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REAL TRUTH

A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING



THE COMING REUNIFICATION

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ARTICLES

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3

The Coming Reunification of East and West

Many efforts have been made to heal the breach between the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox religions. So far, all have failed. Will there ever be peace and unity between these churches?

Page 3



6

The Olympics – What the Games Have Taught Us

The Olympic Games seem to be a time when the world comes together to engage in friendly competition. But a look under the surface reveals something very different. What has the world *truly* learned from the Olympics?

Page 6



9

Why They Hate Us – Part Two: Squandered Blessings

The United States, Britain and the other nations of the West have enjoyed incredible riches, to the point of enriching other countries of the world. Yet, they are hated. In fact, some call for an all-out war against the “evil American empire.” Many quietly agree. Here is why.

Page 9



14

Will Islam Conquer Europe?

A new religious movement is sweeping across Europe. Can the traditional “Christian” world absorb this into the fabric of Western society, or will this movement swallow the traditions of the West? What does the future hold for these two religious cultures?

Page 14

Where and How Did We Get the Bible Part Two: Design and Layout of the New Testament

Some claim that the Bible is not complete without the Apocrypha or other obscure writings. Is there sufficient evidence to prove whether these documents belong in God’s Word? In Part Two of this series, we conclude the amazing story of how God preserved His Word!

Page 18

FEATURES

Personal from David C. Pack
World News Desk

1
28

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ABOUT OUR COVER:

For centuries, the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church have been divided. However, if ongoing talks in hope of reconciliation succeed, what will it mean for Europe—and for the rest of the world?

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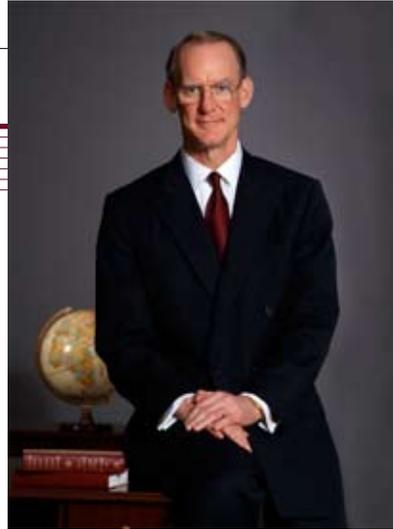
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PERSONAL FROM

David C. Fack



Do Christians Vote?

“Election Year” politics is now in full swing in America. Candidates are gearing up, with ad campaigns vigorously promoting their ideologies and attacking their opponents. Each nominee has his own vision of *how* the government—local, state or federal—should be run, proclaiming his view to be in the best interests of the citizenry. The candidates, through use of conventions, speeches, television ads, direct mail, and other means, appeal to voters. They promise to bring “change” in government. What does the Bible say about all of this?

GOD’S WORD REVEALS that Jesus Christ brought a message about *government*. Everywhere He went, He preached—HE ANNOUNCED—the coming of the kingdom of God. He explained that this would be a WORLD-RULING GOVERNMENT that would smash and replace all the governments of men.

You may have supposed that the governments of modern nations generally reflect God’s way. This is almost everyone’s assumption. Yet, while God does, in fact, establish and remove nations, this is not His world! This is why Christ foretold the arrival of a SUPERGOVERNMENT to replace the confused, inefficient and ineffective governments of men, so powerless to solve any of the world’s biggest problems.

How did the world come to be as it is? *Why* is it in such a state of confusion and ignorance? *Why* can the governments of men not get along—avoid war—and find peace and agreement? *Why* is there constant insta-

bility, scandal and division among leaders and seemingly endless revolutions and military coups? *Why* is there no shortage of demagogues, dictators and revolutionaries, always promising to make things better, yet only able to preside over a continual worsening of problems and conditions?

Look at the governments of this world. Generally speaking, there are three types today—*monarchies*, *dictatorships* and *democracies*.

Monarchies involve nobility—royalty—where bloodline is the key to succession of power. Through the death of a king or queen, a succeeding prince or princess ascends the throne. This can last for generations or many centuries. In the end, monarchies are almost always replaced, either violently or peacefully, with allowance that the king or queen is permitted to retain minimal power.

Dictatorships and totalitarian governments are usually created through violence—by coup or revolution. They are often short-lived because something similar quickly replaces them.

Democracies and republics are best described as collaborative, representative or parliamentary, in that officials and leaders are elected, representing “the will of the people.” This involves a voting or balloting process in the selection of one candidate in preference to one or several others. This form is generally considered to be the *best* of mankind’s governments. Yet, the great 20th-century British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, called democracy “the *worst* form of government—*except for all the others.*” This offers an amazing insight into how democracy really works, from an insider’s view.

But, as bad as democracy may be, it is true that it is far better than any other form of government—when that government lies *in the hands of men*. Democracy does at least attempt to insure more individual “freedoms” than other kinds of humanly-devised government.

In the end, however, none of man’s governments work either very well or for very long.

Consider. God is calling people who are citizens of many different nations on earth, and most who learn the truth in this age are privileged to live under the freedoms of a democracy.

Should Christians continue voting or participating in the politics of their country?

A Christian is one who follows—who *copies*—Jesus Christ (I Peter 2:21; Phil. 2:5). What would Christ do if He were on earth today? Would *HE* participate in the governments or politics of men? What does the Bible teach about voting to select leaders—either in national governments or in the selection of church leaders in various denominations?

Christ would not participate in electing the world’s leaders, because He understands the origin of the governments of this world and who is behind them.

Where did the governments of men come from? *How* did they originate? *Who* is behind them? *Why* is

there so much strife and competition in the world today? Is this God’s world—reflecting His way, and His direction and guidance?

Most theologians, religionists and churchmen blindly assume that it is. Therefore, they conclude that if “all Christians work together, in love and unity, to make this world and its governments a safer and better place for all, we can bring peace, happiness and prosperity to the world.” This is a completely wrong viewpoint. Nowhere did Jesus say “go into all the world and strive to make it a better place by becoming part of it.” Instead, He said, “Go you into all the world and preach the gospel.” Christ did not come to make *this* world better. He announced the *COMING* of a better world, under His government!

Blind, deceived men think they can bring about the kingdom of God through human effort. They see certain evil forces at work and feel compelled to “do something about it.” They assume that Christ would be an “activist” striving to “make the world a better place.” Be honest! Haven’t you heard this many times? Haven’t you heard churches urge people to “get involved” or “take a stand” or some similar thing, in order to improve national or world problems of one sort or another?

But is this God’s world now? Does HE want His servants to “make the world into a better place”?

The Great Deceiver

The Bible speaks of Satan, “which deceives the *whole* world” (Rev. 12:9). Notice that it says, “the *WHOLE* world.” This is a staggering statement—but there it is in your Bible!

If Satan has deceived the entire world, then how can it be God’s world? It must be one or the other! Since the *whole* world is deceived, it is not of God and is actually cut off from Him (Isa. 59:1-2). This will become clear.

Think for a moment! If the devil practices deception throughout the world, it would certainly include

influence upon, and control over, the humanly-devised governments of all nations.

The “god of this world”

The Bible refers to the “god of this world”—and it is not the God of heaven. II Corinthians 4:4 records, “In whom the *god of this world* has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the *light* of the glorious *gospel*...should shine unto them.”

There is only one being who wants to “blind” this world to the truth of the real gospel—Satan the devil. Understand.

Three times in the gospel of John, Christ Himself refers to Satan the devil as “the prince of this world.” John 12:31, 16:11 and 14:30 make plain that in the future the “prince of this world” will be judged because, as Christ says in 14:30, the devil “has nothing in Me.” Take time to read these verses. John 12:31 parallels the judgment of this world with *Satan’s* coming judgment. This is because this is *his* world!

But let’s make this crystal clear.

Matthew 4 contains the well-known account of Christ’s confrontation with the devil after fasting for forty days. The devil repeatedly *tempts* Christ through twisting scripture (one of his favorite devices). At one point, in verses 8 and 9, “the devil took Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showed Him all the *kingdoms of the world*, and the glory of them; and said unto Him, All these things will I give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”

This is a stunning account! Why? Notice that Christ rebuked Satan (verse 10), quoting Deuteronomy 6:13 in response, and answered, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.”

Yet notice! At no point did Christ say, “These kingdoms are *NOT* yours to give” or “Who do you think you

Please see PERSONAL, page 24



THE COMING REUNIFICATION of East and West

Many efforts have been made to heal the breach between the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox religions. So far, all have failed. Will there ever be peace and unity between these churches?

BY BRADFORD G. SCHLEIFER

RECENTLY, another attempt was made to establish common ground in what has been a rocky relationship between two churches with a checkered history. The current Pope of the Roman Catholic Church has made numerous attempts at reaching out to many religions. However, his strongest attempts have been to the Patriarch of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Pope John Paul II has even gone so far as to apologize for his church's actions against those in the Eastern Orthodox faith—a move that would have been unthinkable two decades ago.

Over the last 15 years, meetings between these powerful religious leaders have become more frequent. Both offer a deep commitment to seeing their churches join under one banner and share their power to preach a common message.

Their latest meeting, on July 1, 2004, produced many concessions by both sides that may quickly see these two churches unite. Suddenly, past disagreements are being overshadowed by a common cause: “to restore to the European continent the awareness of its Christian roots...” (*L'Osservatore Romano*, July 7, 2004).

As the budding European Union forms its constitution, some of its member states have resisted the idea of espousing one religion, or religious tenet, as the official belief of the Union. Both of these powerful churches wish for Europe to espouse an official religion. This is why their unification is so important. If they stand under one banner, their ability to influence the EU—and the world—will be much more successful. So far, many attempts have been made, but have come short of this goal.

However, their past *is* common. These churches share a common ancestry, but events occurring thousands of years ago caused their paths to fork. How did this happen? Will those events stop these two churches from reuniting? And will they be able to make certain that, as their recent Common Declaration stated, “the European Continent

does not forget its own Christian roots”?

Events happening today were actually foretold thousands of years ago—that not only would these churches split, but that they would eventually *reunify*! And that reunification would be given the power to unite the European Union under their banner. While this may sound like an incredible—or even impossible—outcome, its fulfillment is certain and it will have a very deep—and REAL—impact on you!

A Road Divided

To understand events as they unfold in our time, we must pull back the curtain of history and see why these two churches separated in the first place. These events and their results will shed much light on the history imposed by the universal church at Rome.

After the death of Jesus Christ and the formation of the New Testament Church, certain figures began to appear. Their purpose, however, was not the same as that of the apostles, and neither were their teachings. The apostle Paul was already warning the early Church about a movement within their membership: “I marvel that you are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:6-8).

Strong words!

The apostle Jude sheds even more light on this counterfeit movement: “For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness [license to sin], and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ” (vs. 4).

Members of an ancient religion—“ordained of old”—were appearing

within this young Church, seeking to change the message that Christ delivered into something else—a *different* gospel!

Mankind has always attempted to fight against God’s way of life. When presented with the choice, man will almost always choose *his* way over God’s. And this was clearly evident with the “ungodly men” who attempted to avert the Church’s focus.

As time passed, the visible church changed rapidly. By A.D. 300, the



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church that called itself Christian was altogether different from the Church formed in A.D. 31, as can be seen by the writings of Bishop Eusebius, who lived during this time: “...we sank into negligence and sloth, one envying and reviling another in different ways; we were almost on the point of taking up arms against each other...people rising up against people, and hypocrisy and dissimulation of rising to the greatest height of malignity...some who appeared to be our pastors, deserting the law of piety, were enflamed against each other with mutual strifes, accumulating quarrels and threats, rivalry, hostility, and hatred to each other, only anxious to assert the government as a kind of sovereignty for themselves” (*The Church History of Eusebius*, bk. viii, ch. 1).

Amazing words—and remarkable conduct—from those professing to be Christian. Much of this fight-

ing centered over who should lead this counterfeit church—the Eastern or Western leg? While their teachings differed slightly, the battle was not over doctrine, it was over POWER! This power struggle continued until the western branch received support from an unlikely source—the imperial Roman authorities.

Approval—and Power—of Rome

Shortly after the Council of Nicea (A.D. 325), occurring in Asia Minor, Emperor Constantine changed the battle of these churches into a slaughter of many thousands. Constantine felt that unity was critical to ensuring that Roman power was maintained. And that unity, as stated in a public edict following Nicea, was to be executed by force:

“Victor Constantinus, Maximus Augustus, to the *heretics* [including those of the Eastern church]...we give warning by this present statute that none of you henceforth presume to assemble yourselves together. We have directed, accordingly, that you be deprived of all the houses in

which you are accustomed to hold your assemblies: and our care in this respect extends so far as to forbid the holding of your superstitious and senseless meetings, not in public merely, but in any private house or place whatsoever. Let those of you, therefore...take the far better course of entering the catholic Church...And in order that this remedy may be applied with effectual power, we have commanded, as before said, that you be positively deprived of every gathering point of your superstitious meetings, I mean all the houses of prayer...and that these be made over without delay to the catholic Church; that any other places be confiscated to the public service, and no facility whatever be left for any future gathering; in order that from this day forward none of your unlawful assemblies may presume to appear in any public or private place. Let this edict be made public” (*Life of Constantine*,

Eusebius, bk. II, ch. 64, 65).

This effectively made it *illegal* to worship outside of the Catholic faith. Unity was *forced* upon the people of that time—by the edge of the sword! It seems that this is how human beings, if left on their own, achieve unity. Men are always divided—be it in word, action, or belief—unless they are *forced* to agree.

Would God's Church be so divided that its unity would need to be forced by the army of a civil government?

Look at the professing Christian churches today. Do they appear to be in unity? Do they agree on teaching, governance or any other matter? Their unity would have to be forced, like it was centuries ago. It has been said that the only thing man has learned from history is that *he never learns from history*. Soon, the universal church will be given power to once again *force* unity!

Unity Short-Lived

This forced unity of the fourth century only held for a short period of time. Constantine's powerful persona—and massive army—temporarily united these two fighting branches of the Greek and Roman churches. But it was only his personality that kept them together. The forced unity again turned into a power struggle after his death. In 1042, the Western and Eastern branches of the church once again separated, with each branch publicly declaring the other as a heretic.

This further shows what a strong leader with a powerful personality can achieve. There was no sense of unity or togetherness between these two branches. Yet, Constantine was able to hold them together with his personal presence.

The same is seen today. Powerful leaders are almost worshipped and when they die, the unity they were able to achieve crumbles. Only those with character are able to endure after a leader has left the scene. And from the quotes we have read, it is apparent that there was very little character in this counterfeit church.

In 1439, another attempt was made

at unification, but this also ended in failure. Soon, however, another powerful attempt at unity will take place—and it will *not* fail. Again, this will only be because men will be *forced* to unify—by the might of an army!

Roads of Unification

The most recent meetings of the leaders of the eastern and western churches is just the latest step in moving them toward unity. Other steps have taken place, behind the scenes, to facilitate this move. One such event occurred in 1948, with the formation of The World Council of Churches (WCC). Its primary goal is to unite all professing Christian churches around the world.

While not an active member, in 1965, the Roman Catholic Church formed a Joint Working Group with this organization to promote the unity of these religious bodies. This is particularly interesting because the Eastern Orthodox Church holds much of the power in the WCC.

This is just one of the attempts to develop the ecumenical movement among the many churches. In light of the recent meeting between the Pope and the Patriarch, this serves to show that steps are very much underway, even if they are not as often reported.

The August 28, 2004 *Economist* did point out the aging pontiff's driving desire to complete this unification in his lifetime: "There is another indication that the pontiff is preparing for the end [of his life]: his increasingly determined push for reconciliation between Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians, who have been formally divided for almost a millennium. As an eastern European, he is particularly sensitive over this issue."

Not only could these and other attempts serve to unite the eastern and western churches, they could also pave the way for all professing Christians to come under the common banner of the Roman Catholic Church.

However, even with all this politicking, it will take much more than agreements and understanding to unite these disagreeing bodies. As previously stated, the only way men will unite is

by force, and this is almost certainly what will happen in the near future.

A Hidden People of Unity

Ask yourself: Does the conduct of "hypocrisy and dissimulation...strifes, accumulating quarrels and threats, rivalry, hostility, and hatred to each other" sound like a church that Jesus Christ would have built? Of course not! Consider Amos 3:3. As the God of the Old Testament, Christ asked, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

Christ is not divided—therefore, this was not Christ's Church! As shocking as that sounds, it is true! Notice this New Testament verse describing how unified the Church *should* be: "For as the body is *one*, and has many members, and all the members of that *one* body, being many, are *one* body: so also is Christ. For by *one* Spirit are we all baptized into *one* body...that there should be *no schism* in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it" (I Cor. 12:12-13, 25-26).

As you can see, God not only *wants* unity—He *requires* it! His people *must* be unified. This is not indicative of any church in the world at large. They cannot agree on the most basic of teachings—yet they profess to be *of* Christ. If they were truly His churches, Christ would not only be confused—but, in light of the above scriptures, also a liar! And God cannot lie!

There is a small Church running parallel with this great counterfeit church—one that focuses on what Christ *taught*. It has often been persecuted by these larger churches, but it refused to bend—refused to change. God's little flock stayed together *in unity*! And because of this, it still exists today. Its history is worth telling, because that history leads you to its doorstep today. To learn more about this small, persecuted flock's experiences over the last 2,000 years, read our book *The History of God's TRUE CHURCH*. □

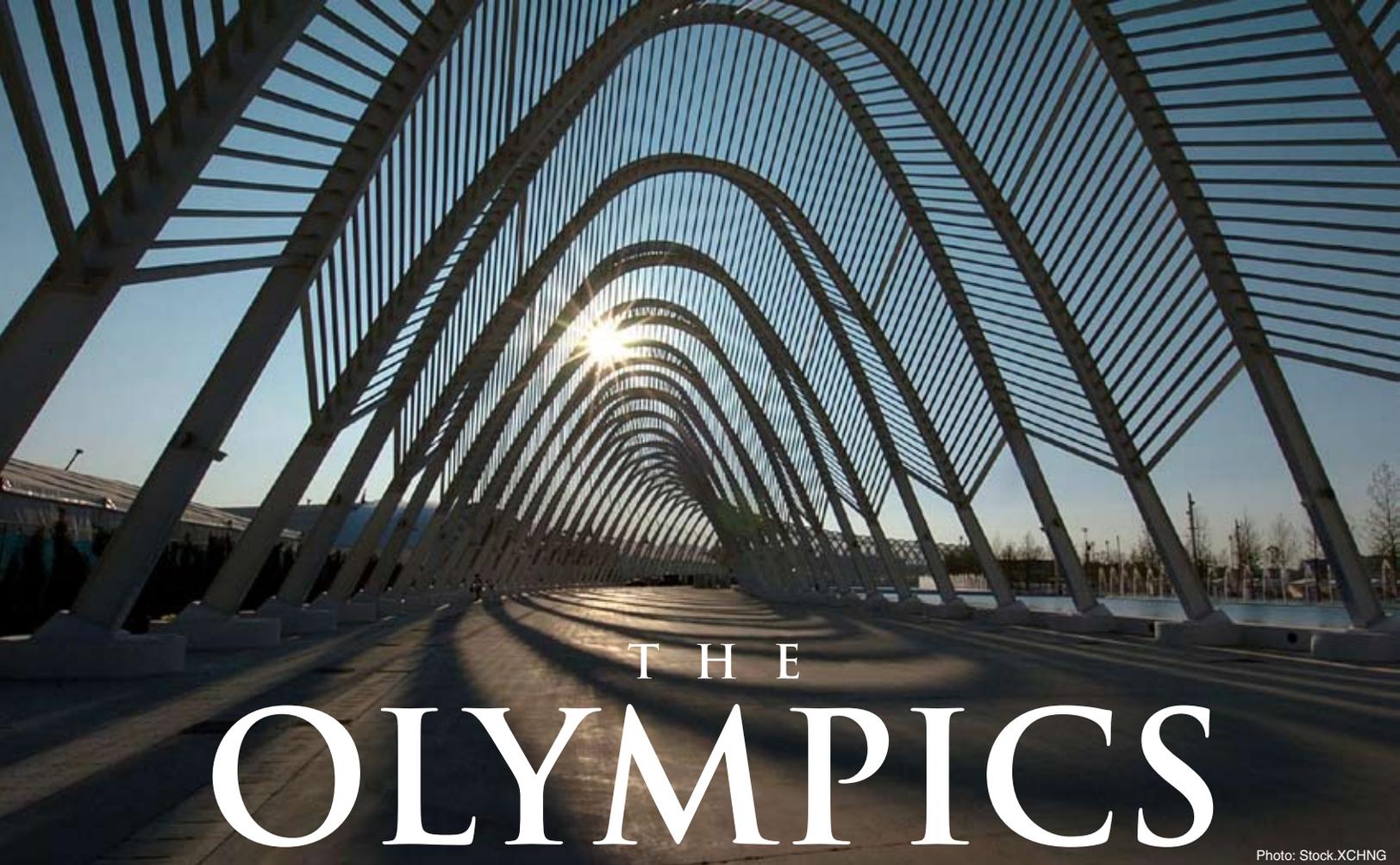


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THE OLYMPICS

What the Games Have Taught Us

The Olympic Games seem to be a time when the world comes together to engage in friendly competition. But a look under the surface reveals something very different. What has the world *truly* learned from the Olympics?

FOR THOUSANDS of years, men have come together to compete on an international level. They vie for titles such as fastest man, fastest woman, greatest athlete, etc. It is the most watched sporting event worldwide. From the torch relay and the magnificent opening ceremony to the spectacular closing ceremony, the audience is wowed by glorious works of art and culture of the host nation, and incredible displays of strength,

determination and endurance by the athletes. This great international event is known as the Olympic Games.

It has influenced every facet of life from religion to literature. An ancient Greek poet once wrote, “As in the daytime there is no star in the sky warmer and brighter than the sun, likewise there is no competition greater than the Olympic Games.” But the Olympics have not always been the spectacle that they have become in modern times. When and where did the Olympics begin? What is the *true* purpose for the games? And what have they taught mankind?

The Ancient Olympics

The first Olympic Games were held in approximately 776 B.C. in the Greek city of Olympia, 90 miles west of Athens. The games were a religious celebration, held every four years, in honor of the Greek god Zeus. Originally, the games lasted one to three days and, for years, it only had one event—the 210 yard dash. The rest of the Olympics were spent sacrificing to the many Greek gods.

Over the years, the games added more events—boxing, pentathlon, jumping and wrestling.

For the athletes, the Olympic Games were completely about pride. They competed not for gold, silver or bronze medals, but for honor and pride. The winners of the events were given a crown of fig leaves, and a statue was made in their image. There was no such thing as quitting. If an athlete gave up, he would not only greatly shame himself, but he would also shame his family. Quitting was so looked down upon, that if an athlete was supposed to compete and he did not, he would be fined for cowardice.

But if anyone failed to appear for an event, who could blame him? The competition was fierce! The boxing matches were extremely violent. There were no rounds. The event was over when either of the two fighters gave up or was knocked out. There were no boxing gloves. The fighters wore thongs around their fists. Some might think that this was to protect their hands. But that was not the case. They were worn so that when the boxers hit each other, it would cause more damage. The crowd loved it. There are stories told about the brutality of the boxing matches. Because of pride, one boxer refused to give up. He was so badly beaten that his own family didn't recognize him.

Wrestling was just as cruel. Once again, there were no rounds. There was no padded mat and no ring. The match was over when one of the wrestlers submitted. There is a story of a wrestler who won matches by dislocating the fingers of his opponents—which was against the rules. But cheating and breaking the rules is not new. This was done in the ancient Olympics. The participants then had the mentality of “win at any cost.”

Married women were forbidden to attend the Olympics, under the pain of death. However, contrary to popular opinion, athletic competitions for women did exist. There was a 160-meter maidens' footrace in honor of the goddess Hera.

The Olympics continued every four years for over 1,200 years. But, in A.D. 393, the Roman emperor of the Byzantine empire, Theodosius I, abolished the Olympic Games. The

empire had adopted “Christianity” and the Emperor brought an end to the games because of their pagan origins. It would be another 1,500 years before the games would return.

The Games in Modern Times

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, a Frenchman named Pierre de Coubertin began the process of trying to revive the Olympics. And in April 1896, the Olympic Games returned to Athens, Greece.

Although society was more civilized and the events were less brutal, the spirit of competition and extreme pride was still there. Some nations even used the national stage that the Olympics offered in order to make political statements, as in the 1936 games in Berlin.

The Olympic torch relay is known today as a symbol of brotherhood and the coming together of the world. It is a most loved tradition. However, most are not aware that there was no torch relay in the ancient Olympic Games. It is a tradition that originated with Adolf Hitler and his Nazi regime. The torch relay was supposed to show Germany's link to the “greatness” of the ancient Greek people. Hitler pointed to how both Germans and Greeks were “Aryan,” and that they were superior athletes. Of course, that was all shattered when Jesse Owens, an African-American track-and-field athlete, won four gold medals in those games. Nevertheless, it does not diminish the fact that one nation wanted to show the world its superiority, and used the Olympics to do it.

Even in the face of political propaganda, the Olympics were once an arena in which amateur athletes would compete to the best of their ability for their country. Their focus would be on honing their skill and gaining the experience needed to turn professional. Yet, over the years, the focus changed dramatically. Nations were tired of losing, so they began sending professional athletes to the games—changing the Olympics forever.

As the games became more competitive, many athletes continuously

found themselves coming up short of victory. They knew that they needed that “extra edge” in order to win. And many would do virtually anything to win.

In 2004, track-and-field proved to be a blemish on the Olympic Games. Many of the athletes who were set to compete in Athens were suspended from competition because of failed doping exams. During the 200-meter final, the Greek fans booed for ten minutes straight to protest the banning of the defending champion (a Greek), who was suspended because of doping allegations. Several medals were stripped from champions because they failed their drug tests. Some of the athletes strutted around in a display of gross arrogance! But at the end of the day, they were not victorious, and found themselves making excuses for less-than-perfect performances.

Also, gone are the days of good sportsmanship. In past times, if a judge or referee made a bad call, everyone would accept that a mistake had been made. It was a part of life. However, today, people correct those mistakes by protesting.

For example, during the gymnastics men's all-around competition, the crowd booed for ten minutes straight, because they believed that a judge had robbed a Russian gymnast of a good score—and he had. Because the crowd would not quiet down, the judges revisited the score and changed it to make it higher. It worked—it appeased the crowd. And all of this happened in front of scores of millions of people around the world.

All of these things happened during an event in which the world was supposed to be “coming together.” Yet, the world is far from achieving that goal.

A Strong Desire to Win

The U.S. has been blessed with good food, pure water, plenty of land and much wealth. As a result, the U.S. provides the best training facilities in the world. Other nations recognize this. So they send their athletes to America to attend college, become residents and train for their sport, and then return



Photo: U.S. Air Force

to their native country to ultimately *compete against America*. Technically, the case could be made that the majority of athletes in Olympic competition have been trained *in America* or *by Americans*.

For example, throughout Olympic history, the United States had always dominated on the basketball court. The U.S. would always send their best college players to compete. But, as the years passed, the other nations grew tired of losing. So they began sending professional basketball players into competition. In order to stay on top, in 1992, the U.S. began sending NBA players to the Olympics. With the likes of such players as Michael Jordan, Larry Bird and Magic Johnson on the squad, the media dubbed them “the Dream Team.” With that team winning each game by a margin of 40 points or more, they lived up to their name. However, over the next decade, the face of the NBA completely changed.

More and more NBA teams began recruiting foreign players. Why? Because the “old workhorses” who were dedicated to honing their skill and dominating the sport gave way to untrained high school kids who were given multi-million dollar shoe contracts, not having played one NBA game. Today’s NBA players are more concerned with how much money they make, how many points they can score and how many spectacular plays they can make. However, the

foreign players are the exact opposite. They are much more basic and fundamental. They spend years honing their shooting, dribbling and passing skills. Once, the greatest shooters in the NBA were all from America. Today, however, many of the best shooters are from foreign countries.

With the experience of playing in the NBA, the world’s basketball teams began to close the gap with America. Since the 1992 Olympic Games, the winning point margin for the “Dream Team” has gotten smaller and smaller. Each team thereafter thought that they would just “steamroll” the other nations. Thinking themselves to be so much better, they would not even stay in the Olympic village with the other Olympic athletes.

At the Sydney Olympic Games, the NBA team barely got to the gold medal game, only winning their semi-final match by two points. But the gap was finally closed in the 2004 Olympics. Before an audience of over 300 million people worldwide, the squad dubbed “the Dream Team” was beaten in their semi-final game by Argentina, ending U.S. dominance in Olympic basketball. Truly, as the proverb goes, “pride goes before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall” (Prov. 16:18).

What Have We Learned?

Nations are incapable of living in peace and harmony with their neighbors. How do we know this? Look at

the track record. The world’s nations engage in games, while fighting wars, committing genocide, slandering, verbally attacking and hating each other. The nations of the world are not *truly* concerned with coming together in “brotherhood” for friendly competition. They are interested in seeing how much better they are than their neighbors. And the only way to validate that is to *win*—and they will do anything, including cheating, to achieve victory!

But why is there such fierce competition and hatred? Because “only by *pride* comes contention” (Prov. 13:10). That is what the Olympics are truly about. It is about elevating oneself above another. It is to say that “I am better than you.” But the pride of the world is going to lead them into a time of trouble that they have never seen. The Bible says, “For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth” (Luke 21:35). At that time, it is not going to matter how many gold medals were won, or how great an athlete someone is.

Jesus Christ will soon return and establish His kingdom on earth. At that time, all things will be restored, including the right attitude toward competition. Athletics will not be about pride and arrogance. It will focus on cooperation, friendly competition and character building. People will learn to live in harmony. And the only one who will be exalted in that day will be GOD (Isa. 2:11)! □



WHY THEY HATE US

PART TWO: Squandered Blessings

The United States, Britain and the other nations of the West have enjoyed incredible riches, to the point of enriching other countries of the world. Yet, they are hated. In fact, some call for an all-out war against the “evil American empire.” Many quietly agree. Here is why.

BY MARK P. DENEÉ

FOR YEARS, American children were taught that they were blessed to live in the greatest nation on earth. At one time, even most American adults had at least a vague understanding of this concept. Unfortunately, such thinking is rare today, and even less understood. British, Canadian and

Australian children would have been taught similar lessons about the peace, abundance and prosperity of their own countries. Some of America’s founding fathers understood where their blessings came from—not from their own hands, but rather from Almighty God!

Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth American President, said in a

January 27, 1838 address, “We find ourselves in the peaceful possession, of the fairest portion of the earth, as regards extent of territory, fertility of soil, and salubrity of climate...We...found ourselves the legal inheritors of these fundamental blessings. We toiled not in the acquirement or establishment of them...”

In proclaiming a “National Day of Fasting and Prayer” (March 30, 1863), Lincoln also said, “It is the duty of nations as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God...and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord... We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers,

wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God.

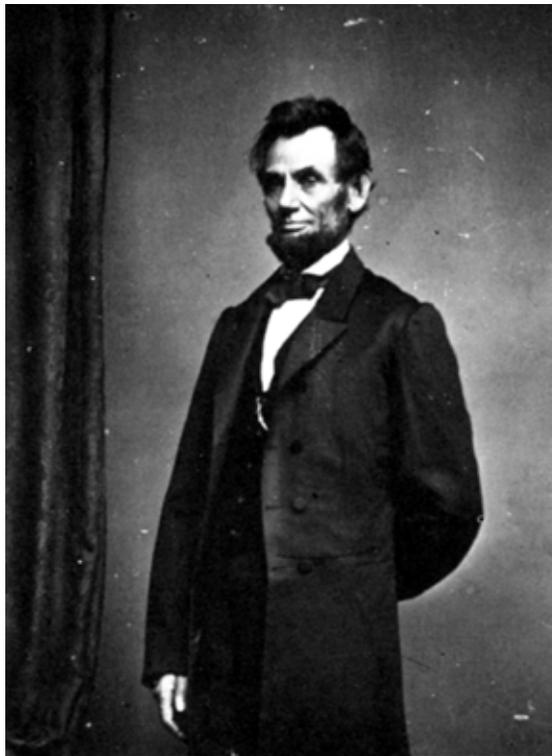
“We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us!

“It behooves us then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.”

George Washington and Thomas Jefferson made similar statements. Can you imagine such proclamations being made in today’s world? Society would laugh and mock—even Americans would laugh and mock! Yet, Lincoln’s words are, in fact, even more applicable to the United States of the twenty-first century.

That understanding has long since disappeared—replaced in recent decades by rampant immorality, extreme pride and arrogance, and endless greed. Gone are the days of any semblance of thanksgiving, modesty and humility in America. Yet, in great hypocrisy, America claims to know the right way—or at least the *best* way—to live, and insists that others around the world would or should want to live the same. This fuels the hatred of America for some, such as Islamic extremists and some European nations, where the hatred is much deeper. It has become acceptable and even popular to denounce America without reason—as no reason is required!

In this article, we will examine all that America, Britain and the other English-speaking nations have been given, and what they in turn have given



“We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God.”

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Photo: Public domain

to others. We will compare what they once were—lands of opportunity—to their current state of decadence. And we will see that it is the extreme hatred of these nations that drives world events.

Benefactors to the World

Prior to 1800, America was a young country, and Britain was only equal to several other colonizing powers. But between the 1750s and 1850s, Great Britain’s population exploded, jumping from 7.7 to 20.7 million. London became the financial capital of the world, and both nations were poised to lead the world—all as a result of the blessings unconditionally promised

to America and Britain’s forefather, Abraham. Beginning in 1800, and continuing for approximately the next two centuries, first Great Britain, and later the United States, came to dominate the world in many ways—industrially, commercially, diplomatically and militarily. In the years that followed World War II, both Britain and the U.S. controlled the majority of the world’s gold, sea gates (e.g., Suez Canal, the Straits of Gibraltar, Cape of Good Hope, Cape Horn, the Straits of Hormuz, Singapore, the Panama Canal, Malta and Hong Kong), oil, steel, and electricity production, as well as many other resources. (For more details, read our book *AMERICA AND BRITAIN IN BIBLE PROPHECY*.)

The blessings of Britain and the United States and, in particular, the effect that they would have on the rest of the world, are described in Micah 5:7-8: “And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the LORD, as the showers upon the grass...”

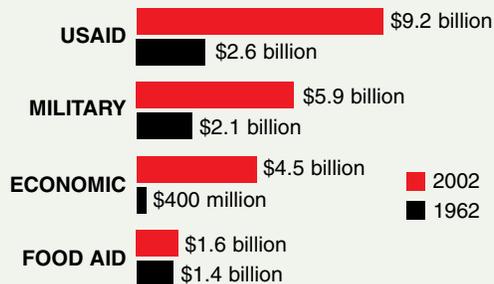
In Genesis 22:17-18, God says, “That in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in your

seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed...”—and indeed they have been!

In 1947, U.S. Secretary of State George C. Marshall unveiled what would be called the “Marshall Plan.” Over the next five years, \$13 billion of aid was given to Britain, France, Italy and what was then West Germany. The United States has, in fact, been the largest contributor of foreign aid in the world since World War II ended (*Microsoft Encarta Encyclopaedia*, “Foreign Aid,” 1993-2000). It gives aid primarily to developing countries in order to assist in projects such as improving agriculture and rural devel-

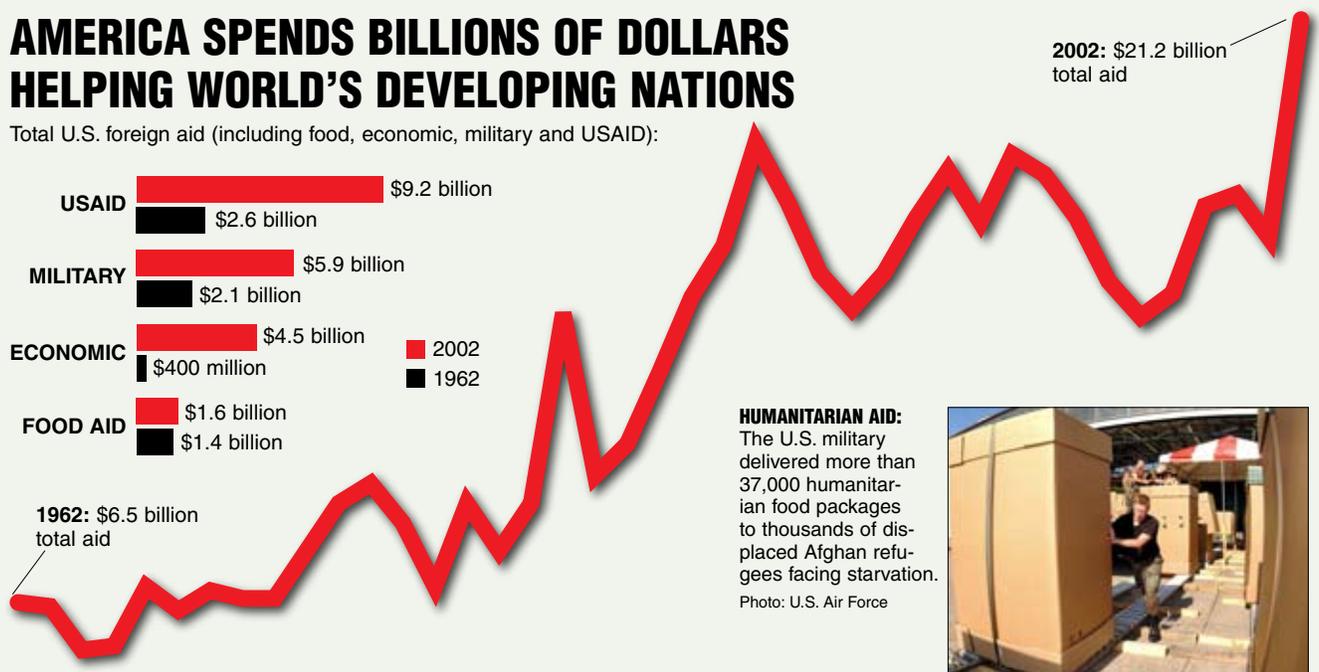
AMERICA SPENDS BILLIONS OF DOLLARS HELPING WORLD'S DEVELOPING NATIONS

Total U.S. foreign aid (including food, economic, military and USAID):



1962: \$6.5 billion total aid

2002: \$21.2 billion total aid



HUMANITARIAN AID: The U.S. military delivered more than 37,000 humanitarian food packages to thousands of displaced Afghan refugees facing starvation.
Photo: U.S. Air Force



PROVIDING CLEAN WATER: U.S. marines help fill barrels with fresh water for citizens of Djibouti, whose water supplies were flood damaged.
Photo: U.S. Marine Corps



COMBATING DISEASES: A U.S. Air Force medical technician immunizes a Chadian girl during a humanitarian mission there.
Photo: U.S. Air Force

U.S. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE: THE ROLE OF USAID

In 1961, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) was established to unify already existing U.S. aid efforts in order to more effectively offer direct support and economic assistance to the world's developing nations.

For example, over the past year, the U.S. government has been proactive in dealing with the current crisis in the western Sudanese province of Darfur. USAID has deployed field staff to Sudan and eastern Chad to assess the humanitarian situation in Darfur.

■ To date, the U.S. Government has provided \$109.4 million in humanitarian assistance to Darfur and \$25.2

million in humanitarian assistance to eastern Chad. During a June 3rd donor conference in Geneva, Switzerland, it was announced that the U.S. will pledge an additional \$188.5 million to Darfur.

■ On June 24th, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution that will send \$95 million in emergency humanitarian assistance to the region.

■ Since February 2003, USAID has provided nearly \$21.4 million to U.N. agencies and non-governmental organizations for emergency health, water and sanitation, agriculture, food security, shelter, logistics and coordination activities.

■ Since October 2003, USAID has provided nearly \$82.9 million to the World Food Program for Darfur for 86,700 metric tons of food commodities.

■ As of July 8th, USAID has delivered a total of 9,570 rolls of plastic sheeting, 157,500 blankets, two water purification systems, and 600 water containers via 21 airlifts to Darfur. USAID's contribution of plastic sheeting will provide shelter for approximately 602,910 beneficiaries. The total value of the commodities provided to-date, including transportation costs, is approximately \$4.6 million.

Source: www.usaid.gov

opment, health care, population planning, child survival, and economic enterprise.

Since World War II, the United States has provided assistance to more than 100 countries. Interestingly, since the break-up of the Soviet Union, Russia and Ukraine have been among the top recipients of American foreign aid. From the online version (<http://quesdb.cdie.org/gbk/>) of the U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID], “U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants, Obligations and Loan Authorizations” (a report commonly known as “The Greenbook”), we can see the billions of dollars the U.S. has given to the world since 1962 (see chart on page 11).

And yet America is still—and increasingly—hated. Yes, the U.S. has given, but it has mostly given to GET. And in recent years, it has become politically less popular in America to give aid to foreign nations. For example, Egypt is a large recipient of U.S. aid, yet does little to support American foreign policy and interests in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia has historically been considered a strong ally of the U.S., having received much economic and military support. But Saudi Arabia has recently given birth to religious extremists like Osama bin Laden and the majority of the terrorists involved in the September 11 attacks. As described in part one of this series, the so-called “party” thrown by the United States is over. The former “lovers,” as Bible prophecy describes national alliances and treaties, now *despise* the U.S., and seek to take American lives! God’s hand is being withdrawn from the modern-day nations of the House of Israel—and along with it, the “friendship” and “respect” that so many other nations have given them is turning to hatred.

Squandered Blessings

The peoples of the U.S., Britain, Canada, Australia and others of the Western world have been showered with a great many blessings. But as Luke 12:48 indicates, “...for unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be

much required...” These nations have squandered their blessings, and forgotten the SOURCE of those blessings. They have used them to further their lives of greed and pleasure-seeking. Alcohol and drug abuse, and now even food abuse, are unbridled like never before! Los Angeles, New York City, and Toronto are havens of rampant pornography and sexual perversity. The modern “good life” requires one to live near financial bankruptcy. Strong, traditional families have all but disappeared, and have been replaced by broken, dysfunctional—and even perverse—so-called family “units.”

Almost completely absent from man’s civilization is the concept of “right and wrong.” Political correctness now stands firmly in its place. It is no longer acceptable to instruct a child, or any person for that matter, regarding right and wrong behavior, and right and wrong “lifestyles.” Homosexuality, and even adults having sex with children are simply considered “choices.” Individual liberties and desires rule the day, flying in the face of what the wisest man who ever lived, King Solomon, had to say in Proverbs: “There is a way which seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (14:12).

America and Britain’s rampant greed and immorality also fuels this hatred. Islamic extremists like Osama bin Laden refer to them as “the Great Satan” and “the little Satan.” They observe the way Americans live and their hypocrisy in trying to control the lives of others. Osama’s infamous 1998 “fatwa” contained the following: “First, for over seven years the United States has been occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of places, the Arabian Peninsula, plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorizing its neighbors, and turning its bases in the Peninsula into a spearhead through which to fight the neighboring Muslim peoples.”

America wants the world to adopt its ways—mainly its politics. However, the whole world sees the great hypocrisy of the way in which America lives. It also watches the ugly spectacle of

the U.S. Presidential election—with opponents slandering, attacking and mocking each other in a race to become the “most powerful man on earth.” The candidates trumpet what they believe is “right” and “good” for the country, mostly in an attempt to win the election, but with little emphasis on true leadership.

Most of the world observes America and Britain and their riches, arrogance and pride, and, quite plainly, are driven to loathe them. Gone is any semblance of humility and thankfulness that would have made the use of these riches tolerable to less fortunate nations. Of course, there is an element of jealousy and ungratefulness in those nations. But America and Britain, having forgotten the Giver of *their* blessings, revel in *their* power and prosperity, virtually taunting the rest of the world—further fueling world hatred of them.

Once the Greatest, Now the Wretched Generation

In the early years of the twentieth century, the United States was still a young nation. Yet it was a country that had been very recently forged from very dramatic events: the colonization of North America, the Revolutionary War (1775-1783), the War of 1812 and the Civil War (1861-1865). France gave the U.S. the Statue of Liberty in commemoration of their alliance during the Revolutionary War. Formally dedicated in 1886, the statue became an international symbol of freedom, as about 16 million immigrants passed under her torch from 1892 to 1954. America had become the destination of choice. This was the land of opportunity, a country where great men could emerge from little more than hopes and dreams.

Ironically, consider today’s animosity between the two countries.

Prior to World War I, the U.S. was still primarily a rural, agricultural nation—but that was about to quickly change. John Rublowsky wrote, in his 1970 book *After the Crash – America in the Great Depression*, “If America had anything after the war ended in 1918 it was these two qualities. Hadn’t

we beat the enemy without half trying? Hadn't our economy supplied the Allies with more war material than the world had ever seen? Wasn't this same economy intact and ready to produce even more for an abundant peace? The answer in all cases was, yes!" And indeed it was, as America soared to great prosperity in the 1920s.

During the Great Depression, Americans and the image of America were further forged through years of perseverance. A generation was born and reared on hunger, humility and hopefulness. Stories abound of mothers with 65 cents rearing four children while the father was in the city desperately looking for work. One such example is described in T.H. Watkins' book, *The Great Depression – America in the 1930s*. It is an excerpt from a letter to Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt dated February 28, 1935: "...we are getting tired of being so termed [the "dirty bunch"]...We do not dare to use even a little soap when it will pay for an extra egg, a few more carrots for our children, pale and woebegone they look..." Author Anna Yeziarska describes one final example: "men who hadn't had a job for years fondled five and ten-dollar bills with the tenderness of farmers rejoicing over a new crop of grain" (*Red Ribbon on a White Horse*). These Americans would grow up to become what Tom Brokaw called "The Greatest Generation."

Consider what that time was like, what people were like then, and contrast it with today. For example, a letter from a Robert Cromer in Mr. Brokaw's *An Album of Memories – Personal Histories from the Greatest Generation* described the following:

"Dear Mr. Brokaw: I went to war as a replacement, in the 309th Infantry Regiment of the 78th Division. My youth was snatched away from me when, at age eighteen, I went into combat and was forced to grow up overnight...Combat was terrible and I lost many friends in battle, and yet I think that ours was one of the most fortunate of all generations. We were privileged to grow up in a time when honor, truth, loyalty, duty and patrio-

tism were real and meant something. What made the generation great? We were simply a product of our times. Growing up in the Depression was not a great honor, but it was a classroom that taught us to be independent and innovative...The Depression was a leveler too. I grew up in what was considered a middle-class family—by today's standards we would be considered poor, but nobody came around to tell us so. Everyone was in the same boat, and extended families helped each other...There were many people who had much less than we did, but they never let on and we never knew. The community sort of stuck together and family was very important. Parents were role models...I never thought of 'me first' or 'do your own thing' and neither did anyone else..."

Now compare that generation with today's generation. The concepts of honor, truth and duty have all but disappeared from every facet of American life—from the individual and community, to business and government.

How important is the family in today's America? It is being attacked from every angle, through such things as abortion, divorce, feminism and alternative lifestyles. Strong fundamental marriage and basic parenting are essentially lost institutions.

The entire economic and social fabric of America today is based on the concept of "me first." The nation is in the middle of a "war on terror," struggling with economic problems, and deeply divided politically and socially. All the while, citizens are encouraged to continue to live their lives as normal as possible—to spend, spend, spend—to look after "me first." When truthfully considered, especially in light of the "greatest generation," we are living today in the "wretched generation."

Notice the following insightful observation: "The images many around the world have of America are derived from watching and listening to the movies, shows and music that Hollywood exports around the world (one of our leading exports, by the way). Overwhelmingly, America is depicted as a materialistic, self-

indulgent, irreligious, licentious nation concerned only with the modern day equivalents of bread and circuses—sex, drugs, luxuries, and violence.

"A Los Angeles op-ed shortly after 9/11 pointed out how this imagery harms America. The op-ed reported that public opinion surveys around the world characterize Americans as overbearing, sexually immoral, materialistic and prone to violence. Since many of these people have never been to America and do not come across many Americans, they develop their impressions largely from Hollywood.

"Terrorism experts agree: licentious imagery tempts and enrages Muslims around the world. Satan is associated with temptation in Islamic theology. Muslims are assaulted by imagery which offends them and while they live in poverty, Americans live in apathetic opulence" (*americanthinker.com*, "Hollywood: the imperial city").

The United States of America was great. But this was a great destiny fulfilled by blessings from God. America now has lost all sense of where it has come from. There is no more gratefulness, humility, or respect for others—and so America is hated.

God has removed His hand of blessings and protection from the U.S., Britain and the other modern-day descendants of ancient Israel. According to God's Plan as revealed in Bible prophecy, these nations will be punished for forsaking Him and His way. As promised, God will "break the pride of your power" and "make your heaven as iron [drought], and your earth as brass [famine]" (Lev. 26:19).

This is beginning to happen right now! The current tremendous hatred of America and Britain is only a part of it. And yet most dismiss that hatred as some sort of "trans-Atlantic rift"—a temporary disagreement that will eventually be overcome. But this hatred goes *much deeper* than that, especially in Europe—it is, in fact, the kindling that will start a *much larger* fire. In part three of this series, we will examine the reality and extent of their growing hatred, its implications, and how it will end. □



WILL ISLAM CONQUER EUROPE?

A new religious movement is sweeping across Europe. Can the traditional “Christian” world absorb this into the fabric of Western society, or will this movement swallow the traditions of the West? What does the future hold for these two religious cultures?

SOME OBSERVERS are saying that Europe is becoming a post-Christian society with an ever-diminishing understanding of its historical Christian values. Many are calling this the “hallowing out” of traditional Christianity.

In her new book, *The Force of Reason*, famed Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci claims that Christianity’s ancient stronghold on the European continent is rapidly giving way to the ambitious and assertive religion of Islam.

Analysts estimate that in Britain, for example, Islamic mosques host more worshippers each week than the Church of England! Filling the void of traditional Christianity is a robust, energetic and youthful movement afoot in Europe. If this continues at the present rate, cathedrals will appear as vestiges of a civilization of times past. The great national cultures of Italians, French, Germans and others may be replaced by a new transnational Muslim identity.

This is not a new 21st century prediction, but one that was actually brought out in 1968 by the British politician Enoch Powell. That year, he gave his famous speech, “Rivers of Blood,” in which he warned that by allowing excess immigration, the United Kingdom was “heaping up its own funeral pyre,” bringing major religious/cultural changes. His message damaged what, at that time, was a promising career.

Recently, an Israeli foreign ministry report stated that Islam is now the second largest religion in Europe. According to this report, most EU nations perceive the presence of radical Muslims as a threat to state security and the fabric of life. The Muslim population in Europe is growing rapidly and may now be approaching 15 million. The report states, "According to the demographic data, the number of Moslems will continue to steadily rise due to a high birth rate and the continued mass immigrations. This means that such a rise could be the increased influence Moslems have on the shape of Europe in the future."

Understanding the Past

How does Islam, the fastest growing religion in the western world, conflict with the goals of the new mighty European Superstate? To understand this, we must briefly examine the past.

For centuries, Europe has had a commonality that united all of the peoples speaking different languages. That common element was their Christian heritage. This common religious heritage has an interesting past that cannot be denied.

History has proven that the powers that have sought control of the European continent in the past have had a standoff with the religion of Islam for the greatest influence of the European continent and the Holy land. The major Christian influence of Europe during times past has always proven to come from the smallest country on the continent—the Vatican.

From the time of Justinian in A.D. 554, the Roman Empire became known as the "Holy Roman Empire." Historians almost universally acknowledge that the Pope's crowning of Justinian, after he defeated the Ostrogoths, signaled this change. Events in Europe, surrounding the Holy Roman Empire, rose and fell for many centuries. Periodically, new rulers appeared—Charlemagne (A.D. 800), Otto the Great, (A.D. 962), Charles V (1520), which in turn

was followed by Napoleon's reign (1805).

The Crusades

During these years, the Vatican's influence was the glue that held together the Holy Roman Empire. The Popes held ultimate power and gave their blessing to the secular leaders to carry out their agendas.

This unity was forced on its peoples most of the time, with the secret police and state military extinguishing hundreds of thousands of non-compromising Muslims (as well as Jews and Protestants for that matter) during the Crusades. This powerful influence was responsible for the slaughtering of vast numbers during the Inquisition. And through the centuries, this influence continued to force millions, on the pain of death, to convert to Catholicism.

Islamists took control of the Holy Land in AD 632. For a time, Christian leaders were allowed to retain the positions of power they had in Jerusalem, and some were even given titles by the Islamic rulers. For example, Charlemagne was given the title "protector of the Christians in Jerusalem" by the Muslim leader Harun al-rashid.

However, Christendom did not tolerate Islam's rule of the Holy Land for long. During the Middle Ages the Catholic Church made repeated attempts to reclaim Jerusalem—known as the Crusades. The pope's call for all Christians to expel Islam from the Holy Land brought Europe more firmly under the power of the Vatican and deepened the roots of Christianity in the continent. It also sowed the seeds of religious tensions that remain between Christianity and Islam to this day.

This past historical accuracy is an essential element in understanding the future of the continent of Europe.

Because of this past, Europe has been branded as having historic "Christian roots." The modern leaders of the new Europe are depending on these historical Christian roots to be the last piece of the puzzle in

turning Europe into the superstate of global supremacy. Why? Because this great religious influence has been the foundation of the modern western culture and stands alone with its arms stretched across the world's dominant economic system!

In 2004, the European Union finds herself on the fast track to becoming a super giant in the political and economic arena. European leaders have long sought the dream of a United States of Europe—a return to the past glory of the Holy Roman Empire, and a rival to the giant of the past century, the United States of America.

Europe is already an economic giant ready to dwarf the United States. They are even standing up against the U.S. on the world stage, in the arena of world politics. Witness the way they snubbed their nose at the U.S. in regard to the war in Iraq. Standing up to the great twentieth century superpower has caused the world to recognize that the EU is a new power to be reckoned with.

The European Union has also made it very clear that they are seeking to become independent of the U.S. in military defense and to make decisions regarding their own security issues.

One major concern against cultural change by the powerbrokers at the top of the pyramid of the coming European superstate is two-fold. First, very simply, if Islamic influence were to continue to spread throughout Europe, that would impede the plan for unification. Peoples across the continent would be further divided, not only by language, but now by religion. The European political landscape would change drastically. New goals and concerns for the continent would certainly follow. Not only that, but the "glue" (the historic Catholic element) that would bind together all of the differing languages and nations would be drastically less influential.

But the second aspect of this concern is even more far-reaching, pertaining to Europe's religious and cultural traditions. Islam hates the religious practices associated with "Christianity,"

which it views as a religion of “infidels.” This great European system is poised to attain world dominance. The powers of many Islamic nations know this and feel very threatened by this fact. Islamic extremists see the possible inclusion of countries such as Turkey in the EU as a means of spreading Christianity into predominantly Muslim nations. These extremist factions have responded to this threat by perpetrating acts of terror on European soil. This trend could be the factor that ultimately binds the nations of Europe into a strong, unified force on the world scene.

Foundation of the New European Superstate

The press office of the Spanish Episcopal Conference recently released Pope John Paul II’s decalogue for the construction of the new superstate. According to the *Zenit News Agency*, some of the points the Pope brought out were “reminders” that Europe’s history and present state have been shaped by Christianity. He stated boldly that Christianity is the religion of all Europeans! The Pope made it very clear that the Christian roots of the European continent are the principal guarantee of its future, and has asked that these “roots” be acknowledged in the new European Constitution. He went on to declare, “To ignore, forget, or conceal Europe’s Christian heritage is an injustice, an offense...This is why, in the future, the European Constitution reference must be made to the Religious heritage, particularly the Christian, and its rights must be respected and recognized.”

For over 20 years now, the Pope has worked tirelessly to bring the nations of Europe together by way of their “Christian heritage.” The Pope and leaders of the European Commission realize that if Islam continues at the speed of growth at which it is moving, it will become the new majority, thus reshaping the European political landscape. Many European officials are stating publicly that the continent could be predominantly Muslim within decades.

For many centuries, the Muslims who were among Europe’s Christians posed a threat to their religious and cultural identity. Likewise, for Muslims, Christianity poses a threat to their religious and cultural civilization. Each side considers the other a rival in the evangelization of the world! No two religions have made such universal claims to the allegiance of mankind as have been made by both Islam and Christianity, each considering the other as “infidels.”

Hatred is now on the rise once again between these two cultures.

In her article “Anti-Semitism: The Old Hatred Returns,” associate editor Pamela Bone states that “according to a European Union report, most of the anti-Semitism in France—the burning of Jewish schools, defacing of graves and attacks on individuals—is coming from young Muslim immigrants, and anti-Muslim feeling is not coming from France’s Jewish community, which is old and established and has better things to do than deface mosques.

“In the Arab world, hatred of Jews pours out on television, newspapers and mosques: Israel is to blame for every wrong that besets Arab countries; the Holocaust is either a lie or didn’t go far enough; the ancient Christian ‘blood libel’, that Jews kill children and use their blood to make Passover bread, is repeated in mainstream newspapers. It is common wisdom that Jews were behind the September 11 attacks, and that Jews persuaded the Americans to invade Iraq” (*The Age*).

The *New York Times* stated, “The call to Jihad is rising in the streets of Europe...Intelligence chiefs across Europe say they are struggling to contain the openly seditious speech of Islamic extremists, some of whom, they say, have been inciting young men to suicidal violence since the 1990’s” (April 26, 2004, “Militants call for Jihad”).

What Does the Future Hold?

Because of the increasing Islamic influence sweeping across Europe,

many Catholics are standing up to promote a spiritual “revival.” Recently, in a powerful speech, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger spoke of a severe decline in European culture. The task before Christians, he said, is to work for a revival of Europe’s true Christian culture, “so that Europe regains the best of her identity, and puts herself in the service of all mankind” (*Lifesite Daily News*, May 14, 2004).

Osama Bin Laden recently wrote an open letter to the West, in which he demanded all of Christianity to convert to Islam. If not, they will be *forced* to turn through Jihad (holy war)! How long before the Pope and the Catholic Church galvanize religion with a united European superstate in defense of their traditional cultural heritage?

Soon, there will be a call for a “strong man” to take the lead on the European continent. This strong man will supposedly have the answers to the problems of terrorism, war, and political and religious unrest. He will also bring together the peoples and nations that have always been separated by language and culture. Indeed, this man will not have to conquer the continent with force as was the case in the past. This man will have the nations *come to him* for leadership—an empire looking for an Emperor! The nations will give their power and strength to him, and will operate as one (Rev. 17:12-13).

Bible prophecy shows there is yet to come a final end-time restoration of the Holy Roman Empire! It will ultimately be composed of 10 nations (vs. 12). This resurrected Holy Roman Empire will be able to stand up and conquer the United States, Britain, and international terrorism! It will be considered by millions to be savior and God’s answer to the world’s twenty-first century problems!

The coming configuration in Europe, according to Bible prophecy, will be a church-and-state combine. Its goal will be to completely dominate the globe. It will go on to enormously influence the world, through false miracles and religion

(Rev. 13:13-14)! This power will claim victory over all other religions and cultures.

So will Europe be conquered by Islam? The answer is...NO. But neither will Rome's brand of Christianity dominate the world. Why? Because there is a supernatural force that will intervene!

The Final War

The great military powers of this world will ultimately be preparing to clash for complete world domination—until they will suddenly be confronted by what they conceive to be “a common enemy”—the returning Jesus Christ! Christ will return and, from Jerusalem, proclaim His dominion over the world! “And the nations were angry...” declares Revelation 11:18. The world will not want to submit to God's rule! Instead, they will seek to destroy Jesus Christ—whom they will regard, falsely, as the *anti-christ*. Instead of fighting each other, the kings of the earth will put aside their differences to “make war with the Lamb” (Rev. 17:14). Christ will bring judgment on this system of religious/economic deception.

This massive power that Christ will war against and conquer is called “BABYLON THE GREAT” (vs. 5). “Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour is your judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buys their merchandise any more: the merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls...The merchants of these things which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing...For in one hour, so great riches is come to nought” (Rev. 18:10-12, 15, 17).

Neither the Christianity of Europe nor the Islamic religions will dominate the world. Since the beginning, man has snubbed his nose toward God's ways and His government. Because of this attitude, God has allowed mankind to learn that it cannot govern itself without ending up in

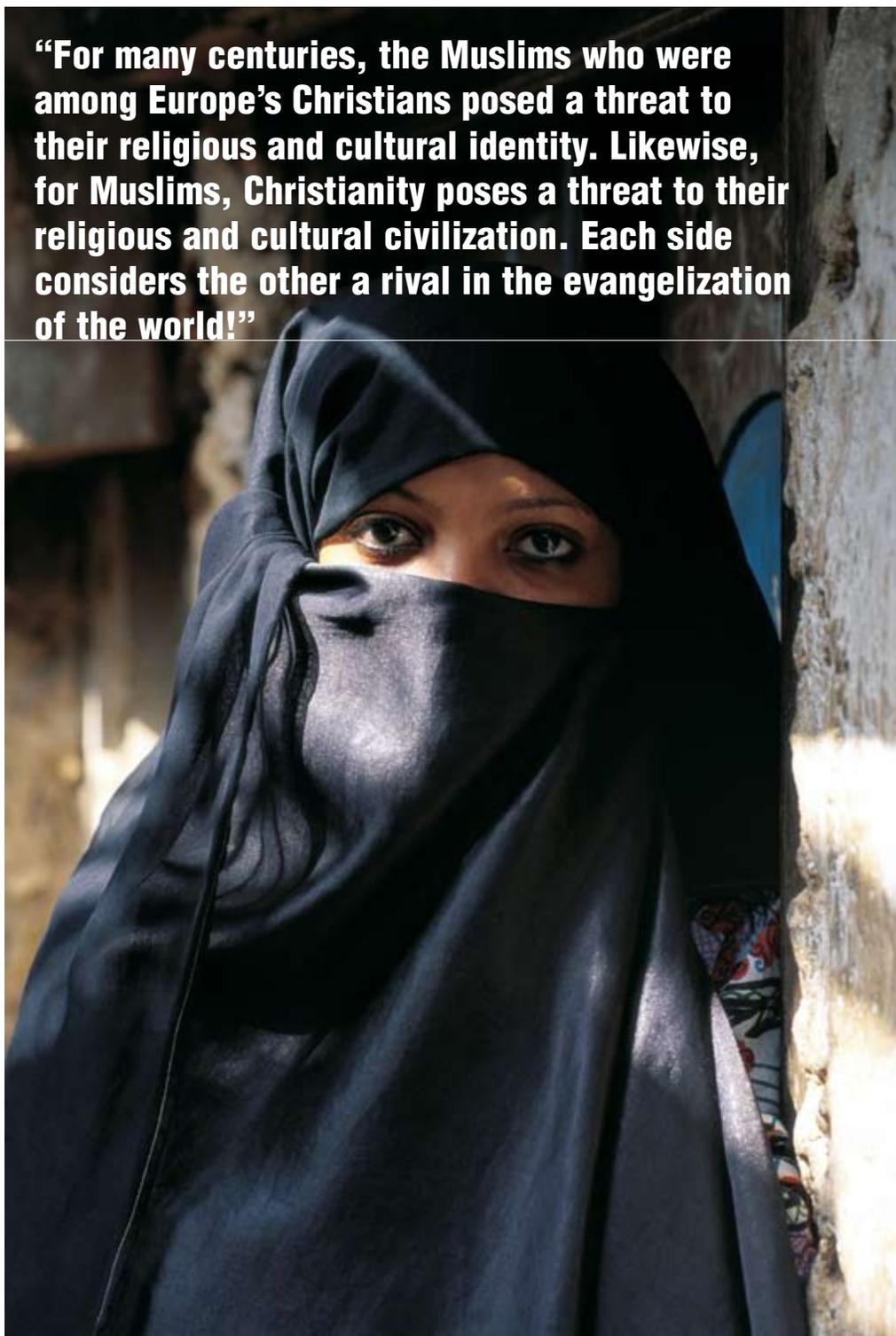
confusion, war and destruction. But ultimately, man's past will not be his future...

Yes, a greater power will engulf the world—a power that will prosper in peace for all eternity! Mankind will finally learn its lesson and submit to the greatest government that civilization will ever see! When Christ returns, He will come as the King of kings with a perfect supergovernment! Having decisively put down mankind's rebellion, Jesus Christ will establish

His kingdom on earth—a millennial kingdom of peace and prosperity for all peoples, nations, and cultures! From the destruction of war, the world will suddenly erupt into global peace, and with the knowledge of the true God! It will be an everlasting kingdom!

(To learn more about this subject, read our booklet *Who or What is the BEAST of Revelation?* and our book *TOMORROW'S WONDERFUL WORLD – An Inside View!*) □

“For many centuries, the Muslims who were among Europe's Christians posed a threat to their religious and cultural identity. Likewise, for Muslims, Christianity poses a threat to their religious and cultural civilization. Each side considers the other a rival in the evangelization of the world!”



Where and How Did We Get the Bible?

Part Two: Design and Layout of the New Testament

Some claim that the Bible is not complete without the Apocrypha or other obscure writings. Is there sufficient evidence to prove whether these documents belong in God's Word? In Part Two of this series, we conclude the amazing story of how God preserved His Word!

BY GEORGE C. ROGERS

THE APOSTLES and other disciples of Christ wrote the New Testament. Certain apostles canonized it. Notice the prophecy in Isaiah 8:13-17:

“Sanctify the LORD of hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. *Bind up the testimony, seal the law among My disciples.* And I will wait upon the LORD, that hides His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him.”

Isaiah 7:14, 8:8 and 9:6 all show the general context of the above-quoted verses. They speak clearly and undeniably of the time of Christ. His disciples were to bind up the testimony and seal the Law. This they did. Christ delivered the New Testament, yet He

required His servants to record—and to bind up and seal—that written record.

The New Testament was written to those “called out” ones (John 6:44, 65), who were to grow in character and qualify for rulership in the coming kingdom of God. It was not a commission to a nation, or for preservation in the same sense as the Old Testament had been.

The real identity and mission of Christ and the concept of called out ones becoming part of the God Family and ruling with Christ “threw” the Jews “for a loop,” as seen in Isaiah 8:13-17. Such a concept was so foreign to them that they considered it *blasphemy* (John 10:31-38). They had been molded into a certain pattern of thought and outlook in relation to the meaning of the Scriptures and the fulfillment of prophecy.

Only the Jews who were part of those called out and whose minds God had opened were able to understand. Of course, all of the very first called out ones—of God's Church—were Jews, as those from other tribes of Israel and gentiles began to be called shortly thereafter.

At first, the apostles believed that Christ would return in their lifetime and that canonization of the gospels, Acts, and a number of letters would not be needed. After all, the 70 weeks prophecy of Daniel 9 gave no indication that the final half of the week would be delayed nearly 2,000 years.

Besides, the servants of that time might not have understood the seven times delay upon Israel, Judah or upon Babylon. (Yet, there was no need to understand this at that early stage of time.)

Also, the Olivet Prophecy, described in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, sounded as if it applied to the Jews of that time. Jerusalem *had* been surrounded by armies. Terrible warfare and suffering *had* occurred, and it appeared that the first four seals had been (and were being) fulfilled.

The apostle Paul thought that Christ would return in his lifetime (I Thes. 4:15-16; II Thes. 2:1-2; I Cor. 15:51-52). Eventually, those surviving apostles (whether in the Greek and Roman world or dispatched among distant tribes of Israel) realized that Christ would return much later.

Notice the apostle John's answer to the Roman Emperor Domitian when he questioned him about the reign of Christ: “You [Domitian] shall also reign for many years given you by God, and after you very many others; and when the times of things upon the earth have been fulfilled, out of heaven shall come a King, eternal, true, Judge of the living and the dead...” (*Ante-Nicean Fathers*, Roberts and Donaldson, pp. 560-2).

More About Canonization and Paul's Letters

Now we turn to particular writings in the New Testament that indicated the apostles were very aware of their responsibility to bind and seal the New Testament. Recognize that in a general sense of the term, all the writers of the Scriptures, both Old Testament (O.T.) and New Testament (N.T.), were called prophets.

Notice the words of the resurrected Christ to those who were slow to understand the significance of events leading up to His miraculous Resurrection: "Then He said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and *all the prophets*, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:25-27).

Again, in a general sense, Christ referred to all the writers of the Scriptures as *prophets*.

When the apostle Peter stated, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto you do well that you take heed..." (II Pet. 1:19), he was not exalting himself and the other apostles above the writers of the O.T.

He was well aware that he and the other apostles had been personally tutored by the One who inspired all the other prophets. The "more sure word of prophecy" was a direct reference to Christ, as opposed to His human instruments of that time. Christ had opened up new understanding to His Church—He was the Source of that "more sure word of prophecy."

Now notice the words of Paul at the conclusion of Romans: "Now to Him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith" (16:25-26).

The "scriptures of the prophets" mentioned here cannot refer to the Old Testament prophets because the revelation to which Paul refers did not occur until Christ made them "manifest."

Paul also acknowledged the abundance of the revelations given to him (II Cor. 12:7). He knew that he was to disseminate this understanding to the Church: "Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God; even the mystery which has been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints" (Col. 1:25-26).

With full humility, but with a strong sense of reality, Paul could state to the Church, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when you received the word of God which you heard of us, you received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually works also in you that believe" (I Thes. 2:13).

Now note what Peter said regarding Paul's writings: "And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him has written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also *the other scriptures*, unto their own destruction" (II Pet. 3:15-16).

Paul's letters were referred in context to "the *other scriptures*." Since Peter had canonized many of Paul's letters, he knew firsthand that they were now scripture. Note that Paul, shortly before his martyrdom, instructed Timothy to bring Mark with him (II Tim. 4:9-11). It was for a specific mission in which he also instructed Timothy to bring "especially the parchments" (vs. 13).

There are strong indications that Mark was dispatched to Babylon with those parchments to present to Peter (I Pet. 5:13), the chief apostle who canonized those very writings of Paul. By that time, Paul had been martyred, but the parchments were already sent to their destination.

Shortly after Peter canonized those parchments—Paul's letters—he too was martyred at the behest of the Roman Emperor Nero. The writings that Peter had canonized up to that time comprised all the writings of the New Testament except what John would later add and canonize.

The Gospels, Acts and Writings of John

The four gospels, as they appear in the King James Version and other versions, are arranged in the correct order. Matthew was written first. Matthew was a Levite, and primarily addressed his gospel to the Jews. Mark was written next. Mark was a companion and an interpreter for Peter. He wrote the account as Peter had proclaimed it—Peter being the eyewitness in this account.

Luke's gospel was written for Greek readers. He was a companion of Paul. Luke also wrote the book of Acts in the Greek language. Since Luke was not an eyewitness, he based his writing upon much diligent research, compiling what a number of apostles and disciples had earlier documented (Luke 1:2). Luke strived to write the things "in order" (vs. 3) and thus establish a chronological order of events.

The fourth gospel (John's) was written after the other three gospels. The others were left in the same order since Peter's canonization. John's gospel was unique from the others, just as Luke's was unique from those that preceded his. John had been away from the area of Judea and the Mediterranean region for about 50 years. He and the other surviving original apostles had been dispatched to the areas of the 12 tribes of Israel where God had called many into His Church.

By the time of A.D. 90, John was the only surviving apostle of the original 12. God had preserved his life for a special mission. Neither Peter nor John himself, nor the others, originally understood why John would live longer or what his mission would be (see John 21:21-23).

John's final mission was multifaceted. First of all, he wrote his

gospel. In spite of the observations of Eusebius and other historians, John most likely wrote his gospel when he was in the region of France for about 50 years, well before the 90s A.D. (Read our book *The History of God's TRUE CHURCH.*)

The tone of John's gospel reflects careful forethought and peaceful introspection. It was carefully written over a period of time, most likely well before returning to the turbulent region of Judea.

John went to the area of Ephesus, in Asia Minor, after he returned to Judea and found the Temple and Jerusalem long since destroyed. Certainly, John must have been well aware of the Jewish war that had occurred about 20 years before his return to the area.

The Church of Ephesus was the headquarters during the era that bore the very same name. From here, John wrote his general letters to the churches. The tone of these letters reflected a great amount of turbulence mixed with urgency, due to the apostasy, as well as persecution.

Shortly after John arrived and settled at Ephesus, Emperor Domitian began the second imperial persecution (the first was carried out by Nero). John was imprisoned on the isle of Patmos in the Aegean Sea, where he received the Revelation and the command to write it down. Christ probably allowed John to be imprisoned to give him the solitude and precious time necessary to carefully document the Revelation of Jesus Christ. This

was to be the final book of the New Testament and the entire Bible.

When John was released from prison, he went back to Ephesus. Here he worked closely with an apostle named Philip (one of the original deacons) and Polycarp. With the help of Philip, he trained and advised Polycarp and others who would oversee the initial stage of the Smyrna era.

After completing his own writings, John may have revised some of them with editorial comments. But his final important mission was the final canonization of the New Testament. His canonization, like Ezra's, was extremely vital for the preservation of the true Scriptures. Just as Ezra had to canonize the true Scriptures in order to set them apart from Samaritan counterfeits, John had to take measures to protect the true Scriptures from counterfeit writings by the followers of Simon Magus and others of similar persuasion.

Upon his binding and sealing of the New Testament Scriptures, Christ commissioned them to be preserved by an unexpected group. The Church of God, systematically persecuted and hunted down over the centuries, was in no position to preserve these Scriptures.

God used the Greeks to preserve these Scriptures. Unlike the Church of God, the Greeks were not persecuted, but were free to remain in their homeland. Their mission would be to treasure, preserve and copy the New Testament word for word and letter by

letter—through the long, dark night of the Middle Ages.

It was not essential for these people to believe or even understand the central message in order to preserve them. God did indeed preserve these Scriptures through the Greek people.

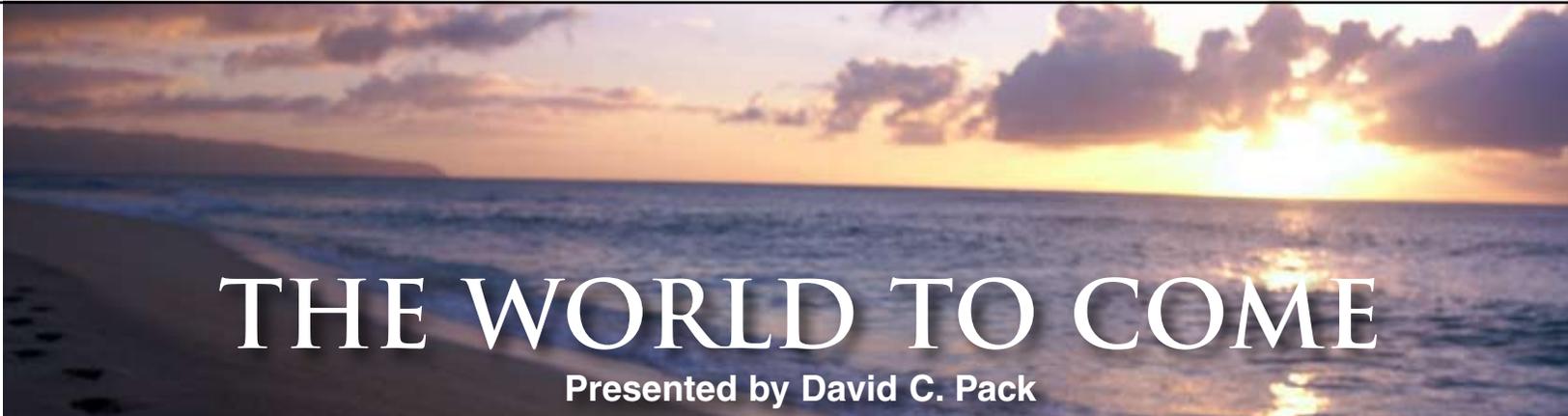
The Proper Arrangement of the New Testament

We have already mentioned that the order of the gospels is the same as presented in modern Bibles. The book of Acts follows next. Then we come to a section that has been dislocated from its original position—the seven general epistles: James, I Peter, II Peter, I John, II John, III John and Jude.

The counterfeit church in the east, in Greece, insisted that the General Epistles appear before Paul's letters. The universal church in the west, headed by Rome, insisted that Paul's letters come first, especially the book of Romans. They opposed anything that was labeled as Jewish or "Judaizing practices." Thus, the objection of the Greek eastern church was overruled in favor of the west, and the general epistles were moved.

Here are some other reasons the general epistles belong before Paul's letters:

- They were intended for the general Church of God and were not addressed to any specific congregations as were Paul's.
- They mainly contain general information.
- God always sent his servants to



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the Jews first (Rom. 1:16; 2:9-10). This included Paul.

■ All the authors of the general epistles preceded Paul in the order of time.

■ General epistles do give some necessary background to better understand Paul's letters.

Then Paul's letters are supposed to follow the general letters as established in the original canonization and confirmed by the Greeks, who were to preserve the N.T. Scriptures. Paul's letters generally contain stronger meat and more specific instructions. The pastoral epistles of Timothy, Titus and Philemon are even stronger. Hebrews, written by Paul, was originally rejected by the Catholics because it sounded "too Jewish."

Now we summarize the order of the New Testament, containing 27 books in 4 major sections:

■ **Gospels and Acts:** Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Acts.

■ **General Epistles:** James, I Peter, II Peter, I John, II John, III John and Jude.

■ **Letters to Specific Churches from Paul:** Romans, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I Thessalonians and II Thessalonians.

■ **General Letter of Paul:** Hebrews.

■ **Pastoral Letters of Paul:** I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus and Philemon.

■ **Other Writings of John:** Revelation.

(Paul wrote the following books while in prison: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon.)

As stated before, when one adds the 22 books of the O.T. to the 27 books of the N.T., a total of 49 books results—representing absolute completion. Out of envy, the Jews of the second century altered the number of their books to 24 (as explained earlier) in order to erase this significance.

But the true Scriptures remain intact even though the order of the O.T. has been rearranged primarily by the Roman Catholic Church, following the order of the corrupt Septuagint version. Then they simply rearranged the N.T., as well.

The Church of God can maintain purity of doctrine since God has guaranteed that all the Scripture has been preserved. This is most foundational and vital for those who seek God's truth!

The Apocrypha and Other Illegitimate Documents

The Roman Catholics contend that they are the exclusive preservers of the Bible with the authority to determine which books should be in the O.T. or N.T., and the order in which they are to be placed. They also acknowledge that they have exercised due authority by adding the seven books of the Apocrypha and portions of three others to the O.T.

Some Catholic translations contain the following books, called the Apocrypha: Tobit, Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, and I and II Maccabees.

Besides these books, one portion is inserted in the middle of Daniel 3 entitled, "Song of the Three Holy Children." At the end of Daniel is an added chapter (13) called "Susana and the Elders." Then is chapter 14, called "Bel and the Dragon."

The word *Apocrypha* comes from the Greek and means "hidden" or "secret in origin." In English, synonyms for *apocryphal* include words such as "unauthentic" and "ungenuine." The very name of these books verifies their lack of authenticity!

The Apocryphal writings come from a mysterious beginning with a secret origin. With this in mind, notice the following comments in regard to the sharp contrast between the canonized Scriptures and apocryphal writings:

"Christianity as it springs from its Founder had no secret or esoteric teaching. It was essentially the revelation or manifestation of the truth of God." The Apocryphal writings are further defined as "inconsistent elements existing side by side with the essential truths of Christianity" (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edit., Vol. 2, p. 176).

Actually, there are *hundreds* of other apocryphal writings, such as the

"Gospel According to the Egyptians," "Gospel of the Birth of Mary," "The Apocalypse of the Virgin," and on and on.

Most all the oldest known versions of apocryphal writing differ from each other. It is very rare to find any two that are identical.

Between 200 B.C. and A.D. 100, many apocryphal writings appeared among the Essene Jews. One of the most notorious of these spurious documents was the book of Enoch.

It should be noted that Jude 14 does *not* mention this book, but rather is quoting an oral prophecy by Enoch handed down by God's servants from before the time of Noah.

The document called the book of Enoch made an attempt to discredit God's Sacred Calendar in the first century. It was summarily rejected by Jude and all the other apostles.

Another interesting fact pertaining to the book of Enoch is that *even the Catholics reject it!* In spite of such a questionable track record, some continue to wonder whether such apocryphal works might be inspired, as were the canonized Scriptures. The best solution to this issue is to ask: Did Christ and the apostles ever recognize them or quote from any books of the Apocrypha? Did they ever show any approval of them?

To answer this, there are 263 direct quotations of the O.T. found in the N.T. Beside this, there are 370 statements found in the N.T. which are references to passages in the O.T. In both the O.T. and N.T., there are *no quotes* and *no allusions* to any of the writings of the Apocrypha!

It is well documented that Essene Jews originated many apocryphal writings. It would be beneficial to learn more about the nature of the beliefs of these Jews.

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* informs us: "The Essenes were an exclusive society, distinguished from the rest of the Jewish nation in Palestine by an organization peculiar to themselves...They had fixed rules...and regulations for the conduct of their daily life even in its minutest details.

WHY IS THE BIBLE DIVIDED INTO CHAPTERS AND VERSES?

The chapter-and-verse divisions of the Bible were added for the sake of convenience in referencing certain locations or points in Scripture. The original manuscripts for both the Old and New Testaments contained no such divisions.

An English scholar by the name of Stephen Langton was credited for dividing the Bible into chapters about the year A.D. 1205 and thereafter. Langton was a professor at the University of Paris and later became the Archbishop of Canterbury.

This is confirmed by the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edition, under the article "Stephen Langton": "Stephen, however, migrated to Paris, and having graduated in that university became one of its most celebrated theologians. This was probably the time when he composed his voluminous commentaries (many of which still exist in manuscript) and divided the Bible into chapters" (Vol. 16, p. 178).

This same source shows that Langton also was instrumental in the formulation of the Magna Carta in England after about 1213 while serving as Archbishop of Canterbury.

Another individual sometimes credited with dividing the Bible into chapters was a Cardinal by the name of Hugo of St. Cher, who died in 1263.

Concerning this claim, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* gives us more insight. From an article entitled, "Hugh [Hugo] of St. Cher," we read: "With the aid of many of his order he edited the first concordance of the Bible...but the assertion that we owe the present division of the chapters of the Vulgate to him is false" (Vol. 13, p. 859).

The work of dividing the Scriptures into chapters, by Langton and his assistants, was not inspired by God (as far as we know). However, this work was foundational for the following project in which a French printer by the name of Robert Estienne (usually known by the Latin form of his name, Stephanus) accomplished in 1551. In this year, Robert Stephanus divided the Greek New Testament into verses (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edit., Vol. 9, p. 799).

Then, in 1555, Stephanus divided the entire Latin Vulgate Bible into verses. He took Langton's chapters as they existed and further divided them into verses. In 1560, the year following the death of Stephanus, the Geneva Bible became the first English translation divided into chapters and verses. Even Jewish scholars came to accept these divisions and followed suit by dividing the Hebrew Scriptures accordingly. However, the order of the Hebrew Scriptures was preserved, as always.

Even though these divisions into chapters and verses provide much convenience for those who study and reference the Scriptures, they are still of human devising. As a rule of thumb, one should ignore these divisions when studying the Bible. These artificial divisions sometimes interfere with the sense of continuity in understanding certain scriptural accounts.

One example of an erroneous chapter break is at the end of Matthew 16. Verse 28 actually belongs with chapter 17. This verse quotes the words of Jesus:

"Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, *which shall not taste of death*, till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom."

Now notice the next verse, which begins chapter 17: "And after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought them up into a high mountain apart."

The following verses show that they saw the glorified Christ in vision, fulfilling Matthew 16:28.

The separation of these verses by a chapter break actually interferes with understanding of the continuity of the event being described. Closer examination will show that the ideal chapter break would better fit where verse 24 begins, in order not to break the context.

Dividing the Bible into verses can also communicate the wrong message, since so many are inclined to quote verses as "stand alone" when they are not meant to be removed out of context. Notice a verse that appears in Colossians:

"Touch not; taste not; handle not" (2:21).

This verse by itself, which is only part of a parenthetical expression, gives the impression that it encourages some type of physical self-denial. But in the proper context, we find the opposite to be the case. To understand the meaning of this verse, we need to read the verse that precedes it to establish the context.

"Wherefore if you be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are you subject to ordinances" (Col. 2:20).

Here, we see demonstrated one of the problems with the dividing of verses. By taking isolated phrases out of context, many have invented numerous false doctrines.

The verses of some books are clearly delineated by punctuation, such as the book of Proverbs.

The verses of the poetic book of Psalms and various other locations are more established due to the writings being already written in segments that fit easily into the verses as established by Robert Stephanus. These verses fit into meters and are set to music in the original Hebrew. Most always, they are correct.

Two exceptions are the final verses of Psalms 111 and 112, in which case the last verse should have been split into two verses. Together, the two chapters form a complete acrostic of 22 verses, not just 20 verses.

The original authors of the Scriptures did not intend that their writings be broken up and divided as has been done.

A number of the smaller books of the Bible can be read in one sitting. This is the best way to read it. To cover a larger segment at a given time helps to get the overview of the writer, rather than concentrating on phrases and segments of sentences as the verse divisions lead many to do.

Remember, while the chapter and verse divisions are convenient and helpful in a number of ways, they are of *human* devising. These divisions lead many to think of scriptural instruction in a "bits and pieces" approach rather than seeing the bigger picture. Be on guard to not let these artificial divisions cause you to forget the writers' intended overview! □

“Their membership could only be recruited from the outside world, as marriage and...[all association] with women were absolutely renounced... the tenets of the society were kept a profound secret, it is perfectly clear from the concurrent testimony of Philo and Josephus that they cultivated a kind of speculation, which not only accounts for their spiritual asceticism, but indicates a *great deviation from the normal development of Judaism*, and a *profound sympathy with Greek philosophy, and probably also with Oriental ideas* [emphasis ours]” (11th edit., Vol. 9, p. 779).

It is also interesting that this same article continues on the subject of the Essenes: “Their office-bearers were elected” (Ibid, p. 780).

Remember that I Timothy 4:1-3 categorizes forbidding to marry with doctrines of demons. The Essenes resorted to the fabrication of fictitious documents to justify the many doctrines of demons they adopted.

The Record of History

The Apocrypha is traced from the Vulgate of the Roman Catholic Church after the fifth century. From there, it was traced back to the Septuagint and on to Alexandrian influences—originating from a mixture of hybrid sources such as Samaritan and Essene writings.

The more devout Jews of the Dispersion accepted no other canon than the very Scriptures accepted by the Jews of Jerusalem and Judea. The

following quote illustrates the exalted position of the canonized Scriptures even outside the area of Judea.

Philo, the Jewish philosopher of Alexandria (Egypt) explained why he “makes no quotations from the Apocrypha, and he gives not the slightest ground for the supposition that the Jews of Alexandria of his time were disposed to accept any of the books of the Apocrypha in their Canon of ‘Holy Scripture’” (*Philo in Holy Scripture*, Ryle, p. 33).

The law portion of the Greek Septuagint version of Alexandria (Egypt) was translated from the Samaritan Pentateuch rather than the official Jewish Version. This can be categorically proven by the existence of 2,000 places where the Septuagint disagrees with the official Jewish Version, but agrees perfectly with the Samaritan Pentateuch.

The Jews used in translating the Septuagint were “Samaritan Jews.” As late as the early A.D. 300s, the Apocrypha was not yet added to the Septuagint. These apocryphal writings were later added to Septuagint version, which was already corrupted before these unwarranted additions.

In the fourth century (300s A.D.), at the Council of Laodicea, the Apocrypha was still excluded from the Scriptures (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edit., Vol. 16, p. 189).

In the year A.D. 384, renowned Roman Catholic scholar, Jerome, began translating the Latin Vulgate. He made his translation directly from

the Hebrew (Ibid, Vol. 3, p. 881). This translation from the Hebrew excluded the Apocrypha, as Jerome had rejected it as being false.

Shortly afterward, at the Council of Carthage, Augustine, the Canaanite Bishop from Hippo, North Africa, led the way for the approval of the seven Apocryphal books. This was the first official “acceptance” of these questionable writings still rejected by many Roman Catholic scholars.

It was not until the Council of Trent (1563) that the Roman Catholics declared the Apocrypha to be “equal” with any of the books of the Bible. The Catholics intended to alienate the Protestants with this ruling and did so by declaring anyone who rejected the Apocrypha to be “anathema of Christ.”

Lost Books of the Bible?

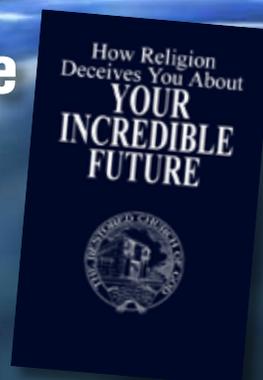
There are a few other books that some have questioned as being “lost books of the Bible” simply because they are quoted once or twice. Remember that, in Acts 17:28, Paul quoted heathen poets.

Certainly, no one claims that heathen poets were a missing part of the scriptures, but the logic that some employ is equally without basis. Paul quoted certain religionists who condemned Cretians as always being liars in Titus 1:12-13. This does not mean he sanctioned that statement along with anything else they may have

Please see **BIBLE**, page 27

What Does the Future Hold for YOU?

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PERSONAL

Continued from page 2

are, trying to offer Me what is already God's?" He said no such thing. Again, why? Because He knew that the governments of this world *ARE* the devil's governments. Christ knew that they belonged to him—*WERE* Satan's to give. Therefore, He rejected the TERMS for receiving these kingdoms from the one who *did* have authority to offer them.

Also understand this! This account describes what is called the *temptation* of Christ. What the devil offered was designed to *tempt* Him. If both Christ and Satan knew that the kingdoms of this world were *not* the devil's to give, *then where was the temptation?* Surely, the devil would have known what Christ knew. Of course, Christ, who was *God* on earth, would have known who had the power and authority to offer those kingdoms. The temptation would carry no weight—would be hollow—if they were not the devil's to offer.

So that there is absolutely no doubt that this is true, note the same account paralleled in Luke 4:6. The devil is speaking directly to Christ. Luke's account adds a key phrase that should hit you like a sledgehammer. Satan said, "All this power will I give You, and the glory of them: for that [it] is *delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will give it.*" Did you notice? It was completely within the scope of the devil's power and authority to offer or withhold the kingdoms of this world. They were *his* to give or not to give. God had "delivered" them to him—to his CONTROL!

This world's nations and governments, with "all the glory of them," are still under the control of the "god of this world"—the "prince of this world"!

Have you ever heard this before? Yet, this is the plain truth from your Bible, and it has a direct bearing on why the world is filled with overwhelming problems. This world, with its ways and systems, is controlled by the devil!

Satan's Kingdom Is Both Organized and Unified

Satan holds sway over all governments and nations. But is his own government, led by him and his demons, and ruling over human governments, unified? Is the devil himself divided? Allow Christ to answer these questions.

Christ and His disciples often had to cast out demons. I have done this on a number of occasions, and these can be very intense, dramatic encounters. They are not pleasant to witness, and those who do are often shocked by what they see. It becomes obvious that great power is present—both in the demon being cast out and in the greater power necessary to achieve this. Christ's accusers saw clear evidence that He was backed by *real power!* However, in Matthew 12:24-26, they accused Him of using the power of the devil to cast out demons.

Here is Christ's response: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and *every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.* And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?" (vs. 25). Christ was saying that Satan would never cast out demons—they are his! To do so would divide his own kingdom. The devil does have a kingdom.

Here is the point. Not only does Satan govern the kingdoms of this world, through his power and influence, but he also does it in an undivided, unified fashion with the aid of hundreds of millions (Rev. 5:11; 12:4) of demons.

Now notice an amazing account in Daniel 10:13-21. An actual spirit war, lasting three full weeks (vs. 13), is described! Michael, an archangel, fought with one called the "prince of the kingdom of Persia," and later referred to another up-coming battle with an arch-demon called the "prince of Grecia." Archangels do not need *twenty-one days* to defeat puny, little, physical men. Michael was battling these "princes," who were powerful (fallen) spirit beings within Satan's unified government, ruling over individual kingdoms (nations) within it.

Further, Ephesians 6:12 explains how Christians wrestle "against principalities, against powers, against the *rulers of the darkness of this world*, against *wicked spirits* [the proper translation] *in high places.*" The context reveals that these "high places" are within the governments or principalities of this world!

This is not God's world! It is evident that the devil governs a vast realm of fallen spirits. Together they deceive, confuse and exert far-reaching influence over all the governments and activities on earth.

What the Bible Teaches About Voting

The next section covers several biblical reasons why Christians do not vote. Each summarizes a biblical principle explaining why Christians do not participate in the governments of this world—or in selection of leaders and doctrine within God's true Church. Not only does a Christian not participate in the democratic politics of this world, but he would also *never* bring the world's politics into God's Church and attempt to stamp it with God's authority. As you examine these points, consider why each has a clear application, both in the civil governments of men and in the churches of man's world. It will also become obvious *why* voting is never practiced within God's Church.

How God Selects Leaders

Benjamin Franklin once said, "The longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of man; and if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?" This is truer than Franklin understood. Here's why.

This insight represents a central biblical understanding that few recognize. Consider these questions: "Who is behind the selection of leaders over the many countries on earth? Who actually chooses them?" Ultimately, do *men* select the kings, presidents and prime ministers, who stand as the human leaders of the nations today? We have

seen that this is Satan's world. But is this all there is to it? Does God play absolutely NO role in men's affairs? Is there anything else to understand?

First read Daniel 4:17. This is part of a remarkable story and partly explains why more talented people are leaving politics than ever before. It contains an amazing statement. Notice: "This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that *the most High rules in the kingdom of men*, and gives it to whomsoever He will, *and sets up over it the BASEST OF MEN.*" The word *base* means "the bottom, under." If a house has a *basement*, it is located at the bottom or under the house.

This part of Daniel's prophecy describes a king, Nebuchadnezzar, who may have been the greatest Gentile leader the world has seen—the "head of gold" of the giant image described in chapter 2. As a result of his important role in prophecy, leading the greatest empire on earth nearly 2,600 years ago, Nebuchadnezzar became lifted up with pride. Notice his words in verse 30: "The king spoke, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that *I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of MY power, and for the honor of MY majesty?*"

This worldly king was far too impressed with his *own* accomplishments and the grandeur of the spectacular ancient city (and kingdom) of Babylon over which he ruled. The account records that God humbled and punished him by giving him the mind of a wild animal for a period of seven years (vs. 32-33).

Nebuchadnezzar was an exception to the rule of verse 17—and there are a few such exceptions that God guides, for His own reasons. But He plainly states that He places "the basest of men" over the governments and nations on earth. Also, Daniel 2:21 states, "[God] removes kings, and sets up kings."

Now, typically, whom do *people* seek to put into office when they cast their ballot in an election? They try to insure that the "best candidate" wins!

No one votes for someone because they think that he is the "worst candidate." However, if we are to believe Daniel 4:17, this puts them in direct opposition to God's purpose—which is that the worst, or *basest*, man wins. The weakest, basest, lowliest people are often those whom God, for His own purpose, installs into office. This effect is why more qualified leaders often choose not to be part of a system primarily composed of this kind of people. Nebuchadnezzar shows that God makes a few exceptions—but this is *His* prerogative, not ours.

It is not God's purpose that the "better" people win. God determines the winners in advance. In the end, the "will of the people" has no power or effect, because God is in charge of the outcome of elections. He has complete control.

Do not misunderstand, however. The governments of this world are not of God simply because He selects their leaders. Some have tried to cite Daniel 4:17, completely missing the point when they say, "God is working in this election and good Christians everywhere, if we can get out the vote, can put godly men into office." This literally puts them in a position of fighting God's stated purpose. They do not understand *WHY* God says the basest people are elected. Many religious leaders ignore this verse, believing it to be their job to work out God's purpose.

God is working out a plan that encompasses 7,000 years. He is allowing mankind to find out that its own ways, governments, values, religions and purposes do not work. God has already picked the leaders that best work toward the fulfillment of His great plan of salvation for all mankind.

Here is the point. You and I do not know whom God has selected, in advance, as the "winner" that *He* wants in office. To cast a vote for someone other than the *pre-selected* winner is to potentially *fight God's purpose!* That is serious—and the Bible says that it is possible to "fight against God" (Acts 5:39)!

Further, if you are seeking to elect the *best* man, in an election where God has told you in advance that He is going to pick the "basest" person, you are directly *ignoring* His purpose and overriding it with your own. God has already picked the winner. Christians know they better "get out of the way," not "get out the vote"! God does not need our "help" installing whom He has chosen.

Where Is Christ's Government?

Next consider this famous "conversation." In John 18, Christ was on trial before Pontius Pilate. In verse 33, Pilate asked Jesus, "Are You the King of the Jews?" The exchange continues until it climaxes in verse 36. Christ had determined not to resist whatever Pilate or the Jews had chosen as His fate. He answered Pilate's question. Notice verse 36: "Jesus answered, *My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence [here].*"

Do you understand Christ's words here? He said that His kingdom (the New Testament term for government) *is not of this world*. Christians are part of THAT government—GOD'S government. They await the coming of *this* government to earth. Also, just based on this verse (there are many others), Christ explains that God's servants do not fight to defend His kingdom. Grasp this. Since Christ's servants do not even fight to defend Christ's (God's) kingdom, they certainly, then, would never fight in the wars of men and nations to defend any kingdom led by men!

Remember that Christ's kingdom is not on earth—it is from another place. It is not the job of His servants, through participation in men's governments or through fighting in their wars, to spread the kingdom of God. It has not yet arrived. Since God's kingdom comes from, and is headquartered in, heaven, His servants neither vote in, nor fight for, men's nations or governments.

So, Christians do not vote because they are part of another kingdom not of this world. In Matthew 6:9-10, Christ told them to regularly pray, “Thy kingdom come,” because His followers serve and look toward a different kingdom, the one to “come.”

A Christian’s “Political Agenda”

Philippians 3:20, states, “For our *conversation* [the Greek word here should be properly translated *citizenship*] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

This is a fascinating passage. It plainly states that a Christian’s “citizenship” is IN HEAVEN—not on earth. Of course, all true Christians are also citizens of at least one country on earth (some few have dual citizenship).

This verse explains *WHY* Christ said, “My kingdom is not OF this world.” That’s right! It is from (of) another place—HEAVEN! This verse complements John 18:36! Human leaders come from a certain city, state or province of the country that they represent. So does Christ. He comes from heaven.

The Greek word for citizenship is *politeuma*. POLITICS comes from this word! Christians *do* have a “political agenda,” but it is not of *this* world. *Politeuma* technically can also be translated another way. It can mean *a townsman*. It is correct to say that citizens of men’s governments are townsmen—of particular *towns* on earth.

Do God’s people practice politics? The answer is YES—in a sense! I have an absolutely deep political conviction. Let me say this more clearly, so you can understand. In one sense, Christians *are* very political in their thinking. Is God a political being? The answer is absolutely YES! But His politics are not of *this* society. He has His *own* view of government, His *own* view of correct and right *politeuma*, or politics. His kingdom—His government—is not of this world, but He *does* have a government.

The word *police* comes from *politeuma*. So do *policy* and *poll*. It is not hard to understand how police, policies and polls are connected, in one way or another, to politics. The

large American cities of Indianapolis and Minneapolis derive their names from *politeuma*. These are large towns with lots of citizens. Minnea(polis) means the major city of Minnesota and Indiana(polis) means the major city of Indiana. Mystery is often stripped away when words are broken down into their most basic meaning. The root meaning of *politeuma* holds an important lesson for Christians regarding from where and by whom their politics are governed.

Fruits of Democracy

We must ask this question: What are the fruits—the by-product—of any system or leader. In Matthew 7:16, Christ stated, “You shall know them *by their fruits*.” He repeated, “Wherefore *by their fruits* you shall know them” (vs. 20). Matthew 12:33 says, “...for the TREE is known *by his [its] fruit*.” These verses are primarily speaking about leaders, but the principle has broad application.

Let’s examine the “tree” called *politics, voting and democracy*. In a sense, it could be said that to demonstrate means to *demonstrate*. Observe the fruits of any demonstration that has gone wild and it is obvious that demons are behind it.

Look at the FRUITS of democracy. This is based on the spirit of *competition* between political parties. Each party seeks to gain an advantage over the other and will even undercut good programs if it will cast a bad light on their opponents. During the political process preceding an election, the challenger will oppose the incumbent at *every* turn on virtually *every* issue, to present himself in the best light and to get himself elected. Over time, this has a devastating effect on the unity of a country that is supposed to stand behind its government. Almost invariably, this openly—and often bitterly—divides the citizenry of the nation. At some point, the division is so entrenched that it becomes permanent.

Such are America and Britain today! The prophet Amos asked, “Can two walk together except they be

agreed?” (3:3). The unstated answer is a clear NO!

The practices of favoritism, endless debates and arguments, bribes, lust for power, corruption, lying and deceit, scandals and cover-ups, greed, exploitation, aggression, protests, intense and relentless accusation, inefficiency, vanity, decisions based on polls, voter apathy, strife and back-stabbing are just *some* of the *fruits* of democracy—and remember that Winston Churchill said that democracy is *better* than all the other forms of human government!

Democratic politics are shot full of division and disagreement, over nearly every issue that any society might face.

The fruit of the democratic way, now driven by unbridled human nature, is virtual CHAOS—rapidly on its way to ANARCHY! Remember, it is run by the god of this world and his “wicked spirits [marginal rendering] in *high places*” (Eph. 6:12). These wicked spirits sit at the real throttle of power *behind* the visible governments of nations. The Greeks were much more right than they knew.

No Christian can participate in such a system!

Those Who Exalt Themselves

Finally, consider this. Some candidates for office want to be a mayor—others a congressman—others a governor, judge or senator—or even a president or prime minister. Ask: What is every political candidate actually saying, between the lines, when he offers himself for the particular office that he is seeking? What is such a person saying about his *qualifications*?

Focus on a governor or a president—or perhaps the mayor of a city with millions of people. When a person seeks such a powerful office, that person is saying that he is qualified, in effect, to be considered a great leader. Such a person is actively seeking to *exalt himself* to a position of *great authority*. He is saying that he is sufficiently intelligent, talented, qualified or special and/or experienced enough to be entrusted with a great office of responsibility. This is exactly what a

candidate is declaring, whether or not he is honest enough to admit it. He is saying, much like Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4:30, that he is a great person, a great leader and the voting masses should hand him GREAT POWER! Understand. Voters directly assist such people in their climb to power.

Here is God's perspective. Jesus said, "For whosoever *exalts* himself shall be *abased*; and he that *humbles* himself shall be exalted" (Luke 14:11). Several chapters later, in 18:14, He repeated almost the exact same thing. One look at the greedy, grasping demagogues of modern western politics—and this is just as true of religious leaders—with their pandering theatrics designed to play to the people's concerns, leaves little doubt that Christ understood the corrupting nature of self-exaltation! He sees through the guise of phony "concern" for the people whose votes these "leaders" must get and/or retain to reach office.

Christians are to humble them-

selves *now*, in this life (Matt. 18:1-4; James 4:10; I Pet. 5:5-6). This will allow God to exalt them *later*, in His coming kingdom, giving them positions of great power and authority, ruling alongside Jesus Christ. Politicians exalt themselves and thereby insure that God will humble them at some later time, when they least expect it.

Christians understand the way God works. To participate in a system in which men *exalt themselves*, in the seeking of high office, is to endorse—to validate—to agree with—a corrupt system, with terrible fruit, emphasizing vanity and pride. Democracy is completely opposite to what God expects of all people when He commands them to humble themselves!

Obeying Civil Authority

No part of this Personal is intended to suggest that Christians should *ever* disobey civil authority—unless that authority directly instructs them to disobey the HIGHER authority of

God (Acts 5:29). Participating in the governments of men and obeying or submitting to these governments are entirely different matters. Christians do not confuse the two! (If you want to learn more about what God instructs on this subject, read our booklet *Should Christians VOTE?* It covers ten separate biblical reasons [we have covered some of these here] why Christians do not vote. Each reason summarizes a principle from the Bible explaining why Christians never participate in the governments of this world.)

Christians participating in the governments of Satan's world, through voting, military service or activism in social causes, is far more serious than most realize. It is disloyalty to the government of God and His complete authority over a Christian's life.

At the center of the gospel of the kingdom of God is a message about God's soon-coming, hierarchical GOVERNMENT. Followers of Jesus Christ look to this government! □

BIBLE

Continued from page 23

said as worthy of being canonized.

The following are some of the so-called "lost books" of the Old Testament: Book of the Wars of the Lord (Num. 21:14), the Book of Jasher (Josh. 10:13; II Sam. 1:18), the Book of the Acts of Solomon (I Kgs. 11:41), the Book of Nathan the Prophet (I Chron. 29:29), the Book of Gad the Seer (I Chron. 29:29), the Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite (II Chron. 9:29), and the Visions of Iddo the Seer (II Chron. 9:29).

Note that the last 4 books listed were quoted in the books that Ezra canonized. Why did he not add these books to the canon? The answer is that God did not authorize him to do so.

When writers compile information in order to complete part of a bigger picture, every source that contributes any given part of the big picture may not be relevant in its entirety. Even though the sources may be completely

reliable and accurate, they may not be a part of the bigger picture that God is guiding the writer or prophet to communicate.

During the time that Samuel conducted his "company of the prophets," part of their duties would have had to include the recording of events and compiling of accounts from sources written previously.

Many isolated accounts were combined into a unified bigger picture in documenting the flow of historical events. This would have applied to Elijah as he conducted the schools of the prophets at a later point in time. God allowed such servants not only to document the history in general, but many accounts in which God dealt with individuals, kings and entire nations.

When servants such as Isaiah or Ezra later canonized the accounts into larger works, they mainly compiled other existing works into a larger unified flow of history. So these servants and prophets actually built upon the labor of previous servants.

Some of the books listed above could have been drafts that God inspired for later servants to contribute to the bigger picture. This being the case, God would only cause the *final* product to be canonized, not every draft in the stages of development.

Those who question the ability of God to preserve the Hebrew Scriptures or the Greek New Testament fail to realize that this is something that He has carefully engineered and brought to pass.

Only those who stand in awe of God's power to preserve His Word will avoid being washed away in a sea of doubt.

After having proven all things (I Thes. 5:21), including God's ability to preserve the *complete* Bible, we are able to confidently trust God when He makes an unequivocal promise.

Almighty God plainly states, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). Mankind must—and someday *will*—learn to take God at His word, and believe Him! □

WORLD NEWS DESK

AN EDITORIAL ANALYSIS OF WORLD NEWS, TRENDS AND CONDITIONS



RELIGION

Vatican Influencing EU

The *New York Times* cleverly pointed out that since the Vatican has been unable to include a reference to “Christianity” in the new European Constitution, it has of course, continued to influence European politics, and the continent’s future, in other ways. Specifically in regard to Turkish membership in the EU, a recent interview with Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger included a statement saying that Turkey, a predominantly Muslim secular republic of 70 million people, is “in permanent contrast to Europe,” and that connecting it to Europe would be a mistake. To accentuate his point, he even referred to the historical Ottoman Empire’s incursions into Europe. *The Times* article continued:

“Like meddlesome clerics the world over, Ratzinger is inflaming an important political debate. He is elevating religious differences over

political process and personal beliefs over values that are universal, not a Judaeo-Christian monopoly. But unlike other issues on which the cardinal has recently taken provocative stands - whether pro-choice Catholic politicians should receive communion, and women’s role in society - enlargement of the European Union is outside the church’s purview. In the cardinal’s view, Europe is Christian, so Turkey doesn’t belong.

“In considering the possible implications of Turkey’s membership in the union, it would be refreshing if the cardinal had chosen to emphasize the positive potential in combining the best Christian tradition of charity and the best Muslim tradition of social justice.”

Most historians and even most of the knowledgeable public would agree that Europe is certainly not the

“best Christian tradition of charity.” They know that Europe’s so-called “Christian” history is seeped in blood. It is amazing how we once again see that the only lesson mankind learns from history is that no one learns from history. Some would also argue that Turkey is not the best example of the “Muslim tradition of social justice.” Linking “justice” with Turkey would certainly be a contradiction in terms for some.

In any case, there is little chance of Europe being interested in having Turkey as a member. *The Times* article points out that the main concern of the Catholic Church is further secularization and loss of Christian identity—both of which would be certain if Turkey joins the union.

Source: *The International Herald Tribune*

HEALTH, SCIENCE & SOCIETY

Britain’s Abortion Rate Hits All-Time High

Government statistics for England and Wales indicated that abortions had reached an all-time high in 2003. They include, as reported on the *This Is London* website:

■ 181,600 resident women terminated pregnancies last year—up 3.2% from 2002.

■ This represents a rate of 17.5 abortions per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44, the highest ever recorded.

■ The vast majority of women having abortions were in the 20 to 24 age bracket, totalling 51,124.

■ A total of 37,043 terminations took place among girls ages 15 to 19.

■ 58% of abortions were carried out at less than 10 weeks of pregnancy, 29% at 10 to 12 weeks, and 13% at greater than 12 weeks.

Such disregard for human life is just one of the many symptoms of a deteriorating society.

Source: *This Is London*

Nyquist: Is al Qaeda Preparing a Nuclear Hit?

Geo-strategic analyst Jeffrey Nyquist, in his recent article "Is al Qaeda Preparing a Nuclear Hit?", says that the recent warnings of a major terrorist assault before the November elections differ qualitatively from previous warnings. He then indicates that two data points serve to explain this qualitative shift: (1) Al Qaeda has claimed that it has nuclear weapons, and that they are probably already deployed on U.S. soil; (2) steps are being taken to deal with a major disruption of the November elections.

Mr. Nyquist writes, "A new book by terrorism expert and former FBI consultant Paul Williams says that al Qaeda acquired 20 nuclear suitcase bombs from the Chechen mafia between 1996 and 2001."

This agrees with similar statements made by Yossef Bodansky in his 1999 book, *Bin Laden: The Man Who Declared War On America*. In saying that al Qaeda poses a nuclear threat, Williams takes his analysis a step farther. He says that al Qaeda has almost assuredly smuggled suitcase bombs into the United States. He also says that these bombs are in the 10 kiloton range, capable of inflicting millions of casualties. Williams believes that al Qaeda will use several of these devices in simultaneous attacks against urban targets in the near future.

He asks, "Is there any reason to credit this dreadful conclusion?" He then points to preparations by the U.S. administration to possibly postpone the November election, as well as a July 8th background briefing by the Department of Homeland Security that indicated threats made during the fall of 2003 for a major offensive were "underway and are near completion."

Mr. Nyquist argues that al Qaeda would not make such statements without the means to fulfill them. He also indicates that the government cannot warn the American people, out of fear

of an economic disaster in response to such a warning.

He concludes: "The most effective security measures are impossible under the present political system. As it stands the U.S. would have to undergo an internal revolution before Washington could enact the policies most needed to defend against the suitcase nuclear threat. Simply put, the country is not ready to accept such measures. The country is not convinced that such measures are absolutely necessary. Therefore, the government cannot accept the reality of suitcase nuclear bombs sitting on U.S. soil! To admit such a thing would be tantamount to admitting that our form of government must come to an end.

"The basis of our nuclear defense for half a century has been 'deterrence.' Unless you can pinpoint your enemy, unless you can locate him on a map, you cannot send a missile against him. You cannot retaliate. In the case of terrorists hiding in remote mountain caves, there may be no deterrence even if you threaten to locate them and nuke their cave. Since they do not care about their own lives, since they are determined to die for their cause, deterrence is ineffective.

"Here is the dilemma of the United States in the first decade of the twenty-first century."

The dilemma? Not quite. Rather, this is part of a much bigger picture.

Source: *Financial Sense*

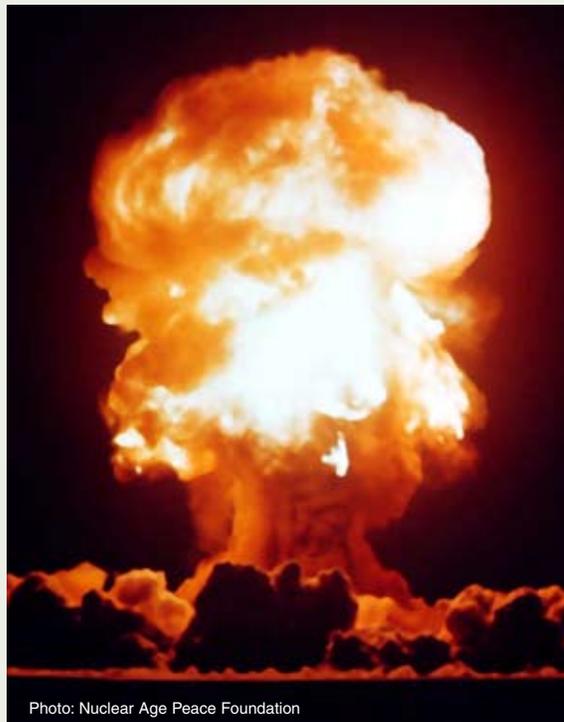


Photo: Nuclear Age Peace Foundation

Call for EU Flag at Next Olympics

Former President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, has called for athletes from the EU member states to fly the EU flag as well as their own national flag "as a symbol of our unity."

The next summer Olympic games will be in 2008 and held in Beijing, China. The press conference in Brussels, given by a spokesman for Mr. Prodi, included statistics of how well the EU did at the recent games in Athens, even claiming that the EU had

"swept the floor." EU officials calculated that the 25 EU states took 286 medals, including 82 golds. "For the sake of comparison," said the spokesman, "the United States of America won 35 gold medals and 103 medals in total, with China and Russian behind them (the United States)."

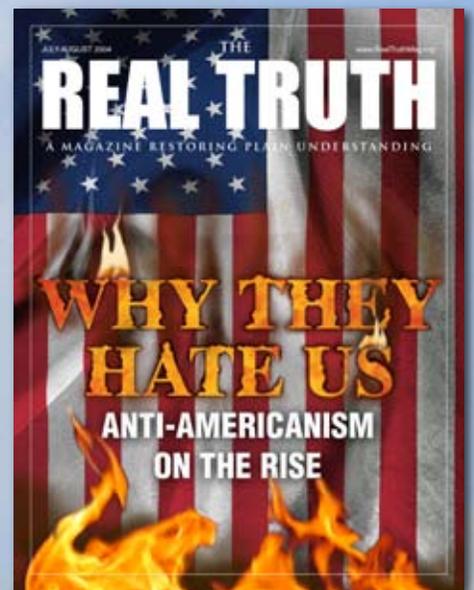
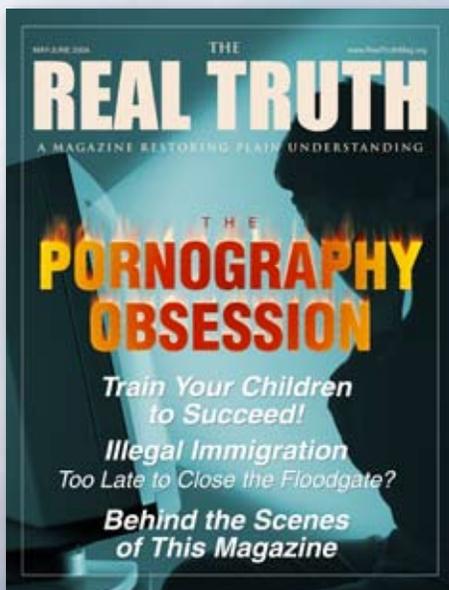
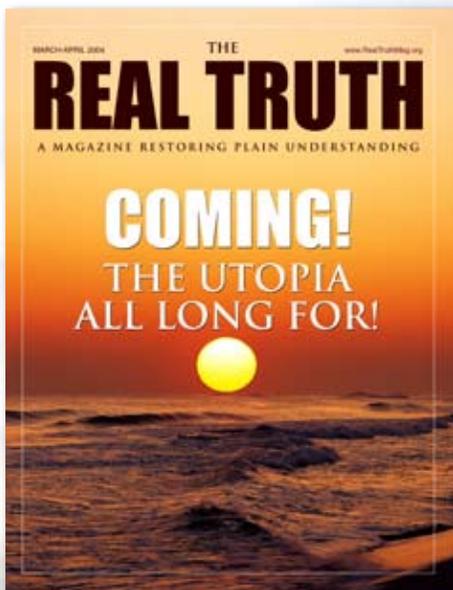
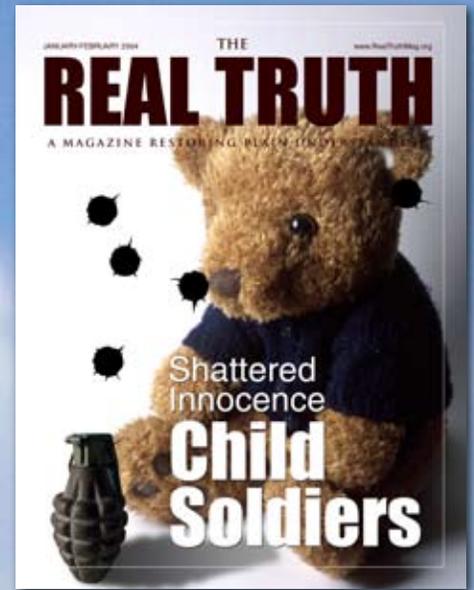
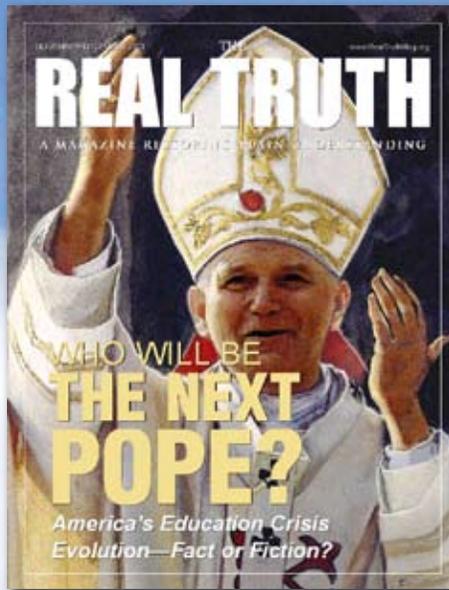
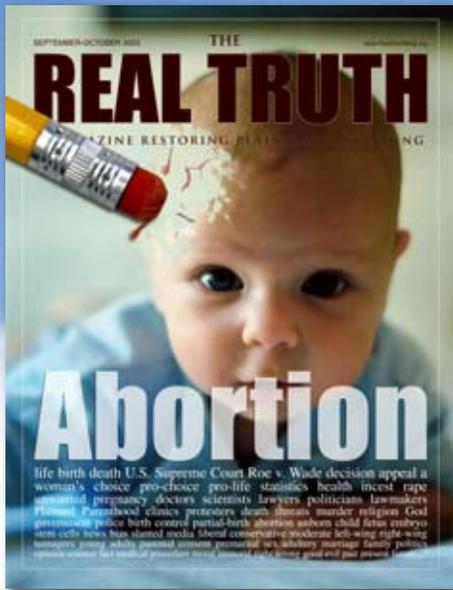
Unfortunately for the EU statisticians, if you compare the number of medals won against the number of athletes participating, the Europeans have less to celebrate. The U.S. won their 103

medals with 1,418 athletes, while the EU sent 6,298.

More importantly regarding the flying of the EU flag in 2008, consider the following: how critical it will be to present a larger and significant united front at that time, especially when participating in China, the world's most populous country; but also for those that remain in the EU to distinguish themselves from those that may disengage between now and then.

Source: *EU Observer*

Have you missed out on previous issues?



You can read them online at your convenience!