

AUGUST 2012

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REAL TRUTH

A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING



**DROUGHT NOW...
FAMINE NEXT?**



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REAL TRUTH

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A R T I C L E S

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■ **IN LIGHTS:** Olympic rings hang from London's Tower Bridge ahead of the 2012 summer Games (July 22, 2012).

PHOTO: TREETER LECKA/GETTY IMAGES

Britain's Identity Crisis

As the world looked to the United Kingdom for the 2012 Summer Olympics, the country unwittingly revealed its true colors.

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FRONT COVER: A collage of photos shows the effects of drought across the United States.

PHOTOS: SCOTT OLSON/ (TOP AND BOTTOM RIGHT); JUSTIN SULLIVAN/ (BOTTOM LEFT) GETTY IMAGES

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PUBLISHER/EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
DAVID C. PACK

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
JEFFREY R. AMBROSE

SENIOR EDITORS
WILLIAM H. BEHRER
KEVIN D. DENEEN
GABRIEL N. LISCHAK

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

DAVID C. PACK
JEFFREY R. AMBROSE
SAMUEL C. BAXTER
WILLIAM H. BEHRER
ABDON V. BUENA
RYAN L. CASWELL
SCOTT A. CLARK
JEFFREY D. DAVIS
KEVIN D. DENEEN
RYAN P. DENEEN
JONATHAN A. DICEN
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SAMUEL C. BAXTER
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ART/GRAPHICS
DARNITRA D. JACKSON
PAULA C. RONDEAU
EILEEN M. WILLARD

WEBSITE SERVICES
BRADFORD G. SCHLEIFER
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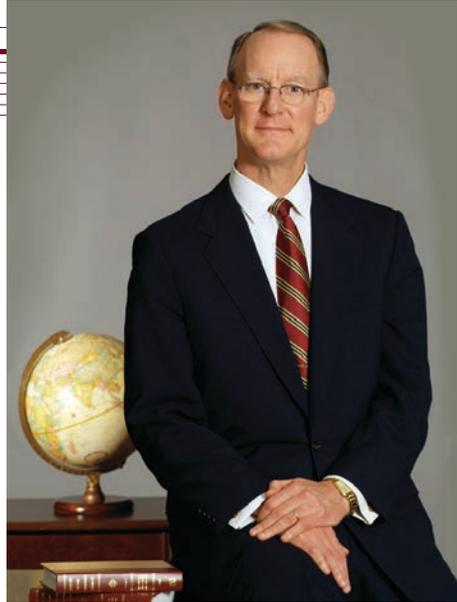
Contact *The Real Truth*:

P.O. Box 23295
Wadsworth, OH 44282

realtruth.org

PERSONAL FROM

David C. Fack



20 Bible Verses Christendom Ignores! – Part 2

MODERN CHRISTENDOM twists, perverts and ignores the many plain truths of the Bible. Over the last 2,000 years, it has counterfeited every true doctrine and replaced them with cheap substitutes. This has been possible because certain more difficult to understand passages can be easily misrepresented to say something they do not. It is these verses that invariably become the vehicle through which false doctrine can be introduced—with almost no one able to recognize it all may have begun with a single wrong scriptural premise.

Unaware of the most crucial rule of study, most Bible students do not build their understanding by beginning with the clearest verses on any subject. Instead they enter God’s Word with preconceived ideas and search for passages that *appear* to support what they have assumed the Bible teaches. This makes them candidates for confusion and deception.

Now for 10 more verses that Christianity ignores. The apostle Peter stated that the apostle Paul wrote “... some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest [twist], as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction” (II Pet. 3:16). Completely unaware of any of the rules of Bible study, but understanding how most people think, teachers and scholars can take advantage of the way certain parts of God’s Word are written. This applies to verses beyond what Paul wrote.

One of the greatest truths about which ministers have deceived billions is the gospel.

(11) Mark 1:14-15

This introduces the 11th verse largely unnoticed by Christians—*Mark 1:14-15*: “Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the *gospel* of the *kingdom of God*, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the *kingdom of God* is at hand: repent you, and *believe the gospel*.”

The most butchered teaching in the Bible is also the most fundamental. Different denominations have invented gospels of healing, salvation and grace, to

name a few, but the biggest false gospel is the one focusing on Christ—the Messenger—instead of His message.

Gospel means “good news”—and this news is far greater than today’s wrong focus about Christ.

The word gospel is found 101 times throughout the Bible—sometimes alone, or with “kingdom,” “kingdom of God,” or “kingdom of heaven” (not kingdom *in* heaven). Since “kingdom” is a King James term meaning government, and “of” denotes possession, *kingdom of God* can be written as “government of God” or “God’s government.”

The “gospel of the kingdom of God” can be expressed as “the good news of God’s government.” How plain! Jesus announced the good news that God’s government was coming to Earth. He did not speak about Himself. Notice: “Jesus...said, My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me...He that speaks of himself seeks his own glory...” (John 7:16, 18).

God takes the truth of the gospel seriously. Paul warned the first-century Church—and all Christians thereafter—that some “would pervert the gospel of Christ” (Gal. 1:7). He *twice* declared that any who do are cursed! (Read verses 8 and 9.)

This is a sobering warning! God demands the true gospel be taught. Jesus Christ and Christians through the ages were put to death for this message. Take time to order the free booklet *Which Is the True Gospel?* at rcg.org/witrg. Christians are in training for positions in a new and different government.

(12) Revelation 18:4

The 12th verse rejected by Christianity is *Revelation 18:4*. God commands, “Come out of [Babylon], My people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues.”

Babylon means confusion. The true servants of God have come out of this world, and its Babylonish religions, ways and governments. They have left behind its teachings, division, strife and confusion. Paul wrote, “Come out from among them [the world], and *be you separate...*” (II Cor. 6:17).

Let’s understand! Just before His crucifixion, Jesus reflected a central principle to His disciples in a prayer: “I pray not that you should take them out of the world, but that you should keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through your truth: Your word is truth” (John 17:15-17).

It is truth that sets Christians apart (“sanctifies” them) from everyone around them. They are not *of* this world, and its ways, customs, beliefs and traditions. They have come out of it, leaving all of its values, ideas and philosophies behind.

Christians cannot live in caves or as hermits. Some religious zealots misunderstand Christ and enter monasteries or retreats to avoid contact with people. Jesus never did this. He did not mean come out of the *physical* world, but rather its system of governments and religions. Christians practice and believe the truth—the whole truth and nothing but the truth of God’s Word—not popular ideas—any of them!

(13) I Corinthians 10:3-4

Although widely missed, the identity of the Old Testament God is found in the New Testament. This introduces the 13th passage Christianity leaves out—I *Corinthians 10:3-4*: “[Ancient Israel] did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that *Rock was Christ.*” This is plain! Jesus Christ is the God of both the Old and New Testaments.

In both Testaments, Jesus is described as the God who never changes (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8). New Testament teachings reflect the Old. In Part 1, we saw the Law of God—the 10 Commandments—is still binding on Christians today. What happens when we die, what sin is, the true gospel, and so many more doctrines are in complete agreement when compared to the Old Testament.

If these verses were not ignored, they would point to the true God of the Bible and, in turn, to the primary purpose of the New Testament—the establishment and building of God’s Church.

(14) Matthew 16:18

The 14th verse describes how Christ built *one* Church. *Matthew 16:18*: “I will build *My church*; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Stating it would never disappear, Jesus promised to build His Church—singular!—not the mass confusion of hundreds of fighting and competing churches, which seemingly cannot agree on anything.

Your job is to seek out and find one Church—*Jesus’* Church! It is only from that Church you will receive true spiritual nourishment, which will allow you to develop and grow in godly character.

Now ask: why are you hearing these verses now—in this Personal? Jesus built His Church to carry out His Commission, and *only one* fulfills all New Testament requirements. It is that Church from which you are learning the truth, including about these basic Bible verses. To understand God’s Church, request my free book, *Where Is the True Church? – and Its Incredible History!* at rcg.org/thogtc.

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BRITAIN'S IDENTITY CRISIS

As the world looked to the United Kingdom for the 2012 Summer Olympics, the country unwittingly revealed its true colors.

BY SAMUEL C. BAXTER

“UTTERLY BRITISH.” That is how English newspaper *Telegraph* described the opening ceremony of the 30th Summer Olympic Games in London. Sixteen days later, the closing ceremony featured much of the same. Media outlets the world over called them “weirdly and unabashedly British,” “quirky,” “madcap,” “sensational” and “drawing heavily on the roots of British identity.”

But what does *British* really mean anymore?

After decades of systematically dismantling the British Empire, the nation has struggled to redefine its place on the global stage. It used to be simple: “British” meant global kingdom, “British” meant meticulous attention to manners, “British” meant military

might and industrial power—“British” meant the top of the world.

Now the term seems synonymous with confused, confounded, perplexed.

The opening ceremony of the 2012 London Games—which was broadcast across the world—perfectly embodied this modern hodgepodge identity. *The New York Times* described the event as “a wild jumble of the celebratory and the fanciful; the conventional and the eccentric; and the frankly off-the-wall, Britain presented itself to the world... as something it has often struggled to express even to itself: a nation secure in its own post-empire identity, whatever that actually is.”

Most wildly praised the event, while detractors concluded it was “confusing,” “overly long,” or simply “too British.” Once Olympic competitions were underway, however, thoughts of the opening events quickly faded. The same happened after the spectacle of the closing ceremony disappeared in the world’s rearview mirror. Both times,

perfect opportunities were missed to once-and-for-all answer the question, “What is Great Britain?”

While the nation was under a microscope for 17 days, the British Isles asserted their post-empire identity, with heavy emphasis on off-the-wall humor, pop-culture contributions, and eccentric tastes. But despite this carefully constructed display of modern-flavored national character, the true roots of British identity shined through.

Yet the world did not take note. Even the Brits themselves did not realize it.

What Other Nation?

The Olympic opener aptly demonstrated the country’s struggle to redefine its global role—and stood as a public testament of the region’s national character. Titled “Isles of Wonder,” the event brimmed with chaotic pageantry.

The Christian Science Monitor marveled at the bluntly honest portrayal of Britain from the London organizers: “What other nation, in a moment of





national glory that politicians pay billions of dollars to win, would allow such a view of their own country to be broadcast to the world?"

Truly, *what other nation?*

In no particular order, the event included a patchwork quilt of musical selections (everything from classical composer Edward Elgar to notorious punk rock outfits). It showcased the nation's love of whimsy (pretending that the Queen of England arrived at the Games by parachuting out of a helicopter with a well-known British actor).

While there was the clamor of industrial factories, a band of 1,000 percussionists, and the boom of dance-club bass drums, there were also quiet moments. Early in the ceremony children sang a medley of traditional religious hymns while actors and livestock milled about a set piece representing England's rolling countryside.

Then there was a bit with the London Symphony Orchestra—arguably the finest in the world—that included a comedy routine that ended in lavatorial humor. Again, *what other nation* would allow this to be broadcast to the world?

A sizable chunk of the ceremony included revelers dancing to the nation's "Top of the Pops" and beyond, leaving virtually no musical stone unturned: rocket men jetted around the arena while psychedelic rock came through loudspeakers, audience members shouted along with an infamous punk rock tune, and glow-stick toting partygoers

gyrated to the beat with the constant shift of popular songs.

During a "nightmare" segment, which simultaneously highlighted England's National Health Service and served as a tribute to a magical British nanny, a massive puppet version of a villainous wizard from the Harry Potter series terrorized dozens of sleeping children who initially protested the forced slumber by jumping on makeshift cots.

The event also highlighted Britain's contribution to the Internet—not through emphasizing its importance in the global marketplace or in making information accessible to people throughout the world—but by staging a tale of two young Brits who "fall for each other" over the course of an evening via text messages and social media networking. The first time they meet face to face, they immediately share a lustful kiss.

What other nation?

There was a meditative moment honoring the contributions and sacrifice of Britain's armed forces—and a "party" section featuring a rap-influenced "grime" musician declaring, "... all I care about is sex and violence."

Soon after, everything went quiet and a single female voice mournfully sang, "Lord, abide with me. When other helpers fail and comforts flee, help of the helpless, o abide with me."

What other nation?

Finally came the parade of 205 Olympic teams, with Britain's squad entering to "Heroes," a song that pairs a

bouncy beat with lyrics that range from hopeful to ambiguous to negative.

Religious references and drug parties. Military memorials and hooking up. A world-class orchestra and bathroom humor. The Queen and the occult. Grandeur turned to mediocrity. The good *and* the bad.

It happened again during the closing ceremony, which was a crazed concoction of high fashion, Rolls-Royces, pop music, and British humor. Most songs focused on materialism, sex and a party lifestyle. Many contained filthy language.

Consider. *What other nation* would so bluntly flaunt their successes and faults to the world?

Between the Lines

Conspicuously missing from "Isles of Wonder" was any hint of the British Empire. The nation seemed wary of highlighting its time at the top.

What the ceremony failed to portray was the period between the 1750s and 1850s, when the nation's population boomed from 7.7 million to 20.7 million—London became the global capital of culture, finances and politics—and the empire gained control of or access to virtually every vital sea gate (the Suez and Panama canals, the straits of Gibraltar and Hormuz, Singapore, Cape Horn, Malta, Cape of Good Hope, and Hong Kong).

For about two centuries, Great Britain ruled. At its zenith, it governed



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■ **BRITAIN ON DISPLAY:** A collage of images from the opening and closing ceremonies of the 2012 Summer Olympic Games highlights various themes of British history, including the nation's agricultural roots and contributions to popular culture, as well as a dance routine said to represent victims of the July 7 terrorist bombings (July 27, 2012).

PHOTOS: GARY AMBROSE/LOS ANGELES TIMES/ (OPPOSITE PAGE BOTTOM LEFT); DAVID EULITT/KANSAS CITY STAR/ (OPPOSITE PAGE BOTTOM RIGHT) MCT; JOHN STILLWELL - WPA POOL/ (TOP); QUINN ROONEY/ (BOTTOM RIGHT) GETTY IMAGES; CHUCK MYERS/MCT (BOTTOM LEFT)

almost one quarter of the world population and controlled 11 million square miles of territory. This led to the popular slogan: “The sun never sets on the British Empire.”

Yet Britain has been in a state of perpetual decline since the end of the second world war. The British Colonial office closed in 1966—effectively ending the empire. Since then almost every vital colony and sea gate has been lost, with the last being Hong Kong in 1997.

Regardless, the period from about 1960 until today was where the 2012 Olympic opener spent much of its time highlighting its contributions to culture—again, both good *and* bad—while adamantly ignoring its plummeting global status.

Without the defining characteristics of an empire, modern Britain seems lost as how to clearly define itself.

Sorry State

Some inhabitants of England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales, especially among older generations, took offense at the proceedings, saying, “That is not *my* Great Britain.” Yet the contents of the opening ceremony *were* honest and highlighted some of the region’s major societal problems.

■ **Mediocrity:** British workers are now world-renowned as slothful and unproductive. Foreign businessmen have noted that rarely, if ever, will someone go above and beyond their job requirements. Also, on Fridays, many employees habitually leave their jobs early (without managerial approval) to prepare for the weekend.

■ **Drunkenness:** For the average Briton, Friday and Saturday mean alcohol-fueled festivities. *The Independent* reported, “Britain is the drunk man of Europe. Alcohol consumption in France, Germany and Italy is down by between 37 and 52 per cent since 1980. But in the UK it is up nine per cent, with binge drinkers sinking more booze than ever, putting unprecedented pressure on the NHS [National Health Service], police and social services.”

■ **Obscene entertainment:** Prime-time television programs offer a steady stream of obscenities and a vile parade

of shameless nudity, sexual encounters, and wanton drug use. Many programs focus heavily on the occult.

■ **Sexual promiscuity:** In all of Europe, the United Kingdom has the highest teenage pregnancy rate and largest proportion of children living in single-parent families, according to research by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The only other Western nation with similar numbers is the United States.

■ **Spoiled youth:** British children are among the most over-privileged, unhealthy and materialistic in the world. UNICEF’s *Report Card 7*, which measured overall child well-being in Western nations, placed the UK among the worst. Given the previous four bullet points, is it any wonder?

These social characteristics starkly clash with the many religious references throughout the Olympic opening ceremony. Most notable were the words, “all I care about is sex and violence” soon followed by “Lord, abide with me.”

Yet the hymns sang by children near the start of the ceremony were even more telling.

One titled “Jerusalem” muses about a non-biblical legend of a young Jesus Christ coming to visit Britain with Joseph of Arimathea: “And did those feet in ancient time, walk upon England’s mountains green?”

Based on a poem by William Blake, the words indicate a desire to build a city of peace in England: “I will not cease from Mental Fight...Till we have built Jerusalem, in England’s green and pleasant Land.”

Children also sang a Welsh hymn “Bread of Heaven.” While the modernized English words were sung for the ceremony, a literal translation more clearly reveals a song about ancient Israel traveling to the Promised Land. It asks God to “guide me through the wilderness,” “give me manna,” and provide drink from “the sweet springs which gush forth from the rock.” Another translation calls this “the Rock that is.”

These two hymns are often sung at royal weddings and funerals—and even sporting events. There has even been a campaign to have “Jerusalem”

replace “God Save the Queen” as Great Britain’s national anthem.

Ancient Roots

Throughout British history and legends, ancient Israel plays a central role. Take the stone that has sat beneath the coronation throne for every British king and queen for centuries.

Writing about the crowning of King George IV, *European Magazine* said in 1821 that beneath the throne “is enclosed a stone, commonly called Jacob’s Stone, or the Fatal Marble, being an oblong square...of a bluish steel-like colour, mixed with some veins of red; of which tradition relates, that it is the stone on which Jacob lay his head, on the plains of Luz...”

Ancient Irish annals tell of a patriarch called Ollam Folla or Ollav Fola (roughly meaning “prophet” in both Hebrew and Celtic languages). Irish lore and historical evidence point to the fact that he was the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah. These chronicles of Ireland also record that he brought with him the coronation stone. The tomb of Ollam Folla is still located near Oldcastle in Ireland today.

In addition, many linguists have noted many marked similarities between Hebrew and Celtic languages.

There is also the British royal seal that contains both a lion and a unicorn. Under this seal, the British Empire ruled. Now read Deuteronomy 33, which describes the descendants of Joseph, a son of Israel: “His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of *Ephraim*, and they are the thousands of *Manasseh*” (vs. 17).

Elsewhere in the Bible, Manasseh and Ephraim (grandsons of Jacob, who was renamed Israel) are further described in Genesis 48:19: “Manasseh will also become a great people, but his younger brother [Ephraim] will become even greater. And his descendants will become *a multitude of nations*” (*New*

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DRUG ABUSE

A Global Epidemic

Part 3: The Coming Solution



■ **GLOBAL GATHERING:** United Nations representatives from 55 countries meet to discuss Afghanistan's drug crisis at the Hofburg Palace in Vienna, Austria (Feb. 16, 2012).

PHOTO: SAMUEL KUBANI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

As the United Nations calls for a shocking strategy change in the drug war, what solutions exist to finally put an end to substance abuse?

BY JUSTIN T. PALM

TO THE average person, humanity *seems* to be slowly solving its problems. From walking on the moon, to incredible technological advancements, from medical breakthroughs to greater cooperation between nations, man's limitless goals never appear entirely out of reach. Many politicians and statesmen claim, "It is only a matter of time" before permanent solutions are implemented that stop increasing troubles.

When honestly examined, however, mankind has a long record of failure in discovering *real* solutions.

Drug abuse is just one example. Although man abounds in scientific knowledge, he has been unable to prevent the many negative effects of drugs. In spite of world leaders' efforts to stamp it out, abuse of illegal and harmful substances continues. And while vast resources are dedicated to

solving the age-old problem, it continues to spiral out of control.

All agree on the need to solve the problem, but cannot agree on *WHY* it exists. Teachers believe it stems from a lack of education. Law enforcement officials believe lenient laws and court systems are to blame. Scientists claim they can solve it through research. Psychologists say it is a result of family or mental problems.

Politicians and leaders enact countless treaties, laws, regulations and resolutions to try to stem the tide of drugs, but to no avail. While there are so *many* "experts"—there still seems to be so *little* understanding!

Losing the War

Governments and global institutions are now admitting failure on the drug front in more candid and sobering terms.

A June 2011 *Los Angeles Times* article outlined the fact that throwing more money at the drug problem has not helped: "As drug cartels wreak mur-

derous havoc from Mexico to Panama, the Obama administration is unable to show that the billions of dollars spent in the war on drugs have significantly stemmed the flow of illegal narcotics into the United States, according to two government reports and outside experts.

"The reports specifically criticize the government's growing use of U.S. contractors, which were paid more than \$3 billion to train local prosecutors and police, help eradicate fields of coca, operate surveillance equipment and otherwise battle the widening drug trade in Latin America over the last five years.

"We are wasting tax dollars and throwing money at a problem without even knowing what we are getting in return," said Sen. Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.), who chairs the Senate subcommittee that wrote one of the reports...

"I think we have wasted our money hugely," agreed Bruce Bagley, who studies U.S. counter-narcotics efforts and chairs international studies at the University of Miami at Coral Gables, Fla. "The effort has had corrosive effects on every country it has touched."

Educational efforts used in public schools such as the Drug Abuse

Resistance Education program (DARE) have also had little positive effect.

“Our results are consistent in documenting the absence of beneficial effects associated with the DARE program,” *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* reported. “This was true whether the outcome consisted of actual drug use or merely attitudes toward drug use. In addition, we examined processes that are the focus of intervention and purportedly mediate the impact of DARE (e.g., self-esteem and peer resistance), and these also failed to differentiate DARE participants from non-participants. Thus, consistent with [an] earlier... study, there appear to be no reliable short-term, long-term, early adolescent, or young adult positive outcomes associated with receiving the DARE intervention.”

Giving Up

In light of the above examples, it is no surprise the United Nations released a report titled *War on Drugs – Report of the Global Commission on Drug Policy* that concluded the drug war has been lost.

Note that this commission consisted of many previous heads of state, including former presidents of Colombia, Mexico, Brazil, a former prime minister of Greece, a former U.S. secretary of state, and former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

Recall the quote from Part 1 of this series (emphasis added): “*The global war on drugs has failed*, with devastating consequences for individuals and societies around the world. Fifty years after the initiation of the UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, and 40 years after President Nixon launched the US government’s war on drugs, *fundamental reforms in national and global drug control policies are urgently needed*.”

“Vast expenditures on criminalization and repressive measures directed at producers, traffickers and consumers of illegal drugs have *clearly failed to effectively curtail supply or consumption*. Apparent victories in eliminating

one source or trafficking organization are *negated almost instantly* by the emergence of other sources and traffickers. Repressive efforts directed at consumers impede public health measures to reduce HIV/AIDS, overdose fatalities and other harmful consequences of drug use. Government expenditures on futile supply reduction strategies and incarceration displace more cost-effective and evidence-based investments in demand and harm reduction.”

In other words, humanity’s best efforts over the previous half-century have not worked. And this is during a period when man has supposedly progressed, advanced—evolved—in his problem-solving skills. The quote above is a shocking admission of failure on a global scale!

Even more stunning are the commission’s proposed solutions. The best and brightest minds concluded that instead of continuing to *fight* illicit drug use, governments should simply *legalize* it: “End the criminalization, marginalization and stigmatization of people who use drugs but who do no harm to others...Encourage experimentation by governments with models of legal regulation of drugs to undermine the power of organized crime and safeguard the health and security of their citizens. This recommendation applies especially to cannabis, but we also encourage other experiments in decriminalization and legal regulation that can accomplish these objectives and provide models for others...”

“Implement syringe access and other harm reduction measures... Respect the human rights of people who use drugs. Abolish abusive practices carried out in the name of treatment...”

“Law enforcement efforts should focus not on reducing drug markets *per se* but rather on reducing their harms to individuals, communities and national security.

“Begin the transformation of the global drug prohibition regime... Ensure that the international conventions...accommodate robust experi-

mentation with harm reduction, decriminalization and legal regulatory practices” (ibid.).

Imagine how much more widespread drug abuse would become if these policies were enacted in *all* UN-member nations!

Radical New Approaches

One country has already begun to implement the UN’s recommendations—Uruguay.

“Uruguay...proposed legalizing and monitoring marijuana sales—making the government, in fact, the sole legal seller,” *Time* stated. “The purpose of the unprecedented bill, which Uruguayan President José Mujica calls an anticrime measure, is to preempt the often violent black market where marijuana is illegally sold (marijuana use itself is legal in Uruguay) and channel the \$750 million that Uruguayan pot users spend on the drug each year into public coffers. ‘The traditional [interdiction] approach hasn’t worked,’ Mujica said. ‘Someone has to be the first’ to try this...”

The article concluded, “More and more, the world seems fed up with the status quo—and willing to try new and less violent solutions to an old but deadly drug war.”

This approach has also been tried in the United States. *The Wall Street Journal* reported, “Some 16 states plus the District of Columbia have enacted laws to legalize marijuana for medical purposes. Others, including New York, have pending legislation to legalize it. For most of the country, however, pot remains illegal.”

Mankind’s failure to stem widespread drug use is perhaps best summarized by the following quote. Regarding prison officials’ failure to stop illegal drug abuse inside prisons, author Anthony Papa stated in the documentary “Breaking the Taboo”: “*If you can’t control drug use in a maximum security prison, how could you control drugs in a free society?*”

It is hard to argue with this logic. And the UN’s revolutionary approach, “Since we have tried all other solutions with no success, why not try

decriminalization?” seems to back up this thinking.

Yet mankind has *not* tried all possible solutions. One has been overlooked.

Lack of Character

Many fall victim to the allure of drugs because they seek an escape from the pain and suffering of their lives. Tragically, the search for euphoria destroys them. They see no alternative before them and choose the easy way out—the path of least resistance.

The head of a drug rehabilitation program in Geneva said, “It’s easy to obtain drugs. And then, because of a disgust of life, because of hopelessness, a process takes place which leads to suicide by an artificially imposed paradise. I insist that it is wrong to think in terms of ‘curing’ those on drugs. They are not sick. Detoxification without something at the end of the road is worthless.”

So many young people turn to drugs out of hopelessness and helplessness. They feel overcome by their problems. They are also offered few legitimate reasons not to try them, other than warnings about their harmful effects. Drugs can take away the pain a person is experiencing—whether emotional or physical. Users often say, “Give me the hope of something better and I’ll quit.”

Experts admit that one of the main reasons people use them is because they do not possess the self-control to say “no.” A lack of character results in an inability to reject what one knows is harmful. Addicts lack the character and moral strength to resist the temptation of drugs.

Although many treatment programs recognize the importance of building self-control on the path to kicking an addiction or preventing one, none truly possess the tools to show users how to quit. Some have compared the policy of imprisoning drug offenders with putting a sick person in jail. Instead of treatment, they receive a prison sentence and enter a facility surrounded by criminals.

The point is valid. Drug abusers do need help in ways that jails and prisons cannot provide.

Track Record

Drug abuse is a massive but so far insoluble problem. By admitting defeat, law enforcement officials and government heads are continuing man’s unbroken record of failure.

Take a step back and look at history. Throughout thousands of years of trying, humanity has been unable to solve its greatest problems. War, famine, disease and drug abuse have all persisted throughout millennia—and ALL of them have only *grown worse*.

■ **War:** While battles between nations used to consume a few countries or a general geographical region, they can now cover the globe. Every year the creative genius of man develops new and more horrible ways to kill fellow human beings. It is now a push-button war of hydrogen bombs, stealth fighters, drones and bunker busters—all designed for maximum carnage.

■ **Famine:** Today, some regions are permanent pockets of famine. For example, despite millions of dollars in aid, Ethiopia, which first caught the world’s attention in 1984 as a result of its extreme famine, continues to grapple with deadly food shortages.

■ **Disease:** Viruses and scourges long thought eradicated are reemerging, including tuberculosis, malaria—even bubonic plague. Many of these have mutated into antibiotic-resistant forms.

■ **Drug abuse:** Narcotics, hallucinogens, misused prescription medications, etc., of today are *more* potent, *more* addictive, and *more* deadly than ever before. Even a cursory glance at frequent news headlines proves this.

Where is world peace? Where is food to feed the world? Where are vaccines and miracle cures? *Where is the solution to the drug problem!*

The answers to these questions lie in a faulty assumption man made long ago. While he has thought he has been capable of governing himself, the greatest minds throughout the centuries have not been able to enact true, positive change.

Many of these “great” minds ignored the only source of true knowledge—

one that outlines human nature—and covers exactly what makes mankind tick. Others have looked to this fount of wisdom, but failed to understand the truth contained within its pages.

Notice this plain phrase from this source, the Bible: “O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walks to direct his steps” (Jer. 10:23).

This passage clearly states that man cannot rule himself! Given his track record, this should not be shocking. Where he is involved, the same problems crop up time and again.

In the New Testament, Mark 7 further details human nature: “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness...” (vs. 20-22).

While most of the global population considers itself naturally good, the Bible states otherwise!

The Old Testament book of Jeremiah sums up this fact: “The heart is deceitful *above all things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (17:9).

To truly solve the drug epidemic, the world must first recognize that it has been deceived into thinking it can govern and decide for itself what is right and wrong.

Wrong Foundation

While many dismiss the Bible as a collection of Hebrew myths, it contains a *complete* Instruction Manual on how to live.

In Genesis, the Book records that man’s problems stem from a choice made in the Garden of Eden. It shows that instead of listening to the Creator of all things, the first two human beings, Adam and Eve, attempted to figure out how to best govern themselves. Since making that choice, humanity has recklessly blazed its own trail, deciding what constitutes both good and evil.

Notice: “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it: for in

the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die” (Gen. 2:16-17).

An often-overlooked aspect of this account is that Adam and Eve were given a choice—to eat of a particular tree and die, or to avoid it and live. God did not *force* them to do what He commanded. He let them of their own free will make a decision—one that tested their character.

Because they did not believe God, Adam and Eve decided to eat from the wrong tree. The account in Genesis 3 shows that they were persuaded to do so by the devil, who told them there would be *benefits* to disobeying God. Satan told them: “...In the day you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil (vs. 5).

The account continues, “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened...” (vs. 6-7).

The decision to disobey God’s instruction and follow wrong advice—in effect choosing the devil’s *wrong* way of living over God’s *right* way—led to Adam and Eve being cast out of the garden and mankind being cut off from His Spirit (Isa. 59:1-2; Jer. 5:25). Access to this Spirit—God’s power—would have given the first humans, and everyone thereafter, the opportunity to learn the correct way to live. It would have also enabled them to develop the *character* to do so because God’s power would have helped them to do right and resist wrong. With this Spirit working within them, every man and woman thereafter would have been able to overcome individual problems in their lives—including harmful addictions and self-destructive habits.

This is the very reason the war on drugs is being lost! Mankind as whole does not understand what human nature is and how to overcome it. And without God’s Spirit, He is helpless to do so!

Yet the Garden of Eden account does not describe some kind of “origi-

nal sin.” Instead, Adam and Eve’s decision started man down a course of rebelling against God. Other Bible verses show that *individuals* can repent and seek God, which results in Him opening His Spirit to them. (To learn more about the fallacy of the original sin idea, request the free booklet *Did God Create Human Nature?* at rcg.org/dgchn. This eye-opening booklet also describes in much more detail the implications of Adam and Eve’s decision.)

The faulty foundation of truth *mixed with error* that started in the Garden of Eden has resulted in man taking to himself the prerogative of deciding how to live. While God has allowed man to learn beneficial and right knowledge—TRUTH—think knowledge of science, technology and other helpful information—he has also learned much wrong information—ERROR—regarding how to live. Drug abuse is just one example of mankind’s knowledge being put to wrong use.

But just because Adam and Eve did not make the right decision does not mean that humanity as a whole is lost to wallow forever in its failures.

This understanding leads to how God will address two of the main CAUSES of why man cannot solve his problems and the origin of the drug problem itself: lack of character and escapism.

Follow carefully, and *believe* what God outlines in the pages of the Bible with the understanding that you have just learned in the back of your mind. While the idea of the Garden of Eden beginning a record of failure for mankind may seem impossible, if you reject God’s Word as being an authority, ask yourself if you would rather trust the “authority” and “wisdom” of supposed experts, whose current best idea on the war on drugs is to surrender.

Truth Mixed with Error

As previously mentioned, man’s current state of being cut off from God has left him without full truth, living without the kind of *spiritual* knowledge that leads to the abundant life Jesus Christ spoke of when He was on Earth

(John 10:10). Instead of turning to their Creator, human beings have attempted to fill this spiritual void with other pursuits of escapism, including drug use. Truly, the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah was right when he observed, “I know that...it is not in man that walks to direct his steps” (10:23).

Unlike any of man’s solutions, God’s Spirit enables one to overcome his or her problems and gives an individual *power* to take charge of his life and reject wrong thinking and actions. In fact, the lack of His Spirit is one of the causes behind rampant drug use.

Only by turning to God can mankind solve its drug problems. While many will not accept God’s solution and try to find *another* one—they will find none. We have seen proof of this. Criminalizing it has not worked. Legalization has failed. There are *no other options*. But humanity so far refuses to accept God’s Word as a viable Source of solutions.

Thankfully, because of God’s great love for His Creation (John 3:16), He has a Master Plan that involves putting a real end to mankind’s drug epidemic.

Coming Global Authority

To fully rid the world of the drug problem requires a *global* solution, implemented with agreement between all nations. God’s Word reveals this will occur—and soon!

Numerous passages in the Bible describe the coming kingdom of God, under which the vicious cycle will be broken. This world-ruling SUPER-GOVERNMENT will usher in peace and prosperity the likes of which have never before been seen. TRUE happiness, peace, love and joy will break out around the world. In fact, this was Christ’s true gospel message—the “good news”—He continually preached when He was on Earth. To be set up at Jesus’ Second Coming, it will be led by Christ and those who built the kind of character necessary to help Him rule in this life (To learn more about what you can do to qualify to be part of this exciting time, request the free book *The Awesome Potential of Man* at rcg.org/tapom.)

Notice the prophet Isaiah's description of this coming time: "*Strengthen* you the weak hands, and *confirm* the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be *strong*, fear not... *He will come and save you*. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes...and the *ransomed* [released from bondage of sin] of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and *everlasting joy* upon their heads: they shall obtain *joy* and *gladness*, and *sorrow and sighing shall flee away*" (35:3-7, 10).

In this wonderful world, people will truly be happy—without drugs. They will have *true joy*—and *lasting peace*. Under God's rule, there will be *real* solutions for mankind's many problems. Living God's Way, with access to His Spirit, will eliminate the *causes* of drug abuse, not just the *effects*.

Unhappiness and misery will be replaced with joy and productivity. Any desire for *escapism* will be negated. When Christ establishes this kingdom, He will heal all the damage drugs have inflicted on people's bodies and minds, and all forms of physical and psychological dependence.

A *worldwide* and effective preventative EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM will be put into place. Proper TREATMENT will be available to all. A global REHABILITATION PROGRAM, aimed at solving the problem of drug abuse once and for all, will be established.

Make no mistake! During God's coming reign, the wrong use of drugs will be outlawed. But the eradication of drugs will not simply come by a dictate from above or as a type of divine sentence. It will take place on a smaller scale, beginning in the individual hearts and minds of men and women the world over. And once the demand for drugs is gone, the supply will quickly dry up.

Instead of people *getting* rich by dealing death to others, and instead of *getting* chemically induced happiness by consuming drugs, people will live God's Way of GIVE. The abundant life will be a reality for billions!

Think about how many millions of drug users would instead choose a life free from drugs if they were (1) given the tools to build the strength to say no, and (2) saw a better and brighter world and future for themselves. God has a plan to provide a wonderful environment for all human beings, giving them a better world that no one will want to escape.

True Solution

Soon a loving God will give all people an opportunity to have His Holy Spirit, which will enable them to build character and strength to *reject wrong* and *choose right*. As mentioned, it is only by the power of God's Spirit that true Christians are able to overcome sin and the pulls of human nature, which the apostle Paul defines as: "...adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lustfulness, idolatry, *sorcery*, hatreds, fightings, jealousies, angers, rivalries, divisions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkennesses, revelings, and things like these; of which I tell you before, as I also said before, that they who do such things shall not inherit the KINGDOM OF GOD" (Gal. 5:19-21, *New King James Version*).

In this scripture, the Greek word for *sorcery* is *pharmakeia*, which *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* defines as "the use or the administering of drugs."

Realize what this means. Under God's coming kingdom, drugs and drug dealers will not be tolerated. War, famine and disease will fade from memory. Unhappiness, depression and despondency will be removed! There will be *real* happiness, joy, peace and love—not the chemical-driven existences so many are living today.

With God's Holy Spirit, mankind will be able to develop *godly* characteristics: "...love, joy, peace, long-

suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control..." (Gal. 5:21-23).

These qualities, including all-important *self-control*, will be available to mankind, and will negate any need for the false, chemically induced feelings of "love," "peace" and "joy." There will be no need for mind-altering substances because these emotions will be present through the Spirit!

At this time, God's Spirit will begin to change human nature. But make no mistake—this process will not occur overnight. It will take years for man to unlearn wrong habits he has developed over millennia. Yet this global SUPERGOVERNMENT will give everyone the tools to overcome wrong desires and build godly character. In addition, temptations will be greatly diminished due to a dramatic change in societal environment.

Incredible Future

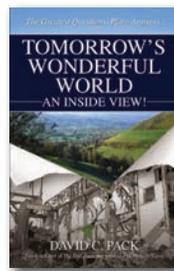
As the toll of deaths and broken lives from drugs piles up, the only thing man can do is agree that the problem is "out of control." Yet simply dealing with its effects, and not its causes, will never bring an end to this tragic epidemic. *Information* is not what mankind lacks—it needs a *real solution*!

While humanity is helpless to find one, God's kingdom will end the tragedy of substance abuse.

In a vision of the end result of this soon-coming government, the apostle John recorded, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and *there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain...*" (Rev. 21:4).

Now think back to all you have read in this series. Ask: which solution seems more attractive—man's or God's?

To learn more about this magnificent world to come, request the exciting, eye-opening free book *Tomorrow's Wonderful World – An Inside View!* at rcg.org/tww. A drug-free world is not an impossible dream, but a coming reality! □



DROUGHT NOW.



More than half of the continental United States is roasting in its worst drought since the 1950s. Yet to fully end it, much more than rain is needed.

BY NESTOR A. TORO

REMEMBER THE Old Testament story of Joseph and his explanation of Pharaoh's two vexing dreams? Dual nightmares for the Egyptian king included fantas-

tic imagery of seven healthy cows being devoured by seven gaunt, emaciated heifers—and seven lush heads of grain being consumed by seven shriveled heads. Joseph

told Pharaoh this meant “seven years of great plenty” followed by “seven years of famine.” Due to this advance warning, this center of the ancient world averted devastating catastrophe by implementing a nationwide food storage plan.

Looking out at meager, sun-scorched fields today, Corn-Belt farmers may be asking: *Where is Joseph when you need him?*

This year, more than 61 percent of the contiguous United States has experienced moderate to exceptional drought, 59 percent of the nation's pastures and ranges are in poor or very poor condition, and nearly a third of America's corn crop has been damaged. Add to this the brutal heat.

“Federal scientists say July was the hottest month ever recorded in the Lower 48 states, breaking a record set during the Dust Bowl of the 1930s,” *The Associated Press* reported.

Unable to control the temperature or precipitation levels, farmers are facing a crisis that is as basic as it gets: no water, no crops. No crops, no cattle—no food.

An essay from a Missouri family farmer, featured on *cnn.com*, explained the drought's widespread effects: “No crops means no feed for livestock...In the end, this will lead to increased food prices. A number of livestock farmers and ranchers will be faced with difficult decisions. Some will be forced to leave the farm or ranch and find new jobs in neighboring towns, while others may have to sell their family farm or ranch. ‘The bottom line is: If you eat, this drought will affect you.’”

■ **SHRIVELED:** A corn plant struggles to survive on a drought-stricken farm near Shawneetown, Illinois (July 16, 2012).

PHOTO: SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES

...FAMINE NEXT?

For now, many see the effects of a rainless summer as filled with petty inconveniences. For example, numerous roads are littered with new potholes and frustrated homeowners are paying to have their browning grass painted green.

Yet there are also serious immediate effects: sweltering heat waves have killed more than 100 people. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has ranked 2012 as the nation's hottest year on record, and conditions causing crop shortages continue to spread.

A climate scientist told *Forbes* that such conditions in Mexico, Texas and in the Southwest were "predicted and [are] usual for a La Nina event. But the drought's expansion into the Midwest and the East Coast is not a typical La Nina occurrence...nor are the record-breaking high temperatures that have accompanied it."

The dry heat caused over 1,300 counties across the country to be declared "natural disaster" zones by the Department of Agriculture. It also sparked some of the worst wildfires in history and charred at least three million acres.

Due to drought, many stock animals have died; others are malnourished, sick or traumatized, prompting massive early cattle sales. Also, insect-borne diseases are spiking.

For the United States, which has enjoyed decades of plenty and served as the breadbasket of the world, thoughts of going hungry seem beyond far-fetched. Yet a massive food crisis is on the world's doorstep, and for the first time in many Americans' lives, it is poised to directly—and severely—affect them.

As extreme drought lingers, lawns brown, food prices steadily increase, and farmers plow under failed crops, most of America will likely still be thinking: *2012 is a very dry year.*

What they should be thinking, though, is: *Could we have seen this coming?*

The answer? Yes.

Drying Up the Economy

Instead of focusing on the underlying *causes* of drought, most see only the surface *effects*. Generally, the negative impact that receives the most press in the United States is the same: how it affects everyone's pocketbooks.

Among natural disasters, droughts are some of the most expensive. A senior scientist and meteorologist told *USA Today* that "the consensus among meteorologists is that 2012 already has surpassed 2011's \$12 billion in drought losses, according to Steve Bowen, senior scientist and meteorologist for Aon Benfield, a global reinsurance firm in Chicago. He said it 'may not be out of the question' that this year's impact could rival 1988 and 1980 droughts, which had \$78 billion and \$56 billion in losses (in 2012 dollars)."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service stated that consumers will "likely see impacts within two months for beef, pork, poultry and dairy (especially fluid milk). The full effects of the increase in corn prices for packaged and processed foods (cereal, corn flour, etc.) will likely take 10-12 months to move through to retail food prices."

Corn prices have risen more than 50 percent this summer and soybeans experienced a spike of about 25 percent. Nations that export grain then pass rising costs on to those that import.

Yet focusing too much on "the Almighty Dollar" masks another problem: what happens if there is no food to buy?

Realize what is at stake. "The United States is the leading producer and exporter of corn, the world's

feedgrain," a *Guardian* article stated. "At home, corn accounts for four-fifths of the US grain harvest. Internationally, the US corn crop exceeds China's rice and wheat harvests combined. Among the big three grains—corn, wheat, and rice—corn is now the leader, with production well above that of wheat and nearly double that of rice."

The article continued, "Welcome to the new geopolitics of food scarcity. As food supplies tighten, we are moving into a new food era, one in which it is every country for itself...Time is running out. The world may be much closer to an unmanageable food shortage—replete with soaring food prices, spreading food unrest, and ultimately political instability—than most people realise."

Drought-stricken Fauna

The American drought is causing much more than dry soil. Lower water levels hold less oxygen and higher temperatures, leading to mass fish deaths.

"In Iowa, losses were estimated at \$10.1 million after 37,000 fish were found dead along a 42-mile stretch of the Des Moines River from the dam in Eldon to the Farmington Bridge in the northeast of the state," *Reuters* reported.

In Texas, "...drought conditions have caused cattle producers to move their herds from pastures where water tanks have dried to new pastures with healthier water supplies," *AccuWeather* stated. "The cattle then gorge themselves on too much water and die within minutes of water intoxication..."

Also, abnormally warm weather is causing spikes in wild animal populations, which naturally lead to increased disease. "More animals overall means more potentially infected animals, leading to an increase in overall rabies incidence," Dr. Charles Rupprecht,

chief of the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] rabies program,” told *Wired* magazine.

“Our two-year drought might be playing a role as well.’ Rupperecht notes that in the bone-dry central United States, where animals are forced to congregate at fewer and fewer available water sources, the uptick in rabid wildlife is even more pronounced.”

In addition, the National Pest Management Association reported that higher temperatures are causing “increased populations of many pests, including ants, fleas, ticks, termites, scorpions, brown recluse spiders, black widow spiders, Japanese beetles, pincher bugs and earwigs.” This year boasted the highest number of reported mosquito-borne West Nile Virus cases since 2004.

Yet these are all just *effects* of an abnormally hot and dry summer.

“The road we’re on”

Return to the question posed earlier: “Could we have seen this coming?” Instead, phrase it another way: “Has this sort of thing happened before?”

Famine (usually due to severe, extended drought) has created “make or break” events for prominent civilizations throughout history. Examples abound of great cultures that first thrived due to settling near fertile ground. Time and again, these great empires favored farming practices that wore out the soil’s capacity to retain moisture and made it unfit for growing food.

In the book, *World on the Edge: How to Prevent Environmental and Economic Collapse*, Lester R. Brown gave an example of one civilization that ended this way: “For the Mayans, it was deforestation and soil erosion. As more and more land was cleared for farming to support the expanding empire, soil erosion undermined the productivity of their tropical soils. A team of scientists from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration has noted that the extensive land clearing by the Mayans likely also altered the regional climate, reducing rainfall. In effect, the scientists suggest, it was the convergence of

several environmental trends, some reinforcing others, that led to the food shortages that brought down the Mayan civilization.”

Throughout history, mankind has taken too much out of the earth—nutrients, minerals, microorganisms, etc.—while giving too little, *if any*, back.

Regions inhabited by great ancient civilizations such as the Chinese, Akkadians, Mesopotamians, Persians, Romans, Maya and Sumerians all show signs of having enjoyed astounding resources that were unwisely misused. Archeological digs evidence overproduction, poor irrigation, and pollution—all of which hastened the demise of the greatest empires.

Today could have been different—*should* have been different. Yet the modern world refused to learn the lessons of history. In the pursuit of quick wealth, the same ancient mistakes are alive and well, except that Earth now houses billions more people and more potent pollutants than ever before.

Mr. Brown continues, “Although we live in a highly urbanized, technologically advanced society, we are as dependent on the earth’s natural support systems as the Sumerians and Mayans were. If we continue with business as usual, civilizational collapse is no longer a matter of whether but when. We now have an economy that is destroying its natural support systems, one that has put us on a decline and collapse path. We are dangerously close to the edge. Peter Goldmark, former Rockefeller Foundation president, puts it well: ‘The death of our civilization is no longer a theory or an academic possibility; it is the road we’re on.’”

Signs of the Times

Also contributing to the end of history’s great civilizations were overpopulation, squandered resources, overstretched militaries, and actions taken in individual lives.

As societies peaked in prosperity, so did materialism, a taste for ultra-violent entertainment, the sexualization of youth, and an overall breakdown of character.

Two prominent examples of this were the grotesque human sacrifices from the Classical Maya and bloody bread-and-circus gladiator battles in ancient Rome. These trends reached their apex as such civilizations declined.

America is following this historical pattern. While these conditions can be found the world over, it is *U.S. culture* the globe is emulating. The following examples are from David C. Pack’s *The Bible’s Greatest Prophecies Unlocked! – A Voice Cries Out*. As you read, think of how prevalent these conditions are in the news—and immediately around you!

Violence: “Consider how often acts of *mass* violence now occur in schools, restaurants or other places in ways that were virtually unheard of until recently! Who ever heard of ‘serial snipers’ in previous decades? The relatively modern phenomenon of terrorism is now worldwide! Gang violence and warfare have never been greater—or spreading faster. Truly, violence is now a global epidemic...”

Sexual license: “Most today have come to believe that free sex of every conceivable kind, with the same or opposite sex—or both—is a simple matter of personal preference. Vast millions have come to believe that achieving sexual pleasure in any setting, for any purpose, and involving any kind of experimentation or activity is perfectly acceptable—and is now, at least unconsciously, even seen to be a kind of human ‘right’ of sorts.”

Music: “Now consider the modern generation’s music of choice... The most common themes glorified by today’s recording artists are illicit sex, anger, extreme violence of every sort and drug use. But because it is only ‘music,’ it is legal.

“Rebellion against authority has been a widespread message for decades. Many songs promote the thinking that work, school, parents and the law are enemies to be disrespected, disregarded and disobeyed.”

Pleasure and greed: “Over the last several decades, the shift toward materialism has been undeniable. Across all nations, the accumulation of goods has

become an obsession. This obsession has led directly to the emergence of a modern mix of humanism and hedonism—the belief that happiness and enjoyment of the ‘here and now’ is the central purpose of life.”

Destroying the earth: “Pollution is also rampant across the globe. In an effort to live the good life, mankind is constantly improving and replacing products in society. But something has changed in today’s consumer-driven way of life. Industry has produced many products that people do not *consume*, but simply *use*. Newspapers, magazines, clothing, packaging, electronics of all sorts, etc., are never consumed! People simply purchase products, only to later throw them away, replacing them with the newer, better version. This describes *user-driven* societies.”

Yet what does societal decline have to do with today’s drought?

Everything.

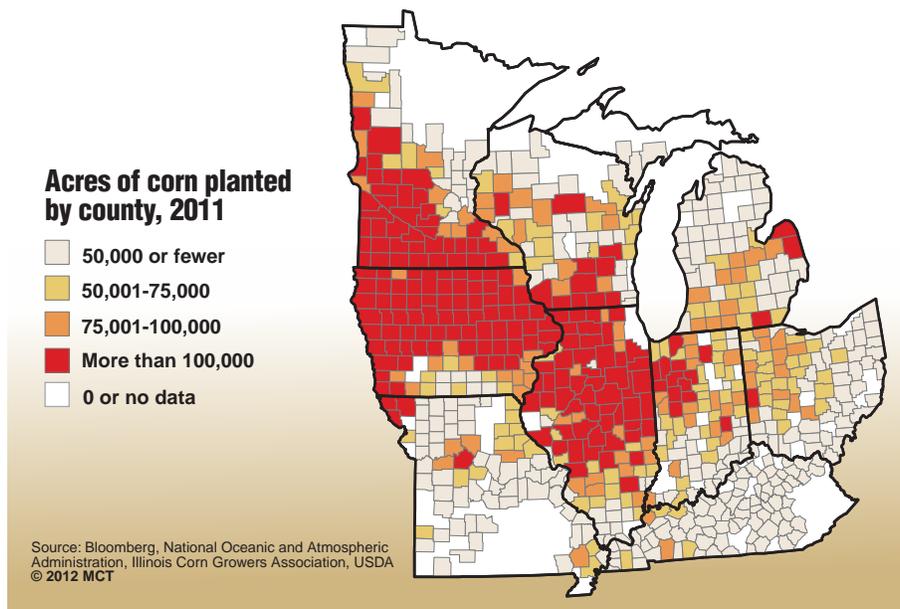
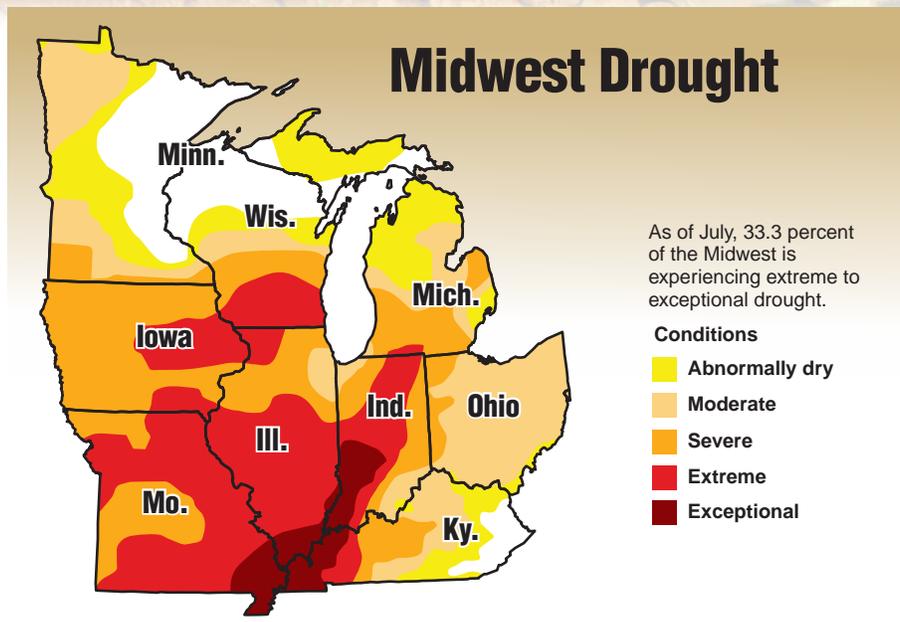
Two Options

America can learn a lot from looking to the past, especially at Joseph’s success in Egypt. The reason for his agricultural feat was simple: he obeyed the Creator God, who is the ultimate Owner of the earth. Even Pharaoh realized it as he considered who he would put as second in command for the nation: “And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is [Joseph], a man in whom the Spirit of God is?” (Gen. 41:38).

Joseph knew that God promises prosperity and protection to any who obey His commands. Notice Deuteronomy 28: “And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD your God, to observe and to do all His commandments...that the LORD your God will set you on high above all nations of the earth” (vs. 1).

These commandments include laws of agriculture. Read Leviticus 25:2-4, 22-24.

The following verses expound on some of the blessings accrued for obedience: “Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in



the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, and the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your kine, and the flocks of your sheep. Blessed shall be your basket and your store” (Deut. 28:3-5).

Yet drought—and famine—is one of the consequences for national disobedience.

Continuing in Deuteronomy: “... if you *will not* hearken unto the voice of the LORD your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes...all these curses shall come upon you, and overtake you: cursed

shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the field. Cursed shall be your basket and your store. Cursed shall be the fruit of your body, and the fruit of your land, the increase of your kine, and the flocks of your sheep” (vs. 15-18).

Disobedience brings “pestilence” (insect infestations), “blasting” (drought), and “mildew” (too much rain). Read verses 21-22.

Even more, punishment includes: “...your heaven that is over your head shall be brass, and the earth that is

Please see DROUGHT, page 20

The Seeds of Success

Parents want the best for their children. But do you know how to properly train your children to achieve their goals?

BY BRADFORD G. SCHLEIFER



PHOTO: THINKSTOCK

YOU LOOK ACROSS the dinner table and see your child looking back at you. By a certain age, he or she has probably expressed an interest in a certain job or career. Usually, such ideas are fanciful, and are either related to something seen on television or the same job held by you or your spouse.

Your son may want to grow up to be a firefighter, lawyer or doctor. Your daughter may hope to be a teacher, veterinarian or ballerina. Such youthful dreams will likely

change over time, but whatever their aspirations, you naturally want success—and happiness—for your children. You want them to experience a fulfilling life and a rewarding career.

But have you ever realized that *you* are vital to their success? *You* can offer them knowledge that, unlike the suggestions of popular psychology, will lead them to true and lasting success.

If you instill this knowledge deep within them, creating the basis for their thinking, you *will* have happy and well-developed children!

What Is Success?

People often link success to wealth, power or fame. But *is* this success? Famous people, who often have both power and wealth, are usually the same ones who are miserable. Their problems, addictions and struggles are covered by television and entertainment magazines. As stated in a well-known song, “Money can’t buy me love.” And judging by the lives of the rich and famous, neither can it buy happiness.

Such people are not a reflection of **TRUE** success. One who is truly successful will be fulfilled and happy. So,

if the common perception of success is wrong, then what *is* it?

The main reason most do not understand success is that they *assume* it is a quality or trait one has from birth. But success is not an innate “talent.” Rather, it is directly related to a desire to produce, grow, learn and achieve.

If success is not a natural ability, then how does one “get” it? Is there a formula?

Amazingly, there is! There are definite LAWS to achieving—and instilling—success! If you instill a desire—and the laws to success—in your children, they *will* succeed!

Teaching these principles will ensure that they become happy, fulfilled, successful adults.

Setting Goals

The first great law to success is SETTING THE RIGHT GOAL.

Thousands of self-help books exist that describe how to set and reach one’s goals. Many times, they discuss different levels of goals—short, medium and long-term—yet often miss the all-important step of setting the *correct* goal. Even the few books that attempt this never mention the role of character or purpose of life in goal-setting.

Teach your children about different kinds of goals. Some are harmful to them; others are greatly beneficial. For instance, they will naturally focus on “getting” material things.

These goals must be replaced with right, proper and godly goals. They should want to help those around them. Teach them to set goals that include out-flowing concern for others. Children do not naturally know this—it must be taught to them! In fact, the four most important parental duties are to teach, teach, teach and teach!

It is important that you do not give your children everything on a “silver platter.” This will make them believe that they do not need goals or have to work hard. By setting goals—and working to achieve them—children will develop a proper work ethic and confidence.

Exercising the Mind

Having first set the right goal, one is then able to focus on how to *achieve* that goal. And one of the main keys to doing so is embodied in the second law of success: EDUCATION.

As with any muscle in the body, the human brain needs to be exercised. In fact, research shows that those who continue mental exercise as they grow older are far less likely to develop diseases such as Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s.

God’s Word states, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Prov. 22:6). If you teach your children when they are young, they will exercise their minds throughout their lives.

Teaching them to think can be done in a variety of ways. Teach them to reflect on what they say and do. Teach them to analyze questions and thoughtfully respond.

Encourage your children to enjoy learning. Make it fun! If, at a very young age, you seed their minds with a craving for understanding and knowledge, your children will look at any problem and *learn* how to solve it.

It has been said that knowledge is power. By encouraging a desire to learn, you are giving your children the ability to harness that power.

Maintaining the Body

Realize, however, that knowledge is power *only* if used. And this requires taking care of the body as well as the mind. This introduces the third law of success: GOOD HEALTH.

The role of parents in their children’s health is often overlooked. As with instilling a desire to learn, you must also instill the knowledge of how—and what—to eat. No matter what excuses may be put forth, your children’s health is *your* responsibility. You control what they eat and, to a large degree, their health!

If one has set the correct goal, and even becomes educated about that

goal, he is still stopped in his tracks if he becomes sick. If a person is tired, weak or always sick, he cannot accomplish much. With children, health also directly affects the second law. If they are not healthy, they will not be able to attend school, and will miss out on receiving a full education.

Think about what you feed your family. Do you follow the principle of staying on the outer walls of a supermarket—where the raw fruits, vegetables, meats and grains are kept? Or do you only shop in the aisles—where much of the processed, sugary and least healthful foods are generally located? Do you reward your children with healthy treats—or empty calories? An entire article could be written showing the myriad of childhood health problems relating to a bad diet. Do you want your children to have attention problems or Type-2 diabetes? *You* can prevent such things by monitoring what they eat.

Remember this principle: “Grains sustain, vegetables build, fruits cleanse, and herbs help to heal.”

Pushing the Body and Mind

The fourth law springs from the previous one. When your children are healthy, they have more energy. When properly focused, this energy is DRIVE. This is the desire to work and achieve.

Are you beginning to see how teaching your children right goals builds a framework for success? Having a good work ethic—wanting to *work* for success—is the basis behind drive.

A world-record-breaking swimmer once stated that the reason he succeeded was not because of natural talent, but because he was willing to work harder than his opponents. This is drive! Train your children to not procrastinate and work hard. This will enable them to do things that they would have otherwise viewed as impossible—and they will be thrilled by what they accomplish!

Wise King Solomon once said, “The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul” (Prov. 13:19). Teach this to your

children. When they accomplish a goal, they will feel a satisfaction that is “sweet to the soul.” Once understood, they will then always be *driven* to accomplish any task set before them.

All Problems Have Solutions

In working toward any important goal, your children must understand that obstacles and setbacks may arise. RESOURCEFULNESS, the fifth important law to success, keeps one from feeling that there is no solution. He will *think*—INVESTIGATE—and *find* a way to succeed!

In many situations, one’s ability to find not just *a* solution—but the best solution—can determine success or failure. Consider one example from nature: a stream of water, when encountering various obstructions, does not simply stop flowing. It will naturally go around, over or through any barriers.

Likewise, when your children face obstacles, resourcefulness will lead them to seek a way *around, over or through* them. The human mind is designed to learn the most when it is struggling. When setbacks occur, the learning mechanism in the mind kicks in. Teaching your children this will prevent them from getting discouraged. They will come to realize that obstacles and problems are *not* a bad thing, but the *best* possible chance to learn and grow!

Life Is Not Fair

It can be said that the continued application of resourcefulness is applying the critical sixth law of success: PERSEVERANCE—also called “stick-to-it-iveness.”

Perseverance is working at a problem even when the solution is not evident. Any goal or thing of worth requires hard work—one must pay the price. Most today, however, are unwilling to pay that price and will settle for second best, or worse.

Teaching your children to persevere will give them the inner strength needed to achieve their goals. This will have implications in not just their

goals and desires, but also in every aspect of their lives! Teach your children to never give up—even in the face of hardship—and you will virtually ensure their success.

Most Important Law

Although listed last, the seventh law of success—CONTACT WITH AND CON-

“Any goal or thing of worth requires hard work—one must pay the price.”

TINUOUS GUIDANCE FROM GOD—over-arches all previous laws. This law is the *foundation* of success! If you teach your children to respect and obey you, you are teaching them to develop a similar relationship with God. As a parent, you must understand that, to your children, you play this vital role.

When you teach your children—when you correct them—when you encourage them—you are creating a basis by which they will respond to their *divine* Parent—God.

This also applies to you! Look at yourself. Do you consider the success of your children success for yourself? Is having happy and successful children *your* goal? Do you have contact with God and continually seek His guidance and help to do so?

Real Purpose

Your children’s success is actually far more important than you may realize. Of course, a good career, happy marriage, and successful future are critical for them.

But there is a greater purpose being worked out in your children, and a great potential that they may be able to reach—to one day become leaders, kings and priests in the king-

dom of God! (Read Revelation 1:6 and 5:10.)

Does this sound impossible?

God has allowed mankind to work out its own way. This is the reason there is so little *true* success in the world. But very soon, Jesus Christ will return to Earth to establish the kingdom of God—a government that will rule over all nations.

While we have not yet reached this glorious time, you can claim this promise from God now! The Bible states that *your* obedience to God will place His protection on your children (I Cor. 7:14). With this protection comes an understanding of the proper—successful—way of life. With God’s protection and involvement in your life, you too can achieve the role of king and priest—and rule in His kingdom. (To learn more about God’s incredible purpose for you and your children, order the free book *The Awesome Potential of Man* at rcg.org/tapom.)

Often-forgotten Role

Simply learning these laws is only the beginning. There is a vitally important aspect of your children’s development that towers above just knowing about the true God and His laws to success: your example!

All small children look up to their parents. You are the center of their growing world, and your example affects them more than anything you could teach them. Are YOU applying the laws of success in *your* life? Are you living the way of “give” and following what you are learning in *The Real Truth* magazine about the *true* God of the Bible? The success of your children hinges on your answer!

Most do not know that the Bible has *much* to say about childrearing. The book *Train Your Children God’s Way* shows the Creator’s clear instruction to parents, grandparents, and any planning to become parents.

Order your free copy of this crucial book at rcg.org/tuyc. □

BRITAIN

Continued from page 6

Living Translation). Also read Genesis 49:25-26.

These brothers are described as becoming the standard for prosperity. The following verse states that the surrounding peoples will offer this blessing, “God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh...” (Gen. 48:20).

Seriously consider: *What other nation* has distinct ties to ancient Israel AND became “a multitude of nations” that pushed “people together to the ends of the earth”? And *what other nation* has a brother country that has “become a great people”?

WHAT OTHER NATIONS have had such influence and sky-high standards of living—“If only we could be prosperous like them!”—to which the world earnestly aspires?

Any honest person is left with one conclusion: Great Britain and the United States.

Good and Bad

In Amos 9:9, God promised protection for the ancient tribes of Israel as they were “sifted,” or filtered, through the nations. While this was happening, these peoples took on the customs and traditions of the countries around them—and forgot their heritage. As a result, they became known as the “Lost Ten Tribes,” and now inhabit a number of nations around the globe.

Yet British history is so steeped in clues that point to ancient Israel that God says this about these modern Israelites: “The ox knows its owner and the donkey its master’s crib; but Israel does not know, My people do not consider” (Isa. 1:3, *New King James Version*).

This nation could know. Yet it refuses to CONSIDER.

There have been some few who have used the identity of Britain as Ephraim to promote the racist theory of “British Israelism.” This idea is a corruption of the biblical truth regarding the modern descendants of the Lost Ten Tribes. Many who endorse this theory

feel Anglo-Saxons are a “chosen people” and often equate the now-defunct British Empire with the kingdom of God—a teaching plainly at odds with Scripture, which states this kingdom will be established in the future. (See II Timothy 4:1.)

Also contradicting British Israelism is the fact that the Bible does more than highlight the good parts of British character—it also includes the BAD.

Notice Isaiah 3: “The show of their countenance does witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, THEY HIDE IT NOT. Woe unto their soul! For they have rewarded evil unto themselves” (vs. 9).

This IS modern Britain: riotous living, alcoholism, corrupt entertainment, sexual promiscuity—all flaunted for the world to see. These tendencies have become so ingrained that God bluntly characterizes the British people as “a silly dove” (Hos. 7:11) and the “drunkards of Ephraim” (Isa. 28:1).

And yet this island nation claims to be Christian: “Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor Me, but have removed their heart far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the precept of men” (29:13).

Instead of following God’s commands, the United Kingdom chooses what is correct in its own eyes—with each citizen doing whatever he deems right.

Ultimate Purpose

The Creator offers these criticisms for a great purpose. Just as any loving parent chastises his children, so God is looking to show modern Ephraim the error of its ways.

This Parent sees Britain struggling and it pains Him: “Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity [lawlessness], a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.

“Why should you be stricken anymore? You will revolt more and more: 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 putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment” (Isa. 1:4-6).

He admonishes modern Israel: “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; *cease to do evil*; learn to do well; *seek judgment*, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow” (vs. 16-17).

Looking out at the many struggles of the British people, He offers a clear promise. Notice verse 18: “Come now, and let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

But there is a qualifier in the next verses: “If you be *willing* and *obedient*, you shall eat the good of the land: but if you *refuse* and *rebel*, you shall be devoured with the sword...” (vs. 19-20).

In other words, the British can claim this sure promise, but they must turn to obedience. If not, they will continue to be “laden with iniquity.”

The options are set before modern Britain in the same way they were before ancient Israel in Deuteronomy 30, where God declares, “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life...” (vs. 19).

Britons today are presented with this choice: reclaim their true identity and prosper, or ignore God’s words and face the consequences. It is up to each individual to choose.

David C. Pack outlines more of these soon-coming momentous events—both positive and negative—in his book *America and Britain in Prophecy*. This well-researched, crystal-clear book explains what vast millions have not understood about the roles great nations have played in the past—and what ones they will have in the future.

Request your free copy at rcg.org/aabibp today! □

DROUGHT

Continued from page 15

under you shall be iron” (vs. 23). Drought-parched land is hard as iron!

In addition, “The LORD shall make the rain of your land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon you...” (vs. 24).

Make every one of these verses live in your mind. The front edge of these punishments is now appearing in the United States.

Behemoth dust storms have begun to rain “powder and dust” upon cities. University of Arizona professor William Sprigg, who works at the school’s Institute of Atmospheric Physics, described one such occurrence to *USA Today*, and the health concerns these bring: “Dust storms carry a noxious mix of fungi, heavy metals from pollution, fertilizers, stockyard fecal matter, chemicals and bacteria, which can cause cardiovascular disease, eye diseases and other illnesses...The phenomenon is hardly new, but the impact hit home a year ago, when a major dust storm—the largest many observers have ever seen—rolled through Phoenix on July 5, 2011. That storm spawned a wall of dust almost 1 1/2 miles high and 100 miles wide that deposited an estimated 40,000 tons of sand and dust in just two hours. It looked like something from a science-fiction movie and was partly blamed on drought-parched ground.”

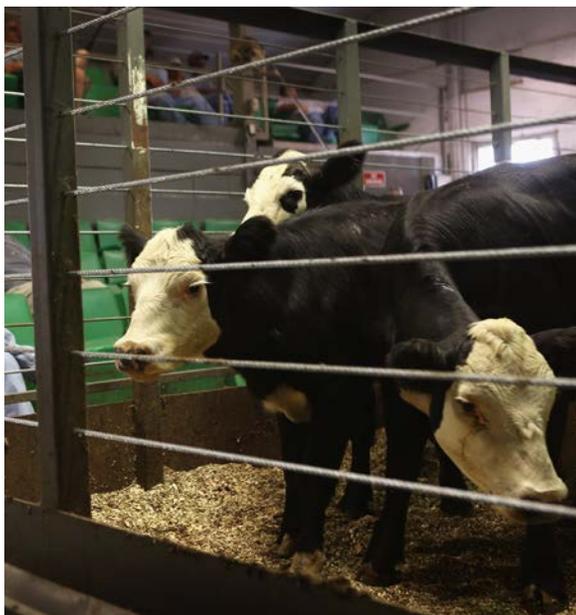
As these conditions continue to worsen, think back to what the Bible plainly states about drought. America, as well as various parts of the world, will soon suffer severe famine. (To learn more, order the free booklet *The Black Horse – “There Shall Be Famines...”* at rcg.org/ews-f.)

Keep this subject simple in your mind. Nations can decide what they want—choosing either prosperity or drought and famine.

Keep Watching

Could this and subsequent droughts have been foreseen? The answer is all around you. Examine the conditions you see every day: the constant barrage of bad news—the conduct of those in your hometown or city—the wild weather hammering the United States...

Placed next to the promised blessings and cursings of Deuteronomy 28, it becomes obvious that the current drought was assured to happen!



■ **AUCTION:** Drought has forced many farmers in the Midwest to sell some or all of their cattle because of shortages of feed, water and healthy pastureland (Aug. 2, 2012).

PHOTO: SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES

Lastly, look at the 2012 drought. Its presence should be a blaring wake-up call.

Ancient Israel was to be an example to other nations for all ages. If it kept God’s commandments and statutes, He promised them tremendous abundance. These blessings were designed to inspire other nations to also want to obey God.

Yet Israel did not comply. The Creator declares that He “brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when you entered, you defiled My land, and made Mine heritage an abomination” (Jer. 2:7).

Even more than Israel in the Promised Land centuries ago—this verse applies to the United States!

Over and over in the Bible, lack of rain and poor crop yields are shown as a sign that a nation must change its ways. Ezekiel 6 states, “In all your dwelling places the cities shall be *laid waste*, and the high places shall be desolate...” (vs. 6). According to *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, the Hebrew word translated “laid waste” means “to parch (through drought).”

How to respond to droughts is the same in America today as it was for ancient Israel. Notice: “If I [God] shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people; if My people, which are called by My name, shall *humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways*; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (II Chron. 7:13-14).

God guarantees it: “If you walk in My statutes, and keep My commandments, and do them; then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and you shall eat your bread to the full” (Lev. 26:3-5).

America’s disregard for God’s Law is the cardinal reason the 2012 drought was inevitable. Unless the nation repents, you can be sure worse drought—and FAMINE!—is on the way.

But drought is just one of the many conditions to *watch* for in these turbulent times. For a complete understanding of what God declares the coming years will bring, read David C. Pack’s *The Bible’s Greatest Prophecies Unlocked! – A Voice Cries Out*, available free for online reading and download at rcg.org/ibgpu.

It will change how you view everything in your life! □

PERSONAL

Continued from page 2

(15) Mark 2:27-28

The 15th verse is *Mark 2:27-28*: “The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.”

No other doctrine is as widely accepted and staunchly defended in the world of traditional Christianity than Sunday-keeping. Though few who profess to be Christian can agree on biblical teachings, they almost always agree that the Saturday Sabbath has been replaced by Sunday worship. To be accepted as mainstream, one must recognize Sunday.

If asked which day is the Christian Sabbath, most answer, “Sunday.” Some falsely believe, “Jesus rose from the dead that day, so we honor Him by observing Sunday.”

Numerous clever arguments exist as to why Sunday is supposedly the day Christians should assemble and worship God. This unbiblical practice has been in effect so long—over 1,600 years—and is so common that few are able—or willing—to recognize clear scriptures that reveal the *true* Sabbath day, and its permanence.

Most start with Sunday as the “Christian Sabbath” and then search for verses to support this idea—if they study at all—rather than beginning with an *open mind* and searching for clear passages on the subject, of which there are many. Even a quick study of the topic with an open mind will reveal the truth. Sadly, most are too steeped in the popular “tradition of men” to leave Sunday’s powerful grip.

How many times have you glossed over *Mark 2:27-28*? Or have you assumed that since Jesus is Lord (or Master) of the Sabbath, He must have changed it from Saturday to Sunday? Be honest.

Jesus’ statement is simple to understand when one considers who created the Sabbath day. As the Creator of all things (Col. 1:16), and God of the Old Testament, Jesus sanctified the Sabbath. Let’s read: “On the sev-

enth day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the *seventh day* from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the *seventh day*, and sanctified it: because that in it [not Sunday] He had rested from all His work...” (Gen. 2:2-3).

Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath because He created it, and set it aside as a day of rest! No verse even hints that He designated Sunday, which is why He did not say He is “Lord of Sunday.”

Some cite *Matthew 12:1-8* (a parallel account of *Mark 2*) as proof Jesus did away with the Sabbath. Yet Jesus was explaining that it is lawful for a person to satisfy immediate hunger on the Sabbath, as King David did, even though it was not lawful for anyone other than the Levites to eat the showbread. (Read *I Samuel 21:1-6*.)

The Pharisees concocted numerous manmade regulations governing the Sabbath that made it a *burden* on people rather than a *blessing*. This is what Christ condemned, not the day itself. How do we know? Because He stated, “The Sabbath was made *for man*, and not man for the Sabbath” (*Mark 2:27*).

Jesus Christ created the Sabbath for people to enjoy. The Sabbath is to serve man, not the other way around! The Pharisees made it into a day one must serve—thus making it a burden. The only difference today is that misguided religious leaders have made it of no effect at all!

Resist shallow arguments that the Sabbath was “only for the Jews” or Jesus “did away with it”! This day has been in effect—as holy time—since the foundation of the world. Man has *no authority* to establish or take away time that God made holy.

Many will argue that they keep the Sabbath “in their hearts” or “in Jesus.” Similar to other plain Bible realities, as with the kingdom of God, the Sabbath is spiritualized away. Human reasoning permits a person to keep the Sabbath as he or she sees fit—rather than as *God commands!* (Read *Exodus 20:8-11*.) What God wants is ignored. They make His Law of no effect—just like the Pharisees! Recall Part 1 of this series.

For a fuller understanding of this topic, order my free book *Saturday or Sunday – Which Is the Sabbath?* at rcg.org/tsosw. You will be surprised where Sunday-keeping originated and who authorized it.

(16) Romans 8:14

The 16th verse virtually no one considers is *Romans 8:14*: “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” This verse defines a true Christian. And a few verses earlier, “You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His” (vs. 9). A Christian is one who has the Holy Spirit. It is that simple.

How one acquires the “Spirit of Christ” begins in *Mark*, which we read earlier: “Repent you, and believe the gospel” (1:15).

One of Jesus’ first commands is to repent, which means to change. This is the perfect summary of Christianity. It is a life of constant change from a carnal mind to one taking on the character of God. As the second step in the Christian walk, it should now be clear why our opening verse about the gospel is crucial—that you must believe in the only gospel Christ preached, the *kingdom of God*.

Peter’s sermon in *Acts 2* adds another element: “Repent, and *be baptized* every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (vs. 38). One must be baptized to receive the Holy Spirit.

Time and again, clear verses reveal core teachings of the Bible. My booklet *What Is True Conversion?* goes much further. Request a free copy at rcg.org/witc.

(17) John 3:13

The 17th passage Christians reject flat out is *John 3:13*: “No man has ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.”

The most universally misunderstood Bible truth is what happens when you die—whether one goes to heaven or

hell for eternity, or something else. Countless millions believe—and hear their ministers preach—that we must “believe in Jesus” so we can “enter heaven” and “ride clouds, play harps, walk the streets of gold in front of the pearly gates, sit in rocking chairs,” or just “roll around heaven all day.”

Nearly everyone believes they will go to heaven upon death. Yet Jesus plainly declares no one has ascended there! No one means *no one!*

Now notice what Peter stated: “Let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both *dead* and *buried*, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day” (Acts 2:29). This is plain. We might ask: if David did not make it to heaven, who did, or who does?

You might next wonder, “If no one is in heaven, then what is a Christian’s reward?” Jesus stated, “I go [back to heaven] to prepare a place for you” (John 14:2). Most assume He is referring to preparing a place *in* heaven. Yet in the very next verse, He said, “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again [to Earth], and receive you unto Myself; that where I am [on Earth], there you may be also” (vs. 3). Combine this with, “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit *the earth*” (Matt. 5:5), and the truth is clear.

The reward of God’s saints is future rulership *on the earth*—as “kings and priests.” Reading Revelation 5:10 makes this obvious! Right now Jesus is in heaven preparing a kingdom for His people to inherit on Earth! Christians will *not* join Jesus in heaven. He will “come again” to Earth, where they join Him!

So few understand this fundamental Bible teaching. This is because they ignore and reject plain scriptures.

Will you believe the plain words of Jesus Christ? Will you believe His statement “no man has ascended up to heaven”? To learn what can be your reward—to see an incredible picture—order my free book *The Awesome Potential of Man* at rcg.org/tapom.

(18) John 3:3

The 18th verse Christianity dismisses is *John 3:3*. Its explanation is longer.

Jesus told Nicodemus, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” For one to see God’s kingdom, he must be born again. There is no other way.

This confused Nicodemus. He could not understand how a human being could experience a second birth: “Nicodemus said...How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born?” (vs. 4). This is certainly a fair question, one that would naturally come to mind when learning one must be born a second time.

It is widely taught and believed that, to be a true Christian, one must be “born again” by religious experience. Millions of professing Christians define themselves as having undergone this experience, claiming it occurs when one accepts Jesus as Savior. Being born again is reduced to a *feeling*, rather than an actual birth. A series of Jesus’ statements in John are used to support this popular teaching.

Jesus expounds on His verse 3 statement: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (vs. 5).

Water applies to baptism—being fully immersed in water, which symbolizes a person’s old self being buried in a watery grave. The person is then raised from the water as a new man and is to live the rest of his life in obedience to God. In effect, such a person is “born of water.”

This also refers to the physical birth common to all human beings. While in a mother’s womb, a baby is surrounded and protected by a water-like liquid called *amniotic fluid*. This cushions the baby to keep it safe and protected from infection. Just before birth, this water “breaks,” signaling delivery will be soon. Everyone can say he has experienced this birth. But the next one is different.

Jesus’ mention of “the Spirit” references the moment of being born again, or born of the Spirit. Again, most believe this happens when one accepts Jesus, while they remain flesh

and blood human beings. Jesus’ next statement? “That which is born of the flesh *is flesh*; and that which is born of the Spirit *is spirit*” (vs. 6). How clear! This means it is impossible for a flesh and blood person to be born again. Those born of the flesh, or of a woman, *are* flesh—period! But those born of the Holy Spirit *are* Spirit—period!

Jesus removes all doubt: “Marvel not that I said unto you, You must be born again. The wind blows where it lists, and you hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it comes, and where it goes: *so is every one that is born of the Spirit*” (vs. 7-8).

You should not marvel either. Jesus compared those born again to wind. We can see and feel the effects of wind—trees swaying, debris being tossed through the air, etc.—but cannot see wind itself. Likewise, when an individual is born of the Spirit, other human beings will not be able to see him, because he will be composed of spirit—not flesh and blood. God is a Spirit and cannot be seen.

We have to ask: of those who claim to be born again, are any of them spirit beings? No. They are still flesh! Sadly, they wrongly assume they are born again, despite Jesus’ plain teaching.

When is one truly born again? At the Resurrection of the dead, when Jesus returns in full power and glory! Let’s read: “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s *at His coming*” (I Cor. 15:22-23). Christians are born again “at His coming”—not before!

What happens at the Resurrection? Paul wrote, “I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump [the moment of Christ’s Return]: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal [body from human birth] must put on immortality [a divine body at spirit birth]” (vs. 51-53).

One verse prior, Paul had stated, “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God...” (vs. 50). Those who believe they are born again and in the kingdom of God now, while in the flesh, err. Human beings cannot inherit God’s kingdom before they have been changed—born again!—into spirit beings.

Will you believe your Bible?—or cling to traditions of men? My extensive booklet *What Does “Born Again” Mean?* addresses every question you may have. Order your free copy at rcg.org/wdbam.

(19) Revelation 1:1

The 19th verse ignored by Christianity is *Revelation 1:1*: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto *His servants* things which must shortly come to pass...”

Understand. The events recorded in the book of Revelation are for God’s servants to understand. Who are God’s servants? They are those who obey Him. This will become more clear.

Mark 4 and Matthew 13 add understanding to how Jesus teaches. In both places, He explained that He spoke in parables so *His servants* would understand Him—but others would not! Let’s carefully read: “When He was alone [with only the disciples], they that were about Him with the twelve asked of Him the parable. And He said unto them [not to others, or the world as a whole], unto *you* it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and

hearing they may hear, and not understand...” (Mark 4:10-12). Note exactly what Jesus said! Only *His servants* could grasp His real meaning. Others might think they do—but cannot!

Jesus Christ never leaves His followers in the dark about matters He wants them to understand. But He does record them in ways that keep them hidden from the view of all others. This will help you see why so few understand a book that has been read by so many.

Those who have God’s Spirit will understand the book of Revelation—and all truth. Read Acts 5:32 and John 16:13. Accepting these two verses is vital to every reader. All who do not obey God—however sincere in pursuing the truth of Bible prophecy—or anything else—are wasting their time.

(20) Luke 21:36

The 20th verse that Christendom never speaks of is *Luke 21:36*—and it is powerful: “Watch you therefore, and pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to *escape all these things that shall come to pass*, and to stand before the Son of man.”

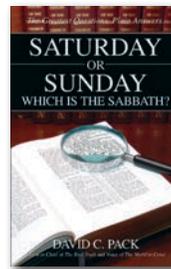
What are true Christians told to escape? Jesus foretold that immediately preceding His Return great prophecies would slam into a completely unsuspecting, unprepared world. He had just said, “As a snare shall it come on *all* them that dwell on the face of the *whole earth*” (vs. 35). This coming world punishment is called the Great Tribulation and includes the

year-long Day of the Lord. Many verses speak of these earth-shattering events, and in much greater detail than most could dream. Yet almost none concern themselves with conditions and events that Jesus plainly states will affect everyone on the entirety of the planet—and how one can escape all that is coming.

My very extensive book *The Bible’s Greatest Prophecies Unlocked! – A Voice Cries Out* brings the truth of Bible prophecy as does no other. This volume includes a long chapter titled “The White Horse—False Christianity.” It carries much more understanding about Jesus’ warning of how false Christianity was to appear soon after His ascension to heaven. Read it free online at rcg.org/gpu.

The Bible’s meaning and purpose is always greater than what men concoct. Now ask: Why have you not been taught these 20 verses? How can such amazing understanding—so obvious in the Bible—remain hidden, and for so long? Believe me, there is much more that has been hidden that we could cover!

Your eyes have been opened to truths closed to others. Will you believe these verses—or common misconceptions and errors taught about them throughout supposed Christianity? Will you return to deception?—or act on what you have learned? The right choice means learning many more marvelous truths from God’s Instruction Manual for mankind! Get started on the journey. Time is short! □



The Bible’s Greatest Prophecies Unlocked! – A Voice Cries Out

Read the free book online at rcg.org/tbgpu to understand all that lies ahead for mankind.



ASIA

India Experiences World's Worst Power Outage

More than 700 million people in India—about 10 percent of the world's population—endured history's largest power outage on July 31, 2012. The massive electrical blackout was the second to strike the nation in two days, with the first having left 370 million people without electricity.

"Everything was out," a *BBC* reporter told *PRI's The World*. "Not just in the homes. On the streets, there were no traffic lights. Delhi's subway, the Metro, was completely halted. People had to be evacuated off the trains. The city was grid locked. There were thousands of people out on the streets."

Both outages, which delayed transportation systems, trapped miners for hours, left millions without air-conditioning, and cost millions of dollars, highlighted the developing nation's inability to keep pace with the energy demands of its booming population.

While the cause of the double blackout is under investigation, Indians blame them on poor investments in the infrastructure of the world's fourth-largest energy consumer.

"Underinvestment at both the state level and national level has been building as power demand increases," said Charles Ebinger, director of the Energy Security Initiative at the Brookings Institution. "This is just a colossal case where everything has come home to roost after years of neglect."

The nation faces complex energy challenges. According to *The New York Times*, "...about 300 million people in India have no access to power at all, and 300 million more have only sporadic access...Another of the nation's basic problems is that supplies of coal, largely controlled by the government, have not been



■ **LONG WAIT:** Indian passengers wait for a train at a railway station during a power outage in New Delhi (July 31, 2012).

PHOTO: RAVEENDRAN/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

enough to meet demand even among power plants that have the capacity to generate more electricity."

Unpredictable weather has also exacerbated the country's energy demands. Diminished rainfall due to a weak monsoon season has lowered hydroelectric generation and pushed farmers to use electric pumps for irrigation. This has further put a strain on the nation's ability to power itself.

According to *The Economist*, "...a decline in average rainfall may not be the main worry. Experts who met in Delhi in May to discuss climate-induced 'extreme events' in India suggest that likelier threats include more short and devastating downpours and storms, more frequent floods and droughts, longer consecutive dry days within monsoons, more rapid drying

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American Nuns Push Back at Vatican

The Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), America's largest organization of nuns, remains at odds with the Vatican since a church-issued controversial review charged the group with promoting "radical feminism," among other issues.

According to *The Washington Post*, the report stated that the LCWR "was focusing on social justice issues at the expense of promoting Rome-sanctioned doctrine on issues like abortion and gay marriage."

In response to the findings, Pope Benedict XVI, who authorized the report, appointed three bishops to inspect the LCWR, which is comprised of 80 percent of the more than 57,000 U.S. nuns.

"Neither side is prepared to budge," *USA Today* reported. John Allen, a Vatican specialist for *National Catholic Reporter* and *CNN*, as saying,

The media outlet added, "This is not just about the Vatican vs. the nuns, Allen says. It's about 'what it means to be Catholic in the 21st century.'"

If the nuns choose to reject the bishops' authority, they may face having their canonical recognition revoked, which has financial and religious implications.

Many American Catholics have jumped to support the women and scold Vatican leadership.

"More than just a psychological shot in the arm, that support also seems to have emboldened the sisters to compose a forceful response that would let Rome know that the nuns are tired of decades of criticism and that they are not going to blindly comply with the hierarchy's demands," a separate *USA Today* article stated.

The future of Vatican relations was the topic of discussion at this year's

national LCWR assembly, held in St. Louis, Missouri.

According to *The New York Times*, "What is in essence a power struggle between the nuns and the church's hierarchy had been building for decades, church scholars say. At issue are questions of obedience and autonomy, what it means to be a faithful Catholic and different understandings of the Second Vatican Council."

"These same conflicts are gripping the Catholic Church at large," the newspaper added. "Nearly 50 years after the start of Vatican II, which was intended to open the church to the modern world and respond to the 'signs of the times,' the church is gravely polarized between a progressive wing still eager for change and reform and a traditionalist flank focused on returning to what it sees as doctrinal fundamentals." □

POWER OUTAGE

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of the soil as the land heats, and a greater likelihood that plant and animal diseases might spread."

"It does not bode well for farmers, or for crammed cities with poor sew-

erage and other rotten infrastructure," the media outlet added.

The unusual heat and humidity has also prompted many to use additional power for air-conditioning systems.

"New Delhi residents were roused from sleep when their fans and air conditioners stopped, and came out

of their homes in the heat as the entire city turned dark," *USA Today* reported. "Temperatures in the city were in the mid-30s C (90s F) with 89 percent humidity."

India's outages have raised concern that such failures could occur in more developed, electricity-reliant nations.

Although United States federal officials have stated that an outage on the scale of India's is "very, very unlikely," they do admit that the power grid is extremely prone to cyberattacks, which are considered one of the nation's biggest domestic terrorism fears.

"The threats to systems supporting critical infrastructures are evolving and growing," a U.S. Government Accountability Office report stated.

The document later added, "A successful attack could result in widespread power outages, significant monetary costs, damage to property, and loss of life." □



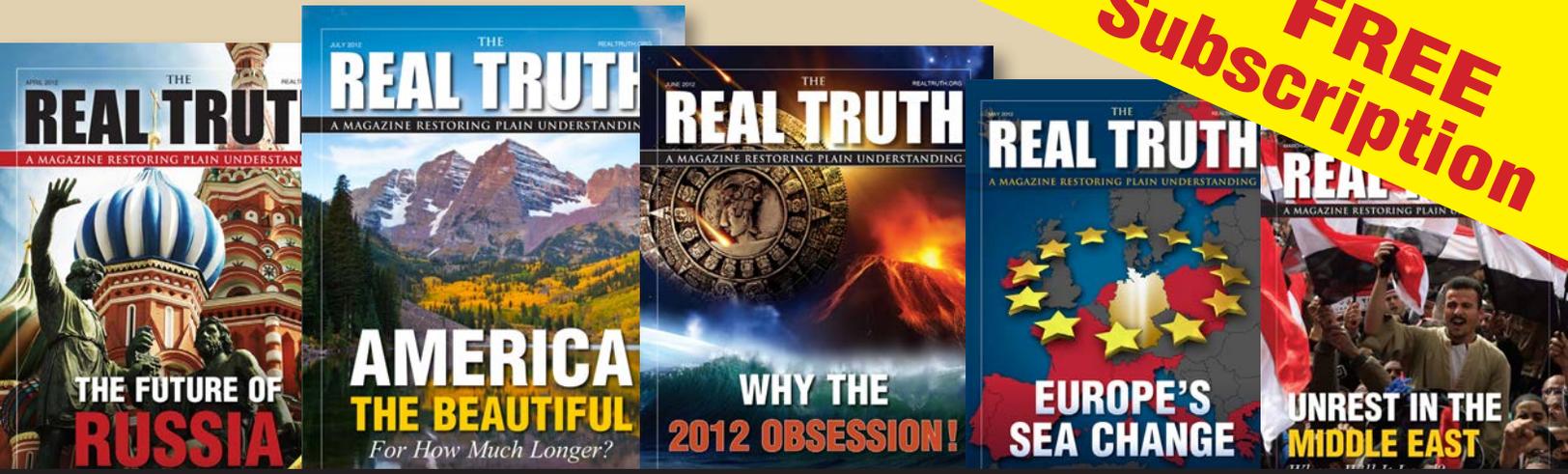
Blackouts in India

More than 700 million people were without power in India when electricity grids failed for two days.

States reporting power outages

- Three of India's five electricity grids failed.

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