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What Was It Really Like Before the Flood?

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The Middle East has for thousands of years been filled with unrest and violence. Governments inside and outside the region have attempted to bring peace, but have always failed. Conditions are seen to be rapidly growing much worse.

In-depth coverage of history is necessary to understand the reason for such instability. History presents a pattern for the future, demonstrating the Bible’s authority—and proving God foretold events before they came to pass. Follow carefully with an open Bible. You will be astonished at what you learn!

Daniel 11 is the single longest unbroken prophecy in the Bible. We will learn how God has brought to pass many specific events He foretold would occur in this picture of the future written in advance.

For background on the early parts of the Daniel 11 prophecy, read my Personal “The Middle East in Prophecy—Today’s Unrest!” (Part 1).

Many of the intricate separate prophecies contained in Daniel 11 have already been fulfilled exactly as God foretold, and have taken their place in history. They are now facts that can be examined—and are powerful proofs that a Supreme Being foretold them and then brought them to pass! The evidence presented serves to make plain the certainty of Bible prophecy—leaving those who disregard future prophecies without excuse!

Understand that the very authority of the Bible is at stake in this series of prophecies. If they stand true—proven by the facts of history!—then a Divine Author recorded them, and all other Bible prophecies carry the same authority. If the prophecy failed, then the Bible is a
book of men and can be thrown away as not worth the paper it is written on.

This prophecy culminates with tremendous events to occur in our time! These events will impact all nations—and yet they have been sealed, closed until this age! So said the prophet Daniel in chapter 12 verse 9.

Also recognize that Daniel was inspired to record these prophecies hundreds of years before the events took place. He lived in the sixth century BC.

Understand that men inserted all chapter and verse divisions of the Bible. While these can be helpful, they can also inadvertently break up longer stories, thoughts or, as in this case, prophecies. The true meaning and scope of the subject matter can be obscured or completely lost from view due to these divisions.

God placed special emphasis in Daniel 10:1 on how the prophecy is “true.” Grasp this! Since the prophecy ends with events yet to happen—in our time—also grasp this!—we must study events already fulfilled to appreciate those in the prophecy not yet fulfilled, but that will be because of the prophecy’s historical accuracy. Movies, plays and books cannot be understood by entering them in the middle or near the end. This means we start at the beginning.

**Two Prophesied Great Kings**

Chapter 11 verse 2 begins covering persons and events that immediately lose the average Bible reader who would have no clue what they mean. But you can understand. History is our constant guide. Read verses 2 and 3: “Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his

strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.”

Who are these four kings—where the fourth is greater than the first three? And who is the “mighty king”? Daniel was speaking of kings Cambyses, Smerdis and Darius of Persia as the first three, with Xerxes being historically the greatest and richest of the four. History shows it was Xerxes who did “stir up” war with Greece.

We must now briefly understand verses in Daniel 8. Alexander the Great’s father, King Philip of Macedonia, created a master plan to conquer and defeat the Persian Empire with a Greek army. But Philip died before he could execute his plan. His son invaded Persia in his stead, and Alexander’s army fought the Persian army at the famous Battle of Issus in 333 BC. (Daniel 8:2 and verses 5-6 describe it.)

Two years later, in 331 BC, in a second battle with Darius called the Battle of Arbela, Alexander completely defeated the Persian Empire. Having already conquered Egypt shortly before, he followed this battle with the destruction of everything from the Middle East to India. This happened precisely as prophesied!

Now chapter 11 verse 4: “And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those.”

What does this mean? What are the “four winds,” and how was Alexander’s kingdom plucked up?

Numerous historical authorities acknowledge that Alexander died suddenly, at age 32, when, as stated by the famous historian George Rawlinson in *A Manual of Ancient History* (which we will quote often), Alexander was, “Cut off unexpectedly in the vigour of early manhood, he left no inheritor, either of his power or of his projects.” Alexander’s kingdom did break into four kingdoms because he had no son to replace him. Prophecy was fulfilled just as God foretold!

Alexander’s four generals obviously represent the “four winds of heaven”—or directions to which his kingdom was divided: General Lysimachus ruled Asia Minor, Cassander ruled Greece and Macedonia, Seleucus ruled Syria, Babylonia and all regions east to India, and Ptolemy ruled Egypt, Judea and part of Syria. These are all established facts of history.

From this point, the prophecy tracks two of these four kings, or divisions of territory. The Syrian kingdom represents the “king of the north.” The Egyptian kingdom represents the “king of the south,” because Egypt is generally south of Jerusalem. (Jerusalem is the central focus of all prophecy and,
Christ Himself said he would be “…three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matt. 12:40). Friday afternoon to Sunday morning is NOT three days and three nights!

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therefore, directions are always established in relation to this city.) These two kingdoms often fought back and forth across Palestine—the Holy Land and Jerusalem—with possession of this area constantly shifting, depending on the outcome of the last battle.

Ptolemy I, named Soter, established Egypt as a much greater, more dominant power than when Alexander was alive. Seleucus also became very strong. By 312 BC, he had established an equally powerful kingdom in Syria. These two kingdoms became and represent, respectively, the “king of the south” and the “king of the north” mentioned throughout the prophecy. Realize that the kings of the north and the south shift in location much later in the prophecy. Verse 5 states, “The king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion.”

**Amazing Fulfillment of Verse Six**

Verse 6 is a very specific and truly remarkable prophecy. Let’s examine various phrases within it: “In the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king’s daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement [most Bible margins say “rights,” meaning marriage union or rights, in this case]: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times.”

What could all of this refer to?

Fifty years later, Antiochus II (called Theos) was the king of the north, ruling at Syria. His wife, Laodice, carried great influence in the kingdom. But Theos divorced her and married Berenice, the daughter of the king of the south. Berenice was to lose the “power of her arm.” Her husband, the king of the north, was foretold to not “stand,” and she and her father (“he that begat her”) were both also prophesied to be “given up.” These three did come to a bad end.

An amazingly detailed, precisely fulfilled prophecy ensues from verse 6. Rawlinson states, “Her [Laodice’s] influence...engage[d] him in a war with Ptolemy Philadelphus [king of the south], b.c. 260, which is terminated, b.c. 252, by a marriage between Antiochus and Berenice, Ptolemy’s daughter...On the death of Philadelphus [“he that begat her”], b.c. 247, Antiochus repudiates Berenice and takes back his former wife Laodice, who...doubtful of his constancy, murders him to secure the throne for her son Seleucus [II], b.c. 246.”

Rawlinson later states that Berenice “had been put to death by Laodice...”

**Control of the Holy Land Shifts Repeatedly**

Before reading verse 7, realize that control of the Holy Land shifts repeatedly. Also realize we are only giving the barest thumbnail of what history reveals. This is because our purpose is to show that God inspired these prophecies, not to teach an in-depth history lesson—as could be done. Also realize that God would have to make known from history the meaning of these verses so we could know that He is the Bible’s Author.

Now verse 7: “But out of a branch of her roots [Berenice’s parents] shall one [this is her brother who took the throne in his father’s stead as the king of the south] stand up in his estate [the margin says “in his place or office”], which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail.”

Rawlinson brings the names, “Ptolemy Euergetes [the III—eldest son of Philadelphus, and therefore Berenice’s brother—a branch of her roots] invades Syria, b.c. 245, to avenge the murder of his sister, Berenice...In the war which follows, he carries everything before him.”

Now verses 8 and 9: “And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the north. So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land.” This speaks of the southern king carrying silver and gold vessels, with captives, back to Egypt—“his own land”—after a successful invasion of the north.

In fact, Ptolemy III did conquer Syria, the Port of Antioch (capital of the kingdom) and Seleucia. He took a vast amount of spoils, including 2,500 idolatrous vessels and molten images, in 526 BC, the northern king, Cambyses, had taken from Egypt. The passage also states that King Ptolemy III would rule longer (“more years”) than the northern king, Seleucus II. Seleucus died in 226 BC, and Ptolemy III reigned four years longer, until 222 BC.

At Seleucus’ death, his kingdom was ruled successively by his two sons. Seleucus III reigned just three years (226 to 223 BC), while his brother, Antiochus III, also called “the Great,” reigned for over 36 years (223 to 187 BC). Each established great armies to fight Egypt, recover their port city of Seleucia, and avenge the previous defeats of their father.

It took 27 years for Antiochus to recapture Seleucia and conquer Syria and the area from Judea to Gaza. Verses 10 and 11 state, “But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return and be stirred up [“stirred up again,” as it states in the margin], even to his fortress. And the king of the south shall be moved with choler [anger], and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand.”

Ptolemy IV fulfilled verse 11 exactly. After gathering an army of 75,000, he did “move with anger” against Antiochus the Great.

Now verse 12: “And when he has taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down [kill] many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it.” Ptolemy IV fulfilled verse 12 because
he did kill “many ten thousands.” However, he retreated too soon to Egypt, having made too hasty a peace with Antiochus, and wasted the substance he had gained, hence the phrase, “But he shall not be strengthened by it”—that is, his victory over Antiochus in 217 BC.

Twelve years later (205 BC), Ptolemy Philopator, king of Egypt, died. His baby son, Ptolemy Epiphanes, was given the throne. Thus, Egypt became vulnerable to attack. Antiochus in the north took advantage of this vulnerability “after certain years” by defeating Egypt. Verse 13 explains, “For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches.”

Soon after, Antiochus formed an alliance with a later Philip of Macedonia to attack Egypt and retrieve Phoenicia and southern Syria from Egypt. This is a clear fulfillment of verse 14. Let’s read it: “In those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of your people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall.”

The famous Jewish historian Flavius Josephus states that a large number of Jews joined Antiochus in this campaign. This is what the end of verse 14 is describing. (Again, read each verse from your Bible as these historical events are outlined before you.) Many believe this prophecy simply cannot be understood. This is because they cannot understand it. These never seem to ask the obvious: why would God record a long detailed prophecy—or any other prophecy—and not want it understood? The answer is He would not.

The Prophecy Continues

Next, Antiochus laid siege all the way from Egypt to Sidon, eventually seizing control of Judea in 198 BC at the Battle of Mount Panium. Notice the reference to the Holy Land (Judea) as “the glorious land” in verses 15 and 16: “So the king of the north [Antiochus] shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand. But he that comes against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land [again, Judea], which by his hand shall be consumed.” In each case so far, history records that events occurred exactly as God foretold.

Now verse 17: “He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her: but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him.”

At this time (198 BC), Antiochus arranged to have his daughter, Cleopatra (not the famous Egyptian

Please see PERSONAL, page 30
The French are typically characterized as being passionate, sophisticated, globally minded, whimsical, diplomatic, stylish, proud, impractical and refined. One of France’s national symbols—the strutting, preening rooster—evokes the country’s grandiose showiness and sense of self-importance.

This people who gave the world the terms *gourmet* and *connoisseur* have long been known for their enjoyment of life’s finer things. French cuisine, wines, cheeses, agricultural products, and fashions are coveted the world over. Together they form a celebrated culture that has been the nation’s signature export.

Italian journalist Luigi Barzini, in his 1983 book *The Europeans*, chose “quarrelsome” as the word that best described the French character (as compared to the “Careful Dutch,” “Imperturbable British,” “Baffling Americans,” and others).

Of the nation’s unpredictable, contrarian slant, Barzini wrote, “The French were at first among the earliest and most determined champions of European unification. They saw in it...a way to solve most of their national problems at one fell swoop... Only a few years later...the same French turned into the most implacable opponents of the European idea. They managed to block all progress by skillful maneuvers and stubborn opposition.”

This love-hate relationship with the idea of a unified Europe came to the world’s attention again in 2005, when a French referendum halted progress toward ratification of the European Constitution with a resounding “Non!” This almost reflexive disagreement has been called “l’exception française.”

Ambivalent thoughts on European integration continue today. A 2013 poll from the Pew Research Study revealed that just 41 percent of the nation has a favorable view of the European Union, which is down from 60 percent the previous year and 62 percent in 2007.
Despite this negative turn, 63 percent of France remains in support of the Continent’s common currency, the euro. It is no wonder why those in the nation are often called the fickle French!

High Overhead

By and large, France’s citizens have enjoyed an enviable lifestyle: a map dotted by beautiful historical sites, picturesque villages, and abundant, varied natural beauty; the most extensive road system in Europe (nearly one million kilometers); almost universal literacy; a virtually tuition-free university system; five weeks of vacation per year; and generous social entitlement programs.

But all of this comes with a hefty price tag. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, France ties with Hungary for the nation with the third-highest tax burden in the world. The French government’s revenue absorbs around 46 percent of GDP.

This high overhead has also contributed to years of slow economic growth, a factor in citizens’ fear that their nation is falling too far behind the rest of the EU.

A Change in Leadership—Again

Former president Nicolas Sarkozy’s 2007 campaign featured promises to overhaul the French economy by tackling high unemployment, loosening restrictive labor laws, and potentially reforming France’s pension privileges. When these reforms did not materialize, change was in the air again. In the 2012 presidential elections, an estimated 51.9 percent of the 80 percent of registered voters who went to the polls chose to replace a center-rightist with a moderate social democrat, Francois Hollande.

“The defeat of the most unpopular French president ever to run for re-election was not simply the result of the global financial crisis or eurozone debt turmoil,” the Guardian reported. “It was also down to the intense public dislike of the man viewed by many as the ‘president of the rich’ who had swept to victory in 2007 with a huge mandate to change France. The majority of French people felt he had failed to deliver on his promises, and he was criticised for his ostentatious display of wealth, favouring the rich and leaving behind over 2.8 million unemployed. Political analysts said anti-Sarkozy sentiment had become a cultural phenomenon in France.”

Mr. Hollande has not fared much better on the economic front since he took the reins a year and a half ago. France continues to face the same economic woes, including an unemployment rate of nearly 11 percent and a public debt that is 95 percent of GDP.

Yet President Hollande has been more successful in building his foreign policy credentials. According to The New York Times, he has “managed a successful military intervention in Mali and has stood in favor of a military strike against Syria over the Assad government’s use of chemical weapons, until the United States and Britain backed off.”

And like his conservative predecessor, Mr. Hollande maintains a hardline stance on Iran’s nuclear program. “‘To take the stance he took doesn’t hurt him politically,’ [Francois Heisbourg, a special adviser to the Foundation for Strategic Research in Paris] said of Mr. Hollande’s position that reportedly scuttled a deal between Iran and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany to relax sanctions against Tehran in return for tangible assurances about the peaceful nature of its nuclear program” (The New York Times).

Identity in Crisis

The traditions of French culture and identity are facing challenges on two fronts. One is the difficulty of integrating non-European immigrants (especially Muslims) into a thoroughly European (and majority Catholic) nation. According to the Gatestone Institute International Policy Council, “A panel appointed by French Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault to review France’s integration policies has urged the government to implement a ‘new form of secularism’ that would raise the profile of Islam in public life—in order to improve the integration of Muslim immigrants.”

“Among a long list of recommendations aimed at ‘recognizing the richness of multiple identities,’ the panel says that public schools in France should begin allowing Muslim pupils to wear headscarves in class (clothing that has been outlawed since 2004), and that courses should be taught in Arabic and African languages rather than in French.”

The institute wrote, “Jean-Francois Cope, the leader of France’s main opposition party, the conservative UMP, said in a statement
that the proposals are ‘explosive and irresponsible’ because they replace ‘the one and indivisible French Republic with a motley assembly of communities, ethnicities and groups of all kinds.’ According to Cope: ‘This report is an attempt to make multiculturalism the new model for France. It would no longer be up to immigrants to adopt French culture, but for France to abandon its own culture, language, history and identity to adapt to other people’s cultures…”

The second challenge, the wholesale import of American and other non-French traditions into the fabric of daily life, is a side effect of globalization: “France is supposed to be the country which says non. France is supposed to refuse all cultural imperialism, except its own. France is supposed to be the country of refusal to be swamped by…Hollywood, la malbouffe [fast food], Japanese cars, Chinese bras or the English language.

“France is supposed to be the country of Asterix, the small village which refuses to bow to the invader; the country of Jose Bove, the man who bulldozed a McDonald’s to preserve his right to wear a droopy moustache and make stinky (but wonderful) cheeses. All this huffing and puffing seems to have depressingly little effect…” (The Independent).

From food to films to fashion, French staples are giving way to foreign intruders: cheeseburgers and fried chicken, Skyfall and Ice Age: Continental Drift 3D (both dominated the French box office), baseball caps, and blue jeans.

The relationship between America and France has long been hot and cold. The two nations share some striking similarities (both in their current state were born of revolution in the late 18th century) and an inter-twined history (Benjamin Franklin’s statesmanship in Paris, Thomas Jefferson’s invitation to France’s National Assembly for the drafting of the French constitution, alliance in the American Revolution and two world wars). Yet, before the Sarkozy era began, France’s politicians rou-

This has led to what could be called sibling rivalry—or more accurately, half-brother rivalry!

France…in the Bible?
As regular readers of this magazine understand, the modern nations of the West are descendants of the biblical patriarch Jacob, later renamed Israel. Israel’s firstborn son, Reuben, began the family that grew into the French peoples. Reuben’s half-brother Joseph received the birthright blessings for which Reuben had disqualified himself through sin: “Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power: unstable as water, you shall not excel; because you went up to your father’s bed; then defiled you it…” (Gen. 49:3-4).

The following excerpt from David C. Pack’s book America and Britain in Prophecy sheds more light on the forefather of the French people: “Reuben’s primary emblem was a man, representing the ‘excellency of power.’ His secondary emblem is recorded as being wavy lines, representing unstable waters (Symbols of Our Celto-Saxon Heritage, W.H. Bennet).

“Reuben dominates the Israelite element in France. Therefore, France—especially northeastern France—is heavily represented by the Ribuari Franks, as bearers of the ensign of Reuben (The Tribes, Yair Davidy).

“In verse 3, Jacob referred to Reuben as ‘my might’ and ‘the excellency of dignity.’ France has portrayed these characteristics to the world. In the past, she was the greatest colonial power behind Britain and called the ‘queen of culture.’

“The Encyclopedia Americana notes that, ‘during the 70 years of...
Statistics report that American criminal activity is down. What does this mean for the country as a whole?

MILLIONS HAVE SEEN the numbers. Decreasing crime rates in the United States are no longer considered an anomaly.

People are taking the declines over the last two decades seriously and headlines reveal as much: “Steady Decline in Major Crime Baffles Experts,” “Good News Is No News: America’s Falling Crime Rate,” “America’s Safer Streets,” and “Triumph Over Crime.” These are only a few of the article titles that appear to show law-enforcement and other officials are winning the war on crime.

A December 2011 Washington Post article declared the 20-year trend of decline in crime according to statistics is “as positive as it is underappreciated.”

The article continued stating: “Between 1991 and 2010, the homicide rate in the United States fell 51 percent, from 9.8 per 100,000 residents to 4.8 per 100,000. Property crimes such as burglary also fell sharply during that period; auto theft, once the bane of urban life, dropped an astonishing 64 percent...With luck, the United States could soon equal its lowest homicide rate of the modern era: 4.0 per 100,000, recorded in 1957.”
The challenge lies in understanding the reason.

Generally, when times are tough, crime spikes. At least this has been the prevailing theory touted by social scientists and others who connect challenging economic times and criminal activity.

The latest statistics, however, appear to contradict this concept. *The Economist* stated: “When people are out of work and out of money, the thinking goes, they turn to crime. But the evidence backing this theory is at best equivocal. There seem to be some links between crime and economic conditions, but they are neither as direct nor clear as one might assume. Crime rose during the Roaring Twenties then fell in the Depression. America’s economy expanded and crime rates rose in the 1960s. Rates fell throughout the 1990s, when America’s economy was healthy, but they kept falling during the recession in the early 2000s.

“And during the current downturn, the unemployment rate rose as the crime rate fell. Between 2008 and 2009 violent crime fell by 5.3% and property crime by 4.6%; between 2009 and 2010, according to the preliminary Uniform Crime Report released by the FBI...violent crime fell by another 5.5% and property crime by 2.8%. Robberies—precisely the crime one might expect to rise during tough economic times—fell by 9.5% between 2009 and 2010. [As of 2011] America’s violent-crime rate [was] at its lowest level in around 40 years, and its murder rate at its lowest in almost 50. According to the social scientists, this was not supposed to happen.”

Do such positive statistics imply America is finally on a path to overcoming crime once and for all?

**Proposed Theories**

Though experts are baffled by the apparent disconnect between hard times and crime, they are not without theories to attempt to explain it.

- **Reduction in exposure to lead:** “One of the newest explanations for the precipitous drop in crime over the last twenty years...[is based on] the well-established relationship between lead exposure and brain development, which is that lead exposure in small children is associated with many complications later in life, including lower IQ, hyperactivity, behavioral problems, and learning disabilities, and likelihood to take part in criminal activity...[A researcher] discovered demand for leaded gasoline declined unequally in states around the country beginning in the 1970’s, with some states banning leaded gasoline early while others continued selling the product well into the 1980’s. [This researcher] found that in states where consumption of leaded gasoline declined slowly, crime declined slowly. Conversely, in states where it declined quickly, crime declined quickly” (*Deseret Morning News*).

- **Aging criminals:** This theory purports that, since Americans are getting older, the bulk of the population is beyond the age demographic known to commit crimes. *The Economist* explained: “The baby-boom in the decades after the second world war created a bubble in the 16- to 24-year-old population a couple of decades later, and most crimes are committed by men of that age. That bubble is now long deflated. In most Western countries, the population is [aging], often quite fast.”

As plausible as this theory may seem, the magazine also presented evidence against it: “The sheer magnitude of the improvement in places such as New York and Los Angeles, where the incidence of some crimes has fallen by as much as 90%, cannot be explained just by a young-person deficit.”

- **Legalized abortion:** Proponents of this idea say that neglected, abused and unwanted children tend more toward criminal behavior. Therefore, abortion leads to fewer unwanted children, which leads to fewer criminals committing crimes. (How ironic that the increased murder of innocent children is pushed as the cause for a reduction in crime!)

- **“Obama effect”:** This theory states that the reduction in crime committed by some minorities in the U.S. is a result of having a minority president. *The Economist* wrote: “…Al Blumstein, [who] heads the National Consortium on Violence Research, posits an ‘Obama effect’ [meaning that] the election of America’s first black president inspires a significant number of young black men away from violence...between 2008 and 2009, the numbers of blacks arrested for murder and robbery each declined by over 2%...”

**Improved car security:** With this theory, supporters say that since car theft is an entry-level and accessory crime, the inability to steal cars as easily has led to an overall decline in crime. “Car theft...is an opportunistic ‘debut crime’ which can start a criminal career. Those who steal cars for fun often go on to become burglars or muggers...[also] a stolen getaway car is often necessary to commit serious crimes such as armed robbery. Technology that makes it harder to steal a car, such as vehicle immobilisers and central locking, thus reduces the number of career criminals” (*The Economist*).

- **More children playing video games:** The idea for this derives from the fact that since young people spend more time playing video games inside, they spend less time outside committing crimes. (Who could have predicted the day when playing video games would be considered a solution for social ills?)

Some of these explanations are so far-fetched that it seems experts are only grasping at straws.

**Can the Numbers Be Trusted?**

Much of the evidence regarding improved crime prevention is based on plummeting numbers. Yet inefficiencies, inconsistent reporting, and in some cases, outright manipulation have brought much uncertainty to the data.

A June 2012 *New York Times* article titled “Crime Report Manipulation Is Common Among New York Police” showed the extent of the concern: “An anonymous survey of nearly 2,000 retired officers found that the manipu-
lation of crime reports—downgrading crimes to lesser offenses and discouraging victims from filing complaints to make crime statistics look better—has long been part of the culture of the New York Police Department.

“The results showed that pressure on officers to artificially reduce crime rates...has intensified in the last decade, the two criminologists who conducted the research said in interviews...'I think our survey clearly debunks the Police Department’s rotten-apple theory,' said Eli B. Silverman [professor emeritus at John Jay College of Criminal Justice], one of the criminologists, referring to arguments that very few officers manipulated crime statistics. ‘This really demonstrates a rotten barrel.’”

The article stated that Dr. John A. Eterno, a retired New York police captain, and Dr. Silverman “have previously argued that the Police Department’s longstanding focus on reducing major felony crimes has given rise to ‘a numbers game.’”

New York City, as with a number of other major U.S. cities, relies on computer software called CompStat to geographically track criminal activity. Also known as “knowledge-based law enforcement,” the data is used to develop solutions to address problem areas or criminal hot spots.

CompStat was developed in the mid-90s with the philosophy that “the success of a police department should not be based on the quantity of arrests or response times, but rather by the department’s success in reducing crime,” the Times reported.

While this focus on the core problem is admirable, one can readily see the potential conflict of interest when it comes to incentives to reduce crime numbers.

The media outlet stated: “One officer, who retired in 2005, wrote that he heard a deputy commissioner say in a ‘pre-CompStat’ meeting that a commanding officer ‘should just consolidate burglaries that occurred in an apartment building and count [them] as one’. Another respondent, who retired in 2008, wrote, ‘Assault becomes harassment, robbery becomes grand larceny, grand larceny becomes [petty] larceny, burglary becomes criminal trespass.’”

The actual experience of citizens also calls the reality of reduced crime into question. A different New York Times article stated: “...W. Taharka Robinson, who runs a [local] community group called the Brooklyn Anti-Violence Coalition...[believes there is] a lack of police receptiveness toward crime victims, particularly in minority neighborhoods. ‘If you go sit in the precinct, you’ll see the nonchalant, lax attitude when people come in wanting to report crimes,’ he said. ‘It discourages people who were victimized because they’re not getting an appropriate response.’”

“Berry Hatfield...who lives in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, said that he was disappointed after a crime report that he filed about being menaced with a gun disappeared from the police records. And Chris Henderson, an event planner, shared his experience of being attacked in Brooklyn by a group of teenagers, one of whom struck him with an aluminum pipe. As the assailants fled, he picked up the pipe, which had been dropped, but the police refused to take it and never followed through with a promise to call him about the attack, he said. ‘They’ve been twisting these statistics,’ Mr. Henderson said.”

While corruption does play some part, opponents of this belief say that it does not explain the steep decline across broad categories of criminal behavior.

Take, for example, incidents of murder and negligent manslaughter

“Robberies—precisely the crime one might expect to rise during tough economic times—fell by 9.5% between 2009 to 2010.”
over the last 20 years—a crime that is almost always reported to police due to its very nature. According to FBI crime statistics, in 1993, there were 24,526 murder victims. Yet, during the last three years, there have been an average of nearly 10,000 fewer victims annually! Property crimes and other nonviolent offenses reflect similar decreases.

These significant numbers are truly difficult to dispute or deny. In the end, evidence strongly indicates that crime is down to some degree, and that it has been for an extended period of time.

What does this mean for the future?

Historical Perspective

A look back over the last century reveals that crime statistics have ebbed and flowed. In reality, the current decline in the amount of crimes being committed is not a new phenomenon.

Notice what Claude Fischer, professor of sociology at the University of California, Berkeley, wrote on his website regarding crime statistics: “We see a cyclical pattern, a high plateau in the 1920s and early ‘30s; a rapid drop of more than half to a low point in the late 1950s; then, a sharp rise, more than doubling, by 1980 and 1990; and then what will probably be a drop of nearly half by 2009. These are huge swings...The [data] shows that progress was hardly uniform, as there were many upsweeps of violence. Spurts often coincide with wars and the aftermaths of war—notably having many demobilized soldiers, trained and armed fighters, roaming the land. Another short-term influence is bloody competition among armed criminals—for example, over alcohol distribution during Prohibition and over crack cocaine during the 1980s.”

With this in mind, and if history is any indication, the truth behind today’s receding numbers may simply be that the U.S. is in another of what have been multiple lulls in criminal behavior.

Incidentally, the year 2012 saw the first rise in violent crime in six years. Murder, rape and aggravated assault were significantly up. The numbers for 2012 included: 14,827 murders, 84,376 forcible rapes, 354,520 robberies, 760,739 aggravated assaults, and 8,975,438 property crimes. These numbers, though, were still down from two decades ago—and significantly in some cases.

So, is U.S. crime up or down? Is there statistics tampering? Has America simply entered a cyclical or periodic low?

Mankind’s Nature

While some social scientists speculate that declining numbers over the last period of time have hit bottom and will only increase moving forward, overarching all of the questions surrounding crime is a simple fact: experts are forced to admit that they are clueless as to the root cause of it.

Though crime is a global problem, America is particularly without excuse for being unaware of the cause of criminal behavior.

The Founding Fathers built the U.S. on what are considered Judeo-Christian principles and borrowed heavily from the Bible for its laws. Three-fourths of the nation profess to be Christian. The American Bible Society’s The State of the Bible, 2013 found that 88 percent of the nation has a copy of the ancient text and 80 percent consider it sacred.

Most, however, do not realize that God’s Word is an Instruction Manual for mankind. It explains the real reason that crime exists and persists.

The Bible describes itself as “a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12) and gives a window into the mind of man: “The heart [mind] is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jer. 17:9). Elsewhere, it states that everyone is naturally a “hypocrite and an evildoer, and every mouth speaks folly” (Isa. 9:17).

This statement not only describes criminals—but all people!

Most will never admit that left to their own devices they are “deceitful above all things,” “desperately wicked,” or both a “hypocrite and evil doer.” Instead, almost all feel people are innately good, with the exceptions being those who commit crimes.

But God’s Word counters such thinking: “All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weighs the spirits” (Prov. 16:2). Verse 25 states, “There is a way that seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”

The existence of human nature within all of mankind is why crime never disappears. (To learn more about human nature, order David C. Pack’s booklet Did God Create Human Nature? available online at rcg.org/dgchn.)

Rebellious Nation

The fact that crime is a result of human nature is not the only problem. There is another aspect—and it directly corresponds with the United States.

Most never ponder why America has such strong ties to the Bible. Yet The Real Truth magazine has regularly proven the connection of America, Britain, and the nations of Western Europe to ancient Israel. For those unfamiliar, request the free book America and Britain in Prophecy at rcg.org/aabibp. It clearly explains the origins of the U.S. and other great nations of the world and their connection to Scripture.

In short, history and the Bible prove that America is one of what are known as the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel. Therefore, when God speaks to Israel in the Bible, it should land with extra force for the modern nations descended from that ancient nation.
Every school system faces the same twofold challenge: how to guarantee access and excellence.

First consider access. According to the United Nations, approximately 57 million children worldwide are uneducated. In 2000, 189 nations pledged to address the issue through the second of the United Nation’s eight Millennium Development Goals to be attained by 2015: “Achieve Universal Primary Education.”

Two years ago, during a World Economic Forum meeting held in Davos, Switzerland, leaders discussed the issue. Following the conference, Britain’s former Prime Minister Gordon Brown, who supports a global education fund, wrote in the article “Our Silent Education Crisis” that “global progress towards universal primary education has slowed since 2005.

“On current trends, the out-of-school population could increase to 72 million by 2015... Another 71 million adolescents are out of school, many of them lacking a basic education...”

Many conclude that the modern worldwide education system is broken beyond repair. Yet all hope is not lost!

BY NESTOR A. TORO

DIFFICULT DECISIONS: The Panel for Educational Policy meets at Brooklyn Tech High School before voting on whether to close or partially close 23 schools that the Department of Education considers to be failing in New York City (Feb. 9, 2012).

PHOTOS: SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES
Millions of children enter school only to drop out in the first one or two grades, long before they have acquired basic literacy and numeracy skills. Around 10 million children drop out of school in sub-Saharan Africa alone each year.”

In modern times, the United States and other Western nations have provided education to most of their citizens. Wide access, however, has often come at the expense of the second challenge: excellence.

While millions of children do attend school, many are “receiving an education of such abysmal quality that they are unlikely to gain even the most basic…skills,” Mr. Brown stated.

“This twin crisis,” he continued, “in access to school and learning in school, does not make media headlines. Cameras will never capture children going hungry for want of education, or lives devastated for want of learning. Yet there is overwhelming evidence that disadvantage in education costs lives, undermines economic growth, fuels youth unemployment…”

The solution to effectively address both sides of the problem has remained a mystery to educators. What have these well-meaning reformers missed?

A Troubled “Student”

As arguably the most successful country of all time, the U.S. has offered educators a national school system to test different teaching methods. This approach provides a clear example of the continual struggle to implement long-term policies that work.

In effect, the American education system has resembled a troubled student who has had ups and downs, but has never seemed to steadily perform well. Early education efforts included the establishment of Latin grammar schools in the 1600s, academies started by Benjamin Franklin in the mid-1700s, a university started by Thomas Jefferson in 1819 (to separate schools from religion), lyceums in the 1820s (where figures such as Abraham Lincoln, Susan B. Anthony, and Isaac Newton spoke), and high schools in the 1870s. These initiatives opened up paths toward educational access for all.

For instance, the movement of pragmatism, which intended to stimulate a more active style of learning through hands-on experimentation, started in the mid-19th century.

The National Education Association made a broader attempt to foster educational excellence with its Seven Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education in 1918. These were (1) health, (2) command of fundamental processes (reading and writing—oral and written expression—and arithmetic), (3) worthy home membership (fostering strong familial bonds), (4) vocation, (5) citizenship, (6) worthy use of leisure time (to teach that it should enrich one’s life, not hinder it), and (7) ethical character.

Then America was put to the test through the Great Depression. Many school programs saw severe cuts. The educational agenda was shifted to promote a better economy through governmental programs. This movement saw education as a vehicle to further political and societal change.

Over the next few decades, the U.S. school system experienced many shifts in focus. Education was retooled when the Soviet launch of Sputnik in 1957 triggered an increase in federal education funding, emphasizing math, science, technology and foreign languag-
es. In the 1960s and 70s, many schools embraced a progressive reform known as Open Education, which endorsed the idea that students should learn “their own way.”

By the early 1980s, many in the U.S. felt that the constantly changing approach to educational theory was inadequate. This brought about a 1983 report by leading educators titled “A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform.”

The Encyclopedia of Education described how the report “found a ‘rising tide of mediocrity’ that threatened the nation’s future.” It felt that the nation “had engaged in unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament.”

In an attempt to correct the course of American education, in 1989, then-president George H.W. Bush set a number of ambitious goals to be accomplished by 2000. These included increasing the high school graduation rate to at least 90 percent, that U.S. pupils would lead the world in science and mathematics, and that all schools would be drug and violence free.

By the early 21st century, desperation birthed the largest attempt yet by the federal government to overhaul education: the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

The initiative put forth by former President George W. Bush was intended to raise accountability with more emphasis on reading and closely monitored standardized testing. If a public school did not perform well on designed tests, it risked losing some of its federal funding. The act also intended to give greater choice to parents as to which school their children attended. If their local school system was underperforming, they could potentially receive a waiver for their child to attend a different nearby district.

Over a decade later, the desired results have not materialized.

“The same year that No Child Left Behind came out, the iPod came out,” former Education Department official Mike Petrilli stated in the Charleston Daily Mail. “We’re still on No Child Left Behind, version 1.0, and we’ve had new versions of the iPod, iPhone, iPad.”

Even with numerous educational approaches and the money to implement these varied ideas, America has never been able to achieve widespread, lasting success.

**Calls for Revolution**

In addition to the twin challenges of access and excellence, educators the world over face the problem of keeping up with the times—which is made worse in an ever-morphing, hustle-bustle 21st century.

Rapidly changing technology introduces a towering question educators must ask: “Will the knowledge we are teaching now be obsolete in five years?”

Such uncertainty has brought on calls for a modern education revolution. Champions of the cause lament that while the globe is well into the digital age, most education is still based upon the needs of the Industrial Revolution. The thought is that over-emphasis is placed on classes where there is only one right answer such as reading, math and science. Critics contend that, while these are important skills, they often crowd out classes that foster critical thinking—such as music, art and dance—in which students can be pushed to discuss ideas and form their own opinions.

The European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, Androulla Vassiliou, commented on this problem: “Today’s young people are the most educated in the whole of European history and yet they find it hard to get steady work after graduation in spite of the two million unfilled vacancies across Europe.

“Education can provide some answers. The crisis has revealed serious weaknesses in Europe’s educational systems. Indeed, it has sharpened what we expect from our education systems.

“Our goal is to make graduates more employable, foster entrepreneurship and stimulate innovation. By combining entrepreneurship education and interaction with business, students can develop the practical skills, knowledge and attitudes that allow them to innovate...There is a lot at stake. Today, more than ever, it is education that can deliver social progress. When we invest in education, we commit ourselves to the development of our citizens and the future welfare of our society.

“The health of a society depends on the quality of the education it imports to its citizens.”

Consider: Europe has essentially achieved the UN goal of “Universal Primary Education.” Despite this success, it still grapples with failures in its school systems.

Something more is obviously missing.

**Teaching True Values**

In 1947, a small college opened in Pasadena, California, which exemplified what real education will look like in the future after it undergoes a much-needed transformation. The institution was called Ambassador College and it was well ahead of its time.

Its founder, Herbert W. Armstrong, understood what had been missed by higher education for centuries: that there are invisible laws that affect all of mankind. If these are followed, they can ensure success in every aspect of life, including education. This set of laws constitutes the proper foundation of all knowledge.

Almost 40 years after the institution’s founding, Mr. Armstrong wrote in the college’s 1986 yearbook: “Ambassador College knows and teaches the purpose and true meaning of life—the true values that pay off—and the way to peace, happiness and abundant well-being.”

“The Bible is the world’s biggest seller, but also the book almost nobody knows. It is the foundation of all knowledge, and the approach to acquirable knowledge...Ambassador students are taught the missing dimension in education—the underlying purpose and the real meaning of life; the worthwhile values; the basic laws of success, not only in economic fields, but in life as a whole. They are given indi-

Please see EDUCATION, page 27
“THE DAYS OF NOAH
WHAT WAS IT REALLY LIKE BEFORE THE FLOOD?"
“ONCE UPON A TIME, LONG AGO…” UNLESS YOU ARE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL, this worn-out first line is usually a cue to zone out. A child’s story is sure to follow. The tale will likely include cookie-cutter heroes and villains, a damsel in distress, and maybe a giant or two. It is usually a highly implausible myth, legend or parable.

This is how most view the idea of a flood that covered the whole Earth. The storyline has captured the imaginations of nearly every culture for millennia. In Sumerian lore, imprinted on cuneiform tablets, Ziusudra rides it out in a huge boat. The ancient Babylonian tale has Utnapishtim in the lead role, with his wife and animals on the watercraft. In both instances, the main characters become immortal post-flood.

Aztec culture has a 52-year version with only one man and one woman—Tata and Nene—surviving by stowing away in a massive cypress tree. Afterward, the god Tezcatlipoca turns them into dogs for disobeying orders.

Over the years, the tale of the Flood (also called the Deluge) has been hashed and rehashed ad nauseam, with nearly every culture preserving a story of waters covering Earth, usually to destroy a wicked humanity. There is also the Greek myth of Deucalion and the Indian legend of Manu.

No two versions are exactly alike. For those who believe in the Bible’s validity, however, just one account is accurate: the story of Noah’s ark. Summarized, the book of Genesis states that this servant of God placed his family and at least two of every animal kind (Gen. 6:19-20) into a mammoth boat. It then rained for 40 days and 40 nights, and a flood covered the Earth. In the end, the ark runs aground on a mountain peak and God says He will never again flood the entire globe. He uses a rainbow to symbolize His promise.

It seems that if any story deserves to start with “once upon a time, long ago,” it is this one.

But there is a problem. If something occurred long ago, how can one know exactly what happened? There are no eyewitnesses to ask or videos of that time to access via the Internet. This means even those who believe the Bible account quibble over what actually happened—especially regarding conditions before the Flood.

A major bone of contention is found in Genesis 6: “There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown” (vs. 4).

Verse 2 states that the sons of God took the daughters of men as wives.

These verses have fascinated Bible readers for centuries: Who were the “giants in the earth” and the “sons of God”? What about the “mighty men”? Most important, what did they have to do with God’s decision to wipe out mankind with a universal flood?

Yet this is only one of many popular misconceptions about the pre-Flood account. To fully understand what it was like in the days leading up to it, one must mine the text of the Bible. Doing so creates a vivid picture of Noah’s day—and its crucial importance for the modern world.

Global Conditions
A picture of this time begins to emerge when continuing to read Genesis 6:
“And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (vs. 5).

Every imagination of the thoughts of men’s hearts was evil continually. How did it get that bad?

Before the Flood, people lived for many centuries. The first man, Adam, lived for 930 years (5:5), which was a decade or two past the standard lifespan of the time.

Try to wrap your mind around living almost an entire millennium. Imagine if a person had 900 years to learn something like playing the violin. He could eventually reach and exceed what is considered a virtuoso level today.

As each person honed new skills, it was not done in a vacuum. They collaborated with others to speed the learning process. Notice: “And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them” (6:1).

The original Hebrew word translated “to multiply” means “increase” and “to multiply by the myriad,” according to Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible.

In other words, the Earth experienced a massive population explosion. Due to their extended lifespans, the number of people could have grown to between five billion and 17 billion by Noah’s time.

Knowledge and technology also rapidly increased in the 1,656 years from Creation to the Flood. Mankind built cities (4:17), had cattle ranches (vs. 20), composed and played music (vs. 21), and discovered metallurgy, including how to make alloys such as brass (vs. 22).

While each man had about 900 years to perfect various crafts, he also had the same amount of time to develop wrong attitudes and habits.

What someone thinks and does becomes part of his character. Just as a person could have become incredibly skilled at metallurgy during that time, he also could have perfected the art of lying, cheating and stealing. Even after just a few hundred years, man would have become incredibly wicked. And, again, there are estimated to have been billions of people like this!

Those alive at the time knew how to work with metals—for both good and bad purposes. This included the development of weapons such as swords and spears. Coupled with a crowded globe, this is what resulted: “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence” (Gen. 6:11).

This is the world that the Creator looked upon and said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repents [grieves] Me that I have made them” (6:7).

Yet there was one person who stood out: “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD” (vs. 8).

Noah lived a completely different way of life from those around him—one that had been known from the day Adam and Eve were created.

Two Trees

In the Garden of Eden, the first man and woman were presented with a choice between two very different life paths. Notice: “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the Tree of Life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. 2:7-9).

God then gave Adam and Eve plain instructions: “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” (vs. 16-17).

Eating the fruit of the Tree of Life symbolized choosing to follow God’s will, and allowing Him to determine how man should live. Eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represented choosing to make decisions based on man’s own understanding.

Genesis 3:1-8 shows what path Adam and Eve chose. They rejected the Creator as their supreme educator and ruler. Instead, they listened to the serpent and ate from the wrong tree. From then on, human beings have been deciding for themselves what is “good” and what is “evil.” They have continued to choose between right and wrong based on their own faulty physical reasoning rather than listening to what God says.

By not eating from the Tree of Life, man cut himself off from access to divine knowledge, which included understanding God’s astounding purpose for him. (This incredible human potential, which is detailed throughout the Bible, is discussed at length in Real Truth, Editor-in-Chief David C. Pack’s book The Awesome Potential of Man, available at rcg.org/tapom.)

The two trees in the garden also symbolized two ways of life: give versus get.

The way of give can be defined as outgoing love, care and concern for others that is equal to or greater than the love for oneself. It includes cooperation, serving and sharing. On the other hand, the way of get is inward concern for self. It can be summarized as, “I want to take. I want to get whatever I can from you. I will let you produce, but I’ll take it away from you, rather than produce myself.” It is materialistic, covetous and self-centered. It involves getting at the expense of others—often to their hurt.
Way of Cain

Genesis 4 shows that Adam and Eve’s first children, Cain and Abel, exemplified these two ways of life. First-century Jewish historian Flavius Josephus had access to ancient historical documents that no longer exist today. His *Antiquities of the Jews* supports the biblical account: “Now, the two brethren were pleased with different courses of life, for Abel, the younger, was a lover of righteousness, and, believing that God was present at all his actions, he excelled in virtue; and his employment was that of a shepherd. But Cain was not only very wicked in other respects, but was wholly intent upon getting…” (emphasis added).

*Strong’s* concordance shows that the Hebrew meaning of the name Cain is “gotten.”

Cain eventually ends up killing Abel out of jealousy and is expelled from the presence of his family as punishment. In response, Cain tells the Creator, “Behold, You have driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from Your face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth…” (Gen. 4:14).

Cain clearly was not removed from Earth, but was driven from where Adam, Eve and their children lived. Verse 16 states, “And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.”

Josephus states that Cain refused to learn from his punishment and instead determined “to increase his wickedness; for he only aimed to procure everything that was for his own bodily pleasure, though it obliged him to be injurious to his neighbors. He augmented his household substance with much wealth, by rapine [theft] and violence; he excited his acquaintance to procure pleasures and spoils by robbery, and became a great leader of men into wicked courses. He also introduced a change in that way of simplicity wherein men lived before; and was the author of measures and weights. And whereas they lived innocently and generously while they knew nothing of such arts, he changed the world into cunning craftiness. He first of all set boundaries about lands: he built a city, and fortified it with walls, and he compelled his family to come together to it…”

Instead of always giving generously, Cain apparently introduced weights and measurements in business dealings. Almost certainly, he began to cheat others using this system to get more for himself. He negatively influenced others to live selfishly.

Josephus shows the incredible effect Cain had on others: “Nay, even while Adam was alive, it came to pass that the posterity of Cain became exceeding wicked, every one successively…more wicked than the former. They were intolerable in war, and vehement in robberies…yet was he bold in his profligate [wasteful] behavior, in acting unjustly, and doing injuries for gain.”

*Antiquities of the Jews* singles out one of Cain’s descendants: “But Tubal, [the Bible calls him Tubal-cain] one of his children…exceeded all men in strength, and was very expert and famous in martial performances [he was an elite warrior]. He procured what tended to the pleasures of the body by that method; and first of all invented the art of making brass.”

These are all just descriptions of Cain’s descendants. Adam’s other children lived separately under a wholly different form of leadership.

Preachers of Righteousness

Recall that Abel was “a lover of righteousness,” which means he lived God’s Way. Psalm 119:172 defines righteousness: “My tongue shall speak of your word: for all your commandments are righteousness.”

This means Abel obeyed God’s Commandments.

The way of give did not die out when Cain killed his brother. (Read “Did the Ten Commandments Precede Moses?” at rcg.org/dttcpm for clear proof that God’s Law has been in place since Creation.)

Return to Genesis 4: “And Adam knew his wife again; and she bore a son, and called his name Seth: for God, said she, has appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew” (vs. 25).

Verse 26 states: “And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.”

The phrase “call upon the name of the Lord” could also be translated as “then men began to preach and publish the name of the Lord.”

Almost certainly, those of Seth’s line invented written language. Josephus states that they founded the study of astronomy and wrote their discoveries on stone and brick pillars to preserve the knowledge.

A passage from the New Testament singles out one of Noah’s eight children. (Read “Did the Ten Commandments Precede Moses?” at rcg.org/dttcpm for clear proof that God’s Law has been in place since Creation.)

Noah was the eighth of what are called “preachers of righteousness.” Abel was the first. The other seven were Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch and Noah. They undoubtedly taught their families to live according to God’s Commandments.

Note that the lives of many of these preachers overlapped for many hundreds of years. At one point, six of these men lived simultaneously. This
Earth! day, establish a supergovernment on Jesus Christ with His saints will one preached. Astonishingly, it was the stand what these eight righteous men 5:22). Through Enoch, we can under- son Enoch “walked with God” (Gen. mixing with Seth’s. occurred as a result of Cain’s children a defection—from God’s Way, which ther), there began to be an apostasy— during the time of a man named Jared speculation that Seth’s children “continued to esteem God as the Lord of the universe” for they likely enforced God’s Law as civil laws. Josephus states that Seth’s children “continued to esteem God as the Lord of the universe” for seven generations “but in process of time they were perverted, and forsook the practices of their forefathers.”

What caused the preachers of righteousness to lose influence over society?

John Gill’s Exposition of the Old and New Testaments speculates that during the time of a man named Jared (who was Noah’s great-great-grandfather), there began to be an apostasy—a defection—from God’s Way, which occurred as a result of Cain’s children mixing with Seth’s.

The Bible is clear that Jared’s son Enoch “walked with God” (Gen. 5:22). Through Enoch, we can understand what these eight righteous men preached. Astonishingly, it was the gospel of the kingdom of God: that Jesus Christ with His saints will one day establish a SUPERGOVERNMENT on Earth!

The New Testament book of Jude states: “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince [convict] all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed…” (1:14-15).

(The booklet What Is the Kingdom of God? available at rcg.org/witkog contains more information on this central theme of the Bible.)

Every indication is that Enoch’s son Methuselah and grandson Lamech did not continue in the teachings of the preachers of righteousness. Instead, the line skipped two generations to Noah. Almost certainly, Methuselah and Lamech maliciously led an apostasy from God’s Way—and used their influence as government leaders to sway others to their thinking.

As has been the case throughout millennia, Methuselah and Lamech probably slowly introduced fraudulent beliefs to those in their charge. They likely taught counterfeit ideas that looked godly, but were really from the mind of Satan, whom II Corinthians calls the “god of this world” (4:4). (Read the booklet A World in Captivity, available at rcg.org/awic, for more on the devil’s incredible deceptive influence over the Earth.)

As marriages continued between Seth’s and Cain’s children, the way of GET gained traction over the entire Earth.

Preaching Campaign

Because Noah was just, the Creator warned him of the coming Flood: “And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make you an ark of gopher wood; rooms shall you make in the ark, and shall pitch it within and without with pitch” (Gen. 6:13-14).

The Flood did not begin immediately. God gave mankind 120 years to repent (vs. 3), during which time Noah, as a preacher of righteousness, warned of the coming calamity for the majority of this time.

Josephus adds to the story: “But Noah was very uneasy at what they did; and being displeased at their conduct, persuaded them to change their dispositions and their acts for the better: but seeing they did not yield to him, but were slaves to their wicked pleasures, he was afraid they would kill him, together with his wife and children, and those they had married; so he departed out of that land.”

A loving God made sure that all of mankind was told of the coming punishment and offered anyone who changed their ways a place on the ark. Additionally, Noah also certainly preached the gospel of the kingdom throughout the world as his great-grandfather Enoch had done.

To sharpen this warning, God may have increased natural disasters at that time.

While most details from the Babylonian telling of the Flood cannot be trusted, the fact that natural disasters were increasing has strong merit as it follows a common biblical pattern. A few details gleaned from the Babylonian myth include an uptick in famines and disease outbreaks in the years before the Deluge. It also mentioned attacks from lions and wolves were commonplace.

Such events should have grabbed man’s attention and showed him that he was living the wrong way!

Despite Noah warning for decades, everyone ignored the patriarch. Just eight people were ultimately saved: “… when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water” (I Pet. 3:20).
“Days of Noah”

The story of the pre-Flood world is not just interesting from the perspective of biblical history. Jesus Himself places paramount importance on understanding this account: “But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be” (Matt. 24:37-39).

Before the Flood, the overwhelming majority ignored the verbal warning from Noah and the warning signs all around them about what was to occur.

Luke 17 contains a parallel account: “And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all” (vs. 26-27).

Said another way, world conditions before Christ’s Return will mirror “the days of Noah.”

In Matthew 24, while talking with Jesus, some of His disciples inquired about this same topic. They stated, “Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the world?” (vs. 3). The word “world” in this verse is better translated “age.”

Go over in your mind the global trends before the Flood: population explosion, widespread violence and warfare, incredible technological advancement, multiplying funds of knowledge, false religion, animal attacks, disease and famine.

Now look at what Christ said would come in the last days in part of what is called the Olivet Prophecy: “For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many [in the form of false religion]. And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars...For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in diverse [various] places” (Matt. 24:5-7).

All of these trends have existed throughout human history. Jesus could only have meant that they would noticeably worsen before the end of the age.

Daniel 12:4 adds to the picture by stating that at “the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”

Also, Revelation 6 contains a parallel to the Olivet Prophecy and mentions four symbolic horsemen, which ride horses that are white (connoting false Christianity), red (war), black (famine), and pale (disease). These represent conditions that will increase in the last days. (Visit worldtocome.org to watch a detailed 12-part video series on this topic.)

Verse 8 summarizes that the four horsemen are given power over the Earth “to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death and with the beasts of the earth.”

Be honest with yourself. Think of the incessant news reports. All of these trends exist today—and are growing more frequent by the day.

The end times—the “days of Noah”—are upon us now! Our booklet Are These the Last Days? (available at rcg.org/attld) brings further unmistakable proof on this topic.

And just as before the Flood, a loving God is warning the nations of the Earth as well as announcing the good news of Christ’s soon-coming super-government.

This was another trend Jesus highlighted in Matthew 24: “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (vs. 14).

The gospel message and the warning of coming punishment are going out with power and force through The Real Truth magazine and its publisher The Restored Church of God. In addition, The World to Come™ program is reaching the entire globe through television and the Internet.

As was the case before the Flood, God offers a way of escape for those who repent and change their ways.

Do not let yourself be lulled into thinking that everything is continuing as it always has been. Allow worsening negative world events to shake you awake and turn you toward God and His way of give. Learn from the examples of those who ignored Noah’s fervent warnings.

Read Luke 17 again: “And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all” (vs. 26-27).

A barrage of prophetic events will soon smash into an unsuspecting humanity. You do not have to be caught off guard. By studying the literature and videos referenced throughout this article—and proving their validity in the pages of your own Bible—you can know what is coming.

You can escape!
The REAL TRUTH
Continued from page 8

the third republic [1875-1945]...more than a hundred cabinets succeeded one another, in France, with an average tenure in office of less than eight months. The main cause of this ministerial instability was the lack of disciplined parties...” This ‘unstable’ and fickle French political system has also produced eleven constitutions since 1791!

“Jacob also goes on to say of Reuben that, ‘you shall not excel; because you went up to your father’s bed; then defiled you it: he went up to my couch’ (vs. 4). It is interesting to note that kings and leaders of France usually have their own mistress—‘concubine’—a pattern that has nearly become part of the national psyche.”

The most recent example is that of Mr. Hollande’s reported involvement in such matters as “the French simply don’t care about the personal vices of their leaders,” according to Matthew Fraser, a media commentator writing for CNN.

Genesis 49:4 bears witness to the continued dalliances of many high French officials today!

The Past—and Future?
The book of Genesis records the resentment that the other sons of Israel felt toward the patriarch Israel’s favorite son, Joseph, which was magnified after a dream that foreshadowed the global dominance his descendants would experience: “And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer comes. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast has devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

“And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him. And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again. And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colors that was on him; and they took him, and cast him into a pit...” (Gen. 37:21-24).

“Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt. And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, where shall I go?” (Gen. 37:28-30).

In this account, Reuben attempted to play the conciliator between Joseph and the rest of his brothers. While he convinced them to spare his life, he was not able to save Joseph from slavery, since he chose a covert plan of later returning to liberate him, unknown to the angry siblings.

In the years ahead, France will be forced to choose between loyalty to natural allies and kin—the Americans and British—or the rising power of a United Europe, with Germany as its engine. France’s one-time president Charles de Gaulle is reported to have said, “The unification of Europe will be performed by France and Germany, France being the coachman and Germany the horse” (The Europeans).

What will the French choose? □
In late October 2013, a mother left her newborn girl in the underbrush of a park in West Midlands, Birmingham, England. A man walking his German shepherd discovered the still alive, day-old infant wrapped in a towel inside a plastic bag, struggling to survive.

Public outrage and media pressure helped police find the baby’s mother. She was arrested on charges of child abandonment two months later.

Fear and desperation can lead a parent to do the unthinkable: walk away and leave a baby to die alone in the elements. It is a terrible tragedy and to all who are parents, horrifying. The only solace is that such news stories are rare and often, when a child is abandoned, media outlets follow the story until justice is served.

But what about other forms of child abandonment? Ones that are much more widespread, yet receive little media attention? They too can inflict damage that can last for generations.

Where are the stories about the father who leaves his son sitting in front of a violent video game for hours on end, or a mother who drops her toddlers off at a day care center for 10 hours per day, six days per week? Where is the public outrage and demand for justice when a teenager, left to her own devices while both parents are working, finds comfort among equally wayward peers and alcohol?

In modern society, the family unit faces attacks from every side, with practically no defense. It is a terrible tragedy and to all who are parents, horrifying. The only solace is that such news stories are rare and often, when a child is abandoned, media outlets follow the story until justice is served.

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For varying reasons, many children are growing up without the guidance they need to become productive members of society. Parents—most of whom do not realize it—are handicapping their children and sending them into this world ill-prepared and unbalanced.

Broken Marriages

One of the most obvious forms of abandonment is a broken home. Numerous studies show that children of divorce suffer lifelong issues associated with a family’s dissolution. On average, children who go through divorce experience “more conduct problems, more symptoms of psychological maladjustment, lower academic achievement, more social difficulties, poorer self-concepts [and] more problematic relationships with both mothers and fathers” (Institute for Children, Youth, and Families).
Consider the following statistics:
- 40 to 50 percent of marriages end in divorce.
- 50 percent of all children in the U.S. will witness the breakup of a parent’s marriage.
- 28 percent of children of divorced parents will live below the poverty line.

Although the divorce rate has declined slightly, the numbers may be a reflection of the fact that fewer people are getting married!

Many parents who have divorced have one thing in common: at their marriage ceremonies, they vowed that they would stay together until “death do us part.” Over time, they had children. Some may have done it for the right reasons, while others may have used a child’s birth as a way to solve a marital problem.

In general, most couples do not realize the work that parenting entails and are surprised that having children actually increases the pressure on the marriage.

Before a couple has children, they should first build a solid foundation for their marriage. The booklet *You Can Build a Happy Marriage*, available at *rcg.org/ycbahrn*, describes what a marriage should look like.

Children should not be expected to solve marital problems. On the contrary, a marriage is supposed to provide a safe and loving environment for children. Husbands and wives must recognize that only they can solve their marital discord by addressing its true cause. If problems are not addressed, the marriage will falter permanently and the children will be torn between two parents whom they deeply love.

Divorce is a tragic result that no one wants or expects. When it happens, the couple and all who are close to them are hurt to one degree or another. But often, people do not stop and consider the short- and long-term effects that their actions have on the children involved.

According to psychologist Carl Pickhardt in a December 2011 article in *Psychology Today*, “For the young child, divorce shakes trust in dependency on parents who now behave in an extremely undependable way. They surgically divide the family unit into two different households between which the child must learn to transit back and forth, for a while creating unfamiliarity, instability, and insecurity, never being able to be with one parent without having to be apart from the other.”

When parents are not willing and able to work out their differences, it is the children who suffer the most—split between two homes.

The end result? Children are dealt a “bad hand” for the rest of their lives because of the wrong choices their parents made before and during their marriage. Through no fault of their own, these children face a fractured family relationship, without the benefit of both mother and father working together in a stable, two-parent home.

**Out-of-wedlock Births**

Then there are those children who are born to single parents. Both parents are needed to properly nurture and guide children through society’s deadly minefield. But the backbone of the family unit—marriage—has been declining over the decades, according to a recent Pew Research Social & Demographic Trends report.

“Marriage continues to lose market share among Americans to other arrangements, such as cohabitation or living alone. According to census data… barely half of adults ages 18 and older are married—51% in 2010, compared with 72% in 1960. This decline is especially notable for young adults: 20% of 18- to 29-year-olds were married in 2010, compared with 59% in 1960.”

In 2011, 40.7 percent of babies were born to unmarried women, compared to only 3.8 percent in 1940. From the beginning, these children enter a world in which they will not experience a healthy two-parent home and all the benefits that it affords.

According to *The Future of Children Princeton-Brookings*, many single parents “find it difficult to function effectively as parents. Compared with continuously married parents, they are less emotionally supportive of their children, have fewer rules, dispense harsher discipline, are more inconsistent in dispensing discipline, provide less supervision, and engage in more conflict with their children.”

As of 2013, 45 percent of children of single-mother households lived in poverty. The collaboration between Princeton University and the Brookings...
Intense effort is often not put into rearing the pinnacle of their careers, the same effects of abandonment.

Yet children who come from two-parent households can still suffer the effects of abandonment.

**Careers vs. Childrearing**

While many parents work hard to reach the pinnacle of their careers, the same intense effort is often not put into rearing their children. They are so exhausted from a hard day at work that they just want to come home and mentally shut down. Some halfheartedly ask the standard question, “How was school?” but then quickly turn to read the newspaper or watch their favorite television program. What they are really expressing to their children is that they have fallen a few rungs on their priority list.

Though the ideal is for a mother to be at home to rear her own children, in today’s economy, this is not always possible. Mothers often return to work shortly after giving birth.

Yet a mother’s career is not the only one that affects the children. Many fathers, in pursuing personal advancement on the job—climbing the corporate ladder—work too many hours. They allow their jobs to swallow their lives—to become their lives. Arriving home after a long day at work, they do not have the energy or the ability to spend quality time with their children.

Fathers “…feel like they’ve made some serious compromises too, though of a different sort. They feel like they don’t see their kids enough. ‘In our studies, it’s the men, by a long shot, who have more work-life conflict than women,’ says Ellen Galinsky, president of the Families and Work Institute. ‘They don’t want to be stick figures in their children’s lives’” (The New York Times).

For some families, there is a very real need for two incomes. Many are just trying to make ends meet. Yet parents need to weigh the differences between wants and needs to ensure the right priorities. How many expenses (wardrobe, second vehicle, etc.) can be cut by eliminating the need for two incomes?

Consider. Where does the extra money really go? How often do you go out for dinner? When was the last time you walked into a thrift shop? Do you actively look for ways to cut costs?

Those in Western society, in particular, have been given so much and now expect to “have it all.” They do not understand that many around the world do not have even a fraction of what is taken for granted in the United States and Britain, among other prosperous nations.

As a parent, you must be sure to differentiate this. Do not just claim to have no choice but to work. Be sure to explore all your options so that you do not automatically relegate the responsibility of rearing your children to others.

**Turning to Day Care**

According to a 2012 fact sheet produced by Child Care Aware of America, “Nearly 11 million children under age 5 in the United States are in some type of child care arrangement every week.” At such a young age, children are being reared by virtual strangers in everything from small in-home care facilities to large chain operations, rather than being reared at home.

In the book The Broken Hearth, William J. Bennett wrote, “The writer Karl Zinsmeister puts it this way, and I agree, ‘A child and a parent are bound eternally…A day-care worker is doing a job.’ How true. The differences between the care and guidance a parent can give and what a child care worker can give are vast!

Of course, the quality of child care varies, but even the very best day care center cannot compare to the love, care and concern that nurturing parents have for their children.

Even at very young ages—1, 2, 3 months old!—parents may decide to send their children to day care. Some choose to forfeit childrearing so that they can achieve “success” in their careers. Often, parents who seek successful careers are ultimately unable to parent properly because all the success or money in the world cannot buy good parenting skills.

As children get older and move beyond the day care stage, parents seem to work even more. Often, children are left alone for a few hours each day after school. Without correct parental supervision, they fall into trouble—they watch inappropriate television shows; they get involved in premarital sex, drug and alcohol use, and other dangerous and damaging misconduct.

Yet the abandonment of children does not end here. Even with both parents having a proper focus on their careers, there are other dangers that can usurp the roles of fathers and mothers.

**Technology as Babysitter**

The Daily Telegraph, a British newspaper, in an article titled, “Keep out: TV, DVD and computers rule,” plainly states the effect of technology on parenting today:

“Technology is destroying traditional family life as young adolescents increasingly spend more time in their bedrooms playing computer games, surfing the Internet or watching television, videos and DVDs, a study…claims.

“Whereas the living room used to be the hub of the home, now more and more 11- to 14-year-olds prefer to be alone in their technology-filled bedrooms, communicating with friends via mobile phone texting or e-mail.

“And, as Britons become more obsessed with technology, the strong sense of family is likely to diminish further, says the consumer report from Mintel.”

In effect, even with both parents in the home together under one roof, children are still not being parented.

Due to all the stresses of today’s fast-paced lifestyle, parents often turn to television to help keep their children
occupied. In an effort to have some quiet time or keep them busy, parents essentially are handing their children over to Hollywood screenwriters, computer programmers, etc.—people who become the children’s most dedicated mentors!

_Bloomberg Businessweek_ reported on a 2013 study released by Common Sense Media, which noted that television is still the reigning king of technology for young children: “In total, 58 percent of children watch TV at least once a day, while only 17 percent of children use a mobile device daily. One-third of children have a TV in their room; the most common reason is that it lets adults watch what they want elsewhere in the house.”

On the surface, this simply seems to give parents “a break.” But many do not stop to consider all the long-term effects of watching too much television or playing too many video games. Studies show that there are many adverse effects of overusing these mediums.

Of course, there are certain computer games that are designed to help in a child’s education. But the majority of the time spent in front of the television or playing video games is not educational. Most parents would freely admit this.

As children grow up, programs or games have to be more tantalizing to keep their attention. So the video game and television industries further push the envelope to provide “more action.” The end result is that children and teenagers are constantly exposed to sex, violence, corruption, crime and the like.

This all begins when the TV or computer is used as a babysitter. Why do parents ultimately resort to this? Why do so many children find themselves growing up in front of television and computer screens?

The answer: It takes work to be a parent! It is a full-time job that requires substantial, ongoing effort. Parents today seemingly have no time for their children! Without correct priorities, they do not make the time to teach!

Gone are the days when families would spend time talking about the day’s events at the dinner table. Gone are the times when children would read book after book, or explore the outdoors to learn about the world around them. Now, their minds are drained by technology, and parents willingly give up their responsibilities to teach their children how to live, how to think and how to become productive, successful adults.

**Starting Where You Are**

Parenting is not for the faint of heart. It is a serious commitment to rear a child into adulthood. Newborns do not emerge from the womb knowing everything they need to know to be productive members of society. They must be taught. From his first words to his valedictorian speech, and everything in between, it is a child’s _parents_ who are most responsible for his development and growth.

Think. What you do today will affect your child throughout his lifetime, and those effects will last for generations to come.

A diligent mother consistently nurtures, teaches and disciplines her children. A good father faithfully supports, protects and directs his children. They both put the needs of their children ahead of their own. Parenting is a way of life.

Parents must reassess their priorities. When you got married and decided to have children, you made the choice—whether you consciously realized it or not—to give them some kind of upbringing. You brought them into this world, and properly rearing them is your responsibility. All the physical possessions you gain in your life, the riches and the material things, are not permanent. But your children will live on, and they, in turn, will have their own children, who will have children, and so on. The parenting decisions you make will affect generations to come.

Determine to start where you are and do all that is within your power to teach your children everything they need to know to become successful, happy adults. Just as traditional values have disappeared, so have the values based on biblical principles. Be resolute in living a life of giving—of outgoing concern for others—and in particular for your children.

Make it a goal to never abandon your child in any way!

To learn more about childrearing, including how to help your children build character, develop their talents, and learn to be productive members of society, read our free book titled _Train Your Children God’s Way_ available online at rcg.org/tuyc.
The coming education revolution actually began with this man who was used by God to restore lost knowledge. Part of what had been lost to humanity was captured in the college’s motto: “The Word of the Lord is the foundation of knowledge.”

To learn more about Herbert W. Armstrong’s life, request the biography Herbert W. Armstrong – His Life in Proper Perspective at rcg.org/hwahlipp.

Today’s continuation of that college is Ambassador Center, which is the educational arm of the publisher of this magazine, The Restored Church of God. This institution imparts the same biblical principles—invisible laws—that made the original “AC” a one-of-a-kind success story. These include an emphasis on give rather than get, the understanding of cause and effect, and developing a well-rounded personality. Also emphasized are proper teamwork, the benefits of hard work, true quality, healthful living, and strong character, among other elements.

These fundamental laws shine a blinding light into the dark recesses of the modern education system.

Wrong Foundation

Plato’s Academy circa 400 BC is regarded by many as the first university. As ancient as this system is, the concept of instruction actually started much earlier. The true origin of this world’s education—both good and bad—is found early in the Bible book of Genesis. The familiar account mentions two trees—the Tree of Life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:9). These two trees, and the decision to eat of them, symbolized two completely opposite ways of life.

In his most important book, Mystery of the Ages, Mr. Armstrong wrote about Adam’s role in that first choice and how it ties into the modern education system: “Adam, not deceived, nevertheless went along with his wife. With her, he took to himself the determination of what is right and what is wrong—thus DISBELIEVING what his Maker had said, REJECTING God as Savior and Ruler—rejecting God as the source of revealed BASIC KNOWLEDGE. He believed and followed Satan’s way!”

He continued: “When God ’drove out the man’ from the Garden of Eden, and barred reentrance—lest he go back and receive eternal life in sin (Gen. 3:22-24)—God PRONOUNCED the sentence:

“God said, in effect: ‘You have made the decision for yourself and the world that shall spring from you. You have rejected me as the basic source of knowledge.…’ Go, therefore, Adam, and all your progeny that shall form the world, produce your own fund of knowledge. Decide for yourself what is good and what is evil. Produce your own educational systems and means of disseminating knowledge, as your god Satan shall mislead you. Form your own concepts of what is god, your own religions, your own governments, your own life-styles and forms of society and civilization. In all this Satan will deceive your world with his attitude of SELF-centeredness—with vanity, lust and greed, jealousy and envy, competition and strife and violence and wars, rebellion against me and my law of love.”

The first humans had plenty of access to the most excellent, spiritual knowledge of God. They, however, settled for physical mediocrity.

In the same book, Mr. Armstrong showed the same mindset that prevails today: “The primary divisions of this world’s civilization—government, religion, education and science, technology, industry—all shy away from God.

“They want God to keep his nose out of their affairs! The mention of God embarrasses them. This ignorance cannot be explained except by the invisible and unaware influence of the supernatural evil power of Satan the devil and the unseen demonic spirit beings. When we read in Revelation 12:9 that all the world has been deceived by Satan, it does not exclude those of advanced intellect. Jesus Christ thanked God that the real truths are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed to those who are babes in materialistic knowledge.”

The real problem behind the twofold education model is a wrong foundation: false knowledge has been spread for millennia. Its author, Satan the devil, has effectively deceived the entire world about it—including you!

How can any educational institution expect to achieve excellence if the knowledge it teaches is wrong?

The good news is that a worldwide educational revolution based on true knowledge is foretold in the Bible. But first, mankind must learn once and for all the lessons of its failed experiment. This revolution will start with a dramatic change of administration.

Master Educator in Charge

The Bible teaches that Satan—who can be likened to the current superintendent of this world’s educational systems—will soon be bound. This amazing prophecy found in Revelation 20 reveals why: “...that he should deceive the nations no more…” (vs. 3).

Jesus told His disciples, “I will come again” (John 14: 2-3). Few understand that during His earthly ministry, Christ qualified to soon replace the devil as ruler of this world. (See II Corinthians 4:4) The devil’s veil of deceit will be removed.

When Christ returns, He will reinstate true knowledge from God. This will revolutionize education!

What should be most inspiring to anyone concerned with the future of education is that Jesus Himself was—and is—a teacher. Consider that most of His ministry while in the flesh was teaching. He preached about the coming solution to the world’s problems! There are many people who may
actually read the Bible for instruction, but remarkably they often miss what Jesus Christ constantly taught: the kingdom of God.

A kingdom is a government. Christ’s message was simple: the governments and systems of man, education included, will be replaced. Jesus said: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent [change] you, and believe the gospel [good news]” (Mark 1:15).

A well-known Old Testament verse often sung in concert halls and cathedrals should now suddenly make more sense to you: “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever…” (Isa. 9:6-7).

Understand—BELIEVE—what God says He will do. Do not miss that one of the titles Jesus Christ will carry at the fulfilment of this prophecy is Counselor. Excellent counsel and instruction will be available to all when God’s kingdom is in place.

As the Master Educator who taught Adam and Eve, God has all the qualifications great teachers require. Notice He has no issue with...

Large classrooms: Christ taught thousands at a time (Luke 9:14).

Pupils with little to no background knowledge: He trained fishermen, such as Peter, to become apostles and great teachers themselves.

“Challenging” students: “But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yes, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are” (I Cor 1:27-28).

Only in God’s kingdom will men come to realize, “The Word of the Lord is the foundation of knowledge.”

Having learned the hard way that its systems do not work, mankind will finally accept God’s excellent instruction. Only then, education will not only succeed—it will thrive. This is just another reason Christians are commanded to pray, “Thy kingdom come” (Matt. 6:10; Luke 11:2).

Universal Access

The goal of universal education, which nations are so desperately trying to reach, will eventually be achieved—and soon! In the coming education revolution, knowledge will no longer be a mixture of good and evil compiled in libraries and worldly institutions with limited access.

During this coming time, God’s Way will be taught the world over.

Notice what it will be like when Christ returns: “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Hab. 2:14).

During this coming time, God’s Way will be taught the world over. Truly high expectations will characterize classrooms in the world to come. At that time, proven, effective teaching will include:

- The benefits of obeying the Ten Commandments: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do His commandments…” (Psa. 111:10).

- Clear course objectives: “To know wisdom and instruction… perceive the words of understanding… receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity… give subtlety to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion…increase learning…attain unto wise counsels…understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings” (Prov. 1:2-6).

- Rigor: “Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (II Tim. 2:15).

- Individualized programs: “…your eyes shall see your teachers: and your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, This is the way, walk you in it, when you turn to the right hand, and when you turn to the left” (Isa. 30:20-21).

- Parental support: “Only take heed to yourself, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life: but teach them your sons, and your sons’ sons…” (Deut. 4:9).

- Reading comprehension: “So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading” (Neh. 8:8).

Man will learn how to live, as well as how to earn a living. He will understand his awesome purpose and potential role in God’s kingdom. (This answer can be found in the free book The Awesome Potential of Man at rcg.org/tapom.)

This is the incredible solution that has remained a mystery ever since Adam and Eve rejected God’s Way. It is what educators have missed: “…the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith…” (Rom. 16:25-26).

Through The Real Truth magazine, God’s Church is making plain the coming education revolution now! Yet schooling is just one aspect of life that Christ’s supergovernment
“It was always the Creator’s Plan that a whole new and infinitely better world would come—one built from the beginning on the right foundation...The coming utopian age that God planned long ago will be absolutely marvelous—breathtaking to behold!—and it appears scripturally in vivid colors, with sharp outlines, and in exquisite detail, as a stunning, beautiful, panoramic, and previously unimaginated future worldscape.”

A wonderful new world is on the way, and this book offers an advance preview—an inside view! For much more information order or download your free copy today. Using many verses from the Bible, it provides a window into the awe-inspiring world to come! □

CRIME
Continued from page 12

For this reason, there is no excuse for America’s ignorance on biblical topics—including what drives people to commit criminal acts.

God clearly declares what He desires from the U.S.: “For in the day that I brought them [Israel] out of the land of Egypt, I did not speak to your fathers or command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. But I have persistently sent all My servants the prophets to them, day after day” (vs. 25, Revised Standard Version).

Widespread disobedience is a core cause of America’s crime problem. Understand. Regardless of fluctuations in crime data, true lawlessness is actually increasing at an all-time rate and showing no signs of stopping.

A crime is an illegal act or action prohibited by law. The label is typically attached to a violation of laws created by men. But what about the laws created by God? Should not breaking one of His laws amount to a “criminal act?”

Consider. If a person broke every one of God’s Ten Commandments, he would only technically have broken at most three of man’s established laws—murder, stealing and lying. Even stealing and lying over time are earning less punitive action.

Does this mean that the other seven commandments are fair game and that violating them brings no consequences? Of course not!

Breaking God’s Law, by definition, is also a crime—yet most do so without giving it a second thought.

Think about the number of people committing adultery (Sixth Commandment). How many children do not honor their parents (Fifth Commandment)? Look at the number of graven images that exist in churches around the world (Second Commandment). What about those who break God’s Sabbath command (Fourth Commandment)?

From ancient times to the present, God has continually and lovingly warned His people of the error of their ways: “From the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt to this day, I have persistently sent all My servants the prophets to them, day after day” (vs. 25, Revised Standard Version).

Each time a person reads the words of the Old Testament prophets, they are being warned by God! Yet America as a whole still will not listen.

Until the fundamental issue of obedience to God is addressed, problems such as crime will never go away. In fact, they are foretold to worsen drastically as a result of national sins.

But the Creator does not want it this way. He continues to warn America of what is coming: “Hear the word of the LORD, you children of Israel: for the LORD has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land…” (Hos. 4:1).

The original Hebrew word that is translated “controversy” is defined by Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament as “to conduct a case or suit (legal), sue.” America needs to realize that the God of the Universe has brought an ironclad criminal case against it!

What are the charges? Hosea continues: “...because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood touches blood” (vs. 1-2).

In verse 6, God states: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you...seeing you have forgotten the law of your God...”

The Creator is calling for America to wake up and remember His Law, which in turn will bring blessings and peace. (Read Leviticus 26.) Until then, criminal acts seen daily on the evening news including rape, murder, assault, and more, will persist. So will divorce, unemployment, and general unhappiness.

Yet you do not have to remain ignorant about what God desires for mankind. Read David C. Pack’s The Ten Commandments – “Nailed to the Cross” or Required for Salvation? at rcg.org/syottc to learn the incredible positive benefits of obedience to the laws of the Bible. □
queen of 31 BC) marry the now little boy king, Ptolemy Epiphanes. But this plan to control and possess Egypt through deceit failed because Cleopatra deceived her father, Antiochus, and did not help him take control of Egypt.

This caused Antiochus to focus on defeating and taking control of the coasts of Asia Minor, including the islands around it (197-196 BC). However, in the Battle of Magnesia (190 BC), Lucius Cornelius Scipio Asiacus, the Roman general, defeated him and destroyed his army. This is recorded in verse 18: “After this shall he turn his face unto the isles [the coasts of Asia Minor], and shall take many: but a prince for his own behalf [one of his generals] shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause it to turn upon him.”

Verse 19 records what came next: “Then he shall turn his face toward the fort [fortresses] of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found.” Antiochus, after redirecting his concerns toward his own fortresses, was killed in 187 BC while plundering Oriental temples in Elymais in an attempt to pay war reparations to the Romans.

Daniel 11:20: “Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom: but within [a] few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle.”

A man named Heliodorus, the “raiser of taxes,” was sent by Seleucus IV Philopator to raise money throughout Judea. However, Heliodorus poisoned Seleucus, who consequently reigned only 11 years (a “few days”)—187 to 176 BC.

Antiochus IV or Epiphanes, Seleucus the IV’s younger brother, won control of the kingdom by flattery and deceit. Verse 21 states, “In his estate shall stand up a vile person [Antiochus Epiphanes], to whom they shall not give the honor of the kingdom: but he shall come in peace-ably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.” This man was an extremely “vile,” contemptible person and his aid, Eumenes, did come to assist him. Rawlinson states, “Antiochus [Epiphanes], assisted by Eumenes, drives out Heliodorus, and obtains the throne, n.c. 176. He astonishes his subjects by an affectation of Roman manners...[and] good-natured profuseness [flatteries].”

Role of Antiochus IV (Epiphanes)

We now begin looking more closely at the extraordinary role of Antiochus Epiphanes. He becomes an important type of something that will happen at the very end of the age. We can now read verse 22: “With the arms of a flood shall they be overflown from before him, and shall be broken; yes, also the prince of the covenant.” This verse pictures an effort by Antiochus Epiphanes to remove the Jewish high priest (“prince of the covenant”). Antiochus’ purpose was to install someone who would be loyal to him. Some misunderstand the term “prince of the covenant” as a reference to Christ. It is not. In the context, it clearly refers to the Jewish high priest. Consider. For this to be Jesus Christ, all the previous verses must have an entirely different meaning.

The next three verses are an insight into Antiochus’ character and manner. Verse 23 first: “After the league made with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people.” Antiochus started with a small group of supporters, yet through flattery and deceit he slipped into greater power and secured large numbers of followers.

Verse 24 and part of verse 25: “He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers’ fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: yes, and he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds, even for a time. And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with [also] a very great and mighty army...”

Although Antiochus’ ancestors granted favor to the Jews, he swept into Lower Egypt and Galilee, thereby alienating the Jews. Let’s read again from Rawlinson: “The Jews...were driven to desperation by the mad project of this self-willed monarch” and, “Threatened with war by the ministers of Ptolemy Philometor [the then-southern king], who claim Coele-Syria and Palestine as the dowry of Cleopatra, the late queen-mother, Antiochus marches against Egypt.”

This is 171 BC, when his nephew (Ptolemy Philometor) attacked him with a “great army.” However, Ptolemy’s officers betrayed him to Antiochus and he lost the battle. This is recorded at the end of verse 25: “But he [Ptolemy Philometor, the king of the south] shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices against him.”

In 174 BC, Antiochus had joined his young nephew Ptolemy at a feast. Antiochus feigned support for Ptolemy against his brother, Euergetes II, in a case of mutual deceit. Read verses 26 and 27: “Yes, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain. And both these kings’ hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table [at the feast]; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be at the time appointed.”

The Abomination of Desolation

Now we read verse 28 for what happens next: “Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land.”
This describes Antiochus deciding to attack and slaughter as many Jews as possible. Upon returning from Egypt in 168 BC, with “great riches,” he sacked the Temple at Jerusalem and took from it the golden vessels—all as part of his planned genocide of the Jews!

Now verse 29: “At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter.” History records that Antiochus did turn back toward Egypt, this time without similar success, because Ptolemy Philometor had secured assistance from Rome.

Verse 30 adds, “For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant.”

The Roman commander, Popillius, brought his fleet of ships to attack Antiochus. Popillius secured surrender on his own terms, which included leaving Egypt after returning the island of Cyprus to Egypt. This caused Antiochus to again vent his anger against the Jews as he was returning to Antioch. This “indignation against the holy covenant” offered favor to any Jews who would renounce their beliefs and practices.

What follows is fascinating, and begins a powerful parallel for our day. Follow closely.

First, the crucial verse 31: “And arms shall stand on his part [again, Antiochus’ part], and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that makes desolate.” Note this.

Antiochus dispatched troops to Palestine one year later, in 167 BC, with terrible results for all who fell in his path. He destroyed the Temple and its sanctuary—doing away with the daily sacrifice (described in Daniel 8:11-24), while setting up an image of Zeus, Jupiter Olympus—the abomination of desolation—directly on the Temple altar!

Some try to portray this as having been fulfilled when the Dome of the Rock was built on the Temple site over eight centuries later, in the AD 600s. Again understand. For this to be true, all the verses that have been explained to this point would require some other equally plausible explanation to work with the precision we have seen every step of the way thus far. This would also apply to all verses that follow Daniel 11:31. Were this so, no one has ever seen that other “plausible” explanation. Why? Because there is no other way to understand the facts of history.

My booklet The Mid-East in Bible Prophecy, available at rcg.org/tmeibp, continues explaining the incredible Daniel 11 prophecy—but goes much further. It ties in the New Testament period, including Christ and the apostles within the prophecy, all the way to World War II and what the Bible calls the “time of the end.”

Be sure to read it!
In an appeal for international support, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe expressed concerns over China’s military actions in the region while speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. The speech furthered the premier’s foreign policy push to subdue Beijing in the coming years.

“We must restrain military expansion in Asia...which otherwise could go unchecked,” Mr. Abe told global leaders attending the forum. “If peace and stability were shaken in Asia, the knock-on effect for the entire world would be enormous” (Agence France Presse).

While China and Japan have been historical rivals, much of the current tension centers around a dispute over ownership of potentially mineral-rich islands in the East China Sea. CNN reported that “both nations’ military vessels and aircraft have navigated and scrambled ominously in the vicinity of the disputed islets.”

There have also been growing strains in Sino-American relations. This includes a near collision between Chinese and U.S. navy vessels on the open seas in December 2013.

*The New York Times* reported that the event “was one more example of the growing rivalry between China, a rising maritime power, and the United States, the dominant naval power in the Pacific region since World War II.”
The infectious disease tuberculosis (TB) is becoming increasingly resistant to medical treatments in Russia—and in a way that has surprised scientists. Almost 150,000 cases of TB were recorded in the nation in 2012, according to the World Health Organization. Of those, about 18,400 were a multi-drug resistant form of the disease.

A study published in the journal *Nature Genetics* has challenged the common theory that improper use of antibiotics is the major factor in the bacterium’s growing strength. After sequencing the TB genome from 1,000 infected Russian patients, researchers found that certain natural processes with the bacterium also result in specific strains resisting drug treatments and spreading more quickly.

Scientists who conducted the study found that many TB strains are morphing through what are called “compensatory mutations.” When a strain comes into contact with antibiotics, it works to develop a resistance—a process that leaves the bacterium weakened. The TB then goes through an additional “compensatory mutation” of its own, which allows the now-drug-resistant strain to “compensate” and return to its previous virulence.

*Nature* magazine reported on the study: “Nearly half of the TB isolates [samples] were multi-drug resistant, which means that they were impervious to the two common first-line antibiotics that cure most TB infections, while 16% of these isolates also harboured mutations that made them impervious to ‘second-line’ drugs. These infections are more expensive to treat, and patients who receive ineffective drugs are more likely to spread TB.”

The World Health Organization found that about 450,000 people developed multi-drug resistant TB in 2012, with the majority of those cases in India, China and Russia.

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Just 85 people have as much wealth as the poorest half of the world’s population combined, according to a report by Oxfam International.

The report was revealed ahead of the World Economic Forum meeting held in Davos, Switzerland. Titled “Working for the Few,” it offered these statistics:

- “Almost half of the world’s wealth is now owned by just one percent of the population.
- “The wealth of the one percent richest people in the world amounts to $110 trillion. That’s 65 times the total wealth of the bottom half of the world’s population.
- “The bottom half of the world’s population owns the same as the richest 85 people in the world.
- “Seven out of ten people live in countries where economic inequality has increased in the last 30 years.
- “The richest one percent increased their share of income in 24 out of 26 countries for which we have data between 1980 and 2012.
- “In the US, the wealthiest one percent captured 95 percent of post-financial crisis growth since 2009, while the bottom 90 percent became poorer.”

According to Reuters, the World Economic Forum warned that “there was a ‘lost’ generation of young people coming of age in the 2010s who lack both jobs and, in some cases, adequate skills for work, fueling pent-up frustration.

“This could easily boil over into social upheaval, as seen already in a wave of protests over inequality and corruption from Thailand to Brazil.”
WHY WERE YOU BORN?

Does your life have a purpose?

- Atheists refuse to know.
- Cynics scoff at the possibility of knowing.
- Scientists cannot discover this knowledge through laboratory analysis.
- Philosophers cannot discern it through meditation or discussion.
- Educators cannot teach what they themselves were never taught.
- Theologians offer humanly devised counterfeits.

What about you?

The booklet Why Do You Exist? is one of the most important pieces of literature you will ever read.

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