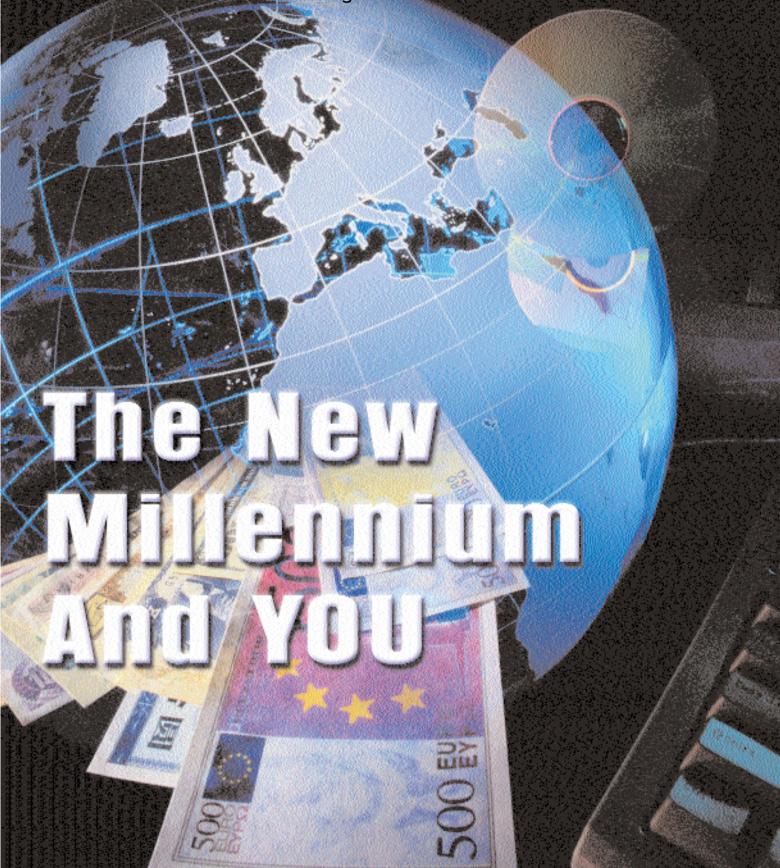
## Tomorrow's World

... For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.



#### January-February 2000 Volume 2, Issue 1

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#### **COVER STORY**

#### The New Millennium And YOU .....

What does the new millennium hold for you? Events are poised just over the horizon that will shake the earth to its very foundation. You need to be ready, taking seriously what the Bible says about the end of man's ruling efforts and about Jesus Christ's soon coming world government.

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#### FEATURE ARTICLE

#### Behind the Mists of Ireland

There is more to the story of Ireland than its forty shades of green. Out of the mists of the Emerald Isle rises a story of biblical proportions linking legend and Scripture to your future. The forgotten history of Ireland will resurface to shape world events ahead.



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#### Personal

By Roderick C. Meredith, Editor in Chief

## **PROVE All Things**



It is amazing to realize how careful most people are when buying a home, for instance, as opposed to deciding which church to join. The house may just fit their need for a number of years. But being involved with the *true* religion of God has to do with where they will spend ALL ETERNITY.

So where did you get your religion? How did you come to believe the things that you believe? Did you find your religious concepts in the Bible? Or did you get your religious ideas from family and friends?

Frankly, most of you did NOT get your religion out of the Bible. It may hurt to have to admit that. But it can easily be PROVED in the vast majority of cases.

It is very difficult for most people to admit they have been WRONG. Human pride just doesn't want to do that. Yet, according to the inspired Word of God, that is the beginning point of true Christianity. When Jesus Christ began His ministry, He told His listeners over and over, "REPENT, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). And the Gospel of Mark tells us: "Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. REPENT, and believe in the gospel'" (Mark 1:14–15). Again, Jesus later said, "I tell you, no; but unless you REPENT you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:5).

The word "repent" means to CHANGE. Yet, again, most people are NOT WILLING to admit they have been wrong and they certainly don't want to change! As Sir Winston Churchill said, speaking before the House of Commons: "Men occasionally stumble over the Truth, but most of them pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing had happened."

Yet, if your *eternal life* is at stake, you would be very wise to consider whether *you*—however sincerely—have grown up in the wrong religion!

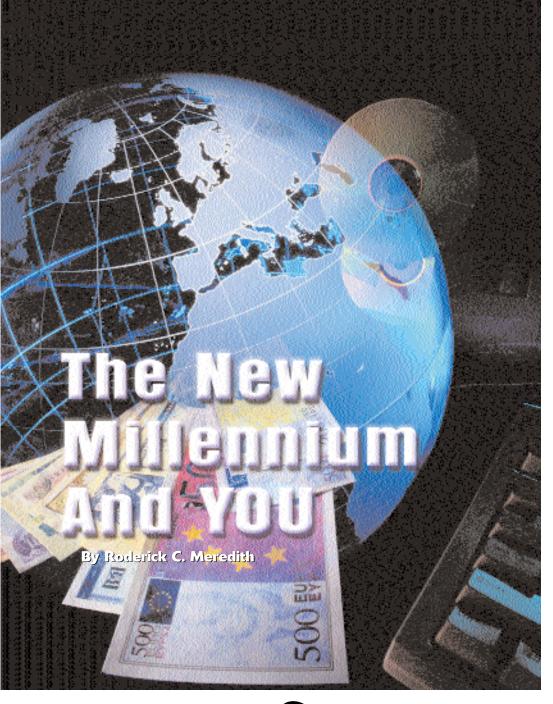
Am I indicting "Christianity" as the "wrong religion"? Of course not! But I want to make you aware of the FACT that there is both false Christianity and true Christianity. Many do not realize that. But the Bible itself makes it abundantly clear that the false form of Christianity would predominate until Christ's Second Coming. The beloved Apostle John described this very time in which we are living: "So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who DECEIVES the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" (Revelation 12:9). Satan the Devil has palmed off on this deceived world a false Christianity!

The highly regarded modern philosopher, Sören Kierkegaard, in his *Attack Upon Christendom*, wrote: "The Christianity of the New Testament simply does not exist. Millions of people through the centuries have little by little cheated God out of Christianity, and have succeeded in making Christianity exactly the opposite of what it is in the New Testament."

So each of us needs to PROVE what we believe by really *studying* the Bible. We need to drink out of the Bible what *it* says rather than reading our own pre-conceived ideas *into* the Bible.

Think for a moment. WHY is professing Christianity divided into more than 400 competing denominations and sects? WHY do churches calling themselves Christian have so many differing beliefs and practices? Could it be that God is the author of CONFUSION? Or might there be another explanation?

Continued on page 30



What is REALLY going to happen during the next 1,000 years? How will this affect your life? What should YOU be preparing for?

taggering changes in world affairs will soon begin to occur. For the United States, a massive drop in prestige and power is on the horizon. Events will soon begin to unfold which will SHAKE this nation and the entire western world. Following these events, a "New World Order" will unfold—led by a European colossus which will, in fact, dominate the entire earth for a few years.

Your life and everything around you will CHANGE dramatically.

Will you be ready? Will you understand the real meaning of these

events as they begin to unfold? Will you know how to protect yourself and your loved ones during the traumatic years ahead?

#### **What Lies Just Ahead**

Within the next several years, the deterioration of American power and prestige will become obvious. The number of young people reaching their teens and early twenties will greatly increase within the next five to seven years. In spite of a slight current downtrend, our crime rate will go back up and up and UP! The absolutely vile entertainment served up to our youth, the increase in broken homes and the rising incidence of drug use will all be major factors in this increasing crime and violence in our society.

In addition, Jesus Christ Himself tells us that there will be drought, famine and powerful earthquakes affecting our daily lives before too much longer (Matthew 24:7). America, Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand

will be greatly weakened by these conditions.

Make no mistake. This coming series of disasters will be brought on by our personal and national SINS. There is a REAL God. That Great God loves our peoples—as He does all peoples. But, though we have been blessed by God above all peoples of the earth, we have turned our backs on the true God. We continue to break His laws with impunity. Millions of our citizens blaspheme His name daily.

In spite of our outward show of religious interest, the American and British-descended peoples do NOT serve and obey the God of the Bible. And that God states in His inspired Word: "For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives" (Hebrews 12:6). This principle certainly applies nationally as well as individually. As I discussed in a recent article in this magazine, God predicts massive national PUNISHMENT to come upon our peoples—unless we repent. Speaking clearly to our peoples—the modern descendants of the "lost ten tribes" of Israel-God tells us: "All your lovers (national allies) have forgotten you; they do not seek you; for I have wounded you with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of your iniquities, because your SINS have increased. Why do you cry about your affliction? Your sorrow is incurable. because of the multitude of your iniquities, because your SINS have increased, I have done these things to you" (Jeremiah 30:14-15). If you want to absolutely PROVE to yourself the identity of America and the Britishdescended peoples in Bible prophecy, be sure to call or write today and ask for your FREE copy of our exciting and revealing booklet entitled, What's Ahead for America and Britain?

Finally, we will come to the "time of Jacob's trouble" (Jeremiah 30:7)—a tribulation so monumental that "NONE is like it." This will definitely be the Great Tribulation prophesied by Jesus Christ (Matthew 24:21-22). At this time, all humanity would be destroyed, "but for the ELECT'S sake."

Who are these "elect"? Why are they protected? How can you be counted among them?

#### **Your Future Possibilities**

Now we need to think about you! What does your future hold? Where will you and your loved ones fit into the scheme of things to come?

First of all, you need to grasp the fact that you cannot "go along with the crowd" and also be among God's elect! Throughout the Bible, you find statement after statement indicating that God's true servants are-and have always been—in a tiny minority. Please think about that!

In Matthew 7:13-14, Jesus warned: "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." Over and over, Christ predicted that His Church would be small, scattered and persecuted (Revelation 12:13-17). Notice that Jesus called His Church the "little flock" (Luke 12:32). Think about the many warnings against following the crowd—including the religious leaders of our human society, as John's Gospel points out: "Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:42-43).

Do you love the "praise of men" more than the praise of God?

Consider also God's consistent teaching that this present society is definitely under the invisible sway of Satan the Devil. Notice Jesus' statement about the real RULER of this present society: "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the PRINCE of this world cometh, and hath

nothing in me" (John 14:30, KJV). And the Apostle Paul was inspired to write, "But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them" (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).

Let us be very plain: IF you go along with this present society and continue to follow its ways and customs, you WILL end up in the Great Tribulation—the greatest national punishment in all human history!

However, if you repent of your sins, of following human traditions instead of God's law and His wayand if you will accept the true Jesus Christ revealed in the Bible not only as your Savior, but your Lord and Master whom you must now choose to OBEY—then you will be protected from the Great Tribulation and be given a position in the soon-coming Kingdom or Government of God to be set up on this earth! (Revelation 5:10).

#### **Christ Must LIVE Within Us!**

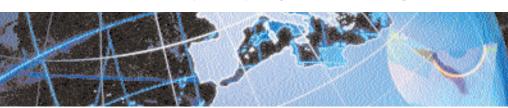
Remember Jesus' warning: "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). Note also the Apostle Paul's clear description of how we MUST repudiate the flesh and let the Living CHRIST live within us through the power of the Holy Spirit, "For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God" (Romans 8:13-14).

Again, the inspired Paul describes for us the very essence of what it means to be a true Christian: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ LIVETH in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20, KJV).

The Bible tells us: "Jesus Christ is the SAME yesterday,

We do not truly know God until we begin to "walk" with Him and experience His very nature and character placed within us by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:4). Then, as we begin to "walk with God" through the promised Holy Spirit, we will be considered among God's "elect." We will be guided, blessed and protected in a

judgments and decisions since we will soon be serving under Jesus Christ to "judge" the entire world and even the angelic hosts! The Moffat translation rendered the term "judge" in this passage as "manage." Therefore, Moffat's translation reads: "Do you not know that the saints are to manage the world? If the world is to



As we daily *sui* God becomes mo

today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). So Christ will live within you and me the SAME kind of life He lived in the flesh nearly 2,000 years ago. Of course, we will NOT be perfect all at once. We must GROW in grace and in knowledge during a lifetime of overcoming (2 Peter 3:18). Nevertheless, Christ will guide us-through His Spirit-to keep God's Ten Commandments which He Himself kept while fully in the human flesh (John 15:10). Christ will direct you to OBEY God's true Sabbaths and annual Holy Days which picture the great PLAN God is working out here below.

As we daily surrender our lives to the Living Christ, God becomes more and more REAL to us. Then, we will begin to understand and claim His promises for protection, for Divine healing, for strength and many other things. For then—as we grow spiritually—we will come to know God in a way we have never known Him before. As the "beloved Apostle," John, wrote: "Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:3-4).

way we have never experienced before. And we *will* be among the "overcomers."

#### BLESSINGS for the "Overcomers"

Although certainly NOT understood or taught by mainstream "Christianity," the truth is that one primary purpose for our Christian lives is that we are now "in training" to be kings and priests in the soon-coming Government of God. As the Apostle Paul was inspired to write: "Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge? I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge brethren?" between his Corinthians 6:2-5).

Paul's point is that we should now be learning to make proper

come under your jurisdiction, are you incompetent to adjudicate upon trifles? Do you not know that we are to manage angels, let alone mundane issues?" (1 Corinthians 6:2–3).

The New Layman's Bible Commentary states regarding this passage: "It is possible to understand judge in the Hebraic sense of 'reign,' a function incorporating judgment, and basic to New Testament eschatology; cf. Romans 8:17; 2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 2:26–27, 3:21, 20:4."

So the responsibilities of God's saints—in the resurrection—will include "managing" or "ruling" over the entire world as kings and priests under Jesus Christ. What a wonderful opportunity to serve in this way, to REAL-LY straighten out the problems of this world's society—yet be inspired and guided in this by the Living CHRIST as King of kings!

The Apostle Paul is telling true Christians—in effect—to practice the right kind of standards and judgments now, since all faithful Christians will be using those standards to help rule or "manage" the entire earth in the soon-coming Government of Jesus Christ! That's why Jesus

Christ tells us: "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall REIGN with Him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:6).

Describing the time immediately after the return of Jesus coming of Christ. As the works of the creation had been finished in six days, their duration in their present state, according to a tradition which was attributed to the prophet Elijah, was fixed to six thousand years. By the same analogy it was inferred that this long period of labor and contention, which was now almost elapsed,

it—overcome their own human nature, overcome the world and its pulls and also overcome Satan the Devil. Of course, no one does that perfectly (1 John 1:8-10). But God looks at the attitude. He looks at the "heart." As God told Samuel when He was about to select David as the next king of Israel: "For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7).

Before Abraham was made "father of the faithful," God tested him again and again. He had to be willing to leave the land of his birth and everything with which he was familiar. He had to TRUST GOD to guide him in his journeys. He had to OBEY God to the extent of asking hundreds of young men-both he and his own son as well—to undergo the painful rite of adult circumcision: "So Abraham took Ishmael his son, all who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, EVERY MALE among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very same day, as God had said to him" (Genesis 17:23).

Finally Abraham had to be willing to sacrifice his only legitimate son, Isaac, as a sacrifice to God! When Abraham showed himself willing to do this, God said: "Now I KNOW that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me!" (Genesis 22:12).

Have you shown God that you will do whatever He commands? Can He TRUST you with the responsibility of governing a city or a nation in His Kingdom knowing that you will faithfully carry out His will in your administration?

The Bible tells us that Abraham was blessed: "Because

#### *render* our lives to the Living Christ, re and more REAL to us.

Christ to this earth, God tells us, "Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him" (Daniel 7:27).

Even in the Psalms, God describes for us the opportunity His faithful servants will have to help stop the "bad guys" at the beginning of the Millennium: "Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud on their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance on the nations, and punishments on the peoples; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute on them the written judgment; this honor have all His saints. Praise the LORD!" (Psalm 149:5-9).

Again, I think we should meditate on what the famous historian, Edward Gibbon, wrote about the beliefs of the early Christians in his celebrated work, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire:

"The ancient and popular doctrine of the Millennium was intimately connected with the second would be succeeded by a joyful Sabbath of a thousand years; and that Christ, with the triumphant band of the saints and the elect who had escaped death or who had been miraculously revived, would reign upon earth till the time appointed for the last and general resurrection" (Vol. 1, p. 403).

Note that even Gibbon discovered in his historical research that the early Christians believed that the true saints "would reign upon earth" at Christ's Second Coming! Are you preparing for this responsibility by taking God seriously, by really STUDYING His inspired Word to learn His will?

#### **BIG** Responsibility for the "Overcomers"

Remember, Jesus Christ said: "And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels shall be broken to pieces—as I also have received from My Father" (Revelation 2:26–27). The "overcomers" are those true Christians who—led by God's SpirAbraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws" (Genesis 26:5). Are you willing to keep the Ten Commandments as Abraham did? Remember, Jesus Christ told the young man who asked Him the way to eternal life: "If you want to enter into life, KEEP the COMMANDMENTS!" Then Jesus began to name some of the Ten Commandments (Matthew 19:16-19). Did Jesus-the Son of God—know what He was talking about? Are you willing to DO what Jesus Christ commanded?

Again, God needs to KNOW where we stand before He entrusts us with the responsibility of RUL-ING over the cities and nations of this world. For our responsibilities and opportunities in Christ's coming Kingdom will be AWESOME.

#### The Structure of Christ's Government

It is encouraging to know that the Living Jesus Christ-seated now at God's right hand—has already planned out in concert with the Father an entire system of government. First of all, Christ Himself will be King of kings. "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 1:15). And note this description of Jesus Christ at His Second Coming: "Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh

a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Revelation 19:15–16).

Under Christ, the Bible surely indicates that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be top advisors or administrators in the Kingdom (Matthew 8:11). After all, Abraham is the "father" of ALL the faithful.

Next, serving under Christ and His "executive team," we find that King David will be given back his job as king over all twelve of the "tribes" or nations of Israel. Describing the Israelites right after Christ's Second Coming, God says: "But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up for them" (Jeremiah 30:9). Again, describing the same time, God inspired Ezekiel to tell us: "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.... My servant David shall be their prince forever" (Ezekiel 37:24-25).

Think about it. Since God's LAW will be the very basis for the government and the entire way of life in Christ's Kingdom on earth, of all humans who have ever lived, who is best qualified to administer that government over Israel? Of course, it is the very man who DID faithfully administer that government for about 40 years! David had the experience of teaching, guiding and administering the affairs of Israel based on God's LAW. And it is David who said over and over-in many different ways-"Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day. You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies; for they are ever with me" (Psalm 119:97-98).

Writing approximately 250 years after the death of King

David, the prophet Hosea also described the time of the resurrection from the dead when the modern tribes of Israel will return from their captivity in the Great Tribulation and David will once again be their king: "Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days" (Hosea 3:5).

My friends, as the world's slide into sin continues and mankind now possesses more than enough weapons to ANNIHILATE all humans from this planet, it should be obvious that we are now in these "latter days." So it should not be too many more years before Christ returns, King David and the true saints are resurrected and the Kingdom of God becomes a physical REALITY here on earth! We should all be inspired and excited by our present opportunity to prepare for our part in the coming reign of Jesus Christ.

Serving immediately under King David will be the twelve Apostles—now also resurrected from the dead. For on His last night in the human flesh, Jesus told His Apostles: "But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones JUDGING the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:28–30).

Under Christ's overall direction, perhaps Daniel or the Apostle Paul will rule over the Gentiles during the Millennium, since each of them had a lot of responsibility working with the Gentiles during their physical lifetimes. But, the Bible reveals *only* the overall pattern of Christ's coming world government. The important thing is

that we understand the REALITY of what is soon to occur on this earth. It may be ten to twenty years or even longer before Christ's feet again touch this earth—this time as King of kings! But many of us will probably live to see that day and we need to be ready.

#### **Are YOU Really Getting Ready?**

Whatever God says is CER-TAIN to happen! The apostle Paul was inspired to reveal God as the One "who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did" (Romans 4:17).

In that light, Christ reveals that-in His great Plan-He has already "made us kings and priests to His God and Father" (Revelation 1:6). Again, in the inspired "prayer of the saints" we find that the Living Christ has "made us kings and priests to our God, and we shall REIGN on the earth" (Revelation 5:10).

If we, individually, surrender to God and let Christ rule our lives, then our responsibility in the coming Kingdom will not only be to rule, but to teach and guide and encourage the countless millions of mortal humans who survive the Great Tribulation and live right on over into the Millennium.

Read Micah's prophecy for the latter days: "Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain [kingdom] of the LORD'S house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it. Many nations shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will TEACH us His ways, and we shall

walk in His paths.' For out of Zion the LAW shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and rebuke strong nations afar off; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against



Faithful Christians will have a prominent role in teaching God's ways to the world. © PhotoDisc

nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Micah 4:1-3).

Note that Christ will "teach" the people of the earth "His ways" and that the LAW will go forth from Jerusalem. Obviously Christ will direct and inspire His Spiritborn saints to do most of the direct "teaching" of these millions of human beings.

As did King David, all of us should LOVE God's great spiritual LAW—the Ten Commandments. As David did, we should meditate on that law-understanding more fully with each passing year how to love God with all our heart, strength and mind and how to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:35-40). We should study carefully how Christ "magnified" God's law in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5, 6, 7) and throughout His ministry. And how His apostles also did this throughout the entire New Testament.

In this way we should learn to with God"—studying, meditating and imitating Jesus Christ through the help and power of His Spirit within us.

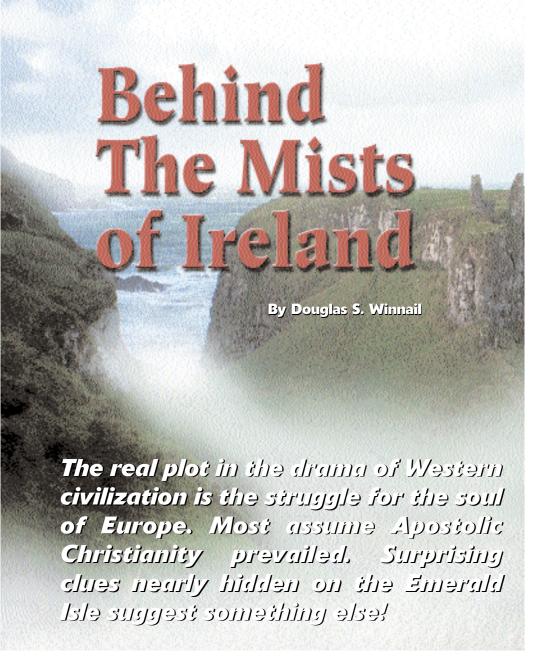
For God reveals that when the nations of Israel return from captivity at Christ's Second Coming they will have teachers who will

> be very alert to their problems and will guide them in the right way: "And though the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, vet your TEACH-ERS will not be moved into a corner anymore, but your

eyes shall see your TEACHERS. Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it,' whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left" (Isaiah 30:20-21).

God grant that you will take this seriously. And God grant that vou may be among those "teachers"—those resurrected Christians now made kings and priests in the soon-coming Government Christ-the Kingdom of God on earth. For the true Gospel—the GOOD NEWS-is not only about Christ's death on the cross. It is also about His resurrection, His actively working with His true servants even now as High Priest and His loving and magnificent RULERSHIP over this earth, which will begin very early in this New Millennium. This will be the most exciting and awesome time in human history.

Be sure that you are genuinely getting ready for this coming reality!



or many today, Ireland is an enchanting—yet puzzling—island on the fringe of Europe; a beautiful green country where terrorist activity periodically makes headlines. It is portrayed as a land of fairies and leprechauns, and of quaint little legends—that few take seriously. However, this popular image of Ireland *totally obscures* the incredible role the Emerald Isle has played in determining the course of history in the West. It also *conceals* the critical part the Irish have played in the struggle for the soul of Europe—a struggle that *will again* envelop Europe and the world in the years ahead!

In this article we will draw back the curtain of time and explore what is hidden behind the mists of Ireland. What you will discover is remarkable. The forgotten history of Ireland—when combined with key facts from the Bible—provides a surprising and sobering insight into events that have shaped the development of Western civilization. You will also learn how *your beliefs* have been influenced by critical events that occurred centuries ago on this "Sacred Isle."

Believe it or not, the preserved history of Ireland reaches far into the distant past—predating even Greek or Roman civilizations. Due to its isolated location on the outer edge of Europe, Ireland was spared the ravages of barbarian invasions that destroyed the culture of the Roman world on the Continent. The most surprising fact about Ireland's early history is that it is clearly linked to the Bible! This critical link is discounted by modern historians, who tend to view Ireland's history as untrustworthy, because events were transmitted orally for centuries before being written down by monks in the Middle Ages. However, even historians realize that legends "may contain a kernel of truth" and that place-names can be important guides to the history of a region (see The Conversion of Europe, Fletcher, 1998, p. 81).

In a sharp challenge to modern critics, Irish author Seumas MacManus notes, "the legends of Ireland are, generally speaking, far from baseless myths. The Irish people are a people who eminently cling to tradition. Not only were the great happenings that marked great epochs enshrined in the memory forever, but even little events that trivially affected the history of the race, were and are, seldom forgotten" (The History of the Irish Race, 1944, p. 9). MacManus comments further that while poets may embellish a tale, "the big, essential facts had to remain unaltered" and that no reputable poet would

dare falsify the essential facts (ibid.). When the legends of Ireland are placed beside the carefully preserved scriptures of the Old Testament, a remarkable story begins to unfold.

#### **Prophet, Princess And Treasure**

One of the most amazing legends in Irish history links the biblical prophet Jeremiah with the Emerald Isle. Oxford-educated Mary Rogers recounts several versions of the Jeremiah story. Each version tells of Jeremiah fleeing from Jerusalem at the time of the Babylonian conquest. One account makes "Jeremiah flee to Ireland with Tea Tephi, eldest daughter of Zedekiah" (Prospects of Fermanagh, 1982, pp. 31-32). (Zedekiah was the last king to occupy the throne of Judah). Other accounts have Jeremiah and a princess or princesses and a man named Barak or Baruch leaving Egypt for the "Isles of the West" (The Book of Tephi, Goodchild, 1897, p. 4).

Although this might sound quite fanciful to our modern ears, it fits directly with the Scriptures. In the Bible we learn that when Jerusalem fell, Jeremiah escaped, along with his scribe Baruch and "the king's daughters" to Egypt where they resided at the city of Tahpanhes (Jeremiah 43:5–7). The Bible reveals little else about this group of refugees. There are no clear statements about where they may have gone from Egypt. However, there are clues, both in the Scriptures and in history especially the history of Ireland!

Ancient Irish legends recount that in addition to the king's daughters, Jeremiah brought with him "some national treasures from the Temple. The most important of these was the Lia Fail, or Stone of

Destiny, Jacob's stone" (Rogers, pp. 31–32). The Bible relates that Jacob, the forefather of the Israelite tribes, set up a stone pillar after

making a covenant with God (Genesis 28:13-22). It was also a custom in ancient Israel to crown kings over a stone (Judges 9:6; 2 Kings 11:12–14). The stone was later taken to Scotland by a king Fergus, and then to England. It has been used in all three countries for the coronation of monarchs—following the ancient Israelite

custom. Other items brought to Ireland by Israelites include a sword, a spear and a cauldron (see The Flowering of Ireland, Sherman, 1981, p. 55). The Bible also reveals that David, when he killed Goliath, took his armor (including a sword and spear) which was kept by the priests (1 Samuel 17:45-47, 54, 21:9). The cauldron was probably used in the Temple. These items were symbols of national identity to the Israelites-comparable to the Crown Jewels of England and Scotland on display today.

#### Jeremiah's Mysterious Mission

But what was Jeremiah doing and why did he bring the king's daughters to Ireland? The Bible reveals that Jeremiah was given a two-part mission "to root out and pull down... to build and to plant" (Jeremiah 1:10). Jeremiah foretold the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the monarchy in Judah—which happened. The Bible does not provide any information on how Jeremiah fulfilled the second phase of his mission; however, Irish history provides some intriguing answers. The

> prophecy to build and to plant would apply to taking the king's daughters to a place where they could re-establish the roval line. Ancient Irish legends say that the princess Jeremiah brought with him married a High King of Ireland (see Goodchild). This would have completed the second phase of Jere-

miah's mysterious

The ancient Stone of Scone is shown beneath the Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey. The Stone was recently returned to Scotland after 700 years. © Presslink Photo

mission. The Bible clearly predicted this would happen (2 Kings 19:30-3: Isaiah 37:31-32).

#### **Lost Tribes in Ireland**

But why did Jeremiah go to Ireland? Irish history describes a prominent people who settled on the island as the Tuatha de Danann. While historians puzzle over the identity of these gifted invaders, the Bible reveals the obvious answer. One of the Israelite tribes that disappears from history after the fall of the kingdom of Israel about 720BC was the Tribe of Dan. Other sources indicate that members of this tribe left Egypt about the time of the Exodus about 1500BC. This is about the time the Tuatha de Danann began to arrive in Ireland. The Tuatha de Danann, if they were Israelites, would be kinsmen to Jeremiah and the princess he brought. Irish legends say that Jeremiah's party came to the island "in the ships of the Danites" and that after being "shipwrecked off the coast of Ireland... the company made its way to the hill-seat of the last of the Tuatha de Danann kings of the tribes of Dan" (Rogers, p. 31).

#### Castles, Footprints and Jewish Knights

One possible landing place for Jeremiah is Murlough Bay, on Ireland's rugged northeast coast, in County Antrim. This is an area of isolated bays and rocky cliffs. Leading up and away from the bay is a trail, marked on geologic maps as the "Gray Man's Path." Jeremiah would have been an old man when he reached Ireland after a difficult prophetic ministry that lasted some forty years. The "Gray Man's

Path" leads westward toward Dunseverick castleabout fifteen miles away. The castle sits on a stunning and highly defensible rocky outcrop this rugged on coastline. A marker at the site states that Dunseverick was a "royal site" "may have been a royal stronghold in the Iron Age (around 500BC) and traditionally was one of

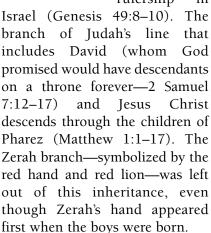
the great duns [royal forts] of Ireland." Jeremiah would have arrived about this same time—and with his "royal cargo."

Traveling south from Dunseverick on the way to Tara, in County Meath (the seat of the Tuatha de Danann kings) you come to the ruins of the great hill-fort, Emain Macha, in County Armagh. This was the seat of the kings of Ulster and the Knights of the Red Branch. The symbol of the knights

was a *red hand* surrounded by a *red cord*. This symbol of a red hand appears on the flag of Ulster, the symbol of Northern Ireland. It is also found (along with a *red lion*) on the heraldic crests of several other counties in Northern Ireland and some Scottish clans (see *Symbols of Our Anglo-Saxon Heritage*, Bennet, 1976, p. 115). But what is the significance of the red hand and red lion in Northern Ireland? How does this relate to Jeremiah and his mission?

The Bible again provides an intriguing answer. Judah, the father of another one of the tribes of Israel, had several sons, including Perez and Zerah. Something strange happened at the birth of

these two boys. The hand of Zerah appeared first and a midwife fastened a red cord around it. However, the hand was retracted and Perez was born first (see Genesis 38:24-30). God promised Iudah (symbolized by a the lion) scepter of rulership in







The Ulster Flag reflects symbols of the Red Branch Knights of the Zerah-Line of Judah in Northern Ireland. © Presslink Photo

#### The Mists of Time

By now you might be asking why you have never heard any of this information before?

Not only is it logical and makes sense, it is actually what has been *preserved* in Irish history—and it connects directly with the Bible! But why is it not being taught today? Here again the answers are shrouded by the mists of Ireland that, with the passage of time, have nearly obscured critical developments in the struggle for the soul of Europe—and for that matter, the world! However, the veil of history, like the Irish mist, is not impenetrable.

The legends that link Jeremiah with the Emerald Isle are concentrated in several counties primarily in Northern Ireland. This is exactly the same area where Patrick, the patron Saint of Ire-

land—the individual credited with bringing Christianity to the Irish—came to live and work. Patrick herded sheep on Slemish Mountain in County Antrim. He made his headquarters in Armagh, near Emain Macha (seat of the Red Branch Knights) and built a church near Tara, in central Ireland. He visited Devenish, an island in Loug (Lake) Erne, in County Fermanagh, where Jeremiah is said to be buried. The name Devenish comes from a word that means "a learned man" (Devenish; Its History, Antiquities & Traditions, McKenna, 1897, Introduction), and it was considered a holy island long before Patrick's time. A monastery was later built there. The activities of Patrick and those who followed him—whose goal it was to convert the Irish to a new religion—suggest "a deliberate policy of locating the new Christian churches beside old pre-Christian power-centers" (The MacMillan Atlas of Irish History, 1997, p. 16). Thus with the passage of time, the footprints of Patrick and the church he established have overshadowed and nearly obscured historical clues from an earlier time that link Irish history to the Bible.

#### **Forgotten Facts**

But what religious ideas did Patrick bring to Ireland after being trained in Gaul (France) and commissioned from Rome? Was it the Christianity taught by Jesus Christ and the Apostles? Here again the facts of history provide some surprising answers. The church Patrick established in Ireland "was Roman in character and organization" (A Short History of Ireland, Wallace, 1986, p. 18). In addition to pointing people to the person of Jesus, the Roman Church emphasized the observance of Sunday, Easter, and

the veneration of the Cross (Fletcher, pp. 55, 171). Patrick's church was a fervent promoter of monasticism and the veneration of saints and relics. To his credit, Patrick worked to build "a Christian culture, where slavery and human sacrifice became unthinkable, and warfare... diminished markedly," however, he had far less success in transforming the sexual mores of the Irish or their attraction to pagan customs (How The Irish Saved Civilization, Cahill, 1995, p. 148). It is noted that "the Irish never troubled themselves overmuch about eradicating pagan influences, which they tended to wink at and enjoy. The pagan festivals continued to be celebrated" (ibid. pp. 148-9). Historians acknowledge that the Christianity that emerges from Patrick's efforts is a "characteristically Irish melange [mixture] of pagan and Christian" beliefs and practices (ibid.).

While recent folklore credits Patrick with converting the Irish to Christianity, numerous sources indicated that the apostles of Jesus Christ visited the "Isles of the West" over three centuries before Patrick arrived! MacManus writes that the early church historians Eusebius [about 300AD] and Nicephorus tell of the apostles Paul, Simon Zelotus and James visiting these islands. MacManus writes that, "Julian of Toledo says that the apostle James addressed a canonical letter from Ireland to the Jews in Spain" (MacManus, p. 104). Both the Bible and history indicate that the teachings of the church established by Jesus and the apostles differed significantly from the teachings of Patrick and his followers. Jesus and the apostles kept the Sabbath and the biblical Holy Days (Luke 4:16; Acts 17:2; 18:4, 21). Edward Gibbon states the early Christians combined the Law of Moses with the teachings of Jesus Christ and that they abhorred idolatrous pagan festivities—especially the Saturnalia—our Christmas (see Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, chapter 15). The Encyclopedia Britannica records "there is no indication of the observance of the Easter festival in the New Testament, or in the writings of the apostolic Fathers—they kept the 14th of Nisan" (see article: Easter, 11th ed.). The church established by Jesus Christ was not monastic, did not venerate crosses or relics and did not pray to saints. These were all innovations absorbed into Patrick's church from pagan sources—between 350-450AD.

But what happened to the teachings of the Apostles who brought Christianity to Ireland nearly three centuries before Patrick? History records that Roman Christianity eventually prevailed in Ireland. However, it is also acknowledged that "history is written by the victors" and that the teachings of those who differed "were systematically vilified, and their writings hunted down and destroyed" (Fletcher, p. 75). What was not destroyed has been obscured and nearly forgotten. This is why little is known about the beliefs of the Irish prior to the coming of Patrick (ibid. pp. 4, 10). Scribal monks of the seventh and eighth centuries suggest that before Patrick, paganism prevailed everywhere in Ireland.

However, historians suspect this is a "deceptive" idea (ibid. p. 12). History clearly records that in Ireland and on the continent of Europe, there has been a struggle not only between Christianity and paganism, but also within the Christian community itself. What is undeniable is, that in most areas of the world, "Apostolic Christianity" has survived in name only. The original teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostles were passed off as allegories and myths, and later rejected as heresy (see Gibbon, chapter 15). Catholic historian Will Durant acknowledges this: "Christianity did not destroy paganism; it adopted it... Christianity was the last great creation of the ancient pagan world" (*The Story of Civilization*, vol. 3, p. 595).

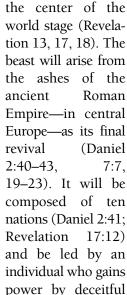
Critical aspects of this struggle for the soul of Ireland, Europe and the world have taken place on the misty Emerald Isle.

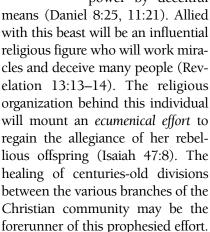
In the years following Patrick, "as Europe sank into the Dark Ages, Ireland in the 7th and 8th centuries became a land of saints and scholars" (Ireland, Smallman, 1996,

p. 15). Monks on this isolated island copied and preserved their ancient legends along with the literature of the ancient world that was being destroyed by barbarians on the continent. Missionary monks from Ireland later reintroduced into Europe the secular and religious ideas that have long formed the core of Western civilization. But in particular, the religious ideas they promulgated were significantly different from the biblical teachings of Jesus Christ. The Roman Christianity that spread over Europe and from there to our modern world contained different doctrines and a different gospel (see Galatians 1:6-9; 2 Corinthians 11:1-4). The forgotten facts of history indicate that true apostolic Christianity disappeared behind the mists of Ireland.

#### What Lies Ahead?

The religious struggle that has played out over the centuries on the Emerald Isle is not over. That ongoing struggle is destined to take some sobering turns in the months and years ahead. The Bible reveals that, as the end of the age approaches, a beast (a political-economic-military organization) and a religious figure of international stature will move to





However, during the rise to prominence of the beast and false prophet, the *original gospel* of the kingdom of God will once again be preached to the world as a witness (Matthew 24:14). The Bible also indicates that before the return of Jesus Christ, a knowledge of *true Apostolic Christianity* will reemerge from the misty past

(Matthew 17:11). This will not be a popular message to a world under the delusion of a resurrected Roman system. This religiouspolitical-economic-military union will—in a replay of the past—persecute those who choose to believe and follow the biblical teachings of Jesus Christ (Daniel 7:25; Revelation 12:17, 17:6). This persecution will be limited in time, because the beast and false prophet will eventually turn on each other (Revelation 17:16; Daniel 11:40-45) as this final resurrection of the ancient Roman church-state system crumbles into ruin at Christ's return (Daniel 2:44-45).

The struggle for the minds of millions will then be over. The world will learn that Roman Christendom, which has played such a dominant role in Western civilization, was not the prophesied kingdom of God; it was merely a counterfeit. The world will come to understand that what emerged from the mists of the Emerald Isle was not Apostolic Christianity, but paganism with a "Christian" gloss. The day is coming when the whole world will have an opportunity to learn and experience the blessings of God's true way of life (Isaiah 11:9). We are also told in Scripture that at the end of the age, God is going to recover a remnant of His people from the "islands of the sea" that lie "far off" to the north and west of Jerusalem (Isaiah 11:11; Jeremiah 30:24, 31:8, 11; Hosea 11:10). God is now calling and training a group of people to assist Jesus Christ in establishing the kingdom of God on this earth in the years just ahead. This is part of the real purpose for human life. You can play a role in the re-introduction of Apostolic Christianity if you can begin to grasp what has happened—behind the mists of Ireland!



A traditional image of Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. © Presslink Photo

## Questions & Answers

#### **QUESTION:**

I was recently told that it is wrong to use words like "gosh" or "gee." Are these words really all that bad?

#### **ANSWER:**

We often hear words like "gosh," "gee," and similar words in conversation today. Although they may sound innocent enough, we should avoid using them. Why? Because these words are euphemisms for the names of God and Jesus Christ. A euphemism is "the substitution of a mild, indirect, or vague expression for one thought to be offensively blunt or harsh" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language).

We are told in Exodus 20:7, "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain." In other words, we should not use God's name in any disrespectful or irreverent way. This includes using God's name in the form of a euphemism.

The scriptures illustrate that God places great importance on His name. In Isaiah 9:6, He is called "Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace"—all terms of honor and reverence.

The Psalms are full of praise for God's name. "Sing to God, sing praises to His name; Extol Him who rides on the clouds, by His name YAH, and rejoice before Him." (Psalm 68:4). "Let them praise the name of the LORD, for His name alone is exalted; his glory is above the earth and heaven" (Psalm 148:13). "Make a joyful shout to God, all the earth! Sing out the honor of His name; make His praise glorious" (Psalm 66:1–2).

If we casually use God's name, or a euphemism for God's name, to express shock, surprise, or even profanity, we are actually showing contempt for the Creator of the Universe.

In contrast, through the prophet Malachi, God said, "But to you who fear My name, the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings" (Malachi 4:2).

In what ways should we use God's name? In the New Testament, Christ instructed His disciples to pray to God the Father through His name. "And whatever you ask in my name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John 14:13). And when we pray, we should give honor to God's name. "In this manner, therefore, pray: our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name" (Matthew 6:9).

The disciples healed the sick through the name of Jesus Christ. "Then Peter said, 'Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk" (Acts 3:6). James instructed the church to continue to follow that example. He said, "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord" (James 5:14).

In the book of Acts, we read that the disciples preached the Gospel through the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 9:15), and baptized in Christ's name (Acts 8:16, 19:5).

Paul told the church at Ephesus, "Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers" (Ephesians 4:29).

The words we use are important to God. We should ensure that our speaking reflects our honor and reverence for Him.

# AMERICA'S SHOCKING MILITARY DECLINE By Mark Mendiola

he North Atlantic Treaty Organization's relentless bombing of Serbian military forces and strategic targets in the Balkans, during an air war that lasted 78 days last March to June, exposed how badly recent defense cuts have limited United States military might. It also drove home to the Europeans the urgent need to beef up their own military expenditures to protect their national interests.

Yugoslavian President Slobodan Milosovic was beaten into submission by NATO's first offensive military campaign in its 50-year history, but a rift also was widened between the United States and European Union, which increasingly find themselves at odds in geopolitical conflicts.

The United States continues to downsize its armed forces, but European nations appear to be on the verge of a significant military buildup, which does not bode well for America or Britain. As "the American Century" comes to a conclusion, many experts see the rise of a Europe much

more powerful economically, politically and militarily in the 21st century —a superpower that will be able to challenge the U.S. on various fronts in its own right as a modern empire.

Rather than cement what has been a strong alliance this past half century, NATO's war in the Balkans worsened tensions between America and Western Europe. During testimony before the Senate Armed Forces Committee in October, the Air Force general who orchestrated NATO's 11-week air war sharply criticized NATO's political leaders for jeopardizing the lives of U.S. pilots by micromanaging the campaign and prolonging the war.

Lt. Gen. Michael C. Short and two other top U.S. military commanders told the committee they would have been more aggressive in attacking the Serbs. "I'd have gone for the head of the snake on the first night" with a heavy air assault on the Yugoslav capital, Short said. "I'd have turned the lights out the first night. I'd have dropped the bridges across the Danube. I'd hit five or six political and military headquarters in downtown Belgrade."

#### **Stretched To The Snapping Point**

Extending the Kosovo air campaign strained U.S. military capabilities as American and British jets simultaneously participated in bombings against Iraq and enforcing no-fly zones there. Under Pentagon strategy, the U.S. hypothetically should be able to fight two regional wars at once, but a shortage of spare parts meant there were not enough combatready aircraft in Turkey to enforce Iraq's northern exclusion zone as the Kosovo air war was under way.

During the bombing of Kosovo, the Air Force banned all pilots, navigators and support crews from leaving the service, affecting about 6,000 Air Force personnel who already had approval to retire and return to civilian life.

Rear Admiral Eugene Carroll, deputy director of the Center for Defense Information, said the U.S. Air Force had fired half of its 100 cruise missiles only two weeks after the Kosovo air campaign had started. The Navy was on the verge of running out of its Tomahawk cruise missiles, forcing intensified use of less accurate cluster bombs.

During the height of the Cold War, the Navy had 600 ships compared to only 324 now. In 1991, the Navy had 15 aircraft carriers plus one reserve, enough to maintain a naval presence in the Persian Gulf, the Mediterranean Sea and the Pacific Ocean. Today, the Navy has only 12 carriers, leaving those regions without U.S. carriers for weeks or even months. Because of continuing confrontations with Iraq in 1999, the Navy left the Mediterranean unguarded to keep one or two carriers in the Persian Gulf.

The New York Times reported on July 11, 1999 that the four major U.S. armed services have steadily shrunk both in size and weaponry in the decade since the Soviet Union disintegrated. In 1989, there were



A U.S. Air Force airman transports an AGM-86C Conventional Air Launched Cruise Missile to a waiting B-52H Stratofortress, during NATO Operation Allied Force. © Presslink Photo

2.13 million men and women in active duty in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines. In 1999, there were 1.36 million, a nearly 40 percent drop! However, the number of peacekeeping missions, relief efforts and other military operations escalated with American troops deployed in the Caribbean, Middle East, Africa and the Balkans; stretching the armed forces dangerously thin.

Since the end of the Cold War, the Army's deployments across the globe have increased an estimated 300 percent while the Army has undergone a 33 percent reduction in force. Since 1989, the Army has provided more than 60 percent of the forces for 32 of 36 major deployments. It also has had to terminate or restructure more than 100 programs because of fiscal constraints.

"The war in Kosovo exposed weaknesses. At the height of the bombing, the U.S. had more than 800 aircraft and 37,500 people committed to the fight. The Air Force, in particular, was strained, with 40 to 45 percent of its entire force somehow involved—a higher percentage than was devoted to war in either Vietnam or the Persian Gulf," the New York Times reported. "In certain areas, the strain was even greater. Three-quarters of the force's aerial tanker crews, for example, were used in the air war."



The U.S. military faces declining enlistments. © MasterClips Photo

of cuts in American defense spending have said the U.S. is no longer capable of launching a nother Desert Storm operation such as the one

Critics

initiated nine years ago by President George Bush against Iraq's Saddam Hussein. There are doubts the nation could even repeat the Kosovo campaign!

The Clinton administration and Congress have slashed the nation's military personnel by about 35 percent since 1991, cut the money needed to train those remaining and reduced equipment purchases. Depleted, untrained crews in all branches of the military have resulted.

Gannett News Service reported June 4th, 1999, that Army units, short of troops and overly stressed from rapid deployments, have been doing badly in recent Pentagon battle tests, indicating a serious decline in combat readiness. Commanders of regular Army units told the General Accounting Office they were ordered to do their tests with as many as 16 borrowed tank crews and only 80 percent of designated unit strength. With units from seven of the Army's 10 divisions either committed to overseas missions or recovering from them, the GAO said maintaining a fighting edge poses a serious problem.

USA Today on October 22, 1999, reported that military recruiting costs per new enlistee hit an all-time high in 1999, even as the Army fell short of its goal by 6,300 soldiers and the Air Force missed its goal by 1,700 people. The Navy also needs an extra 22,000 sailors, who are difficult to recruit as high school graduates find lucrative employment in the booming U.S. economy.

In the past five years, the cost per new service member has risen by as much as 74 percent in the Air Force and in double digits in the other services. "The Pentagon's continuing struggle to fill the ranks could raise questions about the long-term viability of the all-volunteer military," *USA Today* reported, noting the Pentagon spent \$1.8 billion on recruiting in 1999.

In August of 1999, retired Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan, a former chief of staff for the Army, warned in a letter to members of the Association of the United States Army that the Defense Department needs an immediate investment of \$90 billion for new equipment to maintain U.S. combat readiness. But the chances of that amount getting appropriated is slim, as an increasingly isolationist nation prefers to spend its surpluses on domestic programs.

At the height of the Reagan administrations defense buildup, the nation spent \$171 billion on new equipment, research and development. In 1997, procurement spending sank to \$45 billion.

Sullivan noted the U.S. garnered a peace dividend by cutting defense spending by \$750 billion since the end of the Cold War, cutting forces by one-third and declaring a procurement holiday in buying and modernizing equipment. Roughly half of that dividend, or \$350 billion, is directly attributable to massive cutbacks in purchases of new warplanes, ships and helicopters.

"We are in a death spiral in modernizing our armed forces. They are operating increasingly aging

equipment and are not replacing the fleets of trucks, tanks or aircraft at a sufficient rate preclude going beyond their service lives. We are literally mortgaging future readiness," Sullivan wrote.



U.S. Tomahawk missiles are in short supply. © MasterClips Photo

By 2010, the Army's stock of weapons and equipment will have aged beyond their projected life spans with few or no replacements available at current funding levels. The American soldier of 2010 will go to war with essentially the same weapons as the soldier of 1990!

#### **Depending on Numbers**

It is national suicide for a country that does not rely on divine protection for its security to slash its troops and armaments. Even Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, observed, "Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace" (Luke 14:31-32).

The Bible also warns against relying solely on weapons and soldiers for national defense. Even during World War II after the United States undertook the most massive armament buildup in history as "the Arsenal of Democracy," the U.S. and Britain nearly lost the war to the Axis powers of Germany, Japan and Italy. Only direct intervention by Almighty God in such crucial turning points as Dunkirk, Midway, and El Alamein turned the tide in the Allies' favor, but even then losses were staggering.

"No king is saved by the multitude of an army; a mighty man is not delivered by great strength. A horse is a vain hope for safety; neither shall it deliver any by its strength. Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, on those who hope in His mercy" (Psalm 33:16-18).

If a nation does not fear God or hope in His mercy, all of the soldiers or armaments it may muster are futile because God is the One who determines the outcomes of wars and gives victory in battle. Yet, King David himself succumbed to the temptation of relying on his armed forces rather than God, and the results were disastrous. As 2 Samuel 24 illustrates, David had a standing army of more than one million soldiers! Yet because of his dependence on those warriors, God sent a plague that wiped out 70,000 of them in a matter of hours.

Following Desert Storm, the United States swelled with pride in its military power, but because of the nation's mounting sins, God vows to break that pride (Leviticus 26:19). Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall (Proverbs 16:18). The Bible shows a United Europe will arise that will surpass America militarily—both in superiority of numbers and sophistication of weaponry. The end result will be the calamitous fall of the U.S. and British nations!

#### **Deteriorating Relations**

American reluctance to send ground troops into Kosovo indicated to many Europeans that if another major crisis were to erupt on their side of the Atlantic Ocean, the U.S. might not be willing to commit the manpower or armaments needed to defend them.

"The Kosovo war has brought radical changes to the European continent, thrusting Germany into a leading military role not seen since 1945, galvanizing attempts to forge a common European defense policy and altering Europe's relationship with the United States," New York Times columnist Roger Cohen wrote on June 15, 1999.

Cohen noted that German leader Gerhard Schroeder, nicknamed the "Kriegskanzler" or war chancellor, committed 8,000 German troops for deployment in post-war Kosovo, the second- largest contingent after Britain. In fact, troops in Kosovo from the four major European Union countries will total about 33,000, eclipsing the planned American unit of 7,000 troops. Since the end of the Cold War, U.S. troops stationed in Europe have dropped by 200,000 to 100,000 or 66 percent!

The Christian Science Monitor reported on June 4th, 1999, that the European Union's creation of a



France and Germany announced on the last day of their regular six-monthly summit they wanted to boost the European Union's defense role and turn their Eurocorps military unit into a future European rapid reaction force. © Presslink Photo

foreign and security policy czar was a key step toward forming a common approach to international questions, and backing that with military muscle. EU heads of state also agreed to authorize an autonomous European military force for action in trouble spots, making the EU a military power for the first time in its 42-year history, that conceivably could send armies outside its borders, including the Middle East.

"In some countries these moves toward a United Europe, armed with an independently led military, have taken a distinctly anti-American tone," the newspaper reported.

During a conference at the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London in early October, U.S.

Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbot bluntly warned Europe against developing a military capability outside NATO, which, in effect, would detach it from American control.

"On this subject, I sense a basic difference of view on opposite sides of the Atlantic. Many Americans are saying, 'Never again should the United States have to fly the lion's share of the risky missions in a NATO operation and foot by far the biggest bill," Talbot said. off the cities of your land and throw down all your strongholds" (Micah 5:10–11).

This worst case scenario is not beyond the realm of possibility, as the U.S. finds itself virtually defenseless against the growing threat from ballistic missiles. Antagonistic nations like North Korea and Iran are likely to join Russia and China as long-range missile threats to the United States over the next 15 years, the Central Intelligence Agency reported recently.



"Many in my country, notably including members of Congress, are concerned that, in some future European crisis, a similar predominance of American manpower, firepower, equipment and resources will be neither politically nor militarily sustainable, given the competing commitments our nation has in the Gulf, on the Korean Peninsula and elsewhere in the world."

#### **Ominous Prophecies**

Bible prophecy shows that the Europeans will forge one of the greatest military empires the world has ever seen before the return of Jesus Christ to establish His Kingdom on earth. This final resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire, described as a powerful beast, will appear absolutely invincible!

"I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. So they worshipped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" (Revelation 13:3–4).

Yes, this European behemoth will crush other nations, including the American and British peoples, like a juggernaut. The Bible also shows that the military might of the United States, or modern Jacob, will be suddenly destroyed. "And it shall be in that day," says the LORD, 'That I will cut off your horses from your midst and destroy your chariots. I will cut

These emerging missile forces "potentially can kill tens of thousands, or even millions, of Americans, depending on the type of warhead, the accuracy and the intended target," the CIA said, noting Iraq also posed a more distant threat.

Americans are at more risk than they think, facing possible terrorist attack and other new dangers that superior military power cannot prevent, a Pentagon-appointed panel reported to Defense Secretary William Cohen in October.

If the nation is drawn into war, it will bring "casualties and carnage, and combat will not be like a video game, even for Americans," stated the bipartisan, independent commission headed by former Republican Sen. Warren Rudman and former Democratic Sen. Gary Hart. "Americans will become increasingly vulnerable to hostile attack on our homeland, and our military superiority will not entirely protect us," the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century report also concluded.

Western Europe's arsenal of ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads also could be easily aimed at the United States. To learn more about where deteriorating relations between the U.S. and European Union are leading, please write for our astounding booklet titled What's Ahead for America and Britain? It will be sent free of charge. The implications of the shocking decline in U.S. military power are absolutely frightening, but there is wonderful news beyond the unprecedented trouble looming for the U.S. and Britain!

## Dettens to the Editor

What a fantastic cover! The articles in the October issue were extremely clear and the messages easy to understand. Keep up the good work. Our prayers are with you.

C.Z.
Belle Plaine, MN
via the Internet

I read the whole issue in one sitting. I have really enjoyed all that I have read. Thank you for sending me the information.

M.C. Kempner, TX

I am so excited about getting the literature coming to me once again. When I started reading the May–June issue of *Tomorrow's World* I could not put it down. It is so much like the *Plain Truth* I used to get. Keep up the good work!

A.S. Jackson, MS

Tomorrow's World is helping me to build myself up spiritually. May the good Lord show His choicest blessings on each and every one of you all who make Tomorrow's World possible around the world to help me and people like me.

R.R. Couva, Trinidad, West Indies My wife and I would like to thank you and everyone there for the subscription to *Tomorrow's World* magazine. The articles are very interesting, and help out very much while studying the Bible. Thank you for all that you do; it has really made a big difference in our lives.

S.H. Millington, MI

I'm very happy to have found *Tomorrow's World*, where the Truth of God is being preached as a witness and a warning to this world. I'm glad that Mr. Roderick C. Meredith is continuing to preach the Word of the Lord—the true Gospel—and has not given up. May the Eternal continue to bless your work in preaching the Truth.

A.A. Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Thank you for Roderick C. Meredith's Personal in the July-September issue. I am so glad to know that your magazine rejects the racism that some associate with the Biblical understanding of the identity of the British-descended peoples. Our Savior was a Jew, and we must as Christians have no place in our hearts for anti-Semitism or racism of any kind. Thank you for that inspiring message.

J.I. Long Island, NY

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.

## Save Your Mai



re you experiencing problems in your marriage? Do you need help? One source of profound and practical help is the Bible, the Word of God! The Bible gives amazing solutions that can help improve and may even *save* your marriage!

The institution of marriage can be one of the greatest blessings God has ever given human beings! But the curses of selfishness and carnality have led to millions of divorces, broken families and damaged children! The pressures of our society all contribute to fragmented families, bringing about the rising numbers of homes with both parents working, escalating commercialism and materialistic values, the pervasive influence of entertainment industry, the lack of family time together, the inability of families to communicate and the lack of family purpose and cohesiveness.

What about *your* marriage? Chances are that it is

experiencing stress—maybe even severe stress.

The workplace takes its toll on marriage, robbing couples of time. According to Cornell sociologist Phyllis Moen: "Workers increasingly are caught up in a time squeeze.... They have two jobs, one at work, one at home." Her colleague, Cornell sociologist Marin Clarksberg, observes: "People are working longer hours, and it's not because they want to" (San Diego Union-Tribune, January 23, 1999).

The Cornell study also revealed couples' changing values regarding the roles of husband and wife. "Only about 10 percent of couples said they prefer the traditional roles of the man as breadwinner and woman as full-time housewife. Yet 25 percent of the couples [actually] fit this mold."

How can couples cope with these pressures on family and on marriage? Some may even feel like giving up on marriage. But there is a source of real help! You need the truth! Jesus said in John 17:17, "Thy Word is Truth." The Bible—the written word of God—is the Creator's revelation to His creation, and is the source of truth! What better source can there be for guidance about your marital relationship?

#### The Great Commandments

The Ten Commandments teach us how to relate to God and how to relate to one another. They are summed up in the two great commandments: "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets' (Matthew 22:37–40).

The qualities of love toward God and love toward neighbor are fundamental to

#### By Richard F. Ames







our very existence—and are fundamental to family relationships. Two of the Ten Commandments apply directly to our family lives. The Fifth Commandment tells us to "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you" (Exodus 20:12). This is a spiritual cause-and-effect law. It is our God-given responsibility to honor our parents.

The Seventh Commandment states, "You shall not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14). God demands faithfulness and fidelity in our marriages.

These commandments protect and enrich our family relationships. Our Creator wants us to build a strong family, and to love our neighbor. And our closest neighbor is our spouse!

Where did marriage come from? Scripture shows us that God, the Creator, instituted marriage. Adam was alone until God presented him with a beautiful wife. "And Adam said: 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she

was taken out of man.' Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed" (Genesis 2:23–25).

God is the Creator of marriage and the family. He wants those relationships to be happy and vibrant. But you know what happened to Adam and Eve—they sinned! They disobeyed the principles and laws that would have brought them success and happiness. Yet God is allowing us to learn the way of right relationships. "...I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Yes, through Jesus Christ, we can experience abundant living, even in our marriages, if we apply His instructions and God's revealed principles!

#### Five Marriage-Saving Strategies

With that very important perspective in mind, let us consider five strategies to help improve your marriage—and even save your marriage if it happens to be falling apart.

Strategy 1: Renew your commitment. You probably already know that this is one of the most basic principles in marriage. Tomorrow's World Editor in Chief, Dr. Roderick Meredith has written about it in his booklet Build a Joyous Marriage! and he has discussed it on the Tomorrow's World telecast. The first strategy for improving your marriage is to renew your commitment.

We may mentally know this. But have we emotionally and spiritually practiced it? Remember the vows you took during the wedding ceremony? A typical ceremony includes the commitment by the bride and groom to serve one another "for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part."

Were those empty words? Or have you personally worked to fulfill your part of that wedding vow? This first strategy for improving your marriage is to renew your commitment to your spouse. We need to be dedicated to preserving the marriage the best we can! Are you devoted to your spouse?

I know it is not easy! My wife and I have been married for more than 35 years. We have had our rough spots. But we both know we are committed to one another! That is so important. In our world of easy divorces and experimental marriages, we need the commitment Jesus spoke of in the gospel of Mark. In Jesus' day, a man could divorce his wife for frivolous reasons. So the Pharisees, appealing to Moses' writings, asked Jesus whether divorce was lawful. He answered them, "Because of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation. God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate" (Mark 10:5-9).

Jesus emphasized that, from the beginning, a marriage commitment was for life. Again, we need to look to the Creator who joins us together in marriage! Strategy number one to improve and save your marriage is: Renew your commitment to your spouse, to be faithful in loving and serving one another through thick and thin.

God wants all of us to be a part of His divine family for all eternity! Our loving Father in heaven has given us the true knowledge for building a joyous marriage. At the time of your wedding, perhaps you were enthusiastic and expecting a life-long marriage of bliss and happiness. Then perhaps you faced the realities of human nature and the serious differences between you and your spouse! You may have become discour-

aged. But do not give up on your husband—or your wife! Strive to keep your marriage together.

Strategy 2: Deeply respect your spouse. So much of what we see and hear in today's media teaches us to disrespect others. Movies and television often glorify characters who boast vanity and pride. The media promotes heroes and heroines who can disparage, denigrate, and insult others. The attitudes of anger, hate, and disre-



spect cross the line of spiritual murder. As the Apostle John wrote in 1 John 3:15, "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him."

We need to realize that every human being has the potential to be a glorified child of God in the Kingdom of God for all eternity. Each of us must recognize the potential that God has given our spouse. In spite of any current attitude, that potential still exists.

Listen to what God says to husbands in 1 Peter 3:7, "Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered." God tells each husband to give honor to his wife. That honor will be reflected in his words, his courtesy, his service, his body language and his attitude toward his wife!

Wives are also told to respect their husbands. "Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband" (Ephesians 5:33). There must be mutual respect in a marriage. Common courtesy goes a long way to encourage that honor and respect.

We must always remember our spouse's potential value in God's sight. Notice Paul's admoni-

tion in Philippians 2:3, "Let nothing be done through self-ish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself." To esteem means to value, or to hold in regard.

Strategy 3: Communicate in love. This third strategy is very basic but very necessary. How often do couples "tune out" one another in their conversations?

Effective communication means *effective listening* as well as speaking. We should listen in order to understand the other person's point of view. Try to understand the other person's feelings and needs! Demonstrate respect by giving your full attention.

The Apostle Paul wrote on this point. "But speaking the truth in love, [we] may grow up in all things into Him who is the head; Christ" (Ephesians 4:15). Some people speak the truth in hate. But a Christian, maturing in Christ, will care how his words and message affect a listener!

When you talk with your spouse, do you demonstrate concern and care? Do you communicate respect? Certainly we need to be patient with one another. Paul reminds us: "Love is patient, love is kind" (1 Corinthians 13:4, NIV). In your conversations, be careful to speak the truth in love!

Your language, attitude, or expression at the beginning of the day can affect your whole relationship. Learn to express a positive, loving attitude at the beginning of the day. You can avoid an accidental argument or an unnecessary grudge that will last all day. And pay particular attention when you get together at the end of the day. Even if you are tired, a positive word of encouragement or appreciation—a hug or a kiss can make a big difference in your relationship for the whole evening.

Sometimes couples make arguing a habit—a repeated, predictable, pattern of provocation and response. Instead, make an effort to change your communication pattern. We read in Proverbs, "A soft answer turns away wrath. But a harsh word stirs up anger" (Proverbs 15:1). Try responding with a soft answer such as, "Well, I'm sorry that I give that impression." Even a simple response such as "thank you!" can often defuse a tired old argument. Use a soft answer the next time an argument begins in your home!

Strategy 4: Practice the way of "give." This is a key spiritual principle given to us by our Savior, as illustrated by the words and example of the Apostle Paul. "I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

If you make a commitment to give 100 percent to your marriage, you will be blessed! Think about how you can give to your mate. Little gifts or words of appreciation can make a big difference! Think about giving without expecting anything in return. Remember Christ's admonition, "And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two" (Matthew 5:41). True love means giving 100 percent and going the extra mile!

Love also means fulfilling another's needs. Marriage is a physical union in which both partners share important responsibilities, as described by the Apostle Paul: "Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does" (1 Corinthians 7:2-4). You must be willing to give to your mate even if you do not feel like doing so.

Strategy 5: Pray together. If you are married to an unbeliever and cannot pray with your spouse, you still need to pray for your spouse-and pray for your marriage. You can be a Christian example to your mate, as we read in the Apostle Peter's instruction to wives who have unconverted husbands: "Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives" (1 Peter 3:1). Your loving, giving, Christian example can go a long way toward positively influencing your spouse. Notice the emphasis is on the conduct, not on trying to argue your mate into your religion.

If both you and your spouse pray, try praying together once a day, as my wife and I often do. I normally begin our prayer, and after a short while nudge my wife. After her prayer, I will conclude our praying together. In sharing our intimate and personal thoughts with our God in prayer, we are also sharing with each other.

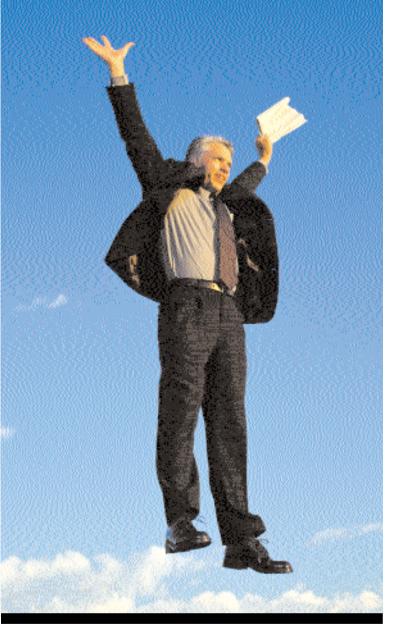
One of my wife's favorite expressions is: "Let's pray about that." I appreciate her willingness to involve God in our marriage and in our life together. We all need to acknowledge God and our Savior in every aspect of our lives. As we read in Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths."

#### You Can Succeed With God's Help!

Marriage takes work, effort and nourishing to be successful. It requires giving all you can in following your God-given responsibilities to your spouse. There will be obstacles, and even conflicts. But with God's help, you can improve your marriage—and even save your marriage if it is in danger!

God instituted marriage for a great purpose in His plan for humanity. We are to learn to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength—and to love our neighbors as ourselves. In the intimate marriage relationship, we should continually learn to apply those principles of love.

In this article, we have briefly discussed five strategies for improving-even saving-your marriage. Ask God to help you apply these principles in your own life. Remember, you cannot force your mate to change—you can only change yourself. But your example of love and service can have an influence and positive effect on your mate. You need the help of your Savior in your own life. As the Apostle Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). May God bless you, your marriage and your family as you strive to live by His word!



## The Secret Rapt False Hope fo

In 1970 author Hal Lindsey wrote a best-selling book entitled *The Late Great Planet Earth*. In the last few years Tim LaHaye has topped the religious best-seller lists with a series of novels he has written centering on the Great Tribulation and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to the earth.

Prominent in the prophetic scenarios of Hal Lindsey, Tim LaHaye and other Protestant evangelicals has been their teaching about the secret rapture of the Church. All of the increased emphasis given to Bible prophecy in recent years has drawn much attention to the subject of the rapture. Perhaps you have even seen the bumper stickers on automobiles announcing that "in case of the rapture, this car will be without a driver!"

Most evangelicals who write or speak on the subject of prophecy assume that the key end-time event for Christians is the secret rapture. What exactly is the rapture? What does the Bible teach concerning it and is it the only hope for end-time Christians? There is a great deal of confusion about this and many aspects of prophecy in the professing Christian world. However, the real truth is both knowable and provable when we look to the plain, clear teachings of the Bible, rather than to the ideas and theories of men.

he long-anticipated year 2000 has finally arrived! A significant benchmark in the way we count time, it marks the final year of both the twentieth century and of the second millennium since the birth of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. In actuality, Christ was probably born about four years earlier than the commonly accepted date, which was calculated by the monk Dionysius Exiguus from the records available to him in the sixth century.

As time approaches ever closer to the commonly accepted 2,000th anniversary of Christ's first advent, it seems that there is a notable upsurge of interest in His Second Advent, as well as in the whole subject of Bible prophecy. Before the past quarter century, this topic was one which was seldom discussed in the pulpits of the western world. Now, it has become one of the hottest topics for religious speakers and writers.

#### The Rapture Doctrine and Its Origin

What is the doctrine of the secret rapture? Simply put, it is the teaching that Jesus Christ will return twice! First there will be a secret, unheralded return in which He will whisk all Christians, both living and dead, off to Heaven to be present there during the time that the Great Tribulation is taking place on earth. This secret coming supposedly could occur at any moment and will come without any advance warning to anyone. Seven years later (or three and a half according to some) Christ will return openly in power and glory to destroy the wicked and to establish His Kingdom.

The term "rapture" is used nowhere in the Bible. It is a term that has been invented by men and applied by them to what they term "the first phase" of the Second Coming. The Bible itself, however, nowhere says that Christ's coming will occur in phases.

### r End-Time Christians!

#### By John H. Ogwyn

A nineteenth century British preacher, John Nelson Darby, was the one who developed the rapture teaching and began to promote it in the 1830s. He was the founder of the Plymouth Brethren Church and developed a scheme of scriptural interpretation called dispensationalism. The idea of the dispensationalists is that God has had different rules for different groups at different times. For instance. He had the law for the Jews and now we have grace for the Church.

Darby's teachings were refined and popularized by C. I. Scofield, an American lawyer and minister who authored the noted Scofield Reference Bible at the beginning of the twentieth century. Primarily through Dr. Scofield, Protestant evangelicals came to generally accept the teachings of both dispensationalism and the secret rapture. These two ideas go hand in hand to blind many sincere people to God's real message to Christians in the end time.

Proponents of the rapture point to 1 Thessalonians 4 as their primary proof of a "secret coming." They then proceed to divide all scriptures that discuss the return of Jesus Christ into two categories. First are the scriptures that discuss the resurrection of the saints and their gathering to Christ. Secondly are the scriptures that discuss Christ taking vengeance on wicked and rebellious people and nations. Their idea is that these events are separated by a period of years. Let us carefully look at 1 Thessalonians 4 and see whether that is so.

#### One Phase or Two?

Paul had preached and raised up a church in the Greek city of Thessalonica about 50AD. Because of intense persecution, he was forced to leave the city and move on to other parts of Greece. While in Athens he sent his assistant, Timothy, back to Thessalonica bearing a letter intended to comfort and encourage the fledgling Christian community. In this context he mentioned those who had already died in the faith. "Since they were dead, how would they benefit from the return of the Messiah?" some in Thessalonica seem to have wondered.

"We wish you not to remain in ignorance, brothers, about those who sleep in death; you should not grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again; and so it will be for those who died as Christians; God will bring them to life with Jesus. For this we tell you as the Lord's word: we who are left alive until the Lord comes shall not forestall those who have died; because at the word of command, at the sound of the archangel's voice and God's trumpet call, the Lord himself will descend from heaven; first the Christian dead will rise, then we who are left alive shall join them, caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, NEB).

This description is taken by rapture proponents to be descriptive of a secret coming of Christ, which will take Christians off to Heaven. But notice we are told that preceding this resurrection the trumpet of God is blown. What is that and when will it occur?

The Apostle Paul added more details when he wrote a letter to the Corinthian Church, located in a neighboring Greek city. "Behold, I tell you a mystery:

We shall not all but sleep, we shall all be changed—in moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the will dead raised incorruptible, and we shall



be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:51-52). The specific supernatural trumpet that will be blown prior to the resurrection of the saints is dubbed "the last trumpet."

Does the Bible anywhere speak of a series of supernatural trumpet blasts? The answer is a resounding yes! Revelation 8:1-2 describes the opening of the seventh and last of the seals which had closed the book of Revelation until they were removed one at a time by Jesus Christ. When the seventh seal was opened the Apostle John saw in vision seven angels standing before God and each receiving a trumpet. The angels proceeded to blow these trumpets one at a time signaling terrible ecological disasters followed by horrible warfare.

Now, let us notice Revelation 11:15: "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." Verse 18 connects this seventh and final trumpet blast with the time when God's wrath has come and when He would reward the saints. Clearly, when we look at these three sections of scripture it is very apparent that the seventh and last trumpet signals both the resurrection of the saints as well as the time when Christ returns to judge the nations. These are not two different phases of the Second Coming, separated by seven years, as most evangelical writers contend. Rather, the resurrection of the saints to immortality and the pouring out of God's wrath on the nations begin at the same time and are both signaled by the same event, the blast of the seventh and final trumpet.

Another important set of verses to look at in this context is Matthew 24:29–31. In verse 29 we learn that the tribulation and the heavenly signs occur prior to the return of Jesus Christ.

Verse 30 emphasizes that His return, far from being secret, will be seen by people everywhere and will provoke mourning and grief from the unrepentant. Then verse 31 states: "And he will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Let us understand the real significance of this verse.

From 1 Thessalonians 4 we learned that when the last trumpet blows, the saints, both living and dead will rise from the earth to meet Jesus Christ in the clouds. Matthew 24:31 talks of the angels gathering the elect from the four winds of heaven. The Bible uses the same term, heaven, to describe three different locations. From which heaven are the saints to be gathered?

The first heaven is the heaven of the earth's atmosphere, where the birds fly and where the clouds are. The second use of the word heaven is for what we call outer space. The stars, the sun and the moon are located in this second heaven. The Bible also refers to the realm of God's throne as heaven, characterizing it in 2 Corinthians 12:2 as "the third heaven."

The wind blows in the first heaven, the heaven where the clouds are, not in outer space or the environs of the throne of God. The angels would have no need to gather Christians from around the throne of God. Rather, Matthew 24:31 describes the resurrection of the saints, which clearly occurs at the time of

Christ's return in glory. When the saints rise, they go straight up. Since we live on a round earth that means that people in Australia who go "up" head in a different direction from those who rise "up" in Europe or in North America. What is described is the very practical way in which God is going to ensure that all of the resurrected saints meet Jesus Christ. He simply sends angels through the sky to gather His elect from all the points of the compass where they are rising to assemble them in the clouds over Jerusalem to greet their returning Savior. How simple!

#### The Parousia

The Bible uses the Greek word *parousia* to refer to the return of Jesus Christ numerous times. It is a term, which was often used in a secular context to refer to the coming of a king.

It carries with it no connotation of a secret coming. Four occurrences of the word are in Matthew 24. In

#### Matthew 24:31 describes the resurred

verse three Jesus' disciples asked Him for the "sign" of his *parousia* (or coming). In verse 27 Jesus compares His *parousia* to the visible spread of light from east to west when the sun rises. In verses 37 and 39 He compares His coming to the time when God's judgment came on the pre-flood world in the days of Noah. None of these verses are descriptive of any secret or clandestine coming.

The word *parousia* is also used in 1 Corinthians 15:23 to refer to the event which will accompany the resurrection of the saints. In 1 Thessalonians 4:15 it is again used to refer to the event which accompanies the resurrection of the saints. 2 Thessalonians 2:8 describes Christ destroying the final false prophet, the man of sin, at His *parousia* (coming). Clearly His *parousia* will not be a secret event, but rather a time when He will begin to execute judgment on the ungodly.

In chapter two of 2 Thessalonians Paul explains that true Christians would be able to know the time when Christ's *parousia* was approaching. He explains that there were events, which had to precede the coming of Christ (v. 3). He simply was not going to be coming "any minute." Earlier Paul had pointed out to the Thessalonians that the world as a whole would not be expecting the Messiah's return. However, he went on to state that true Christians had no excuse for being caught unaware. Since they lived in spiritual light and not darkness, they should be alert

to the signs of the times and not taken by surprise (1 Thessalonians 5:1-4).

#### What About God's Protection?

Does the fact that Christ's return occurs after the Tribulation (Matthew 24:29-31) mean that all Christians will have to go through that time of suffering that is to come? Christ certainly enjoined His disciples to pray that they might be accounted worthy to escape that time of trouble (Luke 21:36). If there is not a secret rapture prior to the tribulation, then what did Christ mean by that statement?

Let us understand the difference between the Tribulation and the Day of the Lord. Revelation 6:17 makes plain that the day of God's wrath follows the heavenly signs mentioned in verses 12 through 16. The heavenly signs are the sixth seal and the Day of the Lord is the seventh. The events that happened earlier do not represent God's wrath; they represent Satan's!

ing Christ's return. Note, however, that all Christians are not taken to this place of safety. Rather, we learn in verse 17 that Satan then goes to make war with the "remnant." These are clearly true Christians because they are described as those who "keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Why are some not protected from Satan's wrath?

The answer is found in a careful study of Revelation 3. Here, in messages to the last two of the seven churches, those at Philadelphia and Laodicia, we find a contrast between two different groups of God's people at the end time. The church at Philadelphia is used to characterize those who are zealously going through the open door to preach the gospel that Christ has set before them. The church at Laodicia is characterized as being lukewarm, lacking in zeal. They are complacent and self-centered. It is upon this group, characteristic of the final phase of the Church of God, that God will allow Satan to pour his wrath. This is a last resort on

#### tion of the saints which clearly occurs at the time of Christ's return in glory.

The fifth seal, described symbolically in Revelation 6:9-11, describes a future martyrdom of saints. Jesus Christ referred to this in Matthew 24, verses 9 and 21. He talked about a time when His disciples would be persecuted and even killed. But notice the events of the tribulation are not only directed against the Church. In Jeremiah 30:7 we read of a time called "Jacob's trouble" described as the worst ever. Daniel 12:1 also describes a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." This is an almost identical expression to that used by Jesus in Matthew 24:21. There surely cannot be several times, each being the worst ever. These verses are all describing the same event!

This time is Satan's wrath against the modern day descendants of Israel as well as against spiritual Israel, the Church. This is made plain in Revelation 12 where we read of the Church being described by the metaphor of a woman. It was the Old Testament Church that brought forth the Messiah (v. 5). After He was caught up to Heaven to be with the Father, the Church (now in its New Testament phase) fled from persecution into the wilderness.

In verse 13 we find that after Satan is cast back down to the earth, a yet future event, he launches allout persecution upon the Church. At this time, we are told, the Church will be taken to a place in the wilderness to be supernaturally nourished and protected during the final three-and-a-half year period precedGod's part, as these people have not been stirred to repent of their lack of zeal by any prior event.

When God prepares to pour out His wrath, the events of the Day of the Lord, He first sets apart those who have come to repentance during the preceding time of Tribulation (Revelation 7:1-3). This is a yet future event designed to protect those who have surrendered to God in the midst of persecution and terrible pressure to conform to Satan's system. There is a clear distinction between the Tribulation (Satan's wrath) and the Day of the Lord, which is the time of God's judgment on those who give their allegiance to the coming Beast system.

A secret rapture? The Bible teaches no such thing! It does teach, however, that Jesus Christ is going to come back in power and glory to rule this world and to bring salvation to His saints. We can and should be aware of the signs of the times, not oblivious to the events that are going to plunge the world into the most hellish time in its history.

Also, we are enjoined to be zealously seeking God in prayer and putting our hearts into the work of preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom to the whole world. Those who are zealously so doing will be protected by God, while those who are not will be confronted with having to learn a hard lesson.

Seek the Lord, while He may be found and draw near to Him while He is near (Isaiah 55:6).

#### PROVE ALL THINGS (continued from Page 3)

Consider the warning Christ Himself gave: "For many shall come in my name, saying [that] I am Christ; and shall deceive many" (Matthew 24:5, KJV). Jesus did not say here that only some few would come in His name, but rather that "many shall come"! They come as "Christian" preachers, proclaiming Jesus as the Christ—yet DECEIVING MANY! In other words, there was to be a mass deception based on the false teachings of the many who would claim to come "in Jesus' name."

Frankly, it is easy for religious teachers to *appropriate* the Son of God's name as a cloak for their personal doctrine, whether or not what they say has any relationship at all to the real Jesus' life or teachings! That is why the Apostle Paul tells us: "PROVE all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21 KJV). Each one of us is responsible to "check up" on the doctrines we are taught—whatever the source. Don't make careless assumptions! *Be sure you know what the Bible really says!* 

Paul further admonishes: "For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted; you may well put up with it!" (2 Corinthians 11:4). In other words, Paul feared that some of the Church members of his day would fall prey to "counterfeit" ministers and would come to accept a *false* gospel about a *false* Christ!

What about you? Is it possible that you have put up with "another Jesus"? Might you have been deceived into believing in a false portrayal of Christ—along with a false message merely purported to have come from the true Jesus? How can we KNOW what's true and what isn't?

Again, we need to truly STUDY the Bible to attain genuine understanding. We need to be willing to open-mindedly consider *if* we have been following the "traditions of men" rather than the *commandments of God* (Matthew 15:3).

As we study the Bible, we need to learn to let the *Bible interpret the Bible*. In other words, if something seems unclear, then we should let the plain, clear verses help us understand those that are not clear. We need to learn also to study the Bible straight through like we would any other book. Many people simply skip around here and there and read sentimental verses of encouragement. While this may help at times, it does NOT give genuine

understanding of the whole plan and purpose of God which He reveals in His instruction manual for mankind—the *Holy Bible*.

Begin by studying the Gospel of Matthew—the first book of the New Testament. Read *right through* Matthew slowly, marking what you feel are the important verses. Then, next day, review these verses you have studied and read slowly—meditating and marking—a few more chapters. In this way, you will become familiar with what the Bible actually says—NOT what misguided men may *tell* you that it says!

In fervent personal prayer, ask God for UNDERSTANDING. Be willing to follow the *Christianity of Christ* no matter what. Always remember the Apostle Paul's vital statement: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ LIVETH in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20, KJV).

Through the promised Holy Spirit, will Christ live the SAME kind of life in you that He did live over 1,900 years ago in the human flesh? Hebrews 13:8 tells us: "Jesus Christ is the SAME yesterday, today, and forever." Did Christ keep the Ten Commandments while He was in the human flesh? John 15:10 tells us, "I have KEPT my Father's commandments."

If you need help in studying the Bible, write or call immediately to enroll in the *Tomorrow's World Bible Study Course*. This thorough course will not just lead you through a lot of sentiment. Rather, it will help you genuinely *understand* the great PLAN of our Creator for all mankind. It will help you PROVE from *your own Bible* what you should do to fulfill *your part* in God's Plan. If you wish to enroll, the addresses and phone numbers of our regional offices are on page two of this magazine.

As the end of this age approaches, may God help you genuinely *study* His inspired Word and PROVE what you believe *from the Bible*. Then, you will be on a solid foundation. And you will come to genuinely know God—and the resurrected Jesus Christ at God's right hand—in a way you have never experienced before.

Robert Meredit

#### ▲ Spanish Radio

## Tomorrow's World TV/Radio Log

#### <u>International</u>

#### **—AUSTRALIA**

Adelaide: ACE-Ch 6/31, SUN 11:30 am Brisbane: BRIZ-Ch 31, SUN 8:30 am Perth: CETL-Ch 31, SUN 9:30 am

#### -NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: Triangle Television—Ch 41, SUN 5:00 pm

△ Mexico City: Cambio—1440 AM, SUN 12:00 noon

#### **-PHILIPPINES**

Borongan: Borongan Cable—Ch 25, SAT 3:00 pm Manila: Home Cable-Ch 11, SAT 9:00 am Naval, Leyte: Naval Cable-Ch 8, SUN 9:00 am,

-CANADA (nationwide) ON, Toronto: Vision—SUN 6:30 pm (ET & PT)

#### **United States**

AL, Birmingham: Cable-Ch 3, FRI 4:30 pm AL, Montgomery: TCI-Ch 3, SAT 5:30 pm AR, Fayetteville: Access TV-Ch 8, SUN 8:30 pm

AR, Little Rock: Comcast -Ch 27, MON 10:30 am; THUR 5:30 pm

AZ, Phoenix: Access-Ch 22, WED 10:30 pm

AZ, Prescott: Cable-Ch13, SAT 9:00 pm; SUN 8:30 am AZ, Tucson: Access-Ch 54/62, FRI 3:00 pm; SUN 7:00 pm

CA, Anaheim: Century-Ch 3, TUE 4:00 pm CA, Buena Park: Comcast-Ch 55, THUR 7:30 pm

CA, Eureka: Cox-Ch 10, FRI 5:30 pm

CA, Garden Grove: Time Warner-Ch 6, SUN 10:30 am

CA, Modesto: Cable One-Ch 8, TUE 3:00 pm

CA, Norwalk: Public Access—Ch 55, THUR 5:30 pm

CA, Oceanside: KOCT-Ch 18, SUN 5:30 pm CA, Riverbank: SONIC-Ch 9, WED 6:00 pm

CA, Sacramento: RCCTV—Ch 20, WED 7:00 pm

CA, San Andreas: Media One-Ch 4, TUE 4:00 pm

CA, San Diego: Cox-Ch 18, & 24 THUR 6:00 pm

CA, Sonora: TCCCA-Ch 8, SUN 8:00 pm

CA, Turlock: Marcus-Ch 2, MON 8:00 pm

CT, Naugatuck: Tele-Media-Ch 10, TUE 9:30 pm

FL, Gainesville: Cox-Ch 55, SUN 8:00 pm

FL, Ocala: Cox-Ch 35, SUN 10:00 am

FL, Tampa: Time Warner—To be determined

HI, Honolulu: Olelo-Ch 23, & 53 SUN 11:00 pm

IA, Des Moines: TCI-Ch 15, SAT 10:00 am; SUN 11:00 am

IA, Dubuque: TCI of Iowa-Ch 45, To be determined

IA, Waterloo: Cable-Ch 2, WED 9:00 pm

ID, Pocatello: Vision-Ch 12, SUN 7:30 pm; FRI 1:00 pm

IL, Bloomington: AT&T—Ch 10, SUN 10:00 am; WED 8:30 pm

IL, Chicago: WGN-Cable, SUN 6:00 am (ET)

IL, Peoria: AT&T-Ch 20, SUN 7:30 pm

IL, Springfield: TCI-Ch 4, TUE 6:00 pm

IN, Elkhart: TCI-Ch 3, THUR 7:30 pm

IN, Flora: Marcus-Ch 2, SUN 10:00 am

IN, Frankfort: Marcus-Ch 2, SUN 10:00 am

IN, Lafayette: Insight-Ch 13, TUE 8:30 pm

IN, Monticello: Marcus-Ch 2, SUN 10:00 am

KS, Chanute: Cablevision-Ch 5, SUN 7:30 am; TUE 5:30 pm

KS, Parsons: Time Warner-Ch 21, WED 7:00 pm; WED 9:30 pm

MA, Cambridge: CCTV-CH 22, TUE 4:00 pm

MA, Malden: Access TV-CH 3, No set time

MD, Baltimore: TCI-Ch 5, SUN 12:30 am

MN, Duluth: Public Access-Ch 24, SAT 11:00 am; SUN 9:00 am

MN, Minneapolis: NW Community-Ch 35, SAT 10:30 pm; SUN 4:30 am, 10:30 am & 4:30 pm

MO, Springfield: KSPR-Ch 33, SUN 8:30 am

MO, St. Louis: Double Helix-Ch 22, MON 4:00 pm

MS, Jackson: Time Warner-Ch 11, WED 12:00 am

ND, Bismarck: CATV-Ch 12, SUN 3:00 pm

NJ, Oakland: Cablevision-Ch 19/20, SUN 7:00 pm

NM, Albuquerque: CCC27-Ch 27, SUN 5:00 pm

NV, Carson City: Access TV-Ch 10, SAT 9:00 pm

NV, Gardnerville: Community Access—Ch 26, SAT 3:00 am; SUN 3:00 am, 3:00 pm

NV, Reno/Sparks: SNCT-Ch 30/16, SAT 12:00 pm

NY, Brooklyn: BCAT-Ch 56/69, SUN 3:30 pm

NY, Elmira & Corning: Time Warner-Ch 1, SUN 9:30 am

NY, Hauppauge: Cablevision—Ch 25, FRI 10:30 pm

NY, Port Jefferson: TCI-Ch 1/99 THUR 11:00 pm

NY, Riverhead: Cablevision-Ch 27, MON 4:30 pm

NY, Rochester: Community TV-Ch 15, SUN 10:30 am

OK, Tulsa: TCI-Ch 9, MON 12:00 am

OR, Portland: MCTV-CH 11, SUN 10:00 am; TUE 1:30 pm

TX, Corpus Christi: TCI-Ch 10, THUR 2:00 pm; FRI 10:30 am; SUN 11:00 am;

TX, Dallas: Community Television—Ch 14b, FRI 2:00 pm; SAT 1:00 pm; SUN 11:00 am

TX, Temple: KPLE—Ch 31/46, SUN 7:30 pm

VA, Chesterfield: Comcast-Ch 6, THUR 6:30 pm

VT, Barre: Ch 7, SAT 9:00 pm; SUN 2:00 pm & 11:00 pm WA, Bellingham: TCI-Ch 10, SAT 8:00 am; SUN 8:00 am

WA, Seattle: TCI-Ch 29, SAT 12:00 pm

WA, Vancouver: Clark/Vancouver-Ch 49, SUN 9:30 am

IL, Chicago: WGN-National Cable, SUN 6:00 am (ET)



TELEVISION SUPERSTATIONS:
WGN: SUN 6:00 am ET

VISION, Canada: SUN 6:30 pm ET & PT

#### **New Stations:**

Perth, Australia: CETL, Ch 31, SUN 9:30 am FL, Tampa: Time Warner—To be determined

IA, Dubuque: TCI of Iowa—Ch 45, To be determined

MO, Springfield: KSPR—Ch 33, SUN 8:30 am VT, Barre: Ch 7, SAT 9 pm; SUN 2pm & 11 pm

#### **Radio Stations:**

Trinidad & Tobago,

Trinidad Broadcasting Co., Port of Spain—730 kHz AM, THUR 5:00 pm United Kingdom,

Manx Radio, Isle of Man—1368 kHz AM, 89/97.2/103.7 mHz FM SUN 10:00 pm

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