

JANUARY 2009

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REAL TRUTH

A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING



WHEN NATIONS FORGET



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A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING

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ARTICLES

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■ **INDIA'S 9/11 ATTACK:** Mumbai residents demonstrate near the Oberoi Hotel against the November 2008 terror attacks, which killed an estimated 174 people, including at least 22 foreigners, and injured about 295.

PHOTO: YANA PASKOVA/GETTY IMAGES

India & Pakistan: *An Uncertain Future*

With relations strained between rival nuclear powers, what does the future hold?

Page 16

FEATURES

Personal from David C. Pack	1
Reader Comments	20
World News Desk	23

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Evolution Exposed *Deconstructing False Science (Part 7)*

The theory of evolution has been shown for the false science that it is. What does this new knowledge mean to you?

Page 3

Internet Age: *Are We Losing Our Ability to Read and Think?*

Popular newspapers report declining circulations, with readers turning to the Internet. How is this impacting society?

Page 7

SERIES: "DAYS OF ADVERSITY"

What Unprecedented Wealth Reveals About a Nation's Character

The United States has enjoyed decades of grand prosperity and world preeminence—yet for how long?

Page 10

Lessons From the Great Depression

Those who weathered the Great Depression are famed for their work ethic, tenacity, ingenuity and character. What about the 1930s caused this group to later be dubbed the "Greatest Generation"?

Page 12

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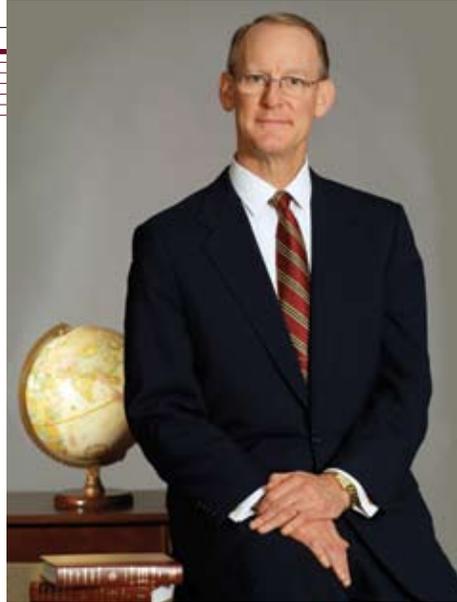
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PERSONAL FROM

David C. Fack



Good News Ahead!

IN A WORLD of non-stop crises, uncertainty, fear—and ever-worsening *bad news!*—people long for good news. Well I have good news—in fact, the very best news you could ever receive! No one is telling you about it, nor could you discover it on your own. You are about to read it—and it will NOT be what you expect!

The truth of the gospel—God’s astonishing *purpose* for man—has been withheld from the world. It explains *why* you were born. It is incredible knowledge that will leave you dumbfounded! This amazing understanding has been revealed—along with the cover-up to suppress it!

Billions are now deceived. Previous billions have been. Even you have been lied to. A complete seduction has taken place, and all the world’s religions have played a part in it. Knowledge of your *incredible future*—your *AWESOME POTENTIAL*—has been kept from you!

Many wonder and worry about the unknown—and what their future holds. Others fear they do not even *have* a future. Still others fear that *civilization* has no future. You need never be in doubt about *your* future again—or of mankind’s.

If only humanity knew what God has in store for it! Yet a deliberate suppression of the truth has withheld this knowledge from all but a few. You can be an exception—one of the few who is *not* deceived!

The world has believed a false gospel for 2,000 years. It has generally supposed that Jesus Christ *is* the gospel rather than the Messenger *of* it. The Message—the

centerpiece—of the gospel is *not* Christ. By focusing on Him—the Messenger—religious deceivers have been able to successfully suppress and cover up the Message He brought!

The vital knowledge of how man could have solved his problems and understood God’s Supreme Purpose has been withheld from the world, keeping it in darkness. Man does not know what he *is* or his *reason* for being. He does not know the way to abundance, peace, happiness and all the good things of life. The gospel would have shown mankind the solution to its most insoluble problems.

And yet, except for the apostle John, all the original apostles were *martyred*—think of it, MARTYRED—for teaching the truth of God’s incredible purpose. Jesus was *crucified* because people did not want to hear His Message!

A correct understanding of the true gospel reveals crucial knowledge. It contains a dimension of understanding that cannot be discovered by scientific inquiry. Again, every supposed “great religion” of the world has helped suppress it. Their theologians neither comprehend nor are willing to teach it.

Both Jesus Christ and the apostles preached the gospel! Jesus commanded in Mark 1:15, “Repent you, and believe the gospel.” But exactly what *is* it that YOU are supposed to believe? Just what *is* the true gospel? Do you know? Are you certain? Be careful of assumptions. For instance, did Christ teach the same gospel that Paul preached to the gentiles? And what does the word “gospel” mean anyway?

The vast majority of professing Christians do not know the ALL-IMPORTANT answers to these most basic questions, and many others related to the true gospel of the Bible!

Christ, at His First Coming, came as a first-century NEWSCASTER, bringing advance *good news* of staggering events to occur just beyond the horizon, and all the *bad news* occurring throughout today's world. This climactic news involves *you*—and eventually every human being on earth!

Deception Abounds

Six new books on religion are published every day in America. And there are over two thousand separate religions in America. Yet there has never been more confusion and disagreement about the answers to humanity's problems. Troubles, woes, evils and human difficulties of every kind are multiplying. World peace is more elusive than ever. Why?

Why is there so much knowledge available to mankind, yet so much ignorance of the truth of the answers to life's BIG questions?

All this has everything to do with the gospel!

Revelation 12:9 reveals this: "The devil, Satan...deceives the whole world." What a staggering statement! Do you believe it? If this is true, then it would certainly apply to the truth of a matter so crucial as the meaning and correct understanding of the gospel!

Almost everyone believes that the gospel is about the Person of Jesus Christ. Certainly, Christ plays an extremely enormous and central role to Christianity, but He is not the gospel. The Bible shows that Jesus is preached in conjunction *with* the gospel. Again, His role is enormous. But He is *not* the gospel.

Some proclaim a "gospel of salvation," others a "gospel of grace." Still others believe a "gospel of

miracles" or a "social gospel." Yet others think of the "gospel of foods" or of "healing" or of "faith" or of "tongues." And there are some who merely think of "gospel music" when they hear this word. These man-made ideas all ignore the truth of the Bible!

Here is more of Mark's account: "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the *kingdom of God*." This is the gospel that Jesus preached. It was in *this* same context that He said, "Repent you, and *believe the gospel*." Which gospel?...of the "kingdom of God."

Verse 1 in Mark refers to this message, when it states, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ." The gospel of Jesus Christ was about the KINGDOM OF GOD—not something else! One must believe *that* gospel—not a humanly-devised counterfeit or substitute.

False Gospels

This subject is so crucial that God inspired the apostle Paul to warn the Galatians then and us now:

"I marvel that you are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which WE have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed" (1:6-9).

This is a *very* blunt statement—and a strong warning to all who will heed! Tragically, almost all have *not* heeded.

A little later, in chapter 2, verse 5, Paul stressed his hope that the "*truth* of the gospel might continue with you." So there is one *true* gospel—with all others FALSE!

Although some assert that Paul taught a different or additional gos-

pel, it is plain that he never did. Ironically, God used Paul to *warn against* ever allowing such false teaching by pronouncing a *curse* on any man or angel who violates this command. Remember, "But though *we* [apostles]...preach any other gospel...let him be accursed" (1:8).

What a powerful scripture—and WARNING!

Paul explained that the apostles were entrusted by God to preserve the true gospel. Notice I Thessalonians 2:4: "But as we [apostles] were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which tries our hearts."

This is a responsibility not to be taken lightly. *True* ministers must always teach what *God* commands—not what pleases *men* (including Bible "scholars"). So any claim that Paul taught a different or second gospel (usually thought to be *about Christ* or some separate idea about "peace") is impossible. Had he done this, he would literally have been pronouncing a curse on himself!

Messenger and a Message

Did you know that Jesus was prophesied to bring the gospel? In the Old Testament, Jesus was foretold to come as a MESSENGER. Notice Malachi 3:1: "Behold, I will send My messenger [John the Baptist], and he shall prepare the way before Me [Christ]: and the Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom you delight in."

Christ was the "MESSENGER" of the gospel—not the message itself.

Now compare the passage in Malachi with another: "The law and the prophets were until John [only Old Testament scriptures had been preached previously]: *since that time the KINGDOM OF GOD* is preached, and every man presses into it" (Luke

Please see **PERSONAL**, page 21



Evolution Exposed

Part 7

Deconstructing False Science

The theory of evolution has been shown for the false science that it is. What does this new knowledge mean to you?

BY BRADFORD G. SCHLEIFER

EVOLUTION CAN BE COMPARED to a murder case in a court of law. There may be physical “evidence,” and witnesses with “sound testimony.” However, if the defense could provide an airtight alibi for the accused, there would be no need to prove that a murder weapon did not belong to the defendant or that other physical evidence (or so-called evidence) was not related to the defendant. A sound alibi would cause the case to be dismissed.

Throughout this article series, we have demonstrated that evolutionary processes could not account for the universe, that it is impossible for life to come from non-life, and the theory violates fundamental laws of science! No amount of arguments, hypothesis or sup-

positions matters. Evolution has no foundation! Nothing can change these facts. The case is closed.

In Part 6, we read Romans 1, showing how the minds of scientists and others have been blinded because they reject plain facts.

However, part of the verse was not quoted: “For the invisible things of Him [God] from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; SO THAT THEY ARE WITHOUT EXCUSE” (vs. 20).

You have seen the pillars of evolution torn down. The passage above now applies to you. May God’s words thunder in your mind!

Because of all the proofs showing “His eternal power and Godhead,” the same God who inspired Romans 1:20 to be written also inspired Psalm 14: “The fool has said in his heart, *There is no God*” (vs. 1).

It should now be no surprise why Arno Penzias, a recipient of the Nobel Prize for physics, stated, “Creation is supported by all the data so far.”

Turning to God’s Word

We do not have the space here to begin an in-depth look into Creation. Our website provides a wide array of articles demonstrating proofs that the universe was created. With

evolution out of the way, it is important to look at God's Word—the Holy Bible—to appreciate all we have seen.

This article will be unlike the previous six. Evolution has been handily dismantled, but there is much more to investigate—and some misconceptions to dispel concerning the Bible.

We have finished examining what *man* teaches—we are now ready to investigate what *God* teaches.

Foundation of the New Testament

There exists within professing Christianity an idea that one can believe in some variant of evolution, while still advocating creation. This could not be further from the truth. The remainder of this article will demonstrate that these positions are diametrically opposed!

First, some groundwork. All buildings have a foundation, the base on which the rest of a building stands. Without it, the structure is never sound. Therefore, a correct foundation ensures a building meant to last.

You may be surprised to learn that the New Testament Church was also built upon a foundation. The Bible states that the Church is “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone” (Eph. 2:20).

In construction, a cornerstone is the *first* stone to be laid. Verse 20 indicates that Jesus Christ was established *before* the Old Testament prophets, and reflects the many Old Testament prophecies foretelling His First Coming.

The verse also has another interesting aspect to it. The teachings in God's Church come from apostles and prophets, tying together both the Old and New Testaments. In fact, the New Testament points to the Old Testament much more than most people realize. The apostle Paul, in particular, quoted the Old Testament numerous times. In the book of Romans alone, it was quoted 57 times! This is also true of the two epistles to the Corinthians. The first quotes the Old Testament 21 times and the second 10 times.

But what does this have to do with evolution? How do all the quotes, ref-

erences and scriptures prove Creation? The link is in *who* the New Testament writers quoted—and the *events* they referenced.

The New Testament—and the entire Bible—was recorded for a purpose. II Timothy 3:16 states, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God.” Keep this in mind as we read New Testament verses.

The New Testament Record

The scriptures listed below cover a wide range of topics. Yet they all have one thing in common: Each is a statement from Jesus Christ or an apostle about events and people of the Old Testament.

When you read them, ask yourself if Christ and the apostles were confused or had blurred the truth to help make a statement. The only other option is to see the quotes for what they are—the inspired Word of God! These verses will help you understand why it is impossible to espouse evolution while declaring oneself a Christian:

■ “For *Adam* was first FORMED, then *Eve*” (I Tim. 2:13-15). This verse directly endorses the Creation account.

■ “Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses...” (Rom. 5:14).

■ “...the *first man Adam* was made a living soul; the *last Adam* [Christ] was made a quickening spirit” (I Cor. 15:45). Christ, as the second Adam, is a type of the first.

■ “For as in *Adam* all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (I Cor. 15:22).

■ “And *Enoch* also, the seventh from *Adam*...” (Jude 1:14-15). Genealogies in the Old Testament are extensive. When summarized in the New Testament, this validates the detailed renditions in the Old.

■ “So all the generations from *Abraham to David* are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations” (Matt. 1:17).

■ “But He [Christ] said unto them, Have you not read what *David* did...” (Matt. 12:3).

■ “The LORD said unto My Lord, Sit You on My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool? If *David* then call Him Lord, how is He his Son?” (Matt. 22:44-45).

■ “Joseph, you *son of David*, fear not to take unto you Mary your wife...” (Matt. 1:20).

■ “Take, my brethren, the *prophets*, who have spoken in the name of the Lord... You have heard of the *patience of Job*...” (Jms. 5:10-11).

This list is extensive enough that most would not dismiss it as analogy or metaphor. But the most telling passage is recorded in the gospel accounts. The Old Testament is clear that Jesus would have direct lineage from King David. The book of Luke records this in exacting detail, identifying Christ's lineage all the way back to Adam!

Notice: “When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph, the son of Eli, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi... the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan, the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God” (Luke 3:23-38; NASB).

God did not inspire this to be recorded simply because it may be “interesting.” Jesus Christ's lineage was extremely important!

It is ridiculous for one to believe that Jesus died for mankind's sins, yet at the same time dismiss a passage validating Creation. Further, the *implications* of Christ's lineage to Adam are critical. To have been the “second Adam” and heir to David's throne (upon which Christ will sit at His Second Coming), Jesus' lineage must be clear. Would Luke—inspired by God—make a *mistake* by incorrectly recording it? Was the Creator of the universe unable to ensure the accuracy of this passage?

While not related to the Creation account, there are many more New Testament scriptures pointing to Old Testament figures and events.

For instance, Christ compared the end of the modern age to “Noah’s day” (Luke 17:26) and to Sodom and Gomorrah (vs. 29). These verses alone PROVE two often contested Old Testament events. Either these events happened or Jesus Christ is a liar!

The New Testament also refers to the “preachers of righteousness.” The lives of these men spanned hundreds of years.

Further, Moses is referenced in the New Testament 79 times. Are you beginning to see why the New Testament is built on the prophets—and why evolution is incompatible with true Christianity?

Countless more examples could be given, and each serves to strengthen the others. However, we have already gone beyond the Creation event. Simply put, the New Testament without the Old Testament would be as useless as a building without a foundation—it would have no support, and much of it would not make sense.

If you profess to be Christian, yet somehow still have faith in evolution, examine your beliefs. Analyze *why* you believe what you do.

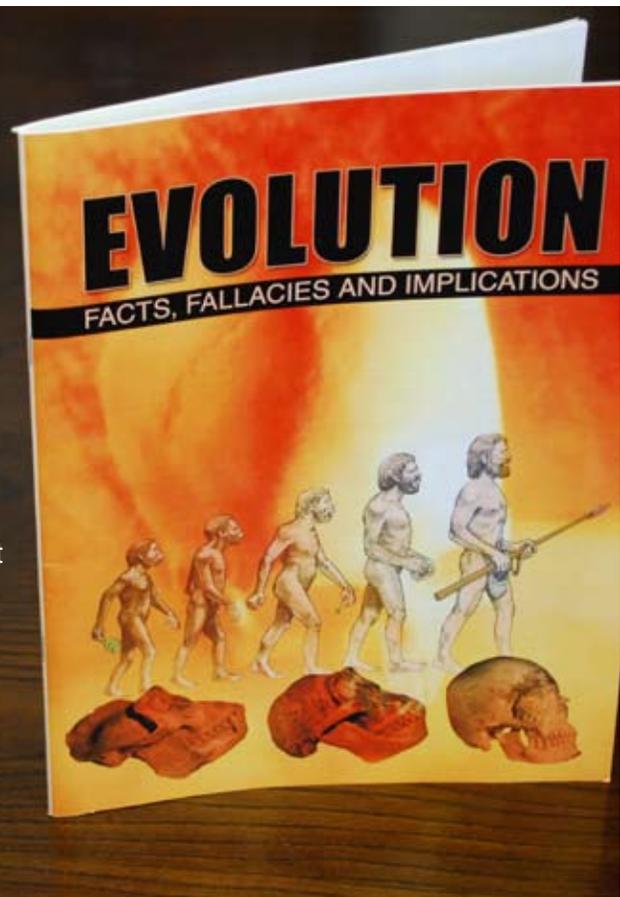
Two “Adams” Reveal Supreme Purpose

An important parallel exists between Adam and Christ that must be understood. It offers another clue to God’s *purpose* and the validity of the Creation account.

Further reading of I Corinthians 15 provides deeper insight to a comparison that Paul makes: “And so it is written, The *first man Adam* was made a living soul; the *last Adam* [Christ] was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward [at the Resurrection] that which is spiritual. The first man [the original Adam] is of the earth, *earthy*: the second man [Christ] is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also [by the resurrection] that are heavenly. And as *we* have borne the image of the earthy [made of flesh], we shall also bear the image of the heavenly [composed of spirit]” (vs. 45-49).

Fact or Fiction?

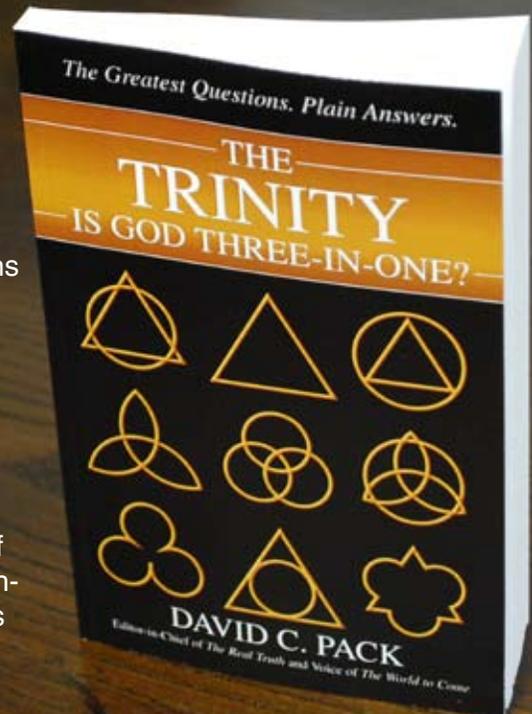
Although nearly universal in its teaching, evolution stands upon many assumptions. Some in the scientific community question its validity. Others state it as fact. What are the facts—the truth—about this “science”?



Three Persons In One?

Does the Bible teach that God is a “Trinity”—three persons in one being? Most professing Christians answer “yes.” Although long the litmus test of traditional Christianity, the triune god is deemed a mystery unable to be understood.

Other questions arise: How does the sacrifice of Christ fit with the “three-in-one” god? How did Jesus “extricate” Himself from the Father and the Holy Spirit to die as Savior?



Paul's inspired statement starts with a reference to Genesis 2:7. Notice the phrase there: "And so it was written..." Again, this is powerful New Testament verification of the Genesis account! Paul knew that Adam "was made" by God—that this event did happen. Paul believed and understood the Old Testament account.

God gave Adam and Eve "dominion" over the earth (Gen. 1:26). This meant man would need to learn and produce—to generate—much knowledge as he subjugated the planet.

God designed human beings with minds that could create, devise, observe and experiment. Through an inherent ability to reason, mankind is able to properly process and interpret physical knowledge *when* it is placed within the framework God intended.

All knowledge falls into two categories: (1) the *physical* knowledge of how to work with matter and physical things, and (2) the *spiritual* knowledge necessary for people to develop personal relationships with both God and their fellow man. All knowledge is either physical or spiritual.

Adam and Eve's problem was in reasoning that *both* kinds of knowledge could be obtained on their own, through experimentation. Once they deviated from God's intended *WAY*, they had no hope of reaching the *destination* He purposed for them—and neither does mankind, which followed Adam and Eve's choice. When the first parents accepted the *wrong premise* as their *STARTING POINT*—that they could reason everything out themselves—they were destined to fail!

The accumulation of vast amounts of knowledge over millennia has not changed—and could never change—the fact that mankind is headed for the wrong destination. Curiously, in its quest for ever more knowledge, humanity continues to ignore facts regarding the fallacy of evolution. Many have been forced to conclude they must live life devoid of the *MOST IMPORTANT* knowledge—that about God!

Change of Framework

Now that you have finished this series, something should have happened to your knowledge of evolution. You should now be able to prove what is true—not just *assume* it to be. The *FACTS* will deflect the clever arguments of evolutionists. Proof is the fundamental difference between creationism and evolution. God's Word teaches us to, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (I Thes. 5:21).

To prove something means to dem-

“God designed human beings with minds that could create, devise, observe and experiment.”

onstrate it to be true or false. You have proven evolution false and, by the knowledge you have obtained, you are now able to debunk ridiculous assertions.

Evolution has gone from something "understood *only* by the scholarly" to an utterly illogical fallacy, believed only by the blind, foolish—and ignorant!

Does it not amaze you that evolution is taught as fact throughout most of the world, yet creation is ridiculed and lampooned as a simplistic and fanatical myth?

On the contrary, it is evolution that *is* simple—*simply* preposterous!

Consider. When you started this series, you unknowingly came to a fork in the road. As evolution was shown to be false, you began walking down a new path.

Knowledge Brings Responsibility

Throughout this series, you have learned new knowledge. It has been said that knowledge is of no purpose unless it is used.

In the Old Testament, the prophet Hosea summarized a problem in ancient Israel that parallels that of evolutionists

today: "My people are destroyed for *lack of knowledge*: because you have *rejected knowledge*, I will also reject you...seeing you have *forgotten* the law of your God, I will also forget your children" (Hos. 4:6).

Without doubt, what you have learned throughout this extensive series is knowledge, and much of it was probably completely new to you.

With such an understanding comes responsibility. You no longer "lack knowledge," but are now left with the question of whether you will *ACCEPT* or *REJECT* it.

Notice Jesus Christ's words: "For unto whomsoever much is *given*, of him shall be much *REQUIRED*" (Luke 12:48).

With knowledge comes responsibility. This means *CHOICES* must be made as a result of receiving it. You must now act on what you have learned.

Now we must ask: Who *is* the God you now know exists? What is the nature of the Being who created the universe, man, animals, plants—*EVERYTHING*?

Some may have read this series assuming they already knew the answer to these questions. Their purpose was to gain knowledge in disproving evolution. But, like evolution, what most believe about God is *NOT* true.

Just as disproving the theory of evolution was only the first step toward understanding the origin of the universe and life within it, proving the existence of a Creator presents you with another path—that of *WHO* this God is. Taking this path will lead you to the understanding of why you were born.

Each of us has a specific purpose, unlike anything you have ever heard before. Learning that purpose—and your responsibility in it—lies down the new path that has been presented.

Only two questions remain:

(1) Will you act on the new knowledge you have received?

(2) Will you continue to study our publications, teaching you the truth about this God?

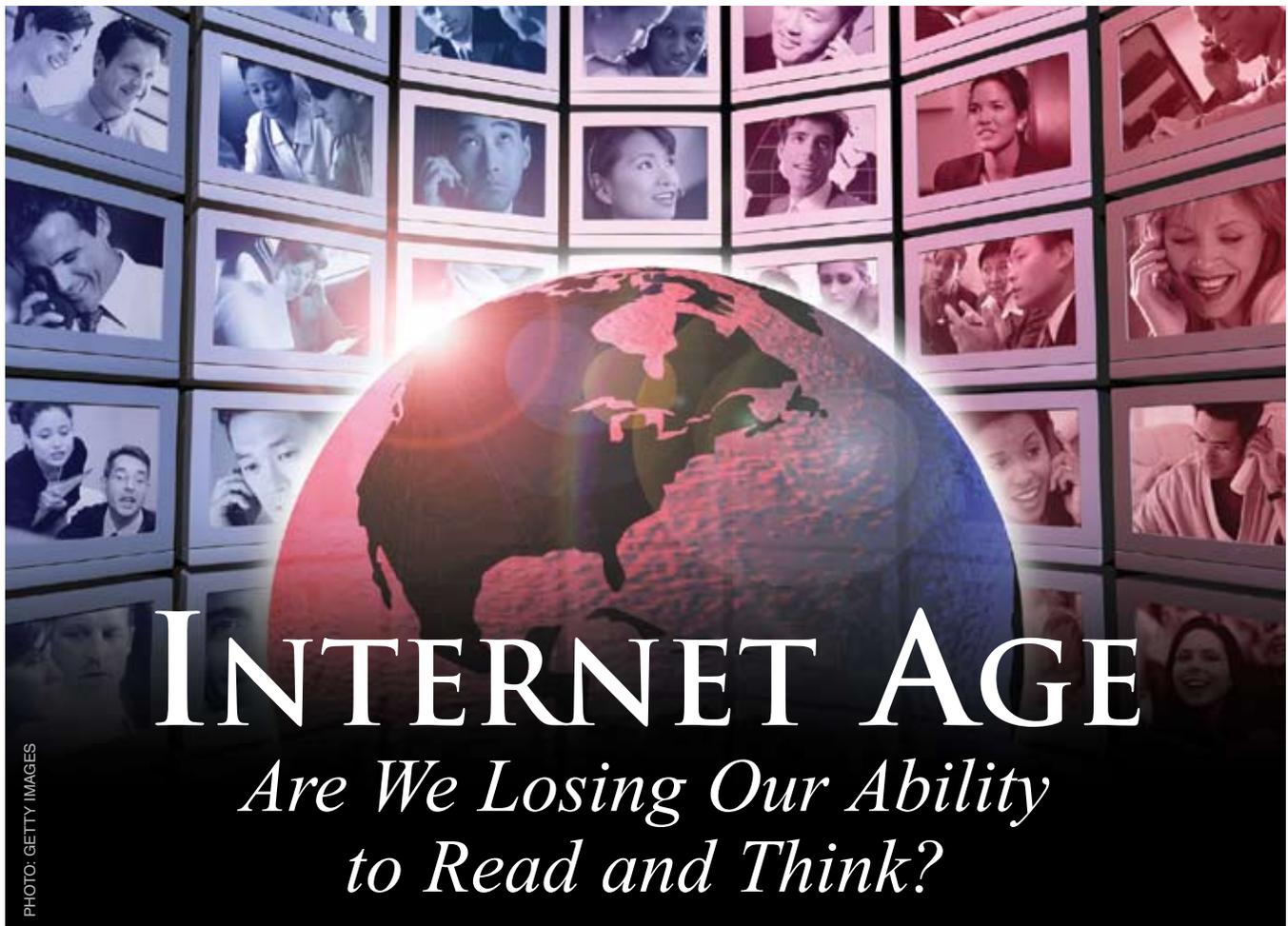


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INTERNET AGE

Are We Losing Our Ability to Read and Think?

Popular newspapers report declining circulations, with readers turning to the Internet. Where is this going? How is this impacting society?

BY KEVIN D. DENEK

TIMES ARE RAPIDLY changing in the 21st century. Like never before in history, the entire world is connected. The global village has become the global home.

Billions now have cellphones, which have brought the ability to talk and send text messages around the world. Even in less developed countries, this technology is widespread. These hand-held devices have advanced into the next generation: smart phones (in other words, phones that act like small

computers). “Intuitive function,” flexibility and sleek design are the leading factors in these devices.

Then there is the personal computer. A luxury item just a few decades ago, it is now a staple in almost every home of the Western world. People of all ages are learning how a computer works, and how it benefits them. Children, as young as a few years of age, find navigating a computer as natural as exploring a playground. Almost every office employee cannot function without one, with spreadsheets, word processors, emails, and so much more at their disposal.

With these and other developing

technologies, the Information Age has truly “come of age.”

Newspapers Declining

In December 2008, the Pew Research Center reported that the Internet surpassed newspapers as the source for national and international news among Americans. The report, “Internet Overtakes Newspapers as News Source,” states, “Currently, 40% say they get most of their news about national and international issues from the Internet, up from just 24% in September 2007. For the first time in a Pew survey, more people say they rely mostly on the Internet for news than cite newspapers (35%).”

Dramatic increases for just one year!

The 2008 statistics are even more telling for young adults, ages 18 to 29: “For young people, however, the Internet now rivals television as a main

source of national and international news. Nearly six-in-ten Americans younger than 30 (59%) say they get most of their national and international news online; an identical percentage cites television. In September 2007, twice as many young people said they relied mostly on television for news than mentioned the Internet (68% vs. 34%)” (ibid.).

Hardcopy newspapers and news magazines are becoming less popular. This can also be seen by looking at the significant and sometimes dramatic changes certain news companies have made over the past couple of years. Circulations of almost every newspaper across the country are declining.

In 2008, two longtime, well-known publications, *The Christian Science Monitor* and *U.S. News & World Report*, decided to abandon print and make their publications online only. This would have been unheard of just a decade ago.

In April of that year, *Forbes* magazine reported that, among 530 U.S. newspapers, circulation fell by 3.57% over 2007. *The New York Times*, one of the largest papers in the country, experienced a significant slide.

Some of the other big decreases were *The Boston Globe*, *The Star-Ledger* of Newark, N.J., *The Star Tribune* of Minneapolis and *The Detroit Free Press*.

Months later, the trend continued, according to *Agence France-Presse*: “Circulation dropped sharply at most major US newspapers in the six months ending in September, continuing a slide which has led to cutbacks in newsrooms across the United States, according to figures released Monday.

“The Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC), citing preliminary figures subject to audit, said circulation for 507 daily newspapers fell 4.64 percent in the period to 38.16 million copies from 40.02 million in the same period last year” (“US newspaper circulation drops again”).

In December 2008, the *Associated Press* reported on a large American city and its news industry: “Newspapers are desperately seeking new business models that will help them survive dwindling readership and a deep advertising slump exacerbated by the recession.

“The latest are *The Detroit Free Press* and *The Detroit News*, which said Monday they will announce ‘a sweeping set of strategic and innovative changes’ on Tuesday.



“Hardcopy newspapers and news magazines are becoming less popular.”

“The Detroit Media Partnership, which runs the business operations of the papers, said the changes are ‘designed to better meet advertiser and reader needs in an era in which digital delivery is revolutionizing how people get information.’”

Digital delivery is truly revolutionizing how we get our information.

For the foreseeable future, there will always be a certain demographic that will desire a print newspaper or magazine. But the question of newspaper survival would not have been considered years ago.

Today, it is safe to say that some will not survive.

21st-Century Source

In this “revolution” of information delivery, what is happening? In short,

the reader is turning to the Internet, which itself is becoming more accessible. The availability of high-speed Internet access is a priority for many Western governments. Several countries already have high penetration rates. Many cellphones now provide access to the Internet, such as receiving a breaking news story.

Since 2000, the size of the Internet has more than tripled—and the trend shows no signs of slowing. As of January 2008, it hosted nearly 1.4 billion users, most from Western nations. At the time of this writing, there are an estimated 100 million more Internet users.

Most assume that “surfing the web” is something done only by younger generations, but the average age is actually increasing.

Notice some excerpts from an article in the *Daily Mail*, titled “Silver surfers beat the young as Web wizards”: “Pensioners surfing the Internet are spending more time online than their younger counterparts.

“So-called ‘silver surfers’ dedicate an average of 42 hours a month to the World Wide Web, compared with 37.9 hours among 18- to 24-year-olds.

“A greater interest in hobbies, news and local issues among the elderly is believed to be driving the trend, which sees over-65s account for nine per cent of all time spent online in the UK.”

“And the trend is likely to continue for decades to come, with over-50s now accounting for a quarter of all UK Internet users.”

These are stunning statistics! Many who are middle-aged have either learned computer skills on their own or been forced to learn because of job demands.

Profiles of Internet Users

What is the behavior of the average Internet user? When one goes online, what is his experience?

First, let’s discuss the concept of “surfing the web.” The computer user opens the browser (the software that



PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

accesses the world wide web). Within seconds, the homepage loads and something grabs the user's attention. He clicks. He begins to read a story or view a video on the page.

Then, 30 seconds later, he remembers he wanted to search for something. He takes his mouse, clicks on the search bar, and types in a couple of words. The search engine returns—in 0.17 seconds—with answers. The individual quickly finds the link he is looking for. He clicks. Then he realizes it is a PDF (a universal file format that preserves the fonts, images, graphics and layout of any source document, regardless of the application and platform used to create it) and does not want to wait. So he hits the back button.

Slightly frustrated, the user opens an additional tab and loads a music station. Now two websites compete for his attention: He opens a third tab to read the daily news while listening to music (second tab) and doing research (first tab). After visiting scores of websites, the session ends.

Does this sound familiar?

Statistics reveal that people bounce from website to website, clicking from one link to another, quickly becoming distracted by other links. Few web users are willing to give their undivided attention to a website or article for more than a couple of minutes.

Take, for example, the second part of a news article, which would include another click of the mouse. The 21st-century user would say, "If you can't get me the information I need within the first couple of clicks, I'm leaving. This is not worth my time."

The company eMarketer, which monitors Internet behavior and statistics, published the following in its report "What's Competing for Internet Users' Attention? The answer: A lot": "Getting consumers' undivided attention gets harder all the time. Much like drivers who listen to music, talk on the phone, apply makeup and eat at the same time, Internet users in the US conduct a wide array of activities while online.

"Nearly six out of 10 respondents to a GfK Roper survey fielded in

"Basic activities of human behavior that were cherished decades ago seem to be slipping from our grasp in this modern age."

September and October 2008 said they listened to music or talked on the phone while using the Internet."

Where will this multitasking behavior lead?

It is not just the Internet itself causing this shift in our behavior. It is modern technology—computers, phones, software, etc.

Take for example the structure of a computer and its software. They are designed to do several things at the same time. Email, documents, spreadsheets, digital photo albums and music players are all open at once. As soon as a person's attention wanes, even for the briefest second, half a dozen other programs clamor for his attention.

In the name of efficiency, human beings are losing their ability to set aside hours to simply read without distraction.

Then there is spelling and grammar. Word processors immediately fix misspelled words or grammatical errors. Search engines are programmed to anticipate what you are attempting to spell and then offer you the correct spelling.

Basic activities of human behavior that were cherished decades ago seem to be slipping from our grasp in this modern age.

Imagine that you are a farmer, living 100 years ago. Sitting behind a team of horses, you plow fields—you have time to think! You are not distracted by televisions, portable radios, computers or cellphones. No one had yet heard of these devices. Until the last century,

no one ever spent one minute in front of a television, computer or stereo. Teenagers did not constantly talk to each other on cellphones, with nothing constructive or important to say.

In the past, people read and thought much more. Try reading what are called "period letters"—letters written 150 years ago or longer. Also read letters exchanged during the American Civil War between President Abraham Lincoln and his generals. These were highly educated men, whose use of English grammar vastly exceeded today's standards. People had time to mentally digest—to think and analyze.

No longer!

The Impact

Nicholas Carr wrote an article in *The Atlantic* magazine that perhaps best summarizes what the Internet is doing to its users: "Over the past few years I've had an uncomfortable sense that someone, or something, has been tinkering with my brain, remapping the neural circuitry, reprogramming the memory. My mind isn't going—so far as I can tell—but it's changing. I'm not thinking the way I used to think. I can feel it most strongly when I'm reading. Immersing myself in a book or a lengthy article used to be easy. My mind would get caught up in the narrative or the turns of the argument, and I'd spend hours strolling through long stretches of prose. That's rarely the case anymore. Now my concentration often

Please see **INTERNET**, page 22



WHAT UNPRECEDENTED WEALTH REVEALS ABOUT A NATION'S CHARACTER

BY RYAN P. DENEE AND BRUCE A. RITTER

■ **BLACK FRIDAY:** Shoppers hunt for bargains at Macy's in New York City. The day after Thanksgiving, often referred to as "Black Friday," was viewed as an indicator of 2008's holiday shopping season and the possible demise of retailers on the brink.

PHOTO: YANA PASKOVA/GETTY IMAGES



WHAT IF IT were here—the greatest financial catastrophe to dwarf all depressions? An unlikely scenario? Why?

The United States has enjoyed decades of grand prosperity and world preeminence. Countless waves of immigrants have come to America from the lowest rung of the economic ladder. Yet, through hard work, perseverance and resolve, many have attained middle-class status or above. Despite its share of problems, the nation remains the “land of opportunity.”

Yet for how long? No one—not Wall Street brokers, Washington insiders, captains of industry or news pundits—knows for certain what lies in America’s economic future. In years past, the nation has survived crisis after crisis, but somehow managed to bounce back.

Even so, this cannot continue forever. Sooner or later, something must give, something must bend. The U.S. cannot remain the world’s superpower forever. There will come a day when the international community will realize that the U.S. is no longer a significant player on the global stage.

How will this great nation end? Will it simply fade away, slowly dying a prolonged but inevitable death? Or will that day arrive with a sudden crash, an abrupt and astonishing end?

A Nation’s Character Revealed

The U.S., along with the rest of the world, is in the grips of a great financial crisis. In fact, it has been in full swing for nearly a year. Yet items that should be “wants” are still considered “needs.”

The National Retail Federation, an industry group in Washington, D.C., reported that the most popular goods during the Christmas season were flat-screen televisions, GPS systems, video game systems, Blu-Ray players and cashmere sweaters.

The average consumer wants more—demands more—expects more.

Years of “easy credit” offers, zero-down home loans, and pre-approved credit cards have conditioned people to spend, spend, spend!

Being jobless does little to curb the national appetite for acquiring unnecessary goods. After being laid off from his office position, one consumer “just needed” to take advantage of a \$500-dollar discount and buy a big-screen TV.

Even loss of life is not much of a deterrent to unbridled greed. On “Black Friday” 2008, the day after Thanksgiving, a long line of impatient shoppers in Long Island, N.Y., stood in the wee hours of the morning waiting for a Wal-Mart to open. They pushed and shoved, and pressed upon the glass doors. A lone employee unlocked the store to the public, intending to maintain control. Moments later, the man was dead—trampled to death by people more concerned with finding the best bargains than with the loss of a human life.

The story does not end there. According to police reports, consumers were actually *angry* when the store closed because of the employee’s death. And after the news spread on the Internet, blog writers and commentators blamed Wal-Mart! In their eyes, the store was to blame for hyping sales and over-effective marketing. *The employee was in the wrong place at the wrong time*, the reasoning went.

How sickening!

King Solomon, the wisest and richest man who ever lived, made a telling statement: “In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity CONSIDER” (Ecc. 7:14).

We live in turbulent times. Many sources say this is only the beginning of greater financial hardships ahead. Few, it seems, stop and consider.

Conditioning Mindsets

In 1999, a large bank launched a marketing campaign called “Live Richly.” Its goal was to get consumers to change their attitudes about money, persuading them to tap into their home

Please see CHARACTER, page 15

Those who weathered the Great Depression are famed for their work ethic, tenacity, ingenuity and character. What about the 1930s caused this group to later be dubbed the “Greatest Generation”?

BY SAMUEL C. BAXTER

THE 1930S ARE OFTEN described as the worst of times. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* calls the period “the harshest adversity faced by Americans since the Civil War.” Author Timothy Egan titled a book on the 1930s Dust Bowl *The Worst Hard Time*.

Those who grew up during the 1930s are markedly different. They have been called the Greatest Generation. Commonly, this age group is viewed as tougher, more weathered. They are known as hard-working and obstinate. This is a generation that seems to make true the old saying “What does not kill me, makes me stronger.”

And while the above description is a generalization, they have known hard times—war, famine, disease—and have conquered them.

It can be difficult to see what about the 1930s could change an entire generation. For most today, the words “Great Depression” may at best bring grainy black and white photographs to mind. Images of the weathered face of a mother with worried creases in her forehead, her children burying their faces in her shoulders; or perhaps it summons the movie-set recreation of John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath*. If asked, perhaps a few would respond with a simple—“Black Thursday” or “The New Deal,” with others perhaps saying “Dust Bowl.”

But overall, if pushed, most today cannot truly say what those days were

like, with the images and stories being relegated to Hollywood or mere footnotes in history. The number of those who grew up during the 1930s is slowly dwindling, and with them, the memories and lessons learned. What about this event made an entire generation be called the “Greatest”?

Something Is Missing

In general, Americans live privileged lives, lives of abundance. Even the poor in the United States have it better than the majority of the rest of the world.

Americans have had it good, and for quite some time. An entire generation has grown up with nothing wanting, with no sustained hardships. In the past, these trials have come in the form of the Civil War or World War II, events requiring sustained periods of lifestyle change and sacrifice.

This is not to say hardships never occur. The cases of September 11 attacks, the Hurricane Katrina disaster and families losing loved ones in Iraq are all tragic, but do not quite reach the same level of widespread hardship seen in the past.

One can seem to make a good case that it is positive that children and now adults have grown without being exposed to what can be called lean times, a wartime draft, disease epidemics or severe recessions. It can seem good to avoid periods of adversity.

Yet something is missing when one grows up without periods of hardship. And those who lived through the Great Depression can show why.



From Crash to Crippling Depression

Leading up to the depression was a period of wild growth—the Roaring Twenties! A housing boom, stock boom, industry boom—the nation was exploding with expansion.

Most did not see it coming.

“Black Thursday,” October 24, 1929, is generally noted as the start of the Great Depression. A stock market price bubble burst, worsened by panicked financiers liquidating their holdings. The stocks soon were hardly worth the paper on which they were printed.

Yet the average citizen still looked optimistically to the coming decade. They thought: *How could a bunch of wealthy investors losing their money affect me?* The following months proved how wrong they were.

Perhaps the worst hit by Black Thursday were middle class investors.

LESSONS FROM THE



Between 15–25 million Americans owned stocks or had family members who did. These families often lost every cent of their savings in the crash, which also meant these former investors would not be there to put money back into the market.

With time, banks began to fail. During 1930 at least 744 banks failed, with a total of 9,000 banks failing before the decade closed. Only a little over three years after the crash, \$140 billion of depositors' cash was lost.

Businesses began to go under; factories closed. Jobs began to be scarce for the approximately 122 million Americans. In 1929, a little less than 3 million citizens did not have a job; 4 million in 1930; 8 million in 1931; and by 1932—12.5 million Americans were unemployed. This meant one quarter of the nation's families had no working parent.

November of 1929 saw industrial production drop 7%. In December, private construction work dropped 43%.

The effects of the crash rippled outward from America: the economies of Britain, Germany and other European nations were especially affected.

It soon became apparent that America would not immediately bounce back.

Farms too were hit. Crop prices plummeted. Wheat and cotton rotted in the field because it cost more to harvest than the price that would be paid. Newsreel footage caught dairy farmers dumping milk on the side of the road, hoping in vain to increase prices.

The economic effects of bank failures and price drops coupled with another scourge plaguing the Great Plains: drought.

The High Plains of Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico

had seen a wheat boom during World War I. The land was worked non-stop, only halted with the price drop and lack of rainfall.

With their last crop failing to bring in a substantial profit, farms now saw only scorching heat and little rain.

“The Worst Hard Time”

When looking for what was learned by the Greatest Generation, the mere facts of history above do little to explain the hardships that were weathered and what the conditions were truly like.

The following is an example of those who perhaps suffered the worst during the 1930s. As you read, put yourself in their shoes and consider how such an event would change you. Remember the conditions described below for some lasted *ten long years!*

With the economic uncertainty, coupled with drought and poor agricul-

GREAT DEPRESSION

tural practices, farming families were most affected by the depression. Yet a worse terror loomed.

The parched and exposed topsoil began to blow away. Sweeping winds sifted the dirt, picking up only the finest particles. Billowing and growing higher, feeding on the dry earth below, dust storms would tear through towns and houses. The fine powder seeped through every crack in the homes and buildings. Inside, dust was everywhere, on everything, in everything. Day or night, they could not escape its suffocating presence.

Outside, the winds could exceed hurricane strength. The storms darkened the sky often blotting out the sun. If one did not have a tether or fence to follow he would be lost.

Residents coughed up dirt. For some, it soon gave way to a form of silicosis, a disease contracted by seasoned coal miners, and an ailment named dust pneumonia that killed many elderly and children.

Some storms picked up enough topsoil to blanket cities as far east as Washington, D.C. and New York City. Experts estimate 850 million tons of topsoil were removed in 1933 alone.

Dust Bowl residents were told to wear dampened masks, which worked for a short time until they were muddied and virtually useless.

And the “black blizzards” brought more troubles. Birds and predators fled due to drought and the constant storms, leaving increasing hordes of grasshoppers that ate anything green left. They also would eat through the handles of hoes and shovels. The lack of natural predators led to an infestation of jackrabbits—thousands quickly multiplying to more thousands that scoured the countryside.

The storms begat other strange occurrences: Static from the blasts of sand caused barbed wire fences and windmills to crackle with electricity. The charge was strong enough to stop the car engines of those caught driving in one of the dusters.

Soon, the only thing left to eat was pickled tumbleweed and rabbit meat.

In the book *The Worst Hard Time*, Timothy Egan detailed a true life account of a family coping with the dust: “The family...had tried to seal their home, stuffing rags into wall cracks, gluing strips of flour paste-covered paper around the door, taping windows and then draping damp gunnysacks over the opening. Wet bed sheets were hung against the walls as another filter. But all the layers of moist cloth and flour paste could not keep the wind-sifted particles out.”

“The plow...was almost completely buried. Going to the outhouse was an ordeal, a wade through shoulder-high drifts, forced to dig to make forward progress.”

Everyone was always coughing, eyes red and itching.

Many left. Families would heap all their belongings onto their automobiles and drive. Most headed to California, in search of work.

By the time they arrived, they were nearly starving. Fathers would take any job so as not to see their children go hungry.

In California, the Dust Bowl refugees found only the squalor of worker camps. Parents watched as their children died of malnutrition. Only those with the strongest will were not broken.

But, despite the horrid conditions, many *weathered all ten years* of the dust storms and drought, even plowing the land once again when the rains returned.

Is Sorrow Better Than Laughter?

Any number of stories from the 1930s could paint a picture of the hardships of the times. The Great Depression saw wealthy businessmen, who days earlier had everything, but now thought their only option was leaping from a skyscraper window. It saw sturdy men cry because they had no way to feed their family. Oklahoma families toughed out ten years of dust-filled homes and dirt-clogged lungs. African-Americans in Harlem lost their jobs first, simply for the color of their skin—which later lead to riots. Dust Bowl refugees watched their children die of malnutrition in California.

Yet the question remains, what about these trying times built the character of the Greatest Generation?

Hard times often lead people back to religion, to get on their knees and pray for help or merely deliverance. And in fact, the existence of hardships is explained in the Bible, but the answer may not be as expected: “In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the *day of adversity* consider: God also has *set the one over against the other*, to the end that man should find nothing after Him” (Ecc. 7:14). Good times are set against bad times. The one follows the other in a continual cycle.

Notice this verse points out that GOD is the one who “has set the [good/bad times] over against the other.” Why?

Verses 2 and 3 of Ecclesiastes 7 reveal more of God’s purpose in permitting suffering: “It is better to go to the house of *mourning*, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart. *Sorrow is better than laughter*: for by the sadness of the countenance *the heart is made better*.”

Though these passages may be shocking, they prove God places great importance on building character. Through trying times, “the heart is made better.”

The apostle Paul also showed that after a life of severe periods of hardship he learned “in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content” (Phil. 4:11).

In verse 12 he continued, “I know both how to be *abased*, and I know how to *abound*: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be *full* and to be *hungry*, both to *abound* and to *suffer* need.”

Paul learned that through days of adversity the heart truly is made better. The Greatest Generation is a near-textbook example of this. (For more information, read our article “Why Does God Allow Suffering?”)

Americans have experienced abundance for quite some time, which means we are due for harder times. Will you give up during these coming days of adversity? Or trudge forward, allowing the trying times to temper and change you for the better? □



CHARACTER

Continued from page 11

equity and use it to live life a little better. Over the years, billions of dollars were spent to re-engineer the common-sense thinking of the consumer to consider it “okay” to tap into what was once used as a last resort.

Not surprisingly, these types of loans are 25–50% more lucrative than typical consumer loans. Banks benefited greatly by the new source of revenue, as home equity loans grew from \$1 billion in the early 1980s to more than \$1 trillion today. This gave consumers more spending power.

However, as more fell behind in payments, many homeowners faced losing their homes.

Driven by the pressure to increase profits, the financial sector consciously used ubiquitous advertisements to change consumer attitudes toward accumulating debt. They fueled the perception that there would always be credit and money available to pay the bills. The average citizen has been rewired to spend, no longer knowing how to pull back and save.

Virtually no one wants to change and reduce his or her standard of living.

Sick From Head to Toe

The United States (as well as Western counterparts Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and others) is a nation of luxuries and manifold conveniences, a land of gourmet coffee sold on every street corner, a sea of “rights” to accommodate every citizen’s desire, passion and persuasion. We have the “right” to employment, the “right” to healthcare, etc.

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy said, “And so, my fellow Americans: Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.” Today, preoccupied with acquiring more rights at every opportunity and seeing who can “die with the most toys,” a spoiled people asks, “What’s in it for me?”

We can see it in religion. Televangelists, religionists and the like

preach a popular “feel good” message about what God can do for you, promising He will “accept you just as you are.”

We can see it in government bailouts. Corporate executives “plead poverty” to congressional lawmakers. But after receiving funds to stave off economic disaster, they reward themselves with “golden parachutes” and bonus packages.

We can see it in television and films. Make-believe characters plan their lives around “Where’s the next party?”—“What new person can I sleep with tonight?” Hollywood entertainment reflects the American people’s deteriorating values, what they want and are willing to get—by any means necessary.

We can also see it in how we spend our money. Few homes lack two or more televisions, microwaves and stereo systems. Even computers are becoming a staple of the American home. These and other wants, now considered needs, are not enough for most consumers. They want more. They “need” more. They have the “right” to get more.

No wonder the Westernized, “me too” mindset—epitomized by the U.S., Britain and its sister nations—is valueless, spiritually corrupt from head to toe. Through the prophet Isaiah, God described the modern landscape of the West’s spiritual condition: “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment” (Isa. 1:5-6).

From political leaders to corporate officers to financial gurus to the man on the street, all have been infected by a common “virus”—greed.

Good, Bad, Worse—and the Greatest

Examining the Holy Bible to gain insight into today’s problems is unpopular. People would rather turn to the latest self-help book than study divinely inspired words of true knowledge, wisdom, instruction—and grave warning—found nowhere else. But there

are those who desire to be armed with understanding that others choose to reject. If this describes you, read on.

First, the age will soon witness unprecedented wealth and prosperity. Scripture paints a prophetic picture of fleets of merchant ships trading in “merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots” (Rev. 18:12-13).

Now for the bad news. The nations and territories of the American and British peoples will not get to enjoy this wealth. Instead, a new superpower—a revitalized and reconstituted Europe—will arise and will bring about the former’s sudden demise. Read our book *America and Britain in Prophecy* to learn more.

Next, even worse news. Every nation, territory and dependency, from global powerhouse to insignificant, will experience unheard of worldwide economic disaster—a maelstrom that will make today’s financial crisis seem like a gentle ripple across a puddle.

But ultimately, there is the GREATEST news of all.

No more greed, from government and corporate leaders to the individual citizen. No more pursuing after wealth and abundance at all costs. No more debt or abject poverty. A new government will replace all manmade governments, replacing the laws of men with perfect laws that benefit everyone.

That government is the kingdom of God. Its laws—based on wisdom and outgoing concern for others—will guide and protect every walk of life, including anything related to managing money. Never again will man see mass layoffs, bankruptcies, government bailouts, soup lines, homeless shelters, and other symptoms of a way of life contrary to God’s laws governing the proper management of money. □

INDIA & PAKISTAN

An Uncertain Future

With relations strained between rival nuclear powers, what does the future hold?

BY ROBERT W. PACK

■ **COORDINATED ATTACKS:** Fire engulfs the top floor of the Taj Mahal hotel, site of one of the shootouts with terrorists in Mumbai, on late Nov. 26, 2008.

PHOTO: PAL PILLAI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

INDIA AND PAKISTAN have been locked in a bitter rivalry with decades-old roots that have almost erupted into outright war several times. In a contentious post-9/11 world, the threat is even greater as the conflict has, on multiple occasions, threatened to escalate into nuclear war.

However, as a year full of international tension and military maneuvering between India and Pakistan came to a close, there was a glimmer of hope. The two countries

signed a landmark accord agreeing to cooperate on military matters. Although made between two non-official organizations, it was the first time the adversaries had worked together in such a manner. The accord outlined a plan to share limited military and security information between India's Institute of Defense Studies and Analysis and Pakistan's Institute for Strategic Studies.

Why such deep-seated animosity between these nuclear rivals? What does the future hold for them? Will the recently signed security pact be

the first step toward lasting peace in the region?

A Historical Look

To understand the current state of affairs, let's examine Indian and Pakistani history.

The close of the British Empire's colonial era on the subcontinent of India began with the formation of the self-governing colony of Burma (today Myanmar) in 1937. A decade later, in the face of the quickly rising anti-colonial movement in India, the British Crown moved to further divide the region in what is commonly



known as the “Partition of India.” With this division, two additional sovereign states were formed: the Dominion of Pakistan and the Union of India.

Peoples of similar culture and language were divided and grouped along artificial lines to create a predominantly Hindu Indian state and a Muslim-majority Pakistani state. Immediately upon partition, both nations maneuvered for control of the adjacent northern princely state of Kashmir, due to its strategic placement and rich natural resources. Although a sovereign nation, the smaller and relatively defenseless Kashmir was pressured to relinquish its sovereignty to both.

Despite the minority Hindus and Buddhists in Kashmir, Pakistan believed the region should give up its sovereignty primarily because Kashmir’s inhabitants were (and still are) predominantly Muslim. Its people shared much more in common (in language and ethnicity) with Pakistan than India. Kashmir’s Islamic population agreed.

However, as the two powers competed for control, Kashmir’s ruling prince quickly acceded to India in the face of an almost certain Muslim-led revolt and outright war in his state. As Indian forces positioned themselves in Kashmir to assume dominion, Pakistan deployed its military as well. Months of escalating tensions and the inability to resolve who would control Kashmir erupted into the Indo-Pakistani War of 1947 (also known as the First Kashmir War).

Months of fighting and thousands of casualties later, the two countries bowed to international pressure, agreeing to a United Nations-brokered peace deal. A tenuous ceasefire led to drawing new national boundaries, and Kashmir was “sliced in two”—leaving many of the disputed region’s fiercely devout inhabitants unsatisfied.

Escalating Friction Since 1947

Two additional wars broke out over Kashmir in 1965 and 1971, each ending with increasingly fragile resolutions, deeper resentment and further distrust.

To this day, many Pakistanis feel the Indian government, based in New Delhi, should allow Kashmir’s overwhelmingly Islamic population to determine its own destiny by permitting residents to object to Indian rule and redraw “more appropriate” national borders. Also engulfed in the conflicts was the smaller province of Jammu, on the southern edge of Kashmir. Called “The City of Temples,” Jammu is predominantly Hindu and is the location of what are considered some of the religion’s holiest sites.

However, it is not only the “unnatural” division of the Indo-Pakistani peoples that has created resentment

between the two nations. In the 1970s and 80s, Cold War politics increased regional polarization. As communism marched across post-World War II Asia, India became a burgeoning ally and valued trade partner to the Soviet Union. The United States, as a counterbalance, supported the military regimes in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In a world forever changed by the infamous September 11 attacks, the most urgent threat to lasting peace is the growing mistrust between Pakistan and India. It is commonly understood that the rugged tribal area crossing Afghanistan and Pakistan is a staging ground for Islamic terrorists. Likewise, India has grave concerns that Kashmir’s mountainous regions are a haven for radical extremists.

On Dec. 28, 2008, U.S. President-elect Barack Obama publicly acknowledged the growing threat of terror in Asia and its potential to spread. He stated, “We can’t continue to see Afghanistan in isolation. We have to see it as part of a regional problem that includes Pakistan, includes India, includes Kashmir, includes Iran.”

Recent Terrorist Attacks

India’s concern over Kashmir being a staging ground for terrorists has cemented New Delhi’s desire to assume control of the area to maintain national security.

On Dec. 13, 2001, a small group of heavily-armed Pakistani militants stormed India’s parliamentary compound, attempting to assassinate key government leaders. The plot, which left eight Indian citizens and all five terrorists dead, could have been far worse. India demanded that Pakistan take immediate and decisive action against the groups responsible. To show their seriousness, New Delhi deployed half a million Indian soldiers to the border; Pakistani forces responded in kind.

The crisis was soon averted when Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan’s president at the time, promised a government crackdown on radical groups within its borders. Nevertheless, many Indians felt as if Mr. Musharraf was

Old Rivals India and Pakistan

Relations between India and Pakistan have been strained since the two countries gained independence in 1947.

- 1947** First war over disputed territory of Kashmir
- 1965** Second war over Kashmir
- 1971** Third war over East Pakistan, it becomes separate nation, Bangladesh, with India's support
- 1998** Both test nuclear devices; Pakistan launches ballistic missile
- 1999** Sign Lahore peace deal, followed by brief war over Kashmir
- 2001** A summit ends without Kashmir deal; 14 killed in terror attack on Indian parliament
- 2002** One million troops face off at Kashmiri border; cease-fire reached
- 2004** Some airline, train service between the countries restored
- 2005** First bus service in 60 years between Pakistani- and Indian-controlled parts of Kashmir
- 2007** Both sign agreement to reduce risk of accidental nuclear war



How countries compare

	 Pakistan	 India
Population	173 million	1.2 billion
Religion	Mainly Muslims	Mainly Hindus
GDP per person	\$2,400	\$2,600
Life expectancy	63 (M), 65 (F)	67 (M), 72 (F)

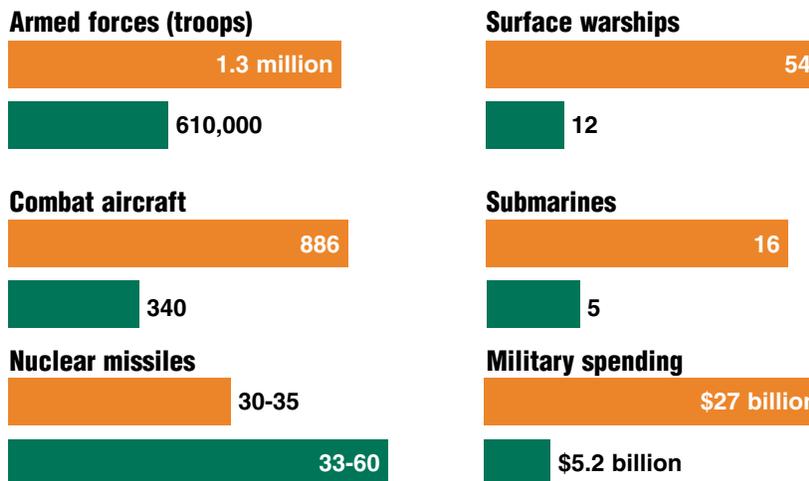
Source: BBC, CNN, CIA World Factbook

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Military Strength

INDIA (orange) PAKISTAN (green)

Strategic balance between India and Pakistan:



only cracking down on certain groups while tacitly allowing others to continue operation.

Any hope of easing further tensions was shattered just months later, in May 2002, when militants attacked an Indian military base in Jammu, killing the wives and children of servicemen. Seen as an attack on India itself, the incident resurrected Hindu-Muslim animosity.

The international community watched as hundreds of thousands of Indian and Pakistani troops once again stared at each other across the border, this time with heightened intensity. Growing uncertainty threatened, like no other time, to “go nuclear.”

After months of hair-trigger readiness, tensions slowly eased when the Indian army was redeployed away from the border. However, decades of past bitterness remained unresolved.

Today, both countries have partial dominion over a region that each believes is rightfully theirs. Further, there remains an underlying feeling by many Indians that Pakistan has gone unpunished. In turn, Pakistan feels increasingly threatened by the presence of Indian troops amassed at the border.

Hope Through Economic Cooperation

Despite recent tensions, India and Pakistan have undertaken joint trade and economic efforts. Significant strategic planning is underway and some progress has already been made. Past trade has been limited to tea, iron ore, textiles, engineering goods, and other industrial raw materials. But now more promising signs can be seen, such as the opening of bank branches within each other's territories, and the operation of commercial trucking and bus lines crossing the border.

When preliminary peace talks began in 2004, both countries gradually lifted trade barriers and sanctions in a concentrated effort toward better relations. The results have been positive. Indian officials reported that, in the fiscal year ending in March 2007, bilateral trade between India and Pakistan was \$1.67 billion—up



■ **TENSIONS RISE:** Left, workers organize for reopening the site of the Leopold Café, the first target of the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks. Right, Protesters burn an Indian flag during a protest in Karachi, Pakistan (Dec. 26, 2008).

PHOTOS: (LEFT) URIEL SINAI/GETTY IMAGES; (RIGHT) RIZWAN TABASSUM/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

from \$850 million the previous year (*International Herald Tribune*).

India's commerce secretary, Gopal Pillai, recently acknowledged the improved ties, stating, "Our bilateral trade has grown phenomenally in the past few years. According to Pakistan's commerce secretary, Syed Asif Shah, all of this is part of an even larger effort to increase trade to \$10 billion by the year 2010" (*ibid.*).

Past contention between the countries has delayed steps toward complete bilateral economic cooperation and the realization of free-trade in Southern Asia, including Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives. The responsibility falls to India and Pakistan to set aside their differences for such an agreement to be realized.

Three Days of Terrorism

Progress was seemingly shattered on Nov. 26, 2008, when a series of highly coordinated attacks were carried out in Mumbai (formerly Bombay), India's largest city and financial capital. After three days, 173 Indians lay dead and over 300 wounded. The attacks were conducted by the terrorist organization Lashkar-e-Toiba, and were planned in Pakistan. The goal was clear: Instill as

much fear and uncertainty as possible by striking at the heart of the Indian nation.

Hundreds of millions of grieving and fearful Indians lay the blame squarely at the feet of Pakistan and its inability or seeming lack of desire to respond. Seen as India's 9/11, there were many who called for immediate military action, regardless of the collateral damage.

Behind closed doors, the Indian military considered resurrecting "Operation Cold Start," a plan devised years ago to deal with such situations. The strategy involved deploying eight integrated battle groups and small ground incursions, along with air support for highly focused attacks, into Pakistani territory. Seen as a way to "resolve" specific targets without the need to mobilize hundreds of thousands of troops, the risks are evident. Though potentially successful at neutralizing certain groups, Pakistan's response in having its border violated could be a direct trigger for nuclear war (*Daily Times Pakistan*).

A Look Forward

Pakistani Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani stated, "We don't want to have aggression with our neighbors. We

want to have friendly relations with our neighbors. I assure you once again that we will not act. We will only react."

He added, "We will not be the first to take any sort of misadventurism but at the same time, we are capable of defending our own dear country" (*AFP*).

Despite all the ongoing issues between India and Pakistan, the prime minister's statement seems to sum up each side's viewpoint. Their increased trade and joint economic efforts and cooperative accords will be for naught if past distrust resurfaces in the wake of the latest attacks on Mumbai.

To India, Pakistan appears lax on terror and unwilling to sufficiently deal with the problem within its borders. To Pakistan, India seems overzealous in its willingness to invade in order to prevent future Mumbai-like attacks.

One of Pakistan's foreign ministers, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, may have best characterized the situation: "We want peace, but should not be complacent about India...We should hope for the best, but prepare for the worst" (*Associated Press*).

What will be the worst? Time will tell. □

READER COMMENTS

From online subscribers of our weekly news updates

All recommended books and booklets can be read and downloaded—free of charge—from our website, thercg.org, while our magazine articles are archived and freely accessible at realtruth.org.

■ “You folks made it clear the importance of the Sabbath and opened my eyes to the deception of the ‘mainline churches.’ Thank you!”
Arizona, U.S.

■ “I’m glad I found you...I can’t stop reading and listening!”
New Jersey, U.S.

■ “I would really just like to be told the truth about religion.”
Queensland, Australia
Recommended article: “Seven Questions Your Minister Does Not Want You to Ask”

■ “I want to learn the truth and true Christianity and I want to know and to worship the right Jesus.”
Minnesota, U.S.
Recommended book: *The True Jesus Christ – Unknown to Christianity*

■ “Has this magazine replaced *The Plain Truth*?”
Kent, England
Editor’s note: *The Real Truth* continues the same unique analysis, through the lens of Christ’s true gospel, as that of the former *Plain Truth* magazine under Herbert W. Armstrong.

■ “What I have listened to so far [*The World to Come* program] is very good and informing...I want to be on top of the ‘good news’ so I can pass it on to my family and friends.”
Alabama, U.S.

■ “What church is this magazine affiliated to? Just curious; it is just exhausting to know who has the truth beside the Bible. There are so many false religions out there, and of course everyone believes truth from their perspective or their interpretation of truth. Each saying the other is false. I have... been to many different churches and yet I am as confused as an unbeliever. Of course, I believe in the Bible, gospels, and Christ, etc. The confusions with the end-times and the rapture are all very confusing...”
Texas, U.S.

Recommended literature: *Here Is The Restored Church of God | Are These the Last Days? | God’s Promised Protection – Place of Safety or Secret Rapture?*

■ “I would like to know about world events in light of biblical prophecy of the last days.”
Sarawak, Malaysia
Recommended booklet: *Are These the Last Days?*

■ “Very good and educational.”
Staffordshire, England

■ “Your magazine is very interesting to read because it tells about the future events of the world. And it also teaches about the moral attitude.”
Mindanao, Philippines

■ “I believe what you are saying as you quote directly from Scripture; also, no one else has ever attempted to explain these things to me and I have been a regular worshipper all my life and attend Bible study classes.”
Australia

■ “A beacon of hope in a dark and rapidly decaying world. Thank You.”
Texas, U.S.

■ “I am a Religion/Theology major at Liberty University. The more I learn about God, the Bible, as well as church doctrine, the more I question the current practices of the established church and man-made Christianity. I am striving to learn what true Christianity is supposed to look like. I hope that your ministry will shed some light on the many questions I have.”
North Carolina, U.S.

■ “What are the views on speaking in tongues?”
New Mexico, U.S.
Recommended booklet: *Understanding Tongues*

■ “I found Mr. David Pack [voice of *The World to Come*] very enjoyable and based in truth. This is a rare thing in this brave and new world we live in. Indeed.”
Texas, U.S.

■ “I am doing my own Bible study at home and your website is a blessing to me.”
Fiji Island, Fiji

■ “*The Real Truth* is truly in the position of profound knowledge and dares

to disclose to the real truth in material facts, never before in my life that I had enjoyed reading.”
Selangor, Malaysia

■ “I like your articles that I have read online and the [*World to Come*] videos that reveal that the true Sabbath is Saturday! I thank you for having the courage to admit and release the truth to the public. You are the only site that discuss real issues and apply it to the Bible. I already knew about the Sabbath because God convicted me to study for myself. However, most people do not study the word for their self!”
Ohio, U.S.

■ “I am curious about which day of the week should be observed as the Sabbath.”
Arizona, U.S.
Recommended book: *Saturday or Sunday – Which Is the Sabbath?*

■ “I am so fascinated with so many of your articles, and question so much about what my church teaches and what God wants me to know. I look forward to studying your magazine and doing further research.”
North Carolina, U.S.

■ “I think it’s great I enjoy reading news updates and analysis briefs from around the world”
North Carolina, U.S.

■ “I was challenged by a friend to know my religion...He told me to prove my religion and I have with the help of your site...”
West Virginia, U.S.

■ “My impression from reading the Bible is that God doesn’t care about how my life is going, as long as His plan is going okay. Am I right in seeing things this way?”
Pennsylvania, U.S.
Recommended book: Our book *The Awesome Potential of Man*, by David C. Pack, publisher and editor-in-chief of *The Real Truth*, explains why God created you, your incredible true purpose, and the extraordinary future He has in store for every human being who has ever lived. □

PERSONAL

Continued from page 2

16:16). Remember that in Mark, Christ preached the “kingdom of God,” and called it the gospel.

The word *gospel* is an old English word meaning “god spell” or *good news*. The word *kingdom* is also an old English term, simply meaning “government.” Therefore, it is accurate to say that Christ preached “the good news of the government of God.” You can know the *who, what, where, when, why, and how* of this good news, and how it relates to the Bible’s greatest prophecy.

The kingdom of God is the dominant theme of not only the New Testament, but of the whole Bible. Yet, incredibly, most know little or nothing of it. This world’s ministers are oblivious to this gospel, and never preach about it. Therefore, virtually the whole world stands in complete ignorance of the single greatest truth in God’s Word!

The word *gospel* is found over 100 times in the Bible. Sometimes it is found alone, and sometimes “of the kingdom” follows it. Other times, it includes “of the kingdom of God,” or the equivalent phrase “of the kingdom of heaven.”

Note that it says, “of heaven,” not “in heaven.” It is heaven’s kingdom, and there is a big difference between the two. Just as kingdom of God means God’s kingdom—not the kingdom in God—the same is true of the kingdom of heaven or *heaven’s kingdom*.

Grasp this crucial point!

Throughout the New Testament, the word “kingdom” is found 27 times, “kingdom of God” 75 times, and “kingdom of heaven” 34 times. All are clearly one and the same.

Two Separate Subjects

Paul preached the kingdom of God to the gentiles. Yet, some believe that he preached to them a “different” gospel—again, unaware that it was Paul who pronounced a curse on anyone

who did this (Gal. 1:8-9). However, while Paul preached the kingdom of God, notice two verses in Acts showing that he did not neglect the subject of Christ’s role in the salvation process.

First, Acts 19:8 establishes which gospel he preached: “And he went into the synagogue, and spoke boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the *kingdom of God*.” In many of his epistles, he taught the kingdom to Gentile congregations. His message was always the same. He continually preached, taught and referred to the *kingdom of God*.

Next, Paul states in Acts 20:25, 21, “I have gone preaching *the kingdom of God*...repentance toward God, AND *faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*.” He preached the same gospel to both Jew and Gentile.

Now notice Acts 28:30-31: “And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, AND *teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ*.”

Luke, who was the writer of Acts, differentiates between preaching about the *kingdom of God* and preaching about *Jesus Christ*! While both are vitally important, they are clearly two *separate* subjects!

In Acts 8:12, the deacon Philip also preached both of these: “But when they believed Philip...concerning the kingdom of God, AND the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” We see that Philip not only preached the kingdom of God, but he also differentiated it from the teaching *about* Christ. Remember, the messenger is not the message.

Notice that these in Samaria were baptized only after “they believed” the right message—not some human idea about it. Also, Christ’s name was taught as an also enormous, but *additional*, understanding.

Jesus is *not* the gospel. However, He does stand directly *alongside* the true gospel and *will* rule the entire earth—with the saints beside Him!—when He returns and establishes His

kingdom. Do not lose sight of this!

Finally, consider another verse where Paul himself made a distinction between the *gospel* and the *person* of Christ. II Corinthians 11:4 contains this powerful warning: “For if he that comes preaches *another Jesus*, whom we have not preached...or *another gospel* which you have not accepted, you might well bear with him.” Paul wanted the Corinthians to reject false teachers and hold to what *he* had taught them. The point here is that Paul distinguishes between the teaching of a *false Jesus* and that of a *false gospel*. These are—and always have been—two separate errors.

Some get confused when they read I Corinthians 15:1-4, thinking that Paul contradicts himself from other passages we have seen by stating that “the gospel” (referenced in vs. 1) is “how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day” (vs. 3-4). Careful reading makes clear that “the gospel” reference in verse 1 is not connected to Christ’s death for our sins and His burial, referenced in verses 3 and 4. When correctly understood, rather than saying that Christ is the gospel, this passage confirms the opposite, and supports all of the above scriptures in the gospel accounts, the book of Acts and II Corinthians 11:4!

Since Jesus preached “repent and believe the gospel,” it should now be clear why. His role must always be preached in conjunction with the kingdom of God, because one cannot enter the kingdom unless he understands and accepts that “Christ died for our sins,” and that person has *repented* of his sins.

Ask yourself: If Christ IS the gospel—IS the kingdom of God—then why did Paul (four times) and Philip speak of them *as separate points of understanding*?

What evidence is there that other New Testament writers—other apostles—preached this same message? A great deal!

The apostle Peter also preached the kingdom of God: “For so an entrance

shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the *everlasting kingdom* of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (II Pet. 1:11). So did the apostle James: “Hearken, my beloved brethren, has not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the *kingdom* which He has promised to them that love Him?” (2:5).

Matthew’s account mentions the phrase “gospel of the kingdom” three times. Notice one: “And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the *gospel of the kingdom*, and

healing every sickness and every disease among the people” (9:35). In most of His parables, Christ taught the basics of the kingdom of God. Matthew alone makes over FIFTY references to it.

Luke records that Jesus Christ commissioned His disciples to preach this same message: “Then He called His twelve disciples together...And He sent them to preach the *kingdom of God*” (9:1-2). Soon after, He sent seventy others to preach, and they also carried the message of the “kingdom of God” (10:1, 9).

In this article, you have learned more about the true gospel of the Bible than most will ever know. But there is much more to understand about the kingdom of God. The true gospel is a big subject. The gospel is only one of many subjects in the Bible that has been badly misunderstood.

To learn more, continue reading the articles in this magazine or go online (*realtruth.org*) to watch my *World to Come* broadcasts. You will hear the plain truth of this and many other subjects! □

INTERNET

Continued from page 9

starts to drift after two or three pages. I get fidgety, lose the thread, begin looking for something else to do. I feel as if I’m always dragging my wayward brain back to the text. The deep reading that used to come naturally has become a struggle.

“I think I know what’s going on. For more than a decade now, I’ve been spending a lot of time online, searching and surfing and sometimes adding to the great databases of the Internet. The Web has been a godsend to me as a writer. Research that once required days in the stacks or periodical rooms of libraries can now be done in minutes. A few Google searches, some quick clicks on hyperlinks, and I’ve got the telltale fact or pithy quote I was after. Even when I’m not working, I’m as likely as not to be foraging in the Web’s info-thickets’ reading and writing e-mails, scanning headlines and blog posts, watching videos and listening to podcasts, or just tripping from link to link to link.”

“For me, as for others, the Net is becoming a universal medium, the conduit for most of the information that flows through my eyes and ears and into my mind...And what the Net seems to be doing is chipping away my capacity for concentration and contemplation. My mind now expects to take in information the way the Net dis-

tributes it: in a swiftly moving stream of particles. *Once I was a scuba diver in the sea of words. Now I zip along the surface like a guy on a Jet Ski*” (emphasis ours).

The last sentence is possibly the best analogy to explain how people read online. Mr. Carr goes on to explain that “the result is to scatter our attention and diffuse our concentration.”

He also quotes playwright Richard Foreman, who said, “We are the pancake people...spread wide and thin as we connect with that vast network of information access by the mere touch of a button.”

No Time to Think

Here is another illustration that shows there is an incessant demand for our attention. Today’s sports experience is all about entertainment and keeping the audience’s attention.

At a typical NBA basketball game, for instance, bands of video screens circle the arena, with constantly changing images and bright flashes of white or yellow transforming the color of the stands. A four-directional mega-screen hangs above the court showing onlookers close-ups and replays of basketball moves. Following almost every play are mindless video clips that provide “commentary,” much to the delight of fans. During time outs, administrators rush to create even more entertainment. Hip-hop dancers take to the floor and gyrate to the latest hits, and

cheerleaders dance as suggestively as possible, and in what is promoted as a “family atmosphere.” At other times, the master of ceremonies incites the audience to scream louder and louder.

And on it goes. So different from a sporting experience of 100 years ago. This is just one example of the tremendous demands for our attention.

Take Time to Read and Think

In the end, it should not be a surprise that so many cannot make it through three or four paragraphs before turning their attention to something else. What will be the long-term effects of such social behavior? What will happen to the children and teenagers of today who have even fewer occasions to read and think? Will a large enough foundation be built for our children to make correct decisions? What about *your* future?

Set aside time to think and read. You will be investing in your future. Ask yourself: When is the last time you have sat down for an hour or two and read the Bible, the most important book of all time? Do you find it hard to concentrate? When is the last time you turned off all electronics and simply thought of your goals and plans in life?

Take the time *now* to read our articles “Meditation – The Misunderstood Tool” and “The Rules of Effective Bible Study.”

Read. Think. You will be glad you did. □

AMERICAS

Cuban Revolution Turns 50



■ **50 YEARS OF COMMUNISM:** (Above) A mural celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Cuban revolution in Santiago, Cuba, where (below) Raul Castro delivered a New Year's speech commemorating the event and blaming the United States trade embargo for the island nation's economic troubles.

PHOTOS: (ABOVE) MCT; (BELOW) RODRIGO ARANGUA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Jan. 1, 2009, marks the 50th anniversary of the day Fidel Castro and his communist revolutionaries seized control of Cuba.

The revolution and its original leader, Fidel Castro, have been a lasting thorn in the side of the United States and a poster child for numerous socialist revolutions to follow.

However, the celebration was a low-key affair. Last year, on top of the global financial crisis, a trio of hurricanes pummeled Cuba, causing \$10 billion in damages. The storms left many Cuban citizens without homes, jobs and electricity.

For 18 months, Raul Castro has been president, replacing his ailing brother Fidel. During that time, small changes have been made, such as the ability to purchase cellphones and DVD players. Cuban life is overall



the same, including the animosity between the Cuba and the U.S.

Despite recent hopes that President-elect Barack Obama and Raul Castro can work to lift the 46-year-old trade embargo against Cuba, Mr. Castro warned in his anniver-

sary speech that the U.S. "enemy will never stop being aggressive, dominant and treacherous" (*AFP*).

Mr. Castro looked back on 50 years and called them a struggle. "The next 50 years... will also be of permanent struggle," he said (*ibid.*). □

MIDDLE EAST

Violence Erupts in Gaza

■ **RELENTLESS ATTACK:** (Above) Smoke rises from Gaza after two days of airstrikes. (Below) Israeli soldiers hang their flag on their tank among scores of other military vehicles preparing for the ground invasion.

PHOTOS: (ABOVE) URIEL SINA/GETTY IMAGES; (BELOW) DAVID SILVERMAN/GETTY IMAGES

Responding to increased surface rocket fire from the Gaza Strip, Israeli warplanes bombed the Hamas-ruled region, which later gave way to a ground invasion, with Israel set to take Gaza City.

Over 537 have died and nearly 2,000 have been injured from the bombings, which have mainly targeted Hamas-linked structures.

The escalation follows the Dec. 19 expiration of a ceasefire treaty between Israel and Hamas.

The *Associated Press* described the scene as dawn broke after two days of bombing: "...strong winds blew black smoke from the bombed sites in Gaza City over deserted streets. The air hummed with the buzz of pilotless drones and the roar of jets, punctuated by the explosions of new airstrikes."

Israel is mainly destroying symbols of Hamas rule in Gaza, including the government building for the Interior Ministry. Israeli warships also aimed their guns at Hamas-run structures in the Gaza port.

The United Nations Security Council called for the airstrikes to cease immediately, and the United States has called for Hamas to stop firing rockets and renew the treaty.

However, it appears Israeli opera-



tions will continue until rocket fire ceases from Gaza.

"I don't want to delude or deceive anyone; this will not be a short operation," Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak said. "The war on terrorism is an ongoing one, and we will have to stand firm in order to change the situation in the south" (*CNN*).

Israeli Cabinet Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer told Army Radio, "If we withdraw today, without reaching some kind of comprehensive agreement, we haven't done anything...The military has to carry on with its work" (*AP*). □

AMERICAS

Mexican Drug Cartel Violence Claims 5,300 Lives

As drug cartels wage turf wars to gain transportation routes into the United States, the number of deaths resulting from gang-related violence in Mexico has doubled in the past year, shifting from 2,477 in 2007 to over 5,300 in 2008.

The most recent wave of killings occurred in December, with the gruesome discovery of eight bodies showing signs of torture in the state of Chiapas, in southeastern Mexico on Dec. 23. Three of the bodies were identified as local merchants.

The findings came just two days after Mexican authorities uncovered nine decapitated bodies and their severed heads in the southeastern state of Guerrero. Eight were identified as soldiers, with the ninth body being that of a high-ranking police official.

The discoveries have left Mexican citizens terrified and bring a very bloody year—with the death toll up 117% from last year—to a close. A *USA Today* article reported that the violence has even caused parents

Please see **DRUGS**, page 25

DRUGS

Continued from page 24

to keep their children out of school to prevent them from becoming victims of the violence in Juarez, a border city that was rocked by more than 1,530 killings in 2008 and is the place of the mysterious murders of hundreds of women.

Since December 2006, 40,000 soldiers and police have been deployed across the country to try to break up the powerful drug cartels. Mexican President Felipe Calderon has repeatedly stated his desire to ally with the United States to crack down on the violence.

But although the U.S. has contributed \$133 million to the Merida Initiative, a government-sponsored program aimed to help Mexico combat drug cartels, Mexican Ambassador Carlos Rico said until the U.S. stops consuming cocaine, the cause is hopeless. The U.S. State Department estimates that 90% of all cocaine reaches the U.S. via the country's southern neighbor.

"The key market in this case is a U.S. Market, that in spite of very, very impressive efforts that the U.S. government has put into reducing demand, it



Ongoing War

A look at the continuing drug war in Mexico:

- **1980s** Mexico supplies marijuana and heroin; becoming transit point for South American cocaine
- Dec. 1, 1988** President Carlo Salinas de Gortari inaugurated, vowing to "make life miserable for drug traffickers"
- Nov. 1984** Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Mexican officials burn 10,000 tons of marijuana being farmed in Chihuahua
- Feb. 7, 1985** U.S. DEA agent Enrique Camarena is kidnapped, tortured and killed by drug traffickers in Guadalajara, Mexico
- Jan. 15, 1996** Juan Garcia Abrego, head of the Gulf Cartel, a drug trafficking organization, arrested and sent to the United States
- June 2, 1993** Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, head of the Sinaloa Cartel, is captured in Guatemala; sent to Mexican prison in 1995 and escapes in January 2001, just after former President Vicente Fox takes office
- July 3, 1997** Drug lord Amado Carrillo Fuentes dies in Mexico City during plastic surgery trying to change his appearance
- Jan. 19, 2004** President Fox launches "Secure Mexico" as a plan to end drug violence and organized crime
- May 8, 2008** Drug hit men assassinate the coordinator for regional security for the Federal Police; year marked with numerous killings of law enforcement officials
- June 27, 2008** U.S. Congress approves Plan Merida; \$350 million to \$400 million to Mexico's drug fight
- Sept. 7, 2006** Armed commandos throw five severed heads on night club floor; 13 decapitated heads discovered in Michoacan
- Dec. 1, 2006** President Felipe Calderon inaugurated and announces all-out war on narco-gangs; sends 6,500 troops to Michoacan
- 2007** Some 2,600 people die violent deaths throughout the year because of drug war
- Aug. 18, 2008** A reported 2,682 people have died violent deaths because of drug gangs and organized crime so far this year

SOURCE: "The Secret History of the Narco" by Jose Alfred Andrade Bojorges, McClatchy Washington Bureau MCT

has remained as pretty much as it used to be a few years ago,' [Mr. Rico] said. 'So as long as that demand is there and the impressive possibility of amazing profits of illegal operators and criminal organizations, it is going to be pretty much impossible for Mexico to solve the issue'" (*Voice of America*). □

AFRICA

Coup in Guinea



■ **CLAIMING VICTORY:** A self-declared leader parades through Guinea's capital. PHOTO: SEYLLOU/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Junior army officer Moussa Dadis Camara organized a military junta and proclaimed himself the new president of the Republic of Guinea, following the death of President Lansana Conte, who had ruled since 1984. □

EUROPE

Three Weeks of Riots in Greece

Three weeks of riotous protests tore through Greece's capital after the fatal police shooting of a 15-year-old boy Dec. 6. The violence and destruction has cost Athens an estimated \$1 billion.

So far, the riots have injured dozens, with more than 300 arrested and over 500 shops damaged in Athens.

Protests quickly turned political, as self-described anarchists, and other masked militants who had been marching behind the demonstrators, blamed Greece's government and the capitalist system. Rioters hurled oranges, rocks and firebombs at the police, smashed store fronts, and set ablaze cars, trash cans and outside cafe furniture.

As the riots continued for weeks,

journalists and politicians questioned if there were a deeper cause for the violent unrest—mainly pointing to the current financial crisis and fearing violent protests would spread throughout Europe.

Robert D. Kaplan pointed out in an article for *The Atlantic* that youth unemployment is at 25-30% for Greece and poverty is rampant. These points, coupled with a government unable to accomplish much due to a deadlock in parliament, make this a "ripe period for protests."

In closing the article, Mr. Kaplan said, "Pay close attention to Greece; at a time of world-wide economic upheaval, it might eerily presage disturbances in 2009" (*ibid.*). □

THE REAL TRUTH
A MAGAZINE FOR EXPOSING PLANNED AGONY

WORLD NEWS DESK
If the Oil Runs Out...
The World to Come
THE TRUE CHURCH - ITS TEACHINGS!

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- Many articles and news briefs feature additional news photographs and informational graphics not published in the print version.
- While the magazine is printed ten times a year, we also post on our site (www.realtruth.org) additional news articles, reports and analyses throughout each week.
- We offer free email subscriptions of weekly news updates.
- The site features our unique "pop-up scriptures" function.
- Visitors can view *The World to Come* program, presented by David C. Pack, publisher/editor-in-chief of *The Real Truth*.

THE REAL TRUTH
A MAGAZINE FOR EXPOSING PLANNED AGONY

ARTICLE - DECEMBER 3, 2008

The Year in Review: Lessons from 2008

Another year passes and a new one takes its place, bringing us deeper into the 21st century. So what have we learned?

BY DAVID C. PACK

2008 was the year of nations assuming greater roles on the international stage of influence and prestige, as America continues its downward slide.

Take Russia, for instance. On August 4, it sent troops into Georgia, a former Soviet satellite nation, capturing territory and ousting the Georgian military. Meanwhile, the European Union and the United States could do nothing other than issue strong statements.

Yet Russia's quick and decisive clamp with Georgia was in itself a strong statement. To Europe: the center of the flow into the continent; do not oppose our regional interests. To other former Soviet satellite nations: We will not tolerate unrest on our borders. To the rest of the world: We will take matters into our own hands, when necessary.

Until the recent global financial crisis, the Russian market boomed. The nation now has more billionaires than any country other than the U.S. Russia's state-owned monopolies, Gazprom, controls the flow of oil into Europe. Its national leaders, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and President Dmitry Medvedev, are highly popular among the Russian citizenry, despite fears of the authoritarian Russian Federal returning to totalitarianism. Largely in response to Washington's determination to station U.S. missiles in NATO nations bordering Russia, Moscow is building strong ties with national leaders in America's backyard, regional players such as Cuba and Venezuela who openly oppose U.S. interests. In a recent analysis and government leaders view as a thumb-to-the-nose gesture to Washington, Moscow deployed its fleet to South America to conduct naval exercises, where it received a more-than-warm reception from Indonesian Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri.

All this begs the question: What will the Russian bear do when the world's oil runs out? Elsewhere, another emerging world power

ARTICLES

THE REAL TRUTH
A MAGAZINE FOR EXPOSING PLANNED AGONY

WORLD NEWS DESK - DECEMBER 10, 2008

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THE WORLD TO COME PROGRAM

THE REAL TRUTH
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WORLD NEWS DESK - DECEMBER 20, 2008

The World in Review

A snapshot of events around the world | Updated each Friday

1. Canada:

- Gas slipped to a four-year low across the nation. According to Calgary-based consulting firm MD Energy & Associates Inc., the average price of gas decreased 3.4 cents since last week. "It starts there in the dozens of data that we've been looking at pump and crude prices, we've seen such a dramatic drop in such a short period of time ever," said Michael Brink, president of MD Energy & Associates Inc. (CBC News).
- The country's internal political turmoil has nearly ended and Prime Minister Stephen Harper will remain in power for now, said David Wilkins, the outgoing U.S. ambassador to Canada. He, Harper and his government are set to introduce a new budget when Parliament resumes on Jan. 26. (See related article: "The Great Canadian Shift")
- A new Alberta study revealed that the rate of pregnant women smokers in the province exceeds the national average, with up to a third of women developing the habit once they become pregnant. (See related article: "The Truth About Smoking")
- "The economic rebounded slightly in October, giving yet another strong indication that Canada has entered a recession expected to last the latter part of a year" (The Canadian Press).

2. United States:

THE WORLD IN REVIEW

THE REAL TRUTH
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WORLD NEWS DESK - DECEMBER 10, 2008

Riots in Athens Escalating

Violence and destruction in Athens continues to escalate, as rioters and police square off in the streets of Greece's capital.

Events started as a peaceful demonstration in central Athens, with thousands turning out to protest police brutality, in response to the fatal shooting of a 19-year-old boy by the police.

But protests quickly became political as self-described anarchists, and other masked militants who had been marching behind the demonstrators, blamed Greece's government and the capitalist system. Rioters burned trash cans and firebombs at the police, smashed store fronts and set ablaze cars, trash cans and outside cafe furniture.

The police retaliated with volleys of tear gas and shot water, but which several hundred militants seized control. In law, police cannot enter school campuses—effect, turning the university into a sanctuary and a rallying point for violent activists.

Unrest grew worse when a 16-year-old, son of a leading official in the pro-demonstrators Greek Teachers Federation, was wounded in a rifle attack.

Protesters hung banners along theropolis monument and erected a news bulletin at a state television studio.

Meanwhile, government authorities issued emergency statements, according to foreign nations for fresh stocks of tear gas, and warning the public to steer clear of Athens' city center.

So far, the riots have injured dozens of people, with more than 300 arrested, and caused 200 million euros worth of damage for over 200 shops in Athens.

WORLD NEWS DESK