

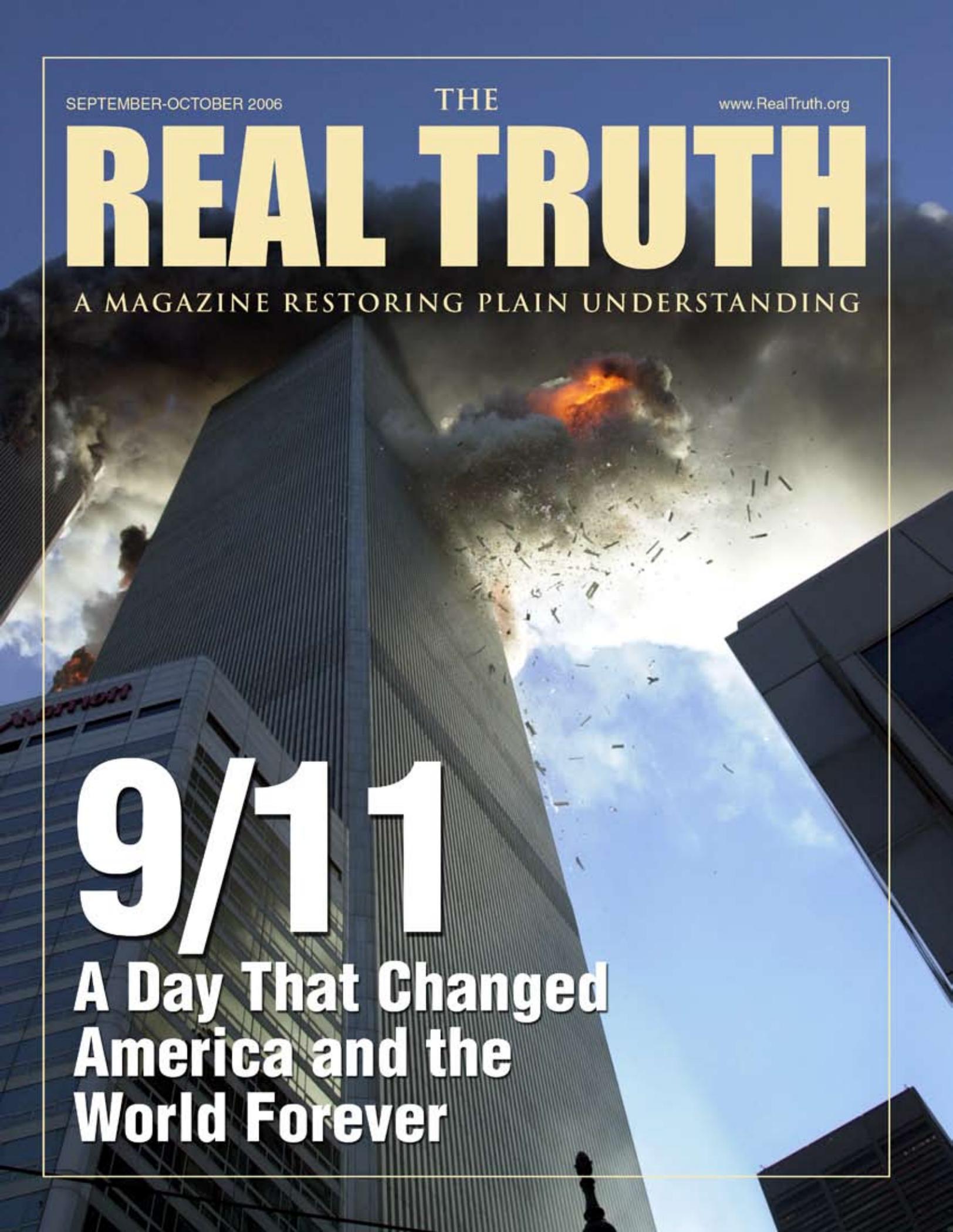
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2006

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REAL TRUTH

A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING



9/11

**A Day That Changed
America and the
World Forever**

THE
REAL TRUTH

A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING

VOL. IV | NO. 5 | SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2006

A R T I C L E S

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**The Greatest “Katrina”
Lies Ahead**

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PHOTO CREDITS: All photographs courtesy of ArtToday, Inc., unless noted otherwise. Page 8: More than 150 French peacekeepers arrived by ship Friday, August 25, 2006, in the southern Lebanese port city of Nakoura. With France leading the force, the European Union has said it would supply half of the 15,000 anticipated troops (Photo: MCT). Page 18: NOAA. Page 29: MCT (at bottom).

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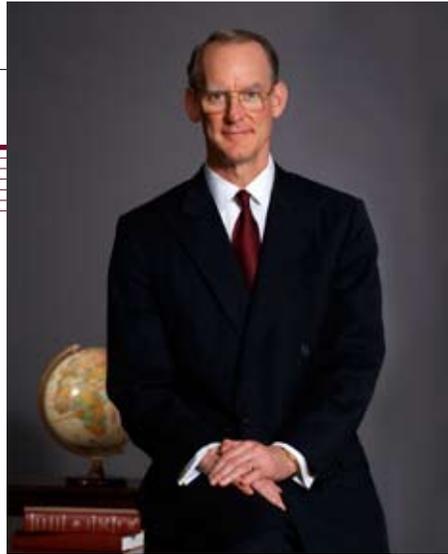
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PERSONAL FROM

David C. Fack



Appointment With Terror

*A Day That Changed America
and the World Forever*

The reality of terrorism grows around the world. Now almost a daily routine, the scope and severity of each new savage, barbaric act seems to exceed the previous one. These acts are perpetrated by shadowy organizations that are difficult to identify and even harder to find. *Why* is this happening? *Who* is behind it? *When* will it end and *what* should it mean to you? Here are the answers!

MANY TIMES, I have stood at the top of the World Trade Center on the same kind of crystal clear day that prevailed September 11, 2001. When I was assigned as a minister to New York City, in the mid-1970s, and again in the late 1980s, I often enjoyed taking people on tours of these enormous buildings. Of course, for five years no one has stood on top of the towers.

As we approach the 5th anniversary of this event, let's look back prior to 2001. Many have forgotten that the World Trade Center was struck for the first time, on February 26, 1993, by terrorist bombers. One day later, on February 27, I gave a sermon in

which I stated that terrorism was going to come to our shores—in a very big way—in the future. Few sitting in the audience believed me.

My sermon was titled "Truth." Below is an excerpted portion about terrorism, though reading it does not convey the emotion in which I made the statement:

"As our society comes apart—and I don't know how many times, brethren, through the years, I have said, I have mentioned in sermons, I've said *our society is going to come apart*. Sooner or later, terrorism—the reality of the ugliness of this world, a world that does not have the truth—will strike *our* society. I don't know how many times I have been right at the spot where a terrorist blew up the bottom of the North Tower, the Twin Towers. I've been there. I can picture the chaos as though I'm there right now.

“Oh, no, no, no, all that kind of stuff happens in the Third World. That happens in South America. That happens in the Middle East, in Israel and other places.’ Listen, when you can damage that much—the damage was tremendous from that car bomb—why, terrorists are going to find they are kids with new toys.

“Seven groups were so excited by what happened that [they] called in and said, ‘We did it.’ Now only one of them did it. Six of them were lying. That’s not my point. But people were just thrilled to get credit for that kind of damage, in this world where people speak falsehood, and ‘bend their tongue like bows for lies.’

“You know, the reality of this world is moving closer to us as God’s people.”

The reason I could so boldly state that terrorism would eventually happen in the United States is because Herbert W. Armstrong began warning of it in the 1970s, in a ministry that spanned 52 years (1934-1986). In a clear and forceful way, until the day of his death, he continued to warn of prophesied terrible calamities to come upon our lands.

This sermon was given 13 1/2 years ago. The expansion of terror has since advanced beyond imagination!

Changed Forever by Another Day of Infamy

I do not need to describe the events of Tuesday, September 11, 2001. Possibly the single worst act of terrorism the world has yet seen took place on American soil. As with the attack on Pearl Harbor, this strike was intended to be an assault on the very security of the United States.

My birth date is December 7, 1948. Because of this, and because my father’s older brother was at Pearl Harbor during that attack, this day has been a subject of interest to me my entire life. I have walked

Pearl Harbor and studied nearly every detail of what happened.

The death toll from the sneak attack at Pearl Harbor was over 2,300. The Titanic sank with 1,500 lost. The September 11 attacks resulted in over 2,800 deaths!

Ironically, twenty years ago, in 1981, the United Nations General Assembly officially designated the opening day of its annual regular session as the *International Day of Peace*. It is to be observed each year. In 2001, that day fell on September 11th. It is probably no accident that the terrorist conspirators, who plotted these awful acts, picked this very date to stick a thumb in the eye of both America and the world. The sheer daring of their plan suggests that they feel they can, in the future, do almost anything they choose—with near impunity. How do you stop criminals whose acts do not require a “getaway”? Through the horrific vehicle of mass murder, suicide bombers are interested in being “heroes” *in death*.

The choice of targets in these attacks was much more important, prophetically, than you might realize. The World Trade Center and the Pentagon are enormous symbols of both the pride and power of the greatest nation on earth. Actually, the Pentagon is the single largest building on earth—with the Twin Towers, Building Seven and the several-story structure that tied them together into one complex probably not far behind.

Yet, I heard two national news commentators state that “this was *not* an attack on America, but rather it was merely an attack on some *buildings in America*.” Though they were trying to bring a reassuring calm to the nation, they were desperately wrong in their assessment of what took place. The particular buildings that were struck were selected because they are possibly the greatest symbols of the world’s

most powerful country. The terrorists knew exactly which buildings to target in order to make the maximum statement of their purpose and to kill the maximum number of people in each strike.

We may never be certain of the target of the fourth plane, which crashed in southwestern Pennsylvania. I am chilled as I realize that there was likely a struggle in the cockpit, literally, as this plane turned in the skies directly over *The REAL TRUTH* offices. The Bible states that Satan the devil, who is called the “god of this world” in II Corinthians 4:4, is also called “the prince of the power of the air” in Ephesians 2:2. He and the fallen spirits he leads were almost certainly involved in the struggle for control of the jet in the “air” above this office.

Why Did It Happen?

As a result of these terrorist acts, America and the world will never be the same. The anger, sadness and confusion that engulfed this country were overwhelming. Americans learned firsthand what the Israelis have been enduring since 1948.

The headlines of most next-day newspapers around the world screamed of what happened. The pictures of the actual attacks, and the sounds and pictures of people shrieking, crying, running in terror and running to banks and gas stations are images that are indelibly stamped in the minds of the hundreds of millions of people all over the world who watched this event play out in slow motion and instant replay.

America has long been known for its “fighting spirit.” People in great numbers wanted her to retaliate. Many voices said, “We must do something!” This time, in the end, America’s fighting spirit will not prevail. We will soon learn why.

Please see PERSONAL, page 25



NORTH KOREA'S

Global Ripple Effect

AS NORTH KOREA CONTINUES TO BUILD ITS NUCLEAR PROGRAM, HOW WILL ITS DEFIANCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IMPACT WORLD EVENTS?

BY ROBERT R. FARRELL

IN A MOVE possibly timed to coincide with America's Day of Independence, North Korea ratcheted up already simmering tensions with the United States by test-firing six ballistic missiles. The next day, it launched a seventh—a long-range missile

said to be capable of striking U.S. soil. The launches came despite repeated warnings from Japan, the U.S., and China, North Korea's close ally.

This defiant act clearly signaled North Korea's determination to join the "nuclear club," countries that

possess nuclear weapons. In fact, it claims to already possess such weapons, and many military and intelligence officials believe this to be true.

Even more frightening for the international community is that North Korea appears to be willing to sell such destructive weapons to rogue nations and terrorist organizations. It has said it will continue to test its missiles, and



has promised reprisals if sanctions are imposed. It has also threatened nuclear retaliation if attacked.

With a history of unpredictable and confrontational behavior, how will the global ripple effects of an aggressive nuclear North Korea shape the future balance of world power?

Aggressive Stance

From its capital at Pyongyang, the North Korean government commands the fifth-largest standing army on earth—more than one million soldiers—as well as a vast special operations force, arguably the world’s second-largest. Its massive, battle-tested armed forces are well equipped with chemical, biological, conventional and possibly nuclear weapons. Simply put, it is a force to be reckoned with.

Many arms control experts believe that North Korea has been pursuing nuclear capability for decades. In 1994, after years of diplomatic wrangling, it agreed to suspend all nuclear-related activities in exchange for fuel,

food and financial aid, primarily from the U.S. and China.

However, this agreement was short-lived. In 2002, Pyongyang restarted its nuclear reactor at Yongbyon and expelled UN International Atomic Energy Agency monitors. The following year, it withdrew from the international non-proliferation treaty.

Despite protests from the international community, North Korea has defiantly stated it has the right to a nuclear “self-defense” deterrent and that it will continue developing its nuclear program. This belligerent approach has strained its relationship with the United States, South Korea, Japan and even China, all of which are concerned about Pyongyang’s military intentions. As a result, North Korea is widely seen as the greatest threat to peace in the Far East.

Economic Distress

North Korea has one of the world’s most centrally-planned and isolated economies. The communist-led gov-

■ **NUCLEAR REACTOR SITES:** Satellite images capture two nuclear reactors in Yongbyon and Taechon, North Korea. The world community continues to monitor the nation’s expanding nuclear program.

PHOTOS: MCT

ernment sets all prices, wages and production levels, and all products are manufactured by state-run enterprises. After years of underinvestment and mismanagement, the country’s industrial infrastructure is believed to be beyond repair, resulting in, for example, a chronic shortage of spare parts for industrial machines.

In the 1990s, the country’s economy declined dramatically under a combination of economic mismanagement, natural disasters, fertilizer shortages and the collapse of its main benefactor, the Soviet Union. For an economy that was never robust to begin with, the results were catastrophic. Poor agricultural yields led to severe food shortages and widespread starvation. It is estimated that during its time of economic decline, between 600,000 and 3.5 million North



Koreans—3% to 15% of the population—starved to death. Since then, the country has relied heavily on aid from China, South Korea, the U.S. and international agencies to feed its population, with China and South Korea being the leading providers.

The country continues to experience food shortages mainly due to a lack of arable land, inefficient farming practices and shortages of tractors and fuel. In 2005, it experienced its 11th consecutive year of food shortages. With famine continuing to be a very real threat, it is widely believed that a desperate North Korea is using its nuclear aggression as leverage

to negotiate a non-aggression pact with America and an ongoing supply of food aid from the international community to feed its malnourished population.

This shortage of food for its citizens is partly due to the maintenance and expansion of its military. It is estimated that the country spends 25% of its gross national product (GNP) on the military, the highest rate in the world. (By comparison, its rival South Korea spends only 2.5% of GNP on its military.) This has enabled North Korea to have a standing army of one million soldiers and a formidable arsenal of biological, chemical and conventional weapons.

In addition, Pyongyang is a major exporter of arms to many nations, including volatile nations such as Iran and Pakistan.

Global Rippling Effects

The international community is concerned about North Korea for a number of reasons:

- The erratic, unpredictable and aggressive nature of its government

- Its lack of commitment to abide by internationally-accepted codes of conduct

- Its sale of weapons to unstable rogue nations and possibly terrorist groups

- Its determination to develop nuclear weapons

- The threat of it attacking and occupying South Korea

In 2003, the world's leading nations initiated "Six-Party Talks" in an attempt to persuade the North Korean government to give up its nuclear ambitions, with the proposed incentive of receiving increased economic aid, as well as a security agreement from Washington not to attack North Korea.

However, after several rounds of talks, little progress has been made.

As it continues to press ahead with its nuclear program, Pyongyang's aggressive stance is causing rippling effects across the world scene.

As it continues to press ahead with its nuclear program, Pyongyang's aggressive stance is causing rippling effects across the world scene.

- **United States:** The U.S. has tens of thousands of troops on the border between North and South Korea, on guard against any potential attack on the South.

However, the American military is also occupied in a number of "hotspot" regions, including Iraq and Afghanistan. If the decision was made to remove U.S. troops from South Korea (which is possible), would the South be able to withstand an attack from the North? And, with its military resources spread so thin around the world, how would the U.S. react?

Also, any attempted invasion of North Korea would be a highly risky move, most likely resulting in disaster. With its massive army, huge stockpile of weapons, and long-range "Taepodong-2" missiles capable of hitting U.S. soil, North Korea represents a "nightmare" scenario for the Pentagon, far worse than Vietnam. A powerful well-armed North Korea with potential Chinese support is a different proposition than Iraq. Would the U.S. public be able to stomach a long-term war with potentially hundreds of thousands of casualties?

- **China:** Since its founding, North Korea has had close ties with the Chinese government, its chief supplier of food and fuel. China has an interest in building a stable North Korea, chiefly because of the threat of millions of refugees streaming over its border in search of food.

However, relations between the two countries appear to have cooled in recent years, due to North Korea's erratic behavior. As North Korea continues to advance its nuclear program, will Beijing be able to persuade it to cooperate with the world community?

- **Japan:** The Japanese and North Korean governments have not had diplomatic relations for some time

NORTH KOREA AT A GLANCE

- **Area:** Slightly smaller than Mississippi

- **Natural Resources:** Coal, lead, tungsten, zinc, graphite, magnesite, iron ore, copper, gold, pyrites, salt, fluorospar, hydropower

- **Geography:** Strategic location bordering China, South Korea and Russia; mountainous interior is isolated and sparsely populated

- **Population:** 23,113,019 (July 2006 estimate)

- **Environmental Issues:** Water pollution; inadequate supplies of potable water; waterborne disease; deforestation; soil erosion and degradation



SOURCE: CIA'S WORLD FACTBOOK

due to long-term hostility. The two countries are historic enemies, with bitterness rising to new heights after Japan's occupation of Korea and the atrocities it committed in World War II. Contentious relations continued in the second half of the century, most notably in the 1970s and 80s when a number of Japanese nationals were abducted by

“It is estimated that the country spends 25% of its gross national product (GNP) on the military, the highest rate in the world.”

North Korean spies, sparking national outrage.

In 1998, North Korea once again ignited controversy when it test-fired a missile over Japan, causing great alarm. Tensions between the two rose dramatically after the July 2006 test-firings, with many in Japan calling for the expansion of its military. In fact, Japan is so concerned about the recent missile test-fires that—for the first time since World War II—some leaders considered a preemptive strike on North Korea's missile bases!

Will North Korea's actions give rise to Japanese nationalism and (as many worry) the emergence of Japan as a military and strategic counterweight?

■ **The Middle East:** Pyongyang is said to have provided weapons to a number of Middle Eastern nations, including Iran. It is also believed to be a sponsor of terrorism. How will this change the balance of power in the Mid-East?

As the state of Israel is supported by the U.S., the Arab nations have long sought sponsorship for their cause. So too have the terrorist organizations. A well-armed North Korea provides a potentially attractive option, particularly for weapons procurement and military training. The attraction of such a relationship for North Korea would be the ability to procure large quantities of cheap oil, so desperately needed. It is believed that the Arab nations are possibly arming themselves for future war with Israel. It remains to be seen what part North Korea would play if war were to occur.

What Lies Ahead?

What role will North Korea ultimately play in world affairs? Intelligence analysts, military specialists and government leaders continually monitor and analyze these and other geopolitical situations and potential scenarios. However, no human being can precise-

ly predict the decisions a rogue nation will make, or how the outcome of such decisions will affect mankind's future.

But there is *one source* that has analyzed and laid out—in advance!—the future geopolitical scene. Few understand that this “analysis” is revealed in the Bible. One third of Scripture is prophecy, of which much is foretold to be fulfilled in “the latter days” (Jer. 23:20)—our time now!

It is likely that North Korea's million-man army will join a prophesied Eurasian power-bloc (the “Kings of the East” – Rev. 16:12), along with Russia, which will eventually fight a European superpower for world domination at the end of the age. The very survival of humanity will be threatened (Matt. 24:22).

Just when all life will be on the verge of extinction, Jesus Christ will return and stop humanity from destroying itself, putting an end to all wars: “And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, *neither shall they learn war any more*” (Isa. 2:4).

At that time, North Korea and all other nations will permanently abandon their nuclear programs. □

“SELF-RELIANT” NATION

North Korea's impact on the world scene outweighs its size. Bordered by Russia, China and South Korea, it has a population of 23 million, in a land-mass slightly smaller than the state of Mississippi. This communist country is perhaps the most isolated, highly controlled nation in the world. Citizens are closely monitored (for instance, cellphones were once banned), and the government restricts travel into and out of the country.

Even though the Korean people have a long history, North Korea is a relatively new nation, formed at the end of World War II. When the Soviet Union and the United States defeated the Japanese occupiers, Korea was divided into two nations, one north of the 38th parallel, and the other south.

Since then, Russia and China have supported the communist North, while the U.S. has backed the democratic South.

Internally, North Korea has had political stability, having only two leaders in its history, Kim Il Sung (known as “Great Leader”) and his son, Kim Jong-il (known as “Dear Leader”). At its founding under Kim Il Sung, the government practiced a policy of economic and diplomatic self-reliance (“*juiche*”) in order to counteract the excessive influence of other nations, including even its closest allies, the Soviets and Chinese. This policy, while continuing to be officially maintained, has been a failure, as North Korea is heavily dependent upon other nations for food. □



IRAN BECOMES A REGIONAL PLAYER

FREE ELECTIONS in Iraq. Syria withdrawing from Lebanon. Libya abandoning its weapons of mass destruction programs. Egypt amending its constitution to allow direct, multiparty elections. Kuwait permitting women to vote and assume office. These were said to be among the many signs that America's invasion of Iraq and subsequent toppling of Saddam Hussein led to change in the Middle East.

The region's political landscape is changing—but not in the way Washington expected.

The Iraqi people are struggling with daily acts of terrorism, as civil war looms. The terrorist organization Hamas was voted into office to head the fledgling Palestinian government. Israel's recent failure to remove Hezbollah has empowered the Jewish nation's enemies and helped to further unify the Arab world. And Iran has emerged as a formidable regional player.

In its Middle East program report, Chatham House, a British think tank, asserts, "The great problem facing the U.S. is that Iran has superseded it as the most influential power in Iraq." Iran trains and equips the Shiite militias, with members numbering in the hundreds of thousands, to destabilize Iraq.

The report continues, "...this affords [Iran] a key role in Iraq's future. Iran is also a prominent presence in its other war-torn neighbor with close social ties, Afghanistan. The Sunni Arab states of Jordan, Egypt and the Gulf are wary of Iran yet feel

compelled by its strength to maintain largely cordial relations while Iran embarrasses their Western-leaning governments through its stance against the U.S." (*Iran, Its Neighbours and the Regional Crises*).

Animosity between Washington and Tehran has existed since the 1979 Iranian Revolution, and has worsened ever since. Many Iranian government leaders are veterans of the eight-year Iran-Iraq War, and have not forgotten that the U.S. backed Saddam Hussein in what is today considered the longest conventional war of the 20th century. Washington supplied Iraq with satellite intelligence and tolerated the use of chemical weapons against Iranian troops. Today, tensions have heightened due to the presence of 135,000 American troops in Iraq—in effect, in Iran's backyard.

The "Unthinkable"

Nicholas Burns, undersecretary for political affairs at the U.S. State Department, said, "An Iran in possession of nuclear weapons is unthinkable for all who value security and peace" (*Gannett*).

But Iran, refuting claims of being a rogue state, maintains it only wants nuclear power for peaceful purposes. "We do not need nuclear weapons," a former Iranian president said to the United Nations. "We do not want nuclear weapons" (*Mainichi Daily News*).

The United Nations gave Tehran an August 31st deadline to end its uranium enrichment program, which the Iranian government ignored. Voices among the nation's public also feel that gaining nuclear technology is Iran's "legal right."

In light of this continuing defi-

ance, some have said that for the UN to remain credible, it must heed Washington's call for discussing sanctions against Iran. However, Security Council members China and Russia, along with Germany and France, have sizable business interests in Iran. This, some assert, explains why Moscow and Beijing have urged patience.

Just days before the UN deadline, the Iranian president inaugurated a new phase of a heavy water production plant, which can be used to produce nuclear weapons. The U.S. military estimates that Iran is just five to eight years away from achieving this.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Iran's current president, even challenged U.S. President George W. Bush to a live televised debate. Claiming that the United States and the United Kingdom were "the origin of all disturbances in the world," Mr. Ahmadinejad told reporters that Iran and other nations "are against America's practices in managing the world" (*BBC News*).

Meanwhile, the Israeli government—which bombed an Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981 to stop Iraq from producing an atomic weapon—stated it will not allow Iran to become a nuclear power.

Most Americans no longer support the war in Iraq. Israel did not gain a decisive win against the terrorist group Hezbollah, emboldening that group and other enemies. The United Nations seems powerless.

With a number of parties declaring Hezbollah (which Tehran supplies with funds and arms) the victor in the recent Mid-East war, Iran has established itself as a regional powerhouse—and has done so without nuclear weapons. Many wonder what role Tehran will play if it joins the "nuclear club." □



EUROPE AND THE FUTURE OF THE MID-EAST

Once again, the world is confronted by the need for a “new Middle East.” Who is capable of making this happen?

BY JEFFREY R. AMBROSE

FOR REASONS including religion, race and natural resources, the Middle East has long been a cauldron of tension and conflict. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 brought a radical shift in the region’s power balance as well as attitudes among its neighbors.

Since that time, a multitude of proposals have been set forth intending to placate the factions in the region and bring lasting peace.

But hostilities continue to flare. The recent showdown between the nation of Israel and the Lebanon-based group Hezbollah, classified (in part or in full) as a terrorist organization by Israel, the United States, Canada and other nations, continued the cycle. This border skirmish has implications elsewhere in the Mid-East, including Syria, Iran and the Palestinian territories.

The region’s chronic unrest weighs heavily on governments around the globe. Recent diplomatic efforts known as the Middle East Peace Process began with the Madrid Conference, held in the fall of 1991 and sponsored by Spain, the United States and the USSR. These focused on cooperation among Israel and three of its neighbors—Lebanon, Syria and Jordan—and led to an Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty. But most goals set in Madrid are still eluding diplomats a decade and a half later.

In 2003, the *Roadmap for Peace in the Middle East*, which focused on building relations between Israel and the Palestinians, was presented by the U.S. in cooperation with the European Union, Russia and the United Nations, collectively called the Quartet.

With each new round of fighting, the rest of the world looks for a third party or parties to present a solution. This provides opportunities for other nations, or groups of nations, to dem-

onstrate leadership on the world stage. In the process, it spotlights differing approaches, motivations and goals among those who would attempt to douse the geopolitical fires.

World Powers Respond

After the fighting broke out between Israel and Hezbollah, a number of countries and organizations were floated as candidates to intervene: the U.S., EU, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and United Nations.

But America, Israel’s closest ally, is already overextended in Iraq and Afghanistan and, as a result, has limited its assistance during the recent conflict to intelligence and logistics. U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, stating that the time has come for a “new Middle East,” proposed a two-stage plan to stabilize the region using international forces. The United States stood virtually alone in insisting that Hezbollah should be disarmed before any cease-fire took effect.

After a cease-fire was enacted August 14, many declared Hezbollah victorious, including the leaders of Iran and Syria. Syrian President Bashar Assad also stated that the outcome of the conflict proved the American plan for the Middle East is “an illusion” (*AP*).

When mulling a response to the crisis, a number of European nations were against the idea of a NATO peacekeeping mission, feeling the organization is too closely tied to Washington. On the other hand, European governments also balked at the proposal of an EU force from Javier Solana, the EU’s High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Plans for a UN peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon, projected to reach 15,000 troops, are progressing slowly, allowing Hezbollah (reportedly using funds from Iran) to gain credibility by swiftly providing aid to the Lebanese and spearheading rebuilding efforts.

France was “considered the likely leader of the force because it has a strong army, can deploy troops quickly and has relative credibility in the Arab world, in part because of its opposition to the U.S.-British invasion of Iraq” (*Reuters*). France also has strong historical ties to Lebanon. However, citing a lack of clear rules of engagement for the peacekeeping force, France disappointed the world by committing only 200 troops to the UN force, far fewer than expected.

France later increased this number to 2,000 and was asked by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to lead the force until February of next year. As of this writing, it appears that the French will be joined by 4,900 troops from other European countries.

However, it is another nation of “old Europe”—Italy—that will have the strongest presence in the force, having pledged up to 3,000 soldiers. This nation’s leadership wants a clear European footprint in the Middle East in the wake of the crisis. The new prime minister Romano Prodi is making a point of stepping out of America’s shadow, stating, “I want to create some kind of European co-action” (*International Herald Tribune*).

A stated goal of this force is to work with the Lebanese army to implement a 2004 UN resolution calling for “all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias” in the south to disarm. At that time, Hezbollah declared itself exempt from this resolution, claiming to be a “national resistance movement” rather than a militia, and the Lebanese army—along with some government officials—agreed. The recent UN resolution that resulted in the August 14 cease-fire leaves Hezbollah intact, leading some to state that it will only be a brief lull in the fighting.

Europe’s Reservations

In choosing a path of involvement (or non-involvement) in Lebanon, beyond any humanitarian motives, the nations of Europe must consider how their own interests will be affected. Factors include the prospect of Hezbollah becoming a strong political force in the rest of the Arab world—a neighboring region with extensive economic and political ties to Europe—the oil supply in the Persian Gulf and North Africa, on which Europe depends—and the reaction of the perhaps 20 million Muslims within current EU borders.

The latter concern was recently voiced by both French and German officials. Philippe Douste-Blazy, France’s foreign minister, fretted about the possibility of renewed Muslim riots in Paris suburbs being sparked by a French military presence in Lebanon. Meanwhile, Germany’s deputy leader of Parliament, Wolfgang Bosbach, stated, “I am really afraid of the radicalization of the Muslim communities in Germany. There are at least 900 supporters of Hezbollah and 300 of Hamas in our country. We are being very careful” (*ibid.*). A remarkable admission—1,200 residents can influence foreign policy decisions within a nation of 82 million people!

Another pressing concern has prevented decisive action from Germany: lingering collective guilt over the nation’s Nazi past. The fact that Germans were responsible for the deaths of six million Jews during World War II has made many Germans

wary of involvement in a peacekeeping force. The possibility of German soldiers firing on Israelis creates a queasiness expressed by Chancellor Angela Merkel: “As Germans we should proceed in this region with utmost caution” (*ibid.*). In an irony of timing, a prominent author considered to be a voice of Germany’s conscience, Günter Grass, recently admitted to serving in the Waffen-SS in 1944 and 1945.

Eyes on the Horizon

The new UN peacekeeping mission is the first major European-led military deployment since the Bosnian war of the early 1990s. Europe’s actions there were largely viewed as ineffectual, and it took U.S. and NATO intervention to finally end the fighting.

Europe needs a resounding success to rebuild its credibility, and Lebanon could be its long-awaited door to greater Middle East influence. Mr. Prodi has alluded to this idea: “Let’s use common sense. Step by step. Now we have to guarantee peace between Lebanon and Israel. Then, of course, we have to start dialogue, links. But we will expand to the neighboring problems. Now we have to prepare minds and souls for that” (*ibid.*). And Europe, not as friendly with Israel as the United States, would bring a notably different long-term strategy to the region.

Europe is a highly developed, technologically advanced continent of over half a billion people, with a gross domestic product nearly equal to the United States (still the world’s largest economy). How long will this would-be superpower remain a divided, relatively passive player on the world stage?

Ultimately, the future will echo centuries past, and Europe will rise again to superpower status. But how can this be known in advance?

There is one book that records the rise of superpowers before it happens—the Bible. This book contains much information about Europe, and the dominant role it will assume in the future.

To learn more, read our report *Out of the Ashes: THE RISE OF EUROPE*. □

As Peace Summit Ends, War Begins—Why?

IT WAS AN ambitious and noble effort to bring peace to a war-torn region. On June 21, some 25 winners of Nobel Prizes in peace, economics, literature, physics, chemistry, and physiology and medicine attended the “Conference of Nobel Laureates, Petra II: A World in Danger.”

The two-day peace conference, convened by Jordan’s King Abdullah II and Elie Wiesel, a Nobel Peace Prize winner and Jewish Holocaust survivor, was held in the ancient city of Petra. Its purpose: to find a peaceful solution to the long-standing troubles between the Israelis and Palestinians.

In his inaugural address, King Abdullah said, “The intellect, knowledge and talent of the world’s Nobel Laureates have brought better lives to millions of people in our world, and this week, we have a unique opportunity to have them apply their highly innovative minds to some of the most pressing contemporary global problems.”

Mr. Wiesel stated, “Hatred, an old and new infectious disease, is still ravaging the human heart. Indifference imperils our future.” Explaining that the theme of last year’s Petra Conference was “A World in Danger,” he said, “Sadly, our world is still in danger, growing danger, so we kept the title for this year’s conference.”

Many dignitaries attended, including former U.S. Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke, Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand Sathirathai Surakiart and the Dalai Lama.



■ **CALLING FOR PEACE:** King Abdullah II (top), Elie Wiesel (bottom).

PHOTOS: MCT

Meeting for the first time since Hamas won control of the Palestinian government, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert embraced each other. Both leaders agreed to set a date for a future summit meeting.

In addition to searching for solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, the peace conference focused on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, education, health and poverty, and economic empowerment. Discussions included joint Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian economic projects (such as quarry exploration and advancing a canal project that will bring water from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea).

Certainly, the leaders and thinkers had commendable intentions.

Yet their best efforts and hopes for achieving peace in the Mid-East were abruptly answered days later by the sudden breakout and escalation of war between Israel and Hezbollah.

The horror of war has wracked the world for thousands of years. Its fruits are terror, destruction, economic upheaval, orphaned children, population displacement, widespread devastation of the land, atrocities, hunger, disease, untold suffering, misery, despair, injuries, death and even genocide. All of this yields greater hatred and revenge, endless retaliation and more war, because nothing is ever permanently resolved through military conflict.

Long-standing ethnic, tribal and religious differences, coupled with boundary disputes and outright aggression to seize the land or property of others, have always served to fuel the next war fought between the same peoples or nations.

Few understand that all wars, battles, conflicts and hostilities are caused by one common denominator—a **ROOT CAUSE**. Found at the very core of human nature, it breaks apart families—transforms safe neighborhoods into crime-ridden ghettos reminiscent of war zones—has historically led the churches of the world to wage religious wars and conduct inquisitions—and has, to varying degrees, corrupted all governments, from the Third World to Western democracies. From marriages and families to neighborhoods, churches and governments, everyone is affected. This keeps even the world’s brightest minds—despite their genuine concern—from discovering the answer to true and lasting peace. □



BIBLE CODES

Decoding the Mystery

WHAT IS THE TRUTH ABOUT “BIBLE CODES”? HOW CAN YOU KNOW WHAT TO BELIEVE? WHY DOES IT MATTER?

BY CHET R. ECHELBARGER

AROUND THE world, men and women are captivated by a theory so incredible that, if proven true, would forever revolutionize mankind’s view of Scripture.

Within the past few years, several bestselling books claimed that prophecies concerning 20th Century people and events were embedded in the Hebrew Bible as hidden code, written many centuries ago. But others renounce this theory as unfounded.

What are the facts—the truth—of the matter?

These Bible codes, also known as Torah codes, involve words, phrases or clusters of words that some believe hold special meaning. The theory is that God intentionally placed hidden messages within the Bible’s text. The popular book *The Bible Code* claims these codes can predict the future. Other bestselling books, along with numerous articles and televi-

sion documentaries, have propagated the theory. However, such claims are strongly questioned by skeptics and contested by various religious groups.

Yet code proponents assert that names and events hidden in the Scripture can only now be revealed, in this modern Information Age, through computer searches of the Hebrew text. Supposedly, these codes contain secret predictions of events that have already come to pass, including the assassination of Egypt’s Anwar Sadat and former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin; the Jewish Holocaust; the 1995 earthquake in Kobe, Japan; the first Gulf War; and the emergence of diseases such as AIDS and diabetes. They even predict an earthquake will strike Los Angeles in 2010.

Advocates say that predictions for virtually every major event of history can be found in the first five books of the Bible, the Torah. Other Bible decoders claim that such predictions are in all of the Hebrew texts—the entire Old Testament.

How It Is Done

The arrival of the personal computer, along with the development of advanced software, has presumably enabled Bible codes to be retrieved. They are deciphered through an encryption method called *Equidistant Letter Sequencing* (ELS). In this method, the spaces and punctuation between words are ignored; only letters are counted. This software treats the entire Hebrew Bible as one long string of letters without spaces, hunting for embedded words.

The program arranges this long line of 304,805 letters, which make up the Torah, into an infinite number of computer configurations. It then searches for a predetermined set of words. Starting with sequences of 1, 2, 3, 4, up to 10, then 20 to 50 letters, etc., code words are found by utilizing a consistent number of skips.

For instance, if someone wanted to embed a message that translated into *BLUE SHOE*, it might look something like this: **B**rown **L**unch **U**nits **E**xist; **S**earch **h**our **h**ome to **E**nter

Counting letters only, the message is decrypted by using every fifth let-

WHY DID CHRIST TEACH IN PARABLES?

Some believe Jesus Christ used parables as interesting stories in order to make His point more clear and enhance the audience's understanding. But was this actually His intention?

Perplexed by His use of parables, Jesus' disciples privately asked Him about their meaning (Mark 4:10).

Jesus answered, "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: *that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand*" (Mark 4:11-12).

Note what Jesus said! Only Christ's servants could understand the parable's real meaning. Others might think

they understand—but they cannot! Christ never leaves His servants in the dark about matters He wants them to understand. But He records them in ways that keep them hidden from the view of others. This is why so few understand the Bible, which has been read by millions.

In John 6:44, Jesus stated, "No man can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me draw him." Only those whom the Father calls and opens their minds through His Holy Spirit will unlock the spiritual understanding contained in God's Word.

In addition, when a person responds to God's calling with obedience, he will receive more understanding (Psa. 111:10). □

ter. Using this method, letter skips can involve hundreds, even thousands. After a name or phrase is found, the letters encoding the words are arranged so the phrase becomes visible. Then, other words of related meaning are sought. These are described with complex statistics to "prove" they are not presented by random chance.

Do They Exist?

Does this system of decoding messages from Scripture reveal hidden prophecies from God?

Prominent scholars dismiss these as illegitimate, noting that no one has a letter-by-letter version of the Bible as it was originally written. Even the oldest surviving manuscripts include slight variations, any of which would throw off computer test results.

Can these codes forewarn of events to come—can they predict the future?

The answer is no. What the future holds is known only to God, and we can only know what He chooses to reveal to us.

Supposed details of future events discovered by computers are speculation at best. Since we do not know the exact details of future events, it is impossible to know that what is found is indeed a future prophecy. Although it may turn out to be true, there is no way to know for sure until after the event has occurred. Therefore, computer-generated codes cannot be relied upon to predict the future or to warn us of events to come.

So what can we conclude? First, we need to read what God's Word has

to tell us—what is openly presented, and *not* some supposed hidden prophecy embedded in the text, or some other erroneous speculation. In John 17:17, Jesus Christ said, "Sanctify them through Your truth: *Your word is truth.*" The Bible's text is the source of all truth, as revealed from God to man. It is the Creator speaking to His creation.

Why the Fascination?

What has sparked today's mushrooming interest in prophecy? Sensing that something is terribly wrong, many believe the world has reached what the Bible calls the "end-time"—or "last days." Millions routinely discuss prophetic terms such as "Anti-Christ," "Great Tribulation," "Millennium," "Armageddon," "Beast," "False Prophet," "God's Wrath," "Abomination of Desolation," and others—but without proper meaning or comprehension.

This is because they simply do not know *where* or *how* to look within God's Word to get correct understanding of what such terms mean, and how they will sequentially play out within God's great Master Plan for the end of the age. Instead of examining the hundreds of clear scriptures on these and other aspects of prophecy—for PROOF (I Thes. 5:21)—many seem content to trust in human "experts." As a result, confusion abounds.

The Bible is approximately 750,000 words. Since about one third is prophecy, this means that 250,000 words are devoted to many, many prophecies. Now ask: What possible purpose

would God have in devoting a full third of His Words to a subject—any subject—and then leaving mankind in the dark about it?

God gives prophecy for two clear purposes: (1) AS A WARNING for those who will take heed and (2) PROOF of the existence of the true God of the Bible—and, therefore, proof of the authority of the Bible.

Also recognize that God's prophecies will occur, regardless of the passing of time. In Matthew 24:35, Christ assured, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." Just because God's prophesied events do not occur within *our* perceived timeframe does not render them unfulfilled. They *will* happen according to God's purpose, on His time schedule.

We have the assurance from a loving and just God that we will be forewarned of prophetic events: "Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but He reveals His secret unto His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7). Notice it says His secrets are revealed to "His servants"—not to mathematicians using powerful computers and sophisticated software.

God keeps His promises. He always reveals great events before they happen. Only He can reveal prophesied events, because He is the one who brings them to pass. No human being can do this. In Isaiah 48, God says, "I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of My mouth, and I showed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to

pass...I have even from the beginning declared it to you; before it came to pass I showed it you" (vs. 3, 5).

In fact, God issues a challenge to all self-proclaimed prophets and seers in Isaiah 41:21-23.

The Bible IS a Coded Book

Bible code proponents are right about two things.

First, the Bible *is* a coded book. However, God's Word is not coded in the manner that advocates assert. For this reason, the vast majority of people are ignorant of Bible prophecy and God's ultimate plan for humanity.

In this end-time age, man gropes in an insatiable quest to acquire more knowledge. Yet, he does not seek the right kind of knowledge. God says people are "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (II Tim. 3:7).

Second, end-time prophecies can only be understood in our time now. God inspired the prophet Daniel to record great prophecies pertaining to future events—yet he was not permitted to understand them: "But you, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the *time of the end*: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" (Dan. 12:4). We are living in this "time of the end," an Information Age when knowledge

continues to rapidly increase. Stunning, long-misunderstood prophecies in the books of Daniel and Revelation have now been unlocked.

Yet, ironically, confusion abounds! This is because people reject God's Word as the right FOUNDATION of knowledge.

The Bible is a mystery to most. It simply cannot be read cover-to-cover like any other book and be understood. The Word of God is like a jigsaw puzzle, with thousands of pieces of varying shapes, forms and sizes, which must be put together in a precise pattern. When every piece fits perfectly, the entire Bible makes sense. These pieces—the truths of the Bible—are scattered throughout, revealed "here a little, there a little." Notice: "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little" (Isa. 28:10).

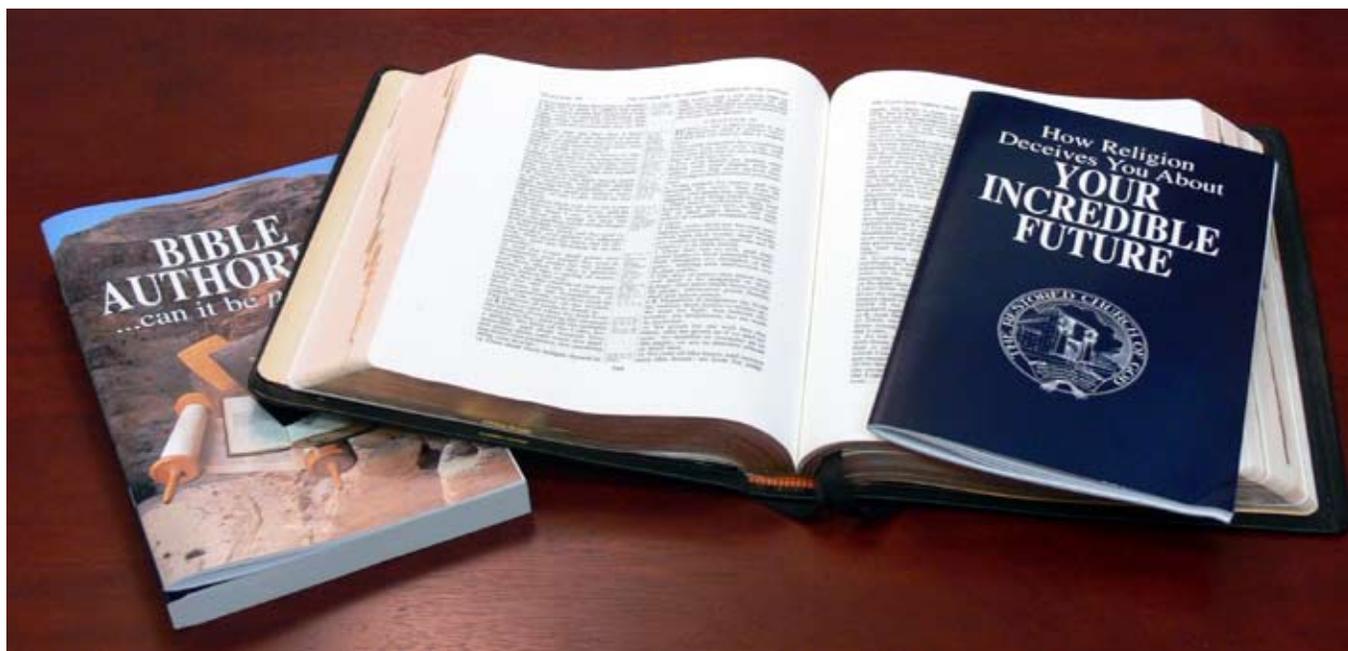
But why are these truths not evident to one who reads the Bible from Genesis to Revelation? Simply because they lack the key needed to decipher the codes—God's Holy Spirit. This alone opens the mind to understand the Word of God. I Corinthians 2:9-10 states, "But as it is written, Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those that love Him.

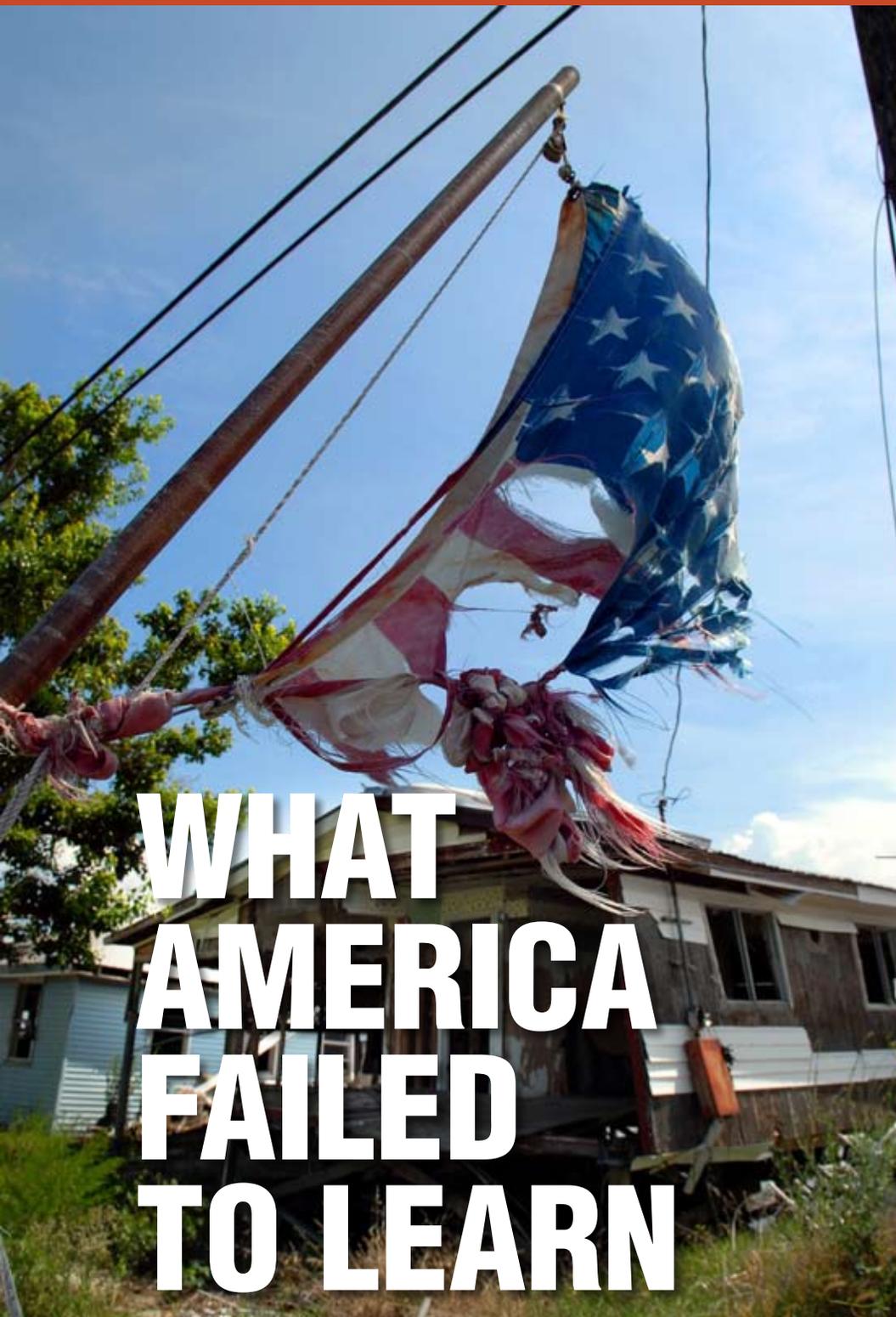
But God has revealed them unto us *by His Spirit*: for the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God." Only the power of God enables human beings to understand spiritual matters.

God gives His Spirit to those who "repent"—who change their way of life—and "believe the gospel," the good news of the coming kingdom of God (Mark 1:14-15). This involves surrendering to God and keeping His commandments, which results in growing in spiritual understanding: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do His commandments" (Psa. 111:10).

Traditional Christianity has generally denied God's Law, teaching that it has been abolished and nailed to the cross. Yet God's Word states His Holy Spirit is "given to them that obey Him" (Acts 5:32). The pastors, priests and theologians who advocate disobedience, therefore, *cannot* and *do not* understand the Holy Bible. Rather, they lead people astray, away from the path that would allow them to acquire God's Spirit and true understanding.

Prophecy has nothing to do with computer software extracting embedded messages from Scripture. Rather, it is God's Holy Spirit that gives biblical understanding and reveals prophecy coming from the text of His Word. □





WHAT AMERICA FAILED TO LEARN

AS HOMES AND LIVES along America's Gulf Coast continue to be rebuilt in Hurricane Katrina's aftermath, there are vital lessons waiting to be learned.

BY BRUCE A. RITTER AND JUSTIN T. PALM

IN 2005, Hurricane Katrina unleashed havoc and destruction throughout the New Orleans metropolitan area and the Mississippi Gulf Coast region. One year later, with homes, schools, businesses and lives still struggling to be rebuilt, the storm's effects remain an open wound longing to be healed.

Widespread damage was caused to schools, hotels, casinos, government buildings and churches throughout Mississippi, Louisiana and Georgia. Scores of thousands of homes and businesses were damaged or destroyed. Disaster declarations were issued over an area of 90,000 square miles. New Orleans was hit the hardest after breached levees put the majority of the city underwater.

At an economic cost of more than \$80 billion and causing more than 1,800 deaths in seven states, all remember the days following Hurricane Katrina. Just over a year later, the population of New Orleans is only half its pre-Katrina size. Remains of the dead were still being found eleven months after the storm, and approximately 700 people are still categorized as "missing."

With only a few victims yet to be identified and debris still being cleared away, people are beginning to move on. In July, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development released \$3 billion in public housing and rebuilding grants. Homes and lives are slowly being reconstructed.

Yet the images of bloated bodies in the streets and outrageous tales of violence and bloodshed, generated by panic and fear, offer a sobering glimpse of what lies ahead for America.

A Broken Society

In the aftermath of Katrina, with 80% of New Orleans underwater, society quickly broke down. Highways and roads were closed. The causeway that stretched across Lake Pontchartrain



■ **ONE YEAR LATER:** Thousands of displaced Gulf Coast residents still live in temporary housing, while prolonged clean-up efforts continue in the Lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans and elsewhere.

PHOTOS: MCT

was broken into giant disjointed slabs. Tens of thousands of people waiting to be evacuated in the Superdome and convention center became restless. Food and water quickly became scarce. In a matter of hours, the situation descended into despair.

Under such extreme and desperate circumstances, human nature was put on raw display along America's Gulf Coast. Vehicles were carjacked. One man shot his sister over a bag of ice. Hospice workers allegedly euthanized the stranded sick or elderly. Looters freely roamed New Orleans, stealing from stores and homes. Temporary jails were constructed in a vain attempt to restore order. Police officers quit

or committed suicide, unable to cope with the breakdown of law and order.

National Guard and federal troops moved into New Orleans to patrol a world-renowned city that came to resemble a war zone. Rescuers in boats and helicopters reportedly had to suspend rescue operations when their heroic efforts were met with gunfire. In just days, society collapsed.

It was a disastrous event never seen before in America; a time most will never forget. Nations around the world were stunned at the havoc taking place in the U.S. Not since 9/11 had America seemed so crippled, so vulnerable. How could a region deteriorate—and so quickly?

Katrina's wide-reaching aftermath has produced many life lessons—lessons America has failed to learn.

Lesson 1: There Is a Cause for Every Effect

After the storm came and went, New Orleans' crime rate dropped dramatically. But this is not because criminals decided to stop stealing, murdering, etc.—they merely moved with the mass

exodus of evacuees to other parts of the nation.

Today, cities such as Houston and others, which welcomed thousands of displaced survivors, are now struggling to cope with the criminal element that came with them. According to authorities, about 150,000 people moved to Houston alone, the most of any U.S. city—which the Houston police believe is responsible for the city's 17% spike in homicides. Of the 232 homicides in Houston (from December through July 25), 21% involved an evacuee as either a suspect or a victim. A local judge said that Katrina evacuees arrested in the Houston area have cost the county's criminal justice system more than \$18 million.

As some of the same evacuees trickle back into New Orleans, the city's crime rate is going back up, and is affecting the recovery process. A *Washington Times* article reported that "six fatal shootings...occurred within 24 hours," causing the Louisiana governor to send the National Guard into the city once again. A month earlier, five teens were killed as they sat in or stood next to their vehicle. A New Orleans City Council member said, "Such sensational slayings have a crippling effect on the city's struggle to rebuild its tourism industry and persuade evacuees to return."

Murders, thefts and vandal-



■ **STATE OF EMERGENCY:** As thousands were stranded across New Orleans, police were pulled from rescue operations to combat looting and other crimes.

PHOTOS: MCT

ism thrive in a city struggling to rebuild. According to a *New Orleans CityBusiness* article, “A national security firm will be in New Orleans...to assess security at New Orleans Public Schools, said Recovery School District Superintendent Robin Jarvis. Many district schools have been open and vandalized since Hurricane Katrina, she said. For example, all copper was stripped out of Drew Elementary School on St. Claude Avenue. Jarvis said the district will eventually have security 24 hours per day, seven days per week, which she said could cost ‘a lot of money.’”

One year after Katrina, human nature has not changed. Most do not understand there is a cause for every effect. In this case, crime is the effect of man’s unchanging nature. Few understand that though man was made after God’s image *physically*, human beings are to become like God *spiritually*—take on His nature, His divine CHARACTER.

God says that He is love (I John 4:8). But if this is the case, then why, many wonder, would He allow such mass devastation and the suffering that followed to crash down upon a major

U.S. city and the surrounding region?

When the storm struck, *The REAL TRUTH* published an article titled “Katrina’s Wake-Up Call.” It pointed out that insurance companies categorize damage resulting from natural disasters as “acts of God.” This led us to ask a simple question: Was this God’s doing?

The article also noted that as residents and tourists evacuated the city, someone left behind a giant hand-painted sign that read, “Please pray for New Orleans.” This led to more questions: How would the God of the Bible answer such a prayer—what would be His reaction? Would He ignore the city’s centuries-long history of lasciviousness and its countless tales of debauchery and lewdness? Does God simply accept people “as they are” and not require a change of heart?

In “Katrina’s Wake-Up Call,” we used several examples to show that there is a CAUSE for every effect. When law and order disappeared in New Orleans, human nature was unleashed. When there is no law, there is no government; when there is no government, peace is impossible. The same is true in churches around the world, and accounts for why there are thousands of competing churches and denominations, all speaking different things. No law equals no peace, and peace is the byproduct of righteousness (Jms.

3:18). The biblical definition for “righteousness” is found in Psalm 119:172: “All Your *commandments* are righteousness.” Commandment-keeping is righteousness!

Yet most professing Christians are quick to proclaim that God’s Law was “done away” at Jesus Christ’s sacrifice and, therefore, no longer needs to be kept. But the apostle Paul—who many religious leaders claim taught the New Testament Church to put aside God’s commandments, statutes and judgments—wrote this: “Wherefore the law is *holy*, and the commandment HOLY, and JUST, and GOOD” (Rom. 7:12).

Sin is defined as the transgression of God’s Law (I John 3:4), and the love of God that preachers endlessly talk about is described in chapter 5, verse 3: “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.”

God’s Law was not “done away” at Jesus Christ’s first coming—rather, He came to “fulfill” and “magnify” it (Matt. 5:17; Isa. 42:21).

Naturally, our article generated numerous emails—some positive, but the vast majority negative.

Lesson 2: Personal Responsibility Must Be Taken

Though Congress provided \$68 billion in relief, people started pointing



fingers immediately after the storm had struck. Cries of a lack of preparedness and a slow response were heard throughout the media. Some blamed the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for not responding fast enough. Others blamed President Bush, declaring him personally responsible for not granting the city needed funds to prepare for an event like Katrina. Investigations and inquiries were launched, bringing more questions than answers.

Today, Americans live in a “nanny state.” The government has long intervened to help the needy with food, money and medical assistance. But what was once viewed as gifts soon became *entitlements*, and entitlements are now seen as “RIGHTS.” Instead of taking personal responsibility for their lives, millions today *expect* the government to take care of them, to provide virtually all their needs and wants—from the womb to the tomb!

Gone are the days when people responded to John F. Kennedy’s presidential call, “My fellow Americans: Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.”

When Congressional lawmakers, for instance, propose to limit the annual *increase* of Social Security, political opponents spin this as *cutting* Social Security itself. Senior citizens across

the nation contact their representatives to vent their anger, believing the spin that the mainstream news media recklessly reports as fact. Pundits who remind the public that Social Security was not originally intended to be the *main* source of one’s retirement nest egg are vilified, called harsh, cruel, unfeeling and inhuman—all for revealing the facts. Politicians have been guilty of feeding into and nurturing the “nanny state” mentality by passing “pork barrel” legislation that caters to the whims of local constituents at the cost of federal taxpayers across America.

Likewise, churches and religious leaders have been guilty of teaching parishioners a similar philosophy of shirking personal responsibility. Calls of “Just give your heart to the Lord” and “The Law was nailed to the cross” and “Jesus loves you just as you are” are smooth and reassuring—and utterly void of biblical truth! Such soft purring lulls the unsuspecting into believing that all they need is grace and faith; works need not apply.

Yes, billions of people across the planet profess to believe in God. But the Bible says their belief is *empty* without works to back it up.

Notice: “You believe that there is one God; you do well: The devils [demons] also believe, and tremble. But will you know, O vain man, that

faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? See you how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which says, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. You see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (Jms. 2:19-26).

The God whom millions *profess* to worship—but do not OBEY—has strong words for religious hypocrisy: “This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. Howbeit in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men... Full well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your own tradition” (Mark 7:6-9).

Lesson 3: “Rumors Are Fueled by a Shortage of Truth”

During the first week or so after the hurricane struck, a “Pandora’s Box” of violence and mayhem was reportedly let loose in the streets of New Orleans. Multiple rapes. Up to 200 corpses piled in the Superdome. Snipers shooting at the police, then later rescue helicopters and National Guard units. Mass looting of television sets, alcohol and other luxuries. Total anarchy. Even the mayor reported this on national television.

But the facts were soon revealed: The overwhelming majority of these violent crime reports were *false*. In its extensive article “Debunking the Myths of Katrina,” *Popular Mechanics* magazine reported...

■ There was only one rape attempt (which was stopped)

Please see **FAILED TO LEARN**, page 24

The GREATEST “KATRINA” LIES AHEAD

An immense “storm” looms over the horizon, amassing strength and rapidly gaining speed as time advances—and the initial effects of this catastrophe-in-waiting are already evident.

BY BRUCE A. RITTER

HURRICANE KATRINA wrought widespread destruction throughout New Orleans and the Mississippi Gulf Coast region. Homes were destroyed. Hospitals and schools were shut down. Businesses were ruined. Bridges and streets were washed away. Levees were breached. Lives were changed, shattered or lost.

As much as 80% of New Orleans was plunged underwater, leaving 1.2 million residents homeless.

As for the greater Gulf Coast area, Katrina affected 90,000 square miles—an area almost as large as the United Kingdom! Katrina spawned several tornados in Mississippi and Alabama, damaging trees and power lines. Beachfront neighborhoods along the Gulf Coast were completely leveled. In some areas, storm surges reached as far as six miles inland. More than

half of Mississippi’s gambling casinos, which floated on barges, were washed ashore, some hundreds of yards inland. The state’s forest industry was also affected, as 1.3 million acres of forest area were destroyed. In all, the storm damaged or destroyed 30 oil platforms, and caused nine refineries to be shut down.

Almost a year later, the streets of New Orleans are still filled with debris, half of the shopping malls in and around the city remain closed and tourism is in steep decline. Some of the larger, more upscale hotels—the Hyatt Regency, the Fairmont, the Ritz-Carlton and Park Plaza—are yet to reopen. The *New Orleans CityBusiness* reported that before Katrina, 38,000 hotel rooms were in operation; to date, only 28,000 are in use.

Hurricane Katrina left an emotional and financial scar that will never fully heal. Yet, as former residents return to rebuild their homes and lives, an even greater, far more immense “storm” is in the making.

Another “Katrina”

Suppose you learned that another “Katrina” was about to strike—only this time causing mass destruction across the entire eastern seaboard, from Miami to Washington, D.C., on up to Philadelphia, New York and Boston.

Unlikely?

What if such a disaster included the West Coast, from San Diego and Los Angeles, through to San Francisco, then Portland and Seattle?

Doubtful?

Now imagine a *national* calamity—a disaster that left nothing untouched, bringing every metropolitan area, city, suburb, small town and village in America to its knees.

Unbelievable?

Suppose such a catastrophe struck on a *multinational* scale, spreading to Canada, Britain and most of Western Europe, as well as South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and other First World countries.

Impossible?

Every year, scientists and other weather experts look into the distant parts of the ocean for the arrival of tropical depressions to see if any will intensify into tropical storms and—even worse—hurricanes (or cyclones). Such violent storms are then monitored and tracked along a projected path. Communities facing potential destruction are warned. People are given time to prepare, time to evacuate, so lives can be spared.

Similarly, there is another type of “storm” taking shape off in the distance—a *prophetic* catastrophe-in-waiting that is amassing strength and rapidly gaining speed as time moves forward. Its initial effects are already being seen and felt...

■ With certain sections of the nation being deluged with flooding (“mildew” – Deut. 28:22), while other regions burn up from raging wildfires (“blasting” – same verse).

■ With parents losing (or giving up) their God-given responsibility to properly rear their children—instead, producing rebellious brats who “rule over them” (Isa. 3:4-5), “a generation that curses their father, and does not bless their mother...[who] are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness” (Prov. 30:11-12).

■ With the world’s lone superpower sinking ever deeper into the bottomless abyss of debt (Deut. 28:43-44).

These are just a few of the many signs that a prophetic “tempest” will soon surface—one that is tracking along a projected path of mass destruction, foretold thousands of years ago in the Bible.

A Government Yielding Peace

The REAL TRUTH analyzes the issues, trends and troubles plaguing mankind—restores plain understanding of the causes behind humanity’s ever-increasing problems—and points to the only real solution. In short, we examine the bad news and then announce good news.

This is why our articles do not take political positions, nor side with or against specific governments, admin-

istrations or their leaders. Our position is strictly neutral.

God has allotted men nearly 6,000 years of self-rule—60 centuries of making and enforcing their own laws, judgments, statutes and ordinances. But what have all the different forms of manmade governments produced? What has been the FRUIT of human-led monarchies, dictatorships, democracies, republics and totalitarian states?

War—strife—cutthroat competition—escalating crime and bloodshed—the tearing apart of the family unit, the nucleus of any thriving society. No matter the government, corruption still exists. No matter the overall noble intentions of some administrators, cronyism, classism and racism have had free reign. The gap between the “haves” and “have nots” continues to widen. The economic scar of extreme poverty continues to be passed down from generation to generation. The utopian peace, security, prosperity and social harmony all long for remain an illusive dream.

Only one administration can end all wars, suffering and troubles. Only one government can execute TRUE JUSTICE—without partiality—to all, from the elite to the bottom rung of the societal ladder. That government is the KINGDOM OF GOD. Jesus Christ Himself will reign over it, and He will delegate His divine authority and power to rulers and judges whose character and loyalty have been tried—PROVEN. Whose favor cannot be turned for personal gain, whose loyalty cannot be bought.

Only through God’s kingdom—a government that administers laws founded upon outgoing concern for the welfare of others (Rom. 13:10)—can permanent peace and prosperity be established throughout every corner of the world. So says your Bible.

Notice: “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the GOVERNMENT shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. *Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be*

no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this” (Isa. 9:6-7).

For this reason, the main goal of *The REAL TRUTH* is to announce the gospel—which literally means “good news”—of the soon-coming kingdom of God! Clearly, the establishment of God’s perfect, incorruptible super-government and the fruits it will yield worldwide—peace, happiness, success, etc.—IS good news!

But before God’s kingdom can be set up on the earth, human beings must undergo a change of heart, and let God rule over and lead them. Tragically, the vast majority will choose to learn this the hard way.

A Prophetic “Katrina”

God’s Word is a coded Book. (To learn more, read our article “Bible Codes – Decoding the Mystery,” published in this issue.) Yet it also contains THE KEYS to unlocking prophetic understanding. For instance, Scripture speaks of future events involving Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Ethiopia and others—but what about the U.S., the greatest nation in history?

You might be surprised to learn that roughly one third of the Bible is devoted to prophecy—much of which directly centers around the peoples of America and its sister nations, Britain, Australia and others. But one must be able to recognize which biblical key reveals the prophetic identity of the American and British peoples. Our book *AMERICA AND BRITAIN IN BIBLE PROPHECY* does so with overwhelming proof.

Many are falling prey to non-biblical delusions promoted by self-proclaimed religious “experts.” But God declares that “they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD...I have not sent these prophets [religious leaders], yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in My counsel, and had caused

My people to hear My words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings” (Jer. 23:16, 21-22).

Despite such wide-scale deception, God assures this: “The anger of the LORD shall not return, until He have executed, and till He have performed the thoughts of His heart: *in the latter days* you shall consider it perfectly” (vs. 20).

Yes, a prophetic “Katrina” is brewing over the horizon, reserved long ago for the “latter days”—our time now! The Bible calls it “the time of Jacob’s trouble.” Take note: “For thus says the LORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask you now, and see whether a man does travail with child? Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! For that day is GREAT, so that NONE is like it: it is even *the time of Jacob’s trouble*” (Jer. 30:5-7).

Explaining to His disciples about events leading up to His Second Coming, Jesus Christ said, “For then shall be GREAT TRIBULATION, such as

was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved” (Matt. 24:21-22). This coming time of tribulation, also called “the time of Jacob’s trouble,” will bring mankind to the brink of total annihilation! Only the Return of Christ and the establishing of God’s kingdom on earth can prevent this!

Horrendous times are coming, and events will begin with the modern descendants of ancient Israel. Called a “nation and a company of nations” (Gen. 35:11), they have been the birthright recipients of the promises God gave to the patriarch Abraham, and have been blessed with the greatest wealth, power and influence in history.

Yet they have stubbornly rebelled against the One who gave them these material blessings, rejecting His laws and guidance. God calls them “impudent children and stiffhearted” (Ezek. 2:4), “a rebellious nation that has rebelled against Me” (vs. 3). They have “changed My judgments into wickedness more than the nations, and My statutes more than the countries that are round about her: for they have refused My judgments and My statutes, they have not walked in them” (5:6); “they despised My judgments, and walked not in My statutes, but polluted My Sabbaths: for their heart

went after their idols” (20:16).

These nations are called a “land... full of idols” (Isa. 2:8), where crosses, crucifixes, images of “Christ,” “Mary” and “Jesus fishes” flourish. Church steeples line almost every block.

But despite these religious displays, God states, “Your altars shall be desolate, and your images shall be broken: and I will cast down your slain men before your idols” (Ezek. 6: 4). He will destroy all the churches throughout the land for their idolatry, which He calls spiritual adultery (Jer. 3:8; 5:7).

An appalling and terrifying future event of mayhem, confusion, panic and unheard-of-sorrow will crash down upon a rebellious people—people who are largely ignorant of their biblical identity. Why?

“For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them *every one is given to covetousness*; and from the prophet even unto the priest *every one deals falsely*. They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush” (Jer. 6:13-15).

A cacophony of voices claiming to be religious experts and authorities of God’s Word has deceived people into believing that God’s Law is

BUSINESS AS USUAL

■ Prior to Katrina, New Orleans earned its reputation as a center of vice—heavy drinking, raucous parties, gambling, etc. Just months later, the debauchery returned.

PHOTOS: MCT



done away—that all He requires is for believers to “give their hearts to the Lord” or “have love,” however defined. They cry, “Peace, peace,” when God plans to unleash “a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation” (Dan. 12:1).

This divine reckoning will arrive in three major stages.

Stage 1: Famine and Pestilence

The prophet Ezekiel was among the first round of Jewish captives taken in Judah’s Babylonian captivity. God commissioned him to take a message to the house of Israel and warn His people that their continued rebellion, Sabbath-breaking and idolatry would result in military invasion, mass deportation and national captivity.

Yet the Israelites had *already* been taken captive by the Assyrian Empire about 125 years earlier. They seemingly disappeared into the pages of history, becoming known as the “ten lost tribes of Israel.”

Ezekiel’s warning was never taken to the *ancient* house of Israel—nor was it meant to be. God intended this message to be delivered thousands of years later to Israel’s modern descendant nations, prior to the Return of Jesus Christ and the establishing of His worldwide government. Recognizing they would be as “impudent” and “rebellious” as their forefathers, God inspired the book of Ezekiel—using

ancient Israel and Judah as types—to describe the contemporary conditions and mindset of the birthright nations. Chapter five paints a prophetic picture of the three-step punishment that will occur.

First will come famine, resulting in mass starvation, deaths and pandemic outbreaks on a scale never seen: “A *third part of you shall die with the PESTILENCE*, and with *FAMINE* shall they be consumed in the midst of you...When I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famine, which shall be for their destruction, and which I will send to destroy you: and I will *increase* the famine upon you, *and will break your staff of bread*” (vs. 12, 16).

What will lead up to this event? God declares, “I will make your heaven as *IRON*”—polluted with smog and all kinds of industrial filth—“and your earth as *BRASS*”—hard, unyielding, infertile, full of toxic levels of chemical pollutants (Lev. 26:19). Farmers will try to yield produce from the land, but their “strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits” (vs. 20). Locusts will consume the crops that manage to grow (Deut. 28:38) and will decimate timberland, parks and national forests (vs. 42). Worms will devour the vineyards (vs. 39).

This will create a national food shortage. First World nations that have

grown fat over the decades from the “fast food” life will suddenly know what it is like to experience *real* hunger pains. Their peoples will begin to appreciate the plight of the millions living in Third World nations who eat meals every other day for lack of food.

But the birthright nations have grown accustomed to getting their own way, accustomed to deciding for themselves how to live. They will not turn to their Creator for His direction. And so their punishment will increase sevenfold (Lev. 26:21).

Human beings will not be the only ones starving for food. God warns that He will “send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your highways shall be desolate” (vs. 22).

Still, the vast majority will refuse to yield to God’s will; only increased punishment will get their attention (vs. 23-24). This means the famine will only grow worse (vs. 26), producing mass starvation—and countless deaths! Rotting corpses will pile up, especially in crowded urban areas, creating a breeding ground for disease outbreaks (vs. 25; Deut. 28:27-29, 35).

Even so, few will acknowledge or submit to the God who was once their Protector, Sustainer, Deliverer, Lawmaker and Ruler—which means stage two will take effect.



Recall Hurricane Katrina. The casinos were smashed into pieces. The streets of New Orleans were flooded and devastated. Still, the people scrambled to bring back the gambling, debauchery and riotous lifestyles they had grown so accustomed to living.

When the mayor of New Orleans wondered aloud if Katrina was God's handiwork, the public outcry that ensued drove him to recant. No one wanted to consider the possibility that the Creator is not pleased with the conduct of His creation.

Famine, starvation, cannibalism, wild beasts on the prowl, deadly plagues—stage one of tomorrow's "Katrina"—will claim one third of the population. But even this will not keep the survivors from clinging to their idolatrous and adulterous lifestyles.

Stage 2: Military Invasion

The prophetic storm of "Jacob's trouble" will intensify, as weakened and distraught survivors undergo a constant barrage of terrorism attacks and military incursions. God will "appoint... terror" (Lev. 26:16) over an unrepentant people, causing them to panic and flee at even the slightest hint of trouble: "And the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursues" (vs. 36).

From within, 9/11-style attacks will

"BLASTING" AND "MILDEW"

■ A lack of rain or an overabundance of it bring wildfires and flooding to different regions of the United States.

PHOTOS: MCT

strike again and again, like the constant beat of war drums!

And from without, nations that were once considered to be allies and fellow partners of peace will turn out to be conspirators: "Among all her lovers [political allies] she has none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies" (Lam. 1:2). Psalm 83:4-8 indicates that several nations will secretly conspire against Israel's national descendants, revealing their true motives when the birthright recipients are in a weak and vulnerable position (Obadiah 7). Perhaps in a grand surprise attack—remember Pearl Harbor!—unsuspecting cities will disintegrate in a nuclear holocaust: "And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation...and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste" (Lev 26:31, 33).

In all, another third of the people will perish (Ezek. 5:12).

Federal, state and local governments will collapse. Power, water and sewage utilities will shut down. Police and military units will dissolve. Mass anarchy will fill the void and reign in the streets...that is, until the foreign invasion force arrives. Like locusts, the victors will spread troops throughout the land and seize whatever spoils are deemed worthy.

"You shall betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: you shall build an house, and you shall not dwell therein: you shall plant a vineyard, and shall not gather the grapes thereof. Your ox shall be slain before your eyes, and you shall not eat thereof: your ass shall be violently taken away from before your face, and shall not

be restored to you: your sheep shall be given unto your enemies, and you shall have none to rescue them. Your sons and your daughters shall be given unto another people, and your eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long: and there shall be no might in your hand" (Deut. 28:30-32).

Whatever property or cherished items one might have, these will be taken away. Whatever loved ones one might struggle to care for and protect, they will be taken away as well. A new era of mass slavery will begin: "And they cast lots for My people; and have given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink" (Joel 3:3).

Stage 3: National Captivity and Mass Deportation

One third will have succumbed to famine and disease. Another third will perish at the hand of military conquest. God will see to it that the remaining third are gathered like livestock and deported en masse into foreign lands.

"And I will scatter you among the heathen, and disperse you in the countries, and will consume your filthiness out of you" (Ezek. 22:15)—"And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them" (Lev 26:39)—"And the LORD shall scatter you among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other" (Deut. 28:64).

Their downfall will come *fast* and *HARD*, surprising even the victors. God will cause His people to "become an *astonishment*, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the



LORD shall lead you” (Deut. 28:37).

And in their daily lives as slaves, God will give them “a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: and your life shall hang in doubt before you; and you shall fear day and night, and shall have none assurance of your life: In the morning you shall say, Would God it were even! And at even you shall say, Would God it were morning! For the fear of your heart wherewith you shall fear, and for the sight of your eyes which you shall see” (Deut. 28:65-67).

Only when they have reached the very bottom rung of despair—when every moment of their lives is filled with hopelessness, abuse, humiliation and shame—will the modern Israelites finally consider. Only then will they put aside the “idols of their hearts” (Ezek. 14:3-7) and begin to seek after and obey their Creator. And, just as He delivered ancient Israel from slavery in Egypt, God will deliver modern Israel from bondage, and lead them into a glorious future in the WONDERFUL WORLD TOMORROW.

A Future Exodus

After the prophetic storm surge of the Great Tribulation passes, a mass exodus of surviving Israelites will emerge. Humbled by their horrific experiences, they will meekly follow God’s lead and come out of the nations where they were enslaved and savagely treated.

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though Your people Israel be as the sand of the sea, *yet a remnant of them shall return*: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness. For the Lord GOD of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land” (Isa. 10:20-23).

Centuries ago, God used the ancient Assyrians to severely punish His people. This was a type for a future

punishment, when He will use the modern descendants of Assyria to inflict punishment upon Israel’s descendants (vs. 24), until “...yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease” (vs. 25).

God promises to save His people and give them righteous leaders. He will cause Israel to dwell in peace and safety, and will shower them with blessings (Ezek. 34:22-30).

Never again will His people trade His Laws for the laws and traditions of men. Never again will the spiritual landscape of the modern Israelite nations be saturated with political corruption, rampant adultery and fornication, religious hypocrisy, lawlessness and wanton covetousness (actually, idolatry – Col. 3:5).

But *individuals* CAN escape!

Way of Escape

The ancient Israelites had a saying: “The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children’s teeth are set on edge” (Jer. 31:29). In other words, “Children shall pay for the sins of their fathers.” But this thinking came from the minds of carnal men, not from God. In fact, He states, “The soul [person] that sins, IT shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him” (Ezek. 18:20).

“Therefore,” He continues, “I will judge you, O house of Israel, *every one according to his ways*...Repent



DROUGHT

■ While some regions in the world are battered by storms, entire lakes disappear in others.

PHOTOS: MCT

[change], and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin” (vs. 30).

After describing the time sequence of the end-time events that will occur prior to His Second Coming, Christ warned, “Watch you therefore, and pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man” (Luke 21:36).

The greatest prophetic “cyclone” is still on track—and it will dramatically affect hundreds of millions of lives in multiple nations—and soon!

But individuals can choose to heed the warning signs—can choose to change their lives (Joel 2:12-14)—and *escape* before the next “Katrina” arrives. □

FAILED TO LEARN

Continued from page 17

■ Only six dead bodies in the Superdome (a suicide, a drug overdose, three cases of dying from natural causes, and one had sustained stab wounds)

■ Only one confirmed account of a weapons charge (involving a Guardsman who accidentally shot himself in the leg when he was jumped by an assailant)

■ And most looters only took food and water in order to live.

Why did so much false information abound? These were the byproducts of human nature. Stuck in a place that was hot, miserable and held little hope, people became frustrated, irritable—which soon gave way to panic. Rumors began to take on a life of their own. Though some might have started with a grain of truth, they were quickly distorted by word-of-mouth. Facts were embellished and spun to the point where they were no longer recognizable. The truth was squeezed out by the overabundance of lies.

“Rumors are fueled by a shortage of truth,” said Ted Steinberg, author of *Acts of God: The Unnatural History of Natural Disasters in America*. Such is the case when law and order are weakened, when the strength of government authority wanes. Getting to the truth of any matter becomes the first casualty when society starts to break down.

Even more telling is that the root of the false reports came from growing panic and frustration, which led people to run their lives as if they were being pursued. This is just a foretaste of even greater panic yet to come: “And you shall flee when *none* pursues you” (Lev. 26:17).

Lesson 4: Band-Aids Cannot Treat Cancer

America is, in a sense, a tenderhearted nation. Despite its problems and shortcomings, when other peoples or countries are in dire need, the United States is usually the first to respond with help. This is part of its patriotic “can do” spirit. Believing they can accomplish anything if they put their collective will

into it, Americans feel there is no natural disaster too great to offer assistance to survivors.

No wonder then so many gave so quickly and so freely to charities and relief organizations. From elementary school students to the mega-wealthy, from the common man to the famous, citizens throughout all walks of life sympathized with what Katrina survivors had suffered and lost—and people wanted to help.

Their motives were well-intentioned, even noble. How could anyone not be moved by the scenes of sorrow and despair broadcast daily by the television news media?

Relief organizations roared into action and raised millions of dollars—yet much of the funds were bilked by con-artists. Officials at the Red Cross are looking into 7,100 possible fraudulent cases. More than 10% of the \$19 billion of FEMA’s disaster-relief program was lost to fraud, stolen or misused, such as for lottery tickets and strip clubs! There was one case of a man crying before a news camera over the death of his wife, who he said drowned before his eyes as they attempted to flee rising floodwaters. The story turned out to be false, an attempt to prey upon the kindness of others. One elderly woman was so moved by the misery left by Katrina that she allowed three evacuees to stay with her; but they allegedly repaid her neighborly goodwill by brutally taking her life. Such noble intentions offered in vain, tainted by the ugliness of carnal nature.

Until man’s nature is changed—turned 180 degrees from its basest desires (Gal. 5:19-21)—charity drives and relief funds will only serve as band-aids on cancer! No one wants to hear that physical consequences often result from spiritual causes—that the way people live can bring BLESSINGS from God...or curses.

Throughout the Mississippi Gulf Coast, business and community leaders are scrambling to resurrect the gambling industry. As soon as Hurricane Katrina had passed, people in the French Quarter rushed to bring back

the pageantry of Mardi Gras and all its riotous trimmings. To even *suggest* that a Supreme Being uses natural disasters as a tool of correction to wake up His people is considered ludicrous—fanatical—uncaring. Yet a “storm” far, far WORSE than Katrina is in the making (see our article “The Greatest ‘Katrina’ Lies Ahead”); the most caring thing anyone could do is to warn of its arrival before it is too late!

Lesson 5: Warnings Must Be Heeded

The New Orleans *Times-Picayune* warned about the resulting damage that a Category-five storm might have on the city. Federal and local officials were aware of the aging levees. The residents of New Orleans knew that their city, sandwiched between Lake Pontchartrain to the north and the mighty Mississippi River to the south, was 6 to 13 feet below sea level, and sinking.

Yet almost 1.2 million people inhabited the metro area. They bought homes there, started families there, and made lives for themselves. And for so many, Hurricane Katrina washed it all away.

Facts about the city’s vulnerability were met with shrugs of indifference. Critical information was downplayed. Signs were ignored. Warnings went unheeded—why?

Because New Orleans had “beat the odds” so many times in the past, having survived Hurricane Betsy in 1965 and Hurricane Camille in 1969. Surely, it could weather through Katrina, the thinking went.

Because New Orleans is known as “The City That Care Forgot,” where residents throw hurricane parties even in the face of the most daunting storms—a city that held the mantle of debauchery and riotous living long before Las Vegas earned the title of “Sin City”—a city that embodies the short-sighted thinking of this increasingly degenerate world: “Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die” (I Cor. 15:32).

No wonder, then, pre-Katrina warnings largely fell on deaf ears—as will the warning published here, in *The REAL TRUTH* magazine. □

PERSONAL

Continued from page 2

While most were initially occupied with the question of “*WHO* did this?” (and this article will emphatically answer this question), the first important question that must be answered is “*WHY* did it happen?”

The United States of America, along with the democratic and generally English-speaking peoples of the Western World, are the modern-day nations that have descended from the tribes of ancient Israel. The Israelis are merely one of the twelve tribes (Judah) that descended from the patriarch Jacob, whose name was later changed to Israel.

These nations, along with the rest of the world, have rebelled against God. Their sins have cut them off from Him (Isa. 59:1-2). They have rejected and disobeyed the great spiritual laws He gave them! In addition to a few others, the modern nations of America, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Israel are to be the special recipients of a prophesied time of terrible national punishment for their sins and crimes against God. (Read our book *AMERICA AND BRITAIN IN BIBLE PROPHECY* to learn more.)

THESE NATIONS NEED TO WAKE UP BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!

One next-day headline of the nation’s largest paper stated, “Tears most of the day,” with a following subhead of “Coast to coast, Americans *turn to each other*.” While this is a natural human thing to do in times of tragedy, Americans need to shed tears about the rampant immorality of their conduct. Americans need to *turn to God* and obey His laws. I have not yet seen headlines stating that these things have even begun to happen.

I have heard numerous religious commentators give weak responses, which demonstrate they are afraid to tell America the truth about why this is happening. They softly speak of grieving, healing, forgiving, prayer

for peace, etc., but they do not tell America to *repent* of her sins!

While grieving and healing are important, they are useless without repentance, because they only deal with the *effects* of America’s suffering, not the *CAUSE!*

Our Responsibility To Warn

This Church has the responsibility to “CRY ALOUD, *spare not*, lift up [our] voice LIKE A TRUMPET, and show My people their *transgression*, and the house of Jacob [Israel] their *sins*” (Isa. 58:1). The modern nations of Israel need to be warned (Ezek. 33:7-9) that punishment is coming. *You* are now learning about this punishment and *you* are being warned! There will soon be no time remaining to do this (John 9:4; Amos 8:11).

The book referenced above carefully explains the stunning scope and nature of the coming national punishment and time of Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:21-22), foretold by Christ and the prophets of the Old Testament, to come upon the descendants of ancient Israel.

In a sense, for the thousands of people who were killed in the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, the “tribulation” came and went in an instant. For them it is over. There is nothing that can any longer be done for them. They are asleep, awaiting the time when they will be resurrected and given an opportunity to learn the truth of God’s awesome plan for mankind. Only then will they understand why they died.

But it is not yet over for America, the rest of the world—or *you!*

Who Did This?

In regard to the terrorist attacks, I mentioned earlier that this article would answer the question of “*WHO* did this?”

Here is the answer.

Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 are two long parallel chapters describing how God would bless Israel for obedience or curse them for disobedience. Among the curses prophesied to come on Israel, if they rebelled, is a

warning of a coming time of “appointed terror.”

In Leviticus 26:14-16, God says, “But if you will *not* hearken [listen] unto Me, and will *not* do all these commandments; and if you shall *despise* My statutes...*I* [God Himself] also will do this unto you; *I will* even *appoint* over [upon] you *terror*.”

YOU NOW KNOW WHO DID THIS TO AMERICA! Your Bible says that it is *GOD* who sent the terror that struck the United States. Humanly, I wish that He was finished sending terror to our lands to punish us—but He is *not!* God’s “appointment” to terror is one that America and her Israelite “brethren” will continue to keep.

Three verses later in Leviticus, God continues, “And if you will not yet for all this hearken unto Me, then *I will punish you* seven times more for your sins. And *I will break the pride of your power...*” (vs. 18-19). This passage explains why the specific targets—great symbols of national military, communications and financial power—were selected for the attack. The fact that the terrorists *probably* had this in mind must not allow us to ignore the far greater importance of the fact that God *certainly* has this in mind! God says He will *break* the pride of the power of the modern-day nations of Israel. What God says He will do, HE WILL DO!

The fact that these enormous buildings could even be destroyed at all has struck a kind of fear in people never known before in this country. In the same way, Americans, like those who rode the Titanic saying, “God Himself couldn’t sink this ship,” probably felt that the failed attempt on the Twin Towers, in 1993, meant that our great buildings were more secure than we now recognize them to be. The 9/11 attack shook a people who desperately *needed* to be shaken!

“When the Towers Fall”

The Bible actually prophesies a time of much greater calamity for the large cities of the modern-day nations of Israel.

In Isaiah 30, God explains more

■ **AMERICA'S DARKEST DAY:** The images of the Twin Towers collapsing are seared into the nation's memory, and the aftereffects of the event, as well as the grief of those who lost loved ones, continue five years later.

PHOTOS: MCT



about what will happen when He intensifies His punishment of this world—when He says that He will come “burning with His anger” and “full of indignation” (vs. 27). Verse 25 states, “And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters *in the day of the great slaughter, WHEN THE TOWERS FALL.*” This passage is primarily speaking of the steeples on top of the great number of false churches of this world. But it is also speaking of a time when God will destroy the great steel, glass and concrete monoliths that are symbols of power, pride and prestige in the

largest cities of the Western World.

The “greatness” of large cities today is measured by their skylines. So, “when the towers fall,” it will be far more than just the Twin Towers or Building Seven that comes down.

Desolation will occur in *all* the big cities of the modern nations of Israel. So says God in numerous Old Testament prophecies!

Consider what has been reported by multiple sources and the subject of at least one book by a respected author: The intelligence services of at least five countries—America, Britain, Israel, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia—confirm that about 20 “suitcase bombs” pur-

chased from Russia have been in the hands of terrorist cells in the United States since the fall of 2001. These cells are supposedly awaiting a signal of some kind.

You Need Not Be Terrified

In Matthew 24, Jesus Christ warned of a time of “wars and rumors of wars,” to appear in a greater way just prior to His Return. In a chapter paralleling Matthew 24, the Gospel of Luke records, for all true Christians living at the time of the end, “But when *you* shall hear of wars and *commotions* [extreme terrorism is at least a “commotion,” if not a “war”], *be*

not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not [yet]. Then said He unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and great *earth-quakes* shall be in various places, and *famines*, and *pestilences*” (21:9-11). You may read our booklets *And there shall be FAMINES* and *And there shall be PESTILENCES* to learn more about how these prophecies have been accelerating.

Those who know the truth, and are in harmony with God, His laws and His plan, do not need to worry. They do not need to be “terrified”—of either terrorists or their terror. God promises a place of safety to those individuals who humble themselves, and yield to and obey Him. You can *escape* the far worse calamities and horror that still lie ahead for America, the other modern-day nations of Israel and eventually the whole world!

You may wish to read our booklet *God’s Promised Protection – PLACE OF SAFETY or Secret Rapture?* to understand that there will be a way of escape for those who truly seek God.

Good News After Bad News

We now need to carefully examine an extensive prophecy concerning our peoples’ short-term and long-term future. It begins with a description of bad news but ends with a wonderful picture of *good news*. It demonstrates that at the end of this age, everything will truly “turn out all right.”

We must first *carefully* read the entire prophecy before discussing it. It is found in Jeremiah 30:4-7, 10-17:

“And these are the words that the LORD spake *concerning Israel and concerning Judah*. For thus says the LORD; We have heard a voice of *trembling*, of *fear*, and *not of peace*. Ask you now, and see whether a man does travail with child? Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and *all faces are turned into paleness?*”

“Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even *the time of Jacob’s trouble*; but he shall be saved out of it...Therefore fear you not, O

My servant Jacob, says the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, *I will save you from afar*, and your seed from the land of their *captivity*; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and *none shall make him afraid*. For I am with you, says the LORD, to save you: though I make a full end of all nations where *I have scattered you*, yet will I not make a full end of you: but *I will correct you* in measure, and will not leave you altogether unpunished.

“For thus says the LORD, *Your bruise is incurable, and your wound is grievous*. There is none to plead your cause, that you may be bound up: you have no healing medicines. *All your lovers [allies] have forgotten you*; they seek you not; for *I have wounded you* with the wound of an enemy [our enemies are merely tools in God’s hands], with the chastisement of a cruel one [certainly, this is the very essence of terrorist thinking], *for the multitude of your iniquity [lawlessness]; because your sins were increased*.

“Why cry you for your affliction? *Your sorrow is incurable* for the multitude of your iniquity: because your sins were increased, *I have done these things unto you*. Therefore all they that devour you shall be devoured; and all *your adversaries*, every one of them, *shall go into captivity*; and they that spoil you shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon you will I give for a prey. *For I will restore health unto you, and I will heal you of your wounds...*”

This remarkable prophecy contains many elements that require explanation and emphasis.

First notice that the prophecy pertains to *both* Israel and Judah. These are not one and the same, and the book referenced earlier makes this clear! *Then* notice how many times God speaks of “fear,” “trembling,” no “peace” and “faces turned to paleness,” in what He describes as the “great...time of Jacob’s trouble.”

Next notice how many times God describes our incurable “wounds,” “bruises” and “sorrow,” and our loss of “lovers” (allies). *Now* notice how many times God says that all of this

has come upon us because of our “iniquities”—our “sins.”

Further notice how God repeatedly says that *He* is the One doing this to Israel and Judah—“I have scattered...I have wounded...I will correct...I have done these things...” These passages make plain that what is happening, and will continue to happen, to our lands *is God’s doing!*

Finally, notice how many times God says that He will “restore...heal...save” Israel and Judah. God absolutely promises a time of restoration, healing and deliverance—as surely as He promises a time of terror, wounds, punishment and correction to precede it.

GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES!

At the “end of the day,” the good news is that America, her Israelite allies and the rest of the world have hope of a final world peace when Christ returns and establishes the kingdom of God.

Additional Literature

To understand more about the many prophecies detailing soon-coming world events, read the following literature, available on our website:

■ *The MID-EAST in Bible Prophecy*

■ *Are these the LAST DAYS?*

■ *REVELATION – Explained at last!*

■ *Who or What is the BEAST of Revelation?*

You do not need to be discouraged and without hope. Jesus Christ will return to establish His kingdom. World peace *will* come. The devil will be chained and unable to deceive the nations any longer (Rev. 12:9). The following additional booklets and book outline the wonderful *good news* that lies beyond today’s bad news:

■ *Which is the REAL GOSPEL?*

■ *How WORLD PEACE Will Come*

■ *TOMORROW’S WONDERFUL WORLD – An Inside View!*

We have examined specific prophecies showing what *God* will do—and why.

Now, what will *you* do? □

WORLD NEWS DESK

AN EDITORIAL ANALYSIS OF WORLD NEWS, TRENDS AND CONDITIONS



GEOPOLITICS, STRATEGIES & ECONOMIES

CHINA AND VENEZUELA REACH OIL DEAL

After a visit to China, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez struck a major oil deal with China, their largest oil customer other than the U.S.

Venezuela currently provides China with 155,000 barrels of oil a day, but will increase this amount to 300,000 barrels by 2007 and one million by 2012.

Alongside the recent agreement, the Chinese have also announced they will help Venezuela build a new oil refinery.

China is the world's second largest consumer of energy, and the new deal will help to keep the country's expanding economy running.

Source: *BBC*

MILLIONS DIE OF HUNGER EACH YEAR

Despite a global food supply that could feed the world, millions are starving to death every year.

According to the director of the Catholic charity Caritas, a confederation of 162 Catholic relief organizations in 200 countries and territories, around 10 million people die from hunger every year.

The Austrian director of the organization said the hunger-related deaths

IMMIGRATION RISES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

New statistics released by the British government revealed that the number of workers who migrated to the United Kingdom from European Union member states is around 30 times higher than expected.

About 447,000 workers from eight eastern European countries have applied for jobs in Britain since the expansion of the EU over the past two years. Of these applicants, 427,095 have been approved.

The government had estimated that since the EU's enlargement, no more than 13,000 would apply for work in the UK.

Source: *EUObserver*

were "greater than those from tuberculosis, malaria and AIDS combined."

The widespread lack of food is due to drought, plagues and governments' poor political, economic and ecological decisions.

The director also said that around 850 million people worldwide (almost one in seven) suffer from severe malnutrition.

Source: *AFP*

SCIENCE

EARTH'S GRAVITY CHANGED BY SUMATRA QUAKE



U.S. scientists have discovered that the 9.1 magnitude earthquake that struck Sumatra in December 2004 changed the Earth's gravity.

A research scientist from The Ohio State University said, "The earthquake changed the gravity in that part of the world in two ways that we were able to detect." Using satellite data, the scientists determined the earthquake dramatically lifted the seafloor and shifted rock underneath it, both producing gravity changes.

The earthquake beneath the Indian Ocean produced a tsunami that killed around 230,000 people and left more than one million homeless.

This marked the first time scientists used satellites to detect changes in the Earth's surface caused by an earthquake.

Source: *UPI*

HEALTH, SCIENCE & SOCIETY

ENGLAND'S OBESITY EPIDEMIC

According to England's Department of Health, at least 12 million adults and 1 million children will be obese by 2010 if trends continue.

The recent Health Survey also warned that around one in five children aged 2 to 15 will be extremely overweight by the end of the decade.

The British health secretary said the government has been taking measures to halt the trend, but "at the end of the day, it's up to each of us to decide what we eat, what we drink, how much exercise we take and how we bring our children up."

The Department of Health is pushing forward a plan to give obese patients diet and exercise plans.

A Medical Research Council nutritionist said Britain's attempts to cut back this rising trend by the decade's end have always been an "unrealistic target," and that obesity is a trend that would take decades to reverse.

Source: *BBC*



INDIA'S PRIME MINISTER: END KILLING OF UNBORN GIRLS

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh called for an end to India's common practice of killing unborn girls.

Four days after authorities discovered 25 female fetuses in a northern Indian state, Mr. Singh said, "We must end the crime of female feticide. We must eliminate gender disparity."

A recent study estimated that up to 500,000 unborn girls are killed each year in India, and a British medical journal put the total number of unborn girls killed in the past 20 years at 10 million (Indian experts claim that the number is no more than half that amount).

India has the world's lowest sex ratio because of this widespread practice. One state has only 798 girls for every 1,000 boys under the age of six, well below the world's average of 1,050 female babies.

Although abortion is legal in India, gender-screening is banned unless for medical purposes. Many doctors have been suspended or prosecuted for carrying out this test.

Girls are often unwanted in Indian families because of the custom of putting money into a dowry at a girl's birth. The dowries expected for marriage are often far above the financial means of most families in India. If the dowry is not large enough, it can result in the murder of the newlywed woman.

India's National Crime Records Bureau reported that in 2004, there were 19 dowry-related deaths every day. Women's organizations claim the number is 10 times higher.

Source: *AFP; Reuters*

SOCIETY & LIFESTYLES

MORE UNMARRIED THAN MARRIED IN U.S.

For the first time in the U.S., there are more unmarried couples living together than married couples.

A 2005 study conducted by the American Community Survey found that 49.7% of households in the U.S. consist of married couples, down from last year, and lower than the 50.3% that are unmarried.

Utah had the highest percentage of married couples, while the District of Columbia had the largest percentage of unmarried adults.

Source: *USAToday*

"LOVE LAND" IN SOUTH KOREA

"Love Land," a theme park in Cheju Island, South Korea, is unlike any other theme park in the world.

About the length of two soccer fields, the entire park is filled with pornographic memorabilia such as statues, photographs and sculptures.

Massive fountains in the shape of human anatomy are found throughout the park. The author of a *Der Spiegel* article wrote, "The sculptures are so explicit you can't help stopping in front of them with a mixture of disbelief and amusement—even as a jaded Western tourist."

The park also offers a store where souvenirs can be purchased.

Source: *Der Spiegel*

MORNING AFTER PILL NOW WIDELY AVAILABLE

The controversial morning-after pill, Plan B, is now available over-the-counter in the United States.

After more than three years of efforts to widen its availability, the Food and Drug Administration approved the sale of this contraceptive to women over the age of 18. Girls 17 and younger can still buy

the pill with a prescription.

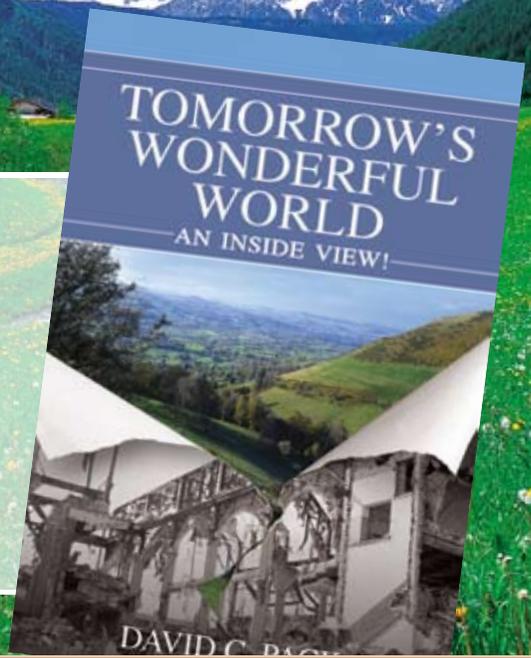
The pill contains the same drug found in common birth-control pills, only more concentrated.

Source: *The New York Times*

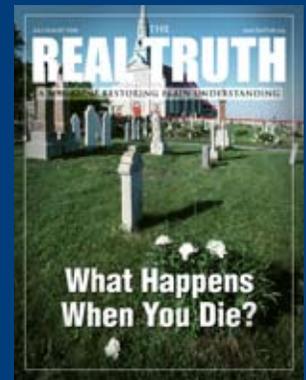
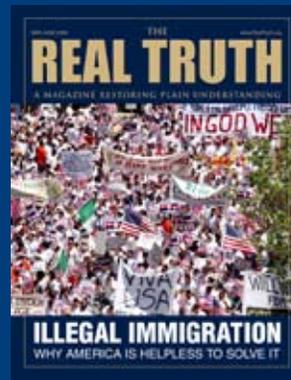
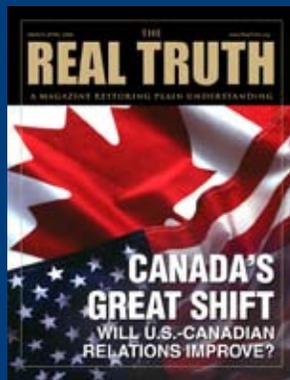
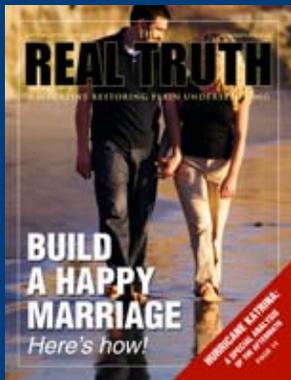


Is Utopia Possible?

WHERE is the world going? Why is it filled with problems, troubles, evils and ills, causing unhappiness, confusion and misery of every kind? What lies ahead? Is there hope for a different—and truly better—world? Yes! A *WONDERFUL WORLD*—unlike anything ever seen—*is* coming. Its arrival is certain. This book presents *an inside view* of what it will be like!



Have you missed out on previous issues?



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