



In This Issue:

August 2003 | Vol. 6, No. 7

African AIDS Epidemic: Made Worse by Political Correctness

by Melvin Rhodes 1

Restoration: Why America?

by Darris McNeely 2

Controversies Concerning Homosexuality Hound the Anglican Community

by John Ross Schroeder 5

Middle East Amnesty Produces Chaos



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by Cecil Maranville 7

In Brief... World News Review

by Cecil Maranville and Jim Tuck . . 10

Book Review: *The Great Republic: A History of America*

by John Ross Schroeder 13

This Is the Way... When the Really Big One Doesn't Get Away

by Robin Webber. 16

African AIDS Epidemic: Made Worse by Political Correctness

Abstinence programs in Uganda and Ghana have proven successful in stemming the progression of this dreaded disease. So why do many in the United States oppose programs like this?

by Melvin Rhodes

One subject seemed to dominate U.S. President George W. Bush's recent five-nation trip to Africa.

Although he discussed Liberia's seemingly never-ending civil war and the constant threat of international terrorism, AIDS was the number one topic.

This partly follows the president's initiative in donating \$15 billion for AIDS in Africa, a decision you would think would be universally applauded. But in this climate of pandemic anti-Americanism, even American generosity is not appreciated.

Many cries were heard along the lines of "It's not enough." An international AIDS conference in Paris a few days after the president's African visit led to cries bemoaning the cost of stationing troops in Iraq when compared to the needs for more money to combat AIDS. "Just one day's war costs would give us all we need for a whole year," said one AIDS delegate to the conference, speaking in a BBC World Service interview July 16.

That's unlikely to be the case. The problem with AIDS is that it's a bottomless pit.

As more and more people become HIV-positive and later develop full-blown AIDS, so the need for more



Reuters/Jason Reed

U.S. President George W. Bush greets AIDS orphans in Uganda

drugs increases—at considerable cost. Even with the cheaper generic drugs
(See "AIDS," page 3)



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BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CURRENT EVENTS

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"Whom heaven must receive until the times of

Restoration

of all things ... ACTS 3:21

Why America?

In today's world, there can perhaps be no more important question. A trip around the globe will offer perspectives of America ranging from "arsenal of democracy," to "the great Satan." With so many mixed impressions out there, Americans themselves can be confused about why we are. Sometimes, it takes an outsider to remind us.

Why America? "The only answer is because destiny put you in this place in history in this moment in time, and the task is yours to do." So spoke Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair before a joint session of the U.S. Congress last month.

It was an amazing speech, all the more so because it came from the leader of America's closest ally. The entire speech was filled with a passion for what America stands for and its role in today's world. Applause and standing ovations punctuated the address. As Mr. Blair suggested in his speech, the reception in the United States was in stark contrast to the controversies and criticisms he had left behind in the United Kingdom concerning Britain's involvement in the recent Iraqi war.

Parts of the speech caught the essence of what America and Great Britain have historically stood for—freedom and individual liberty. In a recent book, *Empire: The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power*, author Niall Ferguson wrote: "For much of its history, the British Empire acted as an agency for imposing free markets, the rule of law, investor protection and relatively incorrupt government on roughly a quarter of the world" (p. xxiii).

Wherever the British Empire went, it carried common systems and values, among the most important being representative assemblies, the rule of law and the idea of liberty. America sprang from this company of nations to become the single great power that today has assumed many of the worldwide responsibilities Britain once had.

Blair went on to say: "As Britain knows, all predominant power seems for a time invincible, but in fact, it is transient. The question is, what do you leave behind? And what you bequeath to this anxious world is the light of liberty. We are fighting for the inalienable right of mankind . . . to be free—free to raise a family in love and hope; free to earn a living and be rewarded by your own efforts; free not to bend your knee to any man in fear; free to be you, so long as being you does not impair the freedom of others."

Blair's vision of how universal freedom and peace will be spread to all the world is through global trade, communication and travel. He sees a partnership between America and Europe as the means to this end. However, Bible prophecy shows a different route to utopia. Peace among nations will not be achieved through human effort, but only through the intervention of Christ at the pinnacle of terrible tribulation. What will be thought to be man's best effort to achieve peaceful relations will turn into a system that trades in the "bodies and souls of men" (Revelation 18:13).

True freedom has not been experienced on earth since the days when Adam and Eve chose to reject God and to decide right and wrong for themselves, thereby laying a path for the tyranny of a world cut off from God. It will take the intervention of Christ to restore true freedom, a freedom only possible through subjecting oneself to God.

America continues in her predestined role, the inheritor of bountiful blessings. Though this power is transitory and wholly dependent on the gracious hand of God, it fills a key role in today's world. Soon an empire of a different spirit will eclipse it, but then the world will experience the coming of the divine Kingdom of God. Its rule will restore true freedom and liberty to a world held captive. —Darris McNeely

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<http://www.ucg.org/wnp/>

“AIDS,” (Continued from page 1)

now available in most Third World countries, the costs of treatment will only go up year by year. Added to which is the great irony of the administration’s generosity—the \$15 billion will actually contribute to the spread of the virus!

How is this possible? Isn’t some of the money intended for education so that the virus will not spread so fast?

Well, yes, but—

The fact remains that the longer people with the HIV virus live, the more people they can pass it on to. If Western donors believe that education will solve this problem, they fail to understand the challenges involved when dealing with people in various cultures.

HIV virus not spread by sexual activity?

The subhead above—“HIV virus not spread by sexual activity”—is *not* the opinion of this publication or of this writer. However, it is the opinion of the leader of the country with the greatest single number of HIV-positive sufferers. That country also happens to be the most Westernized of all the African nations. With over 5 million people infected with HIV, South Africa’s needs will only worsen.

Neighboring countries do not fare any better.

Botswana has the world’s highest percentage of HIV/AIDS-infected citizens. At over 40 percent of the population, the very existence of the country is threatened. President Bush’s trip included visits to these two nations, emphasizing his concern for those with AIDS.

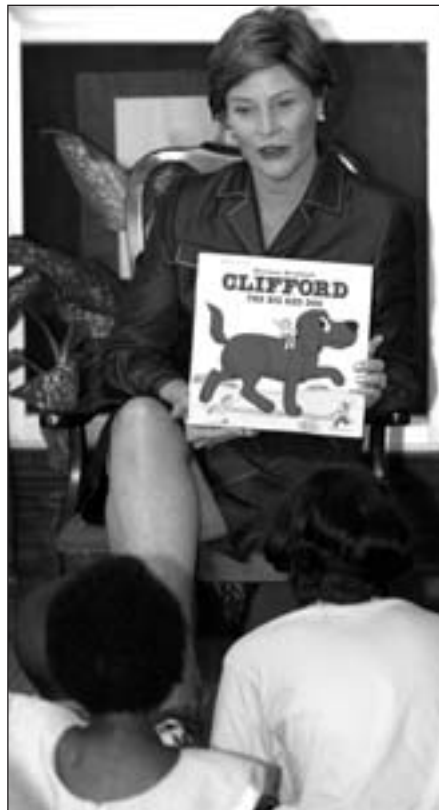
His next stop was Uganda. Greater attention should have been given to this visit, for Uganda is the first country in Africa to actually make progress in slowing the spread of HIV.

One of the worst-affected countries 10 years ago, with entire villages devoid of any adults in the peak sexually active years (15 to 45), Uganda tried a different approach.

Widespread ignorance of cause of AIDS

About a year ago, the World Health Organization claimed that only 4 per-

cent of the world’s population actually understood what causes the HIV virus to spread from one person to another. In a continent rife with ignorance and superstition, HIV is often blamed on Western nations, with accusations that



U.S. First Lady Laura Bush reads to children dying with HIV/AIDS in Uganda during the president’s five-nation tour of Africa. Uganda’s crisis has led to a prevention program that is beginning to actually work

the virus has been deliberately spread to wipe out Africa.

On every visit I make to the continent, there is always somebody claiming they have a cure and are in negotiations with Western organizations to share it with the rest of the world. These “cures” invariably come from traditional healers (what used to be called “witch doctors”). The supposed cures all have one thing in common—they don’t work!

The 4 percent figure given last year shows the lack of effectiveness of most educational programs. A great deal of the \$15 billion donated is for education. When other education programs (on hygiene, for example) have not had much success, why should we expect those for AIDS prevention to work?

If you can’t convince people simply to wash their hands to halt the spread of fatal diseases, is there really any possibility of changing their sexual habits? Sadly, the root cause of the rapid spread of AIDS in Africa is *behavioral*—sexual practices that only serve to increase the spread of AIDS.

Uganda, with millions of young people orphaned following the deaths of both parents to AIDS, started a simple “ABC” program that has had considerable success in that country. So much so that the West African nation of Ghana is now copying the same program. Billboards showing the ABC slogan are ubiquitous.

What does ABC stand for? Billboards read along these lines:

“A is for Abstinence before marriage.

“Be Faithful after marriage.

“Use a Condom, if you can’t.

“It’s as simple as A-B-C.”

In Ghana they now have “virgins clubs” for young people. With regular meetings aimed at encouraging the further education of the nation’s young on the importance of abstinence before marriage, constantly reinforcing a simple message, the tide seems to have turned.

Why then, is so much ridicule directed at the U.S. president’s requirement that one third of the money donated be given for abstinence programs?

That’s a good question.

Perhaps part of the difference is generational. Many AIDS workers in the West are older people still influenced by the liberal sexual revolution of the 1960s. They are the ones who control the purse strings of international AIDS donors operating in Africa, and they are very dismissive of abstinence programs.

Yet abstinence programs work. Younger people have seen the consequences of AIDS, since many have lost both parents to the disease. They

Reuters/Antony Njuguna



U.S. President George W. Bush talks about AIDS to the orphaned children of Ugandan parents who have died of AIDS at The AIDS Support Organisation (TASO) center in Entebbe, Uganda, July 11

hate AIDS and they want to see an end to it.

The only way to bring about a total victory over AIDS is to follow the first two steps of the ABC program: Abstinence before marriage and being faithful within marriage. The “C” option is for those too weak for “A” and

“B.” Sadly, many of them will get AIDS, because condoms are not 100 percent effective against the spread of the virus. Thereby, they perpetuate a problem that could be history within 20 years, if only countries and their citizens would really put their minds and efforts into it.

Is more money really needed for governmental educational programs? The solution to the AIDS problem was given thousands of years ago in the pages of your Bible. It’s actually written in the Ten Commandments. The seventh is, “You shall not commit adultery” (Exodus 20:14)—so simple, anybody can understand. Sex should be confined within the bounds of a committed and loving marriage between a man and a woman.

The apostle Paul adds to this in 1 Corinthians 6:18 with three more words: “Flee sexual immorality.” Interestingly, Corinth was the New York, San Francisco, London or Johannesburg of its day—a very cosmopolitan city with all the vices known to man.

Yet Paul was not swayed by the “political correctness” of his day. He told the truth, adding the words: “Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.” Paul was warning about negative physical consequences for sexual relationships outside the marital union.

It’s a simple message. What are governments and AIDS organizations afraid of? Giving credit to God in the age of political correctness? Being too simplistic? That can’t be the case—it’s the only program that’s actually worked! ❖

African Administrative Problems Complicate AIDS Programs

It’s not just ignorance and superstition that are causing the spread of AIDS in Africa. Administrative incompetence and corruption are also to blame.

According to the U.S. edition of Britain’s *Financial Times* (July 14, 2003): “Only two African countries in the past three years have taken up a German drug company’s offer to give an important AIDS prevention drug free to poor countries.

“Boehringer Ingelheim said only Uganda and Botswana had taken supplies of nevirapine for use in preventing mothers infecting their babies with HIV/AIDS.

“The low take-up of the Boehringer offer points up the fact that an effective response to AIDS requires strong political will from African countries as well as more funds and cheaper drugs” (“African Countries Spurn Free AIDS Drug,” p. 1).

In a separate article in the same issue of the *Financial Times*, writer Alan Beattie explained some of the challenges: “The slowness and difficulty of delivering aid money in countries dogged by corruption and weak governments is well known . . .

“The US is highly sensitive to aid money being mispent. And the [Geneva-based] global fund [meeting in Paris mid-July] has run into its own problems during its short life, with bureaucratic squabbles in recipient countries about who manages its grants, along with the need to ensure that money is not embezzled . . .

“There are also doubts about whether AIDS treatment programs can work in poor countries with weak health infrastructure” (“AIDS Donors Ask If the Third World Can Spend the Money Well”).

Controversies Concerning Homosexuality Hound the Anglican Community

Gay issues are troubling the Church of England and its Episcopal community in America. Its evangelical wing takes issue with liberal clergy who promote acceptance of openly gay priests. What is the true biblical approach?

by John Ross Schroeder

At the end of the day Dr. Rowan Williams, archbishop of Canterbury, concluded that the proposed appointment of gay priest Jeffrey John as bishop of Reading would imperil the unity of the Anglican church. This official position seems somewhat in contradiction to his personal convictions of many years. As Ruth Gledhill, religion correspondent of *The Times* (London), recently reported: “The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams, believes that the Church of England should change its mind on homosexuality in the same way that it has already altered its teaching on slavery, hellfire, usury and marriage after divorce” (May 27, 2003).

Across the Atlantic in the United States, the American Episcopal Church’s General Convention gave final approval of Gene Robinson’s appointment as bishop of New Hampshire on Aug. 5. Although formerly married with two children, he has lived with a gay partner for 13 years.

Liberal and conservative viewpoints

In Mr. Robinson’s words: “God is teaching us something about gay and lesbian people. It will not be too many years before we look back on this recent controversy and think, ‘My goodness, how misled we were’” (*The Sunday Telegraph*, July 20, 2003).

A group of Anglican bishops in England apparently have a similar liberal approach. They are set to publish a radical report titled “Some Issues in Human Sexuality.” It tells us

that “what makes us Christians is our common relationship to Christ, which is rooted in repentance, faith, baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit [so far so good, but notice what follows], and not the correctness of our beliefs about matters of sexual conduct” (*The Sunday Times*, July 13, 2003).

George Austin, former archdeacon of York, reacted to this report by saying, “Anyone who knows the liberal mind will realise this document is simply a ploy to push ahead the gay agenda in which all homosexual activity by priests and lay people is accepted in the church” (ibid.).

These sharp differences of opinion are also reflected in the media. One example of a liberal approach is contained in a feature article in *The Times* by Libby Purves, a noted British columnist. “The Old Testament prohibition on homosexual love sits among many other prohibitions and taboos long since discarded by Christians. The later strictures of St. Paul are, *I think*, less binding than what we find in the true core of the Bible, the four gospels—humane gentleness, forgiveness and an honouring and transfiguration of earthly loves” (July 10, 2003, emphasis added).

Joseph Farah, who is the founder of WorldNetDaily.com and former editor of *The Sacramento Union*, espouses a totally different view about intimate same-sex relationships. He wrote in *The Washington Times*: “You see where the brave new world is heading. When the church abandons its tenets, when it refuses to recognize sin, when it glorifies immorality,

“The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams, believes that the Church of England should change its mind on homosexuality in the same way that it has already altered its teaching on slavery, hellfire, usury and marriage after divorce.”

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Britain's Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams makes a statement July 6 on homosexual priest Jeffrey John's withdrawal of his previous acceptance of the post of bishop of Reading

when it compromises on the Word of God, when it becomes a tool of political correctness, it becomes a tool of evil. It becomes an abomination” (Weekly Edition, June 30-July 6, 2003).

Strong words those! But how does the Bible approach human sexuality?

Sexuality in the Bible

When questions about marital matters arose in His ministry, Jesus Christ nearly always referred people back to the creation account in Genesis. From the beginning our Creator realized the need for intimate human companion-

ship. After creating Adam, “The LORD God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable [suitable] to him’” (Genesis 2:18).

After the first man awoke from a deep sleep, he found a complement to himself standing before him, another human being like himself but with a clear difference of gender. Adam was deeply affected and was immediately moved to proclaim: “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of Man” (verse 23).

God inspired the writer to add: “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (verse 24). Jesus Christ strongly emphasized this centrally important point: “God made them male and female . . . and the two shall become one flesh; so that they are no longer two, but one flesh” (Mark 10:6, 8).

The book of Genesis and the Gospel accounts teach that God created humans heterosexual. They also teach that marriage between male and female is a divine institution and that fidelity between one man and one woman is the Creator’s expressed will and intention—supported by many other passages in God’s Word.

A homosexual relationship contradicts the Creator’s principles and purposes concerning human sexuality. That is why biblical law strongly condemns it in the book of Leviticus (18:22; 20:13), and the apostle Paul goes on to sternly warn against its practice in several of his New Testament epistles (Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 1 Timothy 1:8-10).

The Church and human sexuality

By quoting Deuteronomy 8:3, Jesus Christ clearly showed that the Church must base its teachings on the entire Bible (Matthew 4:4; Luke 4:4). The apostle Paul called this “the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27). Human beings
(See “**HOMOSEXUALITY,**” page 15)

Recent News Items Illustrate Increasing Controversy

- Americans are becoming more tolerant of gay people on TV, as shown by a prime-time network slot for a new makeover show (*The Times* [London]).

- Televangelist Pat Robertson is praying to God to undo a U.S. Supreme Court decision that opened the door to recognition of new gay civil rights. Other conservative activists are seeking a more earthbound response: a constitutional amendment barring marriage between gay couples (*USA Today*).

- Same-sex couples in Britain are to be given the same legal rights as married couples under plans outlined recently (*Daily Mail*).

- When the Supreme Court struck down laws banning

sex between homosexuals last month, a dismayed Justice Anthony Scalia warned that the court was siding with gay men and lesbians in a “culture war” and flouting public opinion (*USA Today*).

- A lesbian pastor is a focus of controversy among Southern Baptists. The congregants support the cleric, calling her a strong spiritual leader (*Los Angeles Times*).

- On July 6 *The Dallas Morning News* said it would begin running advertising notices of same-sex unions with its wedding announcements on Sunday (*USA Today*).

- *The Boston Globe* editorialized in favor of gay marriage and compared state laws against it to those that once banned interracial marriage (*USA Today*).

Middle East Amnesty Produces Chaos

Many observers applaud a move to release Palestinian criminals from Israeli jails. Contrasting this with an October 2002 release of prisoners in Iraq exposes fatal flaws in the U.S.-sponsored road map to peace. What is the biblical answer?

by Cecil Maranville

One of the most urgent needs of Iraq's 22 million people is the restoration of law and order. A few months before coalition forces undertook the liberation of the country, Saddam Hussein released some 100,000 prisoners, ostensibly as a "thank you" to the nation for its 100 percent vote for him for another seven-year term as president.

Abu Ghareb is one of many prisons Hussein emptied with a wide-ranging amnesty decree in late October 2002, when the dictator was facing increasingly negative world public opinion. Abu Ghareb was "a serious crimes prison," housing up to 9,000 men guilty of capital crimes. Ahmed Ibrahim, deputy warden of the prison, assured the public that the freed prisoners were ready to become a part of society again, because the prison "fixed their behavior."

Now, many of these former convicts wreak murder and mayhem in postwar Iraq, as the country struggles to reestablish police forces and a justice system. Most aren't looting, but rather are committing armed robbery, rape and murder, according to the U.S. Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance. Clearly, assertions that Saddam's prisons rehabilitated the criminals was total propaganda. Some wonder if Hussein's declaration of amnesty was a calculated move to create chaos for coalition forces—and for the nation he pretended to thank for its "support" of his dictatorial rule.

The power to imprison or release from prison affords a leader like Hussein incredible leverage in controlling a nation. He detained not only hardened criminals, but also multiple thousands of innocent people, guilty only of disagreeing with him. His penchant for imprisoning people by whim is well known. Political prisoners were tossed into cramped and filthy cells with the worst of criminals and kept imprisoned for many years to maintain his control-by-fear rule.

Many of these innocents were kept in jail when Hussein turned tens of thousands of felons loose. The claim was that the political prisoners were spies for the United States or Israel. Coalition forces had the joy of releasing the innocent ones in concert with liberating the country. The power to release the innocent (or to genuinely rehabilitate the guilty and return them to society) is as great a tool for good as Hussein's methods were a tool for evil.

Hussein's amnesty was a feint, serving neither his country nor the people he freed. The United States is adamant about the fact that these criminals greatly impede the orderly reconstruction of Iraq and urgently seeks to rearrest and incarcerate them. They were not ready for freedom.

Juxtaposing the present situation in Iraq with the pending release of another group of Middle Eastern prisoners, we find a glaring inconsistency in U.S. foreign policy.

United States takes different stand regarding Palestinian prisoners

Israel currently holds more than 6,000 Palestinians in jail, and the Bush administration is pressuring the Israeli government to release them in an attempt to move forward the American-led road map to peace in the Middle East. Anger runs deep in Israelis and Palestinians alike.

Representing one side is a bitter, unforgiving young Israeli man whose young sons and wife died at the hands of a Palestinian terrorist—the wife while she shielded her children with her own body in a vain attempt to spare their lives. The widower sobs as he tells a reporter his life is over, that he cannot forgive the murderer, who is among those the Israeli government may soon release.

Representing the other side of the issue is 17-year-old Bannan, a Palestinian girl who must fill in as the head of the house for her three younger brothers and sister while her

The Bush administration is pressuring the Israeli government to release Palestinian prisoners in an attempt to move forward the American-led road map to peace in the Middle East. Anger runs deep in Israelis and Palestinians alike.



A Palestinian boy holds a portrait of a relative who is being held in an Israeli jail during a protest demanding the release of Palestinian prisoners in Gaza City Aug. 4

mother, older brother and her father—a local leader of the terrorist group Hamas—all sit in Israeli jails. Bannan expresses her joy at the prospect of her family obtaining freedom soon. Then she declares harshly that the Palestinians don't consider any Israeli victims innocent, even women and children.

Israeli Prime Minister Sharon and Palestinian Prime Minister Abbas are both under pressure from their respective constituencies, each people bitterly conscious of the blood spilled by the other. Sharon has said repeatedly in the past that he will not free "those with blood on their hands." Palestinian Information Minister Nabil Amr publicly warned Abbas that the Palestinian legislature could vote him out of power if he could not successfully negotiate the release of the prisoners.

Deep-rooted issues in the recent and distant past blur the lines between an innocent political prisoner and a terrorist to the Palestinians, who believe every one of their citizens detained by the Israelis is a political prisoner, regardless of crimes he or she committed. The Israelis see murder and other violent crimes as deeds that must be punished

under the law; they are bitterly angry that anyone would be willing, in the name of politics, to simply overlook what they see as terrible wrongs.

The United States appears hypocritical by putting pressure on the Israelis to release the prisoners, in light of its own vigorous prosecution of the war on terror, including the detaining of many foreign nationals.

You can't have it both ways, seeking to establish peace through the rule of law and at the same time allowing unrepentant criminals to go free for the sake of political expediency.

Numerous people or groups detained in prisons around the world declare themselves to be "political prisoners" and claim they're being held unjustly. But is someone innocent, *no matter what he does*, simply because he acts out of his personal beliefs? What chaos that would produce!

In order to sort between those who are obviously innocent and those who may be guilty of crimes, members of the human-rights group Amnesty International use the term "prisoners of conscience" in this complex world. By it, they mean people imprisoned or otherwise physically restrained merely

because of their political or religious beliefs or because of their ethnic origin, gender or social or economic status.

They define "political prisoner" as those people detained in all other cases that have a significant political element, including such obvious criminal acts as terrorism. But even the relatively liberal Amnesty International doesn't lobby that the latter go free—rather, that they have a fair and legal trial.

A general amnesty for prisoners can help the peace process, but only when the prisoners are ready and able to be productive citizens. The true basis for national and international peace is law-abiding citizens of every country.

Liberty in law

The national representatives who will attempt yet again to negotiate peace in the Middle East may well pray privately for God's guidance. Without doubt, U.S. politicians will bring His name into speeches on the subject. Yet none would dare to bring religion officially into the discussions.

The simple truth is that it is impossible to separate the present pursuit of peace from true Christianity and Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. We have to say "true Christianity," for much that passes itself off as Christianity today is just as political as the nations are. By contrast, true Christianity wouldn't compromise the rule of law for the sake of mollifying special interests. Further, there's much more depth to true Christianity than there is to the counterfeit version that dominates the present world.

For example, few realize that Christianity points us to lawful living and that the essence of Christianity deals with amnesty for prisoners. When Jesus stood in the synagogue to announce His ministry, He quoted Isaiah's messianic prophecy: "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, *to proclaim liberty to the captives* and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD" (Luke 4:18-19).

In drawing on the Old Testament prophet, Jesus directed discerning minds to two distinct but related roles

He fills. The first is that of Savior—known to most people who read the Christian Bible. The second role, that of liberating King, is one that few Christians realize. By liberating King, we mean the same type of liberating undertaken by the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq—only on a worldwide scale.

The portion of Isaiah He quoted speaks of a time when the age-old squabbles of the peoples of the Middle East will be resolved. Rather than an artificial agreement that only temporarily papers over unhealed divisions, this will be a genuine, *lasting* peace. See Isaiah 42:5-9 and Isaiah 61:1-4. The last

Secondly, the world system inspired and manipulated by Satan incarcerates us in its confining web (Galatians 1:4). Finally, our own intrinsic nature detains us (Romans 8:7).

Let's look at that last reference, for it explains that Christ's liberty has its basis *in law*. "Because the outlook of disordered human nature [the way every person thinks by nature] is opposed to God, since it does not submit to God's Law, and indeed *it cannot*" (New Jerusalem Bible).

Human nature restrains or detains us in spiritually criminal behavior. Through conversion, Christ frees us

the context of genuine rehabilitation (unlike the prisoners Saddam Hussein freed last October) and a willingness to become law-abiding in their spirit, as well as in their actions.

Jesus Christ personifies a treaty (a covenant) that will enable the liberation of prisoners and the restoration of normal government functions (Isaiah 49:8) to ensure prosperity and peace—the same issues with which the U.S.-led coalition is dealing in Iraq.

Speaking of that covenant or treaty, Hebrews 8:10 says: "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

Liberty is based in law. The amnesty Christ grants is in the context of rehabilitation and lawful living. This is the way peace will actually come to the Middle East. Now, place this model over the approach underway in the pressured prisoner release between the Israelis and the Palestinians. Will the present approach bring about peace? Sad to say, there's not a chance that it will. Without a change of heart and genuine rehabilitation, criminals who go free are criminals still.

Although we may applaud any effort to restore peace to the troubled Middle East, the Bible shows that unlawful means do not justify the end. Ultimately, only the second coming of Jesus Christ will bring a real and permanent peace to the Mideast. ❖

Recommended Reading

You need to understand what is prophesied to yet happen in the Middle East. Whether you realize it or not, events there are destined to affect the lives of every person on earth. Request



The Middle East in Bible Prophecy to explore the Bible teaching on this vital subject. It is provided free of charge.

Contact any of our offices listed on page 2, or request or download it from our Web site at

www.ucg.org



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Jesus will free prisoners, "proclaim liberty to the captives." But prisoners will not be free to break national laws, international laws or the laws of God. Their freedom comes in the context of genuine rehabilitation . . .

verse shows that Christ will lead the way to rebuilding that which many generations consistently destroyed, a poignantly apt description of Middle Eastern history.

In His role as Savior, Jesus enables Christians to escape that which imprisons us in the spiritual sense: Satan, this world's system and our own human nature. An evil despot such as Saddam Hussein is but a faint shadow of the great evil one, Satan the devil, who has an enormous capacity to influence people wrongly (2 Timothy 2:26). Christians are told to resist Satan and trust in God's protection (James 4:7-8).

from our imprisonment; it is how He rehabilitates us.

Don't dismiss this by spiritualizing it away, for this is the way Jesus showed He would bring about a peaceful world government. (For the full story, request our booklet *The Gospel of the Kingdom*.)

In His role as King over the earth, Jesus will enact the principles that bring peace to individuals and bring peace to the nations. He will free prisoners, "proclaim liberty to the captives." But prisoners will not be free to break national laws, international laws or the laws of God. Their freedom comes in

In Brief...

World News Review

New York City Establishes Gay High School

Controversy exploded in the United States when New York City public education officials announced the opening of a new high school for “gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered youth,” which they designate by the acronym GLBT.

Named Harvey Milk High School, after an openly gay San Francisco city supervisor who was assassinated in 1978, the school actually began in 1984. Now, however, officials, using taxpayer dollars, are renovating a building for the exclusive use of the GLBT school, which will open with 100 students this fall.

The school’s first official principal, William Salzman, says, “The school will be a model for the country and possibly for the world.”

The city’s rationale for creating the school is that children with these sexual orientations are not safe in regular public schools, where they suffer violent harassment from other students. New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg told the Associated Press, “I think everybody feels that it’s a good idea because some of the kids who are gay and lesbian have been constantly harassed and beaten in other schools.”

However, not “everybody” feels it’s a good idea.

Joseph Farah comments: “I don’t believe this would be happening now without the U.S. Supreme Court decision invalidating the anti-sodomy law in Texas. Now the homosexual activists are working at a fever pitch to transform Western civilization. Indoctrinating the next generation is an important step in that process . . .

“Do you see where our culture is headed? Do you now understand what Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia was warning about in his dissent in the Texas sodomy case?”

Sources: Mark Goebel, “New York Expands GLBT Public School,” July 28, 2003, PlanetOut Corporation; Joseph Farah, “The 1st Homosexual School,” July 29, 2003, WorldNetDaily.com.

The Future Arab World

The 22 Arab nations of the world currently have a population of 280 million people. In spite of oil wealth for a small number of the Arab states, the majority of these people live in extreme poverty. Even where there is oil revenue, the wealth often “sticks to the hands” of a relatively few national leaders or “royal” families and does not trickle down to the masses.

By comparison, the gross domestic product of Spain is greater than that of all of the 22 Arab countries combined.

What does the future portend? The population of these 22 nations doubled in the past 50 years and will nearly double again in less than 20 years. UN estimates place the 2020 population figures at between 410 and 460 million. Among the fastest growing populations are Somalia, the poorest Arab country, and Saudi Arabia, whose general population already reels under a greatly reduced average income. Iraq, currently at slightly less than 23 million, will have 35 to 41 million people by 2020.

Egypt, the largest Arab country, will reach 100 million people if it continues to grow at the present rate. Due to vanishing work opportunities in the Saudi oil fields, thousands of college graduates in today’s Egypt do not have enough income to marry and have a family. That causes much unrest and anger.

The population growth in Arab countries also means explosive growth in the population of adherents to Islam. Egypt is 94 percent Sunni Muslim. Iraq is 97 percent Muslim (Shiite 60 to 65 percent, Sunni 32 to 37 percent). Saudi Arabia is 100 percent

Muslim. Somalia is 100 percent Sunni Muslim.

Writing of the current Muslim population, Dennis Prager says: “Though most people ignore the fact, almost all of the world’s believing Muslims believe that all of mankind should be Muslim. This, in and by itself, is not troubling—after all, most Christians would like the whole world to be Christian, and most Westerners would like the whole world to be democratic. What is troubling is that if only 10 percent of these Muslims are prepared to use violence to impose their religion on others, we are talking about *100 million people*” (emphasis added). (In fact, his figures on the total Muslim population of the world are on the conservative side.)

And, as noted in the last issue of *World News and Prophecy*, the lack of adequate water supplies is now, and will continue to be, a serious problem.

“About 85 per cent of countries in the region share their total available water with at least one other country either as riparians [along a common river] or by sharing a common aquifer. More powerful upstream and downstream countries have been able to determine the water shares of the other riparian or aquifer-sharing countries.

“Equitable water-sharing is often compromised by politics.

“• The rapid increase in population in the region is putting increasing pressure on water availability per capita. Meanwhile, the persistently high share of water used in agriculture (including ambitious, intensive irrigation programmes) is starving other users, industrial and domestic—in the case



of the latter, also helping to worsen health problems. Current shortages can only worsen, even without factoring in any impact of climate change.

“• Conservation and reuse programmes are weak, and no country in the region has effective water-demand management systems and economic instruments to rationalize the use of water” (“UN Arab Human Development Report 2002,” pp. 44-45).

Additional Sources: Dennis Prager, “The Future Is Muslim, European or American,” Creators Syndicate, Inc., Feb. 26, 2003; *CIA World Fact Book 2002*; Thomas L. Friedman, “Arabs at the Crossroads,” *The New York Times*, July 3, 2002.

Pentagon Report Cites Buildup of China’s Missiles

A recent Pentagon annual report to Congress says that China is acquiring short-range missiles much faster than U.S. officials had thought and is aiming the weapons at Taiwan and possibly at U.S. forces to block their use on the island’s behalf in any future conflict. The report on Beijing’s military also said that preparing for a potential conflict in the Taiwan Strait is the primary driver for China’s military modernization.

China has about 450 short-range ballistic missiles but is expected to increase its inventory by more than 75 missiles each year. This assessment is significantly higher than last year when it was projected that China’s military had acquired 350 ballistic missiles and was adding them at a rate of 50 a year.

The sophistication and accuracy of the missiles have improved, with the Chinese army developing longer-range models of the CSS-6 missile, which is capable of reaching as far as Okinawa, Japan, home to more than 33,000 U.S. troops. A senior defense official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said China may be using Okinawa “to checkmate or deter or threaten U.S. involvement” if conflict erupts in the Taiwan Strait, which separates the Chinese mainland from Taiwan.

The report also said China is spending far more on its defense budget than it has acknowledged. U.S. officials estimate the military budget, which Beijing announced as \$20 billion early last year, actually falls between \$45 billion and \$65 billion, and the report noted a potential for annual spending to increase three or four times by 2020.

The buildup of China’s military over the last several years runs counter to Beijing’s stated desire for a peaceful resolution of the reunification dispute over Taiwan. Taiwan split from the mainland in 1949 after Nationalist Chinese leaders fled there following the Communist victory in China. Beijing considers Taiwan a renegade province and has threatened to retake the island by force if necessary. U.S. policy is to help Taiwan maintain a defense capability, but Washington does not favor Taiwanese independence.

The Pentagon report also highlights China’s acquisition of Russian-made submarines that could be used to cut off sea access to Taiwan and threaten American forces that might

respond. For the fourth year in a row, China bought \$2 billion worth of weapons from Russia, at least double its annual procurement from Moscow over the previous decade.

Source: *International Herald Tribune*.

North Korea Says It Will Start Testing Nuclear Bombs

North Korea has raised the stakes dramatically in its confrontation with the United States by privately threatening to conduct its first underground nuclear test, and the United States fears that this declaration could be a prelude to an atomic attack.

A senior official of the hardline Communist regime warned in New York that his country would take countermeasures, “for example, a nuclear test,” if the United States did not ease pressure on his isolated country.

The warning, by Han Sung Ryol, North Korea’s deputy ambassador to the United Nations, was delivered to an American official earlier this month, according to reports circulating in Tokyo. The test would be conducted inside a tunnel dug into a mountain in the run-up to Sept. 9, the anniversary of the republic’s foundation, the respected Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* reported.

Officials in Tokyo close to the Pyongyang (North Korea’s capital) regime say if Washington does not offer a nonaggression guarantee for abandoning its nuclear program, North Korea is prepared to announce it has become the world’s ninth nuclear power.

Senior American officials, who are reluctant to rule out future military action, fear that the warning shows that the rogue state’s relations with the United States are out of control.

William Perry, a former secretary of defense under President Clinton, warned that Pyongyang may have acquired six to eight nuclear weapons by the end of the year, allowing the regime to target Japan, South Korea and even Hawaii in the United States.

“I think we are losing control of the situation,” he said. “The nuclear program underway in North Korea poses an imminent danger of nuclear weapons being detonated in American cities.”

In an effort to block any export of weapons from North Korea, the United States has assembled a group of 10 other nations, including Britain, which have agreed to intercept suspicious North Korean shipping.

The deteriorating situation has fueled increasing concerns of an arms race in Asia, with Russia and Japan watching the standoff between North Korea and the United States with growing trepidation.

Japan has already begun to rethink its postwar pacifist stance, while Russia’s deputy foreign minister, Alexander Losyukov, said that Moscow had begun to take steps to defend itself from the possible use of nuclear weapons on the Korean



peninsula. Testing of the civil defense resources has already started in the districts bordering North Korea.

Despite the moves to blockade shipping, the Bush administration appears increasingly divided over how to deal with the crisis. State Department officials indicated recently that a written security guarantee to North Korea might be possible, but the suggestion was immediately dismissed by the White House.

In the Pentagon, meanwhile, hawks are privately discussing the possibility of launching a “surgical strike” similar to the Israeli raid carried out on an Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981. A State Department official told *The Telegraph*: “More than a few people are worried about where we might end up six months down the road. This impasse is not going to be the status quo forever.”

Under its eccentric dictator Kim Jong Il, Pyongyang has never officially claimed membership in the “nuclear club,” though it admitted last October that it was pursuing a secret nuclear weapons program. The eight countries acknowledged to possess nuclear weapons are the United States, Britain, Russia, France, China, Pakistan, India and Israel.

The White House is counting on multilateral negotiations involving China, South Korea and Japan to defuse the situation.

Source: *Daily Telegraph* (London).

Constitutional Convention Is Unknown to Most European Citizens

Sixteen months of hard toil on a constitutional text by some of Europe’s most well-known politicians have not succeeded in raising awareness of the constitutional convention among the majority of Europe’s citizens.

A poll conducted on behalf of the European Commission directly after the draft Constitution was ceremoniously handed over to EU leaders at the Thessaloniki Summit (June 20 to 21), found that 55 percent of the 25,000 surveyed had never heard of the convention.

The worst informed in the enlarged 25-member European Union were the British, with only 25 percent having heard of the convention. However, they are not alone. Snapping at their heels were the Hungarians and Latvians also coming in with less than 30 percent.

At the other end of the scale, the Greeks beat everybody else hands down. There 81 percent of those asked had heard of the convention—most likely due to the fact that their country held the EU presidency during the first half of this year, resulting in broad coverage by domestic media.

About 40 percent of those surveyed said they “do not intend” to read the text, which proposes, among other things, a European foreign minister, a permanent president of the European Council and substantially increasing the powers of the European Parliament.

Finns score highest here. Some 53 percent do not want to

read the treaty blueprint—despite being quite well-informed about the convention itself. But they are also keeping good company. Britons, Germans, the Dutch and the Danes also score highly in their plans to not read the draft constitution.

The European Commission intends to conduct a second survey at the beginning of October for the start of the Intergovernmental Conference to tie up any loose ends in the treaty.

Source: EUobserver.com.



Gay-Themed TV Gains a Wider Audience

Thirty years ago, prime-time television series often depicted homosexuals as suicidal or psychopaths. In an episode of *Marcus Welby, M.D.*, the doctor tells a tormented patient to “win that fight” against his homosexual feelings. An episode of *Police Woman* centered on three lesbians who murdered the residents of a retirement home.

How things have changed. Last month the Bravo cable network presented the first episode of *Boy Meets Boy*, in which a gay bachelor chooses a potential partner from a field of 15 men, some of them straight.

That is followed by *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, in which a team of gay men with expertise in designer clothing, food and wine and the arts, save aesthetically challenged straight men from their own warped senses of fashion.

These shows join a growing prime-time roster of gay-themed programming (*Queer as Folk* on Showtime, *Will and Grace* on NBC) that reflects a major shift in attitudes about gay subjects. Several network and cable television executives said the Supreme Court’s 6-3 decision in June, overruling a Texas sodomy law and legalizing gay sexual conduct, underlined what they already knew—that the nation’s attitudes toward gays and lesbians are radically changing.

“Finally, television is catching up with society at large,” said Max Mutchnick, the cocreator with David Kohan of *Will and Grace*. “These new gay shows are a reflection of what everyone sees now in their jobs, in their families, in their schools.”

But the trend has come under attack. A. William Merrell, a vice president on the executive committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, said the new shows were a sign of the growing influence of gays in Hollywood. “I believe that the net effect is to forward an agenda making homosexuality appear first normal, and then desirable,” he said.

In many ways the new shows are trying to capitalize on the popularity of *Will and Grace*, which was the third-most-watched sitcom on network television last season behind *Friends* and *Everybody Loves Raymond*, with an average weekly audience of 16.8 million people, according to Nielsen Media Research.

Source: *The New York Times*.

Contributors: Cecil Maranville and Jim Tuck

Book Review: *The Great Republic: A History of America*

Few really grasp the importance of Winston Churchill's incredible relationship with the United States. A recent compilation of his most essential writings about America fills this void.

by John Ross Schroeder

It is not generally known that Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965) possessed considerable American credentials. The 102 passengers on the famous *Mayflower* (1620) included not one but three ancestors on his maternal side. They were among the 53 pioneers who survived that harrowing first winter in New England. His mother, Jenny Jerome Churchill, was an American. (The beginning of this book includes a two-page *Mayflower* genealogy of his family.)

Churchill fondly referred to America as “the Great Republic.” He undertook 15 visits to the United States over a period of 65 years, including one extended lecture tour. He even surveyed several Civil War battlefields as part of the research for one of his history books.

His grandson, Winston S. Churchill (editor of *The Great Republic*, 1999, 2002, Cassell & Co., London) wrote: “Churchill’s love of America endured throughout his lifetime, until by the chance of history, it fell to him to provide the leadership at a critical juncture in the greatest war in history [World War II], that crucially enabled Britain to hold out, though the rest of Europe had fallen under the Nazi jackboot, until in the fullness of time the United States was able to join the conflict” (p. xiii).

In writing about America and Britain in 1936, Churchill referred to “our common duty to the human race” and that Anglo-American unity “might well notably influence the destiny of the world.” Today, even though under great pressure, that unity continues.

On Abraham Lincoln

In this book Sir Winston’s assessment of Abraham Lincoln is one of the most insightful looks into this president’s character ever written. Both men assumed critical leadership roles in periods of great national crisis.

Churchill wrote of Lincoln: “His spirit was sustained by a deepening belief in Providence. When the toll of war rose steeply and plans went wrong he appealed for strength in his inmost thoughts to a power higher than man’s. Strength was certainly given him.

“It is sometimes necessary at the summit of authority to bear with the intrigues of disloyal colleagues, to remain calm when others panic, and to withstand popular outcries. All this Lincoln did . . . Fortitude was written on his countenance” (p. 183).

On Franklin Roosevelt

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945) was one of Churchill’s *Great Contemporaries*, another remarkable book written in the 1930s. After Roosevelt’s death, Sir Winston said in his tribute speech in the British House of Commons:

“President Roosevelt’s physical affliction [crippling polio] lay heavily upon him. It was a marvel that he bore up against it through all the many years of tumult and storm. Not one man in ten millions, stricken and crippled as he was, would have attempted the plunge into a life of physical and mental exertion and of hard, ceaseless political controversy.

“Not one in ten millions would have tried, not one in a generation would have succeeded, not only in entering this sphere, not only in acting vehemently in it, but in becoming indisputable master of the scene” (p. 365).

Churchill called Roosevelt’s courage “an extraordinary effort of the spirit over the flesh, of will-power over physical infirmity.” Solomon said: “The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?” (Proverbs 18:14, KJV).

In summary

This 450-page work generally covers the period from the beginnings of the original British colonial incursion into America until the early years of the Cold War. Certainly many other good histories of the United States have been written. This book’s main benefit lies in Churchill’s almost spiritual insight into American heroes, history and politics—ably expressed in his own inimitable way with the English language. His words transcend the passage of time.

In speaking of the enduring partnership of America and Britain, he wrote: “Ought we not to take counsel with one another? Ought we not when necessary, to be prepared to act together?” (p. 317). ❖

“My grandfather, Winston Churchill, took enormous pride in his American heritage. This book stands as a tribute to him. It is also a testimony to the faith that he had in the theme of Anglo-American unity” (editor’s preface).

“BIG ONE,” (Continued from page 16)

as we move through the uncharted waters of global terrorism.

But what about the biggest one of all?

But stay with me as my story continues and my arms stretch even wider to remind us there’s still a bigger fish out there. And yes, he’s big. And yes, he’s real. And yes, he’s oh so elusive. He would like us to divert our attention and energy away from him to the current crop of history’s most wanted list of thugs, be it Saddam Hussein or Osama bin Laden or, for that matter, future poster children of inhumanity like the biblically prophesied Beast and False Prophet. And yes, he would like us to listen to “experts” who downplay his existence and influence, or who deny his abilities to affect our daily lives or the course of society.

Yet none other than Jesus Christ Himself defines the dimensions of the “greatest catch” in world history and verifies the reality and enormity of such a creature. In Matthew 10:28, Christ jolts His audience by declaring, “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

Even then, 2,000 years ago, Jesus Christ was challenging His followers to reach beyond the familiar and stretch their senses beyond the known sources of terror of their times and focus on the real source of human woe. His reference was to none other than Satan the devil, the adversary, the ultimate spiritual terrorist threat.

We don’t wrestle against flesh and blood

Building on the words of Christ, the apostle Paul in Ephesians 6:11-12 exhorts us to “put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

While there is certainly “evil incarnate” stalking this earth in the form of man, we must always be mindful that the ultimate source of spiritual mass destruction is not readily seen or noticed by the ordinary individual. Satan seems to specifically like it that way. He chooses to stay behind the scenes and allow his minions to do the dirty work.

In Ephesians 2:2, Paul defines his *modus operandi* as being the “prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.” This evil power seemingly operates from behind the scenes by projecting attitudes, moods and thought patterns through our atmosphere thus rendering his will upon humans. Yes, while we see the human faces of dictators, thugs, murderers, rapists, thieves, “beasts” and “false prophets,” never lose sight of the force behind them.

The apostle Peter adds a chilling dimension in regards to our elusive yet very real spiritual foe by insisting that the reader “be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8). It’s been said that in Africa, three



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The apostle Peter adds a chilling dimension in regards to our elusive yet very real spiritual foe by insisting that the reader “be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

beasts lie in wait for prey: the lion, the leopard and the hyena. The hyena and the leopard do not completely eat the prey, but desire only certain parts of it. The lion, however, completely devours its helpless victims, leaving not a single portion. What a perfect picture of Satan, the devourer of souls.

The very first prophecy tells it all

But the best news of all is that the time of this “devourer of souls” is coming to an end. Did you realize that the very first prophecy in the Bible clearly indicates his demise? In the Garden of Eden, God clearly spells out the fate of Satan, the serpent.

There can be no doubt. In foretelling the coming of Christ through the womb of woman, God graphically portrays the conquest of Satan by Christ: “And I will put enmity between

you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel” (Genesis 3:15).”

Yes, God plainly spelled out how this “Son of Man” would be temporarily wounded by death at the hands of an agitated humanity directed by Satan (notice Luke 22:3). But upon His glorious resurrection the clear indication is that Christ would triumph over Satan.

The apostle Paul concludes his great thesis on salvation to all humanity, known as the book of Romans, by ending with this joyful reality, “And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly” (Romans 16:20). This thought was never too far from the minds of the early followers of Christ. It was a reality that they welcomed and reflected on. The apostle John clearly announced in 1 John 3:8 that “for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”

What is it going to be like when Satan is put out of commission in the future? Can you imagine what it will be like when “the big one” that kept on getting away is caught? There is going to come a time when Satan is going to be cornered. He will no longer be able to hide his persona behind the actions of others. Everyone, and I do mean everyone, is going to be able to see the depth and size of his monstrous efforts against humanity.

Then the depth, breadth and enormity of his crimes against humanity will be understood by all.

God’s servants have spoken through the ages of such an evil one. They have been met with mockery and ridicule as if telling one more “fish story.” In the end they will be justified by the reality of events before them.

Do you think God is just going to quietly incarcerate Satan for crimes against humanity? I don’t think so. The recent deaths and public exhibition of Uday and Qusay Hussein’s corpses help to paint a vivid type of future events and their related effects upon a world completely pulverized by the Great Tribulation. Yes, the world will have lost hope and wonder if the “bad guy,” Satan, is coming back. Let’s realize that God sees things as if they already are,

and thus He shares not only His victory over Satan, but also some of the colorful details.

He laid hold of the dragon

Revelation 20:1-3 paints a vivid and colorful picture that is designed to offer humanity some real hope and effective closure after 6,000 years of spiritual tyranny and abuse. “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more.” Can you grasp the sights, sounds and dynamics of what you are going to be privileged to behold?

Just imagine watching an angel enter earth’s atmosphere and grab hold of a spiritually tangible Satan, who is going to be incarcerated, bound and sealed up so that he cannot influence humanity.

Just as many of the citizens of Iraq cannot move forward until they know the threat of Hussein is totally gone, likewise, the future citizens of the world are going to have to know Satan has “gone out of business”—even with Christ and His occupying heavenly army now on earth. And God is more than willing to comply with overwhelming force and power. Just imagine the rejoicing and celebration that will occur.

Yes, there is coming a day when the really “big one” out there isn’t going to get away. Your family, friends and neighbors will come to realize that the size and scope of your concerns regarding the “god of this age” (2 Corinthians 4:4) were no stretch of your imagination, but in reality were the biblical truth all along.

Until that day of divine justice, let each of us be mindful of the biblical admonition found in Isaiah 30:21 which tells us—“this is the way, walk in it.” Perhaps there is no better recurring echo of this advice than that found in the words of Peter who encourages us to “be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” ❖

“**HOMOSEXUALITY,**” (Continued from page 6) are told to live by every Word of God. The Church is not free to selectively pick and choose biblical principles and passages according to the dictates and current fashions of our modern world or our frail human nature.

That said, Jesus Christ said: “I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Matthew 9:13). So biblical teaching also requires the Church to wholeheartedly accept *truly repentant* sinners, whether they have been idolaters, fornicators, homosexuals or guilty of any other sins contrary to sound biblical doctrine.

All are guilty of having broken God’s great spiritual law, the Ten Commandments—summarized by Jesus Christ as loving God above all and loving others as much as we love ourselves.

In principle, the Seventh Commandment covers all forms of sexual immorality and unchastity. In regard to several major sins, including homosexuality (all threatening our entrance into the Kingdom of God), the apostle Paul said this to Christians: “Such were some of you. But you were washed [by the blood of Christ, Revelation 7:14], but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of our Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Corinthians 6:11).

Later in this chapter Paul tells us to “flee sexual immorality.” Then he explains that “every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body” (verse 18). The strong implication is that this form of sin can be very difficult to fully overcome.

Often people have been raised in a dysfunctional home environment they could not control, which left them susceptible to sexual sins. In light of this, God’s ministers compassionately help Christians to conquer wrong sexual inclinations of whatever nature. The United Church of God provides a compassionate ministry to help educate, comfort and assist Christian men and women in surmounting this challenging personal issue. We offer a publication titled *Anchor*; a magazine of hope for Christians struggling with homosexuality. More information about *Anchor* can be found at its Web site, www.anchorhelp.com. ❖



by Robin Webber

When the Really Big One Doesn't Get Away

How often have we heard the fisherman tell about "the really big one that got away"? You know how the story goes. We can all smile in our mind's eye as we reflect on the animated discussion and fictitious dimensions displayed by the fisherman's arms stretching out so far that they can seemingly reach no farther. But upon a keener examination by the listener, the would-be Moby Dick of the pond shrinks into proper proportion. We all laugh. We all go home. We all wait for the next "fish story." But some fish stories are true. Very true! And, in the turbulent and troubled waters of our current age, there are some really "big ones" still out there.

As I write, the U.S. Army has landed a big catch. Uday and Qusay Hussein were, to put it delicately, "reeled in" and put on public display. These two sons of Saddam Hussein were the embodiment of the Baathist regime's evil as they murdered, tortured and raped their way through the decades in Iraqi society. It was a bold decision by the U.S. command structure to place their bullet-ridden and bloated bodies out there for all to view. It may well have shocked our own civilized sensibilities to witness such gore.

The rationale for such a photo op was to break the cycle of fear that is paralyzing the average Iraqi from moving forward to build a new society. After decades of horrendous physical and psychological repression, the Iraqi public has got to know that "these guys simply aren't coming back." A very real mental image had to be indelibly stamped into the minds and hearts of the average Iraqi that

the door to the past was shut and bolted from any possible future reopening. Such effective closure, as gruesome as it may be, is certainly a path to new horizons for a people who can only believe what they see.

Still, even bigger fish out there

But even as we all take a collective sigh of relief that justice has been enacted upon such evil men, and seemingly there is some "wobble room" for hope to find a home in a demoralized society; we also know that there are still even bigger fish out there—and thus our arms knowingly spread much wider to show the size of the potential catch.

Even as I write, it seems Saddam Hussein is moving from house to house seeking to evade capture and the fate of his offspring. Will he be captured? Only time will tell. It has been reasonably postulated that until Saddam Hussein is caught and bound, whether in life or death, Iraq will remain basically paralyzed as a society. A true and lasting peace cannot be assured in Iraq until he is caught and put out of business.

But then, the arms begin to span even wider as we think of the even "bigger fish" out there in global waters eluding capture—yes, Osama bin Laden, whose audio-taped shockwaves still stir up the unsettled imagination of the world's citizenry. Why? Because there has been no effective closure. We don't know whether he is dead or alive. We don't know what he is planning next or where the next "shoe" will actually drop. It truly is unsettling

(See "BIG ONE," page 14)