

The background of the entire page is a close-up photograph of an American flag. The flag's stars and stripes are visible, with a dark blue field containing white stars and red and white stripes. A white rectangular label is pinned to the flag, featuring the text 'MADE IN CHINA' in bold, black, sans-serif capital letters. The label is positioned diagonally across the upper left portion of the image.

TOMORROW'S WORLD

September–October 2006

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U.S.-China Trade War: Coming Soon?



Biblical Ignorance: A Real Problem!

A personal message from the Editor in Chief, Roderick C. Meredith

Millions of people throughout the western world have read *The Da Vinci Code*. This last summer, millions saw a film based on the novel. It is challenging the faith of many churchgoers! And it is confusing millions about what the Bible really says.

As the *Charlotte Observer* wrote: “The debates over ‘The Da Vinci Code’ book and movie have shown many curious Americans how ignorant they are about biblical history. And many churches, rather than lamenting this ignorance and lambasting the book’s distortions, are recognizing this as a teachable moment. Publishers are seizing the opportunity, too. At least 45 books challenge or explain the many points in Dan Brown’s religious murder mystery.... For a church struggling with scriptural ignorance and public complacency, the opportunity seems almost—well, heaven-sent” (June 5, 2006).

This world and its “mainstream Christianity” is obviously in great confusion—and hundreds of pastors and religious writers freely acknowledge this. They *know* that most churchgoers do not remotely understand the Bible and are therefore “susceptible” to *all kinds* of religious ideas. Even the “church” is not one unified body, but is instead a confusing hodgepodge of *hundreds* of different denominations all calling themselves “Christian”—all competing with each other, and each having somewhat *different* teachings and practices. The world is confused. But what about you?

Most people almost **never** actually *study* the Bible as they would a textbook on science, mathematics or history. They usually read only a select few “inspirational” passages with which they are familiar, leaving the rest of the Bible as a sort of *black hole* about which they are totally **ignorant**.

As *U.S. News & World Report* pointed out a few years ago: “More than three-fourths of Americans call the nation’s religious diversity a source of strength; fewer than a third think it makes it harder to keep the country united.... Meanwhile, more than 3 in 4 Americans believe all religions have at least some elements of truth—even though few say they know much about religions other than their own. And nearly 70 percent think spiritual experiences are the most impor-

tant part of religion. ‘If one’s religion is more about individual identity than doctrine or creed, it’s a lot easier to be tolerant,’ says Egon Mayer, a sociologist at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Gallup says that the high degree of religious tolerance reflects, in part, ‘not only a lack of knowledge of other religions but an ignorance of one’s own faith.’ In some polls, he says, ‘you have Christians saying, ‘Yes, Jesus is the only way’ and also, ‘Yes, there are many paths to God.’ It’s not that Americans don’t believe anything; they believe everything” (May 6, 2002).

No wonder people are confused! *No wonder* people are uncertain about what the Bible says. For they do *not* actually **study** the *very revelation* from their Creator! Therefore, they can easily decide to “believe” almost *anything*. They can wrongly *assume* that “all religions are pretty much the same.” Meanwhile, millions have heard famous evangelists proclaim, “The Bible says,” when, in fact, the Bible *clearly proclaims the exact opposite!*

So we at *Tomorrow’s World* want to *challenge* you to learn to actually *study* the Bible! Please carefully read, and meditate, as you *study* the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Mark important passages that you read. Then, in like manner, *study carefully* through the book of Acts—noting that the *original* Christians believed and practiced the *same things* Jesus taught and practiced.

Note that, *after* His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples and *continued to teach* “the Kingdom of God”—the full message about His second coming and the *world government* He will establish when He returns as “King of kings.” When Jesus’ disciples pointedly asked Him, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”, He replied: “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority” (Acts 1:6–7). Christ clearly indicated that the disciples’ expectations of a literal government *would* be fulfilled, but at a *later time* not yet revealed to them. Soon, two angels appeared and proclaimed, “This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven” (v. 11).

(Continued on page 30)

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Cover

22 U.S.-China Trade War: Coming Soon?

China is becoming a world power, challenging the U.S. and other capitalist nations, and starting to flex its military and economic muscle. How will this affect the U.S., and what does it mean for end-time prophecy?

Features



4 Vital Keys to Understanding Prophecy

More than a quarter of your Bible is prophecy. Do you know how to make sense of it? There are principles that can illuminate God's word for you, and help you know the truth about your future—and the future of the whole world!

10 Fear, Frustration or Faith?

Are you afraid? Are you frustrated? Millions find the stress of daily living almost unbearable. Can we have faith in the midst of challenges, dangers and anxieties? Yes, we can! God's word shows us how.



16 How the Romans United Europe: Then and Now

Does a united Europe sound plausible to you? It did to the ancient Romans, whose empire provides a model that many Europeans appreciate even today. A look at ancient Rome's techniques can help us understand Europe's very near future.

28 Giving Up Everest

Imagine that you have almost reached the pinnacle of your life's ambition, but a painful dilemma stands between you and your goal. What choices do you really have—and what are the consequences?



Departments

9 Questions & Answers

14 Prophecy Comes Alive

21 Letters to the Editor

26 Watch and Warn

31 TV/Radio Log

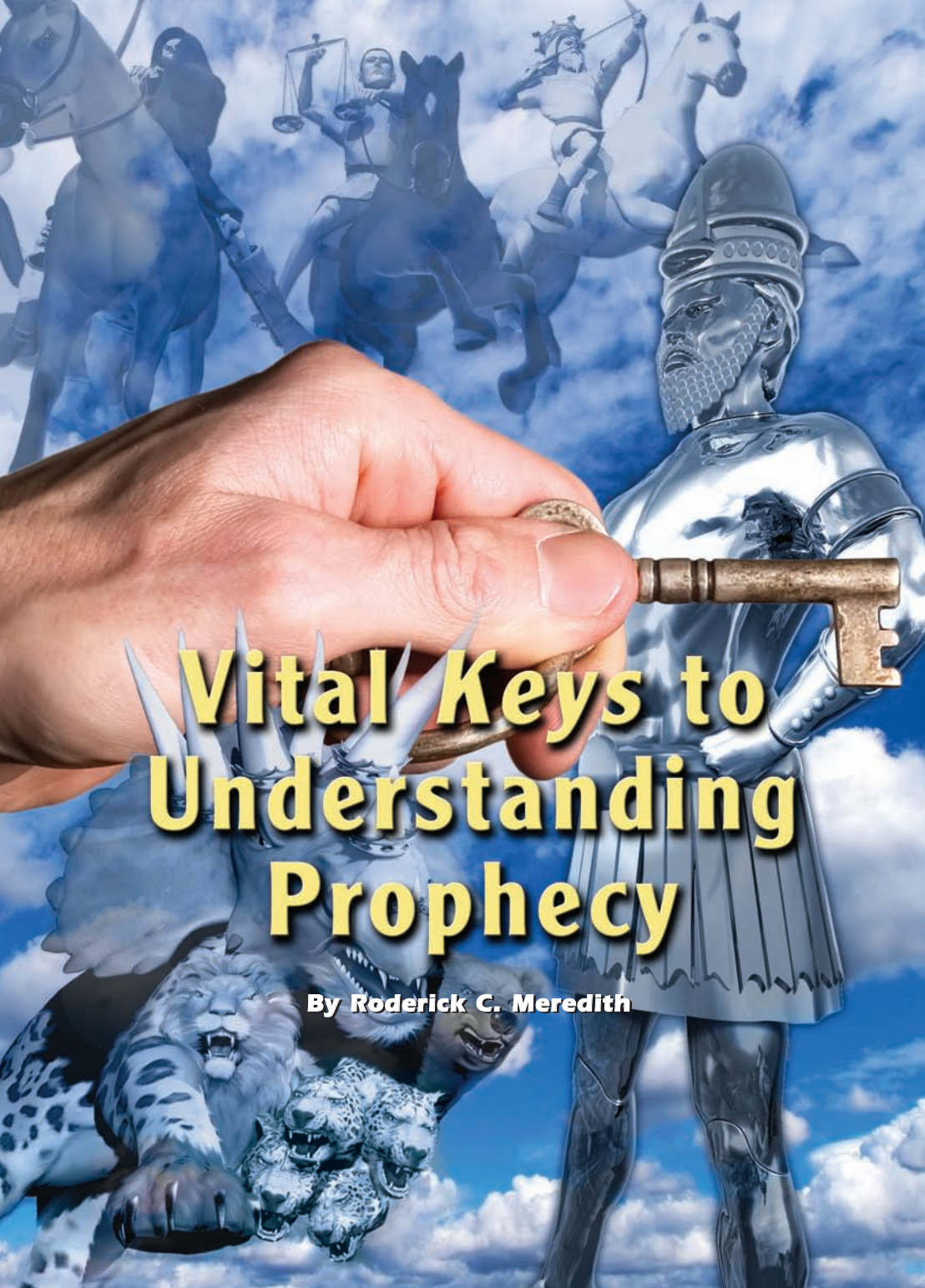
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Vital Keys to Understanding Prophecy

By Roderick C. Meredith

America is now at a *turning point* in its history. Respect for the United States is quickly declining all around the world. Even in the U.S., respect for its own President is at an all-time low. Internationally, the value of the U.S. dollar is declining and the nation is in danger of a financial catastrophe if it does not get its economic house in order. The nation's military forces are stretched very thin because of increasing commitments all over the world.

Meanwhile, a powerful *China* is challenging the U.S. on many fronts—economically, politically and militarily (see article on page 22). As swarms of Chinese diplomats and businessmen descend on South America, Africa and the Middle East, the strength of U.S. diplomatic and financial influence in these areas is waning. As the Associated Press recently reported: “China is rapidly extending its military reach, buying more long-range aircraft and weapons that will allow it to compete with the United States and potentially pose a threat to other countries in the region, a Pentagon report said Tuesday. The pace and scope of China’s progress in modernizing its military suggests it is looking beyond Taiwan, according to the annual study” (*Charlotte Observer*, May 24, 2006).

Also, as we have reported for many years, a full-scale “United States of Europe” is quietly being put together right under our noses! Eventually, as Bible prophecy clearly indicates, *this* is the power that ultimately poses the greatest threat to the U.S., Canada and Britain. What most Americans do not realize is that much of this

European empire-building is being done by “stealth.” Leading members of the British Parliament have expressed deep concern. As reported in the *London Daily Telegraph*: “The European Commission has drawn up plans to set up a European coastguard, which critics fear is a back-door attempt by Brussels to create an EU navy with its own powers to stop and search shipping.... Lloyd’s List, the daily newspaper which covers the maritime industry, accused the commission of attempting to build up a navy by stealth in a leading article last week. ‘The concept of a European coastguard has a federalist charm about it that causes eyes to brighten instantly among gatherings of Europhiles, tired of endless discussions about fish or agriculture,’ the newspaper said. ‘In a way, it is a European navy, by the back door.’ Julian Brazier, the shadow shipping minister, said: ‘This is very worrying news. It seems the empire building ambitions of Brussels know no bounds. The drift towards an EU navy must be stopped’” (May 25, 2006). A “stealth” European Empire with a stealth navy?

Please note that *just before* Jesus Christ’s second coming, a group of ten “kings” (leaders) will give their power and authority to a charismatic dictator called the “Beast.” These leaders and their people will be *so deceived* that they will end up directly *making war* with the returning Jesus Christ (Revelation 17:11–14)!

Wow!

Why have many of you never heard *that* before? Because most of you have heard *very little* about the one-fourth of the Bible that is inspired prophecy! You have heard mainly sentimentalities about the “little Lord Jesus,” or

about “giving your heart to the Lord,” or about “floating off to heaven” when you die and then apparently sitting around for untold billions of years with virtually **nothing** to do!

The exciting prophecies of your Bible have been mainly ignored or misunderstood. Most have neglected the enormously important message of the soon-coming Kingdom or *government* of God. That government will be set up *on this earth*, where the true saints of God will assist Jesus Christ in **ruling** the nations (1 Corinthians 6:2–3; Revelation 2:26–27; 5:9–10). “Mainstream Christian” churches have neglected or ridiculed this truth, though it is what your Bible plainly teaches. This is **why** you probably do not really understand Bible prophecy, and why you can easily be misled about it.

In this article, I will give you several basic *keys* to understanding Bible prophecy. I *challenge* you to *prove* these keys’ validity by *using them* in your study of the Bible and in your study of *world news*. Remember that after outlining several **end-time** prophetic events, Jesus Christ taught us: “**Watch**, therefore, and *pray* *always* that you may be counted worthy to **escape** all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36).

Our National Identity

After describing how He has set the sun, moon and stars in their places, God said, “If those ordinances depart from before Me, says the LORD, then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before Me forever.’ Thus says the LORD: ‘If heaven

above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done,’ says the LORD” (Jeremiah 31:36–37).

That is a very dramatic statement by our **Creator**! But is God just talking about the tiny remnant of the Jewish people, as so many assume? *No way!*

For, in this same inspired passage of scripture, God also said: “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Jeremiah 31:31–33).

Here, in plain language, the God of the Bible clearly described *two different parts* of His people “Israel.” For God said His covenant will be with “the house of Israel **and** with the house of Judah.” Yet most people have been led to believe that “Jew” means *Israel* and that “Israel” means *Jew*!

Although they may not have told you, *all* knowledgeable theologians recognize that the “house of Israel” *split off* from Judah (the “Jews”) and became a *separate* nation. The Bible often describes “Israel” as warring *against* the “Jews!” In fact, in the *King James Version*, the very first time the word “Jew” is even men-

tioned is when the kings of Syria and *Israel* were *fighting* the “Jews” (2 Kings 16:5–6).

Where IS the House of Israel?

So, where is the house of Israel today? After Solomon’s son Rehoboam became king of Judah, he *cracked down* on the ten tribes of Israel. Those tribes then *split off* from Judah, saying: “To your tents, O Israel! Now, see to your own house, O David!” (1 Kings 12:16). The author of 1 Kings then concludes, “So Israel has been in *rebellion* against the house of David to this day” (v. 19). After this followed a period of some two centuries of alternating peace and warfare between the house of *Israel* and the house of *Judah* (the *Jews*)—two *separate* nations. Eventually, around 721BC, Assyria took the ten-tribed house of Israel into captivity, and “Israel” seemingly disappeared. Modern historians sometimes write of the “Lost Ten Tribes” of Israel.

Lost?

But what about God’s solemn promise that He would *never* allow the people of Israel to “cease from being a nation?” (Jeremiah 31:36). Has God’s promise *failed*?

No!

For, in Genesis 49, we find an inspiring prophecy about the state of each of the twelve tribes of Israel in the “last days” (v. 1). Judah was to retain the “scepter” and produce the *Messiah*—the ultimate King over the earth (v. 10). The other nations proceeding from Jacob’s (Israel’s) sons were described very briefly—*except Joseph*. Only Joseph—whom God

used powerfully to save Egypt’s grain and produce and **feed much of the world** in a time of drought—is described in *very*



The U.S. and British nations have sent more food, medical supplies and financial aid to beleaguered countries than all the other nations on earth combined!

lengthy and glowing terms. In the “last days,” Joseph was to be mightily **blessed**: “By the God of your father who will help you, and by the Almighty who will bless you with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. The blessings of your father have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers” (Genesis 49:25–26).

In our day, it should be obvious that **no other peoples** have received blessings of worldwide power comparable to what the U.S. and British-descended peoples have shared! *Together*, these nations won every major war for about two centuries. *These two nations* have sent more food, medical supplies and financial aid to beleaguered countries than all the other nations on earth combined! They have, together, certainly acted like “brothers!”

Are they brothers?

Yes! Although Americans often speak of their British “cousins,” the Bible shows that these two nations are much more than that! Just before the description of the awesome **blessings** “Joseph” would receive in the “last days,” the Bible describes how Israel (Jacob) laid his hands on Joseph’s sons—Ephraim and Manasseh—and predicted that these two grandsons of Israel would *bear his name*. He said, “Let my name be named upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham

and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth” (Genesis 48:16).

Joseph tried to cause his father Jacob to give the greater blessing to Manasseh, the older son. “But his father refused and said, ‘I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations.’ So he blessed them that day, saying, ‘By you Israel will bless, saying, ‘May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!’ And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh” (vv. 19–20).

The younger brother, Ephraim, became the British people who controlled, until recently, the greatest empire in world history. At its height, Britain controlled Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, much of Africa and many other areas of the world. Except for the Panama Canal, Britain controlled virtually **all** of the world’s major “sea gates.” For God had specifi-

cally promised that Abraham's descendants would "possess the gate of their enemies" (Genesis 22:17). God extended this awesome promise through Abraham's son, Isaac, whose wife was prophetically blessed in this way, "May your descendants possess the gates of those who hate them" (Genesis 24:60).

In this way, Almighty God directly guided world affairs so that the sons of Jacob, whose name was changed to "Israel," were to become the *greatest nations* on earth. The U.S. became the one "great" nation in the last days, with younger brother Ephraim becoming the great "company" or *commonwealth* of nations—the British empire! For God stated: "Your name is Jacob; your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but **Israel** shall be your name.' So He called his name Israel. Also God said to him: 'I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a **nation** and a **company of nations** shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body" (Genesis 35:10–11).

Once you grasp this vital *key* to national identities, you can much more easily understand the **dozens** of end-time prophecies describing what will happen to "Israel." For—although *some* of these prophecies may include the Jewish people and the tiny Jewish state that calls itself Israel—these prophecies usually apply to *all twelve nations* descended from Israel. Also, when the Bible speaks prophetically of the house of Israel, it is **always** referring not only to "Judah" (the *Jews*), but also to the other nations proceeding from Jacob's sons. Since Israel's "name" was *specifically placed* on Ephraim and Manasseh, most of

the **major** end-time prophecies concern the U.S. and British-descended peoples. That is **vital** to understand when considering end-time prophecies.

The FUTURE of the House of Israel

That is why *the U.S. and the British peoples* have become the great nation and company of nations. That is why *they* will bear the brunt of the soon-coming "Great Tribulation!" For, *in spite* of all the physical blessings they have received, they have *turned away* from the true God who gave these blessings. That is **why** the "time of Jacob's trouble" is, in fact, the coming Great Tribulation. For it is not merely a punishment on the tiny Jewish nation, but a **massive tribulation** coming upon the entire house of Israel, including especially the U.S. and British-descended peoples (Jeremiah 30:4–7).

Yet, when Jesus Christ returns, those nations will have been deeply humbled. Then, at the resurrection from the dead, God will raise up King David to once again rule over *all twelve tribes* of Israel (vv. 8–9). David will serve, of course, under Christ—who will be King of kings over the whole earth (Revelation 19:16). He will teach them to **obey** God's commandments and His laws! Notice: "David my servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them" (Ezekiel 37:24).

Ezekiel's inspiring prophecy reveals that, at that time, God will once again *join* all twelve nations of Israel together as *one people* (Ezekiel 37:16–26)! In that day, all the peoples of Britain

and America will learn to **love** the Jews—for they will finally learn that they are **one nation— one people!** "And I will make them *one nation* in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again" (v. 22).

Once you *understand* the prophetic *key* to finding modern-day Israel in end-time prophecy, these prophecies will truly *come alive* to you. Your newspaper reading and your television news viewing will become an almost daily saga of what is happening **now** to the descendants of Israel, and what this *means* to you and your loved ones in the immediate future!

If you have not yet done so, be sure to call or write immediately and request an absolutely **free** copy of our eye-opening booklet, *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy!* This booklet explains and *spells out* for you, in plain terms, the biblical and historical **proofs** of the national identity of the U.S. and British-descended peoples—and what this **means** to your future! Be sure to call or write and request and *study* this **vital key** to understanding what is going on around you in world news.

The Principle of DUALITY

Another vital *key* to understanding the Bible is to recognize that God often employed the principle of *duality* as He inspired the biblical authors. Certain prophecies have both an early fulfillment **and** a latter-day fulfillment.

Isaiah predicted that *Babylon* would be destroyed because of its

many sorceries and sins (Isaiah 13). In our day, a *modern* “Babylon” is described as a religio-political system that will also be destroyed—this time at *Christ’s second coming* (Revelation 18:1–4).

Jeremiah also predicted the fall of a modern “Babylon.” He described that both Israel and Judah would be released from the slavery imposed by this modern dictatorship (Jeremiah 30:4–8) and would come back to *seek* God in a repentant attitude after Christ’s return (Jeremiah 50:1–5). Many prophecies about the punishment of ancient Israel—as *seen in their biblical context*—clearly bridge over into a *modern* fulfillment just before or just after Jesus Christ’s second coming.

Other examples include the prophecies of Hosea, Amos and Micah. Although these books are clearly addressed to the ancient house of Israel, time and again there are definite references to *end-time* punishments on *modern* “Israel” because of similar sins and situations in today’s society. Throughout Hosea, God talks about the sins of adultery, drunkenness and false religion in *ancient* Israel. Then, suddenly, the writer describes the *final re-gathering* of Israel at Christ’s second coming (Hosea 3:5).

As we realize that the Bible is the “mind of God” in print, it is also important to understand how God chooses to help us grasp His plan and His will by using *duality* throughout His inspired word.

The Bible Interprets Its Own Symbols

The Bible uses many *symbols*, especially in the prophetic books. Daniel uses different sets of symbols to describe the major Gentile empires. He describes, for example, a great “image” symbolizing the four great world-ruling kingdoms that would succeed one another right up until Christ returns (Daniel 2:32–34).

Without the Bible’s *own* interpretation, we might wonder what this image symbolized. But Daniel tells King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, “You *are* this head of gold” (vv. 38–40). Nearly all Bible scholars and even interested historians agree that Daniel was clearly describing the then-current world-ruling kingdom, Babylon, as the “head of gold.” They acknowledge that Daniel describes the following great kingdoms that would come on the world scene: the Medo-Persian Empire, the Greco-Macedonian Empire of Alexander the Great and, finally, the mighty Roman Empire that arose centuries after Daniel’s death.

Finally, God inspired Daniel to describe the *Kingdom of God* typified by the “stone”—*Jesus Christ*—which will eventually crush *all* the warring, worldly kingdoms and “*shall stand forever*” (v. 44).

The book of Revelation pictures the living Jesus Christ—now seated at God’s right hand in



heaven—as in the middle of “seven lampstands” (Revelation 1:13), having in His right hand “seven stars” (v. 16). Again, without reading our *own* ideas into the Bible, we should let the Bible interpret *itself*. God’s word explains: “The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches” (v. 20).

One important symbol to understand is that the word “woman” sometimes represents a *church*—either God’s *true* Church or a great *false church*. The Apostle Paul wrote to Christians in Corinth: “For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:2). Here, the church is represented as a *woman*—the affianced “bride” of Christ.

In Ephesians 5:22–33, Paul repeatedly uses the analogy or symbolism of the Church as the wife of Jesus Christ: “Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything” (v. 24).

The Apostle John was inspired to use this same symbolism in describing the great *false church*—which will soon rise to its ultimate power and influence in our day. Note how this entire pagan system is described as a “woman”—though, in fact, a “fallen” woman—a great harlot. John was inspired to write, “And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads

(Continued on page 29)

Questions & Answers

Question: Many people believe that a human being's soul or spirit can separate from the body and travel to far distant places beyond the body's reach. This is not just a "New Age" or Eastern religion" idea; even some who call themselves Christians believe in "astral projection" or "out-of-body experiences." Does the Bible teach in 2 Corinthians 12:2–4 that a human being's soul and spirit can operate outside the body?

Answer: Many people have told stories of having an "out-of-body experience" during surgery, or of practicing "astral projection" (in which the soul supposedly travels to far away places while the body stays behind). Was the Apostle Paul describing a similar experience? The answer may surprise you!

In 2 Corinthians 12:2–4, as in the two previous chapters, Paul was describing his own experiences as a minister of the true gospel. He wrote: "I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

It is important to notice that in the previous verse (v. 1), Paul explained that he will come to "visions and revelations" of the Lord. The word translated as "visions" is the Greek *optasia*, meaning "a sight or vision presented to one, whether asleep or awake." The word translated as "revelations" is the Greek *apokalupsis*, meaning "laying bare, making naked a disclosure of truth, instruction concerning things previously unknown." In these verses, Paul acknowledges that he was not recounting physical experiences.

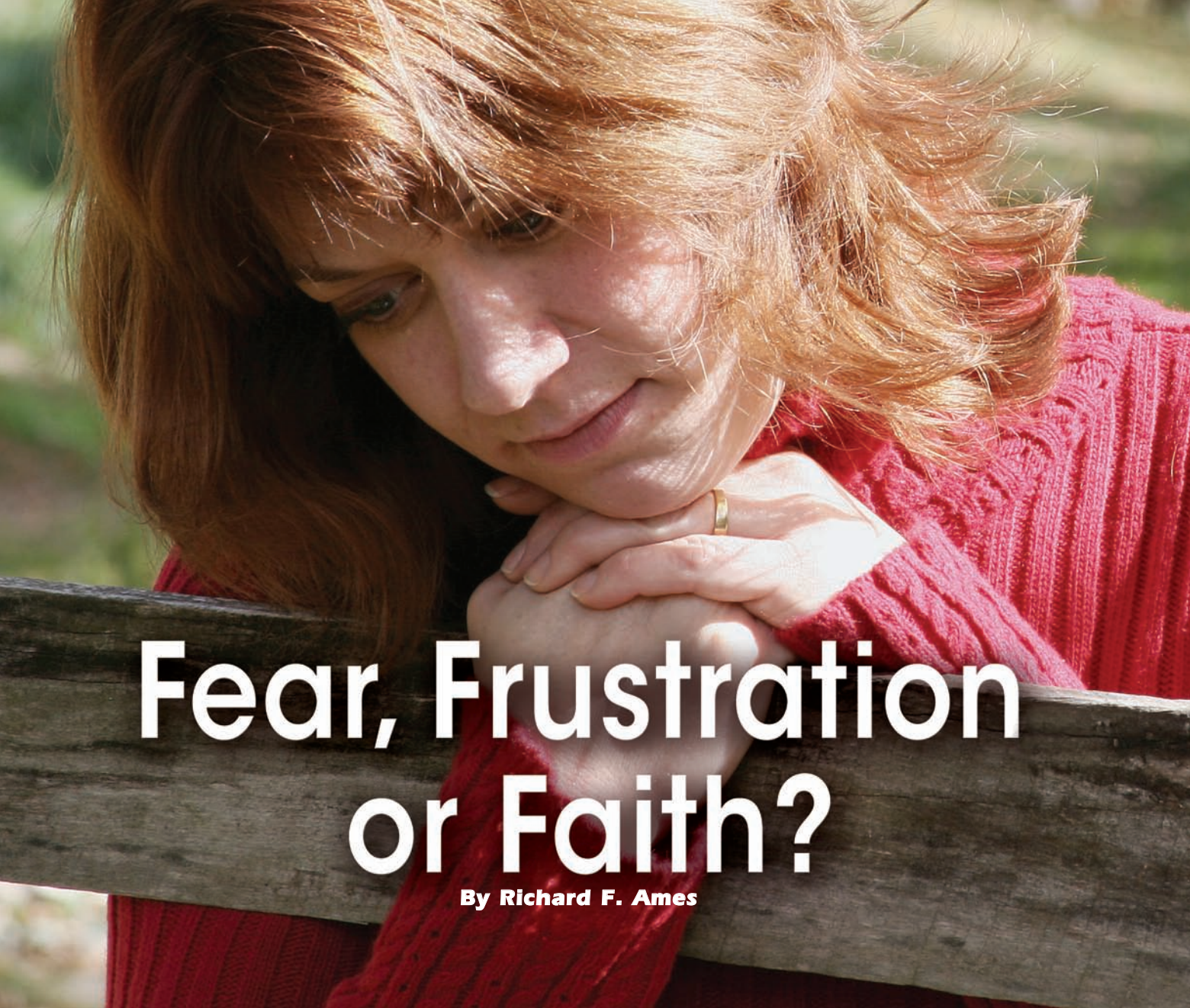
But was Paul describing an out-of-body experience? He tells us that his physical experience was so intense that he could not tell whether it was a mere vision within his mind, or whether he had actually been taken to heaven. Though Paul was plainly talking about visions at the start of 2 Corinthians 12, this particular

vision felt so real that he was unable to explain what had happened, except that he had felt as if he were "out of the body." Paul did not draw his own conclusion, though; he said plainly—twice—that "God [not Paul] knows" the nature of his spiritual vision of Paradise.

Another similar passage may help us appreciate Paul's phrasing in its proper context. He wrote to the Colossians, "For though I am absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in spirit" (Colossians 2:5). Was Paul telling the Colossians that he had left his body to be with the Colossians? Of course not!

Scripture helps us understand, in part, what Paul's vision was not. The Apostle John reminds us, "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven" (John 3:13). John wrote those words after Christ's resurrection. Had Paul actually ascended to heaven during his vision, John's words would not have been true. Rather, Paul experienced a vision, akin to the vision recounted in Matthew 17:1–9. In that passage, the word Jesus uses for "vision" is *horama*—a sight divinely granted in an ecstasy or in a sleep. Remember: when the disciples had this experience, neither Moses nor Elijah had ascended to heaven. Like Paul's experience, this was clearly a vision, not a mystical visit from two dead people!

Therefore, just as Peter, James and John did not actually ascend to heaven during their vision of the transfigured Jesus with Moses and Elijah, we can understand that Paul did not ascend to heaven. Similarly, people today may feel that they have had an "out-of-body experience" that seems real to them, but the Bible reveals that they are mistaken.



Fear, Frustration or Faith?

By Richard F. Ames

We live in a world of challenges, dangers and stress. Can faith overcome our frustrations?

Millions of people around the world suffer from anxiety disorders. A major news-magazine asked the question, how many of us are “worrying ourselves sick”?

That article observed, “There is certainly a lot of anxiety going around. Anxiety disorder—which is what health experts call any anxiety that persists to the point that it interferes with one’s life—is the most common mental illness in the U.S. In its various forms, ranging from very specific phobias to generalized anxiety disorder, it afflicts 19 million Americans” (“Understanding Anxiety,” *Time*, June 10, 2002, p. 48).

Many people experience even more serious mental health challenges, including panic attacks or panic disorder. The National Institute of Mental Health reported: “Approximately 2.4 million American adults ages 18 to 54, or about 1.7 percent of people in this age group in a given year, have panic disorder” (“When Fear Holds Sway,” April 9, 2004). Millions of us experience anxieties that interfere with normal living. Just the stress of everyday life can kill us. We commute in congested traffic. We interact with angry, argumentative people. We face financial, social and personal problems.

The Bible gives us strategies for overcoming worries, frustrations and anxieties. But our materialistic

world distracts us from spiritual priorities. Jesus chastised His listeners who worried about food and clothing. He said, “Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?” (Matthew 6:30).

Yet many of us allow ourselves to worry. We become fearful and anxious. What do Americans fear most? A 2001 Gallup Poll surveyed U.S. adults about their fears. The number one fear was snakes, affecting 51 percent; the second-most prominent fear was public speaking, affecting 40 percent. These were followed by: heights: 36 percent; enclosure in a small space: 34 percent; spiders and insects: 27 percent; needles and shots: 21 percent; mice: 20 percent; flying: 18 percent; thunder and lightning: 11 percent; dogs: 11 percent; crowds: 11 percent; going to the doctor: 9 percent; the dark: 5 percent.

God knows our fears. Jesus said that your Father knows you intimately. Jesus gives us this encouraging perspective and instruction: “Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows” (Luke 12:6–7). Or, as the *NIV* states it: “Don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows” (v. 7).

As you read and study God’s word—the Bible—you will learn of His awesome love and His amazing promises to you. You will find documentation of God’s intervention in people’s lives. He promises that He will intervene in your life! Just read Jesus’ words in

chapters 5–7 of Matthew’s gospel, often called “The Sermon on the Mount.” I was amazed when I first read those words. I was about 12 years old at the time. I took those words seriously and it began to change my life!

Today, many modern distractions keep us from spiritual priorities. We live in a materialistically minded world. Many seek wealth as their first goal in life, whether possessions of real estate, cars, boats, jewelry, cash or designer clothing. Others seek power of position in government, business or education. Others seek pleasure through illicit sex, overindulgence in media and other forms of entertainment, alcohol or illegal drugs. Many even become addicted to video games. Human nature causes us to turn to activities that deepen our fears and our frustrations. How can we replace those fears and frustrations with peace, faith and love?

A Godly Fear?

If we have reverence for God, we can keep our daily problems in perspective. Many in mainstream churches call the fear of God “primitive.” But the biblical fear of God is not “being afraid” of Him—it is a deep reverence and respect for our Creator. It is an awe of God’s majesty and greatness. It is a response to the reality of God. When you choose to fear God, you will not fear human beings. We must understand that the *fear* of God and the *love* of God are *not* mutually exclusive. Many professing Christians think that you have one or the other. That is *not* what your Bible says. Both qualities are required in our relationship with God. “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you

but to *fear* the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways and to *love* Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which command you today for your good?” (Deuteronomy 10:12–13).

A godly fear helps us overcome phobias and worries. “In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, and His children will have a place of refuge” (Proverbs 14:26). True faith and confidence—strong confidence—come from God.

The New Testament also praises the value of a godly fear. Notice: “By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with *godly fear*, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith” (Hebrews 11:7).

Yes, God requires that we both love Him *and* fear Him. Both qualities go hand in hand! I challenge you to read through the books of Psalms and Proverbs. The blessings and benefits of a godly fear will amaze you!

How else can we overcome our worries and anxieties? Jesus’ beloved apostle, John, wrote: “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment” (1 John 4:18). Love is the antidote to fear. How can we have that love? We must realize the profound truth John mentions: *God is love*. “And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him” (v. 16).

Yes, God loves us, and He will give us the gift of His spiritual love! He gives us this amazing promise: “And hope putteth not to

shame; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us” (Romans 5:5, ASV). Human selfish nature can be transformed into a loving, godly nature. We receive this precious gift of godly love by the Holy Spirit that was given to us. On the day of Pentecost, the Apostle Peter explained to thousands how to receive this wonderful gift: “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:38–39).



Are You Frustrated?

Sometimes, Christians are not close to God, and they become frustrated. Are you often frustrated? The word “frustrate” means “to prevent from attaining a purpose; to thwart.” The word comes from the French *frustra* which means “in vain.” The fruits of frustration can include mental anxiety, worry, turmoil, apprehension, nervousness, and restlessness. How can you overcome your frustrations?

Many of us live lives of worry and anxiety. We all experience frustration in our modern society. We sit in traffic jams when we are late for an appointment. We feel burdened with long hours on the job. We may feel rejected when asking someone for a date. We

may feel insecure, or unloved. We may have conflicts with friends or family. We may have health problems. We may lack patience. Things just go badly for us at our workplace, or school.

Why do we experience so many frustrations? Perhaps our focus is on the material rather than the spiritual. What goals are you setting? When you set the wrong goal, you can be thwarted and frustrated. The simple solution is to *set the right goal*. If you have not

already internalized these words of Jesus, you should: “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:33).

We become frustrated when we have the wrong goal, or no goal at all. God has made us for an awesome purpose. When we commit to His goal, and seek God’s Kingdom and His righteousness, we minimize life’s frustrations! We also become frustrated when we insist that our own will be done, without consideration for others. The selfish attitude is, “I want it my way.” Our Savior gave us the right example. Even when He faced crucifixion, He prayed, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done” (Luke 22:42).

Jesus surrendered to God’s will. When we surrender to God’s will instead of insisting on our own, we find peace and overcome our frustrations. Remember, Jesus taught us to pray, “Your will be

done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10).

We need to have the right motivation. We all need the godly attitude of *giving* as opposed to *getting*. Scripture tells us, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). Or, as the *Moffatt* translation has it, “It is happier to give than to get.”

Patience is another strategy for overcoming frustration. Several characteristics of love, or charity, are mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13, which is often called the “love chapter” in your Bible. What is the first characteristic? “Love suffers long and is kind” (1 Corinthians 13:4). Or, as the *NIV* states it, “Love is patient, love is kind.”

Can You Find Faith?

The Bible emphasizes our need for faith. Perhaps you are lacking faith and confidence. Can you have faith in this faithless age? Yes, you can. How? “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17).

Is it any wonder that many of us lack faith? If our priorities are materialistic, we will not have faith. Jesus of Nazareth made plain what our top priority in life should be. He addressed the common problem many have of worrying about their physical needs. “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing?”

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, *O you of little faith?* Therefore **do not worry**, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble” (Matthew 6:25–34).

Jesus encourages us to not be anxious or worry about our physical needs. The opposite of worry and anxiety is faith. So Jesus instructs us to focus on the spiritual. If we do, then all our physical needs will be added to us.

Abraham obeyed God in faith. You need to decide whether you will step out in faith and obey God, as Abraham did. Abraham believed God’s promises. Will you believe your Bible? Will you believe the wonderful promises God has for you? Notice Paul’s description of Abraham: “He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore ‘it was accounted to him for righteousness” (Romans 4:20–22).

Ask yourself, “When I read God’s promises in the Bible, do I believe that God is able to perform what He has promised?” If you do, you are well on your way

to living by faith. Read your Bible, and claim God’s promises. He wants you to have a close relationship with Him.

God promises to provide our every need. The Apostle Paul wrote, “And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19). That is God’s promise to you. Once you know God’s promises, you can talk it over with God in prayer. You can claim God’s promises. You will follow His instruction, “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened” (Matthew 7:7–8).

Take God at His word. Pray to Him, according to His will. Ask, seek, and knock. You will find that answered prayer will help you overcome your worries, frustrations and anxieties with faith.

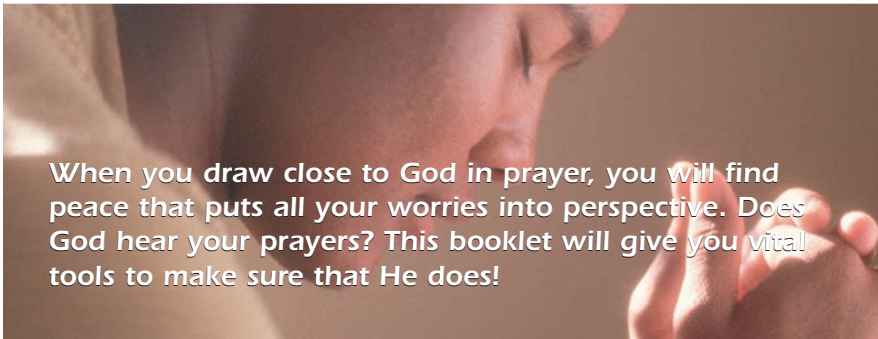
The godly qualities of patience, faith, obedience and surrender to God’s will (and His divine love) will help us overcome our frustrations, fears and anxieties. God wants us to live by faith. He will give us that faith, if we draw close to Him in prayer, and seek to understand His will from

the Bible. The April 2005 edition of *Reader’s Digest* featured an article titled: “New Proof Prayer Works.” Author Julie Bain wrote, “While no one can absolutely prove that prayers cure illnesses, many doctors cite cases of recovery that can’t be attributed to any other reason. What we do know, though, is that religion and spirituality can reduce stress and boost the immune system” (p. 153).

The Bible instructs us to pray daily. If we humble ourselves to seek God in prayer, and if we read the Bible seeking to do God’s will, He will give us more faith and more peace of mind. As the Apostle Paul wrote, “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). Three times in the New Testament, we read that “the just shall live by faith” (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38). As we draw closer to God in our actions and in our prayers, we can have the godly fear that will help us face our frustrations, and experience the benefits of faith.

God gives us amazing promises in His word, the Bible. We need to act on those promises. Then we can have the love that casts out fear and frustration, and we can live by faith. ■


Twelve Keys to Answered Prayer



When you draw close to God in prayer, you will find peace that puts all your worries into perspective. Does God hear your prayers? This booklet will give you vital tools to make sure that He does!

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The Petrine Deception



Last June, Pope Benedict XVI reminded a crowd of 50,000 people in St. Peter's Square that the foundation of his authority is *the rock* on which Jesus founded the Catholic Church—that

rock being the Apostle Peter. In his remarks, he urged, "Let us pray, so that the *primacy of Peter*... will be increasingly recognized in its true meaning by brothers not yet in communion with us" (*Zenit News Agency*, June 7, 2006). Benedict was proclaiming that all who call themselves Christians should acknowledge the Roman pontiff as the unique and singular head of the Christian world.

His claim—the so-called "Petrine theory"—has been standard Roman Catholic teaching for centuries. Many, however, do not realize that *neither the Bible nor history* support such an assertion of papal authority. In fact, Benedict's notion of papal primacy is one of religion's longest-running *deceptions!*

Roman Doctrine vs. the Bible

The "primacy of Peter" doctrine asserts that Jesus gave Peter, and Peter's successors, authority to function as the sole custodians of true Christian teaching—and as Pope Benedict asserted, "This primacy is for all time" (*ibid.*). Supporters of this doctrine point to one key passage of scripture, in which Jesus said, "you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church... I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven" (Matthew 16:18–19).

A careful study of this passage and other scriptures, however, reveals something very different from what Benedict has in mind. In the original Greek text, Jesus' statement is actually a play on words. The Greek word for "Peter" is *petros* (meaning a small stone), and the Greek word for "rock" is *petra* (a huge rock or mountain). The Bible clearly shows that Jesus Christ is the

Rock (see 1 Corinthians 10:4; 1 Peter 2:4; see also Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 28:16). He was referring to Himself as the *petra*, and to His disciple Peter as the *petros*.

Scripture also shows that the Church was *not founded on Peter alone*, but was "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, *Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone*" (Ephesians 2:20). Jesus described His *petros*—Peter—as a foundation stone of the Church, along with the other apostles and prophets. However, Jesus Christ and His teachings would remain the true foundation of the Church. This is the true meaning of Matthew 16:18–19. Attempts to twist this verse into a statement of Peter's exclusive authority are simply not biblical. This is why the Roman claim for power based on Peter's supposed primacy has *never been accepted* by the Eastern Orthodox churches, and why it was *rejected* by the Protestant reformers (see *Civilization Past & Present*, Wallbank, p. 133).

Peter's Biblical Role

What does the Bible reveal about Peter's role in the early Church? Peter is placed first in lists of the twelve apostles (Matthew 10:1–4; Luke 6:13–16). He was often the spokesman for the group (Matthew 16:13–16), and he gave the first sermon on Pentecost (Acts 2). Peter, along with James and John, was one of three pillars in the Jerusalem Church (Galatians 2:9). Peter, Paul and Barnabas made observations about doctrine at a conference in Jerusalem, but James—not Peter—chaired the conference and rendered the final decision (Acts 15). Peter was the apostle to the Jews, and Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles—but neither one is listed as above the other (Galatians 2:7). Paul even corrected Peter (Galatians 2:11–14). Peter refused homage when it was offered (Acts 10:25–26); no one kissed his ring. The Bible reveals that Peter was a leader among the apostles, but he neither had nor claimed primacy over the others.

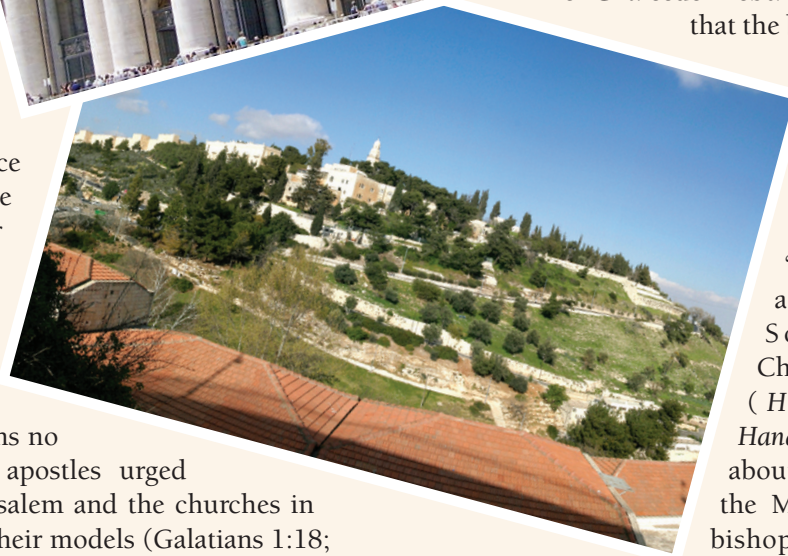
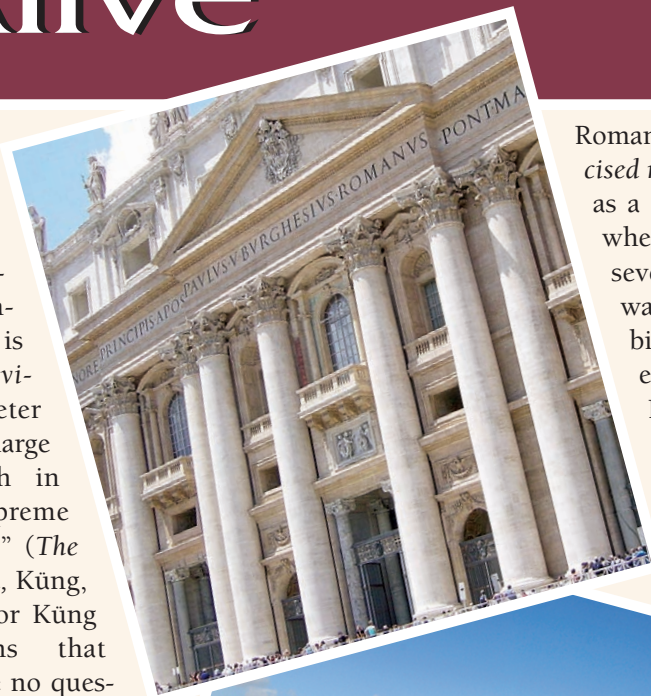
Facts of History

But was Peter the first pope to preside in Rome? Even Catholic sources acknowledge that the term "pope" was not used in the West "until the first half of the 5th century" (*Short Biographies of All the Popes*,

Lozzi Roma, p. 2). As scholar Hans Küng states: “Catholic theologians concede that there is *no reliable evidence* that Peter was ever in charge of the church in Rome as supreme head or bishop” (*The Catholic Church*, Küng, p. 20). Professor Küng also mentions that “there could be no question of a legal primacy—or even of a pre-eminence based on the Bible—of the Roman community or even of the Bishop of Rome in the first centuries” (*ibid.*, p. 49). The New Testament does not link Peter with Rome, and it mentions no successor to Peter. The apostles urged Christians to look to Jerusalem and the churches in Judea—not to Rome—as their models (Galatians 1:18; 1 Thessalonians 2:14).

Historians know that the bishop of Rome was “at first only one of several patriarchs” (*Civilization Past & Present*, Wallbank, 6th ed., p. 133). There were also patriarchs in Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria who were regarded as equals—but history records that they were also competitive and grasping for power. Around 160AD, Bishop Anacetus of Rome tried to pressure Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna, to keep the Roman Easter instead of the biblical Passover held on Nisan 14. Anacetus was unsuccessful, because Polycarp said he was following a tradition learned from the Apostle John. Fifty years later, another Roman bishop, Victor, threatened to excommunicate the eastern churches for not adopting the Roman date of Easter. Again they refused, and they continued to follow true apostolic teaching.

The Petrine theory holds that Peter’s successors are to decide doctrinal matters for the Church. Yet, at the Council of Nicaea in 325AD, records show that the



Roman bishop, Sylvester I, *did not attend and exercised no primacy* when the date of Easter was set as a replacement for the biblical Passover, and when Sunday worship officially replaced the seventh-day Sabbath. The Council of Nicaea was called and presided over not by a Roman bishop, but by the Emperor Constantine. As emperor, Constantine held the title of Pontifex Maximus in the pagan Roman religion—a title that Roman bishop Leo I would adopt a century later when arguing for the Petrine primacy over all other bishops. In 451AD, however, the Council of Chalcedon rebuffed Leo, and decreed that the bishops of Rome and

Constantinople had equal authority. By 1200AD, Pope Innocent III was claiming to be the “Vicar of Christ,” and the Supreme Sovereign of the Church and the world (*Halley’s Bible Handbook*, p. 776). For about 600 years during the Middle Ages, Roman bishops pointed to the “Donation of Constantine”

as evidence of their right to preside over all the other bishops, but the document was later proven to be a *fraud* (Kung, p. 50).

Prophetic Warnings

Scripture and history both show that the early Church did not recognize the Roman theory of Petrine primacy. Rather, it was ambitious Roman bishops who developed the doctrine to gain power over other bishops and their churches. Jesus Christ warned that at the end of the age, many would be deceived by false teachers claiming to represent Him (Matthew 24:3–5). Paul warned that *in the latter times* hypocritical teachers would spread lies (1 Timothy 4:1–3) and would delude people into believing *ancient heresies and unbiblical traditions* (2 Thessalonians 2:1–15). These long-standing warnings are *coming alive today!*

—Douglas S. Winnail



How The Romans United Europe: Then and Now

By Douglas S. Winnail

The modern drive to unite Europe began shortly after World War II, and has made remarkable progress in just a few decades. However, *significant obstacles* to European unity remain. There is no single central leader. There are many competing nationalisms. No single spiritual framework binds the diverse peoples of Europe together.

Two thousand years ago, the Roman Empire overcame similar hurdles. Ancient Rome created a cultural and political unity that led to history's most successful and longest-lasting empire. Today, proponents of a unified Europe look back with admiration on what Rome accomplished. This is not surprising, for Bible prophecy reveals that in the end-times, Europe will be united under a religious-political system using many of the same strategies that were used in ancient Rome. Few today understand the significance of events in Europe, but Bible students can recognize how long-propheesied events are coming together in Europe to affect the entire world.

Ancient prophecies reveal that the *final phase* of the Roman Empire will emerge in the “last days” (Daniel 2:28, 41–45). Over the last 50 years, we have witnessed the *formative stages* of this long-propheesied event. In 1946, Winston Churchill called for the creation of “a kind of United States of Europe” (*The Principality and Power of Europe*, Hilton, p. 21). Two years later, Churchill told the Congress of Europe, “We hope to see a Europe where men of every country will think of being European as of belonging to their native land” (*The European Dream*, p. 200, Rifkin). In 1951, six European nations seeking to prevent a future war—France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg—signed the Treaty of Paris to form the European Coal and Steel Community. That treaty placed a long-disputed industrial region between France and Germany under a *supranational authority* with regulatory powers, a legislative assembly and a European Court. In 1957, the same six nations signed the Treaty of Rome, establishing the European Economic Community (EEC), which created a common market and a European Parliament. It also formed a European Commission that would formulate laws and regulations, harmonize tax codes and reduce internal customs barriers (*ibid.*, pp. 201–202).

In 1992, the Treaty of Maastricht transformed the EEC into the European Union. Fifteen member nations agreed to form a European police force, a European bank—and a single currency, the euro. In 2002, ten additional nations from Central, Southern and Eastern Europe joined the EU, bringing the total membership to 25.

In 2004, EU representatives met again in Rome to sign the new European Constitution. Signatories felt they were gathered for a lofty purpose. A marble plaque commemorating the occasion reads, “On 29 October 2004 in this most sacred Capitoline Hill... the high contracting parties of the nations joined in the European Union signed a treaty about the form of constitution to be adopted, so that the races of Europe might coalesce *into a body of one people with one mind, one will and one government.*”

British journalist Boris Johnson noted, “When did the Continent of Europe last have one mind, one will, one government? *Not since the fall of the Roman Empire*” (*The Dream of Rome*, pp. 30–31). Indeed, the use of Roman methods to create a unified Europe has not gone unnoticed. Johnson wrote: “In many ways the European Union can be seen as *the inheritor of the Roman Empire*, an attempt to unite this vast and disparate territory *in the way that the Romans did...* It is that memory, of a peaceful and united continent, that is so appealing... and that... is why *the latest and most ingenious attempt to rebuild the Roman Empire...* should have begun in the Eternal City” (*ibid.*, pp. 1, 22, 52).

Belgian politician Paul-Henri Spaak was one of the “founding fathers” of the modern effort to

unite Europe. Commenting on how it felt to sign the Treaty of Rome in 1957, he observed, “we felt like Romans on that day... We were consciously recreating the Roman Empire once more” (*The Signature of God*, Jeffrey, p. 191).

Few today realize that the prophet Daniel *predicted* these developments more than 2,500 years ago!

Ancient and Modern Parallels

When we study how the Romans unified Europe, the parallels soon become obvious. The Romans developed a system of laws, courts and administrative skills to manage their empire. Today, Roman law forms the basis of legal codes in France, Italy, Latin American countries—and the EU, as well as much international law. Roman law also undergirds Roman Catholic canon law (*Civilization Past & Present*, Wallbank, 6th edition, pp. 87–88).

English common law differs from Roman law in one key area. Under English law, suspects are considered innocent until proven guilty. Roman law treats suspects as guilty until proven innocent. The contrast between these two legal approaches has had a profound influence on the types of societies built on those very different legal foundations.

The EU has also formulated an expanding body of laws and regulations that are slowly and quietly pulling the nations of Europe into an ever-closer union. These European laws, draining power away from member states, supersede national laws and apply

to any countries or corporations wanting to trade within the EU. When the European Court enforces these laws, it will supersede the courts of member nations. This European legal system will bind countries together as a legal entity that will become a united federal Europe! As the nations of the world conform to European laws in order to do business in an economically prosperous Europe, the EU will become the chief power determining the rules of global trade.

The Romans developed a reliable system of coinage as they united the continent. From the time of Augustus, about 11BC, a *single currency* was in use throughout the empire.

Coins were stamped with the head of the emperor and conveyed a powerful political message. The EU has also established a common currency—the *euro*. When EU leaders

launched a single currency, they “*knew that they were taking a huge step towards a political union in much of what had been the old Roman Empire*” (Johnson, p. 175). The European Bank is located in Frankfurt, Germany. In the Middle Ages, Germany was the *political center* of the Holy Roman Empire. The EU is developing a tax that will be paid directly to Brussels—EU headquarters. The Roman Empire levied a similar tax that paid for the army, civil servants and public expenditures supporting the Empire. Both in the past and in the present, currency reforms have played a significant role in efforts to unify Europe!

Military power fostered peace in ancient Rome, and had significant economic implications. “The



Pax Romana [Roman Peace] was responsible for the elimination of tolls and other artificial barriers, the suppression of piracy and brigandage, and the establishment of a reliable coinage. Such factors, in addition to the longest period of peace the West has ever enjoyed, explain in large measure the great expansion of commerce that occurred in the first and second centuries AD” (Wallbank, p. 83).

The EU has removed internal customs barriers and opened borders to facilitate trade and travel between member countries. This process began during an era of peace guaranteed by U.S. military power. However, like the Romans, the EU is building its own army, and recent reports suggest that the plan to set up a European coast guard is “a back-door attempt to create a EU navy” (*The Sunday Telegraph*, May 21, 2006).

Stealth Conquest

Ancient Rome conquered and united Europe *openly by force*. Today, the EU is attempting to unite the continent by *legislative and regulative stealth*. The Romans recruited *provincial elites* to become agents of the Romanizing process. In return for helping to raise taxes, local chiefs were backed by the Roman army and given citizenship—“and the Romans were careful to leave them with the *illusion* of self-government” (Johnson, pp. 126–127). In time, it became a mark of distinction to wear a toga, go to baths and games and hobnob at parties in Roman villas. Today, the EU is using the same process in its attempt to unite Europe. When individuals are elected to the European Parliament (or appointed to the

European Commission), their salaries soar, they travel in style, and they live the good life as they spread the “gospel of Europe” to their home countries.

The Roman historian Tacitus described the process of inducing provincials to adopt Roman ways as a *form of slavery*: “So the population was gradually led into the demoralizing temptations of arcades, baths, and sumptuous banquets. The unsuspecting Britons spoke of such novelties as ‘civilization,’ when in fact they were only a feature of their *enslavement*” (*The Agricola*, 22). In the ancient world, Romanization *enslaved the provinces in a gilded cage* (Johnson, p. 131). Modern efforts by the European elite to unite the continent by stealth could spell trouble—as nations wake up to the fact they have been enmeshed in a *legislative and regulatory prison* from which escape will be difficult.

The Roman *approach to religion* also helped to assimilate diverse peoples into a united empire. Foreign religions were seldom divisive in the Roman world, because “the Romans were both cunning and easy-going... they *welcomed* new gods and just *merged* local gods with Roman divinities” (Johnson, p. 50). Prior to the coming of Christianity, “the chief imperial cult [in Rome] had become Sol Invictus (the Unconquered Sun, whose temple was dedicated 25 December)” —the time of the winter solstice and the rebirth of the Sun god (*ibid.*, p. 33). When Constantine made “Christianity” the religion of the Empire, the notion spread that Jesus was born on the already-sacred day of 25 December, even though Christ was born in the fall of the year.

In the Roman effort to use religion to unify the empire, the birthday of the sun god became the birthday of the “Son of God” to facilitate pagans’ conversion to the new state religion!

Ephesus had been the worship center of the virgin-mother goddess Artemis, and was a major tourist attraction with a magnificent temple and thousands of priests and priestess-prostitutes. Gradually, it became associated with stories about the virgin mother of Christ. A large church was built in Ephesus, and souvenir statues of the “Virgin Mary” were sold in place of Artemis, as the tale was told that Mary had been buried there (Johnson, pp. 119–120). This exemplifies the Roman technique of using their malleable religion to bind their empire together.

In Europe today, religion has been sidelined by secularism. There is no Euro-religion, and there are no Euro-religious rituals to cement the unity of the continent (see Johnson, p. 186). The “spiritual dimension” that bound the Roman Empire together is *missing today*—the religious factor has yet to be used. Watch for a powerful religious personality who will coax European political leaders into a spiritual union.

Cult of the Emperor

Powerful personalities have played important roles in efforts to unite Europe, and the cult of the Roman emperor is a prime example. Octavian (later titled Augustus Caesar) was “the founder of the Roman Empire” and “one of the great pivotal figures in history” (*The 100*, Hart, p. 127). Only 18 years old when his great-uncle Julius Caesar was assassinated, Octavian used ambi-

tion, cunning, courage and determination to rise to the top of the Roman political system. Once in control, he ended the strife and civil wars that nearly destroyed the Roman Republic, and he reorganized the government. He formed a capable civil service, built an extensive network of roads, reorganized the army and established a permanent navy. As a populist—“delighting in the pleasures of the people”—he beautified Rome, attended the games and sanctioned their

ordained, and... that the Roman emperor was *also divine*” (*ibid.*, p. 96). This fusion of religion and politics became a powerful strategy for unifying the empire.

Boris Johnson makes this cogent observation: “The emperor cult was a *key element* in the process by which Europe was Romanized... to understand how the Romans ran Europe so well for so long, we have to understand the mesmerizing way in which Augustus set up the idea of a *divinely ordained empire*, with a

European continent? More than 2,500 years ago, King Nebuchadnezzar had a vision of a giant image, picturing four empires that would dominate the Mediterranean world (Daniel 2:36–43). The two legs of the image reveal that the fourth empire—Rome—would divide into eastern and western parts, and that the *final phase* of this fourth empire (the feet of iron and clay) will be a “fragile... sort of federation” composed of nations that were once part of the



Augustus understood the people he ruled—their “obsession with tradition, and the validation of the past.” He built temples and promoted the old Roman religion. Because he ended decades of strife, and ushered in a golden age of peace and prosperity, many saw him as a “savior” and some kind of god.

mounting extravagance (Johnson, pp. 92–94). During his 40-year reign, Augustus *talked* of restoring the Republic, but kept his fingers on the sources of power—becoming a benevolent dictator who used a *democratic façade* to maintain his personal tyranny.

Augustus understood the people he ruled—their “obsession with tradition, and the validation of the past” (*ibid.*, p. 91). He built temples and promoted the old Roman religion. Because he ended decades of strife, and ushered in a golden age of peace and prosperity, many saw him as a “savior” and some kind of god. Augustus used Roman poets (the “media” of the ancient world) to mold a “single political consciousness” throughout the empire and spread the idea that the “boy emperor” was a “wonder child” who would “pacify and rule the world” (Johnson, pp. 74, 82). The feeling grew, “that the success of Rome was *divinely*

divinely ordained emperor at the center... The great advantage of the Roman system was that their emperor-god actually existed... This had enormous political advantages, and it helps to explain how the Romans ran Europe and created that sense of unity that has eluded everyone else ever since... *it was the pagan system with emperor worship at its heart that allowed the Romans to run Europe*... Augustus had the *imagination* to see how it might work, and the *authority* to fulfill the role so successfully that it was centuries before it finally fell apart” (Johnson, pp. 98–100). This strategy *has yet to be tried* in Europe today.

An Ancient Vision

What, then, is the *real significance* of modern efforts to unite the nations of Europe? What do Bible prophecies reveal about future developments on the

Roman Empire (*The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 47). This is exactly what is developing in Europe today! The *ten toes* indicate that there will be *ten nations* or *ten national leaders* involved in the final revival of the Roman Empire.

The prophecies also reveal: “In the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed” (Daniel 2:44), and that the returning Jesus Christ (the stone) will strike the image and put an end to those worldly kingdoms (Daniel 2:44–45). These events will occur at the close of this age, when Jesus Christ returns to this earth.

The *real significance* of the modern efforts to unify Europe using Roman methods and the Roman model is that we are witnessing the *final revival* of the Roman Empire that was prophesied to occur *just before the return*

of Jesus Christ! We can expect to see the current European Union of 25 nations *rearrange itself around a core of ten nations* as we approach this climactic event.

Bible prophecies indicate that the leaders of these final ten nations will be “of one mind, and will give their power and authority” to a clever and charismatic politician called “the beast” (Revelation 13:1–10; 17:12–13). This individual will allow, and then stop, daily sacrifices by Jews in Jerusalem, and will set up an idol that will defile the temple (Daniel 8:11–14; Matthew 24:15). He is described as an evil person who will gain power by deceit and flattery, appearing as an advocate of peace, yet becoming militant and using state power for his own ends—not unlike Augustus, Napoleon, Mussolini or Hitler (Daniel 11:21–24). He will “cast truth to the ground” and blaspheme what is holy during a brief period of prosperity, “and he shall magnify himself in his heart” before meeting his demise (Daniel 8:12, 23–26; 11:36–39). The modern attempt to unite Europe lacks a strong, cunning, central leader, but the Bible reveals that such a leader *will appear!* The Roman Empire was founded by such a man, and the leader of the final revival will reflect the founder (Daniel 2:28, 45).

A Turn to Religion?

The Bible and history indicate that European leaders will *again turn to religion* to provide the glue to hold disparate nations together. Just as the Romans tapped the power of religion and the emperor cult to bind their empire together, European leaders are beginning to echo the same theme. For decades, popes have spoken of Europe’s *spiritual vacuum*, and have warned

that economic regulations cannot truly bind peoples together. In 1975, Pope Paul VI declared, “it is faith, the Christian faith, *the Catholic faith* that made Europe... It is there that our mission as bishops in Europe takes on a gripping perspective. *No other force in Europe can render the service that is confided to us...* to awaken Europe’s Christian soul, where its unity is rooted” (Hilton, p. 35). In 1979, Pope John Paul II said that to find fundamental unity, Europe “must turn to Christianity. Economic and political reasons cannot do it. We must go deeper” (*ibid.*, p. 33). In 1982, the pope entreated Europeans, “Find yourself again. Be yourself. Discover your origins, *revive your roots*” (*ibid.*, p. 33). Recently, German Chancellor Angela Merkel stated that the EU must be *something more* than an economic or political union, and said that Germany would push for a clear reference to God in the European Constitution—to make Europeans more aware of their Christian roots.

Many of the founding fathers of the modern European movement were devout Roman Catholics. Observers have noted that the idea

of a united Europe is “essentially a Catholic concept” and that “Catholic churches in many continental countries are influenced by a *desire to see a shadow Holy Roman Empire recreated in Europe*” (Hilton, p. 37). Bible prophecies indicate that the final revival of the Roman Empire will be “ridden” by a woman (Revelation 17:1–6). In prophetic symbolism, a woman represents a church (see Revelation 12:1–6). The woman who rides the beast power at the end of the age has persecuted true believers, meddled in politics and spread a paganized form of Christianity around the globe. In the years ahead, the Roman church and its leaders will promote Catholicism as the necessary glue to bind together a core group of European nations as the final revival of the Roman Empire emerges in Europe.

Just as Constantine used the religion and the emperor cult to unify his empire, Bible prophecies indicate that European leaders will once again look to *religion* and to a *strong man* to unite Europe, just before the return of Jesus Christ. *Watch and be prepared* for these dramatic events! ■

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"Can You Believe the Bible?" by Douglas Winnail (March-April 2006) was an eye opener. Full of facts and finds no one could not believe. Thank you for the deep insight of archeological discovery proving the Bible's scriptures to be true. It's nice to know there are new finds to back up what I believe in my heart to be true. Thank you all for the hard work.

L. B., Gatesville, TX

I am writing to thank you for the booklets and the magazines that I am now receiving. The learning experience has been outstanding. All of your eye-opening articles have brought me closer to God, with deeper understanding of the Bible. My family and I wish to congratulate you on the wonderful work that you are doing.

C. M., St. Elizabeth, Jamaica

I keep running to the mailbox, but so far no *Tomorrow's World*! Well, it will get here. You asked a very interesting question in one issue—could the reader be deceived about God's true message. I could have been at one time, but not now. I am too well informed by the magazines and booklets I have been getting. They are all based on the Bible, prophecy and history. That is solid.

J. H., Lilburn, GA

One of your magazines was left on the table at my local post office. I picked it up and read it at lunch break. It was very insightful and interesting!

D. C., Old Hickory, TN

I have been receiving your magazine now for some time. I am amazed that you bring to light the vision of God's Plan so clearly. I am now convinced that God is in your work to reveal the truth to this world of deception, because you keep referring to "God's Law"

which is the "way, the Truth and the Light" and you do not use God's Work for profit. Your materials are free for all who hunger and thirst.

J. T., Blytheville, AR

I have greatly enjoyed watching your telecasts and reading your booklets. Thank you for sharing the truth about what the Bible really says to the world. Like many, I was brought up going to churches that contradict the true teachings of the Bible. Many things being taught to me did not add up. Your explanations of doctrine have been a great help. I share *Tomorrow's World* with everyone who will listen. I continually gain strength and knowledge through your ministry, which has been a blessing to my life.

J. M., Marietta, GA

I just got through reading your article on "Who is Burning In Hell?" (January-February 2006). I must say you have a great way of twisting words. Personally I think you are radical and you certainly have a screw loose. Most of your magazines speak truth, but this article is way off course. Please do not send me any more of your material.

L. H., Surprise, AZ

The doctrine of everlasting torment in hell was something that always stood in my way of complete trust in God. Your article "Who Is Burning in Hell?" (January-February 2006) really encouraged me, and as a result I have read almost all of the booklets on your Web site. All of your teachings seem so right and basic and true. Please contact me.

P. L., Bowdoinham, ME

Editor's Note: If you would like to talk with a representative of *Tomorrow's World*, please contact the Regional Office nearest you, listed on page 30 of this magazine.

We encourage you to share with us your reactions to *Tomorrow's World*. Please direct your correspondence to "Letters to the Editor" at our United States address, or send e-mail to letters@tomorrowsworld.org. Letters may be edited for space and clarity. Remember to include your name, address and daytime phone number.



U.S.-China Trade War: Coming Soon?

By Dexter B. Wakefield

Mr. Smith, who owns a small import business, met recently with a buyer from a large discount store chain. The buyer showed him a photo of a competing store's product—a small table with a \$100 list price—and asked, “Can you make me a table like this, with a few modifications and a much lower price?”

A few minutes later, Mr. Smith e-mailed the photo to a manufacturer in China, along with a description of the requested changes. Within two weeks, the Chinese manufacturer had evaluated the product, produced a prototype to Mr. Smith's specifications, and air-freighted it to Mr. Smith for review. After making a few minor design adjustments—and receiving a large purchase order from the discount store buyer—Mr. Smith e-mailed his final product order to China. The Chinese manufacturer

was ready to produce a container-load of inexpensive tables in four to six weeks. When the tables arrived, the discount store advertised them for sale at \$29.99—well below the competition's \$100 price.

If you were an American manufacturer, could you compete with this?

Consumers in the United States are enjoying a virtual tsunami of inexpensive, high-quality manufactured goods coming from China, a nation that is now being called “the workshop of the world.” Cheap labor and fast, flexible production combine to make Chinese manufacturers extremely competitive.

One other key factor helps China leverage its growing industrial prowess. The People's Bank of China has fixed a very low exchange rate for the nation's currency, the yuan (also called the renminbi). One U.S. dollar cur-

rently buys about eight yuan. An importer's dollars buy much more Chinese merchandise, compared to what a Chinese manufacturer could buy with yuan in the U.S., which makes Chinese-manufactured goods very inexpensive for American retailers and consumers. Correspondingly, American-manufactured goods seem unusually expensive to the Chinese.

This imbalance has brought about a huge balance of payments deficit between the U.S. and China. Americans buy far more from China than China buys from the U.S., so dollars pile up in China. In 2005, the U.S. deficit with China was a record \$201.6 billion. Last June set a monthly record with a deficit of \$14.5 billion, and the annual deficit in 2006 is expected to set another record.

Normally, in the wake of such a deficit, market forces would be

expected to shift the dollar-yuan exchange rate, so that the dollar would buy fewer yuan and Chinese manufacturers would become less competitive abroad, and Chinese exports would decline. However, the Chinese government has *fixed* the yuan's exchange rate against the dollar. Although the yuan was allowed to appreciate slightly in 2005, the official exchange rate is still extremely low, helping to keep Chinese manufacturers competitive and the Chinese economy growing at a blistering pace of 8 to 12 percent per year, spurring the rest of the world to lodge protectionist complaints.

Many observers perceive that China's authoritarian government cannot maintain political stability without such a high growth rate, because of an implied social contract with Chinese consumers. Indeed, as long as China experiences growth and relative economic prosperity, its people seem to be willing to accept their government's authoritarian control of daily life—at least for now.

But what would happen if China's manufacturing sector became less competitive? What would happen if economic growth slowed or ceased? What would happen if China revalued the yuan? Chinese citizens might demand change from their government—leading to serious economic, social and political instability.

In the Same Boat

Faced with a trade surplus, China needs to do *something* with all those dollars. Like many other Asian countries, China buys massive amounts of dollar-denominated assets, particularly U.S. Treasury securities. China and Japan's combined holdings of U.S. Treasury notes amount to nearly *one trillion*

dollars! China accounts for about one-fourth of that figure.

If China were to stop buying U.S. Treasury notes, there would be great economic pressure to revalue the yuan, thus damaging China's economy. Yet such extensive buying cannot continue forever. Alan Greenspan, former chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve, has warned that the present situation will inevitably lead to instability in the Chinese monetary system.

The Chinese Communists may have an "Asian Tiger" by the tail. They cannot let go, but neither can they maintain the present situation indefinitely. Additionally, a variety of older, struggling, socialist economic sectors exist alongside China's new and dynamic capitalist enterprises. Some observers think China's state-owned banking system is dangerously weak because of decades-old bad loans that prop up inefficient state-run industries.

The U.S. also faces serious problems because of its trade deficit with China. The U.S. government wants the Chinese to buy more from U.S. producers, and to this end has called for a revaluation of the yuan. But China has so far resisted. During his Asian tour in November 2005, U.S. President George W. Bush scheduled meetings with President Hu and Premier Wen of China, primarily to discuss economic concerns. Bush pressed for further revaluation of the yuan, and for increased import of U.S. goods.

Since then, the U.S. Congress has proposed punitive quotas or high tariffs on Chinese imports, if the Chinese do not revalue the yuan and import more U.S. goods. Most recently, U.S. Senators Lindsey Graham (R-SC) and Chuck Schumer (D-NY) announced last July that they

would bring their trade deficit bill up for a vote by September 30 if China did not quickly overhaul its currency system. The bill mandates six more months of trade negotiations before imposing 27.5 percent tariffs on all goods imported from China. The Bush administration opposes the bill, which received 67 votes last year on a procedural question. Observers expect not only that it will pass if introduced, but that it could withstand a presidential veto.

The U.S. and China are economically interdependent, but this mutual dependence is not sustainable. China cannot maintain its high rate of economic and manufacturing growth without competitive access to the massive U.S. market. The U.S. cannot keep interest rates low—and offset the balance of payments deficit—unless China uses its excess dollars to buy U.S. debt in the form of Treasury securities. Economically, both nations are in the same boat, sailing toward a rocky reef, but unable to change course.

Could these two interdependent economies take each other down? A trade war between these two economic giants could seriously damage both nations' currencies and economies. Although China sells its goods to many countries, the U.S. is its biggest buyer.

If China were to sell its U.S. securities—or even just stop buying more of them—this would put great pressure on China to revalue the yuan, which in turn would damage China's price advantage in exports. This would dramatically slow down China's economic growth. Also, the loss of China as a buyer of U.S. debt could force an increase in U.S.

interest rates and could prompt an American financial crisis.

Asian Tigers and Past Problems

There are parallels between China's present economic problems and the problems other "Asian Tiger" economies have experienced in the past. For instance, Japan in the 1980s was considered invulnerable economically, and Americans stood in awe of the banking, manufacturing and export prowess of "Japan Inc." However, Japan's banking system contained a huge volume of shaky loans, and the banks' accounting systems made it difficult for outside observers to analyze their loan portfolios. It turned out that Japanese banks were not accounting for their bad investments, unlike American banks which were required by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation to account for troubled loans as they occur.

As Japan discovered, postponing such problems only makes the final reckoning more difficult. The heady days of Japan's bubble economy in the 1980s led to economic quagmire and monetary deflation in the 1990s from which Japan has yet to recover fully.

Thailand suffered similarly from a currency crisis in 1997. Though a prosperous "Asian Tiger" economy in the early 1990s, the nation suffered from bad bank loans and from speculators hoping to cash in on perceived weakness of its currency, the baht. Because the baht had been linked closely to the U.S. dollar—like the yuan today—Thai exports sold cheaply on world markets.

The Thai economy had experienced spectacular growth during much of the 1990s—an 8 to 10

percent rate comparable to China's today—but its boom was based in part on heavy investment in real estate, financed by foreign borrowing. When the value of that real estate declined, banks were stuck with billions of dollars in bad loans. When the value of the dollar began to soar, lifting the baht with it, Thai



exports slowed dramatically. Together, these factors led to the collapse of a once-vibrant economy.

Thailand's situation is of course not identical to China's, but the many similarities suggest that China is indeed vulnerable. Bad bank loans and an artificially low exchange rate have caused problems for other Asian economies, and it may soon be China's turn. One important difference, however, is that the U.S. economy is tied much more closely to China's than it was to Thailand's or Japan's.

Dollars or Euros?

The U.S. dollar has for many years been the world's international currency, and has been valued because of its perceived stability. Within the U.S., the Federal Reserve can control many factors affecting the dollar's value at home, such as short-term interest rates. However, it cannot control major factors affecting the dollar's value abroad, such as the trade

deficit and the amount of overseas capital moving in and out of U.S. financial markets.

The trade deficit is a major contributor to the dollar's instability. In 2004, it was US\$668.1 billion, and it is expected to soon top US\$700 billion—with no decrease foreseeable! This deficit must be financed abroad, chiefly by Asian nations such as China and Japan. But how long will they—or can they—continue to finance it?

The situation is precarious. Were China to falter—and the U.S. to falter with it—nations would look for a more stable international currency. Were the U.S. to lose its economic preeminence, its pride, power and prestige would suffer accordingly. Politicians tend to deal with such difficulties as a problem of public perception, but the underlying economic realities cannot be talked away. Eventually, there comes a reckoning.

If the dollar declines in importance as the international currency, the United States could suffer considerable economic loss in addition to a loss of influence and prestige abroad. But which currency stands to gain from the dollar's loss? *The euro.*

In the late 1990s, economists often speculated that the euro would join the dollar as a favored international currency. However, the European Union's economic performance has been lackluster in recent years, and the mighty dollar has continued to dominate world trade.

In 1998, the European Union added ten new member states which have increased its population to more than 450 million people in 25 member states. The EU is now the world's largest single market, and will be increasingly

well-equipped for the challenge of global competition.

It is hard to understate the euro's effect on the psychology of EU citizens and nations. A diverse continent where nations fought each other for centuries is now feeling the unifying effect of a common financial system. National currencies support national identities, and EU officials are now leveraging the euro's unifying effect to subordinate European national identities and foster instead a common European identity. Even the legal and tax systems are being "harmonized" among EU member states.

Many Europeans see the EU as a counterbalance to U.S. power, and some think that Europe should take a leadership role among world nations. If the euro were to join the dollar—or supplant it—as the favored international currency, EU power and prestige would be greatly elevated on the world stage, both economically and politically.

What Does the Bible Say?

Economists have likened the making of economic projections to "steering an automobile by looking in the rear view mirror." But God tells us, "I am God, and there is none like Me, *declaring the end from the beginning*, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand'" (Isaiah 46:9–10).

The Bible reveals that at the end of the present age—just before Christ's return—a great trading, political and social power will arise, consisting of a group of nations that come together for a short time to give their power and sovereignty to a great leader. This great power will ultimately fail, but its economic

power will be built on trade (Revelation 18:3, 11–19).

Regular readers of *Tomorrow's World* understand that the prophecies concerning the house of Israel just before Christ's return tell the future of the U.S. and the British Commonwealth nations. While ancient Israel was set up as a theocracy, the U.S. is a secular democracy. Though it has no official religion, the U.S. was founded on a Judeo-Christian ethic by the consensus of its people. In recent years, however, many of those people have broadly rejected those traditional moral values. God warned long ago that "the LORD will greatly bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance—*only if you carefully obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe with care all these commandments which I command you today. For the LORD your God will bless you just as He promised you; you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow; you shall reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over you*" (Deuteronomy 15:4–6).

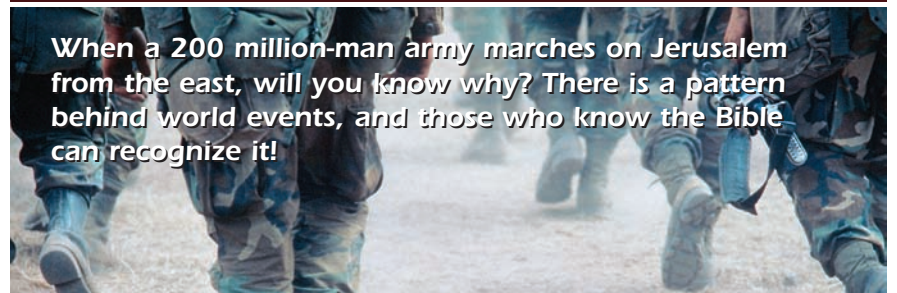
Until recent years, the U.S. remained a net lender to the world, thanks to the great industrial output the nation was able to maintain. But that situation has changed. As a nation, the U.S. consumes much more than it produces. As a result,

the U.S. is borrowing from abroad at a massive and unsustainable pace to cover its trade deficit. Foreign investors are also using their dollars to buy large quantities of U.S. stocks, bonds and real estate.

Wise King Solomon presided over a kingdom that was famously successful economically, and he warned that "the borrower is servant to the lender" (Proverbs 22:7). It is God who gives a nation "the power to get wealth" (Deuteronomy 8:18), and the U.S.' huge trade deficit shows that its wealth production is declining relative to its wealth consumption. God said that as He withdraws His blessing, the nation would become a net borrower. "He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail" (Deuteronomy 28:44). As of May 2006, foreign nations held \$2.075 trillion of U.S. Treasury securities.

What will happen to the mighty U.S. dollar when the nation can borrow no more from other nations? Will trade and currency tensions between the U.S. and China precipitate a trade war or attacks on the dollar? If the U.S. becomes "the tail," who becomes "the head"? *Tomorrow's World* will continue to keep you informed about world events as they relate to Bible prophecies that are "declaring the end from the beginning." ■

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Watch and Warn

Slavery Makes a Comeback

Not long ago, most people assumed that slavery was a thing of the past, and that the idea of one person holding another as property—to be used involuntarily, by coercion, for the master's benefit and profit—had disappeared as human civilization had become more civilized and enlightened.

Shockingly, however, involuntary servitude not only exists today; it is increasing in many parts of the globe. Whether practiced to obtain repayment of debt, to reward victors in war, or for the economic benefit of cruel and greedy criminals, slavery has been making a comeback—even in places where it had been made illegal long ago.

The British Empire officially abolished slavery in 1834. Yet slavery has become such a serious problem that London police set up a dedicated anti-slavery unit earlier this year, to catch slave traffickers and rescue their victims. City officials were spurred to action after London's *Sunday Telegraph* newspaper exposed evidence that slavers were using immigrant children—some just six years old—as workers in London sweatshops and brothels. British authorities have discovered that this practice is not limited to the middle of big cities like London, but is also occurring in houses and apartments across the nation.

Too Good to Be True?

Slavers often lure their victims with promises of jobs and prosperity. Poverty-stricken people from less developed nations in Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia and South America enter a wealthy country, often illegally, eager to improve their lives and provide for family members back home. However, once these immigrants arrive, slavers take away their personal papers and keep them as virtual prisoners to work in sweatshops or as prostitutes. Unable to speak English, fearful of police and often held by threats of violence, they toil for their masters in ter-

rible working conditions, laboring long hours for little food and no pay.

How widespread is the problem of slavery? Even the U.S. Department of Defense has had to develop anti-slavery guidelines, after finding that some of its overseas contractors enslave their workers who toil on behalf of America. "The department has instituted a human trafficking awareness program as part of its efforts," Defense Department undersecretary Gail H. McGinn told the House Military Personnel Subcommittee. McGinn said her department is focused on two areas, "the overseas sex exploitation industry near U.S. areas of operations and the employment practices of civilian contractors supporting Department of Defense operations overseas" (*American Forces Press*, June 22, 2006).

A United Nations Development Program study noted, "India has become a key destination and transit hub for human trafficking from East Europe and other places. Trafficking occurs from Egypt, Brazil, Azerbaijan, Russia and other Eastern European countries... Out of 593 districts in India, 378 are affected by human trafficking. Forty-three percent of the women involved are minors" (*Times of India*, June 22, 2006). In some cases, poor families will sell their children to raise money.

Millions still work as slaves in Pakistan, particularly in the brick, glass, carpet and fishing industries. "Pakistani girls are also reportedly trafficked to the Gulf for sexual exploitation and Pakistani boys are trafficked primarily to the UAE and Qatar to serve as camel jockeys" (*Pakistan Dawn*, June 6, 2006). Pakistani workers in Persian Gulf states, Iran, Turkey, Greece and Iraq often find themselves in situations of involuntary servitude and are also subjected to physical or sexual abuse.

Authorities in Vietnam are trying to stop the flow of Vietnamese slaves into China. According to one recent report: "More than 550 Vietnamese women and children were trafficked to China in the last two years" (*Vietnam*



News, June 22, 2006). Organized crime gangs in both countries had promised naïve Vietnamese good jobs in big cities in Vietnam and abroad, but most victims were sold to brothels in China.

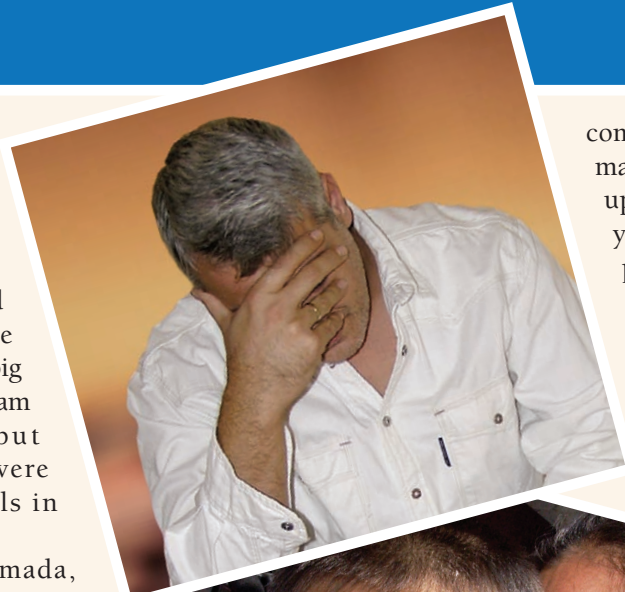
Narumi Yamada, representative of the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), told *Vietnam News* that human trafficking had reached “epidemic proportions” in East Asia, and that no country is immune (*ibid.*).

According to the UNODC, more than 700,000 people worldwide—a number larger than the entire population of the state of Alaska or the nation of Bahrain—are trafficked and exploited as sex workers and slave laborers each year.

No One Is Safe

Economic hardship, greed and lust all feed this enormous and growing crime. Could you or members of your family become slaves in a foreign land? The U.S. is now the greatest debtor nation the world has ever known, and many economists doubt that its debt can ever be fully repaid. As the dollar continues to lose value, creditors are becoming more and more nervous. The day will come when creditors demand that America’s obligations must be satisfied—and the Bible warns that its debt will be paid with the bodies of its citizens. The book of Revelation describes a time in the near future when merchants will traffic in the “bodies and souls” of human beings (Revelation 18:13). This frightening time was first mentioned in the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy, recounting what will happen to the modern-day descendants of ancient Israel—the American and other British-descended nations:

“But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His



commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you... Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, and your eyes shall look and fail with longing for them all day long... You shall beget sons and daughters, but they shall not be yours; for they shall go into captivity... The alien who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower. He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail... Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known—wood and stone... And the LORD will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, ‘You shall never see it again.’ And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you” (Deuteronomy 28:15, 32, 41, 43–44, 64, 68).

Because of their sins, the ancient Israelites were taken into captivity. *But those people were never sent back to Egypt!* Therefore, we can see that the Deuteronomy 28 prophecy foretells a yet-future event that will ravage the U.S. and the former British Commonwealth nations (For more detailed information on this vital topic, please write or call to request a free copy of *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy*). Yet, when His people repent, God will rescue them from the slavery into which they have been sold: “I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; they shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them,” says the LORD your God” (Amos 9:14–15).

God speed the coming of Tomorrow’s World, the millennial rule of Jesus Christ under whom all people will treat one another with love and respect (Isaiah 60:1–3; Mark 12:30–33)!

—Don Davis

Giving Up Everest

Climbing high on the north slope of Mount Everest last May 26, guide Daniel Mazur made a shocking discovery. Mazur, his two clients and a Sherpa guide were just two hours from Everest's 29,035-foot peak when they found Lincoln Hall, a 50-year-old climber whose guides had left him for dead the day before. Hall's first words to Mazur were, "I imagine you are surprised to see me here!"

Indeed, he was. As Mazur told *Associated Press*, "I was shocked to see a guy without gloves, hat, oxygen bottles or sleeping bag at sunrise at 28,200 feet height, just sitting up there" ("Man Gives up Everest Climb for Rescue," June 8, 2006).

After meeting the dying Hall, Mazur and his party faced a life-or-death decision. Just two hours away from reaching Everest's summit, should they turn back and save a man's life? Or should they pursue their own goal, and ignore a dying man's plight?

Mazur and his clients had spent thousands of dollars, and had flown halfway around the world. They had invested much in their goal. They had faced—and conquered—many obstacles to come as far as they had. Was there a temptation to pass Hall by and leave him there?

There was—and other climbers *did* pass Hall by. "While Mazur's team was busy assisting Hall, two... climbers walked past them toward the summit... 'I don't know why they didn't want to stop to help,' Mazur said. 'I hope when I am there, in that state, and someone passes me... I hope it is someone like me'" (*ibid.*) Hall's situation was not unique. Just one week before, on May 15, nearly 40 climbers walked right by 34-year-old David Sharp, who was about 1,000 feet into his descent. Sharp died.

Most of us are not climbing Everest. But if we are Christians, we *have* been called to lay down our lives for one another. Jesus gave the parable of the Good Samaritan to show that we *all* should be willing to help one another in time of need—even if it means we must sacrifice something. What are you willing to sacrifice for your neighbor, mate, or family members? Your time? Your own goals? Your pride?

Jesus told this story: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side... But

a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him" (Luke 10:30-35).

We do not know what the Samaritan gave up so that he could help that man. But whatever the inconvenience, he had compassion, he stopped to think about others and he took care of a need. Mazur was a true neighbor to a lonely, scared and dying climber up there on the slopes of Everest. We should look around and see who needs us—and whom we can serve and help in their need.

Did Mazur have any regrets about giving up the summit to save another human being? As he told the *Associated Press*, "We all looked at the summit and then returned," he said. "We all agreed there was no choice."

—Rod McNair



Daniel Mazur

Vital Keys

(Continued from page 8)

and ten horns” (Revelation 17:3–6).

God describes this fallen church as a “great harlot who sits on many waters” (v. 1). John then reveals that “the waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues” (v. 15). This extremely powerful “woman” will be “sitting on a scarlet beast” and will have tremendous religious and political influence at the time of the end!

Revelation 12 describes an entirely different “woman”—*God’s true Church*. This “woman” had to “flee into the wilderness” in times past to escape severe persecution. When Satan is cast down to the earth at the very *end* of this age, he will terribly persecute this “woman,” who is led by God, “that she might fly into the wilderness to her place” where God will *supernaturally protect* her during the 3½ years of the Great Tribulation (vv. 12–14).

If you want to *understand* these prophecies genuinely—and be among those *protected by God*—do not let this world deceive you about what these verses mean! Pray for *understanding*! Pray for the strength to “come out” of modern Babylon (Revelation 18:4) and to be among those true *saints* who genuinely obey God’s commandments: “Here is the patience of the saints; here *are* those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:12).

Understanding Comes Through Obedience

God’s true saints are those who “keep the *commandments*”—

who also have the “faith of Jesus,” not merely their human faith “in” Jesus! So—through the Holy Spirit—they are given the *understanding* and the courage to actually obey God. For God does **not** give the Holy Spirit to those who merely “believe” in Him or in Jesus. As James was inspired to tell us, “Even the demons believe—and tremble” (James 2:19).

God’s word describes “the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who **obey** Him” (Acts 5:32). Over and over, the Bible makes it very clear that only those who are willing to **obey** God will be filled with His inflowing Spirit: “If anyone loves Me, he will **keep My word**; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him” (John 14:23). In this passage—as in many others—it is clear that God and Christ *will live within* the true saints and *guide* them through the Holy Spirit. John writes that the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father in Jesus’ name, “will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you” (v. 26).

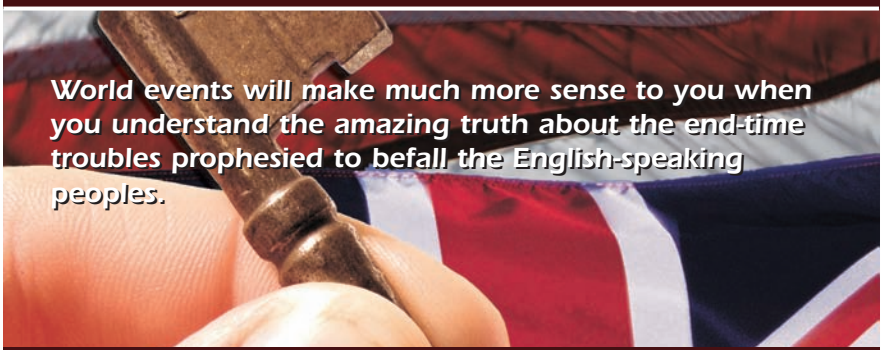
Our entire relationship with God and with the Holy Spirit—

that gives us genuine *understanding*—is determined by our willingness to *surrender* genuinely and to **obey** our Maker. Near the very end of the apostolic age, Jesus’ “beloved” apostle wrote: “He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not **keep His commandments**, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked” (1 John 2:4–6).

God’s word also clearly states, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who **do His commandments**. His praise endures forever” (Psalm 111:10).

So, to understand the Bible fully, the most vital *key* of all is to **surrender** one’s heart, mind, will and life totally to **obey** the great God and to **keep** His commandments as a way of life! Then, and *only then*, will God open your mind to fully understand His word, His great plan and His *inspired prophecies* that are now swiftly beginning to come to pass. May God help you to begin to use these vital *keys* to understanding! ■

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Bible Ignorance: A Real Problem!

(Continued from page 2)

The apostles' powerful preaching of this message—that Christ would return to establish His Kingdom—brought forth the accusation that they had “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6), and that they had proclaimed that “there is another king—Jesus” (v. 7).

The Apostle Paul was inspired to write: “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (1 Corinthians 15:51–52). The Apostle John also wrote about the last trumpet: “Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!’” (Revelation 11:15).

As you **study** your Bible—Old Testament and New—God’s **purpose** will become more real to you. Going through the Gospels, Acts, the Epistles and the book of Revelation, you will find—in passage after passage—mention of Christ’s second coming and God’s *intervention in human affairs*. You will also see that the *original* Christians—long after Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection—continued to follow Christ’s own practice of teaching and observing the weekly Sabbath that God had commanded (Acts 16:13; 17:2). They always observed God’s commanded annual festivals such as Passover and Pentecost (Acts 2:1; 12:2–3; 20:16; 1 Corinthians 5:7–8; 16:8). Significantly, the early Christians **never** observed the **pagan** festivals such as Easter or Christmas, which were introduced into the professing church much later on as it gradually abandoned true Christianity in favor of man-made customs.

We have explained in these pages that the *biblical* religious festivals such as Passover, the Days of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost and the Festival of Trumpets picture the great **Plan** God is working out among mankind. The *Passover* pictures Christ’s death for our sins. The *Days of Unleavened Bread* picture the need to put sin *out* of our lives and to “grow in grace and knowledge.” *Pentecost* pictures our need for the Holy Spirit for salvation. The *Festival of Trumpets* pictures the second coming of Christ “at the last trum-

pet.” These and the other *biblical* religious festivals picture God’s great Plan. Also, the biblical account of Christ’s birth, death and resurrection clearly shows that Jesus Christ is alive, that He will *come again* to set up His Kingdom on this earth and that *genuine* Christians are now *in training* to become kings and priests in that soon-coming world-ruling Kingdom (1 Corinthians 6:2–3; Revelation 2:26–27; 5:9–10; 20:6).

How *powerful* and **meaningful** the Bible’s real message is! How very relevant it is to *our lives now*, living as we do in the prophesied “last days” (2 Peter 3:3) just before Christ’s return as King of kings. Yet most churchgoers are totally **deceived** about the Bible’s real *meaning* (Revelation 12:9).

Why?

Because most people do not truly *cry out* to God for understanding, and because they do **not** really *study* His inspired word! If you, personally, want to overcome this **ignorance** of the Bible—which affects even most professing Christians—then please begin to **study** your Bible earnestly, as never before. If God is leading you to appreciate the **Truth** available through us at *Tomorrow’s World*, I heartily suggest that you *call* or *write* us and request a free copy of a *key* booklet, *Restoring Apostolic Christianity*. This eye-opening booklet reveals, in detail, what actually happened to the original Christianity of Christ and the apostles—and how *you* can find and practice true Christianity today. This booklet explains our **purpose**—and what the entire Work of *Tomorrow’s World* is all about—perhaps more clearly than anything else we publish.

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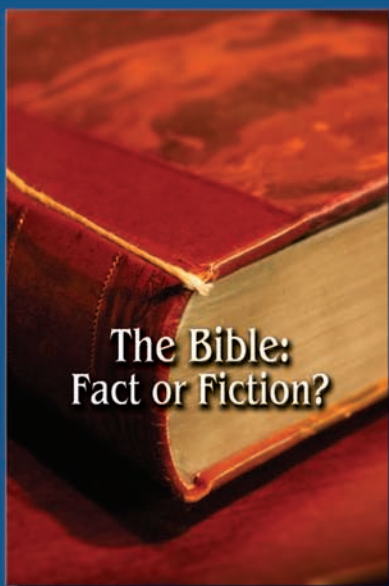
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