basis.

When Jesus came to the earth the first time, He came to fulfill the role of "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). He came to die for the sins of humanity. When He returns, He will come as "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Revelation 19:16). His limitless powers will enforce 1,000 years of peace, joy, comfort and safety (Revelation 20:4).

As we pray to God "Your kingdom come" (Matthew 6:10), let us rejoice in the knowledge of the coming compassionate and caring rule of Jesus Christ! **GN**

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Recommended Reading

Many people believe that Jesus Christ will return to the earth. But only a few understand *why* He will return and what His reign over all nations will be like. Few realize that His gospel was all about His coming Kingdom—the Kingdom of God—and His awesome plan for every one of us! To learn more, request or download your free copy of *The Gospel of the Kingdom*. And to learn more about Jesus Christ, the ruler of this coming Kingdom, request or download *Jesus Christ: The Real Story*.



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The Pope: other Christian faiths defective

A midsummer Associated Press report from Italy stated: "For the second time in a week, Pope Benedict XVI has corrected what he says are erroneous interpretations of the Second Vatican Council, reasserting the primacy of the Roman Catholic Church and saying other Christian communities were either defective or not true churches" (July 10, 2007).

Also, according to the *International Herald Tribune*, "The Vatican document repeated many of the contentious claims of a document issued in 2000 by the Vatican office on orthodoxy, which Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger headed for more than two decades before being elected Pope in 2005" (July 12, 2007).

From the papal point of view, the bottom line as to what constitutes a church is the capacity to trace one's line of bishops all the way back to the original apostles. The AP report quoted the recent Vatican document's assertion that "the other communities [religious denominations] 'cannot be called churches in the proper sense' because they do not have apostolic succession . . . and therefore their priestly ordinations are not valid."

Naturally leaders in the Protestant world objected to these assertions from the papacy. "It makes us



question the seriousness with which the Roman Catholic Church takes its dialogues with the Reformed family and other families of the church," said the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, which represents 75 million believers in 214 churches in 107 countries.

They rightly see it as a putdown and as endangering the ecumenical efforts for Christian unity between Catholics and Protestants during the past century. They generally claim that the Bible itself rather than church tradition is the key

determining factor when evaluating ecclesiastical validity.

Sadly, mainstream Christianity in general—including Catholicism, Protestantism and Eastern Orthodoxy—has drifted far away from the doctrines the early Church believed and practiced as revealed in Scripture. To understand the real truth of this matter, request or download our free booklet *The Church Jesus Built*. (Sources: Associated Press, *International Herald Tribune*.)

Russian and Chinese troops in new military exercises

A London *Times* correspondent reporting from Moscow stated that "thousands of soldiers and 500 combat vehicles will take part in 'Peace Mission 2007,' organised by the Shanghai Co-operation Organization (SCO) in the Chelyabinsk region of Russia . . . Scores of Russian and Chinese aircraft begin joint exercises tomorrow before a week of military manoeuvres . . . At least 6,500 troops are involved in what is described as an anti-terror exercise" (Aug. 6, 2007).

Some observers see these Russo-Chinese military activities as a potential rival to NATO. From the biblical point of view, perhaps it is even a forerunner of what will become a vast end-time army that is prophesied to descend on the Middle East. Not long before the second coming of Christ, the "kings from the east" will play a major prophetic role in the world (Revelation 16:12).

In any event, the *Times* article concludes with the disturbing thought that "a newly assertive Russia, flush with oil and gas revenues, is moving rapidly to increase its military capability amid tensions with the West over missile defence and NATO expansion. Almost £100 billion [\$200 billion] has been set aside for rearmament over the next eight years." (Source: *The Times* [London].)

Modern living causes cancer

Years ago it was sometimes sarcastically said that living causes cancer. While that's not accurate, it is true that many aspects of modern lifestyles do cause cancer. According to London's *Evening Standard*, "Cancer Research UK . . . said up to half of all deaths from the disease could be avoided by the use of common sense" (Aug. 8, 2007).

The organization notes some dangerous trends: The most dangerous form of skin cancer, malignant melanoma, is up 43 percent over a decade ago

as people ignore warnings to stay out of the sun.

Liver cancer, linked to excessive alcohol intake, is up 33 percent.

Cases of mouth cancer, often associated with alcohol consumption and with smoking and chewing tobacco, have increased almost 25 percent.

Uterine cancer, linked to obesity, increased by a fifth. Rates of this form of cancer are double among overweight women compared to those of a healthy weight.

Kidney cancer, much more prevalent in smokers and the obese, is up 14 percent.

The director of Britain's National Obesity Forum, Colin Waine, said: "These figures just go to show

Ice Station Putin

The race for Arctic riches in black gold is on. In midsummer Russia planted its flag on the North Pole via a submarine stunt beneath the Arctic ice. Members of the British Parliament's Select Committee on Foreign Affairs fear that "the West could be on a collision course in the struggle for energy resources with 'an authoritarian bloc opposed to democracy' that was based on an alliance between China and Russia" (*The Times*, Aug. 6, 2007, emphasis added).

According to *The Sunday Times*, Canada is spending a large amount of money on military vessels in anticipation of a struggle with Russia. The United States, along with many European nations, shares Canadian anxieties. "At stake . . . [is] access to what geologists believe are a quarter of the globe's oil and gas reserves—in short the solution to the crippling energy shortages that will begin throttling Western economies within the next two decades" (Aug. 5, 2007).

Resisting Russian claims to ownership of Arctic mineral resources will require strong political will from the Western world. "Russia already controls the world's largest reserves of natural gas and is second only to Saudi Arabia in oil production. Both European and American officials are concerned that the West may be



forced into politically damaging dependence on Russian energy production if Moscow's claim to 463,000 square miles of [the] Arctic is not challenged."

Clearly Russian President Vladimir Putin has seized the strategic initiative. In an area twice the size of France, it is estimated that possibly 500 billion barrels of Arctic oil and an incalculable amount of natural gas may be at stake. Is the world moving towards the beginning phases of another kind of Cold War? (Sources: *The Times*, *The Sunday Times* [both London].)

the wide-reaching ramifications of obesity, which go way beyond diabetes, heart disease and stroke to several sitespecific cancers. As well as womb cancer, obesity has been linked to postmenopausal breast cancer, colonic cancer, bile duct cancer and pancreatic cancer. These figures can only get worse if we fail to halt the obesity epidemic."

Frank Soodeen, campaigns manager at the British agency Alcohol Concern, said: "The Government estimates that 5,000 people a year die from cancers attributable to alcohol. It's another reminder to stay within safe drinking limits if at all possible to minimise health risks." (Source: *Evening Standard* [London].)

Chinese toys could be hazardous to your health

“Mattel Inc. late yesterday identified the Chinese factory involved in the company’s big toy recall last week, ending nearly a week in which critics complained that Mattel’s unwillingness to do so highlighted a regulatory failure.

“Mattel said the plant is Lee Der Industrial Co., located in Guangdong province. Mattel, of El Segundo, Calif., last week recalled 1.5 million Chinese-made toys believed to contain lead paint. The toys included



items involving popular characters like Elmo and Dora the Explorer” (*The Wall Street Journal*, Aug. 8, 2007).

Other recalled toys contained small magnets that could be loosened and swallowed by children, possibly leading to intestinal blockage or perforation.

The Chinese government, fearful of the impact on its image, quickly banned exports from the company that manufactured the toys.

It’s remarkable that Mattel Inc., a highly regarded toy company, would not have better quality control than to allow popular toys coated with lead paint to be sold to unsuspecting parents. Part of the problem appears to be apathy; another appears to be greed. And greed can overlook or overpower the need to show kindness or to live by the golden rule—to treat others as you would like to be treated. (Source: *The Wall Street Journal*.)

South African update

Much of the population in South Africa is very unhappy with the present government’s progress in closing the poverty gap. It’s estimated that more than 40% of South Africa’s 50 million people live on about a dollar a day, while others make a fortune. More than a third of those of working age are unemployed. Some are saying that “this is what we expected from apartheid—not from our own government” (*The Guardian*, June 26, 2007).

Although progress has been made in some sectors of economic life, the South African government has conceded that a huge gap between rich and poor remains. Public expectations have run high after the demise of the previous regime, which had ruled South Africa for decades.

Violent crime and robbery up in America and Britain

Time magazine stated, “Driven by a big jump in robberies, violent crime in the U.S. edged up 1.3% last year, according to preliminary FBI data” (June 18, 2007, emphasis added). Violent crime essentially means murder, rape, robbery with violence and aggravated assault.

The piece in *Time* listed the top 15 violent American cities. All of them are in the Midwest/Eastern area of the United States with the sole exception of Oakland, Calif. In contrast Irvine, California, is regarded as the safest city in the United States. Flint, St. Louis and Detroit head the list of the most violent, in that order. New York City is now ranked 119th, the result of intense crime-reduction efforts over recent years.

commitment, tend to be somewhat less negative in their view of morality in the United States.

Clearly there is a widening “marriage gap,” with millions simply opting out of traditional matrimony based on the Bible.

One category of morality that deeply concerns some of the country’s citizens is marriage and divorce. While the American divorce rate is down slightly, the marriage rate has fallen sharply by 30

percent in the last 30 years. “The number of unmarried couples living together [is] up 10-fold since 1960” (*Time*, May 28, 2007). Clearly there is a widening “marriage gap,” with millions simply opting out of traditional matrimony based on the Bible.

Further, more and more college students indulge in premarital sex, sometimes waking up “garmentless after a hook-up” (as *The Economist* described it), usually preceded by far too much alcohol consumption. The publishers of *The Good News* offer help in our free booklet *Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension*. (Sources: Gallup News Service, *Time*, *The Economist*.)

Meanwhile crystal meth, considered one of the world’s most dangerous drugs, is at the root of a great deal of crime and violence in the sprawling townships. The problem is not confined to any one ethnic group. One recovering woman described the drug’s effects: “Before you know, you just can’t manage without it. Girls will do anything to get it, and I mean anything. It drives you crazy. You just don’t know what you are doing” (*The Times*, July 30, 2007).

Crystal meth is a synthetic stimulant that can lead to violent behavior, insomnia and psychotic conduct—sometimes for years after the user has quit the drug.

Although no Zimbabwe by any means, South Africa’s transition from white rule has not been an easy one. (Sources: *The Guardian*, *The Times* [both London].)

Britain has also suffered from a rise in violence. “The British Crime Survey found violent offences were up 5 per cent, and a separate survey of all-night drinking indicated a rise in offences between 3 am and 6 pm” (*The London News*, July 19, 2007). According to Metropolitan police statistics, 906,442 crimes were reported in London during the past 12 months. The figures include 175 murders, 179,063 crimes of violence, 2,145 rapes, 44,179 robberies and 95,886 burglaries.

These criminal activities are serious and shameful blights on our Western way of life. Too many have abandoned the Judeo-Christian morality under which both nations rose to greatness. And too few have taught their children to live by the Ten Commandments.

For help in successful child rearing, request or download our free booklet *Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension*. (Sources: *Time*, *The London News*.)

The sad state of American morals

“More than 8 in 10 Americans think morality is getting worse,” reports the Gallup News Service regarding a recent poll. Among those polled who regard American moral values as very low are senior citizens, women in general and those who attend church regularly.

Only one person in six believes that U.S. moral values could be described as excellent. Younger adults, especially those with no overtly religious

percent in the last 30 years. “The number of unmarried couples living together [is] up 10-fold since 1960” (*Time*, May 28, 2007). Clearly there is a widening “marriage gap,” with millions simply opting out of traditional matrimony based on the Bible.

Further, more and more college students indulge in premarital sex, sometimes waking up “garmentless after a hook-up” (as *The Economist* described it), usually preceded by far too much alcohol consumption. The publishers of *The Good News* offer help in our free booklet *Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension*. (Sources: Gallup News Service, *Time*, *The Economist*.)

How Can You Make Sense of the News?

So much is happening in the world, and so quickly. Where are today’s dramatic and dangerous trends taking us? What does Bible prophecy reveal about our future? You’re probably very concerned with the direction the world is heading. So are we. That’s why we’ve created the *World News & Prophecy* Web site—to help you understand the news in the light of Bible prophecy. This eye-opening site offers you a perspective you won’t find anywhere else—the perspective of God’s Word, the Bible. Visit us at www.wnponline.org today!





Pakistan: A Nuclear-Armed Power Walks a Tightrope

Pakistan's pro-Western leader has now survived three assassination attempts and is under increasing pressure from Islamic militants. If he falls, Pakistan will likely fall with him. If that happens, radical Islamists will likely gain control of Pakistan's arsenal of nuclear weapons.

Although many people can't find it on the map, Pakistan could easily be the next major threat to the United States and the Western world.

In the 1960s, there was a great deal of talk about the domino theory. The fear was that, if one country fell to communism, others would fall too, like a long line of dominoes. Many dismissed the idea—at least until South Vietnam fell, followed quickly by Cambodia and Laos.

Today the greatest threat to peace and security is radical Islam. It's been almost 30 years since its first major success, the Ayatollah Khomeini-led Iranian revolution and ousting of the shah in 1979.

In the same year the Soviet Union sent troops into neighboring Afghanistan with the intention of spreading atheistic communism. They stayed for 10 bloody years before their defeat by radical Islamists under the leadership of Osama bin Laden, who at that time was receiving arms and support from the United States. Following defeat in Afghanistan, the Soviet empire collapsed.

Afghanistan changes hands

The threat from radical Islam has, however, been growing. Afghanistan came under the control of the Taliban, strict Muslim fundamentalists who instituted Islamic sharia law. Allowing Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda to stage the events of 9/11 from bases in Afghanistan inevitably led to the overthrow of the Taliban following the U.S. invasion of 2001.

But that does not mean they are gone—or that they no longer have the support of many of the Afghan people. Lately the Taliban has been staging a comeback in some areas, producing heavy losses among coalition forces.

Following the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland after a

38-year presence, a senior member of the British military expressed the opinion that British forces would be in Afghanistan at least as long!

And Osama bin Laden remains free, in spite of doubling the reward offer from

“Beyond Musharraf lie only question marks and uncertainties at best, which is a dire Western predicament for a nuclear power cohabiting with popular and powerful al-Qaeda and Taliban movements on its soil.”

\$25 million to \$50 million. In the mountainous tribal areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan, money means little. What is important are tribal loyalties and adherence to Islam, and people are very loyal to Osama and his followers. As they see it, they are fellow Muslims who are struggling in a continual jihad against the Western infidels.

Increasingly, it's become apparent that Osama bin Laden and his associates may not even be in Afghanistan. They could just as easily be across the border in remote and rugged mountainous areas of Pakistan. One American presidential contender has said that he will order an invasion of Pakistan if the Pakistani government does not hand over the world's most wanted man. Clearly, some in America think that Pakistan has greater control of its borders than America does!

The truth is that the central government of Pakistan has very little control of the tribal areas of the North-West Frontier Province. This was also true of the British, who ruled the area for almost 200 years prior to Pakistan's independence 60 years ago. Like much of Afghanistan, this rugged no-man's-land has defied control by outsiders for centuries.

Disturbing Pakistani realities

Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf

writes that “many members of al-Qaeda relocated to the mountains—specifically to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in the North-West Frontier Province. The border with Afghanistan is a stretch of 850 miles (1,360

kilometers) . . . The terrain is inhospitable and inaccessible—rugged and mountainous, with heights ranging from 8,000 to 15,000 feet, subject to harsh winters and burning hot summers and largely devoid of roads.

“During the colonial period the British were restricted to transit on just a few roads in this region, and many of those were rarely open.

“Under our constitution, FATA enjoys a semi-autonomous status. It is home to some 3.2 million tribal folk. It is spread over 10,600 square miles and is largely governed by age-old tribal customs, with maliks, or chiefs and elders, wielding political and military influence and authority over their tribes . . .

“Pakistan's border with Afghanistan cuts across tribes, dividing people with deep ethnic and social bonds.” From 1893 the British “allowed cross-border social and commercial interaction for the tribes,” a practice that “continues to this day.”

These tribes “are fiercely independent,” writes the Pakistani president. “It was only in 2000 that the Pakistan Army was allowed to enter all the tribal agencies for the first time ever, to build roads and to foster economic development . . .

“After 9/11, the army's strength was increased and a network of human intel-



A Pakistani youth wields a toy assault rifle at a rally protesting President Pervez Musharraf and his army's July 11 attack on the pro-Taliban Red Mosque in Pakistan's capital, Islamabad. Large segments of the Pakistani population are anti-Western and support Islamic fundamentalists such as al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

ligence was created in the area. When we received initial reports of al-Qaeda's presence there, we did not take them very seriously, and in any case the magnitude of the threat was unknown. The truth dawned on us only gradually, with increased intelligence" (*In the Line of Fire*, 2006, pp. 264-265).

High stakes in Pakistan's stability

President Musharraf has himself been the intended victim of assassination attempts on at least three occasions, the latest in July. His government has frequently been threatened by radical Islamists, who seized the Red Mosque in Islamabad and challenged the Pakistani government, prompting a bloody shootout in the nation's capital that same month.

While Musharraf vows to restore democracy to the country as soon as possible, there is also the possibility of the radicals overthrowing him and establishing a fundamentalist state. Many among the military, intelligence services and general populace of this Muslim state sympathize much more with Osama bin Laden and hate Musharraf's ties with the West.

Attempting to receive greater backing and end criticism of his government from the West, Musharraf talked with former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir

Bhutto in July, with a view to possibly sharing power. The threat from radical Islam could bring about the permanent downfall of both President Musharraf and Bhutto.

It would also mean that Islamic fundamentalists would gain control of Pakistan's arsenal of several dozen nuclear weapons and missile delivery systems.

With neighboring Iran also working on developing nuclear weapons, what would happen if the two countries formed a nuclear alliance? Coupled with the spread of radical Islam into Lebanon, Somalia, Gaza, the West Bank, Iraq and even Turkey, the threat to the West seems only set to grow.

"Musharraf is the only known trustworthy custodian of Pakistan's nuclear weapons arsenal," writes Steve Schippert, cofounder of ThreatsWatch and of the Center for Threat Awareness. "Beyond Musharraf lie only question marks and uncertainties at best, which is a dire Western predicament for a nuclear power cohabiting with popular and powerful al-Qaeda and Taliban movements on its soil.

"And increasingly, the question regarding Musharraf's rule as the leader of Pakistan is most often discussed in terms of how long he can survive, not whether or not he can retain reliable control of both

Pakistan's government and its military" ("Ceding the Fall of Pakistan," *Front-PageMagazine.com*, July 5, 2007).

Musharraf's difficult balancing act

Mr. Schippert continues with the following facts:

"Pakistan has nuclear weapons.

"It is also the current home of al-Qaeda and the Taliban, the epicenter of the global jihadiyun movement.

"The Taliban has recently taken to seeking its enemies by reportedly deploying suicide bomber teams to distant shores, including Germany, Canada, the United States and Great Britain.

"Al-Qaeda is considered to have surpassed its pre-9/11 capabilities since migrating to its sanctuaries in Pakistan in 2001-2002.

"The Taliban-al-Qaeda alliance fields an armed fighter force of over 200,000 men on Pakistani soil.

"The alliance has been steadily gaining territory ceded to them by Pervez Musharraf, as he has been incapable of defeating or even stemming the rising tide of Islamists inching ever closer to Islamabad.

"As [the Center for Security Policy's Salim] Mansur states bluntly, Musharraf 'has run the country for over seven years and his welcome has run out' among the general population, not just the Taliban-al-Qaeda alliance" (*ibid.*).

The Wall Street Journal adds that Musharraf's "antiterror policy has been . . . contradictory. While he remains an ally against al Qaeda, Pakistanis report that the madrassa schools continue to be unreformed as a refuge for Islamist indoctrination. More troubling, last year his government cut a deal with tribal chiefs in the province of Waziristan to stop pursuing Islamist militants.

"While that may have been forgivable given the heavy losses the Pakistan military suffered trying to secure its border with Afghanistan, it is now clear the truce has allowed a new sanctuary for the Taliban and al Qaeda. Mr. Musharraf also does not help his credibility by denying clear evidence that border towns such as Quetta have become terrorist bazaars" ("The Pakistan Dilemma," July 28, 2007).

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The Biblical Map to Jesus Christ's Return

Maps show the way from where you are to your final destination. The Bible provides the only spiritual map to our ultimate destiny. Doesn't it make good sense to plan your life's journey by learning how to read the genuine biblical map?

by Jerold Aust

You and I may take ordinary road maps for granted, but the history of mapmaking shows that ancient peoples carefully relied on their relatively primitive maps.

Noted author and professor John Noble Wilford wrote: "Before Europeans reached the Pacific, the Marshall Islanders were making stick charts. Sticks were lashed together with fibers to depict prevailing winds and wave patterns; shells or coral were inserted at the appropriate places to represent islands. When a Tahitian communicated his knowledge of South Pacific geography to Captain Cook by drawing a map, it was clear that he and his people were quite familiar with the map idea.

"Pre-Columbian maps in Mexico indicated roads by lines of footprints. Centuries ago Eskimos carved accurate coastal maps in ivory, the Incas built elaborate relief maps of stone and clay, and early Europeans drew sketch maps on their cave walls" (*The Mapmakers*, 1981, p. 7).

The map idea

According to Wilford, cartographers agree that there is something fundamental about the map idea: "It is a basic form of human communication . . . Indeed, the term *map* is often used metaphorically to explain other types of knowing and communicating" (p. 13).

Wilford carefully explored the symbolic values of mapmaking: "In everyday conversation, the word *map* is used to convey the idea of clarification: someone maps out a plan or maps out his future" (ibid.). Later in this book he wrote, "Maps embody a perspective of that which is known and a perception of that which may be worth knowing" (p. 386). He makes a very good case that maps are excellent symbolic tools, communicating that which is so far unknown by that which is known.

But if an ordinary map can communicate a desired destination, could there also be

a map for Christians to use to find their ultimate destiny in this life? Is there a plan already mapped out that would determine a sense of *here* in relation to *there*? The short answer is yes.

Would Almighty God, who has created the orderly, harmonious and self-regulating universe, create human beings—the only fully cognitive processing creatures on this planet—without planning and/or mapping out an ultimate destiny for us?

Not only is there a biblical map that can

have ignored the basic biblical map leading to salvation and "penciled in" traditional pagan symbols instead. When you misread a map, a miss is as good as a mile.

For example, though God has clearly mapped out our salvation by way of the Holy Days He reveals in the Bible, religionists from time immemorial have changed God's symbols and replaced them with pagan ones. For instance, they have substituted modern religious holidays like Christmas and Easter for God's revelatory Holy Days.

No wonder humankind has consistently run into biblical dead ends or taken frustrating and confusing religious detours—rather than following the road to eternal life (Daniel 7:25). Let's briefly explore God's symbols, His annual Sabbaths in the autumn that mark out and point the way to immortality in God's coming Kingdom.

Our Creator has revealed



If an ordinary map can communicate a desired destination, could there also be a map for Christians to use to find their ultimate destiny in life? The short answer is yes.

assist you in arriving at your ultimate destination, but that map is also the key to your spiritual survival. The map I speak of is both real and symbolic, a great communication tool in the service of humankind.

The Bible's symbolic map

Remarkably, the Scriptures are filled with basic symbolic maps that can and will lead you to true freedom and immortality. Ironically, millions of Christians have neglected to use the very biblical map that God has so freely given to them.

In fact, many mainstream Christians

seven annual festivals starting in the spring, each one depicting some great event in the ongoing mapping of God's salvation for humankind. However, this particular article will focus on and highlight only the four festivals that occur in the late summer and autumn of the year (in the northern hemisphere).

Each represents a decisive turning point in human history. The previous three spring festivals of Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost constitute personal responses to the workings of God in the people He calls and chooses during

this age of man. The Bible calls them the firstfruits of God's salvation. (For a fuller discussion of all seven of these annual occasions, request or download our free booklet *God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind.*)

The Feast of Trumpets maps the arrival of Jesus Christ

The first autumn festival is the Feast of Trumpets. This biblical festival helps us understand why Jesus Christ must return and reveals how and what He will do when He arrives.

It also reveals what happens to His true followers, both those who are still alive and those who are "dead in Christ," at His coming. Both are transformed immediately to immortal children of God (1 Corinthians 15:22-23, 42-44, 50-53). Jesus gathers His elect (see 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17), who will afterward follow Christ when He descends on the Mount of Olives (Revelation 19:14; John 18:36).

Historically, the Feast of Trumpets was first given to God's nation Israel (Leviticus 23:24). In that context trumpets were, and still are, symbols that indicated an alarm for war. Israel often blew trumpets to alert its army and regular population that battle was imminent. Consider the trumpets that were blown when God instructed Israel to conquer Jericho (Joshua 6). A blowing of trumpets signaled imminent battle.

The book of Revelation likewise shows blowing of trumpets in preparation for Jesus' return. The fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets is loudly sounded in Revelation chapters 8 through 11 where the seven trumpets of God warn of major cataclysmic events. These trumpet blasts serve as the prelude to the seven last plagues of Revelation 16.

The Feast of Trumpets symbolizes the return of Christ, the most pivotal and well-mapped-out event in all of human history. When Christians celebrate the Feast of Trumpets, they are in a sense acting out in advance a great symbol of their salvation. (If you would like to understand the significance of these biblical prophecies in much greater detail, please request or download our free booklet *The Book of Revelation Unveiled.*)

The Day of Atonement maps Satan's removal

The Day of Atonement focuses on the future removal of the devil and his cohorts, powerful evil spirits unseen by the naked human eye, called demons. As agents of deception and baleful influence, they have

been misleading mankind since the Garden of Eden (see Revelation 12:9).

The fact that many today doubt the existence of evil spirits demonstrates the success of the deception. (For the absolute biblical proof, request or download our free booklet *Is There Really a Devil?*)

Through the book of Job, Scripture shows that Satan is personally involved with humanity. "And the LORD said to Satan, 'From where do you come?' So Satan answered the LORD and said, 'From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it'" (Job 1:7).

From this and many other biblical passages we see that Satan is intricately involved with humanity at large. Recall that when the devil offered Jesus Christ the kingdoms of the world, Jesus did not counter his rule over mankind. "Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, 'All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me'" (Matthew 4:8-9, emphasis added throughout).

The apostle Paul tells us that Satan is the god of this world and that he has blinded the minds of all humanity (1 Corinthians 4:4). He began his deception with our first parents, Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 5:14-15).

Thankfully Satan's destructive work on humankind will cease. Christ will remove the devil from the human realm for a thousand years at His return (Revelation 20:1-3; compare Romans 16:20). This major event is mapped out or symbolized by the Day of Atonement. Christians observe this unique biblical festival by fasting, drawing close to God and acknowledging their total reliance on Him (Leviticus 23:26-32; Acts 27:9).

The reason God is going to remove Satan and the demonic realm from the human sphere is very clear: They are at the heart of all human troubles, pain, suffering, war and death. Without the destroyer, peace can break out on the earth (Isaiah 14:4-7). Only then can humanity continue on the road to God's peace and prosperity.

The Day of Atonement keeps the path open for all humankind to experience the wonderful world tomorrow, the coming Kingdom of God! That time is symbolized by the joyous Feast of Tabernacles, the next stop on the road map to eternal life.

Feast of Tabernacles maps universal peace and prosperity

The Feast of Tabernacles is strongly

symbolic of the great destination for humanity on the road to universal peace and prosperity. Yet that destination cannot be reached before the previous ones. There is a specific and orderly sequence of benchmark events that must take place for humankind to arrive safely at its ultimate destination. There are no shortcuts.

By way of a brief review, the Feast of Trumpets heralds the return of Jesus Christ, where He resurrects the dead in Christ and changes those Christians who are still alive (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 1 Corinthians 15), and begins to remove all tyrannical governments (Revelation 11:15-18).

The next destination in God's master plan of salvation is the Day of Atonement, where Christ removes Satan and incarcerates him (Revelation 20:1-3). Only then can peace break out on earth (Isaiah 14:7; 11). This leads to the next step as represented by the Feast of Tabernacles, when Jesus will rule as the great Sovereign for 1,000 years.

Today Christ's disciples who understand the meaning of the symbols of God's step-by-step map of salvation keep the annual Feast of Tabernacles in anticipation of mankind's great future.

Throughout the earth, humanity will rejoice in unparalleled peace and prosperity. War, violence, deception, famines and all the other insoluble problems that plague mankind today will disappear from the earth (Isaiah 11:1-9; Micah 4:1-7). This war-weary earth will become a new Garden of Eden, beginning at Jerusalem and then spreading to all nations (Ezekiel 36:35; Zechariah 14:16).

Last Great Day maps salvation for mankind

During the autumn festival season, yet one major event follows the Feast of Tabernacles.

This destination on the biblical map that Christ has revealed to His saints has stupendous meaning. It figuratively shows the destination of all human beings who have ever lived from Adam's time to Christ's second coming.

It's called the Last Great Day, or the eighth day of the Feast. "On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation . . . It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it" (Leviticus 23:36).

Keep in mind that as an ordinary road map has the appropriate symbols to depict the reality of destinations, so has God given symbols to show the reality of

Continued on page 26

Myths of Evolution Part 2

Some may be shocked to find that long-heralded “proofs” of evolution are anything but. Here we examine four widely used examples to learn what the evidence really shows.

by Mario Seiglie

As we saw in the first part of this series in the last issue, Charles Darwin presented in his book, *The Origin of Species*, what he thought were numerous examples from the animal world to support his theory of evolution. But do they? Let’s examine some other supposed proofs and see how well they have fared some 150 years later.

Pigeon breeding: artificial versus natural selection

In the beginning of *The Origin of Species*, Darwin stressed the importance he attributed to domestic breeding as a proof from *analogy* for his theory.

“At the commencement of my observations,” he notes, “it seemed to me probable that a careful study of domesticated

theoretically could lead to the formation of new species (*macroevolution*).

Darwin believed this was possible because he accepted the erroneous theory of the blending of characteristics of different species. He thought that given enough time, a virtually infinite variety of completely different species could arise. But he did not understand Mendelian genetics, as yet undiscovered in his day, which *limits* how much an animal or plant kind can truly vary.

This was one of Darwin’s greatest blunders—supposing life had an almost infinite capacity for change when submitted to strong environmental and reproductive pressures. Understanding the laws of genetics, scientists today understand that variety exists, but it is *limited*.

This was one of Darwin’s greatest blunders—supposing life had an almost infinite capacity for change when submitted to strong environmental and reproductive pressures.

animals and of cultivated plants would offer *the best chance* of making out this obscure problem [of how evolution works]. Nor have I been disappointed; in this and in all the other perplexing cases I have invariably found that our knowledge, imperfect though it may be, of variation under domestication, afford *the best and safest clue*” (1958, p. 29, emphasis added throughout).

Darwin himself bred pigeons and was impressed with all the varieties that domestic breeders could develop. He explained in the first chapters of his book how pigeons could be bred to have a large variety of tails, beaks and colors. He then proposed that if breeders, using *artificial selection*, could come up with such great changes in such a short time, how much more could nature, using *natural selection* and eons of time, produce wholesale changes in plants and animals.

He admitted it was only a hunch, for he had no direct evidence. Yet from this limited evidence of variation within species (today called *microevolution*) he went on to extrapolate complex changes that

This is what Michael Behe, professor of biochemistry at Pennsylvania’s Lehigh University, calls “the edge of evolution.” Animals and plants can “evolve” or vary up to their genetic edge, beyond which no more true variation is possible because genetic “walls” prevent further adaptation.

Genetics can also be compared to having a great number of marbles in a bag. Shake them around and you can pull different marbles out every time—in this case, representing the different varieties possible. But there is only a *specific number* of marbles in the bag and you *cannot* create any more without ruining the product.

You can only select from the different mix inside the bag. This is the same with genetics—only a specific number of genes, or information packets (the marbles), are contained within the genetic code of each creature. You can, through mutations or genetic engineering, *manipulate* the genetic data in different ways (damaging, splicing, deleting or multiplying it) but no *new* genetic information is created. Similarly, only a fixed number of feasible combinations is possible

within each animal or plant kind.

Behe now says in his new book, *The Edge of Evolution* (2007), that science can actually determine mathematically exactly *where* that genetic borderline exists. This is another devastating blow to Darwinian evolution.

Darwin lost his gamble that nearly an infinite variety of possibilities exist among species and that quite different kinds of plant and animals could arise out of a common ancestor. Despite the wide variety of dogs, from the tiny Chihuahua to the giant Great Dane, they are *all still dogs*—no dogs are “evolving” into different creatures. In the same way, you can’t change the “dog” marbles into “cat” marbles, no matter how many genetic reshufflings you do.

Darwin’s finches fail the test

One of the famous examples of evolution is that of the finches Darwin collected when he visited the Galapagos Islands in 1835. In his honor, these Galapagos birds are now called “Darwin’s finches.”

Back in England, as he and others examined these specimens, they noticed slight variations in their sizes and beaks. He briefly speculated in a later edition of *The Origin of Species* how natural selection could modify the beak and body sizes of these birds and mused that, given enough time, such changes could eventually transform them into different birds altogether.

“It was ten years since he had visited the Galapagos,” biographers Adrian Desmond and James Moore note, “and he was still reconceptualizing the islands. By now he had had ample time to reinterpret the fauna in the light of John Gould’s work on the birds and his own theory . . .

“But finches were still a minor part of his evolutionary proof. Admittedly he now illustrated the various types, showing their range of beaks. ‘Seeing this gradation and diversity of structure in one small, intimately related group of birds,’ he hinted, ‘one might really fancy that from an original paucity of birds in this archipelago, one species had been taken and modified for different ends.’ It was a broad clue, and as

much as he would ever say on finch evolution” (*Darwin: The Life of a Tormented Evolutionist*, 1991, pp. 327-328).

Although he did not emphasize this evidence about the finches in his theory of evolution, in the 20th century his followers would present it as one of the major proofs of Darwinism.

In the 1970s, biologists Peter and Rosemary Grant conducted studies on the beak sizes of the finches in the Galapagos. They focused primarily on one particular island, Daphne Major, and noticed that when a severe drought took place from 1976 to 1977, most of the finches died. But those

tional selection in the long run. Moreover, the change in beak sizes had been infinitesimal—on average, less than a millimeter! Further, finches with beaks in that size range existed on the island both *before* and *after* the drought, so where is the evolutionary change?

Again, some evolutionists seem to be so desperate to confirm their theory that they will perhaps unwittingly resort to deception. For example, a booklet published in 1998 by the U.S. National Academy of Sciences mentions Darwin’s finches as “a particularly interesting example” of Darwinian evolution. It explains how the experiments

concealing a crucial part of the evidence.

“It makes one wonder how much evidence there really is for Darwin’s theory. As Berkeley law professor and Darwin critic Phillip E. Johnson wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* in 1999, ‘When our leading scientists have to resort to the sort of distortion that would land a stock promoter in jail, you know they are in trouble’” (*Icons of Evolution*, 2000, p. 175).

Archaeopteryx—the missing link that wasn’t

Shortly after Darwin’s *The Origin of Species* came out in 1859, a spectacular fossil was found that at first glance seemed to be a transitional species, or a missing link, between reptiles and birds. Discovered in Germany in 1861, it was called *Archaeopteryx*, meaning “ancient wing.” It had wings and feathers, but it also had teeth, unlike modern birds, a lizard-like tail and claws on its wings. Several more specimens were found during the last century.

Darwin added it to his “proofs” of evolution in a later edition of *The Origin of Species*. He commented: “Even the wide interval between birds and reptiles has been shown by the naturalist [Thomas Huxley] to be partially bridged over in the most unexpected manner, on the one hand, by the ostrich and extinct *Archeopteryx*, and on the other hand, by the *Compsognathus*, one of the Dinosaurians” (1872 edition, p. 325).

Noted Harvard evolutionist Ernst Mayr called *Archaeopteryx* “the almost perfect link between reptiles and birds” (*The Growth of Biological Thought*, 1982, p. 430).

Yet in the last 25 years this supposed proof of evolution has been quietly demoted. On further examination, scientists now classify it not as a transitional species but as an extinct bird. Ornithologist Alan Feduccia, an expert on *Archaeopteryx*, stated: “Paleontologists have tried to turn *Archaeopteryx* into an earth-bound, feathered dinosaur. But it’s not. It is a bird, a perching bird. And no amount of ‘paleobabble’ is going to change that” (quoted by Virginia Morell, “*Archaeopteryx*: Early Bird Catches a Can of Worms,” *Science*, Feb. 5, 1993, pp. 764-765).

Professor Feduccia went on to predict that the dinosaur-bird theory would become “the greatest embarrassment of paleontology in the 20th century” (quoted by Pat Shipman, “Birds Do It . . . Did Dinosaurs?” *New Scientist*, Feb. 1, 1997, p. 28).

Why the drastic change of mind? It was



There is an enormous variety of dogs, from the tiny Chihuahua to the giant Great Dane, but they are all still dogs—no dogs are “evolving” into different creatures.

that survived were the ones with larger beaks and bodies. They could consume the large, tough fruits that are virtually impossible for smaller-beaked birds to eat.

The textbook *Biology* by John Kimball notes: “Here, then was natural selection at work. But did it produce evolution? The answer turned out to be yes. As the population of *G. fortis* [the finch species] recovered after the rains returned, the average body size and beak depth of their offspring was greater than before (an increase of 4–5% for beak depth). The bell-shaped curve had been shifted to the right—[evidence of] directional selection” (updated 2006 online edition).

Yet this textbook, as many others, fails to mention that during the next decade of average rainfall, the beak sizes returned to normal! There was no direc-

tioned by the Grants and their associates on the Galapagos finches demonstrated “that a single year of drought on the islands can drive evolutionary changes in the finches,” and “if droughts occur about once every 10 years on the islands, a new species of finch might arise in only about 200 years” (*Teaching About Evolution and the Nature of Science*, p. 10).

As biologist Jonathan Wells points out about this booklet: “Rather than confuse the reader by mentioning that selection was reversed after the drought, producing no long-term evolutionary change, the booklet simply omits this awkward fact. Like a stock promoter who claims a stock might double in value in twenty years because it increased 5 percent in 1998, but doesn’t mention that it decreased 5 percent in 1999, the booklet misleads the public by

due to the evidence that now points to the similarity of *Archaeopteryx* with ancient and modern birds and not with reptiles.

Fossils of ancient birds have been found to have teeth like *Archaeopteryx*—very different from the reptilian types. Some modern birds have claws on their wings, such as the hoatzin of South America and the turaco and the ostrich from Africa. Some modern bird embryos have more tail vertebrae than *Archaeopteryx*, and the swan's tail structure is strikingly similar. Also, it has now been shown that *Archaeopteryx* was fully feathered, had no reptilian scales, could fly and had hollow bird bones.

Jonathan Wells again points out, "The world's most beautiful fossil, the specimen Ernst Mayr called 'the almost perfect link between reptiles and birds,' has been quietly shelved, and the search for missing links continues as though *Archaeopteryx* had never been found" (p. 135).

The strange saga of the peppered moth

As I glanced at an updated biology book, I noticed that an example of "evidence" for evolution that I had read about decades ago in high school biology is still

"Paleontologists have tried to turn *Archaeopteryx* into an earth-bound, feathered dinosaur. But it's not. It is a bird, a perching bird. And no amount of 'paleobabble' is going to change that."

being used today—even though it has long been discredited.

Back then I was taught about peppered moths in Britain changing their color from light to dark due to industrial pollution. This, the textbook asserted, showed how natural selection can change a species into another type, and eminent scientists have emphasized the importance of this supposed proof of evolution.

"We should expect to find the most rapid evolutionary changes in populations suddenly exposed to new conditions," declared paleontologist John Maynard Smith in the 1966 book *The Theory of Evolution*. "It is therefore natural that one of the most striking changes which has been observed in a wild population . . . is the phenomenon of 'industrial melanism,' the appearance and spread of dark forms of a number of species of moths" (p. 137).

Sir Gavin De Beer, writing in the 1974 edition of *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, said, "One of the most striking examples of observable evolution is the phenomenon

known as industrial melanism" (Vol. 7, "Evolution," p. 14).

Here is a summary from the textbook *Biology*, by John Kimball (online version), updated in 2006: "Many species of moths in the British Isles began to become



darker in color in the 19th century. The best-studied example is the *peppered moth*, *Biston betularia*. The moth gets its name from the scattered dark markings on its wings and body.

"In 1849, a coal-black mutant was found near Manchester, England. Within a century, this black form had increased to 90% of the population in this region.

"The moth flies at night and rests by day on tree trunks. In areas far from industrial activity, the trunks of trees are encrusted with lichens . . . The light form [of the moth] . . . is practically invisible against this background. In areas where air pollution is severe, the combination of toxic gases and soot has killed the lichens and blackened the trunks. Against such a background, the light form stands out sharply.

"The moth is preyed upon by birds that pluck it from its resting place by day. In polluted woods, the dark form has a much better chance of surviving undetected. When the English geneticist H.B.D. Kettlewell . . . released moths of both types

in the woods, he observed that birds did, indeed, eat a much higher fraction of the light moths he released than of the dark.

"Since pollution abatement programs were put in place after World War II, the light form has been making a comeback in the Liverpool and Manchester areas."

And now, the rest of the story

It's regrettable that much of the information given in this biology textbook and in others turns out to be grossly inaccurate. It shows why it's so important to get both sides of an argument and not just one. As the Bible tells us, "The first one to plead his cause seems right, until his neighbor comes and examines him" (Proverbs 18:17).

Under scrutiny, this so-called "proof" of the evolution of the peppered moth reveals even supposedly careful and impartial scientists cannot be trusted to leave their bias aside when it comes to teaching Darwinian evolution.

Further investigation on the peppered moth phenomenon has shown that Kettlewell's classic experiments with these moths are deeply flawed. Here is what Dr. Jerry Coyne, professor of evolutionary biology at the University of Chicago, candidly explained in a prestigious British scientific journal:

"From time to time, evolutionists re-examine a classic experimental study and find, to their horror, that it is flawed or downright wrong . . . The prize horse in our stable of examples has been the evolution of 'industrial melanism' in the peppered moth, *Biston betularia*, presented by most teachers and textbooks as the paradigm of natural selection and evolution occurring within a human lifetime.

"The re-examination of this tale is the centrepiece of Michael Majerus's book, *Melanism: Evolution in Action*. Depressingly, Majerus shows that this classic example is in bad shape, and, while not yet ready for the glue factory, needs serious attention . . . Majerus notes that the most serious problem is that *B. betularia* probably does not rest on tree trunks—exactly two moths have been seen in such a position in more than 40 years of intensive search.

"The natural resting spots are, in fact, a mystery. This alone invalidates Kettlewell's release-recapture experiments, as moths were released by placing them directly onto tree trunks, where they are highly visible to bird predators. (Kettlewell also released his moths during the day,

while they normally choose resting places at night.)

“The story is further eroded by noting that the resurgence of *typica* [light-colored moths] occurred well before lichens recolonized the polluted trees, and that a parallel increase and decrease of the melanic form also occurred in industrial areas of the United States, where there was no change in the abundance of the lichens that supposedly play such an important role.

“Finally, the results of Kettlewell’s behavioural experiments were not replicated in later studies: moths have no tendency to choose matching backgrounds. Majerus finds many other flaws in the work, but they are too numerous to list here. I unearthed additional problems when, embarrassed at having taught the standard *Biston* story for years, I read Kettlewell’s papers for the first time.

“Majerus concludes, reasonably, that all we can deduce from this story is that it is a case of rapid evolution, probably involving pollution and bird predation. I would, however, replace ‘probably’ with ‘perhaps.’ *B. betularia* shows the footprint of natural selection, but we have not yet seen the feet.

“Majerus finds some solace in his analysis, claiming that the true story is likely to be more complex and therefore more interesting, but one senses that he is making a virtue of necessity. My own reaction resembles the dismay attending my discovery, at the age of six, that it was my father and not Santa who brought the presents on Christmas Eve” (*Nature*, Nov. 5, 1998, pp. 35-36).

“Proofs” are full of holes

What conclusions can we draw today about the supposed evolution of peppered moths?

- Both specimens of moths already existed at the time of the experiments—no new species appeared in response to changes in the environment.

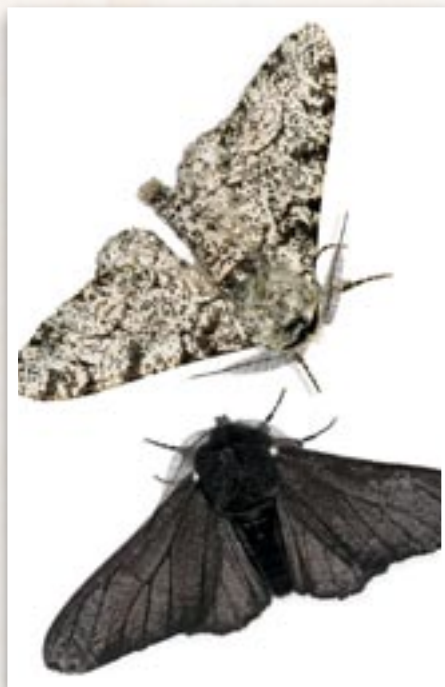
- Only the *population ratio* of the dark and light moths changed over the 19th and 20th centuries due to a number of conditions, not all well understood. There was *no new* creation or an evolution to a new species.

- The photographs of moths on tree trunks were *staged* according to researchers’ inaccurate assumptions, and further investigation showed these moths do not normally perch on trunks.

- The increase of the dark moths and the decrease of the light moths were likely due

to various environmental factors, including bird predation, but these examples also show how resilient God’s creatures are when faced with changing conditions.

- In the beginning of the 20th century, the dark moths predominated perhaps



“From time to time, evolutionists re-examine a classic experimental study and find, to their horror, that it is flawed or downright wrong . . . The prize horse in our stable of examples has been the evolution of ‘industrial melanism’ in the peppered moth, *Biston betularia* . . .”

due in part to the darkening of the environment through industrial pollution. When the environment was cleaned up, the lighter moths became the dominant type. Yet there was *no* change in color or structure of the moths—both had existed *before* industrial contamination began and both existed *after*.

Regrettably, in their desperation for presenting evidence of their molecule-to-man theory of evolution—which effectively removes from the scene the Creator God described in the Bible—many scientists writing biology books or presenting information on science channels continue to promulgate these myths of evolution to millions of unsuspecting people.

So, given the evidence on both sides, let’s mothball another false claim of evolution and instead give glory to God for having created variety within moths that have shown in recent history how they can adapt and survive under different circumstances.

“The great cosmogenic myth of the twentieth century”

Various other supposed “proofs” of evolution have fallen by the wayside: Haeckel’s famous drawings of embryos turned out to be false representations; progressions of fossils demonstrating horse, whale and human evolution have been discredited; and antibiotic-resistant bacteria only show a *diminished* and not an increased amount of genetic information—so nothing new has been created in this case.

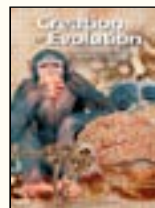
As the agnostic geneticist Michael Denton concluded after thoroughly going over Darwin’s supposed evidence of evolution: “One might have expected that a theory of such cardinal importance, a theory that literally changed the world, would have been something more than metaphysics, something more than a myth. Ultimately the Darwinian theory of evolution is no more nor less than the great cosmogenic myth of the twentieth century” (*Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, 1985, p. 358).

Don’t be fooled by all the smoke and mirrors and sleight of hand by those who want to pawn off Darwinian evolution as a fact—for there is far more at stake than

just a scientific theory. It comes down to believing God’s evidence in the Bible about creation as a carefully designed product or this humanistic alternative based on an undirected process of random mutation and natural selection—a theory riddled with great holes that has caused so much unbelief and grief. **GN**

Recommended Reading

The theory of evolution dominates so much of the world’s thinking. But why? And is it all it’s cracked up to be? This article has scratched the surface of some of the striking evidence of evolution’s shortfalls. You’ll learn much more in our free booklet *Creation or Evolution: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?* Download or request your free copy today!



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www.gnmagazine.org/booklets

Phil scooped up his little daughter on his lap and asked, “Emily, who made you?”

Emily replied in her sweet, toddler singsong voice, “God.”

“And where does God live?” queried Phil.

“Up in da sky!” replied Emily, lifting her pudgy hands over her head and wriggling her fingers.

Such was my first lesson more than 20 years ago on teaching a preschooler about God. Phil’s questions didn’t end there, of course, and with each question, Emily instantly and cheerfully responded with simplicity and truth. She had spent time with her daddy before, discussing where the trees, flowers, puppies and squirrels all came from. Emily knew from a very early age exactly who is the source of all life, including hers.

Step by step, the process of teaching a child about God unfolds, as the Bible teaches us to talk about God’s ways “when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up” (Deuteronomy 6:7, New International Version). But what does that look like in the home of a preschooler? And more importantly, what is the parents’ goal in teaching their child?

Knowledge about God is necessary, but what does God really want from each of us? At its heart, our calling is about coming to know God, loving God and learning to obey and trust Him with our entire being.

Start with love

Knowledge about God is necessary, but what does God really want from each of us? At its heart, our calling is about coming to know God, loving God and learning to obey and trust Him with our entire being. Deuteronomy 6:7 is immediately preceded by “Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts” (Deuteronomy 6:5-6, NIV).

As parents, then, our goal is to influence both the hearts and minds of our children toward God. The first step is letting our children know that God loves them. As 1 John 4:19 says, “We love Him because He first loved us.” How simple is that? And it can be as easy as just saying so.

What started as a sweet game during a cuddling moment between a mother and her toddler son emerged into a lasting reminder of God’s immeasurable love, and it goes like this:

Mom: “I love you . . .”

Son: “I love you . . .”

Mom: “I love you more . . .”

Son: “I love you *more!*”

Mom: “I love you the most . . .”

Son: “But I love you *infinity the most!*”

Mom: “Mmm, that’s tough to beat, but you know what? God loves you even more than that, and He loved you before you were even born!”

The little boy, now in grade school, still loves that game, and while he has to concede defeat in the game, you can bet he knows that you can’t beat God’s love. (Yes, that little boy is my son.)

With the foundation of God’s love, a preschooler then begins to correctly process all kinds of information that teaches just who this loving God is. And it’s up to the parents to bring that information forward in bite-sized tidbits in a joyful and accurate way, as Phil did with Emily.

Stories, songs, CDs, DVDs and more

This can be in the form of conversations that, with a toddler, may last all of just a few seconds, and with an older preschooler, can become quite intricate. Parents can also use age-appropriate Bible stories, songs and Bible-lesson DVDs.

A word of caution—it can be tricky finding CDs and DVDs that are completely accurate, and parents should carefully screen them for wrong concepts. Bible stories are a bit easier to work with, though these also require careful screening.

Years ago we purchased several children’s Bible stories in verse that were both entertaining and astoundingly accurate except for a line or two. So with the help of “Wite-Out” and my husband’s ingenious rhyming ability, we were able to delete the inaccuracies and rewrite those lines in accordance with God’s Word.

Those little books provided many hours of enjoyable reading and rereading with our young children (now college-age), who can recite many of the stories word-for-edited-word to this day!

If you decide to use aids such as books and CDs, it’s a good idea to hire a babysitter and visit your local Bible bookstore alone so you can browse at leisure. Some Bible bookstores have a children’s area where you can listen to CDs with headphones and possibly even view sample DVDs before purchasing. Alternatively, you can ask about the store’s return policy so that you can preview at home, or you may be able to borrow some from your local library to preview before purchasing.

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Check out our Web site for additional resources on working with and teaching your children. Helpful articles and, once your child reaches kindergarten age, Sabbath School lessons can be found at www.ucg.org/youth/parents.

Teaching throughout the day

With or without aids, keep in mind the instruction in Deuteronomy to create teaching moments regularly throughout the day.

Mornings can be started with lots of snuggles and a brief prayer of thanks for another beautiful day—or, as the case may be, thanks for the rain to give the birds fresh bath water! A stay-at-home mom can incorporate lessons about God on a morning walk—just how do those ants know how to build an anthill anyway?

Active preschoolers who love to sing and dance can bounce around the living room to tunes with godly

moment of peace and solitude you've had that day, your example of looking to the Bible for guidance will be permanently etched into his mind and his heart.

A family evening dinner preceded with a prayer of thanks, a story before bedtime with Dad, and the moments of cuddles and love that only you can share with your child finish off his day with assurance that God's way is pretty good stuff. In these ways your child will absorb positive values and attitudes from you.

Next time you scoop up your child on your lap, with a tickle, a snuggle, a hug and a kiss, keep in mind how much God loves your little one. As you lift him or her up in your arms, remember how Jesus did the same so many years ago in the days just before His death. As He did then, He might say to you, "Let your child come to Me, and do not hinder him, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (based on Luke 18:16). **GN**

"Let the Children Come to Me":

Teaching Your Preschooler About God

Our children are a wonderful gift from God, and it's our responsibility to teach them about Him. What are some of the ways we can teach our children about God?

by Nancy Capo

themes. A child can offer a lunchtime prayer, or at least say "Amen" to Mom's. He can drift off for naptime sleep with a soothing hymn of lullaby.

And when he wakes up and wanders into the living room to see you reading God's Word in the only



Recommended Reading

The Bible contains a treasure trove of practical, helpful ways husbands and wives can build closer, stronger families and marriages. It also offers many crucial principles for proper parenting to help couples bring up happy, healthy, well-adjusted and successful children. You'll find much of this timeless guidance in our free booklet *Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension*. It's yours free for the asking!



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Prescott Valley
Tucson
Arkansas
Fayetteville
Mena
Mountain Home
California
Alamo
Berkeley
Clayton
Concord
Danville
Dublin
El Cerrito
El Sobrante
Emeryville
Eureka
Hayward
Hemet
Hercules
Lafayette
Livermore
Marin County
Martinez
Modesto
Monrovia
Moraga
Novato
Oakland
Orinda
Palo Cedro
Pasadena
Petaling
Piedmont
Pittsburg
Pleasant Hill
Pleasanton
Redding
Richmond
Rossmore
Sacramento
San Diego
San Francisco
San Jose
San Rafael
Santa Clara
Santa Rosa
S. Pasadena
Verdugo Hills
Walnut Creek
Colorado
Boulder
Florida
Tampa
Georgia
Cornelia
Hawaii
Hilo
Lanai
Maui
Molokai
Idaho
Boise
Illinois
Arlington Heights
Bartlett
Buffalo Grove
Chicago
Des Plaines
East St. Louis
Elk Grove Village
Glenview
Golf
Hanover Park
Hoffman Estates
Lincolnwood
Morton Grove
Mt. Prospect
Naperville
Niles
Normal
Northbrook

ch. 2, Fridays 8:30 p.m.;
Saturdays 3:30 p.m.;
Sundays 9 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.;
ch. 73, 98, 120, Sundays 10 a.m.;
Saturdays 9 a.m.
ch. 18, Sundays 10 a.m.; Wednesdays 6 p.m.; Saturdays 9 a.m.
ch. 19, Sundays 8:30 a.m.;
ch. 7, 22, Sundays 9 a.m.
ch. 26, Thursdays 7:30 p.m.,
2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.,
ch. 26, Thursdays 9 p.m.,
ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.,
ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.,
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ch. 26, Thursdays 9 p.m.,
ch. 26, Thursdays 9 p.m.,
ch. 26, Sundays 8 a.m.,
ch. 10, Fridays 8 p.m.,
ch. 28, Tuesdays 10 p.m.,
ch. 3, Fridays 2:30 p.m.,
ch. 26, Tuesdays 9 p.m.,
ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.,
ch. 26, Fridays 4 p.m.,
ch. 26, Tuesdays 10:30 p.m.,
ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.,
ch. 26, Thursdays 8:30 p.m.;
Fridays 6 p.m.,
ch. 16, 98, Tuesdays, Thursdays
and Saturdays 4:30 p.m.,
ch. 26, Thursdays 7:30 p.m.,
2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.,
ch. 71, Tuesdays 9:30 p.m.,
ch. 26, Sundays 8 a.m.,
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ch. 26, Sundays 8 a.m.,
ch. 26, Thursdays 12 midnight
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ch. 26, Fridays 4 p.m.,
ch. 11, Sundays 11:30 a.m.,
ch. 26, Thursdays 9 p.m.,
ch. 26, Thursdays 7:30 p.m.,
2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.,
ch. 18, Thursdays 6 p.m.,
ch. 18, 23, Mondays 5 p.m.,
ch. 19, Sundays 3:30 p.m.,
ch. 29, Sundays 11 a.m.,
ch. 15A, Wednesdays 4:30 p.m.,
ch. 26, Tuesdays 8 p.m.,
ch. 15A, Wednesdays 4:30 p.m.,
ch. 72, Sundays 7:30 p.m.;
Saturdays 10:30 a.m.,
ch. 6, Thursdays 4:30 p.m.,
ch. 20, Thursdays 9:30 p.m.,
ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.,
ch. 43, Fridays 1 p.m.,
ch. 20, 30, Sundays 6 p.m.;
ch. 19, 36, Thursdays 6 p.m.,
ch. 4, Sundays 2 p.m.,
ch. 53, Sundays 10 a.m.;
Thursdays 7:30 p.m.,
ch. 13, Fridays 7 p.m.; Saturdays 7 a.m.,
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ch. 13, Fridays 7 p.m.; Saturdays 7 a.m.,
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ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.,
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ch. 19, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.,
ch. 36, times vary
ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.,
ch. 18, Saturdays 5:30 p.m.,
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ch. 17, Sundays 10 a.m.,
ch. 19, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.,
ch. 20, Sundays 6 p.m.,
ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.,

Palatine
Park Ridge
Prospect Heights
Rolling Meadows
Romeoville
Schaumburg
Skokie
Springfield
Streamwood
Wheeling
Wilmette
Indiana
Bloomington
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Centerville
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Eagan
Golden Valley
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Lexington
Lino Lakes
Litchfield
Maple Grove
Minneapolis
New Hope
New Ulm
Osseo
Plymouth
Robbinsdale
Rochester
St. Charles
Spring Lake Park
Willmar
Winona
Wabasha

ch. 19, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.,
ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.,
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ch. 19, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.,
ch. 6, Sundays 9 a.m.,
ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.,
ch. 4, Fridays 3 a.m., 11 a.m. & 8 p.m.,
ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.,
ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.,
ch. 19, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.,
ch. 3, Sundays 9:30 p.m.,
ch. 99, Mondays 4:30 p.m.,
ch. 7, Mondays 5:30 p.m.;
Tuesdays 6:30 p.m.,
ch. 57, Sundays 12 noon
ch. 99, Tuesdays 8:30 p.m.,
ch. 15, Sundays 11:30 a.m.,
ch. 5, Fridays 9 & 9:30 p.m.,
ch. 23, Wednesdays and Fridays 11 a.m.,
ch. 52, Sundays 8 a.m. & 7 p.m.,
ch. 2, Sundays 2 p.m.,
ch. 5, Fridays 9 & 9:30 p.m.,
ch. 12, Tuesdays 9 p.m.,
ch. 22, 23, 83, Sundays 7 a.m.;
Wednesdays 10 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.,
ch. 22, 23, 83, Sundays 7 a.m.;
Wednesdays 10 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.,
ch. 5, Sundays 11:30 a.m.,
ch. 17, Tuesdays 4 p.m.;
Wednesdays 10:30 a.m.,
ch. 15, Sundays 12, 2:30 & 8 p.m.,
ch. 33, Wednesdays 10 p.m.;
Thursdays 7 a.m.,
ch. 13, Thursdays 10 a.m.,
ch. 17, Thursdays 4:30 p.m.,
ch. 22, Mondays 4 p.m.,
ch. 25, Tuesdays or Wednesdays 11 a.m.,
ch. 19, Sundays 8:30 a.m.,
ch. 3, Fridays 5:30 p.m.,
ch. 3, times vary
ch. 2, Sundays 11:30 a.m.,
ch. 17, Thursdays 4:30 p.m.,
ch. 6, Sundays 9:55 a.m.,
ch. 6, Sundays 7 p.m.,
ch. 14, Sundays 1 & 9 a.m.;
Saturdays 5 p.m.,
ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.,
4 p.m.; Saturdays 10 p.m.,
ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.,
4 p.m.; Saturdays 10 p.m.,
ch. 14, Mondays, Wednesdays,
Fridays 4:30 p.m.; Sundays, Tuesdays,
Thursdays, Saturdays 4:30 a.m.,
ch. 14, Sundays 1 & 9 a.m.;
Saturdays 5 p.m.,
ch. 14, Sundays 1 & 9 a.m.;
Saturdays 5 p.m.,
ch. 15, Sundays 6:30 a.m.; Mondays
12:30 a.m.; Tuesdays 9:30 p.m.; Wednesdays
6:30 p.m.; Thursdays 3:30 p.m.;
Fridays 12:30 p.m.; Saturdays 9:30 a.m.,
ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.,
4 p.m.; Saturdays 10 p.m.,
ch. 14, Sundays 1 & 9 a.m.;
Saturdays 5 p.m.,
ch. 15, Sundays 6:30 a.m.; Mondays
12:30 a.m.; Tuesdays 9:30 p.m.; Wednesdays
6:30 p.m.; Thursdays 3:30 p.m.;
Fridays 12:30 p.m.; Saturdays 9:30 a.m.,
ch. 14, Sundays 1 & 9 a.m.;
Saturdays 5 p.m.,
ch. 10, Sundays 2 a.m., 8:30 a.m.,
1 p.m., 7 p.m.; Wednesdays 1 a.m.,
3 a.m., 8:30 a.m., 6:30 p.m.,
ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.,
4 p.m.; Saturdays 10 p.m.,
ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.,
4 p.m.; Saturdays 10 p.m.,
ch. 72, Sundays 5 p.m.; Thursdays
10 a.m.; Fridays 7 p.m.,
ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.,
4 p.m.; Saturdays 10 p.m.,
ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.,
4 p.m.; Saturdays 10 p.m.,
ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.,
4 p.m.; Saturdays 10 p.m.,
ch. 10, Sundays 10 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.;
Saturdays 10 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.,
ch. 20, Sundays 2 p.m.;
Wednesdays 3 p.m.,
ch. 14, Sundays 1 & 9 a.m.;
Saturdays 5 p.m.,
ch. 8, Thursdays 11 a.m. & 8 p.m.;
Saturdays 5 p.m.,
ch. 20, Sundays 2 p.m.;
Wednesdays 3 p.m.,
ch. 20, Sundays 2 p.m.;

Missouri
Cape Girardeau
Jackson
Jefferson City
Poplar Bluff
Springfield
St. Charles
St. Louis
Montana
Billings
Helena
Missoula
Nevada
Carson City
Reno/Sparks
New Hampshire
LaConia
New Jersey
Newark
New Mexico
Albuquerque
Santa Fe
Queens
Rochester
Woodbury
North Carolina
Asheville
Burlington
Brooklyn
Canandaigua
Manhattan
Olean
Oneonta
Queens
Rochester
Woodbury
North Carolina
Asheville
Burlington
Brooklyn
Canandaigua
Manhattan
Olean
Oneonta
Queens
Rochester
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Cincinnati
Cincinnati (Union Twp.)
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Defiance
Fairborn
Greenville
Oberlin/Wellington
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Wash. Court House
Xenia
Oregon
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Medford
Oregon City
Portland
Salem
Woodburn
Pennsylvania
Pittsburgh
York
Rhode Island
Entire state
Texas
Austin
Dallas
Del Rio
El Paso

ch. 5, Tuesdays 6:30 p.m.; Thursdays
1 p.m.; Fridays 10 p.m.; Sundays 8 p.m.,
ch. 5, Tuesdays 6:30 p.m.; Thursdays
1 p.m.; Fridays 10 p.m.; Sundays 8 p.m.,
ch. 3, Wednesdays 6 p.m.,
ch. 54, Tuesdays 4 p.m.,
ch. 26, Sundays 8:30 a.m.; Wednesdays
7 p.m.; Saturdays 8:30 a.m.,
ch. 18, Sundays 8 a.m.;
Saturdays 10 p.m.,
ch. 18, Saturdays 5:30 p.m.,
ch. 7, Sundays 6 p.m.; Saturdays 11 a.m.,
ch. 11, Sundays 3 p.m.,
ch. 7, Sundays 11 a.m.,
ch. 10, Wednesdays 7:30 p.m.,
ch. 16, Wednesdays 7 p.m.,
ch. 25, 26, Sundays 7:30 a.m. & 4:30 p.m.,
ch. 19, Sundays 6:30 a.m.,
ch. 19, Sundays 6:30 a.m.,
ch. 4, Thursdays 5:30 p.m.,
ch. 56, 69, Sundays 10 a.m.,
ch. 12, Sundays 2 p.m.,
ch. 57, Sundays 7 a.m.,
ch. 6, Thursdays 9:30 p.m.,
ch. 23, Mondays 6 p.m.;
Wednesdays 9 p.m.,
ch. 35, Tuesdays 8 p.m.;
Thursdays 3 p.m.,
ch. 56, Sundays 10 p.m.;
Thursdays 4:30 p.m.,
ch. 15, Tuesdays & Thursdays 8 a.m.,
ch. 115, Thursdays 6 p.m.,
ch. 20, Sundays 1 p.m.;
ch. 5, 10, Sundays 10 a.m.,
ch. 21, Saturdays 2 p.m.,
ch. 8, Wednesdays 7:30 a.m.,
ch. 8, Sundays 10:30 & 12:30 a.m.,
ch. 3, Sundays 7 p.m.,
ch. 5, 10, Sundays 10 a.m.,
ch. 22, Tuesdays 6:30 p.m.,
ch. 12, Sundays 2:30 p.m.,
ch. 12, Tuesdays 10:30 a.m.;
Mondays 11 p.m.,
ch. 23, Sundays 7 p.m.;
Wednesdays 7 p.m.,
ch. 21, Tuesdays 7 p.m.; Wednesdays
12:30, 4:30 & 8:30 a.m.;
2:30, 6:30 & 9:30 p.m.,
ch. 12, Wednesdays 10 a.m. & 3 p.m.,
ch. 18, Sundays 10:30 a.m.;
Tuesdays 10 p.m.; Thursdays
11 p.m.; Saturdays 6:30 a.m.,
ch. 8, Sundays 2:30 a.m.; Tuesdays
9:30 a.m.; Wednesdays 11 p.m.;
Saturdays 2:30 p.m.,
ch. 21, Sundays 11:30 a.m.,
ch. 12, Mondays 3:30 p.m.;
Saturdays 11:30 p.m.,
ch. 5, Sundays 12 noon;
Thursdays 6 p.m.,
ch. 23, Sundays 5:30 p.m.,
ch. 3, Thursdays 8 p.m.,
ch. 12, Sundays & Saturdays 9 a.m.,
ch. 23, Sundays 5:30 p.m.,
ch. 23, Sundays 5:30 p.m.,
ch. 1, daily 6 a.m., 10 a.m. & 7 p.m.,
ch. 23, Sundays 5:30 p.m.,
ch. 3, Wednesdays 2 p.m.;
Saturdays 10 a.m.,
ch. 23, Sundays 5:30 p.m.,
ch. 29, Tuesdays 2 p.m.,
ch. 11, Sundays 5:30 p.m.;
Wednesdays 8 p.m.,
ch. 15, 95, Sundays 5 p.m.,
ch. 21, Mondays 8 p.m.,
ch. 22, Sundays 7:30 p.m.,
ch. 23, Sundays 12:30 p.m.;
Fridays 2 p.m.; Saturdays 11:30 a.m.,
ch. 11, Sundays 9 a.m.,
ch. 21, Sundays 11 a.m.,
ch. 16, Sundays 8:30 p.m.;
Mondays 4:30 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.,
ch. 11, Mondays 8:30 p.m.,
ch. 14B, 74, Sundays 12:30 p.m.;
Thursdays 9:30 p.m.;
ch. 19, Sundays 9 a.m.;
Wednesdays 5 p.m.,
ch. 15, Mondays, Fridays,

Fort Worth
Houston
Longview
Virginia
Hampton Roads
Washington
Everett
Kennewick
Olympia
Seattle
Vancouver
West Virginia
Morgantown
Wisconsin
Beloit
Eau Claire
Kenosha
Madison
Milwaukee
Oshkosh
Stevens Point
Wausau
West Allis

Saturdays 1 p.m.,
ch. 28, Tuesdays 5:30 p.m.;
Thursdays 1 p.m.,
ch. 17, 98, Sundays 1:30 p.m.,
ch. 26, Tuesdays 2 p.m.;
Wednesdays 10 p.m.; Fridays 12:30 p.m.;
Saturdays 9 p.m.,
ch. 71, 74, Sundays 10 a.m.,
ch. 77, Wednesday 5 p.m.,
ch. 11, Sundays & Tuesdays 8:30 p.m.,
ch. 22, 29, Sundays 9 a.m.;
Thursdays 10:30 p.m.,
ch. 29, 77, Sundays 9 a.m.,
ch. 11, Sundays 1 p.m.; Tuesdays
3:30 p.m.; Thursdays 12 noon;
Fridays 8 p.m.,
ch. 3, Mondays, Wednesdays,
Fridays 3 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m.,
ch. 12, Thursdays 6:30 p.m.,
ch. 13, Sundays & Tuesdays 2 p.m.,
ch. 14, Sundays & Mondays 7:30 p.m.,
ch. 4, Sundays 12:30 p.m.,
ch. 96, Mondays 2 p.m.; Wednesdays
7:30 p.m.; Thursdays 12 noon
ch. 2, Mondays 4 p.m.; Tuesdays
2 p.m.; Fridays 1 p.m.; Saturdays 8 p.m.,
ch. 3, Mondays 5 & 9:30 p.m.;
Tuesdays 10 a.m. & 3:30 p.m.,
ch. 10, Sundays 8:30 a.m.;
Saturdays 9 a.m.,
ch. 14, times vary

CANADA

Nationwide
Vision TV, Sundays 11 p.m. (PST)
Star Choice Digital Channel 399, Sundays 10:30 a.m. (EST)
Alberta
The Christian Channel Telus ch. 158, Sundays 8:30 a.m.
British Columbia
The Christian Channel Telus ch. 158, Sundays 7:30 a.m.
Manitoba
The Christian Channel MTS ch. 21, Sundays 9:30 a.m.
New Brunswick
The Christian Channel Rogers ch. 396, Sundays 11:30 a.m.
Newfoundland and Labrador
The Christian Channel Rogers ch. 396, Sundays 12 noon
Northwest Territory
The Christian Channel Northwestel ch. 226, Sundays 8:30 a.m.
Ontario
The Christian Channel Rogers ch. 396, Sundays 10:30 a.m.
The Christian Channel Cogeco ch. 186, Sundays 10:30 a.m.
Saskatchewan
The Christian Channel SaskTel ch. 282, Sundays 8:30 a.m.

AFRICA AND EUROPE

The Omega Channel, INSAT 10, orbital position 68.5 degrees east, frequency 12682MHz, 11 p.m. daily

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live365.com, Sundays 9 a.m. (PST)
1070 AM, Sundays 7:30 a.m.
930 AM, Saturdays 10:30 a.m.
1240 AM, Saturdays 10:30 a.m.
1470 AM, Saturdays 10:30 a.m.
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760 AM, Sundays 6 a.m.
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1190 AM, Sundays 10 a.m.
870 AM, Saturdays 9:30 p.m.
101.9 FM, Mondays 8 p.m.;
Fridays 8 p.m.; Saturdays 8 a.m.
1110 AM, Sundays 7:30 a.m.
930 AM, Sundays 6:30 a.m.
550 AM, Sundays 6 a.m.
740 AM, Sundays 8 a.m.
550 AM, Sundays 6:30 a.m.
770 AM, Sundays 7:30 a.m.
1170 AM, Mondays 11 p.m.;
Fridays 8:15 p.m.



The Future of Jerusalem

Jerusalem, although holy to three major religions, is a city of seemingly endless strife with no equitable solutions. What does the future hold for this long-troubled city?

by **Beyond Today** host Gary Petty

Where is wise King Solomon when we need him? Where is the voice of reason, the voice of fairness, that can at last bring peace to the bloodstained streets of Jerusalem?

For Jews, Jerusalem is the City of David, the capital of a glorious past where Solomon's Temple stood as the great house built to honor the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For Christians it is the site of the death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ, the Savior of humanity. It was here that Jesus was crucified by the Romans and rose from the dead three days and three nights later just as He had foretold. To Muslims it is the site of the holy Dome of the Rock.

When Abraham, the father of both the Jews and the Arabs, traveled the land of Canaan as a wandering nomad, this city was already well known. Caravans from the civilizations that sprung up along the Tigris, the Euphrates and the Nile wound their way to Jerusalem.

Abraham's descendants: key players in the story

The God of the Hebrew Scriptures promised Abraham and Sarah a son, but as the years wore on and the couple remained barren, it seemed that God would not fulfill His promise. Struggling with the seeming impossibility of having a child, they devised a plan to produce the promised heir through a surrogate mother.

Sarah gave to Abraham her servant girl Hagar, and from that union Ishmael, the father of many Arab nations, was born.

But God had other plans, and eventually Abraham and Sarah gave birth to a son, Isaac. Ishmael was driven into the wilderness and the seeds of future strife between the descendants of Isaac and Ishmael were sown.

Two generations later another family feud, this time between the two sons of

Isaac—Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, and Esau—would create further bad blood in Abraham's family lineage.

The descendants of Jacob, the Israelites, ended up spending a long time in Egyptian slavery, only to be led back to Canaan by

independent Jews and Romans eventually led to the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in A.D. 70.

But the city never completely disappeared. Occupied by Arab Muslims, it was the focal point of the Crusades in the



The Temple Mount built by King Herod, center, dominates the city of Jerusalem.

Moses. A few centuries later, around 1,000 B.C., Israel's renowned King David captured Jerusalem from the Jebusites. David's son Solomon, known for his great wisdom, reigned for 40 years during Israel's golden age.

Jerusalem's bloody history

After Solomon's death, Israel was torn by civil strife and divided into two competing nations, with Jerusalem serving as the capital of the southern kingdom known as Judah. In 586 B.C. the Babylonians destroyed the City of David, and it fell to a future generation of Jews to rebuild it under the direction of men like Ezra and Nehemiah. This was during the period of Persian dominion, which was followed by Greek rule.

Jewish independence again flourished temporarily under the Maccabees, and the splendid temple was later disassembled and reconstructed by Herod the Great. But Roman legions brought Roman domination, and endless conflict between the fiercely

Middle Ages as Europeans tried to restore Christian control over the Holy Land. Though temporarily successful, Jerusalem fell back under Muslim control for the next seven centuries.

In the 20th century the United Nations attempted to mediate a peaceful solution to the city always at the crossroads of strife. In 1948, with the world trying to dig itself out of the rubble of World War II, the United Nations created a Jewish homeland for the tens of thousands of survivors of the Nazi concentration camps. Yet immediately open warfare broke out between Jew and Arab, with Jerusalem once more at the center of the conflict.

An Israeli victory brought a reprieve, but no real peace. War exploded again in 1956, 1967 and 1973 as the children of Abraham wreaked havoc on each other. The Israelis have maintained a tenuous hold on Jerusalem since 1967 in spite of attempts by many to make it an international city. But they have allowed Arab Muslims to remain in control of the Temple Mount.

Jerusalem's astounding future

Jerusalem plays a very important role in both biblical history and in the fulfillment of future biblical prophecy.

Jesus told His disciples that He would visibly return there. In a prophecy He gave while overlooking Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives on the city's east side, He explained that "immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matthew 24:29-30).

To where exactly will Jesus return? The Old Testament prophet Zechariah was inspired to write: "Behold, the day of the LORD is coming . . . For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

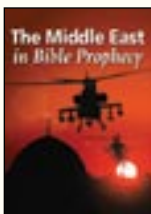
"Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east" (Zechariah 14:1-4; compare Acts 1:9-12).

It's one of the great paradoxes of history that for the Prince of Peace to bring an end to violence and strife, He has to fight a war. Mankind will initially see Jesus Christ not as the Savior, but as an invader. And it's in the area around Jerusalem that this cataclysmic battle will take place.

Jerusalem will then become the capital city of one world government, not organized by the United Nations or similar organization, but established by Jesus Christ, the Son of God. **GN**

Recommended Reading

Why have Jerusalem and the wider Middle East so long been a trouble spot? The roots of their ancient antagonisms go all the way back to Genesis. But the strife won't go on forever. Bible prophecy reveals a glorious future for Jerusalem. You need to know how events in the Middle East will affect you! Request or download your free copy of *The Middle East in Bible Prophecy*.



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Christ's Return

Continued from page 17

His major goals for humanity.

God's people are instructed to observe the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days, with the first day being a Holy Day (verse 34). Following is a final festival that represents the opportunity for salvation for all human beings who have ever lived not knowing nor really understanding God's truth. This involves a general resurrection to physical life, at which time Jesus Christ and His reigning saints will reveal the true path to salvation.

Let's notice two significant passages that help us understand this symbolic festival. "But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished . . . Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away . . . 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" (Revelation 20:5, 11-12).

The great white throne judgment described here has several symbolically significant meanings. It's *great* because of the billions of human beings who will be raised from the dead for their day of salvation. *White* refers to holiness and righteousness. *Throne* infers Christ's righteous rule. It's a time of *judgment* because these human beings are then judged or evaluated by Jesus Christ in mercy and compassion over a period of time (1 Corinthians 11:31-32).

Another notable passage is found in the oft-misunderstood prophecy of Ezekiel 37. The valley of dry bones represents the whole house of Israel, all 12 tribes (not just the Jewish people although they are prominently included), who lived and died with no apparent hope. At this time, Christ will resurrect all human beings, Israelites and gentiles alike, all those who have ever lived and who never really knew God. They will be resurrected to physical life but offered His Spirit and the hope of salvation they never had (Ezekiel 37:11-14).

Though some will ultimately reject God and be lost—destroyed in a lake of fire (Revelation 21:8)—most will embrace Him and His ways, joining the saints in eternal salvation.

Jesus' return symbolized by the fall festivals

John Noble Wilford's quotes about maps certainly ring true when it comes to mapping Christ's return: "Maps embody a perspective of that which is known and a perception of that which may be worth knowing" (*The Mapmakers*, p. 386). Maps "communicate a sense of place, some sense of *here* in relation to *there*" (p. 7).

The four autumn festivals can rightly be compared to great milestones for all of mankind, mapped out in advance by God in His Holy Bible. Each one comes in its own order and proper sequence, just as following an ordinary road map from town to town leads to a physical destination. But with God's map, the end result is the salvation of all humankind.

Most human beings today do not know or understand how to read and study the Bible. During this age of man, God's people are given the understanding to follow His map of the future leading to the coming Kingdom of God and beyond.

The grand ultimate destiny of humanity is to become immortal children of God the Father, younger brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ, living and serving in the New Jerusalem and throughout the universe forever and ever (Revelation 21-22; Hebrews 2:8; Deuteronomy 4:19).

Understanding God's plan and purpose revealed in the pages of the Bible constitutes the map that the people of God now follow in earnest. However, *responsibility* comes with the God-given ability to read His map of salvation. Those who have the knowledge of God, sprinkled throughout a darkened global society, should rejoice in these festivals and help show the world God's way and His path to salvation for mankind. **GN**

Recommended Reading

You likely already own God's guidebook for your life and future—the Holy Bible. But do you have an understanding of His map for your future and the future of all humanity? Request or download your free copy of *God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind*. This eye-opening booklet will take you through all the festivals of the Bible, showing their meaning for you and all mankind. Get your own free copy today!



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God, Science and the Bible

News from the world of science about God and the Bible

by Mario Seiglie, Tom Robinson and Scott Ashley

Archaeological Discovery Confirms the Bible (Yet Again)

The British Museum recently announced the discovery of a remarkably significant cuneiform inscription within its vast collection of Mesopotamian tablets. Many are hailing it as sensational proof of the accuracy of the Old Testament—as indeed it is.

Searching for Babylonian financial accounts among



This tiny cuneiform tablet is a receipt for a donation of gold to a temple made by Nebo-Sarsekim, a Babylonian official mentioned in Jeremiah 39:3. The discovery proves the existence of yet another biblical figure.

the ancient records, Michael Jursa, a visiting professor from Vienna, came across the name of a court official of the famed Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar (*The Daily Telegraph*, July 13, 2007). The name is also found as one of the king's officials in the book of Jeremiah, though with a slightly different spelling.

More than 2,500 years old, the tablet—which sat in the museum's collection since 1920 with its significance unrecognized (*The Times*, July 11)—

identifies Nabu-sharrussu-ukin as the chief eunuch of Nebuchadnezzar. This equates to “Nebo-Sarsekim” in the Hebrew of Jeremiah 39:3 (New International Version).

Actually, this new information helps with a translation problem in the verse. Most Bible versions do not obviously contain this name. The King James Version lists the names in Jeremiah 39:3 as “Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, Rab-saris, Nergal-sharezer [and] Rab-mag.”

The New King James Version's list of names is essentially the same, although it offers footnotes that *Rabsaris* and *Rabmag* are titles. Other translators recognize that two individuals in this list are named Nergal-sharezer—leading them to conclude that the word following each individual is a further identifier so as to distinguish between them.

Notice the New International Version's list of the names: “Nergal-Sharezer of Samgar, Nebo-Sarsekim a chief officer, Nergal-Sharezer a high official and all the other officials of the king of Babylon.”

Here *Samgar* has been reckoned as a place name associated with the first *Nergal-Sharezer* rather than as part of a compound name with *Nebo*, which follows it, as in the King James Version. Thus, in the NIV, *Nebo* is taken to be the first part of the name *Nebo-Sarsekim*. And indeed, the new discovery shows that this is the name of one of Nebuchadnezzar's chief officials.

Bible critics who claim that the book of Jeremiah is a fictitious account written centuries after the Babylonian period are hard-pressed to explain away such accuracy as recording the names of relatively minor foreign figures.

One difficulty that has long faced the Bible's critics is its many mentions of seemingly insignificant names inserted here and there. Some speculate that they were added to make the accounts merely look authentic. Others suggest that people important to stories of later times are surreptitiously inserted into earlier accounts or serve a poetic function.

Yet how do you explain listing someone like Nebo-Sarsekim—a minor figure of a foreign land with a difficult name who is never mentioned again—and this turning out to be correct? Clearly, the author of Jeremiah was familiar with the details of the times in which he wrote and was concerned with accuracy. The obvious conclusion is that this book was indeed written by Jeremiah at the time of the Babylonian conquest of Judah under Nebuchadnezzar.

This discovery is just the latest archaeological find proving the accuracy of the book of Jeremiah. A recent excavation in Jerusalem uncovered a bulla, a hardened clay impression with the imprint of a seal, bearing the name of Jehucal, son of Shelemiah, son of Shevi. This individual, a court official serving under King Zedekiah, is mentioned in Jeremiah 37:3 and 38:1-4.

Another bulla found not far from this one has on it the name Gemariah the son of Shaphan, the royal scribe (36:10). And before these, two remarkable bullae were found bearing the name of Jeremiah's scribe Baruch the son of Neriah.

All of these were real people, as Jeremiah attests. The evidence shows that the book of Jeremiah relates real history—as does the rest of the Bible.

Beyond Today

Continued from page 9

percent of the earth that is now tillable will more than double. The incredible changes in the earth's landscape will be astonishing.

“I will put in the desert the cedar and acacia [trees], the myrtle and the olive . . . the fir and the cypress together, so that people may see and know, may consider and understand, that the hand of the LORD has done this, that the Holy One of Israel has created it” (Isaiah 41:19-20).

Most people today simply do not know the Creator God. Even those who think they do, but neglect to obey His spiritual laws, are yet in ignorance of the majesty of their Creator. Straying farther and farther from God and His way of life is our biggest and most fundamental problem today. Man has

not yet learned this most basic lesson of all. But then he will!

Christ said in prayer to God the Father: “Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent” (John 17:3).

Summing up the world of tomorrow

This article has only scratched the surface of the marvelous blessings mankind will experience in the coming millennial age. Perhaps the one New Testament passage that best summarizes the wondrous world to come is found in the apostle Peter's sermon during the opening days of the early Church as recorded in Acts 3:19-21:

“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ, who has been

appointed for you—even Jesus. He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.” **GN**

Recommended Reading

We've selected and quoted some of the utopian prophecies recorded by the Hebrew prophets. There are many more to consider. To study this subject further, request or download our free booklet *The Gospel of the Kingdom*. For those who wish an even more detailed study, request our free *Bible Study Course*. One of the lessons focuses on Christ's millennial reign in much more detail.



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"The Debate Over Life's Ultimate Question: Does God Exist?"

Thank you so much for all your publications. They are full of truth and I feel so strengthened in my faith in God. I was pleased to receive your recent issue of *The Good News*. The article on "Does God Exist?" is so timely, covering the atheist debates that the Church needs to be informed about.

K.R., Melksham, England

I had never seen your magazine before, but I recently read the article "The Debate Over Life's Ultimate Question: Does God Exist?" It was a thoughtful, if one-sided, article. For Christianity to survive in an increasingly "militant, atheistic" world, it must embrace science and the evidence science presents for the origin of the universe. Christians should not be afraid of science, but rather recognize that change and the evolution of ideas is a fundamental part of being human.

If God indeed placed us on this planet, He also gave us the intelligence to discover and study our universe. While I believe that religion has a place in the world, so does science, and the two don't have to be at odds. Science cannot explain why we are here, but religion can. Religion does not need to explain how we are here. Science can do that.

V.B., Boise, Idaho

The Bible has no disagreement with true science. God is its author. The term science essentially means knowledge. The prophet Daniel had understanding of science (Daniel 1:4, King James Version). Grasping the sense of the passage, the New King James translators used the word "knowledge" instead. Later the apostle Paul spoke of "oppositions of science falsely so called" (1 Timothy 6:20, KJV). Again the NKJV used the phrase "what is falsely called knowledge." Unproven evolutionary theories are neither true science nor true knowledge.

Please send me the booklet *Creation or Evolution?* I am not totally convinced about creationism. Maybe I was indoctrinated too much when I was a child. I don't know. I need to look into it more closely.

H.W., Manchester, England

Yesterday I received a copy of your booklet *Creation or Evolution: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?* I am not sure how I originally got on your mailing list, but your *Good News* magazine is great. I actually just got fired from my teaching position in the biology department of a local junior college for teaching the truth about evolution. I shared much of the same information contained in your magazine with my students. I am amazed by the number of Christians who believe that some form of evolutionary process was responsible for life on earth. If Christians have this belief, then they don't know God for who He really is—the Creator.

S.H., Pleasant Hill, California

"Charles Darwin: Evolution of a Man and His Ideas"

I always love to read your articles on the truth behind the theory of evolution. "Charles Darwin: Evolution of a Man and His Ideas" was particularly interesting. Rather than attack Darwin, it helped us to understand where Darwin was coming from. Here was a very clever man who just could not accept that hellfire is the punishment for all who are not saved in this lifetime.

Quite rightly, Darwin could see such an avenging god as being more terrifying than the devil, who can "merely" torture people to death during their physical lifetime, not for eternity. The article also helped me to be able to discuss this issue with evolutionists differently: no longer combative, but with genuine respect for the person. What better way to be a witness for God's wonderful truth on the matter!

Z.K., New South Wales, Australia

Readers who may not be aware of the true biblical teaching about hellfire should request or download our free booklet Heaven and Hell: What Does the Bible Really Teach?

"The Terrible Twos or the Terrific Twos?"

Your article on 2-year-olds came at a perfect time. My daughter is a vivacious, curious, willful, spirited little girl to say the least! There are days when I feel overwhelmed (as a stay-home mama), but after the reassurance and guidance from your article, I felt so empowered and so blessed to be able to spend my days

with her. She really is our terrific 2-year-old, and our family loves her to pieces.

M.W., Alpine, California

Thank you for such a wonderful and inspiring magazine. I am a single mother to a 2-month-old baby boy who is a blessing to me. After reading the magazine you sent me recently, it opened up new hope both physically and spiritually because I had lost all hope after I had my baby. It was hard for me to think that my child would grow up without a fatherly figure, but thank God we can do that.

S.C., North Potomac, Maryland

Teachers appreciate *The Good News*

I recently subscribed to *The Good News*. As a teacher of English and Arabic in the Armenian Orthodox School of Theology, I feel that I have a duty and responsibility that I can neither shirk nor overlook. I believe that it's imperative for our seminary students to read the articles published in *The Good News*. Such articles, written by God-fearing individuals, will undoubtedly mold their character constructively and help keep them on the right track.

H.M. Jerusalem, Israel

Thank you for sending me *The Good News*. The biblical insights you publish are indeed very timely. As a teacher by profession, I recognize that your articles can be very good subjects for discussion. May you also find time to include me in your prayers because I am facing very tough spiritual and financial battles these days.

A.C.A., Philippines

You will be in our prayers.

America in jeopardy

If I read *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy* correctly, this booklet tells us that the descendants of the original house of Israel are presently spread out over Northwest Europe, North America, Australasia and southern Africa—with Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand being the tribe of Ephraim and the United States being the tribe of Manasseh. Ephraim's glory days as a world power began diminishing at the end of World War II. Manasseh is currently the strongest, largest remaining part of the house of Israel.

With our national toll of bloodshed with abortion and other crimes over the past half-century, the United States is totally oblivious about the end-time prophecy of Ezekiel, chapters 5 through 8. Few here have the slightest clue that events such as 9/11, Katrina, Rita, tornadoes, financial debacles and all kinds of other calamities are an indication that Almighty God has removed His divine protection from our country.

If we don't repent and return to the worship and obedience of our Creator, we may be the principal recipient of a much more severe "duplication" of the house of Israel's original punishment and dispersal in the eighth century B.C. (2 Kings 17). It's time past for the United Church of God to more elaborately educate our peoples as to their origin and proper identity in history.

R.R., East Freetown, Massachusetts

Spreading this vital knowledge is one of the principal goals of the United Church of God. Readers may request or download the free booklet The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy to learn more.

Clean and Unclean Meats

I read a pamphlet [published by *The Good News*] titled *What Does the Bible Teach About Clean and Unclean Meats?* This pamphlet was in a doctor's office in Waynesville, North Carolina. We have believed this for many years and have tried to spread the word. However, I have never seen such a well-written and easy-to-understand explanation.

D.S., Canton, North Carolina

Published letters may be edited for clarity and space. Address your letters to *The Good News*, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, Ohio 45254-1027, U.S.A., or e-mail ginfo@ucg.org (please be sure to include your full name, city, state or province, and country).



Q: I don't fully understand your views on the judgment. Surely we can't all be saved. Or can we?

P.B., Sheffield, England

A: We all *can* be saved, but sadly we all *won't*—though most will be. The doctrine of absolute universal salvation is a false one. Nevertheless, God holds out great hope for all those who have never heard or really understood His message of salvation. Scripture indicates that the majority of human beings who have ever lived are going to be saved (see Romans 11:26; 2 Peter 3:9).

Our loving Father in heaven does not doom people to the everlasting, fiery hell preached by many mainstream churches. (If you would like to understand the biblical truth about hell, request or download our free booklet *Heaven and Hell: What Does the Bible Really Teach?*)

The apostle Paul told Timothy that God “desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4). This is not happening in this present age of man, but it *will* occur after Jesus Christ returns to earth. Revelation 20:1-3 speaks of the restraint of Satan during Christ's millennial reign. The firstfruits of God (those who are saved in this age) will rule with Christ after the first resurrection (verse 6), which takes place at His return to earth (1 Thessalonians 4:15-16; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52).

Revelation 20:5 explains in a parenthetical note, “But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.” But why is this second resurrection needed?

The truth about it has largely been hidden from the world. It is at that future time that God will reveal to everyone the knowledge of His truth. The religious confusion and blindness that exists today will disappear forever. At the time of the Millennium and the Great White Throne Judgment to follow, “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9).

Most people today—like most who have lived throughout human

history—do not really know God or His truth. They have simply never had the opportunity to hear and understand it.

Unlike those in the first resurrection who are raised to everlasting life with a new spirit body (1 Corinthians 15:22-23, 51-54), the second resurrection will be one to a temporary physical life as shown by the vision of dry bones given new life in Ezekiel 37:1-14.

Those resurrected at that time will then hear and learn God's truth for the first time. Scripture shows that conditions will then be optimal for these people to repent of their sins, accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for forgiveness and be saved.

However, God will not *force* salvation on those who, after having their minds opened to His truth and receiving full opportunity to repent of their sins, still stubbornly persist in practicing a sinful way of life. As Revelation 20:15 and 21:8 tell us, they will be thrown into a lake of fire that will burn them up so that they no longer exist.

Their punishment is *not* eternal life in hellfire. Malachi 4:3 tells us that the wicked will be reduced to ashes, their bodies consumed in this fire. This fate is far more merciful than the unbiblical view of the wicked suffering forever in eternal torment. As Romans 6:23 plainly tells us, “The wages of sin is *death*.” Death is the *absence* of life, not living forever in another place or state of being.

All ungodly things will ultimately be purged from the earth. Eventually the physical world as we know it will melt and disappear (2 Peter 3:7-13). Yet the glorious Kingdom comprising God, Jesus Christ and all the glorified, resurrected saints will remain forever. God the Father will be present on a new, transformed earth and will bring every blessing to His children (Revelation 21:1-3). Death and sorrow will be but a faded memory (verse 4).

This explanation is but a brief summary of these events. To better understand all the encouraging details, request or download our free booklets *What Happens After Death?* and *God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind*.

Pakistan

Continued from page 15

Will catastrophe follow a U.S. defeat?

Clearly, the situation in Pakistan should be of grave concern to the United States and its allies.

However, the reverse is also true. What is happening in the United States means that allies like Pakistan have to be prepared for different possible outcomes. What if America is defeated in Iraq? What if a future U.S. administration withdraws? These are questions increasingly asked around the world as the next U.S. election looms ever closer.

“Opponents of the U.S. mission in Iraq say they want to ‘change course.’ Most refuse to specify what their new course would be. Others say they want U.S. troops to ‘redeploy’ to friendly countries in the region,” writes Clifford May, president of the Foundation for Defense of

Democracies, a policy institute focusing on terrorism, in a July 7, 2007, column titled “Imagining Defeat in Iraq.”

“But in international relations, nothing cools a friendship like defeat. For any regime to rely on the U.S. for security after the U.S. has abandoned Iraq would be high-risk. In fact, it would soon become apparent that the continuing presence of American forces invites subversion, terrorism and assassination of those in power.”

The Bible tells Christians to be alert to what is happening in the world (Matthew 24:42). Jesus Christ was speaking in answer to a question from His disciples about the events preceding His return (verse 3). The book of Daniel foretells that “at the time of the end” there will be a monumental clash of civilizations between the biblical kings of the North and South (Daniel 11:40), apparently leaders of the Western and Islamic worlds.

What is becoming increasingly clear is the shifting balance of power in the Middle East and Southern Asia. The United States is increasingly perceived as a declining power in the region. The big question is, who will fill the vacuum and what will be the consequences? **GN**

Recommended Reading

Our world is becoming an increasingly dangerous place. The rise of tensions in the Middle East and grave threats to the survival of the United States are but two of several major trends foretold repeatedly in Bible prophecy. You need to understand what the Bible reveals about the end time! Request or download your free copy of *Are We Living in the Time of the End?*



Contact any of our offices listed on page 2, or request or download it from our Web site at

www.gnmagazine.org/booklets

Collateral Damage: The Darwin Bomb

What may seem like a good idea at the moment doesn't always turn out to be good in the long run. This is certainly the case with Charles Darwin's theory of evolution.

by David Treybig

When Charles Darwin began formulating his theory of evolution, he probably never dreamed of causing humanity grief or degrading the human condition. Instead, he wanted to advance scientific knowledge. Through his theory of evolution, he offered an explanation of how life might have come into existence apart from God. It was a revolutionary idea that has had a monumental impact far beyond the field of science.

Yet what Darwin offered to the scientific world in 1859 in his book *The Origin of Species* has precipitated a great deal of collateral damage—that is, unintended consequences. Sadly, few in society at large have considered the repercussions of his landmark idea. Like a bomb shattering an innocent silence, the shock waves from Darwin's supposition continue to relentlessly pummel society.

How the theory of evolution evolved and how it has been defended is a story filled with irony, deceit and even religious-like faith held by nonreligious people. Here is a tale stranger than the animals Darwin observed on the Galapagos Islands.

Rejecting religion

Before offering his theory of evolution, Charles Darwin completed a degree in theology. Yet Darwin's theory rejected the biblical explanation of special creation. He was unsure of whether life initially came about through a Creator or of its own accord. In any case, Darwin supposed that different gradual evolutionary changes in various life-forms accounted for the variety of creatures—mammal, fish, fowl, etc.—extant today.

Why did Darwin abandon biblical teaching? Why did he offer a completely unproven theory that was in opposition to the Bible? As it turns out, Darwin apparently wasn't well-grounded in the Scriptures.

In rejecting religion, Darwin struck a chord that resonated with many in his day and continues to resonate today. In holding to Darwin's theory, some mistakenly

think they are free from the rules and laws of a Creator and are free to decide for themselves what is right and wrong.

Had such individuals only read the Bible, they could have known that Adam and Eve tried the same thing—rejecting God—several thousand years ago and suffered a terrible consequence. In rejecting God's revealed knowledge and deciding for themselves how to live, Adam and Eve lost access to the tree of life, which represented the opportunity to live forever (Genesis 3). Sadly, Darwin and his supporters were undeterred by biblical history.

It seems they didn't want to "retain God in their knowledge"

(Romans 1:28)—much less hear what God had to say through the pages of the Bible. They mistakenly thought their course of action gave them freedom—an enticing word often used in propaganda.

The introduction of Darwin's theory opened up an all-out debate over *truth*. Ironically, Darwin's supporters claimed that religion was just a humanly devised invention to help people during times of trouble. Ah yes. Humanly devised—as if the theory of evolution wasn't . . .

Evolution under the microscope

In reflecting on his theory of evolution, Darwin knew there were dauntingly unproven aspects of his hypothesis. For example, he admitted that the complexity of the eye presented certain problems. He also acknowledged that there was no fossil record proving the gradual changes

in life forms that he imagined had taken place. He simply hoped that fossils would eventually be found to prove him correct.

Given the weaknesses of his theory, Darwin was surprised at its positive reception. Today it seems that Darwin himself had more doubts about his theory than many Darwinian devotees who have



Darwin's theory of "survival of the fittest" aligned with Adolf Hitler's racist worldview and his killing of 6 million Jews in his effort to build a super race.

accepted it without question.

Yet under the microscope of inspection, scientists and competent thinkers have jointly discovered serious flaws with Darwin's theory. A number of the theory's supposed proofs have been found inadequate (see "Myths of Evolution Part 2," beginning on page 18).

The church of Darwin

With no valid evidence to prove Darwinian evolution and mounting scientific evidence against it, supporters of evolution find themselves increasingly challenged to maintain their faith. It's an awkward position demanding unquestioning adherence.

When evolutionary theory is challenged by scientific evidence such as that offered by the intelligent design movement, some are surprised that Darwinian

supporters almost always respond by claiming that intelligent design is thinly disguised religion. Yet technically, one doesn't have to believe in a particular God or creed to believe in intelligent design since the arguments for intelligent design are made from scientific evidence alone.

Sadly, it seems that those who faithfully hold to Darwin's theory don't want to acknowledge the accumulating body of scientific information undermining their position. The reason they don't is obvious: *Their worldview is at risk.*

If the creation indeed has the fingerprints of the Creator—as mounting evidence indicates—they will have no excuse for ignoring God. Indeed, the Bible says just that (see Romans 1:20).

For the academic world to accept intelligent design would be as monumental a change as was the acceptance of Darwin's theory. Unwilling to face the evidence, true-believer Darwinians respond by trying to discredit the science as religion. Ironically again, these days it seems to take more faith to believe in Darwinism than it does to believe in the Creator God of the Bible.

Collateral damage

Since its detonation, the Darwin bomb's blast wave has impacted just about every field of study, with some seriously negative consequences. While Darwin's devotees are fond of talking about all the deaths associated with religious wars, they don't like to be reminded of the immoral, materialistic worldviews that have been built upon or justified by Darwin's theory.

A biography of Joseph Stalin explains that Stalin considered Darwin's book *The Origin of Species* proof that there was no God (E. Yaroslavsky, *Landmarks in the Life of Stalin*, 1940, pp. 8-9).

As a seminary student, Stalin encouraged a fellow student to read Darwin's book so his friend would also understand that talk about God is "sheer nonsense" (ibid.). With reassurance from Darwin that there was no God with rules against killing other human beings, Stalin had no qualms about murdering millions of his countrymen in an effort to build a better state.

In Nazi Germany, Adolf Hitler's concept of breeding a master race was based on the "survival of the fittest"

concept inherent in Darwin's philosophy. Whether or not Darwin's own views were racist, his theory and even the full title of his book—*On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*—aligned with Hitler's racist worldview and his killing of 6 million Jews in his effort to build a super race.

Again, if we don't rely on God for the truth that it is wrong to murder other human beings, people's choices simply become matters of personal opinion.

Is the killing of millions of people the outcome Charles Darwin desired in writing *The Origin of Species*? Of course not. But the collateral damage associated with Darwinism doesn't end with Stalin and Hitler. It has continued its relentless march through numerous fields with perhaps none more striking than that of moral conduct.

If people are simply animals, as Darwin suggested, there is nothing wrong with them mating with whomever they wish whenever they wish. Disregarding biblical instructions governing our sexual conduct has led to the destruction of numerous families and untold heartache. Chalk it up to collateral damage.

Furthermore, if people are simply animals, then it really doesn't matter if a woman chooses to have an abortion or not. With this mind-set, millions of babies have been aborted before they ever drew their first breaths. More collateral damage.

When writing *The Origin of Species*, did Darwin anticipate that his philosophy would be instrumental in destroying marriages and snuffing out the lives of millions of babies? Surely not. But a faulty premise leads to faulty conclusions. The negative effects of immoral conduct justified by Darwin's theory continue to add up.

How strange that so many support a mistaken idea that has evolved into a materialistic philosophy devaluing human life and undermining mankind's faith in his Creator. How sad to see all the unnecessary heartache. Why not acknowledge God as God and choose to live a lifestyle of blessing and restoration, not of collateral damage?

For more information, be sure to read our free booklet *Creation or Evolution: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?* **GN**



If you like reading our articles for teens and young adults in *The Good News*, be sure to take a look at our companion magazine, *Vertical Thought*, at www.VerticalThought.org.

This magazine is specially written for our younger *Good News* audience. Each issue is packed with helpful insight and eye-opening articles to guide today's young adults in getting the most out of life—both now and in the future.

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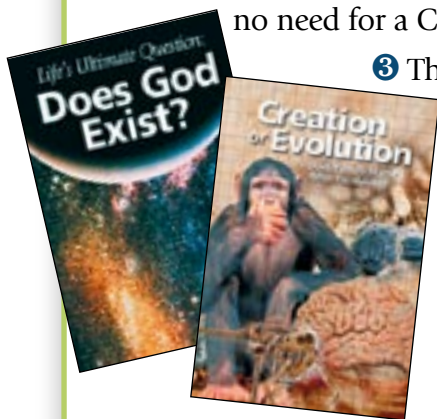


Evolution or Creation: What's the Truth?

Never has the creation-evolution debate been more heated than it is now. And never has there been such misinformation and confusion on this crucial subject. Have you been confused about the facts? Take this short true-or-false quiz to assess your knowledge.



- ❶ Fossil discoveries over the last century have proven Darwin's theory of evolution to be true.
- ❷ Most astronomers believe the universe has always existed, so there is no need for a Creator.
- ❸ The fossil record conclusively shows simple life-forms evolving over time into more-complex creatures.
- ❹ All animals and plants and relationships among them can easily be explained by the theory of evolution.
- ❺ The Bible plainly teaches that the earth was created about 6,000 years ago, so it is impossible to reconcile the Bible and science.
- ❻ The fossil record shows exactly what we should expect if evolution were true: many transitional links between species and the beginnings of features such as new limbs, bones and organs.
- ❼ Our beliefs on evolution and God have no bearing on how we live and treat each other.



The correct answer to all of the above questions is *false*. If you missed some, don't be surprised. After all, we are routinely led to believe that most or all of these are "facts" proven by science. The truth, however, is far different!

You need to understand the truth about our origins, creation and the theory of evolution. We've prepared these two clear, easy-to-understand booklets—*Life's Ultimate Question: Does God Exist?* and *Creation or Evolution: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?*—to help you learn the truth. You'll discover many fascinating facts difficult to uncover anywhere else!

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