

MARCH-APRIL 2003

THE

# REAL TRUTH

A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING

# THE RISE OF EUROPE!



*...Should You Worry?*

# THE REAL TRUTH

A MAGAZINE RESTORING PLAIN UNDERSTANDING

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### ABOUT OUR COVER

Adopted in 1986, the flag of the European Union displays a circle of twelve golden stars, representing the union of the peoples of Europe. Though there are three additional member nations who have not adopted the European currency, the number of stars is fixed at twelve, symbolizing perfection and unity.

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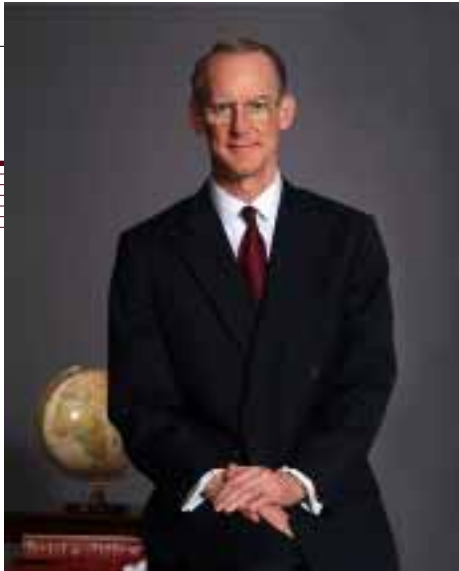
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## PERSONAL FROM

David C. Fack

# Why Does God Allow Suffering?

**T**ake a long look around the world. Enormous numbers of people are suffering everywhere for every kind of reason.

Every day, 220,000 people starve to death—and this is *after* weeks or months of horrible suffering. Such suffering is not limited to *physical* pain, but includes psychological and mental anguish of parents often having to watch their children die in their arms. Starvation is so awful that death is actually a blessed relief.

Why doesn't God stop this?

Even more people die each day from disease. The very word *disease* means people are not "at ease." As you read this magazine, untold trauma, pain and suffering, due to crippling conditions, infections and disease of every sort, are occurring around the world. Just in Africa, children are orphaned by the millions *every year*, due to AIDS alone.

Why isn't God intervening?

Now consider poverty, which affects one-third of all people on earth. The lack of even the most basic necessities (sufficient water, sanitation, clothing and shelter, as well as food) brings untold suffering to over two billion people. Conditions are growing *worse* instead of better.

Why does God allow this to continue?

War now ravages much of the world, with some nations suffering almost complete destruction of their economy, property, homes and businesses, including injury or death to large numbers of their civilian populations.

Why doesn't God banish war?

Earthquakes, fires, floods, volcanoes, tornadoes, hurricanes, blizzards, other violent storms, drought, blights and insect infestations due to weather, also take their toll on the human misery index.

Why doesn't God better control the weather and nature?

### Why?

Yes, *why* does God allow war, terrorism and violence? *Why* must men suffer disease and famine? *Why* must humanity suffer poverty or misery in the wake of natural disasters? Again, **WHY** do these things happen almost routinely on planet earth?—and why doesn't God intervene to end it?

If God is working out an unseen **PURPOSE** through these conditions, what is it? Is there a great **REASON** for the almost constant state of affliction encompassing, to one degree or another, most of humanity?

Is not the God of the Bible described as merciful? Does He not speak of His kindness to, and compassion for, all mankind? If God is all-powerful, and a God of **LOVE** (I John 4:8, 16), *why* does He not stop the terrible human suffering billions now endure?

The ministers and theologians of traditional Christianity cannot explain the purpose of human suffering. Many theorize that Adam and Eve were created perfect and complete, until they "fell" in the Garden because the devil overthrew God's Plan by tempting them into sin. This popular idea continues with the explanation that God's Plan is to restore men to their pre-fall condition, but the devil keeps slowing things down and disrupting God's progress.

Is this true? Is God desperately trying to *repair* damage brought by Satan's unforeseen attack on a Master Plan that God did not think through carefully enough?

Grasp this. In all physical and spiritual matters, mankind only addresses the bad *effects* engulfing the world today. He does not understand and cannot explain the *causes*—the true meaning and purpose—behind the world's woes and ills. *The REAL TRUTH* magazine addresses and explains the true **CAUSES** of these bad

effects. There is no use trying to remove wrong effects, when the CAUSES are ignored.

You need not be ignorant of the answers to these questions. You *can* know God's Plan. There *is* a cause for human suffering. The Bible reveals it so clearly that a child can understand.

Let's learn what it is.

### God's Character

The true God of the Bible possesses infinite understanding (Psa. 147:5) and perfect character. A Christian is to develop that same spotless character (Matt. 5:48), while growing in God's understanding (Prov. 2:6, 9, 11).

The Holy Spirit, given at conversion to those who obey God (Acts 2:38; 5:32, defines God's character. Notice: "But the fruit of the [Holy] Spirit is love, joy, peace, *longsuffering*, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance..." (Gal. 5:22-23).

Did you see that God describes His Spirit—His DIVINE NATURE (II Pet. 1:4)—as "longsuffering"? Why? How can God's character include longsuffering? Most can understand that God is love. Many can also recognize that God experiences joy and happiness! Certainly, none would doubt that God has complete faith in His own plan and purpose—or that He has complete self-control (temperance) in all that He does. The same is true of the remainder of this description of God's nature.

But why does God list suffering (actually suffering *long*) as part of His character? How does God suffer?

Before He flooded the world in Noah's time, "it repented the LORD that He had made man on the earth, and it *grieved Him at His heart*" (Gen. 6:6). Does it surprise you that God felt pain (grief) at what mankind had chosen—and become? God brought the Flood to put mankind out of his misery, stating that He would never again do this to His creation.

In Numbers 14:18, God plainly says, "The LORD IS LONGSUFFERING." There it is! God wants no one to misunderstand that even He suffers. But this verse does not reveal *why* it is necessary for God to suffer.

Let's grasp what God is saying.

All those with children should stop and think! When you see your children hurt or sick, how do you feel? Does it not grieve you? Do you not suffer your own anguish at their pain? Of course you do.

God is no different. He is a parent with children. When His children disobey Him, directly hurting themselves in the process, it hurts *Him*. He feels pain—grief!

### Great Unseen Purpose!

Most people have no idea what God's purpose is for mankind. Many assume that life is probably about "getting to heaven," but have no more understanding than this. (Actually, salvation has nothing to do with going to heaven, but that is subject for a future *Personal*.)

To find out God's purpose, on any matter, you must go to the source—God's Instruction Manual, sent along by the Creator with His creation (man). God's Word reveals the answers to life's greatest questions. Surely, the reason for human suffering is one of the greatest answers of all.

Mankind's suffering is not an accident. It is actually one of the most marvelous tools within God's Plan of *making sons* who have developed His CHARACTER within them. The purpose for every human being's life is to develop the perfect, holy, righteous character of Almighty God. Suffering is directly tied to building character. Since God is longsuffering, it is also obvious then, that no person is complete in the development of God's nature and character *until* he has learned the value of human suffering!

Wise King Solomon was inspired by God to record one of the great principles in the Bible: "In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of ADVERSITY *consider*: God also has set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him" (Ecc. 7:14).

Did you understand this verse? *God* did this! *God* designed life so that we would face "adversity" and be forced to "consider" the circumstances

we are experiencing. Certainly, adversity is no fun. It is sometimes *very* difficult, hard, painful, even traumatic, to endure. Yet, God said He engineered the human existence to include adversity! This seems strange to the human mind that wants a free pass to sail through life, experiencing only the *good* life—*good* times!

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

Does this passage shock you? Does it make sense that "sorrow is better than laughter" or that "the house of mourning is better than the house of feasting"? Yet these statements are God's PLAIN WORDS about how He views suffering—and that He actually *designed* this physical life to require it.

Understand. If one is mourning, it is usually because something *terrible* has happened—serious illness, painful divorce, death of a child or loved one, loss of property through a disaster or bankruptcy, or something similar. Therefore, this passage seems absolutely backwards to the human mind. This is why Solomon states that "the end of all men" (the goal of the average person) is to make life one long, neverending party—or "feast."

### Why Christ Suffered

The world gives much attention to the suffering of Christ. But how many know what the Bible says about *why* Christ suffered? The answer lies in the book of Hebrews—and has a direct bearing on you.

Notice God's inspired answer to this question: "Though He [Christ] were a Son, yet LEARNED He obedience *by the things which He suffered*" (5:8).

Christ was sinless. If He was otherwise, we have no Savior. So, of course, He *was* without fault, blame-

less, sinless. Yet, this passage reveals that even Christ LEARNED from the suffering He endured. This is what God says.

Suffering completed Christ's learning process. Yes, He (as God incarnate) was able to learn as a result of being in the flesh. Being made of flesh allowed Him to learn lessons that He would otherwise not have known. The REASON Christ learned from His suffering is that pain kicks the mental learning mechanism into gear! *This* is why Solomon said that men should "consider" when facing or suffering "adversity."

For instance, physical pain of sufficient intensity stops people in their tracks. They search for the cause of the pain. Whether it is the discomfort of an on-coming heart attack, an acute headache or the inflammation of arthritis, people want to know why their body hurts.

The apostle Paul, also in Hebrews, begins to relate suffering directly to the process of God's purpose in making sons who reflect His character. Notice: "For it became Him [Christ]...in bringing *many sons* unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation *perfect through sufferings*" (2:10).

Christ's suffering actually perfected Him—made Him full, mature, complete, as God's first begotten, and later firstborn, Son. This is what it says. Hebrews 5:9 continues by adding, "And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that *obey Him*." Christ qualified to "become the author of eternal salvation" because He was willing to endure and learn from God's prescribed suffering process for all who are His sons—those who "obey Him."

The salvation process involves obeying Christ. But let's see more plainly exactly what this means. The apostle Peter explains, "For even hereunto were YOU [Christians] called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us AN EXAMPLE, *that you should follow His steps*" (I Pet. 2:21).

Let Peter's words speak to YOU. Christians do not just *believe in* Christ, they *copy* Him—they pattern their lives after His life! This was the whole purpose of His "example." But this verse also shows that copying Christ means being willing to suffer as He did! We have seen that it is this very suffering that causes one to learn and to become, in fact, perfect. Peter explains that God's servants are actually called to a life that involves suffering.

The two previous verses (19-20) explain that people sometimes have to "endure grief, suffering wrongfully"—that they must "take it patiently" because "this is acceptable with God." (Also see Ecclesiastes 8:14.) It is acceptable with God because He knows that suffering builds character—it strengthens the person required to endure it.

I do not like to suffer. Neither do you. But it is *only* through suffering that we can learn what God intends in order to achieve salvation. Paul also wrote, "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him: *If we suffer*, we shall also reign with Him..." (II Tim. 2:11-12).

Suffering is absolutely essential to the character-building process. Because it is a process, TIME and EXPERIENCE are involved.

Paul recognized that suffering was tied to the resurrection of the dead, and actually looked forward to it, seeing it as a way of drawing closer to what Christ endured—as literally "fellowship with Him." Here is how God inspired him to record this connection: "That I may know Him [Christ], and the power of His resurrection and the *fellowship of His sufferings*, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the *resurrection of the dead*" (Phil. 3:10-11).

### David Also Understood

King David was required to learn many lessons during his life, some causing great pain, for both himself and others. Adversity and suffering was a pattern in David's life. He fully understood the

purpose of what he had to endure: "Before I was *afflicted* [suffered] I went astray: but now have I *kept Your word*" (Psa. 119:67).

David knew exactly what suffering was intended to produce. It brought him back into line with God's instruction—and true purpose in his life. Notice further: "It is *good* for me that I have been *afflicted*; that I might LEARN Your statutes" (vs. 71).

Suffering certainly did not *feel* good to David, but he knew it *was* good! Mankind is now suffering terribly, but, in the end, it will be to its good. Six thousand years of suffering will eventually teach *all* humanity the crucial lesson that it cannot ignore God and still be happy. Other vital lessons are a by-product of painful trials and tests.

David grasped the great principle that those who obey God—practice righteousness (Psa. 119:172)—often suffer affliction. Many know of this next verse, but how many truly believe it or the promise that accompanies it?: "Many are the *afflictions* of the righteous: but the LORD delivers him out of them all. He keeps all his bones: not one of them is broken" (Psa. 34:19-20).

### Job Proves the Point!

Many know of the ancient patriarch Job, but know little of the important lessons his life holds regarding how God works with His servants—even His greatest servants. Though Job lived thousands of years ago, his experience bears directly on *us* today.

The book of Job is fascinating, containing almost an endless number of principles and lessons. You may wish to read all of its forty-two chapters. We will merely focus on the first two.

Chapter 1 describes Satan appearing before God (vs. 6). In verse 8, God asked Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that fears God, and eschews [shuns] evil?" This establishes Job's character as extraordinary. While Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived, Job was certainly the most righteous.

Also, what follows could not be

considered *punishment* for evil-doing because God described Job as “perfect.”

The account continues with Satan boasting that he could turn Job from God, if he was permitted to bring terrible suffering upon him. Because Job was one of the richest men in the world, Satan argued that he merely obeyed God because it was in his best interest to do so. In effect, God was *paying* him to be righteous!

It continues with Satan causing tremendous destruction in Job’s life, killing his ten children and causing the death of all of his servants and animals through four separate disasters. The devil wiped out the most precious things in Job’s life.

Yet Job’s reaction to this devastating turn of events was not to attack or blame God. He acknowledged that all his blessings had come from God. In no way did he show a wrong attitude (vs. 20-22).

### **Satan’s Second Attempt**

Chapter 2 records that, after this, Satan again came before God. Here is what happened next: “One day the sons of God again came to present themselves before the Eternal, and among them came Satan. Where have you been? said the Eternal to the Adversary; and the Adversary answered, Roaming here and there, roving about the earth.

“Then the Eternal said to Satan, Have you noticed that there is no one like My servant Job on the earth, a blameless and an upright man, who reverences God and shuns evil? He still holds to his loyalty: it was idle of you to entice Me to undo him. But the Adversary answered, “He has saved his own skin! A man will let all he has go, to preserve his life. Only put out your hand, touch his flesh and bones, and see if he will not curse you to your face! So the Eternal said to Satan, He is in your power; *only spare his life!*” (Job 2:1-6, Moffatt).

While this passage concludes with God giving certain power to Satan to strike Job’s health, God retained final control over his life, with Satan

unable to go one inch beyond what God expressly permitted. Studying the account shows that Satan was given certain specific limits to what he could do. The ideas of men, about Satan’s ability to disrupt God’s Plan for mankind, collapse like the very “fall of man” theory that theologians and preachers have invented.

The account continues with Satan smiting Job with horrible boils over his entire body. As a result, his wife tried to convince him to curse God (vs. 9). His response to her: “You speak as one of the foolish women...What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not *receive evil*? In all this did not Job sin with his lips” (vs. 10).

This is a remarkable passage. It reveals Job’s understanding that human beings must sometimes “receive evil” from God. Notice that the account does not record God correcting Job for misstating the facts! Rather, it *validates* Job’s conclusion by inspiring “in all this did not Job sin with his lips.”

Grasp what you have read in this abbreviated description of events. God permitted disastrous, even catastrophic suffering in Job’s life—physical and emotional pain beyond imagination! Yes, God directly permitted and endorsed this nightmarish suffering.

But it was for a great purpose for Job’s life within God’s Master Plan.

The next thirty-four chapters are primarily a description of Job’s three friends blaming him for what had happened. Throughout, Job refused to accept blame, while at the same time continuing to identify God as the source of what had occurred. He knew that God was working out an extraordinary purpose, both in his life and with all mankind. He had absolute faith in God’s authority and overall control of what was happening.

This account is recorded for us to understand—deeply! We too must have faith in God’s decisions about what we must endure. Of course, God could stop us from suffering. But He

does not CHOOSE to do this, because it would thwart His Purpose.

The final five chapters show how God eventually brought home certain lessons to Job about God’s greatness and Job’s insignificance in His sight. I encourage you to study this remarkable book for its application in your own life.

In Chapter 42, Job acknowledged, “No purpose of Yours can be restrained” (vs. 2, marginal rendering). He had said previously, in Chapter 14, “If a man die, shall he live again?...You will have a desire to the work of Your hands” (vs. 14-15). Job grasped that God was working directly in his life, and that nothing could impede or restrain that purpose.

The same is true of you! Christians are purposed by God to develop His character. After a lifetime of overcoming, character development and spiritual growth, they are to be BORN as sons of God. This process involves suffering, sometimes *much* suffering, occasionally lasting a lifetime. But this is God’s purpose and no one can defeat it. God knows that life’s all-important learning process is inseparable from suffering.

### **Is God a Source of Evil?**

While most wonder why God does not stop suffering, there is another even greater question, asked by others: “Can evil come directly *from God*?” God answers: “I am the LORD, and there is none else...I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, AND CREATE EVIL: I the LORD do all these things” (Isa. 45: 5, 7).

Obviously, Isaiah agreed with Job. Evil *can* come from God, and, though always within God’s overall control and purpose, Satan is often the vehicle that brings it. I cannot stress enough how all true servants of God must recognize the vital role of suffering within the learning and character-building process, central to the lives of all those God calls to His truth!

Paul lived what he taught! Take time to read what Paul’s ministry

*Please see PERSONAL, page 33*

# PALESTINE *and the* PALESTINIANS

Where did the Palestinians come from? Are they descendants of the biblical Canaanites? Why are they constantly at war with the Israelis? Is “Palestine” the original and proper name of the Holy Land? Here are the answers to these and other vital questions.

BY GEORGE C. ROGERS

**E**VERY DAY, news headlines blare the latest developments of the crisis in Israel. The Jewish state has had to respond to unrestrained terror against its citizens by finding and eliminating the terrorist networks.

The press largely portrays the terrorists as victims and heroes, while almost unanimously condemning Israel’s reaction. Three decades of “negotiations” with the Palestinians have produced broken agreements, more terrorism and no peace!

To understand this conflict, the participants and their motives must be understood. We start with how the area received its name.

## Origin of the Name Palestine

The name Palestine encompasses the ancient Holy Land and the modern nation of Israel. But it is *not* the original name for that country. The Romans assigned this name about the second century A.D.

To appreciate the pressure brought upon the Jews in Judea and Jerusalem during this time, some background is necessary.

A Jewish revolt occurred just before A.D. 70, when the Romans sacked Jerusalem after a bitter siege. The revolt was caused by ongoing provocations by the Roman occupation forces. Roman officials continually stole valuables from Jewish priests, demanding ransom

for their return. They plundered the temple and looted the priests’ ornamental garments—along with other sacred treasures. This surpassed the breaking point, and the inevitable revolt began (*Wars of the Jews*, Josephus, Book 2, chapters 14-16).

Distorted historical accounts and Hollywood portray the Romans as cool headed, rational, military types. However, this was hardly the case.

The survivors of the A.D. 70 revolt were subjected to similar provocations that led to another revolt in A.D. 132. The Romans prevailed again, and the revolt ended in A.D. 135. The Roman Emperor Hadrian (Publius Aelius Hadrianus) punished the surviving Jews.

He renamed Jerusalem after himself and the god Jupiter Capitolinus—Aelia Capitolina. He then imposed the death penalty on any Jew who would enter the city.

Some historians feel that this period was most likely the time that the Romans renamed Judea as Palestina (or Palestine). Others believe the change occurred about a century or so later, after Constantine established the eastern, or Byzantine, part of the Roman Empire.

The following quote demonstrates this belief: “Till the period of the Roman occupation it [the Mid-East area later designated as “Palestine”] was subdivided into independent provinces

or kingdoms...but never united under one collective designation. The extension of the name of Palestine beyond the limits of Philistia proper is not older than the Byzantine Period” (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed., Vol. 20, p. 601).

So, the Roman term “Palestine” came into existence well after Scripture had been written and canonized. The term “Aelia Capitolina” did not last for Jerusalem, but “Palestine” did somehow manage to hold for the region including and surrounding Judea. Understandably, the Jews who have lived there since then have rejected that name.

## Holy Land Never Called Palestine in Scripture

Some believe that Israel today was once called Palestine millennia ago. The word Palestine does not occur in the original Hebrew or Greek translations of the Bible. The Hebrew term *Pelesheth*, which refers to the land of the ancient Philistines—Philistia—is erroneously translated in King James Version as “Palestina” in Exodus 15:14 and in Isaiah 14:29 and 31, and as “Palestine” in Joel 3:4. The New King James Version correctly reads “Philistia”—the land of the Philistines—in every case noted above.

The Bible does not use the term “Palestine” or “Palestinians” to designate any geographic location or people. Nor does the historian Josephus ever use these terms in his major works, *Antiquities of the Jews* and *Wars of the Jews*. These relatively recent terms cannot change history—much less Scripture.

In the New Testament, other terms denote the territories of that region. For example, in Luke 1:5, Herod (the Great)

is the King of Judea. In Luke 3:1, we find other references: Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea; Herod (Antipas), Tetrarch of Galilee; Philip, Tetrarch of Ituraea (northeast of Judea); and Lysanias, Tetrarch of Abilene (near Ituraea). Notice that there is no “king,” “governor” or “tetrarch” of Palestine found anywhere in Scripture—more proof that “Palestine” was *not* an ancient term.

### Secular History Finds “Palestine” Without Merit

Notice the following comments, from the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edition: “PALESTINE, a geographical name of rather loose application. Etymological strictness would require it to denote exclusively the narrow strip of coastland once occupied by the Philistines, from whose name it is derived...The modern subdivisions under the jurisdiction of the Ottoman Empire are in no sense continuous [having common boundaries] with those of antiquity, and hence do not afford a boundary by which Palestine can be separated exactly from the rest of Syria in the north, or from the Sinaitic and Arabian deserts in the south...” (p. 600).

These historians strongly imply that (1) the boundaries are obscure, (2) the territorial name breaks many ancient language rules, and (3) at best, the name is a “loose application.” (The boundaries were in effect in 1910, when this source was written. The Ottoman Empire still controlled the region, and Judea was designated as part of Syria.)

In short, by God’s standards, the term “Palestine” is illegitimate. (This will be covered later.) To name the entire region in honor of the Philistines—bitter enemies of Israel for centuries—insults the Jews. The Romans chose this name because they knew it would be an abomination to the



**SATELLITE VIEW OF THE HOLY LAND:** This image shows the Mediterranean Sea (left), and portions of the Middle East. This region has been a place of turmoil for centuries and is prophesied to be the central focus of end-time events.

Jews. For these reasons, some informed political leaders and statesmen still denounce the term “Palestine.” One of the more notable is Lady Margaret Thatcher (former prime minister of Britain), one of the few public figures not intimidated by “political correctness.”

### The Peoples of the Mid-East

While they were still in Egypt, God revealed to Israel how they would obtain the land of Canaan—the Promised Land: “And I am come down to deliver them [Israelites] out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good

land and a large [land], unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites” (Ex. 3:8).

These peoples, as far as lineages can be traced, were descendants of Ham. Collectively, they were called Canaanites, and the land was often referred to as Canaan (Gen. 10:15-20).

Palestinians today insist that they inhabited the land of Canaan before God gave it to Israel. But they are either seriously misinformed or willfully ignorant. The Canaanites described above were definitely *not* of Arab descent. The Arabic peoples are descendants of Ishmael, who descended from Shem. The peoples of Tunisia, Malta, Algeria and Sicily of today are of similar descent as these Canaanites.

The peoples who now call themselves Palestinians correctly acknowledge the common ancestry of Abraham just as the Jews and the Arabs claim.

Let’s review some of this tribal lineage to better understand the origin of the Jews and Arabs.

Abraham had two sons: Isaac (by his wife, Sarah) and Ishmael (by Hagar, her handmaid). Though Abraham passed the birthright to Isaac, Ishmael was also blessed, becoming the progenitor of the Arabs. Twelve princes, sons of Ishmael (Gen. 25:16), went on to form *major Arab nations*—not *insignificant nomadic tribes*. These peoples intermarried primarily with the Egyptians and were located in areas south of Canaan, known as Arabia.

Isaac had two sons: Jacob and Esau. Abraham and Isaac’s God-given birthright was passed on to Jacob. Esau, like his uncle Ishmael, was also blessed with wealth and offspring. He moved away from Canaan to a region called



Mount Seir, just south of the land of Moab (southeast of the Dead Sea). Esau was also called Edom, and his offspring were known as Edomites. Many rulers, nobles and kings were borne of Esau (Gen. 36). Esau married Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael (Gen. 28:9). He also had a number of wives from various other nations. His offspring continued to marry into the families of Ishmael, as well as other peoples.

Meanwhile, Jacob, whose name God changed to Israel, had twelve sons—Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulun, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Joseph and Benjamin—the twelve tribes of Israel. While in Egypt for nearly two and a half centuries, the tribes of Israel grew vastly in numbers. The birthright was passed from Jacob (or Israel) to Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Israel effectively became thirteen tribes. The birthright remained with Ephraim and Manasseh, and began to be fulfilled in about A.D. 1800.

### Israel and Judah

After the time of King Solomon, the original nation of Israel split into two nations: Judah and Israel (to the north of Judah). Judah consisted of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, as well as the majority of the tribe of Levi. These peoples became known as Jews. In fact, the first time the word "Jews" is found in the Bible is in II Kings 16:6, when the Jews (allied with Syria) were at war against Israel.

The northern ten tribes of Israel were taken into captivity by the Assyrians in 721-718 B.C. and became known as the "lost ten tribes of Israel." The Jews remained in the land of Judah (later Judea). The Assyrians placed other peoples in the land formerly inhabited by the ten tribes of Israel. These new inhabitants were called Samaritans, who came from a region near Babylon.

In about 600 B.C., the Jews were taken captive by the Babylonians. A remnant of them returned approximately 70 years later. The vast majority of the Jews remained dispersed among other nations after the captivity. The Jews who returned were continually opposed by certain peoples, such as the

Samaritans. To a lesser extent, they also faced opposition from the peoples of Ammon and Moab. The Ammonites and Moabites—sons of Lot, Abraham's nephew—were distant relatives of the Jews. The Jews' most bitter rivals during this era were probably the Edomites—sons of Esau.

Later, Alexander the Great's Empire dominated the region, and local rivalries were suppressed. The series of ongoing wars between the Seleucid and Ptolemy Empires—fragments of the former Empire of Alexander—dominated the second century B.C.

Next came the Roman era and their provoking of the Jewish religious leaders, as mentioned earlier.

### The Masses of Palestine

Major population shifts occurred in the area before the Jews' arrival between 1917 and 1948: "The spread of Islam introduced a very considerable Neo-Arabian infusion. Those from southern Arabia were known as the Yaman tribe, those from northern Arabia the Kais (Qais). These two divisions absorbed the previous peasant population, and still nominally exist [as of 1910]; down to the middle of the 19th century they were a fruitful source of quarrels and of bloodshed." (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed., vol. 20, p. 604). Note that these people were inclined toward quarreling and infighting.

The "infusion" of Arabians coincided with the expansion of Islam. Their presence in the Holy Land began about the seventh century A.D. These waves of migration continued as the Turks pushed north, spreading Islam by the edge of the sword. By the tenth century A.D., the Turks had conquered the former land of Judea, as well as Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. By the eleventh century, they controlled the bulk of Asia Minor. The Arabians—descendants of Ishmael as well as Esau—claimed the land from that time until the present.

Many of the particular nationalities that live in Judea and Jerusalem do not intermix and intermarry with other peoples or nationalities.

Notice this reference about the Samaritans: "The most interesting of all the non-Arab communities in the coun-

try, however, is without doubt the Samaritan sect in Nablus (Shechem); a gradually disappearing body, which has maintained an independent existence from the time they were first settled by the Assyrians to occupy the land left waste by the captivity of the kingdom of Israel" (Ibid.).

Like the Samaritans, the original Canaanite nations and the Philistines also diminished in size and had long since emigrated. Much of this occurred during the time of David and Solomon. An example is the Hivites, who were "hewers of wood and drawers of water" (Josh. 9:21). "And all the people that were left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which were not of the children of Israel, their children that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were not able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon levy a tribute of bondservice unto this day" (I Kings 9:20-21).

Modern descendants of these former bond servants exist only in occasional lineages of certain modern inhabitants of the nation of Israel. The percentage of that bloodline would only be small, being diluted by many generations.

Arabs comprise the bulk of the remaining residents. Not only is the term "Palestine" found to originate as late as the Byzantine era, the Arabs who call themselves "Palestinian" did not lay claim to the Holy Land until about the tenth century A.D.

There were relatively few Arabs in the region when the Jews opted to return in 1917. Shortly before then, the population of the Holy Land was estimated to be about 650,000 permanent residents. More than 65% were Islamic (Ibid.). Only after the Jews established their nation in 1948 did the masses of these Arabic peoples feel drawn to this particular territory. The population of Palestinians swelled dramatically after the Jews brought about vast improvements in agricultural production. They established irrigation and re-introduced efficient means of agriculture.

Understandably, many took advantage of gainful employment provided by the Jews in developing the land and building a needed infrastructure for the

tiny nation of Israel. These local laborers were called *fellahin*, or agricultural workers. Previously, the Arabs had only used primitive methods. Without the innovations introduced by the Jews, the *fellahin* had been restrained by their own superstitions, which prohibited advancements and efficiency in agriculture. So, initially, a mutual benefit existed, and the two peoples worked together.

But the Jews were never welcomed by Arab leaders who harbored jealousy and ancient resentment. No consideration was given to the willingness of the Jews to advance the cause of the *fellahin*.

Golda Meir, former Prime Minister of Israel, offered some insightful comments on this. Herbert W. Armstrong, a friend and confidant of Mrs. Meir and many other Middle Eastern leaders, recorded her words in 1971. Keep in mind that these statements followed the 1967 War:

“Then she told us of the Israelis’ ability and willingness to help their Arab neighbors. This small but remarkable nation now sends its experts and its technology throughout the deepest parts of Africa and to even more remote places in the world to help under-developed nations.

“‘How easy it would be,’ she said earnestly, ‘to send the same teams across the border into Jordan, or across the canal into Egypt, and how much prosperity and happiness would be brought to this entire area of the world by peace...

“‘We don’t want to have to go on winning more and more victories,’ she added. ‘We only want peace...’”

Then Mr. Armstrong reflected upon Mrs. Meir’s words: “What a deplorable tragedy that the whole world cannot now have the kind of peace, with prosperity and happiness that Prime Minister Golda Meir expressed a desire for—each nation cooperating with its neighbor.

“But the reason is summed up in the biblical statement: ‘The way of peace they know not.’ There has, of necessity, to be a cause for every effect. There will have to be a cause to produce peace. That cause is a way of life” (*Autobiography of Herbert W.*

*Armstrong*, Vol. 2, pp. 500-501).

Today, Palestinian leaders and Islamic clerics have rejected gestures of mutual cooperation from the Jews, because their ancient hatreds stand in the way. Their only plan regarding Israel is nothing less than the extinction of all Jews.

Ownership of the territory is another controversial issue. The Palestinians claim to be the ancient owners of Palestine. Yet we see that they only took possession of the land in the wake of the Turkish campaign through that region in about the tenth century A.D. The claim made by ancient Israel precedes this claim by about 2,300 years.

How ironic that these Palestinians accuse the Jews of depriving them of their home when (1) the vast majority of them moved to Israel *after* the Jews reclaimed the land from desolation and ruin, and (2) their Arab relatives in the world of Islam own over 1,000 times more real estate than exists within the boundaries of tiny Israel. Remember when thousands of Palestinians were expelled from Kuwait in 1991 after they were found conspiring with the Iraqis in selling out their host country?

The following scriptures show how the true Owner of this and *all* land everywhere expressed this “land transfer”: “And the LORD gave unto Israel all the land which He swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the LORD gave them rest round about, according to all that He swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass” (Josh. 21:43-45).

Joshua 24:13 covers more details: “And I [the LORD] have given you a land for which you did not labor, and cities which you built not, and you dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which you planted not do you eat.”

### **The Coming Solution**

Today, the Islamic Arabs (descendants of Ishmael and Esau) bear the same

rivalry and suspicion of the Jews that they have always borne for Israel. But that rivalry is greatly intensified by Islamic fundamentalists advocating the destruction of the Jews and Israel. The most dangerous enemy of the west—as well as the Jews—is the incessant Islamic message that fuels the flames of hatred and vengeance, which fuels the fires of terrorism.

The Palestinians have lived near the Jews for over half a century. This closeness to the “enemy” makes them of great value to the perpetrators of terrorism. Thus, the Palestinians have served as surrogates for the terrorist states of Syria, Iran, and Iraq, confronting the Jews with escalating terrorism.

To see through the smoke surrounding the Mid-East crisis, a clear understanding of Palestine and the Palestinians is critical. We live in momentous times. Events in this crucial area will soon impact everyone!

This millennia-old hatred will soon come to a boil, instigated by the “god of this world,” Satan the devil (II Cor. 4:4). He is the source of human nature, the source of all wars, evils, and mass confusion: “From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? You lust, and have not: you kill and desire to have, and cannot obtain: you fight and war, yet you have not because you ask not. You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss, that you may consume it upon your lusts” (Jms. 4:1-3).

Satan is the great deceiver; so great that most do not believe that he even exists (Rev. 12:9). (Read our free booklets *Who is the DEVIL?*, *A WORLD IN CAPTIVITY*, and *Did God Create HUMAN NATURE?*, to learn more.)

Real peace—the kind that lasts forever—will not come before the end of this age. (For more information read our free booklet *How WORLD PEACE Will Come*. You will find this to be an incredible eye-opener—as is our booklet *The MID-EAST in Bible Prophecy*.) The present dilemma will not be solved until the arrival of the King of Peace—Jesus Christ—and the soon-coming kingdom of God. □

# The IMMORALITY EXPLOSION! Part Two

BY BRADFORD G. SCHLEIFER

**I**N PART I, we looked at many of the effects that immorality has on society. The stories and statistics that were current then still apply and, in many cases, downplay the growth of immorality in our society. Starting with the base family structure, we began looking at the foundation on which children are raised. We also looked at the school system, and how it forces children to face adult issues years before they are actually adults. We examined the role of tolerance and what it means. Finally, we uncovered the wide array of immoral acts committed in schools, and that the flawed system of sexual education is actually promoting these acts.

While statistics and trends in Part I were eye-opening, the fruits of that system—young adults today—are alarming. Adults are involved with many dangerous lifestyle choices. They open themselves up to sexually transmitted diseases, with no thought of any prolonged impact.

News articles report shockingly immoral activities happening in your backyard. Should we be tolerant of such actions? Schools are teaching—even instructing—young people on sexual topics of all kinds. What is the cause of this escalating immorality in society? And what will be its end?

Allied forces in the Pacific during World War II, stated, “History fails to record a single precedent in which nations subject to *moral decay* have not passed in to political and economic decline.” These wise words point to the moral decay that is rotting our nations around us. Time is short—humanity must pay attention *now*!

#### **Moral Barometer**

Children and adults are bombarded with advertising, television, and social issues that simply did not exist a few generations ago. Each year, the standard of what is considered acceptable entertainment drastically degrades. Hollywood pushes immoral

Legislators have introduced bills and statutes that would give pedophiles and other “alternative lifestyles” legal standing. Our society is failing and the results are evident.

Douglas MacArthur (1880-1964), Supreme Commander of the

concepts through movies. And the fashion industry and magazines take up the baton in offering clothing to suit these roles.

Such drastic social changes have not occurred without a dramatic effect!

Society has gone from Hollywood and television *driving* the moral standard, to Hollywood and television trying to *keep up* with society as a whole. Mass media now merely *reflects* the condition of society.

In 2002, a survey in the United States showed what children believe and consider to be moral. It was a kind of moral gauge—or barometer—to see where the country stands.

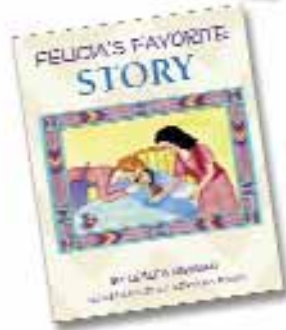
It found that 30% of adults in America did not even believe in morality. Take a moment to realize what this means. Almost one in three adults does not feel that morals shape the way he thinks and makes decisions.

*The American Heritage Dictionary* defines *morality* as “a system of ideas of right and wrong conduct.” Unless those surveyed do not understand the meaning of morality, one-third of Americans do not believe in a concept of right and wrong conduct.

How did this happen? Just a few decades ago would have shown completely different results. Can the blame be laid at the feet of the entertainment industry? Many will argue: “Adults can resist the pulls of television and society. They can watch televised acts of murders, sex or deceit without it affecting their moral compass.” This thinking is *partially* correct. The most *effective* way to instill wrong morals into a person is to teach him wrong morals *as a child*. The key is education!

For example, few suggest that people are born as *racists*. It is learned—developed—over many years, in an environment that drives these wrong concepts into his mind, supplanting what should have been proper and balanced concepts of racial equality.

Also, the younger a person is when wrong thoughts and concepts are introduced, the more likely he is to be open to them. Attitudes must be programmed *before* a concept of right and wrong solidifies. And so is the case with morality. People must be *taught* morals when



**Heather Has Two Mommies:** A preschooler with two “moms,” Heather discovers that some of her friends have mothers and fathers, or just a mother, or mothers, fathers, plus stepparents. Heather’s teacher reassures her students that “each family is special” and that “the most important thing about a family is that all the people in it love each other.” A review states that “the book is essential for children (ages 2 to 6) with gay parents or family members.”

**My Two Uncles:** A father explains to his daughter about his relationship with “uncle” Phil: “Sometimes a man loves another man in the way a married couple love each other,” and “some people feel funny about seeing gays with their partners.”

**Felicia’s Favorite Story:** Little Felicia wants her “parents” to tell her favorite story: How she was adopted by her two “mamas.” Written by the author of *Heather Has Two Mommies*.

they are young to have them transfer to adulthood. But if they are not being taught proper morals, what are they learning?

The most basic and seemingly innocent of popular teachings is that of tolerance.

### The Intolerance of Tolerance

Unlike most concepts we will cover in Part II, the concept of tolerance seems logical. Should we not tolerate everyone else? We should not judge people or discriminate against them because of genetics or similar characteristics. Tolerance is *based* on this noble foundation. But the framework built on this foundation has distorted and perverted what *appears* to be a moral concept.

Educators have gone beyond simply teaching that we should tolerate—accept—someone because they are African, Chinese, short, tall, thin, etc. We have reached a point where society and its schools are teaching that we should be tolerant of *every* action one would encounter.

For example, when a child throws a temper-tantrum, it is no longer an unruly child—it is a “child expressing himself.”

When countries attack another, it is not blind hatred or lust—it is our “mis-managed foreign policy.”

There is now always a reason—an excuse—for what is simply *wrong conduct*. “Being tolerant” has become that *excuse*.

An often-heard mantra of tolerance advocates is, “As long as we are not hurting others, what we do to ourselves is our business.”

But is this concept sound?

Most hospitals and prisons do not feel that it is. When a patient or inmate becomes suicidal, he is put under a “suicide watch.” This prevents him from doing something to himself that in theory “would not hurt others.” He is being *protected* from hurting himself.

While modern society cannot stop people from committing immoral acts, individuals must realize that their actions *do* carry serious consequences. The world has reached a point where virtually anything is tolerated. Almost nothing is considered intolerable. Or is it?

The basis of true tolerance would be to tolerate *all* viewpoints. But there is a critical view—God’s view—that has

been completely wiped from such teachings.

Even small children are now being taught about lifestyles and sexual concepts that would make adults blush. They are taught, as we have said, from a very young age, so that such beliefs and ideals are ingrained into them as they grow into adults.

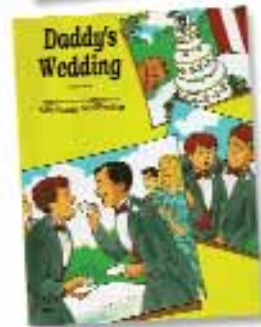
The result? One-third of adults in the United States do not believe in morality! Yes, one-third does not believe in the concept of right or wrong conduct. It has been said that “you don’t know what you don’t know.” This is especially true with morality—you are not born with a proper concept of right and wrong, you must be taught!

The reason many problems such as crime, war, adultery, theft, etc. are exploding around us is that children are no longer taught right from wrong. They no longer understand what is proper conduct and what is improper—immoral—conduct. When one says that something is wrong, they are being *intolerant* of wrong conduct. Teaching tolerance will never be compatible with teaching right from wrong, because teaching right from wrong is considered intolerance!

Schools are no longer able to teach that something is wrong because the true understanding of right and wrong is found in the Bible. And when schools begin to teach anything even remotely connected to the Bible, they are hit with legal battles from those who feel the separation of Church and State has been compromised.

The task of teaching children proper morals now completely lies in the hands of parents—and this responsibility is usually underemphasized. Think of all the things influencing our children today: Music, television, movies and peers, which all undermine proper parental influence and authority.

Those pulls always appeal to the carnal nature and “feel good” attitudes in people—especially youth. Television “reality shows” continue to push the envelope of what is acceptable. One begins to wonder if we are even “pushing” anything anymore. It seems that anything and everything is acceptable on television—even in prime time.



**Daddy's Roommate:** The book begins with a child, Nick, dealing with his parents' divorce and the arrival of dad's new “roommate”—a man. Dad then explains to his son that his new relationship is “just one more kind of love.”

**Daddy's Wedding:** In this sequel to *Daddy's Roommate*, dad and “uncle” Phil get “married” in a commitment ceremony in their backyard. Meanwhile, young Nick stands in as their best man.

**Who's in a Family?:** This book teaches children that all man-made definitions of a family are valid—including families headed by same-sex couples.

For example, every year, a popular lingerie company parades models around in outfits that would have been unthinkable even in catalogs just a few decades ago. Another extremely popular program among children touches on many aspects of the darker side of human nature. This program—which airs in prime time—is about a group of trendy twenty-somethings who fight and kill vampires. During the opening

of one program, two female “friends”—who are also witches—were shown in bed together talking about their recent “experience.”

Aside from one's view of such relationships, should parents be *forced* to address these issues, presented in such a shocking “in your face” manner?

Truly, anything and everything is tolerated in our society, except those who warn of the consequences of such tolerance.

Which begs the question: Is God tolerant? Many will say that God tolerates any form of conduct as long as we “love each other,” that as long as we “have Jesus in our hearts,” conduct is secondary.

The Bible teaches no such thing. It does say that without love, you are nothing. It also says that living the laws of God is love. To be truly happy, one must follow and live God's laws. The Creator of the universe put these laws in place to allow people to live happy and fulfilling lives. He knows that when His laws are broken, sadness, emptiness and confusion result.

Therefore, unless God is a cruel and heartless being, He could never tolerate sin, because He knows it brings unhappiness. The world around you is the result of a confused humanity walking blindly, deciding for itself right from wrong, when the Bible has existed for millennia with clear and precise answers.

### Gender “Blending”

A major part of the problem comes from people not understanding or knowing what their roles should be. When you show that there are differences between men and women, many angry and loud voices enter the fray. They usually overpower the one speaking. But understand! Men and women were NOT created equal. We are not the same. This is not to say that men are better or vice-versa, but the simple fact is: Males and females are different.

In what is perhaps the most sexist act of all, modern thinkers have tried to blur those differences, instead of allowing men and women to develop their natural abilities—which would

result in a more productive and balanced society. What has this caused?

Men are being softened—emasculated—and women are being hardened. People have lost who they are. Again, popular culture is helping this to develop. Beginning in the mid-60s, asexual-looking males became popular. Fashion and hairstyles became unisex. And this has increasingly become the norm. “Pretty” men are the ones who walk the runways and star in movies and, again, boys are unsure who they are and who they should be. Young boys have become so confused by the images drilled into them, some even feel they were born the wrong gender—thinking that God somehow made a *mistake* in their creation.

Many times, the effect is often more subtle and, like the transition of our culture from morality to immorality, the changes seem minor and “tolerable.” No longer is the man the head of the home. His role of authority has been destroyed, and horribly behaved children are the result. When one does not respect authority, the standards and rules of authority are also no longer respected—and, at times, openly challenged. The line in the sand is blurred, making it easier for young people to cross it.

One such example is women being sexually demure. This is no longer the case; oftentimes women are as aggressive or more aggressive than men. In Part I, we presented statistics showing that women are increasingly becoming the instigators in premarital sex. A strong, conservative woman is portrayed as boring and weak. Radical feminism has sought sexual liberation and has contributed to a perverse, immoral society.

Men have all too readily taken the passenger’s seat in relationships. They no longer lead the relationship, and assume a role not natural for them. This forces women to also walk a path that is not natural for them. Marital problems often stem from partners not understanding and fulfilling their *natural* roles—so much so, that over 50% of marriages now end in divorce.

When parents play these distorted roles, they leave their children to grow

in a confusing environment. Understand! People are not born thinking they are something different than they are. Boys are born knowing they are boys, and the same can be said for girls. But society—and at times, parents—greatly influence child development and their ability to identify with their gender. And it is society, schools and parents that have created gender identity problems for children.

### Education Revisited

Be it at home or at school, education is the core component of any child’s development. Whether a child becomes a stable adult is largely based on how that child is raised and what he is taught. The following are actual courses taught in schools nationwide:

“What They Didn’t Tell You About Queer Sex & Sexuality in Health Class: A Workshop For Youth *Only*, Ages 14-21” or “Teach Out,” which was held in Massachusetts. It featured that state’s Department of Education employees—government employees—instructing children as young as 14 in how to properly perform homosexual sex acts.

Or how about “One Teenager in Ten: Writings by Gay & Lesbian Youth.” This recommended book in the California school system discusses, in explicit detail, a 16-year old’s first lesbian experience with her 23-year old dance teacher. The story continues, teaching that she should hide the experience from her religious parents.

We could continue quoting news articles from around the country. But now ask: How sure are you that *your* child is not learning some of the above courses? Many of these and others have been introduced into school systems under the banner of “tolerance.” This has caused many educators to open their doors to such “modern” and “politically correct” attitudes and teachings.

By classifying such courses and assemblies as “Anti-Hatred,” many schools allow very young children to be taught such explicit materials without a parent ever knowing.

How hard it has become to be a parent in the twenty-first century!

Like heroin to a drug addict, sex to human nature—especially that of children—is nearly impossible to resist! Therefore, is it any wonder that children are performing sex acts in record numbers, that teenage sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy are skyrocketing?

### The Source of Confusion

The different acts of immorality prevalent today could have filled many pages, with varying descriptions. We could have gone into detail about the agendas and methods various groups use to promote their beliefs—and relieve their guilt. Such accounts are usually the launching point for attacks on people—not their *conduct*. We have no interest in attacking people. That said, some background must be understood to know the *real cause* behind the perversions of pedophilia, homosexuality, bestiality, etc.

There is a being who does not fully understand sex. What he *does* understand is that that sexual relations are a critical part of marriage. While we do not have space to go into why the devil hates marriage, it can be best understood by knowing that the marriage union is symbolic of a union Christ will have with His Church when He returns to earth.

The devil hates that union because it represents a time when he will be put away and unable to influence humanity any longer. But that time has not yet arrived, and he is doing everything in his power to influence and twist mankind.

Is it any surprise that such perversion has gripped our society?

A core concept he wishes to destroy is that of marriage. In a perverse and immoral society, the concept of marriage becomes irrelevant—and the devil has achieved his goal. (To learn more about how marriage represents an important part of God’s Plan, read our free booklet *The Purpose of MARRIAGE—Ever Obsolete?*) Also, as an angel, Satan has no gender, and therefore does not understand sex. And as god of this world (II Cor. 4:4), this distorted, genderless fallen angel has created a distortion of genders and perversions of sex.

The whole world has been deceived by the devil (Rev. 12:9). Yet, this does not leave man without responsibility for his actions. Satan leads mankind, and the perversions described below are the result of that leadership. Keep in mind that we are not attacking people or groups of people, but we are attacking *sin*, and helping this blind world see the result of its actions.

### “Lying with Mankind”

The concept of homosexuality is neither new nor original. It has existed since ancient times. Near the fall of any dominant society, homosexuality flourished. Be it in Sodom and Gomorra, or ancient Greece, the proliferation of homosexuality has become the great indicator that a society’s days were numbered.

Make no mistake. Homosexuality is wrong and is sin (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Deut. 23:17-18; I Cor. 6:9; I Tim. 1:10; Jude 7). God Himself calls it an abomination. It is unnatural and mocks the very concept of marriage and reproduction. It is clear what God teaches about homosexuality. In no way would He create someone as homosexual. It must be a learned behavior. The road it has taken in modern society has changed it from criminal, to a mental disorder, to a celebrated and encouraged “lifestyle.” Never has a subsection of society seen such sweeping changes and acceptance in such a short period.

Nevertheless, the survival of homosexuality also links it to other perversions—such as pedophilia. A 1998 study showed that 86% of pedophiles described themselves as homosexual. In fact, the *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality* verifies, “that until very recently man/boy love relationships were accepted as a part, and indeed were a major part, of male homosexuality.” The links continue: Alan Bell and Martin Weinberg found that 25% of white gay men have had sexual relations with boys under age 16.

This is obviously not to say that all homosexuals look to corrupt children, but historically, when taken as a whole, the man-boy relationship has been prevalent.

And as shocking as it may seem, schools are helping to promote this! In

just the last year, various organizations have begun to promote curricula with increasing success. Schools all across the country have begun to teach children *how* to be homosexual—be it by cross-dressing, reading about homosexual relationships or even booklets teaching *children* what sodomy involves.

Many times, such programs are delivered to children without parental knowledge. Again, do you know if your children are being taught any of the following popular courses?:

Booklets like *Jesse’s Dream Skirt* and *In Mommy’s High Heels*, for elementary-age boys, show them that it is “good” to want to wear your mother’s high heels or your sister’s dresses. How about *Daddy’s Roommate* or *Heather Has Two Mommies*? Not to mention the courses listed in the introduction of this article.

And if it is not enough that *children* are being taught such things, *teachers* are being encouraged to take extended learning programs such as “Mobilizing Young Same Gender Loving Men,” “Responding Effectively to the Right Wing,” “Using Music to Deconstruct the Heterosexual Meaning of Family” and “Transgender Mind, Body, Spirit.”

These various curricular materials not only encourage experimentation with homosexuality, but also encourage such experimentation to be done without a parent’s knowledge.

Again, what are your children being taught?

If the curricula were not enough, a California school district *unanimously* passed a resolution that allowed teachers to “come out” to their classes, discussing such topics as homosexuality, sodomy and experimentation, with children as young as six-years old!

### Pedophilia

Pedophilia is when an adult engages in sexual relations or intimacy with a person who is under age. The definition of underage varies according to local age-of-consent laws, but the world average is 16-years old for both heterosexual and homosexual relationships.

As previously mentioned, the links between homosexuality and pedophilia are many. But links between any acts of

immorality should not come as a surprise. It can be compared to the process a drug user undergoes on the road to harder drugs. When you experiment with something that is forbidden you experience a thrill. Over time, what was forbidden becomes the norm and to experience a thrill again, you become curious—interested—in other more forbidden drugs.

Inevitably, most who smoke marijuana will try other drugs, but always tell themselves that they would not do a particular drug, or method of consumption. Over time, their adversity to heavier drugs fades and they slowly, but surely, happily trot down avenues once considered completely outside the realm of possibility.

And so it is with immorality. Like drug abuse, sexuality immorality is addictive. Many who have been arrested for rape, sexual abuse and pedophilia freely admit that they would do it again. They feel they would be unable to help themselves from fulfilling their addiction. Like drugs, any sexually immoral indulgence will typically lead to others. Studies show that pedophiles, homosexuals and swingers (adulterers) are more likely to be involved in bondage, masochism and other dangerous sexual activities.

And like many “fringe” sexual topics, pedophilia now seems to be viewed the same way that homosexuality was viewed just 50 years ago. Back then, homosexuality was shown to be the immoral choice that it was. But today, many feel that homosexuals are “born that way” and have no choice but to exercise that lifestyle. The pedophilia movement in North America sounds very similar to the homosexual movement of years ago. Many states and provinces have now introduced legislation to define pedophilia as “mental disorder” instead of a crime. Like homosexuality, this is the stepping-stone into excusing pedophilia as a lifestyle choice that must be therefore understood and accepted.

There is also other legislation to reduce or remove the age of consent laws—the minimum age at which a child can legally have sex with an adult. Many countries have already

reached crossroads in this. In Canada, the age of consent law allows children as young as 14 to have sexual relationships with an adult. In some states, the power of the lobbying groups is more evident. While New Mexico's age of consent for heterosexuals is 17 years, it is 13 years for homosexuals. Take a moment and imagine if a 13-year old understands the consequences of sodomy. But this is the steady, ever-growing trend.

The voices of the pedophilia movement are gaining in intensity, and many are beginning to listen. Some popular psychiatrists have even stated that sexual relations between an adult and a child can be *beneficial* to the development of a child—shocking! While it may seem incredible that we are seeing such sweeping changes throughout society, it should never be so. As mentioned, before the fall of any society, rampant immorality reigns—especially pedophilia and homosexual.

### **The Nation of Israel Changed the World**

In approximately mid-1400 B.C., God led the nation of Israel out of Egypt. In the course of re-teaching this slave nation all the laws and statutes that would help them live in happiness and prosperity, God taught them laws governing morality.

Such teachings were foreign to the world at large. Various perversions were rampant in the world, to the point that the ideas this small slave nation put forward were extreme, as this quote from Martha Nussbaum, Professor at Brown University shows:

“Ancient categories of sexual experience differed considerably from our own. The central distinction in sexual morality was the distinction between active and passive roles. The gender of the object...is not in itself morally problematic. Boys and women are very often treated interchangeably as objects of [male] desire.” It could be said that Israel's laws were “deviant” in the ancient world.

From ancient Mexico, Mesopotamia, Greece, Rome to the Far East, homosexuality and pedophilia were so common that sociology professor Dr. David E. Greenberg writes that such

action “seems to have been universal among male citizens” (*Why Judaism Rejected Homosexuality*, Dennis Prager).

Therefore, this new nation of Israel was completely different in its beliefs and concepts. Its introduction of monogamous marriage-bound relationships shook the ideas common in the world. But the laws of God took years to be properly enforced. Male prostitutes often appeared in temples throughout Israel's history. Some of their kings sought to put out this evil: “And he [King Asa] took away the sodomites out of the land...” (I Kgs. 15:12). The Greek word used for sodomites is *qdeshim*, which means “a male devotee by prostitution.” Given free reign, human nature will always turn to immorality.

But regardless, when Israel followed God's Law, the people prospered. They were happy and their nation was at peace.

With the re-introduction of The Ten Commandments, this former nation in bondage began to learn the ways of God, and was forced to walk against the traditions of the world. They put away perversions, such as homosexuality. They had learned from God that in order to find happiness, they must follow His laws and no longer believe or “go along” with the deceived world around them.

Many other biblical examples show that immorality was put out from among the people of Israel. Using their example, the modern nations of Israel—United States, Britain, Canada, New Zealand and Australia—should do the same. If a nation does not turn and follow proper morality, it is assured the same fate that has befallen ancient Greece, Rome, Egypt, Mesopotamia and others.

### **The Amoralty Explosion**

Things have turned from the era of modesty and purity that was normal only a few generations ago. If the world does not wake up and see the results of their actions, homosexuality, pedophilia and even bestiality, will quickly become the norm.

The purpose of this article is to help

the world see their sins, and that happiness, prosperity and fulfillment will not result from immoral and perverse lifestyles. The world must awaken to its sins and turn from the slippery slope that is taking it from an immoral society to an amoral one—a society that has gone from *decaying* morals to one *without* morals, without rules, and without RULE!

But this is not the “end game” of society. There will be a very different way coming to this world very soon. It will end the sadness and emptiness that immorality and sexual abuse have brought. Christ is returning to earth to enforce the laws of God throughout the entire world. And, like ancient Israel, true happiness, peace and prosperity will break out throughout civilization.

You do not have to follow the path society has chosen. You now know many of the facts and statistics on how immorality has proliferated throughout our society. The concepts, the teachings and agendas have been exposed for what they are. You now understand that there is a being—the devil—who directs and shapes the moral code of this world, and his concept of morality is distorted and perverse. Will you allow yourself to be shaped as a veritable puppet? Or will you choose God's Way and experience the joy and happiness that it brings?

In Part III, we will give you more facts to further understand how pervasive immorality has become in our society. You will be able to see the big picture and know *where* this road will lead. And finally, we will provide you with the REAL answer—God's solution to the problems of immorality—next month, in “The IMMORALITY EXPLOSION! Part III.” □

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# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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## **Q** Is hypnotism something that Christians should practice or subject themselves to?

**A** Hypnotism is the rendering of a person into a sleep-like condition, during which he or she remains respondent to extraneous stimuli. A person subjected to hypnosis (Greek, *hypnos*: “sleep”) temporarily gives up full control of his or her mental and physical faculties.

Christians should never involve themselves in such practices. The Bible states, in I Peter 1:13, “Gird up the loins of your mind.” We are to maintain control over all of our thoughts, so as to be in obedience to Christ (read II Corinthians 10:5). This would not be possible if one’s mind could be controlled by external stimuli, while in a trance-like state.

God expects us to focus on, fill our minds with “whatever things are noble...just...pure...lovely...” (Phil. 4:8). God grants His people “...a spirit of...power and of love and of a sound mind” (II Tim. 1:7). One of the fruits of God’s Holy Spirit is temperance, or *self-control* (Gal. 5:23).

## **Q** What does the Bible say about the woman *Lilith*?

**A** Some have suggested that this woman was Adam’s first wife. However, the name *Lilith* does not even appear in the Bible.

The Genesis account records that *Eve* was formed from one of Adam’s ribs. Both were created on the *same* day (Gen. 1:26-28). That evening, God presented her to Adam and they were married.

Further proof of the fallacy of *Lilith* lies in the meaning of *Eve*’s name: “mother of all living” (Gen. 3:20). Besides Adam, *no other human beings existed*. The concept of *Lilith* comes from Gnostic legends. Gnostics misinterpreted many parts of the Bible. They based their false concepts on myth and legend, as is the case with *Lilith*.

The Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary defines *Lilith* as: (1) A female figure who in rabbinic legend is Adam’s first wife, is supplanted by *Eve*, and becomes an evil spirit; (2) A famous witch in medieval demonology.

**IN THIS SECTION**, we answer some of our readers’ most commonly asked questions. If you have a question, or would like to comment on the material presented in this magazine, please write to us at:

**The REAL TRUTH  
P.O. Box 23295  
Wadsworth, OH 44282 (USA)**

Or email: [info@RealTruthMag.org](mailto:info@RealTruthMag.org)

We welcome your questions and comments.

Space does not permit us to print all monthly questions and answers in the magazine. However, the Online Edition of *The REAL TRUTH* magazine ([www.RealTruthMag.org](http://www.RealTruthMag.org)) includes a more extensive Questions & Answers section.

There is no authority or validity in the idea that Adam had a wife prior to the creation of *Eve*. *Lilith* is a rabbinic legend with roots in medieval demonology. The Bible is *the* source of authority and clearly states that *Eve* was Adam’s “first wife.”

## **Q** What does the Bible say about those who claim to have psychic abilities?

**A** The fruits and teachings of such men can shed light on the origin of their “visions.” They will typically believe in reincarnation or other false doctrines, contradicting the plain teachings of the Bible.

Most who are able to “view” the future or “remember” things from the past are getting such information from *another* source. The Bible cites many examples of people turning to “familiar spirits”—demons—instead of looking to God and His Word. Demons and evil spirits have existed far longer than man. They remember the past because they experienced it. They also have a partial understanding of future prophetic events. However, like Satan, they will lie or deceive (Rev. 12:9).

God’s Word is clear that we should NEVER look to these spirits for answers or counseling. God directly warns against them in many places in the Bible (Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:10-11; Isa. 8:19-20).

## **Q** Why does the Bible contain accounts of immorality and violence?

**A** Jesus Christ said that we should live by every word of God (Matt. 4:4). In doing so, we were given examples of both how to live and how NOT to live. The Bible contains many accounts of different situations and circumstances. This helps you to frame God’s way into your life and experiences, in turn, helping you apply its lessons in your life.

The Bible also shows that there are penalties for breaking those same laws. But it also shows that God will forgive those who repent and turn back to His way. All men are subject to weaknesses and mistakes (Rom. 3:23). And the Bible shows that even His most righteous servants committed grievous errors. Why would God do this?

As our Instruction Book, God wanted the Bible to show that even in our modern, complicated world, His laws still apply. The mistakes of others are recorded as examples, allowing us to avoid those same mistakes in our lives. You can either learn by making mistakes yourself, or by reading about, and learning from, the mistakes of others. I Corinthians 10:6 further expounds on this point.

To properly help people understand what is right and wrong in God’s sight, the Bible must give many examples. This includes immorality and violence. While the Bible does give enough information to understand the circumstances of the acts, it never dwells on them, or gives details that would be considered either graphic or “pornographic.”

The important facts are recorded, allowing the reader to learn from these mistakes. Once again, learning by the examples of others is far better than having to suffer the consequences of breaking God’s Law.

At the final judgment, everyone will have to concede that God warned and cared about us enough to give us these examples in His Word. God and His Law are perfect love and His Word is a light for our feet—a lamp to guide us—on the narrow path that leads to perfection and everlasting life. □

# OUT OF THE ASHES THE RISE OF EUROPE

## PART ONE: 1945 to the Present

Some said it would take Europe 100 years to rebuild after the Second World War. Others maintain that it will never rival the United States in terms of economic, technological and military might. History indicates otherwise. Are you willing to learn about this coming United States of Europe? It is upon us now! Will you believe it? Will you prepare? Will you watch?

BY MARK P. DENEÉ

**T**HE SPRING OF 1945 found Europe in a smoldering ruin. By the end of April, Mussolini and Hitler would be dead, Germany would surrender on May 7<sup>th</sup>, and Japan would follow on August 14<sup>th</sup>.

World War II—the greatest war of history in terms of expended human life and national resources—would be finally over. Sixty million people lay dead. More than one trillion dollars had been spent.

Nearly six years of the Second World War, in addition to the remaining effects of the Depression and the First World War, had devastated most European economies, industries, agriculture and societies. The German Blitzkrieg had wreaked havoc on military installations or infrastructure of most all neighboring countries that laid in its path. Much of the natural resources

of all participating countries had been plundered in the war effort. Starting in the summer of 1944, British and American bombers had carried out daily and nightly missions that decimated

most German cities and other strategic targets.

The result of this mammoth conflict was a pile of burning rubble—a continent so severely crippled during that

final fateful summer that many insisted it would take 100 years to re-build. Yet we will see the incredible, almost miraculous, recovery and rebuilding of Europe, owing to its own resiliency plus generous American aid.

Few had taken seriously Mussolini's boasting that he was leading the restored Roman Empire during the course of the war. But the core of the Axis powers—the German-Italian alliance—was historically the sixth of seven restorations of the Holy Roman Empire.

Over the span of history, there have been six restorations of the Holy Roman Empire since



**BIRTH OF AN EMPIRE:** This statue symbolizes the beginnings of the Roman Empire, which ruled Europe for centuries, in various stages. According to pagan Roman mythology, twin brothers Romulus and Remus were abandoned by the banks of the River Tiber. They were found by a she-wolf, who took pity on them and fed them with her milk. Years later, the twins grew up to build a city, which eventually became Rome.

# Years Member Nations Were Added



the imperial restoration by Justinian in A.D. 554. It was considered a renewal of the former Roman Empire, but now with the recognition of the supremacy of the Pope over the secular emperors.

The second restoration of the Holy Roman Empire was led by Charlemagne in A.D. 800, followed by the third restoration by Otto the Great in A.D. 962. Fourth in this series was Charles V of the Hapsburg dynasty in 1530. Fifth was the restoration by Napoleon with his French-based kingdom in 1804.

This brings us to the sixth restoration discussed above, as it related to the Axis powers in World War II. The foundation was laid for the manifestation of this phase of the Holy Roman Empire by the unification of Italy in 1870 and the unification of Germany, both occurring in the wake of the Peace of Prague, Austria of 1866. Although Mussolini declared himself emperor of this restoration, Hitler was the one who wielded power over this German-Italian alliance, as culmination of the sixth restoration of the Holy Roman Empire ended in 1945.

In each phase or restoration, the secular emperor acknowledged the supremacy of the pope. Never in history has such an arrangement of rulership existed as was introduced at the inception of the Holy Roman Empire by Justinian.

## The Necessity to Rebuild Europe

From both sides of these smouldering ashes, two new superpowers emerged—the United States and the Soviet Union. Britain, France, Germany and Japan essentially ceased to be significant mil-

itary powers in the traditional sense. The balance of power had shifted, leaving Europe divided—and between two powerful enemies.

The United States undertook the financing of the effort to rebuild Europe. In June 1947, then U.S. Secretary of State George C. Marshall unveiled what would be called the “Marshall Plan.” Over the next five years, \$13 billion of aid would be given to Britain, France, Italy and what was then West Germany. The U.S. was compelled to underwrite this for two reasons: (1) Europe had been a great market for American goods, and it was in the interest of sound economic policy to restore this capacity as soon as possible; (2) there was a new threat from the east—Communism and the Soviet Union. Europe had to be strengthened and even re-armed for its own survival as a free society. A strong rebuilt Europe would stand as a bulwark against expansion from this new enemy.

Germany, historically the “hub” of economic and industrial strength in Europe, was the essential core of this bulwark. Germany would drive momentum for the renewal of the continent. For Europe to succeed, Germany had to succeed. American dollars and American arms were earmarked to guarantee the success of this frontier bastion of the free world as it faced the threat of Soviet expansionism.

## The Beginnings of Cooperation

The Marshall Plan was complete by 1952 and, shortly thereafter, European voices of dissent began to be heard.

Some were uneasy with the powerful embrace of America. One of the most outspoken in this regard was the famous General Charles de Gaulle, who was elected President of France in 1958. He strongly disliked what appeared to be the permanent presence of American troops on European soil. He therefore suspended French cooperation with NATO and started his country off on her own race for a nuclear weapon. De Gaulle’s stance of European control of its own destiny, free of American hegemony, reawakened the latent desire of a number of influential European political and industrial leaders who long dreamed of European Unity.

This dream is almost as old as Europe itself. Certain visionaries could see the power such a union could wield. Both Charlemagne (the second of the seven heads or restorations) and Napoleon (the fifth of seven) ruled empires that encompassed most of the continent. But those two, along with the one ruled by Hitler and Mussolini, failed because they were based upon forced subjugation instead of fully participating partners. The post World War II scenario provided the right conditions for real union, but this time cooperation would come first. The prospect of future subjugation has been discounted by the number of junior participants intoxicated by the prospect of their inclusion within the security of a European economic combine.

In 1951, France, West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg established the European

# The European Union Today



Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). By 1957, the same group signed another treaty in Rome to establish the European Economic Community (EEC), which, for all intents and purposes, was the beginning of the new United Europe. Henri Spaak, former secretary general of NATO had this to say in a BBC documentary about that significant event: "...we felt like Romans on that day...We were consciously recreating the Roman Empire once more" (Grant R. Jeffrey, *The*

*Signature of God*, 1996, pp. 190-191). As we will see, each step forward on this path toward unity essentially forced the next step and, although there would be the occasional step backward, these were typically followed by several steps forward.

Other countries were invited to join the EEC. Britain was initially interested, though concerned about the loss of sovereign control. By 1961, however, they were economically forced to seek membership. But, due to their close ties

with the U.S., they were denied membership by a veto from President de Gaulle, once in 1963 and again in 1967.

In 1967, the ECSC, EEC and a third organization (Euratom), controlling atomic energy, were merged to form the European Community (EC). Finally in 1973, the UK, Denmark and Ireland joined, Greece in 1980, and Portugal and Spain in 1986 (Austria, Finland and Sweden would join in 1994, bringing the union to its current total of 15 states).

## Progression Towards Eventual Union

Of course, economic cooperation among a “community of nations” was still just that, and not much different from previous economic alliances and other similar agreements also being established in various regions of the world. An eventual union of states would require actual integration of economies, currencies, governments, etc. The pace of integration accelerated during the 1970s.

In 1970, the original six nations set in motion plans to establish (by 1980) an Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) to integrate the member states’ economies and currencies. In 1979, they created the European Monetary System (EMS), linking the exchange rates of members’ currencies to the exchange rate of the strong and stable German deutsche mark. Interestingly, made formal by German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and French President Giscard d’Estaing (current chair of the Convention on the Future of Europe and thus the main author of the upcoming European Constitution) was the selection of the small German city of Aachen as the site for the signing of the EMS documents. You may recall that Aachen is where the throne of Charlemagne was—and remains to this day.

In 1986, the EC introduced the Single European Act (SEA), which sped up the process of removing all trade barriers and customs frontiers by setting the completion date for this as 1992. In addition, the SEA stepped beyond the

usual economic guidelines, and began to create common policies regarding such areas as employment, health and the environment.

Events at that time would immediately influence and expedite European unity. In late 1989, the infamous Berlin Wall came crashing down. Less than a year later, East and West Germany were united as the Federal Republic of Germany. Soon, the powerful Soviet Union began to be dismantled, leaving a dozen eastern European nations free to pursue membership in the EC. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, communism ceased to be a unifying threat for Europe. To the European mind, the Cold War was now over, although unpredictable leaders of Russia still controlled the same vast nuclear arsenal, as before.

It now appeared that the U.S. was the only remaining world superpower. The Soviet Union had virtually collapsed. However, in the wake of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, a series of diplomatic blunders, spanning the mid-to late 1990s set the U.S. at odds with her former allies. This also further exacerbated an existing rift between the U.S. and former European allies.

In December 1991, EC members established the Treaty of European Union (often called the Maastricht Treaty), giving birth to the European Union (EU). It committed the EU to the aforementioned EMU, specifically that all member states would unify their economies and currencies by 1999. In addition, the Maastricht Treaty created

new structures to begin integrating such areas as foreign policy and security, as well as police and judicial matters.

In May 1998, eleven of the fifteen EU members agreed to relinquish their national currencies by January 1, 1999, for a new single European currency—the Euro. Along with this decision came the creation of the European Central Bank (ECB) and, by January 1, 2002, the Euro would replace the physical currencies of those eleven nations.

## Power & Control Within the Union

The European Union currently operates within what is commonly referred to as the “pillar system.” The main pillar—the European Community (EC)—contains the major governing bodies of the EU, including the European Commission, the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament, the European Court of Justice, and the Court of Auditors. Two other pillars, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA), flank the main EC pillar.

It is the CFSP that has failed Europe thus far. During both the Gulf War in 1991 and the Yugoslavian crisis of 1991 and 1992, the Union was unable to find and present a common position on foreign and security policy. It is the CFSP, however, that holds the greatest potential for execution of military policy.

When an economically strong Union can speak with one voice in regards to foreign and security policy, and back that up with military might, then we will

# Timeline: Key Dates in European Integration

‘50 ‘51 ‘52 ‘53 ‘54 ‘55 ‘56 ‘57 ‘58 ‘59 ‘60 ‘61 ‘62 ‘63 ‘64 ‘65 ‘66 ‘67 ‘68 ‘69

**April 18, 1951:** France, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, West Germany, and the Netherlands sign the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).

**Aug. 30, 1954:** The French Parliament rejects the EDC Treaty.  
**Oct. 20-23:** Following the London Conference, agreements on a modified Brussels Treaty are signed in Paris and the Western European Union comes into being.

**June 1-2, 1955:** The Foreign Ministers of the Six, meeting in Messina, decide to extend European integration to all branches of the economy.

**Jan. 1, 1958:** Treaties of Rome enter into force and the EEC and Euratom Commissions are set up in Brussels.

**Jan. 14, 1963:** General de Gaulle announces at a press conference that France will veto the United Kingdom’s accession to the Community.

**April 8, 1965:** Treaty merging the institutions of the three European Communities signed.

**July 1, 1968:** Customs union completed 18 months early.

**May 9, 1950:** French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman proposes that Europe pool its coal and steel industries.

**May 27, 1952:** Treaty establishing the European Defense Community is signed.

**March 25, 1957:** Treaties establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) are signed in Rome.

witness a legitimate superpower. Dr. Habsburg, in his book entitled *Macht Jenseits des Marktes; Europa 1992* (Power Beyond the Market; Europe 1992) wrote: "We need, especially in the area of foreign policy, a genuine European government and a European army." It is this "one voice" that is currently lacking, but it is destined to develop in the course of time.

Above, and influencing, all three pillars, is the European Council, a grouping of the national government leaders. It is in a position to shape and coordinate all EU initiatives, and has been essentially responsible for all developments. Its decisions are almost always unanimous but require the typical and intensive political bargaining and compromise.

As previously stated, the main EC pillar consists of the European Commission, the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament, the European Court of Justice, and the Court of Auditors. The European Commission is the most powerful administrative body of the Union. It differs from the European Council, in that it focuses solely on the EC pillar. It initiates, implements and supervises policy. It is also responsible for the financial management of the EU, as well as being the driving force behind integration. Member governments appoint 20 commissioners (2 each for Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Spain; one each for the other 10 member countries) to operate this body.

The Council of the European Union (formerly the Council of Ministers) is the primary decision-making power of the EU and is, thus far, the most impor-

tant and influential body. It essentially adopts proposals and then issues instructions to the European Commission. When this Council meets, member governments each send the appropriate minister to discuss the issue at hand. So, for example, if one Council meeting were defense-related, it would consist of 15 defense ministers, but a judicial meeting would consist of 15 justice ministers.

The European Parliament consists of 626 members, elected by EU citizens, and is the ultimate "Tower of Babel" in terms of inefficiencies due to the language barrier. Although it is the only true democratic body of the EU, it is largely powerless. It can block legislation but rarely introduce it. It was designed as a consulting body but can be simply ignored; and it has no power over the Council of the European Union. It can, however, dissolve the European Commission through a vote of non-confidence.

Finally, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) oversees all judicial matters for the Union. Each member country appoints one judge to the ECJ. Although it currently has no direct control over national courts, it has, interestingly enough, established that EU law is above national law.

Sitting outside of the three pillars is another powerful EU body—the European Central Bank (ECB). A six-member executive board, chosen by EU member governments, runs the ECB, and has complete power and control over all EU financial policy.

### Recent Problems and Frustrations

As we have seen, there are a few governmental bodies within the EU with

some power, but not one unified, overriding and controlling influence. Agreement among 15 nations has been, in general, easier in terms of economic cooperation, but much more difficult in foreign and security policy. Europe has lacked the "one voice" on international issues that the United States of America has, for example, in its President. In addition, the accountability of certain bodies has been called into question, causing much embarrassment and consternation for the EU. For example, the EP initiated in 1999 an independent review of the European Commission's activities. The report cited corruption, cronyism, and poor oversight among several commissioners, which, in turn, caused the entire Commission to resign. Although these are steps backward, they should only be considered "growing pains," and opportunities for the EU to learn and to strengthen itself.

Paul Kennedy indicates (*The Rise and Fall of Great Powers*, 1987, p. 439) that military and political strength tends to follow economic strength: "And despite their recent woes, the EU since 1993, consists of the world's largest economy" (Lester Thurow, *Head to Head*, pp. 24-25.)! "As such, they are the ones writing the rules of the new economic game" (p. 65). "Britain was in this position during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the U.S. during the 20<sup>th</sup>, and now during the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Europe is writing the rules. All others will have to play along" (p. 75).

Thurow goes on to indicate that the prospects for Europe are just too good to pass on: "An opportunity as good as this one hasn't existed since the fall of the Roman Empire" (pp. 69-70), and

## '70 '71 '72 '73 '74 '75 '76 '77 '78 '79 '80 '81 '82 '83 '84 '85 '86 '87 '88 '89

**June 30, 1970:** Negotiations with four prospective member states (Denmark, Ireland, Norway and the United Kingdom) open in Luxembourg.

**Jan. 22, 1972:** The Treaty on the Accession of Denmark, Ireland, Norway and the United Kingdom is signed in Brussels.

**Jan. 1, 1973:** Denmark, Ireland, and the United Kingdom join the European Community (Norway withdrew following a referendum).

**Feb. 28, 1975:** First Lomé Convention with African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries signed.

**March 13, 1979:** European Monetary System (EMS) becomes operational.

**May 28:** The Treaty on the Accession of Greece is signed.

**June 7 and 10:** The first direct elections to the 410-seat European Parliament are held.

**Jan. 1, 1981:** Greece joins the European Community.

**June 29, 1985:** European Council endorses "White Paper" plan to complete single market by end of 1992.

**Dec. 2-4:** At the Luxembourg European Council, the Ten agree to amend the Treaty of Rome and to revitalize the process of European integration by drawing up a "Single European Act."

**Jan. 1, 1986:** Spain and Portugal join the Community.

**Feb. 17 and 28:** The Single European Act is signed.

**April 14, 1987:** Turkey applies to join the Community.

**July 1:** Single European Act (SEA) enters into force.

**June 26-27, 1989:** Madrid European Council endorses plan for Economic and Monetary Union (EMU).  
**July 17:** Austria applies to join the Community.  
**Nov. 9:** The Berlin Wall is breached.

that Europe is essentially forced to become larger and stronger, just to financially survive and compete with the American and Japanese economies. William Pfaff had this to say in the June 23, 1986 edition of *The International Herald Tribune*:

“Count France and Britain, or France and Italy together with West Germany, and you have an industrial agglomeration of Soviet size or bigger, and one infinitely more flexible, innovative and technologically sophisticated. If the European Community is considered all together, it makes up the most powerful economic and industrial combination on earth.

“Common American perceptions of Western Europe as a comparatively weak and declining force in world affairs are justified by neither the indices of productive power nor those of potential military strength. The military capacity of Western Europe, collectively, is equivalent to that of either of the superpowers—should the Europeans wish to make use of it.”

The development of a European Constitution, slated for introduction by mid-2003, along with which will come a sort of “European President,” will no doubt provide some, if not all, of this missing “one voice.”

### A Common Identity

In addition to lacking a strong leader, Europe currently lacks a socially binding force. Derek Urwin, in the *Encarta Encyclopaedia 2001*, summed up the EU’s problem:

“Almost all EU activity has been devoted to building the equivalent of a state. Little effort as been focused on

how to created a European nation with a strong bond of identity across national electorates, making them feel they have much, including a future, in common. The issue of a European identity will be a major challenge in the next century.”

The historical sequence of the seven restorations of the Holy Roman Empire, discussed earlier, relates directly to the European power now riding its momentum to its destiny as a world power. This historical phenomenon is actually the realization of an event prophesied in the Bible.

A parallel prophecy of the whore-ridden beast of Revelation 17 is the fourth (ten-horned) beast from Daniel 7. The ten horns represent each revival of the Roman Empire, of which the last seven are the Holy Roman Empire—the Roman Empire controlled by a mysterious “little horn” (Dan. 7:8), which is none other than the Vatican! Religion, more specifically Roman Catholicism will soon provide this strong bond of identity. The conditions are approaching ripeness. Much of the European population believes that materialism and capitalism have failed—there is a certain feeling of emptiness, and a loss of direction and morals.

The Roman Catholic Church is aware of this, and is biding their time, waiting for the right moment to once again provide their faith to the nations of Europe, as a way of hope. Pope Pius



**The European Emblem:** Adopted in 1986, the flag of the European Union displays a circle of twelve golden stars, representing the union of the peoples of Europe. The number of stars is fixed at twelve, symbolizing perfection and unity.

XII had this to say about Europe and religion: “Europe...had its eras of greatness when a common faith had animated the hearts of its peoples...” and that it “could have its geopolitical greatness again...if it could create a new heart” (Windswept House, 1996, p. 2). Also, in November 1975, Pope Paul VI stated to a gathering of bishops, cardinals and prelates in Rome, that it was their mission to “reawaken Europe’s Christian soul, where its unity is rooted.” He stressed that it was Catholicism “that made Europe” great.

The current pope, John Paul II, has from near the beginning of his papacy (1978), exhorted Europeans to return to their roots—their religious heritage. In October 1988, he had the opportunity to address the European Parliament and said that Europe had “invested...much in the domain of its economic cooperation,” but now “this part of Europe...[should] be more and more intensely involved in the search [for] her...spiritual cohesion.”

Otto von Habsburg, member of the European Parliament and son of the last empress of Austria (Zita), told editors of *The Plain Truth* in 1989, “The Community is living very largely by the heritage of the Holy Roman Empire, though the great majority of the people who live by it don’t know by what heritage they live.” Again, time and oppor-

Please see **EUROPE**, page 33

## ‘90 ‘91 ‘92 ‘93 ‘94 ‘95 ‘96 ‘97 ‘98 ‘99 ‘00 ‘01 ‘02 ‘03 ‘04 ‘05 ‘06 ‘07 ‘08 ‘09

**Oct. 3, 1990:** A united Germany enters the Community.

**Jan. 1, 1993:** European single market is achieved on time.  
**Nov. 1:** Treaty on European Union (Maastricht Treaty) enters into force.

**Jan. 1, 1995:** Austria, Finland, and Sweden join the European Union.

**Oct. 21, 1991:** European Community and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) agree to form the European Economic Area (EEA).  
**Dec. 11:** Maastricht European Council (EC) agrees on Treaty on European Union.  
**Dec. 16:** Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia sign first Europe Agreements on trade and political cooperation.

**March 12, 1998:** European conference launches consultations on issues related to Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Justice and Home Affairs (JHA).  
**March 30-31:** EU opens membership negotiations with Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia.  
**May 2:** Eleven EU member states qualify to launch the euro.  
**June 1:** European Central Bank (ECB) inaugurated in Frankfurt, Germany.

**June 17, 1997:** Treaty of Amsterdam is concluded.

**Jan. 1, 1999:** EMU and euro launched in 11 EU countries.  
**May 1:** Treaty of Amsterdam enters into force.  
**Sept. 15:** European Parliament approves new European Commission.  
**Dec. 10-11:** EC decides to open accession negotiations with Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Romania, and the Slovak Republic, and to recognize Turkey as a candidate country.

**June 23, 2000:** A new partnership agreement between the EU and the ACP countries is signed.  
**Dec. 7-11:** European Council agrees on Treaty of Nice; EU leaders formally proclaim the *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union*.

**Jan. 1, 2001:** Greece joins the euro area.  
**Jan.-Feb. 2002:** Euro becomes legal tender, permanently replacing national currencies in EMU countries.



# THE GROWING DANGER OF SPIRITISM

## PART TWO

BY BRUCE A. RITTER

**I**N PART I, we examined the widespread growth of witchcraft, spiritism and the occult. Mass media—books, magazines, television, movies—merchandizes paganism. Occultism thrives on college campuses nationwide. And mainstream Christianity is learning to tolerate and even embrace it.

In San Francisco, California, no fewer than 105 psychics, 20 spiritual consultants, and 17 astrologers are listed in the local phonebook. Recently, the city has had to create a bill that, if made into law, would ban certain scam-artist techniques commonly used by fortuneteller and other diviners to part the gullible from their money.

In Australia, witchcraft is the fastest-growing religion, with nearly 9,000 believers, up from less than 2,000 in 1996. Pagans have more than doubled there, to 10,632. And druids, animists and pantheists have also increased. Yet, from 1996 to 2000, membership among Australian church denominations only grew by 1.4%.

While some churches condemn fortunetelling, witchcraft and paganism, others see little, or nothing, wrong with them. For example, the Church of

Do witchcraft and the occult reveal “ancient wisdom” to life’s big questions? Does the spirit realm exist? Should men communicate with it? Are astrology, Tarot cards, Ouija boards and crystals harmless fun—or is there something more to them? Part II of this two-part series examines these and other important questions!

England has given one of its priests permission to attend a witches’ coven in order to research a thesis on Wicca. Believing it was “something that God has called [him] to do,” the priest said that Christianity must “interact with people who are interested in witchcraft, druidry and shamanism...and hear what they have to say about our faith.”

At a recent press conference, the Vatican gave its approval to the *Harry Potter* series. Justifying its new position, a spokesman reasoned, “I don’t think there’s anyone in this room who grew up without fairies, magic, and angels in their imaginary world.”

Part II will examine three reasons why so many are turning to the occult—and why it will continue to grow worse.

### Thirst for Knowledge

Humanity’s fascination with the stars is nothing new. Man has always had a thirst to know more, to understand the world around him. This thirst has led men to explore continents and oceans. It has sent people to walk on the moon numerous times. It has sent remote control vehicles to explore the surface of Mars. It inspired men to create the Hubble telescope and peer into the vastness of space to unlock its mysteries.

Men will do anything to quench their thirst for knowledge—even turn to the supernatural, such as divination, the occult art of looking into the future.

Astrology is an ancient tool of divination used to gather information, usually about either the future or a person’s



personality, through examining the “heavenly bodies”—stars, planets, the moon, comets, etc.

The earliest records of astrology date back to the 19th century B.C. The Babylonian Empire attempted to link earthly events, such as famine and war, with other events observed in the heavenly bodies above. Astrology was an integral part of the polytheistic Babylonian religion. The people back then believed that earth was the center of the universe and that all the stars and planets revolved around it.

Babylonian priests were regularly called upon to use their “connections” with their gods to predict the future. Two principle means of doing this were (1) inspecting the liver of a sacrificed animal, and (2) reading omens in the sky.

The latter eventually developed into astrology, similar to what is practiced today. Between 612 and 539 B.C., Babylonian priests divided the sky into twelve sections of thirty degrees each, constituting the twelve signs of the zodiac. Once mathematical astronomy developed (under the Persians, 539-331 B.C.), it became possible to calculate some motion of the moon and various planets. This made way for the development of horoscopes, similar to what exists today.

Other tools of divination include Ouija boards and Tarot cards.

Though often used by both children and adults as a game, Ouija boards are used to contact the spirit realm. Human participants invite spirits to control their hands in order to answer questions involving the afterlife, past human lives of these spirits, or future events.

Favored among Wiccans, Tarot cards are used to predict future events and cast spells, and meditation.

Whatever tool of divination used, people want to know the future. They want to know the past. They want to understand the world in which they live. Which is why throughout history, men have turned (in one degree or another) to witchcraft and the occult.

The term occult comes from the Latin word *occulere*, which means “to hide.” This word applies to anything based upon mysterious, secret, or hid-

den forces. Yearning for knowledge, power and personal fulfillment, men often turn to the mysterious “hidden powers” of the occult.

In Part I, we examined how people are being turned off and let down by mainstream Christianity. They are growing tired of religionists and theologians who preach smooth, comforting words, but secretly live lives in contrast to God’s Word. In desperation, many former believers often turn to “ancient wisdom” supposedly revealed through paganism and witchcraft.

All people want to know who they are, why they exist, what is their future. When professing Christianity cannot answer these questions, tools of divination—astrology, Tarot cards, Ouija boards and others—are seen as an alternative.

A wise man often said that if we want to understand why the world exists as it does today, we must look at the beginning of civilization: The Garden of Eden. When God created the first man and woman, He placed them in a garden paradise (Gen. 2:8, 15).

God told Adam and Eve, “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).

The two trees represented the knowledge of two opposite ways of life. The Tree of Life symbolized the way of give, love, peace, and outgoing concern for others. Eating of its fruit means to trust in God (Prov. 3:5). The tree of the knowledge of good and evil symbolized the way of take, hate, strife, and selfishness. Eating of its fruits means to trust in self.

God allowed Eve to be deceived into eating the fruit of the forbidden tree: “Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yes, has God said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die. And the ser-

pent said unto the woman, You shall not surely die: for God does know that in the day you eat thereof, *then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.* And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and *a tree to be desired to make one wise*, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat” (Gen. 3:1-6).

Adam and Eve wanted knowledge, but they wanted to acquire it *their* way. So they rejected God and ate the fruit of the forbidden tree. In doing so, man decided to rely upon *himself* to judge right from wrong, good from evil. This is why mankind’s history has been rampant with all kinds of evils, suffering and turmoil. Cut off from God’s revealed knowledge, people cannot agree. And walking in complete *agreement* is the path that produces peace.

Some people think certain wars are justified. Others think all war is wrong and inexcusable. Still others think that all war is acceptable, just as long as they are the ones pulling the strings.

In the same way, men have devised various means to gain knowledge. This includes witchcraft and the occult.

### Lust for Power

History is replete with power-hungry dictators—such as Hitler, Stalin, Nero. Since the First World War, the manufacture and accumulation of weapons of mass destruction have grown. And though the image of “one world order” frightens many, some long for it—especially if it means personal power on a global scale.

The lust for power is a common theme in mankind’s story. Casting spells, divining the future and communicating with spirits are tools many have picked up to satisfy this lust. Fed up with mainstream churches, many believe that witchcraft will empower them to bring personal control to their lives. They even turn to the powers of the occult in order to control the lives of others.

History records that men have often used religion (pagan and so-called “Christian”) to force their will upon

# “Try the Spirits”

**P**sychics, fortunetellers, channelers and others who practice the black art of divination do so by tapping into the demon world. But how can one tell if a person is practicing divination—especially when that person’s “prediction” comes to pass?

In Deuteronomy 13, God gives the criteria to judge with: “If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spoke unto you, saying, Let us go after other gods, which you have not known, and let us serve them; you shall *not* hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proves you, to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul” (vs. 1-3).

Uttering accurate predictions is not proof that God is working with a person. The real proof is whether that person teaches people to serve and worship God through keeping His commandments. Yet, God does allow spiritual charlatans to make accurate (or nearly accurate) predictions as a test for His people. He wants to know whether or not they will put His Way first. Demons have existed far longer than man. Their acute understanding of human nature, coupled with their limited knowledge of future events, allows them to make predictions. This is the source of false prophets’ predictions.

In Matthew 24, Christ warned that in the end time, many would come in His name—claim to speak by His authority—“and shall deceive many” (vs. 5). He also warned, “And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many” (vs. 11). People are deceived by false prophets, enchanters and psychics when they see their predictions come to pass. Such people then jump to the conclusion that “if he was right about this, certainly he must be right about that.” This is just one of the many ways Satan has kept the world deceived and spiritually blind.

Therefore, we must be careful to “believe not every spirit, but *try the spirits whether they are of God*: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1).

But how do we “try the spirits”? Isaiah 8:19-20 reveals the answer: “And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? For the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: *if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*”

others. In fact, much of man’s recorded wars involved, to some degree, religious beliefs—especially by organizations calling themselves Christian!

Concerning His Second Coming and the end of the age (Matt. 24:3), Jesus Christ warned, “Take heed that no man deceive you. *For many shall come in My name*, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive *many*” (vs. 4-5). Many religious leaders will arise and claim that their authority comes from Christ—and they will fool *many*!

How can this be? In II Corinthians 11, the apostle Paul reveals the answer: “For such are *false* apostles, *deceitful* workers, *transforming themselves* into the apostles of Christ” (vs. 13). They *look* like righteous leaders. They *seem* like faithful workers. But they *transform* themselves into *appearing* to be chosen representatives of God.

Such deceivers do this because they lust for power. And they grab and main-

tain power through cunning deceit.

God’s Word says that we should not be surprised: “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” (vs. 14-15).

Lust for power is nothing new to religion. The Bible shows that practitioners of witchcraft often resorted to human sacrifices to instill fear—and power—over the lives of others.

Recall the Garden of Eden. The serpent told mother Eve that the forbidden fruit would give knowledge—secret, hidden knowledge—that would *empower* her to become “as *gods*, knowing good and evil” (Gen. 3:1-6). Eve was seduced into lusting for power. Adam followed suit.

Ironically, God does want to give power to man. But people must first

learn to qualify for it. This requires building holy, righteous character. Without godly character, men have always used power to destroy. Our history of war and strife proves this.

The apostle James wrote about the true origin of all war and strife: “From where come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of *your lusts* that war in your members? You *lust*, and have not: you kill, and *desire to have*, and cannot obtain: you fight and war, yet you have not, because you ask not. You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss, *that you may consume it upon your lusts*” (Jms. 4:1-3).

Feeling that church denominations leave them powerless and directionless, some turn to crystals. Believing they can be used to transmit spiritual energy into light, crystals are used in an attempt to cleanse the “blocked aura” (a supposed invisible electro-magnetic field) around a person’s body. People also rely on crystals to heal diseases, trauma, and emotional problems; to create feelings of joy, peace and love; for insight into past life lessons; to be positive, responsible, brave; for advance “spiritual” practices; and to generally enhance one’s career and relationships.

Though they will deny it, those who rely upon crystals are putting their trust in the wrong rock. The Bible shows which Rock all people should turn to for help: “Moreover, brethren, I would not that you should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that *spiritual Rock* that followed them: and *that Rock was Christ*” (I Cor. 10:1-4).

Witchcraft, spiritism and the occult are *powerless* to reveal such amazing knowledge!

## Desire for Purpose

Knowledge is exploding. More people possess more power—government, financial, corporate—than ever before. Yet, few are ever truly *satisfied*.

Man is physical, limited to five senses and a temporary lifespan. Like

# A King Seeks a Medium

**E**arly in his monarchy, Saul, Israel's first king, rebelled against God, refusing to obey His commands (I Sam. 15). The prophet Samuel told Saul, "...for you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel" (vs. 26).

In chapter 28, the Philistines gathered into a massive army, positioning themselves to conquer Israel: "And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled" (vs. 5).

Saul was gripped by stark fear because he knew that his sins had cut him off from God's guidance and protection (Isa. 59:1-3). He had rebelled against God's will—and "rebellion is as the sin of *witchcraft*, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry" (I Sam. 15:23).

Verse 6 of I Samuel 28 states that "Saul enquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, *nor by prophets*."

With Samuel dead (vs. 3), and God remaining silent, Saul was desperate. He sent his servants to seek out a witch—"a woman that has a familiar spirit" (vs. 7). Yet, ironically, Saul spent the beginning of his rule putting away "those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land" (vs. 3).

Saul's servants found a woman from Endor who secretly practiced witchcraft.

Verse 8: "And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray you, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto you." Saul was in disguise for two reasons: (1) He did not want his subjects to know that he was seeking out a witch. And (2) so the witch would not be frightened off, thinking that Saul was trying to entrap her (see verse 9).

Amazingly, Saul made an oath to the witch *in God's name*, promising not to punish her for practicing witchcraft! Yet, this was clearly against God's will (vs. 10).

Now read verses 11-13: "Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto you? And he said, Bring me up Samuel. And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spoke to Saul, saying, Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what saw you? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods [*elohim*—also means "judge"] ascending out of the earth." In other words, she claimed to have seen the prophet Samuel, who had also been a judge, come up from the grave.

But notice that *Saul* did not see "Samuel"—only the witch could: "And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man comes up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul *perceived* that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself" (vs. 14).

Both Saul and the witch *assumed* that it was Samuel—but it was not! The Bible teaches that "the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing" (Ecc. 9:5).

animals, man was created "a living soul"—mortal (Gen. 2:7; 3:19). Yet, unlike animals, man is endowed with creative mind power. He does not just build a building. He plans, assembles and builds houses, barns, office buildings, military complexes, arenas, stadiums, and airports of every shape, size and color thinkable. He sculpts, paints, illustrates, writes, photographs, sings—does anything he can to express himself.

Yet, man wants—needs—something *more*.

Traditional Christianity cannot meet the desire. Neither can materialism. Money and career will only satisfy for a

short time. The constant pursuit of physical pleasure quickly becomes meaningless. People will turn to almost anything that will bring purpose and meaning to their lives.

To some, casting spells, gathering in the dark around open fires with other pagans, and divining the future are an attempt to gain control and purpose in their lives.

Like King David of Israel, people throughout millennia have looked up into the night sky and wondered, "When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained; *what is man*, that You are mindful of him? And

the son of man, that You visit him?" (Psa. 8:3-4).

Humanity began in the Garden of Eden. Man was created physical, of the ground. But he has spiritual needs. Since he has rejected the only true source that can fill those needs, man tries to feed spiritual desires with the physical—"the works of the flesh." It cannot be done.

Paul wrote, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest [obvious], which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, *witchcraft*..." (Gal. 5:19-20). Witchcraft is a "work of the flesh"—part of carnal nature. Men cannot feed a spiritual need (such as the desire for purpose) with anything carnal.

Notice: "For the flesh lusts *against* the Spirit, and the Spirit *against* the flesh: and these are *contrary the one to the other*" (vs. 17).

Spiritual cravings are fed and satisfied by "the fruit of the Spirit...love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (vs. 22-23).

This world's brand of "Christianity" has failed to teach this. It has failed to give purpose and meaning to life. Also, nature abhors a void. If a person's needs are not met, he will find another way to meet them; often with disastrous results.

## God of This World

Upon seeing the innocent suffer, people are quick to ask, "Where is God? Why has He allowed this to happen?" What most do not understand—and religionists, theologians, priests and "Christian" leaders fail to recognize—is that God is *not* running the affairs of this world. All societies, governments, empires and kingdoms of this world are being run by "the god of this world"—Satan the devil.

It is unpopular to admit that the devil exists. Most people scoff at the idea. The very thought seems ridiculous to them—and yet their disbelief falls right into Satan's scheme. The Bible plainly teaches that Satan is "the god of this world [age]" and "has blinded the minds of them which believe not" (II Cor. 4:4). He deceives people into believing he is

a fairy tale because he does not want humanity to be alerted to his world-ruling presence. God describes Satan as “the great dragon...that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world” (Rev. 12:9).

During a tremendous battle of wills, Satan took Christ to a high mountain and, in a vision, instantly showed Him all the kingdoms and powers of the world (Luke 4:5). Then Satan said to Him, “I will give You all their power and grandeur, for it has been made over to me and I can give it to anyone I choose” (vs. 6-7, Moffatt translation).

How did Christ respond? Did He dispute or deny the devil’s claim of possessing world-ruling authority? Did He say, “What are you talking about, Satan? You can’t give Me what doesn’t belong to you! God rules this world, not you”?

No. Christ simply said, “Get you hence, Satan: for it is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve” (Matt. 4:10).

Clearly, the Bible shows that the devil has the authority to grant world-ruling power—Christ did not dispute or deny this! In fact, several times Jesus described Satan as “the prince of this world” (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).

As such, the devil has humanity so thoroughly deceived, people who think they are seeking the light of truth are in reality finding darkness, misery, and even death. Throughout history, Satan has deceitfully disguised his dark ways, confusing and misleading gullible minds into believing them to be the righteous ways of God: “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness” (II Cor. 11:14-15).

Yes, the devil does use human instruments as tools of his deception. Recall verse 13: “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.”

Satan does rule the governments of this world—but he is not alone. The devil has plenty of help from others.

### **Satan’s Government**

The Bible reveals that there is a spirit realm. These spirits are:

(1) Obedient angels, who faithfully serve God. Part of their purpose is to help God’s people achieve their awesome human potential: “But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” (Heb 1:13-14).

(2) Fallen angels, called demons. They serve their own selfish lusts, under the world-ruling authority of Satan, “the prince of the devils [demons]” (Mark 3:22). Demons are fallen angels who sinned as they followed Lucifer (now Satan) into rebellion against their Creator (II Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Isa. 14:12-14; Rev. 12:3-4, 9).

They are the “unfruitful works of darkness” that Paul warns about in Ephesians 5: “...have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (vs. 11).

In Ephesians 6:12, Paul wrote that Christians “wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against *principalities*, against *powers*, against the *rulers of the darkness of this world*, against *spiritual wickedness* in high places.”

Because a matter weighed heavily upon his mind, the prophet Daniel fasted so that he could draw closer to God, and perhaps receive an answer (Dan. 10:3-4). The fast stretched into “three full weeks” before an answer from heaven could arrive.

Finally, an angel appeared to Daniel (vs. 10-11) and said, “Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that you did set your heart to understand, and to chasten yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I am come for your words. But the *prince of the kingdom of Persia* withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the *kings of Persia*” (vs. 12-13).

Were Michael and the other angel “withstood” by mortal men 21 days? Of course not! The above verses are about a battle of wills between angels (servants of God) and demons (servants of Satan). Satan controls the kingdoms of this world. Christ said that Satan’s kingdom is not divided (Mark 3:23-26).

Although it is based on competition, strife, hatred, selfishness—the “get” way of life, symbolized by the tree of the (self) knowledge of good and evil—it is organized and structured.

God’s servants always seek to teach, serve and build.

The devil’s agents (demons) always seek to confuse, blind and destroy. Among their tools are witchcraft, spiritism, paganism and the occult. They want us to believe that we can harness “earth energy” through crystals, or that we can predict the future, or speak with the dead (see “Witch of Endor” inset). Demons love to use mediums, making it seem like these “guides” are communicating with the “afterlife.”

Why? Because it helps to perpetuate the myth of the immortal soul. Recall Satan’s lie to Eve in the Garden of Eden: “You shall not surely die” (Gen. 3:4). The serpent who told *that* lie is the same serpent, or dragon, who “deceives the whole world” *today* (Rev. 12:9).

### **Misguided Values**

Men place great value on the writings of other men. They often quote the musings of dead human beings, yet ignore—and even make light of—the one true source of knowledge, the Holy Bible.

God’s written Word is truth (John 17:17)—revealed knowledge of who and what man is, why he exists, what his purpose is. The Bible reveals who God is, why society is the way that it is, and what future events will soon come to pass.

God inspired Paul to write, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for *doctrine*, for *reproof*, for *correction*, for *instruction* in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Tim. 3:16-17).

True knowledge comes from God: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction” (Prov. 1:7).

The empty, vain writings and traditions of men cannot compare to the truth of God’s Word.

Yet, men often highly value famous writings of literary “giants”—men who were often possessed by demons!

Ancient Greek writers, such as Homer, commonly sought to speak for their “gods” (demons masquerading as god-like beings) by being directly under their control.

Ancient Delphi grew to international prominence for the famous oracle of the Greek god Apollo, who foretold the future through his priestess. Responding to questions from rulers, military generals, legislators and other dignitaries while in a trance, the priestess’ inarticulate cries were interpreted and recorded by an official interpreter, in verse, then later in prose.

Plato is recorded to have written, “All questions should be left to the decision of the oracle, as is the usual practice in Greece.” The influence of spiritism and the occult is centuries old.

### Strong Words From God

Millennia ago, God delivered ancient Israel from slavery in Egypt. Just before they were about to inherit the Promised Land, God warned the Israelites: “When you are come into the land which the LORD your God gives you, you shall not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that makes his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that uses *divination*, or an *observer of times*, or an *enchanter*, or a *witch*, or a *charmer*, or a *consulter with familiar spirits*, or a *wizard*, or a *necromancer*. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD your God does drive them out from before you” (Deut. 18:9-12).

Leviticus 19:31: “Regard not them that have *familiar spirits*, neither seek after *wizards*, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.”

Notice what they were to do if they found such people among them: “A man also or woman that has a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be *put to death*: they shall *stone them with stones*: their blood shall be upon them” (Lev. 20:27).

Also notice: “Take you therefore good heed unto yourselves...lest you lift up your eyes unto heaven, and when you see the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, should

be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD your God has divided unto all nations under the whole heaven” (Deut. 4:15, 19). Astrology was not to be tolerated in the Promised Land.

God commanded the Israelites to totally destroy all nations found in Canaan because the people dwelling there practiced witchcraft and the occult. Their perverted and twisted pagan religions even involved human sacrifice—including infants!

Yet, the biblical record shows that Israel failed miserably. The people tolerated—even encouraged—witchcraft and the occult throughout ancient Israel. The same is happening today among the modern-day descendants of Israel. Just as ancient Israel and Judah were severely punished for these and other national sins, the modern-day peoples and nations of Israel will also be severely corrected.

### Witchcraft in the “Last Days”

Christ warned that just before His Return to set up His kingdom, “...many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many” (Matt. 24:11). He also inspired the apostle John to warn of a great, end-time false prophet. Possessed by an “unclean spirit,” this false prophet will perform miracles, deceiving the masses into receiving the “mark of the beast” and worshipping the beast’s “image” (Rev. 16:13; 19:20). This future deceiver will draw his powers from “spiritual wickedness in high places”—the same source of witchcraft and the occult. But those powers will *appear* to be Christian.

But in the end, the great false prophet will meet his end (20:10) at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

From then on, God’s government will be set up at Jerusalem, and will spread across the earth (Isa. 9:6-7). True knowledge will flow freely to quench the thirst of all who desire it. Power will be in the hands of those who have qualified to properly use it—Christ and His righteous kings, judges and priests (Rev. 5:10).

All who obey God will have access to the Tree of Life, and enter into the kingdom (22:14).

But the Bible says that there will be those who refuse to obey. They will not enter God’s kingdom: “For without are dogs, and *sorcerers*, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loves and makes a lie” (vs. 15).

Also, Satan and his demons, the authors of witchcraft and the occult, will be imprisoned in darkness, no longer the “god of this world.”

As you can see, witchcraft and the occult are not alternatives worth considering. They are paths leading to danger, and even death.

Those who choose to submit to God and resist Satan (Jms. 4:7) can receive the knowledge, power and purpose all men long for: “For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of *power*, and of *love* [which is man’s true purpose for life], and of a *sound mind* [deep knowledge, understanding and wisdom]” (II Tim. 1:7).

Witchcraft, spiritism and the occult can do none of these. □

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# A Foolish Holiday

Is April Fools' Day something Christians should take part in? Is it godly? Would Christ have participated in it? What are the implications of it? What does God's Word say about the keeping of this day?

**M**ANY SEE the first day of April as a time to perpetrate pranks, practical jokes and even lies, in the name of "innocent fun." Every year on April 1st, people around the world celebrate April Fools' Day. Although customs and traditions differ, a common thread runs through the international celebration of this day.

History does not provide an authoritative source to determine this holiday's exact basis and origin. Notice the following statement about April Fools' Day (also known as All Fools' Day): "Although it has been observed for centuries in several countries, the origin of the custom is unknown. It resembles other festivals, such as the Hilaria of ancient Rome (March 25) and the Holi festival of India (ending March 31). Its timing seems related to the vernal equinox (March 21), when nature 'fools' mankind with sudden changes in the weather" (*Encyclopedia Britannica*). Regardless of its origin, people use April Fools' Day as an excuse to "play the fool."

## Unclear Origin

As the above statement shows, the history of this holiday is clouded in mystery. Consider the following:



RT Illustration/Paula Rondeau

"One theory is that April Fools began when Charles IX, following the Gregorian Calendar, decreed January 1, 1562 as the official New Year instead of the end of March/April 1 Solstices. Individuals who continued to honor...April 1st were teased, ridiculed and played pranks upon.

"This must have been too much fun, it spread from France to England and then to the US. Now we have a day of havoc for us all to tread and enjoy. Now

this story, the dates are all in dispute, proving Time may be the best trickster of all" (*presentpicker.com*).

April Fools' Day was instituted due to a change in the calendar concerning the beginning of the new year. (To understand more about this change, read our free article "Why Christians don't celebrate NEW YEAR'S.")

Also notice the following statements:

"To coincide with the vernal equinox and other agriculturally significant events, New Year's Day used to be celebrated in many societies around the first of April. Although Pope Gregory introduced a new calendar for the Christian world in 1562—with the new year beginning on January 1—there were some people who did not hear of the change (or refused to believe it) until much later and continued

to celebrate New Year's Day on April 1. Others called these traditionalists 'April fools' and played tricks on them, sending them on 'fool's errands' or trying to make them believe that something false was true.

"In France today, April first is called Poisson d'Avril. French children fool their friends by taping a paper fish to their friends' backs; when the 'young fools' discover this trick, the prankster yells 'Poisson d'Avril!' (April Fish!)

Even though April Fool's Day is not an official American holiday, it is still recognized by many. Most of us are 'taken in' at some time or another on April 1" (*punctuationtips.com*).

By way of background, it is interesting as to how April 1st came to deserve this dubious "honor."

"In 1752, Great Britain finally changed over to the Gregorian Calendar, and April Fool's Day began to be celebrated in England and in the American colonies.

"Pranks and jokes are of course still popular on this day—not to mention the rest of the year.

"Pope Gregory XIII issued a papal bull, 'Inter Gravissimus' on February 24, 1582 that established the Gregorian calendar as the new and official calendar of the Catholic world. Since the Julian calendar had fallen ten days behind over the centuries, Pope Gregory XIII designated that October 4, 1582 would be officially followed by October 15, 1582. The news of the calendar change was disseminated across Europe. Not only would the new calendar be utilized but ten days would be 'lost' forever, the new year would now begin on January 1 instead of March 25, and there would be a new method of determining the date of Easter...

"In the era after the change, dates were written with O.S. (Old Style) or N.S. (New Style) following the day so people examining records could understand whether they were looking at a Julian date or a Gregorian date. While George Washington was born on February 11, 1731 (O.S.), his birthday became February 22, 1732 (N.S.) under the Gregorian calendar. The change in the year of his birth was due to the change of when the [start] of the new year was acknowledged. Recall that prior to the Gregorian calendar, March 25 was the new year but once the new calendar was implemented, it became January 1. Therefore, since Washington was born between January 1 and March 25, the year of his birth became one year later upon the switch to the Gregorian calendar. (Prior to the 14th century, the new year change took place on December 25.)" (*geography.about.com*).

God is not the author of *confusion* (1 Cor. 14:33). The above statements alone demonstrate the confusion surrounding this holiday, through conflicting historical accounts involving the year the Gregorian Calendar was implemented.

*Halley's Bible Handbook* dates the papacy of Gregory XIII at 1572 to 1585. Therefore, his authorization of the calendar change could not have taken place in 1562, but rather 1582.

The following lengthy quote also shows the confusion surrounding this holiday, and offers a glimpse at some of the foolish customs associated with it:

"Claim: April Fools' Day began in the 1500s when the Gregorian calendar took over from the Julian. Those who forgot the change and attempted to celebrate New Year's (previously celebrated on the 1st of April) on the wrong date were teased as 'April fools.'

"Status: *Undetermined*.

"Origins: It has become tradition on the first of April to pull jokes of the harmless variety on those near and dear to us. We plot and we scheme, and often the yuks are funnier in our imaginings than how they play out in reality, but that doesn't stop us from sending the little kid in us out on a rampage. Even the most staid among us have been known to indulge in a practical joke or two, so beware of trusting anyone on that day.

"How the custom of pranking on April 1 came about remains shrouded in mystery.

"...According to the most widely-believed origin for April Fools' Day, those who could be tricked into believing April 1 was still the proper day to celebrate the New Year earned the sobriquet of April fools. To this end, French peasants would unexpectedly drop in on neighbors on that day in a effort to confuse them into thinking they were receiving a New Year's call. Out of that one jape supposedly grew the tradition of testing the patience of family and friends.

"But that's only one theory. Others are:

■ The timing of this day of pranks seems to be related to the arrival of spring, when nature 'fools' mankind with fickle weather, according to the

*Encyclopedia of Religion* and the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

■ *The Country Diary of Garden Lore*, which chronicles the goings-on in an English garden, says that April Fools' Day 'is thought to commemorate the fruitless mission of the rook (the European crow), who was sent out in search of land from Noah's flood-encircled ark.'

■ Others theorize it may have something to do with the Vernal Equinox.

■ Some think to tie in with the Romans' end-of-winter celebration, Hilaria, and the end of the Celtic new year festival.

"...In Scotland, an April fool is called an April 'gowk'—Scottish for cuckoo, an emblem of simpletons. In England, a fool is called a gob, gawby or gobby. In France, the victim of a hoax is called a 'poisson d'avril,' an April fish. ('April fish' refers to a young fish, thus one easily caught.) The French delight in shouting 'Poisson d'Avril!' at the denouement of the foolery. Some also insist that all pranks include a fish or at least a vague reference to same within the joke. Asking someone during a phone conversation to hold the line, then later returning to the call and inquiring of the victim if there'd been any bites is a popular groaner. So are pranks which trick the victim into placing calls to fish shops or the local aquarium" (*snopes.com*).

We observe that the phenomenon of April Fools' Day is of relatively recent origin, in the sense that it has become a universal custom. Based upon the adjusted Roman calendar, it is nonetheless a vain custom of questionable origin. But even without an understanding of the history of this holiday, we can see in God's Word that He does not approve of this day and that His people, true Christians, do not participate in it.

### **God Hates All Pagan Customs and Traditions**

Now notice what God inspired the prophet Jeremiah to write: "Learn not the way of the heathen...For the customs of the people are vain" (10:2-3). This is a command from God. Throughout Scripture, God describes "heathens" as those who worship nature

(the sun, moon, stars, trees, etc.), man-made idols or *anything* but the one true God. He calls such people and their practices *pagan*. True Christians understand that God hates any customs, practices and traditions that have pagan roots. He commands, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be you separate” (II Cor. 6:17).

How serious is God about paganism? When He rescued the twelve tribes of Israel from Egypt and led them out of brutal slavery, He commanded them, “After the doings of the land of Egypt, where in you dwelt, shall you not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, where I bring you, shall you not do: neither shall you walk in their ordinances” (Lev. 18:3). God demanded the Israelites not defile themselves with the practices and customs of the surrounding nations (vs. 24-29). God further commanded, “Therefore shall you keep Mine ordinance, that you commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that you defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God” (vs. 30).

God had explicitly commanded Israel to cast out and utterly destroy all nations that occupied the Promised Land (Canaan); above all, they were not to make political alliances with them or marry into their families (Deut. 7:1-3, 5, 16). “For they will turn away your son from following Me, that they may serve other gods” (vs. 4).

But, thinking they knew better than God, the Israelites decided to do things their own way: “They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them: But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them. Yes, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood. Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a-whoring with their own inventions” (Psa. 106:34-39).

To wake them up, and get them back on track to being His model

nation, God gave Israel over to their enemies. Israel repented. God rescued them. Then Israel rebelled and pursued other gods. God punished them again. Israel repented again. So went the deliverance-idolatry-punishment-repentance cycle (vs. 40-46), until finally, God had no choice but to “divorce” unfaithful Israel (Jer. 3:6-11). He used the Assyrians to brutally invade, conquer, relocate and enslave the northern kingdom of Israel (II Kgs. 17), which “disappeared” into history, having forgotten their national identity (even today, the modern-day descendants of those ten “lost” tribes do not understand who they are). Later, God sent the southern kingdom of Judah into Babylonian exile (II Kgs. 24 and 25).

This happened because they lusted after pagan customs, rituals, traditions and ways. As you can see, the one true God does not take pagan practices lightly!

#### **What About April Fools’ Day?**

Clearly, April Fools’ Day is rooted in the ancient pagan customs of this world. It is literally a day for fools! But you may wonder, “Where is April Fools’ Day mentioned in the Bible?” Although God’s Word contains no direct “Thou shalt not” command against April Fools’ Day observance, one can examine certain biblical *principles* and know that God does not approve of this day.

Proverbs 24:9 states, “The thought [devising] of foolishness is sin.” And sin is the breaking of God’s spiritual laws (I John 3:4; Rom. 7:14). Also, God is the author of wisdom—not foolishness. He expects His servants to seek His wisdom (Jms. 1:5)—not play the fool!

Christ also condemned *engaging* in foolishness: “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, *foolishness*: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man” (Mark 7:21-23). He also said, “...whosoever shall say, You fool, shall be in danger of hell fire” (Matt. 5:22).

The basis for April Fools’ Day is also in *direct violation* of one of God’s Ten Commandments: “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor” (Ex. 20:16; Deut. 5:20). Pranks played on April Fools’ Day (in the name of harmless fun) are set in motion through *lies*, often leading to misunderstanding and confusion.

Faithful Christians know that “God is not the author of confusion, but of peace” (I Cor. 14:33). The original Greek word used here for *confusion* also means “instability, disorder, commotion, tumult”—words that perfectly describe the April Fools’ Day scene and the holiday’s history.

For thousands of years, men kept changing the beginning of their New Year from spring to fall, from March 1 to January 1 (and in some cases, December 25), to March 25, back again to January 1—the dead of winter!

“January 1 was restored as New Year’s Day by the Georgian calendar (1582), immediately adopted by Roman Catholic countries” (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1998). Even today, men cannot agree on the same date: “Chinese New Year is celebrated officially for a month beginning in late January or early February” (Ibid.). “The Muslim New Year falls on the first day of the month of Muharram and commemorates the date of the Hegira (July 26, 622 A.D., on the Gregorian calendar), the starting point of the Muslim calendar. Since the Muslim year is a lunar one consisting of only 354 days, the commencement of the new year fluctuates widely by the Western calendar” (*Encyclopedia Americana*). The Vietnamese New Year, Tet, falls between January 21 and February 19. “The Jewish New Year, a solemn occasion called Rosh Ha-Shannah, is observed during September or early October. Hindus in different parts of India celebrate the new year on various dates” (*World Book*, 2001).

This is what happens when people insist on relying on their *own* judgment rather than trusting the One who designed the entire universe and everything in it.

*Please see APRIL FOOLS’, page 33*





## EUROPE

### Old Europe vs. New Europe

**T**he split in regards to Iraq, amongst EU members and more so between applicant members and existing members, is becoming increasingly obvious and problematic. U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld dubbed the terms “old Europe” and “new Europe” earlier this year to refer to the two sides that European countries have taken on the issue of inspections and war in Iraq. The “old Europe” consists largely of France and Germany, who are against any military action. The “new Europe,” consisting largely of EU applicant countries from the east, has been more supportive of the U.S. position.

The animosity began with France and Germany dominating the issue and portraying the appearance that their position was Europe’s position. By mid-January, eight countries had issued an open letter of support for the U.S. position on Iraq

(Italy, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom, and EU candidates Denmark, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland). In early February, another letter of support was released consisting of 10 eastern European nations (Albania, Croatia and Macedonia, and EU candidates Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia).

On February 17, the EU held an emergency meeting, excluding any applicant countries, to try to reach some sort of unified position. French President Jacques Chirac took this opportunity to scold the applicant countries by inferring that their position may affect the ratification of their EU membership applications, and commented, “It is not well-brought-up behaviour. They missed a good opportunity to keep quiet.”

Once again, the almost desperate

need for a strong, unifying leader is making itself clear. Interestingly, it is the French President, and not the German Chancellor, who scolds the eastern “children.” That of course, would appear right now to be “out of line.” The overall lesson that Europe is learning right now is the need for unity. This is especially difficult but most important in the area of “foreign affairs.”

Europe is trying desperately to act and behave as one nation, but in this one area, they continue to struggle and stumble.

But not for much longer... □

Source: *BBC News*

## RELIGION

### Three Things Vatican Expects in European Constitution

**A**ccording to Cardinal Sodano, the Vatican’s Secretary of State, the Catholic Church is looking for the following three issues to be covered in Europe’s upcoming Constitution:

Each church and/or religion must be free to organize itself within its “statutes and objectives.” [Editor’s comment: Will this guarantee be above national laws?]

The identities of each church and/or religion must be “safeguarded,” and dialogue between these institutions and the State must be maintained. [Editor’s comment: The Roman Catholic Church is looking to be treated as a state-equal, and is insisting that the usual

political and diplomatic ties are maintained between Europe and The Vatican.]

Member states must “respect” the jurisdiction of the church and/or religion, especially in regards to national legislation. [Editor’s comment: This essentially answers the question posed above in point 1: Yes, the guarantee will indeed be above national laws.]

Cardinal Sodano pointed out that the inclusion of Europe’s “religious heritage” is not the weightiest of matters. He went on to indicate that a recent poll taken in the 15 member states and the 10 applicant states, shows that

81% of the citizens identify themselves with “Christianity.” Sodano said, “To exclude this factor would be like constructing Europe without taking Europeans in due consideration. It would contradict the principles of genuine pluralism and, therefore, of a healthy democracy.” □

Source: *Zenit News Agency*

## GEOPOLITICS, STRATEGIES AND ECONOMIES

### Paying for the War

**S**audi Arabia, Germany and Japan picked up just over 60% of the cost (\$36 billion of the \$61 billion tab) for the first Gulf War. Saudi Arabia and Germany, of course, strongly oppose any new war in Iraq, and will almost certainly not contribute financially in any way. Japan, although more supportive of the U.S. position, is mired in a decade-long economic slump and simply may not be able to contribute in the same fashion it did in 1991.

The rumble of this sub-issue has been slowly building in volume and momentum in U.S. political circles during recent weeks. Steven M. Kosiak, in a study last month for the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, estimated the cost of the war to be likely between \$18 billion and \$85 billion—the crucial variable in this extreme range being allied support, combined with the issue of a U.N. resolution.

Some argue that Iraq's vast oil reserves will cover some of the costs to the U.S.—this will almost certainly be detrimental to America's "world relations" problem. Many already see oil as the reason for the U.S. attacking

Iraq, never mind just using it as a method to pay for the "service" of riding the world of a terrible dictator.

We have asked these questions here before. Can the American nation afford an 85 billion dollar price tag? Yet can it afford not to eliminate someone who harbors and supports terrorism? Does economic improvement or disaster lie on the horizon? In any case, the U.S. economy is heading toward uncharted waters—never before has the government combined major deficit spending with large tax breaks and a war. If the war is any bit successful, if the U.S. economy improves, the result will be an exponential hatred towards America. If on the other hand, the war is somewhat disastrous and the economy gets worse, we may be witnessing the beginning of something large... □

Source: *Washington Times*

### Far Right Emerges in Austria (Again)

**T**he Austrian President swore in a new government last week, reviving a coalition between the People's Party and the far-right Freedom Party. Although some are expecting the coalition to struggle, and despite the fact that Freedom Party founder Joerg Haider will not be a part of the new government, there is still an uneasy indication that he is eager, from his somewhat distant position as a provincial governor, to be involved in Austria's federal politics. □

Source: *BBC News*

### Modern-day Assyrians

**A**pproximately 1.2 million of Iraq's population are neither Arab nor Muslim—they are Assyrian Christians—remnants of the ancient Assyrian empire. Biblical and secular sources indicate that the modern-day descendants of the Assyrian people are the Germans. This may indicate why Germany has, to this day, maintained strategic and economic ties with Iraq, and how they may (under the auspices of the United States of Europe assisting in a post-Saddam Iraq) in the near future gain a hold in the Middle East. □

Source: *The Japan Times*

## HEALTH, SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

### STDs Overwhelm UK Health System

**U**nited Kingdom MPs have concluded in a recent inquiry that an explosion of sexually transmitted diseases is overwhelming the national health care system, and is indeed threatening the health and well-being of an entire generation of young people. Although their report was no doubt somewhat political, the UK facts are these: Gonorrhoea has increased 86% in five years; chlamydia

has doubled in the same period; syphilis is making a comeback; and the rate of HIV infection reached its highest level in 2002, with 70% of the heterosexual cases contracted abroad.

Once again, the failure to recognize and treat the cause of these outbreaks is monumental. Billions of dollars are invested in drugs to treat and prolong lives that are barely living. The illogic of

it all is tremendous but so well ingrained in Western society, that only a calamity on a scale the world has never seen will correct it. □

Source: *The Independent*

### Antibiotic-resistant Bacteria Now in Boston

**T**he antibiotic-resistant strain of *Staphylococcus* that was reported earlier this year in the RT as a problem on the U.S. west coast has now appeared in Boston. The infection, known as MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) is normally caught only in hospitals by those already seriously ill, but its appearance in the general community is alarming authorities. Although the five Boston men who were diagnosed with the infection were

also HIV-positive, the doctors could not say with certainty that the two were related.

In any case, Dr. Scott Fridkin, a medical epidemiologist at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said, "It's of great concern. The reports are becoming more frequent, and it appears to be a growing problem." And yet man's reliance on treatments for the effects instead of the causes will continue and increase—right along with some bacte-

ria's ability to resist these treatments. Dr. Stephen L. Boswell, executive director of Fenway Community Health Center said, "The whole issue of antibiotic resistance is a huge problem for all of us, and it's a problem that really needs to be addressed because it has huge public [Editor's comment: i.e., national] health implications." □

Source: *The Boston Globe*

## PERSONAL

Continued from page 4

required him to endure by studying II Corinthians 11:24-30. This astonishing passage reveals that people can, with God's help, handle far more discomfort, pain and suffering than they think—if they see its purpose.

Yet, in the grand scheme of things, when compared to the reward God has in store for all His begotten sons and daughters, how difficult was the suffering? Paul answers, "For I reckon that *the sufferings of this present time* are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waits for the manifestation of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:18-19).

*Nothing* we endure in this life even remotely compares to the immortal life of supreme happiness in God's kingdom in store for those who serve Him.

Nevertheless, suffering can be very difficult for the moment—for "this present time." God understands

this, and knows exactly when to let up—when the intended lessons have been learned! God has promised to never allow you to be tried beyond what you can endure (I Cor. 10:12-13).

Job knew God's supreme WISDOM was at work in all that happened to him. After acknowledging God's sovereign power over his life, he was blessed vastly beyond what he had before his trial. Faith in God's wisdom paid off in the end.

Recall that Solomon explained that God, throughout our lives, alternates "days of prosperity" with "days of adversity" (Ecc. 7:14). Put another way, either condition you are experiencing will be followed by the opposite condition. If you are enjoying good times, difficult times lie ahead. If you are enjoying difficult times, good times will soon follow. David, Solomon's father, knew that "weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning" (Psa. 30:5). This is God's promise.

If you submit to God, this will be fulfilled in *your* life, both now and eternally! □

## APRIL FOOLS'

Continued from page 30

The spirit behind April Fools' Day is diametrically opposite to the Christian way of life. Christ not only said, "...whosoever shall say, You fool, shall be in danger of hell fire," but He also instructed, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:39). Christ further expounds on this principle in Matthew 7:12: "Therefore all things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." This is commonly referred to as "The Golden Rule." It sets the standard by which we are to conduct ourselves toward others—treating others the way we would want them to treat us.

Obviously, April Fools' Day pranks are not based on love toward others.

Such tricks, even if innocent and *physically* harmless, are designed to embarrass or humiliate others. Foolishness is sin. Christians must not engage in it. They must separate themselves from *all* pagan customs, practices and traditions of this world—including April Fools' Day! □

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## EUROPE

Continued from page 21

tunity will provide the Catholic Church circumstances to educate those people.

In addition, Popes and the Vatican historically seek protection from their enemies, especially during times of trouble, and have typically found this protection in Europe. In addition to defense and support, the papacy considered one of the empire's main responsibilities to be the enforcement of doctrine and the elimination of all heresies. Those who did not conform were dealt with harshly. Conversely, "kings" have often sought legitimacy and/or authority from this "little horn" that sits in Rome. We will discuss this further in Part 2.

### Coming Next – The New Europe

We have seen the speed at which Europe has arisen out of the smoldering ashes of World War II. It obviously did not take 100 years as some had thought. We can see now the structure of its government and how the upcoming Constitution and proposals for a European President will affect it and the entire world.

In Part 2, we will more closely examine the height that Europe will ultimately attain – current events that are creating a more desperate European people, events that will lead to the sound of this powerful "one voice," and events that will once again bring about the resurgence of the Roman Catholic Church. We will see how "the kings of the earth have committed fornication" and "have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication" (Rev. 17:2). We will see how and why "the woman drunken with the blood of the saints" (vs. 6) rides the power of the beast.

We will see how the seventh and final restoration of the Holy Roman Empire will affect the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and the entire world. We will see how it will affect you and me. We will see how it perfectly fulfills that part of God's Great Plan, and how it will lead up to the Return of Jesus Christ. □

WANT MORE ARTICLES? *More* World News Desk updates? *Extra* Questions & Answers? *Additional* photos, illustrations and graphics? Read *The REAL TRUTH* Online Edition!

[www.RealTruthMag.org](http://www.RealTruthMag.org)

The screenshot shows the Real Truth Magazine website in a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window. The browser's address bar displays the URL <http://www.RealTruthMag.org>. The page header includes the magazine's title, "THE REAL TRUTH ONLINE EDITION", and the volume and issue information, "VOL. 1 | NO. 2". A search bar and navigation links for "Contact Us", "Help", "Site-Map", and "Search" are also present. The date "Monday, March 17, 2003 4:28:48" is shown in the top right corner.

The main content area is titled "The WORLD TO COME" and "ARTICLES FOR MARCH/APRIL 2003". It features several article teasers, each with a small image and a brief description:

- OUT OF THE ASHES: The Rise of Europe!** Part One: 1945 to the Present. Some said it would take Europe 100 years to rebuild after the Second World War. Others maintain that it will never rival the United States in terms of economic, technological and military might. History indicates otherwise. Are you willing to learn about this coming United States of Europe? It is upon us now! Will you believe it? Will you prepare? Will you watch?
- The Immorality Explosion! - Part Two**. News articles report shockingly immoral activities happening in your backyard. Should we be tolerant of such actions? Schools are teaching—even instructing—young people on sexual topics of all kinds. What is the cause of this escalating immorality in society? And what will be its end?
- PALESTINE and the PALESTINIANS**. Where did the Palestinians come from? Are they descendants of the biblical Canaanites? Why are they constantly at war with the Israelis? Is "Palestine" the original and proper name of the Holy Land? Here are the answers to these and other vital questions.
- Witches, Wiccans and Pagans: The Growing Danger of Spiritism - Part Two**. Do witchcraft and the occult need "ancient wisdom" to life's big questions? Does the spirit realm exist? Should men communicate with it? Are astrology, Tarot cards, Ouija boards and crystals harmless fun—or is there something more to them? Part II of this two-part series examines these and other important questions!
- A Foolish Holiday**. Is April Fools' Day something Christians should take part in? Is it godly? Would Christ have participated in it? What are the implications of it? What does God's Word say about the keeping of this day?

On the left side of the page, there is a navigation menu with links for "HOME", "WHO ARE WE?", "ARCHIVES", "BROADCAST", "Q & A", "EMAIL UPDATES", and "PDF VERSIONS". A large image of the magazine cover, titled "REAL TRUTH THE RISE OF EUROPE! ...Should You Worry?!", is also visible. The bottom of the page features a "WORLD NEWS DESK" section.