

The Good News

July-August 2007

A MAGAZINE OF UNDERSTANDING

**The Debate Over Life's
Ultimate Question:**

**Does God
Exist?**

Page 4

Charles Darwin: Evolution of a Man and His Ideas **12** • Myths of Evolution **16**
Can You Believe the Bible? **20** • Parenting: The Terrible Twos or the Terrific Twos? **24**

The Battle Over God

Even though it's taking place right before our eyes, I still find it somewhat hard to believe. I hardly expected to witness such a sudden rise of militant atheism that boldly denounces both Bible and believer alike.

Granted, it's existed behind closed doors in some circles for generations, but the hostility with which it has now entered the public arena in the United States is startling. I never expected to see belief in the teachings of the Bible condemned as a threat to society, civilization and sanity, but now it's happening.

This attitude is exemplified by Oxford University professor Richard Dawkins, staunch defender of atheism and evolution. How does he view those who don't agree with him? "It is absolutely safe to say that, if you meet somebody who claims not to believe in evolution, that person is ignorant, stupid or insane (or wicked, but I'd rather not consider that)," he wrote in a 1989 *New York Times* book review.

What about the Bible? "To be fair," he writes, "much of the Bible is

Some argue that parents should be banned from teaching religious beliefs to their children, since to do so amounts to child abuse.

not systematically evil but just plain weird . . . a chaotically cobbled-together anthology of disjointed documents . . . that religious zealots hold up to us as the inerrant source of our morals and rules for living" (*The God Delusion*, 2006, p. 237).

Professor Dawkins and his colleagues are in the vanguard of efforts not just to attack God and the Bible, but to literally transform society. He and others have gone so far as to argue that parents should be banned from teaching religious beliefs to their children, since to do so amounts to child abuse.

Regrettably, some are heeding these evangelists of atheism. Just this week I heard from one who, after viewing our free booklet *Creation or Evolution: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?*, felt compelled to write the following:

"You don't know [expletive deleted] about science or biology, so it can be forgiven that your logic & arguments are faulty . . . The only 'flaws' pointed out on this page, or on any part of your non-sensical, irrational, & not even very well thought out web site are the obvious flaws in both your logic & your grasp of fundamental biology & anthropology.

"Only when religious extremists such as you are *wiped from the face of the earth* will mankind be free of the hatred, stupidity & needless suffering the scourge of 'Religion' has put on the human race. If there actually *were* a God, [expletive deleted] like you would surely be struck down—or at least have a special place in hell reserved for them.

"You are as bad as child molesters, spewing this non-sense to impressionable young minds. Thoughtful, rational people can only hope your kind will die off quickly, while there's still time for reason & sanity to save this planet from idiots like you."

Apparently he missed the many quotes in the booklet from a former director of NASA, a Nobel Prize winner, paleontologists, physicists, zoologists, microbiologists, biology and biochemistry professors and others who logically and clearly lay out some of the many flaws in and evidence against Darwinian evolution.

This battle isn't going away anytime soon. These are the kinds of messages that will increasingly confront you and your family. Will you be prepared? More than ever you need the facts and clear-cut answers you'll find in *The Good News*.

—Scott Ashley, Managing editor



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Table of Contents

Cover Feature

The Debate Over Life's Ultimate Question: Does God Exist?

Aggressive atheism is on the march, proclaiming that God is a delusion, that religion (Christianity in particular) is the root of all evil, and that teaching religious beliefs to children is child abuse. These culture-transforming trends have helped focus people's attention on that most crucial of all questions: Does God exist? 4



A growing debate over whether God is real 4

The Six-Day War—40 Years Later

Many events have shaped the modern Middle East—perhaps none more than the 1967 Six-Day War. Sadly, Israel and Jerusalem remain a source of contention, with still more conflict prophesied to come. 8



What does the evidence reveal about the Bible? 20

Charles Darwin: Evolution of a Man and His Ideas

Almost 150 years have passed since the publication of Charles Darwin's The Origin of Species. Nearly everyone knows about the theory of evolution, but few know the man and motives behind it. 12

Myths of Evolution

If evolution is such a sure thing, why have so many doubts been raised about it? Why do so many fight to prevent alternatives from being seriously considered? And what does the evidence really show? 16

Can You Believe the Bible?

Both God and the Bible have long been under attack. What are some of the motives of critics? And, far more important, what does the evidence dug from the dust of the lands of the Bible reveal? 20

Parenting: The Terrible Twos or the Terrific Twos?

With all the stereotypes about 2-year-old children, what strategies can parents follow to help make this year terrific? Understanding a child's development and capabilities will help you make a good start. 24



Will your child's "twos" be terrible or terrific? 24

The Role of a Watchman: Who Are Today's Watchmen?

In ancient times, watchmen stood guard on a city's walls to see to the welfare of its citizens and to warn of coming trouble. Who is to do that job today in a world moving closer to the end of the age? 27

Regular Features

World News and Trends	<i>An overview of conditions around the world.</i>	10
God, Science and the Bible	<i>News from the world of science about God and the Bible.</i>	19
Beyond Today	<i>Television and radio log.</i>	26
Letters From Our Readers	<i>Readers of The Good News share their thoughts.</i>	29
Youth Focus From Vertical Thought	<i>Is the Bible Relevant and Reliable?</i>	30

The Debate Over Life's Ultimate Question: Does God Exist?

A reemergence of aggressive atheism has helped focus people's attention on that most crucial of all questions: Does God exist?

by John Ross Schroeder

“**T**he debate over creation and evolution, once most conspicuous in America, is fast going global,” says the popular British newsmagazine *The Economist* (April 21, 2007, p. 23). Citing reporters in Istanbul, Moscow and Rome, the magazine concluded that the current controversy over God’s existence is spreading all over the world.

“A good year for religious conflict and atheism” is how columnist Gerard Baker of *The Times* of London summarized 2006 in the title of a Dec. 22 feature article. This trend has continued unabated well into 2007.

Across the Atlantic, *Boston Globe* columnist Jeff Jacoby commented: “You don’t have to be especially religious to find this

atheist zealotry alarming nor do you have to live in Europe. Though religion remains important in American life, anti-religious passion is surging here too” (Dec. 15, 2006).

A confusing world of contradictions

Our age is often contradictory when it comes to belief systems and how we choose to live. At the same time that militant atheists are spreading the message of evolution and the supposed nonexistence of God, we also find a resurgence in religion—especially in certain areas of the world. Witness the growth of both Islam and traditional Christianity in the developing world.

People today are presented with a confusing array of choices. One of the

purposes of *The Good News*, a magazine of understanding, is to clarify important spiritual issues—making them plain to all having eyes to see. We seek to focus our readers’ attention on trunk-of-the-tree biblical beliefs and values—and their application to current happenings.

Our teachings are based on what the apostle Paul described as “the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27). Our doctrines are based on the entire Bible—“correctly teaching the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15, Holman Christian Standard Bible).

Why is this important? Because *truth matters*. What we believe about God and His Word will shape our thoughts, values, morals and how we choose to live. In the same way, rejection of God and His Word will likewise shape how we live.

Let us first consider the rise of militant atheism.

"The high priest of atheism"

Many things have been and are being written about Oxford professor Richard Dawkins' disbelief in God and open hostility toward Christianity. One of the world's foremost proponents of evolution, he is also perhaps one of the greatest advocates of atheism. One British historian even dubbed him "the ayatollah of atheism." Others have called him "the high priest of atheism."

John Preston, writing in *Seven* (the magazine supplement of *The Sunday Telegraph*, Dec. 17, 2006, p. 8), stated that Dawkins "is almost evangelical in telling Christians they are misguided in their faith."

Even those who vehemently oppose his views generally acknowledge that Professor Dawkins "has caused a sensation this year with the runaway success of his anti-religious book, *The God Delusion*" (*The Sunday Times*, Dec. 24, 2006, p. 2). This book has headed the nonfiction best-seller list in Britain, and it stayed on *The New York Times* bestseller list for 14 weeks.

On a recent train and ferry trip from England to Northern Ireland and back, I saw at least two individuals reading *The God Delusion* intently. In one case I sat down opposite a businessman, and a conversation about Dawkins' book soon ensued. It turned out to be a friendly discussion in which I (hopefully tactfully and diplomatically) pointed out some of the flaws in the author's rationale.

Dawkins started his aggressive campaign with a two-part television documentary titled "The Root of All Evil?" And what was the "evil" as he saw it? Nothing less than religion in general and Christianity in particular.

But Professor Dawkins is not the only atheism spokesman who wants to see religion eradicated. "In London last month, leading British atheists squared off with defenders of faith in a public debate on the motion 'We'd be better off without religion' . . . The audience [of 2,000] declared the atheists the victors by a margin of 1,205 to 778" (*The Wall Street Journal*, April 12, 2007).

But does anyone seriously believe we'd be better off without religion? As London *Times* assistant editor Gerard Baker has pointed out: "The two great global conflicts of the 20th century were not truly religious at all . . . It was twisted ethnic, rather than religious, ideology that principally animated the Nazis. And it is worth noting that the narrowly avoided conflict which would have

trumped even these tragedies—a nuclear war with the Soviet Union—would have been launched and prosecuted in the name of militant atheism" (*The Times*, Dec. 22, 2006).

In reality it was atheistic, antireligious communism that butchered tens of millions in Stalin's Soviet Union, in Mao Tse-tung's China and in Pol Pot's Cambodia—not counting millions more who were imprisoned and impoverished under this corrupt ideology, one of the most murderous and destructive ever known to mankind.

Believers in the Bible, on the other hand, have been in the forefront of efforts to eradicate slavery, poverty, hunger and disease around the world. Most hospitals in the Western world were started by religious organizations; the same is true for many of the world's well-known universities. Many prestigious Ivy League universities in the United States, for example, started as institutions to train Christian pastors.

As British conservative philosopher Roger Scruton summed it up, "Richard Dawkins believes that faith is an infectious disease which spreads intolerance and conflict. In fact, . . . it is our principal source of love and peace" (*The Spectator*, Jan. 14, 2006, p. 24).

Another writer, Alister McGrath, is a professor of historical theology at Oxford University but also holds a Ph.D. in molecular biophysics.

He notes that what Richard Dawkins actually attacks is "his own views of what religious people believe" rather than what the Bible actually teaches. "To put it bluntly," he explains, "Dawkins' engagement with theology is superficial and inaccurate, often amounting to little more than cheap point scoring" (*Dawkins' God*, 2005, p. 83, emphasis added throughout).

"Reeducating" the public

Professor Dawkins has stated that "there is a strong correlation between religion and education: the more educated people are, the less religious" (*Financial Times*, Dec. 16/17, 2006, p. 16).

While true, this isn't surprising considering the pervasive secular and materialistic foundations of the education offered by most modern colleges and universities. But, we would ask, can anyone be truly educated without fully examining the overwhelming evidence for the reality of a personal Creator God?

In spite of the success of evolutionary education, Professor Dawkins is not at all satisfied with education in even elementary schools that mostly emphasize secularism. A recent report stated that "the Oxford

Believers in God and the Bible

"This beautiful system of the sun, planets and comets could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being . . ."—**Sir Isaac Newton** (17th-century British mathematician and physicist)

"It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible."—**George Washington** (first president of the United States)

"Personally I have always taken the view . . . that Almighty God, far from setting the universe in motion and then letting the drama enact itself—as many think—is an ever-present, ubiquitous arbiter in all affairs."—**Paul Johnson** (20th-century British journalist and historian)

"The intellectual beauty of the order discovered by science is consistent with the physical world's having behind it the mind of the divine Creator."—**John Polkinghorne** (20th-century British scientist and author)

"So great is my veneration of the Bible that the earlier my children begin to read it the more confident will be my hope that they will prove useful citizens of their country."—**John Quincy Adams** (U.S. president 1825-1829)

"I believe that the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to man. All the good from The Savior of the world is communicated to us through this Book."—**Abraham Lincoln** (U.S. president 1861-1865)

"That Book [the Bible] accounts for the supremacy of England."—**Queen Victoria** (British monarch for 64 years, the longest reign in British history)

"In all my perplexities and distresses, the Bible has never failed to give me light and strength."—**Robert E. Lee** (chief Confederate general during the American Civil War)

"There are more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible than in any profane history."—**Sir Isaac Newton** (17th-century British mathematician and physicist)

"I have known 95 of the world's great men in my time, and of these, 87 were followers of the Bible. The Bible is stamped with a Specialty of Origin, and an immeasurable distance separates it from all its competitors."—**W.E. Gladstone** (19th-century British prime minister)

professor and campaigning atheist is planning to take his fight against God into the classroom by flooding schools with anti-religious literature" (*The Sunday Times*, Nov. 19, 2006, p. 5).

Dawkins plans to set up a charity that "will subsidise books, pamphlets and DVDs attacking the 'educational scandal' of theories such as creationism while promoting rational and scientific thought" (*ibid.*).

Similarly, evolutionists in America fight vigorously to maintain their monopoly on school science curricula at all levels—rejecting any mention of such concepts as intelligent design lest the many flaws of evolutionary theory be exposed.

Yet how is that approach impartial or consistent with the accepted scientific method of subjecting theories to scrutiny from all sides?

These evolutionists want to maintain their monopoly on what goes into students' minds and not allow that to even be questioned. Where material undermining evolution has made it into the schools, evolutionists have typically fought in the courts rather than through the democratic process where they might be answerable to parents' wishes.

Teaching children belief a "ludicrous obscenity"

In terms of reeducating the American public, Stanford philosophy graduate Sam Harris' atheistic *Letter to a Christian Nation* is on the nonfiction bestseller list in the United States. In it he says that "raising our children to believe that they are Christian, Muslim, or Jewish" is a "ludicrous obscenity" (2006, p. 88).

Deriding Americans' belief in God and the Bible, Harris writes: "Our country now appears, as at no other time in her history, like a lumbering, bellicose, dim-witted giant. Anyone who cares about the fate of civilization would do well to recognize that the combination of great power and great stupidity is simply terrifying" (p. xi).

In his conclusion, Harris states that he is "dumbstruck" by Christians' "denial of tangible reality, by the suffering you create in service to your religious myths, and by your attachment to an imaginary God" (p. 91).

Harris' earlier book is titled *The End of Faith*. In it he tells us that "every religion teaches the truth of propositions for which it has no evidence. In fact, every religion preaches the truth of propositions for which no evidence is even *conceivable*" (2006, p. 23). But are these assertions true?

Far too many erroneously believe that religion is chiefly responsible for every human

wrong in the world. Gerard Baker helps counter this false notion with the thought that "you don't have to be religious to have a dangerous inclination to bend others to your own views. Professor Richard Dawkins provided a timely reminder that belligerent intolerance of the beliefs of others is by no means the preserve of the faithful" (*The Times*, Dec. 22, 2006).

Atheists seize the pulpit

According to an April 20, 2007, *Wall Street Journal* article, "Passive indifference to faith has left Europe's churches mostly empty. *But debate over religion is more intense and strident than it has been in many decades.*" The author, Andrew Higgins, headlined this article, "As Religious Strife Grows, Europe's Atheists Seize Pulpit."

Historian Felipe Fernandez-Armesto recently assessed the general state of British religious interest. He stated: "Sermons are [now] about society, not salvation. Alastair Campbell spoke for England when he said *we don't do God*. The British now respond to religion with the embarrassment once provoked only by sex" (*The Independent*, Dec. 24, 2006).

British educational authorities like Chris Woodhead, England's chief inspector of schools from 1994 until 2000, have argued that religious education lessons "are badly taught and fail to instill faith and tolerance.

"The pre-eminent mystery is why anything exists at all. What breathes life into the equations, and actualised them in a real cosmos. Such questions lie beyond science, however; they are the province of philosophers and theologians."

They should be axed" (*The Sunday Times*, July 24, 2005, p. 11).

Even the Jewish community in Britain has adherents in the atheist/agnostic camp, while still claiming to hold to some aspects of Judaism. For instance, one couple gave their twin sons a "faith-free" bar mitzvah. The two are quoted by *The Jewish Chronicle* as saying, "You can be Jewish without praying to a God you don't believe in" (Dec. 22, 2006, p. 20).

According to Harvard professor and author Niall Ferguson, "The Gallup Millennium Survey of Religious Attitudes shows that barely 20 per cent of West Europeans attend church services at least once a week, compared with 47 per cent of North Americans and 82 per cent of West Africans.

"Less than half of Western Europeans say that God is a 'very important' part of their lives, as against 83 per cent of Americans

and virtually all West Africans. And fully 15 per cent of Western Europeans deny that there is any kind of 'spirit, God or life force'" (*The Daily Telegraph*, July 31, 2005).

America's religious beliefs

Atheist Sam Harris writes about America's religious beliefs as well. "Our situation is this: most of the people in this world believe that the Creator of the universe has written a book . . . According to Gallup, 35 percent



of Americans believe that the Bible is the literal and inerrant word of the Creator of the universe.

"Another 48 percent believe that it is the 'inspired' word of the same—still inerrant, though certain of its passages must be interpreted symbolically before their truth can be brought to light. Only 17 percent of us remain to doubt that a personal God, in his infinite wisdom, is likely to have authored this text . . ." (*The End of Faith*, 2004, pp. 13, 17).

Actually 17 percent, though small by comparison, is quite a large figure, given the American population of 300 million people. Also, a substantial percentage of the 48 percent category that Harris mentions often consider many crucial portions of the Bible, such as the creation account in Genesis 1 and 2, figurative or metaphorical. (If you would like to understand why the Bible is

the written Word of a Creator God, request or download our free booklets *Is the Bible True?* and *How to Understand the Bible*.)

Still, a recent ABC News poll revealed that 60 percent of Americans believe God created the earth in six days.

The other side of the debate

As Winston Churchill once articulated, human life in fact has a great God-given purpose. He said in a speech to both houses of the U.S. Congress, "He must be a blind soul indeed that cannot see that a great purpose is being worked out here below."

Daily Mail columnist Melanie Phillips pointed out that "religion lies at the heart of our society's greatest achievements because it enables the human spirit to soar . . . It is also this Judeo-Christian heritage that has given us values that . . . secularists prize, such as human rights and tolerance.

"Religion gives us a code to live by which helps make us better people . . . The value we in the West place on every individual and on the principle of equality is based on our foundation religious doctrine that we are all created equal in the image of God" (*Daily Mail*, Dec. 19, 2005).

Columnist Jeff Jacoby articulated the fact that "without God the difference between good and evil becomes purely subjective" (*International Herald Tribune*, Dec. 15, 2006).

At least a few scientists also ask some searching questions relevant to life's ultimate question. For instance, Martin Rees, president of Britain's Royal Society, stated: "The pre-eminent mystery is why anything exists at all. What breathes life into the equations, and actualised them in a real cosmos. Such questions lie beyond science, however; they are the province of philosophers and theologians" (*The Sunday Times*, Dec. 24, 2006).

An article in the Nov. 29, 2004, issue of *Time* magazine titled "Cosmic Conundrum" stated: "The universe seems uncannily well suited to the existence of life. Could that really be an accident?"

In yet another piece from *Time*, Francis Collins, director of the Human Genome Research Institute, states, "For me the fundamental answers about the meaning of life come not from science, but from a consideration of the origins of our uniquely human sense of right and wrong and from the historical record of Christ's life on earth" (Aug. 15, 2005, p. 34).

Intelligent scientists and great leaders from all walks of life have expressed their belief in God and the Bible (see "Believers

in God and the Bible" on page 5).

The testimony of a former atheist

Can an atheist be persuaded by a long look at the evidence before him?

It happens! About three years ago, "one of the most renowned atheists of the past half century . . . changed his mind and decided that there is a God after all. Antony Flew [now in his mid-80s], emeritus professor of philosophy at Reading University, whose arguments for atheism have influenced scholars the world over, has been converted to the view that some sort of deity created the universe" (*The Sunday Times*, Dec. 12, 2004).

To quote this long-believing atheist directly, Professor Flew stated, "I have been persuaded that it is simply out of the question that the first living matter evolved out of dead matter and then developed into an extraordinary creature" (ibid.).

Professor Flew came to recognize a basic scientific fact—life comes from life! The question is: Who possessed life before the creation? The Bible tells us that God has life within Himself (John 5:26).

During the first century the apostle Paul addressed the intelligentsia of his day in Athens, declaring the reality of the Creator God to the Greek philosophers (see Acts 17:16-28). This aspect of the gospel is also a part of the role of *The Good News* today.

We have written in detail about the many reasons we believe there is a personal Creator God who has always existed (request or download our free booklets *Life's Ultimate Question: Does God Exist?* and *Creation or Evolution: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?*). Our "God, Science and the Bible" section regularly reports on scientific discoveries that substantiate God's existence and the truthfulness of the Bible.

Does it really matter what you believe?

Two opposing worldviews are pitted against each other in this crucial battle for people's minds. The first argues that human beings are nothing but a cosmic accident, the result of millions of years of random mutations and survival of the fittest. The bottom line here is that we should all look out for number one because this life is all there is.

This despairing outlook sums up the Darwinian worldview. In his weekly *Spectator* column, historian and author Paul Johnson analyzes the results:

"Much of the blame lies with Richard Dawkins, head of the Darwinian fundamentalists in this country [Britain], who has (it seems) indissolubly linked Darwin to the more extreme forms of atheism, and

projected on to our senses a dismal world in which life has no purpose or meaning and a human being has no more significance than a piece of rock, being subject to the blind process of pitiless, unfeeling, unthinking nature" (Aug. 27, 2005, p. 25).

Indeed, Richard Dawkins has described the universe as being characterized by "no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind pitiless indifference" (*River Out of Eden*, 1995, p. 133). Professor McGrath frankly stated that "evolutionary theory leads inexorably to a godless, purposeless world" (*The Twilight of Atheism*, 2004, p. 108).

Clearly the other much more sensible worldview is firmly based on life having a great divine purpose. In the vernacular it says, "*It's not about me*"—that is, this life is not about us seeking to please the self. Instead, it's meant to be about seeking and following the will of the Creator God.

More specifically, the proper worldview is a Christian one, with our life now to be focused on showing love to God and neighbor, striving to become more like the greatest Man who ever lived, Jesus Christ of Nazareth. He showed us the ultimate example of love in giving His life for us so that we might eventually share the entire universe with Him (see Romans 8:16-23).

The stakes in this battle are high. The opposing worldviews shape our thinking (and that of our children) on everything—who we are, why we are here, where we are going, the root causes of our many problems and how, or whether, they can ever be solved.

Don't go into the battle unarmed. Educate yourself as to which is really true—the theory of evolution or the doctrine of creation, particularly as revealed in the Bible. Continue reading *The Good News* to be sure you understand the issues and what's at stake for both you and your loved ones! **GN**

Recommended Reading

If you'd like to learn more, request our eye-opening free booklets *Life's Ultimate Question: Does God Exist?* and *Creation or Evolution: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?* Why did God create human beings in the first place? Does the Bible reveal a great divine plan and purpose? Why has it been hidden from most of mankind? All these questions and more are answered in another crucial free booklet, *What Is Your Destiny?* Request or download your free copy today.



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

www.gnmagazine.org/booklets



The Six-Day War—40 Years Later

Many events have shaped the modern Middle East—perhaps none more than the Six-Day War in 1967. Sadly, Israel and Jerusalem remain a source of contention, with more conflict to come.

A century ago, only a few zealots believed that the reestablishment of a Jewish homeland in the Middle East was a possibility.

At the time, the entire region was a part of the Ottoman Empire, ruled by the Ottoman Turks. Their empire had at one time covered the entire Middle East and had stretched all along the coast of North Africa and into Europe. By the beginning of the 20th century they were in decline, but their presence in the Balkans was a contributing factor that led to World War I.

By the end of the First World War, the empire was in a state of collapse. At the Paris peace talks, the victorious Western powers divided up its territory. This was aptly described by Archibald Wavell, later to command British army forces in the Middle East in World War II, as “a peace to end all peace.”

In 1917 the British had marched into Palestine. The postwar treaty gave them administration of the territory under a mandate from the League of Nations. They were also given Iraq and Jordan. The foundations of today’s Middle East had been laid, and the consequences are with us to this day.

Birth of a new Jewish homeland

Between the two world wars Palestine continued under British rule. Increasing numbers of Jews were arriving from Europe with the expectation of a Jewish nation, promised to them by the British Foreign Secretary, Arthur James Balfour, in 1917. At the same time, the Palestinian Arabs had their own expectation of a homeland. As both peoples wanted the same land, a major problem was brewing.

Following the Holocaust, in which 6 million European Jews died, Jewish demands for a homeland intensified. These were finally realized in late 1947 when the British announced they were leaving and handed the problem of Palestine to the United Nations, the post-World War II successor to the League of Nations. Six months later, with UN approval, the Jewish nation-state of Israel came into

being on May 14, 1948.

It truly was a miracle. A generation earlier few would have thought it even remotely possible. A country that had not existed for almost 2,000 years had been reborn. Even its own ancient language, Hebrew, had been revived and remains the national language of Israel.

It is important to recognize that the Jewish state *had* to be reborn to fulfill Bible

Jerusalem remains a major source of contention between Israelis and Palestinians. It has been fought over many times down through history, and Bible prophecy shows at least one more battle is going to take place in and around the city.

prophecies regarding Judah in the last days. We should note that the citizens of the state of Israel are descended from the biblical kingdom of Judah and constitute only a small fraction of the descendants of the patriarch Israel. (To learn more, request our free booklet *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*.)

From the start Israel was surrounded by hostile powers intent on destroying her. Within hours of the withdrawal of British troops, five Arab armies attacked the fledgling country, which at that time had a Jewish population of only half a million. Hundreds of these were to die in Israel’s War of Independence.

Hundreds more were to die in subsequent wars. The next followed in 1956 when the Egyptians seized the Anglo-French-owned Suez Canal. A joint military action involving the two European nations and Israel was thwarted by American pressure.

Six days that changed the world

Barely a decade passed before Israel again found itself imperiled.

“The population of Israel had continued to grow, mainly by immigration; by 1967 it stood at some 2.3 millions, of whom the Arabs formed roughly 13 per cent. Its economic strength had increased, with the help of aid from the United States, contributions from Jews in the outside world, and repara-

tions from West Germany. It had also been building up the strength and expertise of its armed forces, and of the air force in particular” (Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, 2002, pp. 412-413).

By 1965 Palestinian terror groups had formed and were attacking Israelis. The Israelis retaliated against neighboring states from which the attacks were launched.

“Faced with Israeli retaliation against

other Arab states, and with reports (which may have been unfounded) of a coming Israeli attack on Syria, [Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser] asked the United Nations to withdraw the forces which had been stationed on the frontier with Israel since the Suez war of 1956, and when this was done he closed the straits of ‘Aqaba to Israeli shipping,” effectively an act of war (Hourani, p. 413).

Three weeks later the war began.

“As tension mounted, Jordan and Syria made military agreements with Egypt. On 5 June Israel attacked Egypt and destroyed its air force; and in the next few days of fighting the Israelis occupied Sinai as far as the Suez Canal, Jerusalem and the Palestinian part of Jordan, and part of southern Syria (the Jawlan or ‘Golan Heights’), before a cease-fire agreed on at the United Nations ended the fighting” (ibid.).

A pivotal turning point

The war was a pivotal turning point in the Middle East. “There has hardly been an Arab peace plan in the last 40 years—including the current Saudi version—that does not demand a return to the status quo of June 4th, 1967. Why is that date so sacred? Because it was the day before the outbreak of the Six Day War in which Israel scored one of the most stunning victories of the 20th century. The Arabs have spent four decades



Israeli soldiers pause in front of the Jews' holiest site, the Western Wall, in the old city of Jerusalem following its recapture from Jordanian rule in the Six-Day War on June 9, 1967.

trying to undo its consequences" (Charles Krauthammer, May 21, 2007, column).

Israel's pre-Six-Day War borders gave those hostile to Israel a distinct military advantage. This weakness inspired Egypt, Syria and Jordan to attack in the first place, convinced that they could achieve a quick victory. The total annihilation of the Jewish state remains the goal of many Palestinians, regardless of their political affiliation.

"That three-week period between May 16 and June 5 helps explain Israel's 40-year reluctance to give up the fruits of the Six Day War—the Sinai, the Golan Heights, the West Bank and Gaza—in return for paper guarantees of peace. Israel had similar guarantees from the 1956 Suez War, after which it evacuated the Sinai in return for that UN buffer force and for assurances from the Western powers of free passage through the Straits of Tiran . . .

"It is hard to exaggerate what it was like

for Israel in those three weeks. Egypt, already in an alliance with Syria, formed an emergency military pact with Jordan. Iraq, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, Libya and Morocco began sending forces to join the coming fight.

"With troops and armor massing on Israel's every frontier, jubilant broadcasts in every Arab capital hailed the imminent final war for the extermination of Israel. 'We shall destroy Israel and its inhabitants,' declared PLO head Ahmad al-Shuqayri" (ibid.).

Israel's stunning victory altered the military balance in the Middle East, showing the world that Israel had military superiority over its neighbors.

The war also gave Israel control of all of Jerusalem, including sites considered holy by Jews, Christians and Muslims—a major contributing factor to the continuing conflict, which threatens to spill over into all-out war at any time.

Following the Six-Day War, Jews were able to worship freely at their holiest site, the Western Wall of the Temple Mount. Atop the same Temple Mount are two of the holiest Islamic sites, the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa Mosque.

The Jews consider Jerusalem the "eternal, undivided capital" of Israel. Muslims will never accept this, nor will most accept the presence of the Jewish state, which they see as a temporary usurper, similar to the Crusader Catholic Kingdom of Jerusalem in the 11th century, which lasted less than a century.

"We also forget that Israel's occupation of the West Bank was entirely unsought. Israel begged Jordan's King Hussein to

stay out of the conflict. Engaged in fierce combat with a numerically superior Egypt, Israel had no desire to open a new front just yards from Jewish Jerusalem and just miles from Tel Aviv. But Nasser personally told Hussein that Egypt had destroyed Israel's air force and airfields and that total victory was at hand. Hussein could not resist the temptation to join the fight. He joined. He lost" (ibid.).

A continuing battleground

Clearly, all is not well in Jerusalem. "Even as they were populating the Jerusalem-area settlements, Jews began leaving the heart of the city. The reasons were both economic and cultural.

A recent *Newsweek* article reports: "Overall, roughly 300,000 people have fled the city since 1967. According to a demographic study released this month by the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 17,200 people left Jerusalem last year, while only 10,900 moved in. With Arab birthrates rising faster than Jewish ones, demographers predict the Jewish-to-Arab ratio in the city will be roughly even within 20 years" (Kevin Peraino, "A Holy City Loses Faith," *Newsweek*, June 4, 2007).

The same article also states that "the city is now Israel's poorest metropolis; ambitious young people prefer making their living in the country's high-tech corridor along the Mediterranean coast. A vastly disparate standard of living divides Jerusalem's Arabs and Jews, who only rarely mix."

The city remains a major source of contention between Israelis and Palestinians. It has been fought over many times down through history, and Bible prophecy shows that at least one more battle is going to take place in and around the city.

Speaking of conditions in the last days, Jesus Christ warned: "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near . . . For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled . . . and Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (Luke 21:20-24).

The Old Testament prophet Zechariah, who lived in the sixth century before Christ, also prophesied of end-time events surrounding Jerusalem: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the

Continued on page 19

Severe drought grips parts of America

Reporting from Denver, Patrick O'Driscoll wrote in *USA Today*: "Drought, a fixture in much of the West for nearly a decade, now covers more than one third of the continental USA. And it's spreading. As summer starts, half the nation is either abnormally dry or in outright drought from prolonged lack of rain that could lead to water shortages, according to the U.S. drought monitor, a weekly index of conditions . . . Coast to coast the drought's effects are as varied as the landscape" (June 8, 2007).

America's second-largest freshwater lake, Okeechobee in Florida, is at a record low level due to the driest spring in the nation's Southeast since 1895. Drought has also hit hard in central and southern California. "Los Angeles residents were urged on Wednesday to take shorter showers [and] reduce lawn sprinklers . . . in a bid to cut water usage by 10 percent in the driest year on record . . . since rainfall records began 130 years ago" (*USA Today*, June 7, 2007).

From California and Arizona, drought conditions have reached their tentacles into 11 other Western states. Minnesota has also been experiencing its worst drought in 30 years. Of course, some areas of the nation, such as much of Texas and Oklahoma, are apparently recovering well from previously severe drought conditions.

Rising populations in the Southwest and Southeast require more water, not less. *New Scientist* reports that "for the past seven years, states in the Southwestern United States have been drying up. Rising temperatures, a decline in precipitation and an increasing population have combined to leave major water sources perilously low" (April 14, 2007). A study at Columbia University "suggests that the region is in the early stages of a profound climate shift" (ibid.).

The Bible clearly shows that God has ultimate control over the weather. The Hebrew prophet Amos

cites God as saying: "I made it rain on one city, I withheld rain from another city. One part was rained upon, and where it did not rain the part withered" (Amos 4:7). God's purpose in withholding rain from ancient Israel was to encourage repentance, as shown by the context: "Yet you have not returned to Me" (verses 8-9).

Two important questions: Do these drought conditions, not only in America but also in Australia (followed by outbreaks of damaging flooding in the Land Down



"Drought, a fixture in much of the West for nearly a decade, now covers more than one third of the continental USA . . . Half the nation is either abnormally dry or in outright drought . . ."

Under), have anything to do with God and His Word? Are certain ancient prophecies (in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28) directed towards the English-speaking peoples now beginning to be fulfilled in earnest?

In hopes of a widespread national repentance, is God gradually withdrawing His hand of blessing from the posterity of the patriarch Joseph? If you do not yet understand the true identity of the lost 10 tribes of Israel, request or download our free booklet *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*. (Sources: *USA Today*, *New Scientist*.)

Jerusalem: Troubles in a united and yet a divided city

Four decades after the Six-Day War reunited Jerusalem, some in Israel still fondly call this historic city the "eternal, undivided capital." But others are now wondering if it is inevitable that the city will become politically divided yet again. One right-winger-turned-peace-activist even said that "we have to divide Jerusalem. We have to get rid of some of our syndromes; some of our dreams."

Jerusalem is not a popular place to live. It is Israel's poorest city economically. Most Israelis prefer residing in Tel Aviv, Haifa and other places along

Israel's high-tech corridor. Current demographics and even its geography now trouble the ancient capital of King David.

Some 300,000 Jews have left Jerusalem since the Six-Day War. More than 17,000 left in 2006, offset somewhat by nearly 11,000 moving into the city. Demographers have estimated that the ratio of Jews to Arabs in the city will be 50-50 within 20 years. A long barrier both divides and surrounds Jerusalem. The network of checkpoints frustrates both Arabs and Jews. The city itself is often full of religious tension and strife. Its current plight reflects the biblical description of its spiritual condition in Revelation 11:8.

Yet in spite of all the past, present and future sufferings of this great city, we should never forget the sure hope behind these inspired words of King David:

New Gaza reality: a dangerous Islamic mini-state

Hamas Islamic hardliners now dominate the Gaza Strip after a short and bloody showdown with Fatah, the rival Palestinian faction. Recall that Israel voluntarily left Gaza in 2005 and the next day Palestinians burned down four synagogues in abandoned Jewish settlements. Both Hamas and Fatah celebrated these travesties. Yet since Hamas won Palestinian legislative elections in January 2006, more than 600 Palestinians have died in fierce internecine warfare between the two factions.

The Hamas victors have arrogantly proclaimed a new era of Islamic rule in Gaza, overturning Fatah's more secular rule. The future looks bleak for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who, now effectively exiled to the West Bank, was forced to dissolve the government and weakly call for new elections. *Hamastan* appears to be the new reality in Gaza, with

Fatah in control in the West Bank.

How will America and Israel deal with this new development? The *International Herald Tribune* reported: "For two years, the United States tried to choke off Hamas, the militant Islamic group that has been ascendant in



Gaza and the West Bank, while throwing limited aid and support to Fatah" (June 15, 2007). Since Washington has designated Hamas a terrorist organization with which it will not negotiate, American options appear severely limited.

How Israel will react is another matter. If Hamas continues its cross-border rocket and other attacks against Israeli settlements, military intervention seems almost certain—especially since the Israelis will no longer be constrained by concerns about undermining the authority of President Abbas. The Road Map to Peace has acquired more delaying detours than ever. (Sources: *International Herald Tribune*, *Financial Times*.)

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem" (Psalm 122:6). They echo down its 3,000-year history. It is certain that David's prayer will be answered when Jesus Christ returns to make this great city the capital of the world. From there He will reign over all nations in a world of peace, purpose and plenty.

To understand Jerusalem's historic role, request or download our free booklet *The Middle East in Bible Prophecy*. (Source: *Newsweek*, June 4, 2007.)



Economic revival in Germany and EU

Since the mid-1990s Britain has been able to look across the English Channel and compare sluggish Continental economic growth with relatively good figures in the British Isles. But now, "Germany, Europe's largest economy, has staged a powerful recovery over the past 12 months. Business confidence is close to record highs, and the number of people out of work has fallen by an impressive 670,000 since the beginning of 2006" (*The Guardian*, May 27, 2007).

The news is mostly good in other Continental countries as well. For many years European nations have largely been characterized by high unemployment, economic stagnation and resistance to needed reforms. But Michael Heise, chief economist at Allianz and Dresdner Bank in Germany, has recently written: "The EU expansion [to 27 nations] has spurred on the 15 oldest members . . . to revamp and reshape their economies to meet the challenges of the global market place" (*International Herald Tribune*, June 12, 2007).

EU-wide growth is predicted to achieve a figure of 2.7 percent in 2007. Germany grew by 3.6 percent in this year's first quarter.

Heise assures us that "the revival of Western Europe is by no means a threat to the United States." Maybe not now, but Bible prophecy shows that a coming European-centered superpower will challenge the United States and for a time it will dominate the globe. For further information, request our free booklets *Are We Living in the Time of the End?* and *The Book of Revelation Revealed*. (Sources: *The Guardian*, *International Herald Tribune*, *The Boston Globe*.)

Superbug deaths increase greatly

In the United Kingdom, "a huge rise in deaths linked to the superbug MRSA [a staph germ] in just over a decade has been revealed in official figures" (*The Sunday Telegraph*, May 13, 2007).

A mere 51 cases in 1993 mushroomed to 1,629 in 2005, a 30-fold increase. This is most probably a very low estimate as most hospitals are very reluctant to assign MRSA as the cause of death, preferring to put forward any alternative explanation if remotely possible.

An earlier report in *The Guardian* (Feb. 23, 2007) listed 5,436 deaths from MRSA and another super-

bug called *Clostridium difficile*. Hospital health inspectors are currently urging greater priorities in patient safety.

Across the Atlantic in Chicago, "drug-resistant staph infections have spread to the urban poor, rising almost seven-fold in recent years in some Chicago neighborhoods" (Associated Press, May 28, 2007). Crowded conditions in public housing and jails apparently aid and abet this type of infection. Other American cities are experiencing similar increases in superbug infections.

The AP report suggests the following precautions: "To prevent staph's spread, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends washing your hands with soap and water

Earth's rare mineral resources running out?

Most people are somewhat familiar with the more common of the earth's mineral resources such as gold, silver, copper and aluminum. But what about rare resources such as platinum?

New Scientist magazine states that "it has been estimated that if all the 500 million vehicles in use today were re-equipped with fuel cells, operating losses would mean that all the world's sources of platinum would be exhausted in 15 years. Unlike oil or diamonds, there is no synthetic alternative" (May 26, 2007). Catalytic converters that control

levels of exhaust pollutants are almost completely dependent on platinum.

Although accurately estimating both levels of current use and the availability of extractable reserves of precious metals is a somewhat tricky exercise, experts in the field are expressing understandable concern. Indium is another rare metal in short supply. It is used in large quantities in making LCDs for flat-screen television sets. Likewise tantalum, a rare metal required to manufacture compact electronic cell phones and the like, is becoming scarce.

Whether the marvels of a yet undiscovered new technology can alleviate these potential shortages in sufficient time remains to be seen. (Source: *New Scientist*.)

Potential trade war between America and China

US *Today* reporter David Lynch writes: "After years of inconclusive skirmishing, trade tensions between the United States and China are about to intensify . . . On Capitol Hill, lawmakers from both [major political] parties have drafted legislation designed to punish China for trade practices they say violate the Asian giant's international commitments and leave American companies at a profound competitive disadvantage. A bilateral trade deficit that yawns wider with every year is fueling the push for action"



(June 13, 2007, emphasis added throughout).

Warnings that such congressional action could backfire substantially came from respected bankers. After all, duties imposed on Chinese goods would immediately bring higher prices for the American consumer. A Shanghai newspaper, *Jiefang Ribao*, summed up the overall effect: "Once a trade war breaks out, it will be devastating for China and the United States."

Even if sensible restraint averts any negative economic repercussions, the problem of how to address America's huge trade imbalance with China remains. The first quarter of 2007 showed a nearly 20 percent increase in the imbalance over the previous year. Juggling finances between large nations and groups of nations in this supercompetitive world constitutes an ongoing worry for all concerned. (Source: *USA Today*)

or an alcohol-based sanitizer, keeping cuts clean and covered with a clean bandage until healed, avoiding contact with other people's wounds and bandages and avoiding shared personal items such as towels and razors." This is obviously plain and practical common-sense advice.

Further, we should all take responsibility for our own health by avoiding harmful addictions, maintaining a decent diet, exercising reasonably for our age bracket and keeping a sound mental attitude. For more detailed health advice based on biblical principles, consult our free booklets *Making Life Work* and *What Does the Bible Teach About Clean and Unclean Meats?* (Sources: *The Sunday Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, Associated Press.)

How Can You Make Sense of the News?

So much is happening in the world, and so quickly. Where are today's dramatic and dangerous trends taking us? What does Bible prophecy reveal about our future? You're probably very concerned with the direction the world is heading. So are we. That's why we've created the *World News & Prophecy* Web site—to help you understand the news in the light of Bible prophecy. This eye-opening site offers you a perspective you won't find anywhere else—the perspective of God's Word, the Bible. Visit us at www.wnponline.org today!



Charles Darwin: Evolution of a Man and His Ideas

*Almost 150 years have passed since the publication of Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* launched a theological, philosophical and scientific revolution. Nearly everyone knows about the theory of evolution, but few know the man and motives behind it.*

by Mario Seiglie

In a series of coincidences fewer than two years away, three important historical dates will converge—the bicentennial of the births of Charles Darwin and Abraham Lincoln (both born on Feb. 12, 1809) and the 150th anniversary of the publication (in 1859) of Darwin's *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*. Many celebrations will take place honoring the memories of these two influential men in world history.

Abraham Lincoln, the 16th U.S. president, is known primarily for three great accomplishments: his Emancipation Proclamation that set the stage for freeing the American slaves; his efforts to preserve the United States when it was wracked by the American Civil War; and his actions that marked him as one of the most humane and respected leaders in recent centuries.

Yet, of the two, the social, psychological, political and scientific impact of Charles Darwin is greater. Ideas based on Darwinian evolution still permeate most scientific fields and the philosophical perspectives presented in schools, universities and the popular press. Just recently, for example, the Science Channel named its top 100 scientific discoveries of all time—and trumpeted as number one Darwin's theory of evolution.

Who exactly was Charles Darwin? Why did his theory of evolution have such an impact? And more importantly, is what he proposed really true?

Much has been written about the man, but two books (by pro-evolution authors) have exhaustively covered his life—*Darwin: The Life of a Tormented Evolutionist* (1992) by Adrian Desmond and James Moore, and the two-volume set *Charles Darwin: Voyaging* (1995) and *Charles Darwin: The Power of Place* (2002) by Harvard professor Janet Browne. Along with these two biographies are Darwin's own autobiography and what was written by Darwin's son, Francis.

On the other side of the ledger, books critical of Darwin and his theory include the

masterly exposition *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* (1985) by biochemist and physician Michael Denton and *Darwin on Trial* (1991) by University of California law professor Phillip Johnson, to name a few. Much of the material for this article is drawn from these sources.

Darwin's early life

Many today assume Darwin was the originator of the idea of evolution, but the concept had actually been around as early as Greek times. Darwin's achievement was proposing a mechanism for evolution to work—natural selection.

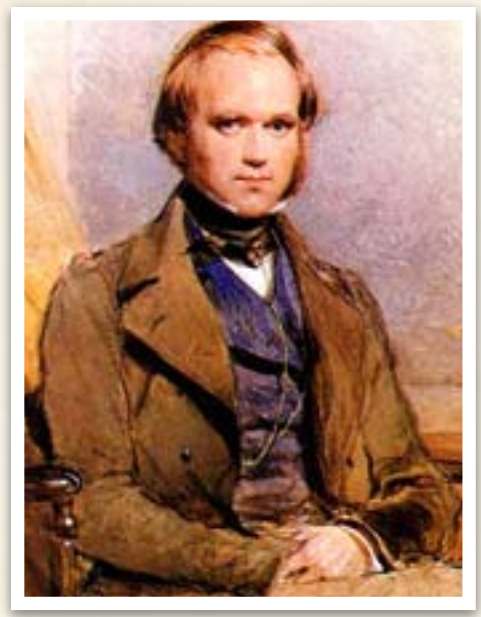
Two of the most influential people in Darwin's early life and thoughts were his father, Robert, and, indirectly, his famous grandfather Erasmus. Although Erasmus died before Charles was born, Charles' father made sure

“There will always be an ineluctable mystery surrounding the origin of the theory of natural selection, just as there will always be a shadowy web surrounding the real Charles Darwin.”

Charles was familiar with his grandfather's writings on evolution.

Erasmus Darwin wrote a book, *Zoonomia*, that included many evolutionary concepts Charles would later adopt. Erasmus had been a successful physician, as was his son, Robert, and both were decidedly anti-Christian—although careful to disguise their ideas in public. “The name of Darwin,” write Desmond and Moore, “was already associated with subversive atheism. Dr Robert was himself a closet freethinker . . .” (p. 12).

Charles Darwin eventually rejected Christianity, in part because he could not accept the fate he understood it to decree for unbelievers such as his grandfather, father, older brother and even himself. He wrote in his autobiography: “Thus disbelief crept over me at a very slow rate, but was at last complete. The rate was so slow that I felt no distress, and have never since doubted even for a sin-



gle second that my conclusion was correct.

“I can indeed hardly see how anyone ought to wish Christianity to be true; for if so the plain language of the text seems to show that the men who do not believe, and this would include my Father, Brother and almost all of my best friends, will be everlastingly punished. And this is a damnable doctrine” (Online edition).

Sadly, Darwin was influenced by an erroneous, though widely believed, view of Christian doctrine. (To learn what the Bible really teaches on this subject, request or download our free booklet *What Happens After Death?*)

Darwin's mother tragically died when he was 8 years old, and he followed the loose and freethinking ways of his father and deceased grandfather. He wrote in his autobiography, “I may here also confess that as a little boy I was much given to inventing

deliberate falsehoods, and this was always done for the sake of causing excitement” (emphasis added throughout).

“He was an attention-seeker; he wanted praise . . .,” Desmond and Moore add. “He would still do anything at school ‘for the pure pleasure of exciting attention & surprise,’ and his cultivated ‘lies’ . . . gave [him] pleasure, like a tragedy.” He told *tall tales* about natural history . . . Once he invented an elaborate story designed to show how fond he was of telling the truth. It was a boy’s way of *manipulating* the world” (p. 13).

“He often told lies about seeing rare birds,” concurs Janet Browne. “The lies were not connected to any sense of shame . . . More accurately, they mirrored a search for attention. He wanted to be admired . . . Lies—and the thrills derived from lies—were for him *indistin-*

below the common standard in intellect. To my deep mortification my father once said to me, ‘You care for nothing but shooting, dogs, and rat-catching, and you will be a disgrace to yourself and all your family.’”

Around the world on the *Beagle*

His father, although inwardly rejecting Christianity, thought the best thing for his undisciplined and carefree son would be to live the comfortable life of a country parson, wherein he could placidly pursue his interests in natural history.

Darwin actually completed his theology degree and for a while embraced Scripture, but before he could find a job in the clergy he was offered a berth on the British vessel HMS *Beagle*, as the captain’s dining companion. He was not the naturalist on board, a

role given to the ship’s surgeon. Those five years on a trip around the world would radically change his life and beliefs.

Four great experiences then shaped Darwin’s future. The first was the trip itself—he discovered a wonderment and love for natural history and geology that would continue throughout his life.

Secondly, he would rebel at the bigoted Christianity of the ship’s captain, Robert FitzRoy.

Thirdly, he read Charles Lyell’s books on geology arguing the earth was millions of years old, shaking his faith in the Bible and ending any desire for a career in the clergy.

Fourth, he became perplexed by the different varieties of creatures he encountered, especially in the Galapagos Islands. He wondered how these differing species could fit into the standard creationist accounts of his day.

Returning to England and wearied by the long and perilous journey, he vowed never to sail again. He would spend most of his life within the confines of his rural home in Downe and in London, some 15 miles away.

At 29, he married his first cousin, Emma, and it looked like he would become another British squire, living comfortably off his father’s money and surrounded by a cohort of cooks, maids, butlers and gardeners. He was never duly employed by anyone and had all the wealth and free time he needed

to seek whatever interests suited him.

Conflicting ideas on natural selection

He dedicated his life to the study of nature, deeply desirous of making a name for himself as a naturalist.

While reading Thomas Malthus’ book *Essay on the Principle of Population*, he was struck by the similarity between man’s competitive struggle for limited resources and the constant fight for survival in nature, providing a possible basis for evolution—natural selection, the survival of the fittest. “Here then I had at last got a theory by which to work,” he wrote.

In Darwin’s conception, random genetic mutations would give some offspring physical advantages over others. These fitter creatures would outlive their companions in struggles with environmental conditions and with one another, enabling them to reproduce in greater numbers, passing the genetic advantages on to the next generation. Darwin imagined that over many generations this would give rise to whole new species—thus explaining all the kinds of plant and animal life we see.

As he mused over evolution, then called transmutation, Darwin started to question the need for a Creator God. He began to write some secret notebooks on the subject, afraid to divulge his radical ideas. For a country gentleman with a Christian wife and many Christian friends, he wanted to keep his heretical thoughts to himself. He said they made him feel like “confessing a murder.”

So he cleverly disguised his ideas and used many euphemisms. “He began devising ways of camouflaging his materialism,” say Desmond and Moore. “Don’t mention it, he admonished himself, talk only of inherited mental behavior: ‘To avoid stating *how far*, I believe, in *Materialism*,’ he scrawled in a rush, ‘say only the emotions[,] instincts[,] degrees of talent, which are hereditary [sic] . . .’ He was learning to guard his words” (p. 259).

Yet in his secret notebooks he was candid enough to say to himself, “Oh, you Materialist!” In the terminology of the day, this meant one who believed that only matter exists in the universe and that this strictly material universe is governed by physical laws without the need for a Creator.

Sadly, as he tried to live a respectable life that outwardly appeared very normal, his conscience was being torn by his shocking beliefs. “But now, deep into his clandestine work,” continue Desmond and Moore, “compiling notes that would shock his geological compatriots, his health was breaking. He was living a double life with double standards, unable to broach his species work with



A watercolor portrait of Charles Darwin, left, shows him in his late 20s, not long after his journey on HMS Beagle. The Beagle, above, surveys Tierra del Fuego at the southernmost tip of South America in a painting by the ship’s artist.

guishable from the delights of natural history” (Charles Darwin: *Voyaging*, pp. 13-14)

As we will see, these tendencies for clever but unfounded tales and the fondness for hiding secrets would, regrettably, arise later in his adult life. As one biographer notes, “There will always be an ineluctable mystery surrounding the origin of the theory of natural selection, just as there will always be a shadowy web surrounding the real Charles Darwin” (Loren Eiseley, *Darwin and the Mysterious Mr. X*, 1979, p. 93).

Darwin was not a very good student at school. He quit medical school, only to be rescued by his wealthy father and sent to Cambridge in the hope he would make something of himself.

He confessed in his autobiography: “When I left the school I was for my age neither high nor low in it; and I believe that I was considered by all my masters and by my father as a very ordinary boy, rather

anyone . . . for fear he be branded irresponsible, irreligious, or worse” (p. 233).

Two devastating deaths in the family

Next, he received two devastating blows to his young family. According to biographer Janet Browne, the death of his beloved daughter Annie at age 10, followed a year later by the death of his first-born son William, caused great bitterness toward God. “This death was the formal beginning of Darwin’s conscious dissociation from believing in the traditional figure of God . . . Bleakness swept in. The gradual numbing of his religious feelings . . . and the godless world of natural selection he was even then still creating came implacably face to face with the emptiness of bereavement” (p. 503).

Yet, ironically, some might say Darwin was a victim of his own theory of natural selection because of the genetic dangers of inbreeding.

In 1839, he married Emma, his first cousin. Both families had intermarried through first cousins for some time, a dangerous trend for heredity. Twenty-six children were born from these first-cousin marriages; 19 were sterile and five died prematurely, including Darwin’s daughter and first son. Many suffered from mental retardation or other hereditary illnesses, as was the case with his last son. All these effects engendered great hostility toward the idea of a personal, intervening God.

“A Devil’s Chaplain”

Darwin wrestled at this time with publishing his theory, fearing ostracism. Moore writes: “The strain showed . . . In a letter, Darwin . . . blurted, ‘What a book a Devil’s Chaplain might write on the clumsy, wasteful, blundering low and horridly cruel works of nature!’ It was a book that Darwin feared he might be accused of writing, a book that would reveal him as an unbeliever and open him to punishment—like the original Devil’s Chaplain, Rev. Robert Taylor—the Cambridge graduate and apostate priest, who was twice imprisoned for blasphemy” (“Darwin—A Devil’s Chaplain?” online edition).

He finally did write what he called his “*accursed book*,” but most of the writings were hidden away for 20 years. Only after a colleague, Alfred Russel Wallace, sent him a paper with essentially the same theory was his hand forced. Fearing Wallace might get credit for the theory, Darwin first read his own paper and then Wallace’s at a scientific meeting.

From the time he began to write his secret notebooks on evolution and materialism, he started to suffer terrible psychosomatic

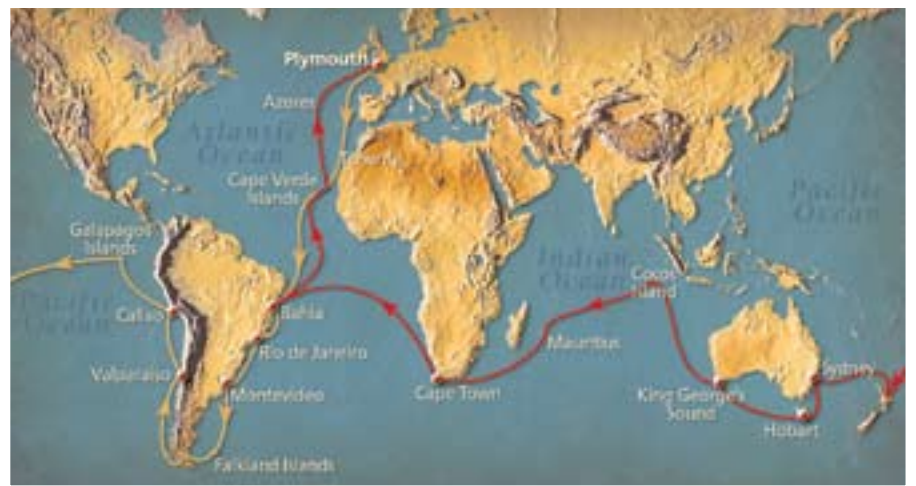
disorders for most of his long life. He experienced some 40 years of generally poor health.

Not only was he suffering from what seemed to be psychologically induced illnesses, but he was also racked with doubts about his own book. He confessed to some fellow scientists: “It is a mere rag of an hypothesis with as many flaws & holes as sound parts . . . [but] I can carry in it my fruit to market . . . A poor rag is better than nothing to carry one’s fruit to market in.” To another colleague he wrote, “I . . . have devoted my life to a phantasy [sic]” (quoted by Desmond and Moore, pp. 475-477).

The fruit he wanted to market was his theory of evolution—which included a direct

ising science would lead to an epoch of constant scientific and material progress, ultimately answering all of man’s questions and solving his problems without the help of religion. It was also a time when the churches of Britain were viewed by many radicals like Darwin as corrupt and outdated.

Darwin proposed a theory that essentially displaced the Creator God, with only physical and undirected mechanisms such as natural selection and adaptation doing the creating. “His vision,” state Desmond and Moore, “was no longer of a world personally sustained by a patrician God, but *self-generated*. From echinoderms [marine creatures such as starfish] to Englishmen,



A transforming event in the life of Charles Darwin was his voyage on HMS Beagle, 1831-1836. His observations on the trip would later lead to his theory of evolution.

attack on the prevailing notions of God, Christianity and the Bible. And what deadly fruit it turned out to be!

As Desmond and Moore explain: “Plumbing the radical depths Darwin saw the cataclysmic consequences. ‘Once grant that species . . . may pass into each other . . . & the whole fabric totters & falls.’ The *Creationist* ‘fabric’ and all it entailed was *his target*. He peered into the future and saw the old *miraculous* edifice collapsing” (p. 243).

A man for the times

Although torn with doubt, Darwin’s ideas came at an opportune moment for him. It was a period deeply affected by the French Revolution and the overthrow of many European monarchies and clerical power. In his autobiography Darwin wrote, “Nothing is more remarkable than the spread of skepticism or rationalism during the latter half of my life.” He was able to take advantage of the radical political and social winds that were blowing his way.

The age of positivism had arrived, prom-

all had arisen through a lawful redistribution of living matter in response to an orderly changing geological environment” (p. 237).

It should be noted that in later editions of *The Origin of Species*, Darwin did add the term “Creator” in a few places and in his conclusion, in one place stating: “There is a grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one.” Yet he later confessed to his outraged colleagues that this impression of theistic or deistic evolution was to soothe the feelings of his Christian wife and of a likeminded public.

Even so, Darwin admitted to wavering views and claimed to be an agnostic. In an 1879 letter he wrote: “I have never been an Atheist in the sense of denying the existence of a God . . . Agnostic would be the more correct description of my state of mind” (Darwin to J. Fordyce, published by him in *Aspects of Scepticism*, 1883).

Consequences of the theory

The results of Darwin’s theory of evolution

were dramatic. Atheism and secularism became widely popular. As one of today's most ardent modern supporters of Darwin and atheism, Richard Dawkins, has famously said, "Darwin made it possible to become an intellectually fulfilled atheist" (*The Blind Watchmaker*, 1986, p. 6).

So scientific materialism spread like wildfire. Karl Marx, the father of communism, out of gratitude to Darwin, sent him *Das Kapital*, his principal book on communism. "Although developed in the crude English fashion," he wrote to his communist colleague Friedrich Engels, "this [Darwin's *The Origin of Species*] is the book which in the field of natural history, provides the basis for *our views*." To another he wrote that Darwin's work "suits my purpose in that it provides a basis in natural science for the historical class struggle" (Browne, p. 188).

This evolutionary backing eventually helped establish the philosophical framework for the twin scourges of communism and atheism in Russia, China and many other nations.

As Darwin's ideas gained respectability, moral absolutes were increasingly questioned. If there is no Creator, then it seemed all things are permissible. If there is no God, then there are no ultimate consequences. If there is no greater authority than yourself, then the rules of survival of the fittest are in effect and back the idea that you can succeed by any means by applying the law of the jungle—only the strong survive.

To cap it off, Darwin wrote in 1871 his *Descent of Man*, describing human descent from apes, a book with considerable baseless speculation and even racist claims—including that of white supremacy (as whites were reckoned as further from apes along the evolutionary advancement chain than blacks).

Hitler later used some of these ideas, called "social Darwinism," in World War II to eradicate millions of Jews and others he thought were racially inferior. He said: "Nature is cruel, therefore we, too, may be cruel . . . I have the right to remove millions of an inferior race that breeds like vermin! . . . Natural instincts bid all living beings not merely conquer their enemies, but also destroy them" (quoted by Hermann Rauschning, *The Voice of Destruction*, 1940, pp. 137-138).

In effect, Hitler could say he was applying the theory of evolution and only quickening the inevitable end of the weak. This was necessary to make room for a fitter, superior race. It gave him what he thought was a scientific and moral validity for his warped views—and some 65 million people died in World War II largely

because of those warped views.

Flaws in Darwin's theory

As we near the 150th anniversary of *The Origin of Species*, we find a world deeply divided over Darwin's ideas. The belief in God, creation and the Bible has not disappeared, although admittedly it has been greatly weakened.

Yet as more scientific discoveries are made, including the intricacies of the human DNA genome (consisting of carefully assembled instructions 3 billion genetic letters long), the mind-boggling complexity of the cell and the millions of missing transitional forms between different animal and plant types, Darwin's theory truly is in trouble.

"As recently as twenty-five years ago," noted Patrick Glynn, a former atheist and a Ph.D. from Harvard, in 1997, "a reasonable person weighing the purely scientific evidence on the issue would likely have come down on the side of skepticism. That is no longer the case. Today the concrete data point strongly in the direction of the God hypothesis" (*God: The Evidence*, 1997, pp. 55-56).

But many scientists are unwilling to give up evolution because of the theological and philosophical implications.

"We take the side of science in spite of the patent absurdity of some of its constructs," Harvard biologist Richard Lewontin once candidly admitted, "in spite of the tolerance of the scientific community for unsubstantiated just-so-stories, because we have a *prior* commitment . . . to materialism . . . We *cannot* allow a Divine Foot in the door" ("Billions and Billions of Demons," *New York Review of Books*, Jan. 9, 1997, p. 31).

Where's the evidence?

Of course, what Darwin *always* lacked was the *evidence* of transitional forms between one-celled and multi-celled organisms, between reptiles and mammals, and between apes and men, just to name a few. He even asked: "Why then is not every geological formation and every stratum *full* of such intermediate links? Geology assuredly *does not* reveal any such finely graduated organic chain; and this, perhaps, is the most obvious and serious objection which can be urged against the theory" (*The Origin of Species*, 1958, Mentor edition, pp. 293-294).

So what did he do? He explained away the missing fossil evidence—saying the geologic record was sparsely excavated and imperfect. Yet, today, according to biochemist Michael Denton, of the 44 orders of living terrestrial vertebrates, 43 have been found as fossils (a 97 percent recovery rate!). And *no* transitional

forms have been found among these groups. Not even, for instance, anything in between reptile scales and bird feathers—and these are groups of creatures supposedly related.

Paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould admitted, "The extreme rarity of transitional forms in the fossil record persists as the *trade secret* of paleontology" (*The Panda's Thumb*, 1980, p. 181).

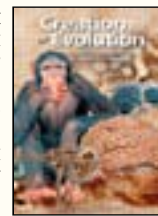
If Darwin's theory is correct, there should be *millions* of transitional forms—animals and plants in different stages of transformation into other kinds through mutation and natural selection. In fact, if evolution were true, we should see far more transitional forms than fully complete, fully functioning species. In addition, we should expect to clearly see gradually changing creatures in the more than one million species on earth and the even more numerous fossil types. Yet *none* have been found.

There are some reports that Darwin had a shift in thinking near the end of his life—perhaps regretting how far his ideas had been taken and even accepting the idea of salvation through Christ (though still believing in evolution). While possible, as Darwin considered personal beliefs to be private, none of his family ever admitted to such a change in his thinking, including his believing wife. And for society it wouldn't have really mattered, as his disciples would not have turned back.

Biographers Desmond and Moore conclude on page 677 with the following scene as Darwin is solemnly laid to rest in Westminster Abbey: "It marked the accession to power of the traders in nature's marketplace, the scientists and their minions in politics and religion. Such men, on the up-and-up, were paying their dues, for Darwin had naturalized Creation and delivered *human nature and human destiny* into their hands. Society would never be the same. The 'Devil's chaplain' had done his work." **GN**

Recommended Reading

This article tells you a lot about Charles Darwin the man. But what about his ideas? Does his theory of evolution stand the test of time? When *The Origin of Species* was published, Darwin made various predictions about evidence that would be found to support or utterly disprove his theory. The evidence is in—and what does it reveal? You need to know the facts! Request or download your free copy of *Creation or Evolution: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?*



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Myths of Evolution Part 1

If the theory of evolution is such a sure thing, why have so many doubts been raised about it? Why do so many fight so hard to prevent alternatives from being seriously considered? Most important of all, what does the evidence really show?

by Mario Seiglie

Here at the start of the 21st century, the theory of evolution remains the dominant explanation in schools and the mass media about the appearance and the wondrous variety of more than a million living species on planet earth.

Of course, not all areas of the world place the same emphasis on the theory. In China, for instance, a paleontologist quipped to an American colleague: “In China we can criticize Darwin but not the government. In America you can criticize the government but not Darwin” (“The Church of Darwin,” *The Wall Street Journal*, Aug. 16, 1999).

Interestingly, France, Spain, Latin America and Islamic countries haven’t accepted

Gordon Taylor, for instance, in his pro-evolution book *Great Evolution Mystery*, mentions: “As Professor Ernst Mayr of Harvard, the *doyen* [senior member] of species studies, once remarked, the ‘book called *The Origin of Species* is not really on that subject’, while his colleague Professor Simpson admits: ‘Darwin failed to solve the problem indicated by the title of his work.’

“You may be surprised to hear that *the origin of species remains just as much a mystery today*, despite the efforts of thousands of biologists. The topic has been the main focus of attention *and is beset by endless controversies*” (1983, p. 140, emphasis added throughout). And the controversy continues today.

But why should this controversy persist?

vival of the fittest, I have called Natural Selection” (pp. 124, 130).

Yet it’s a long way from explaining merely *how* the species *survived* to *how* it had *arrived*! As biochemist and agnostic Michael Denton states: “The fact is that the evidence was so patchy one hundred years ago that even Darwin himself had increasing doubts as to the validity of his views, and the only aspect of his theory which has received any support over the past century is where it applies to micro-evolutionary phenomena.

“His general theory, that all life on earth had originated and evolved by a gradual successive accumulation of fortuitous mutations, is still, as it was in Darwin’s time, a highly speculative hypothesis entirely without direct factual support and very far from that self-evident axiom some of its more aggressive advocates would have us believe” (*Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, 1985, p. 77).

“The evidence was so patchy a hundred years ago that even Darwin himself had increasing doubts as to the validity of his views . . .”

the theory with the same enthusiasm. Nevertheless, in Great Britain, where Darwin was born, and in America, which has received so much of its cultural heritage from the British, as well as in Germany, Darwin’s ideas on evolution are still king and criticism is frowned upon.

A beleaguered theory

Why is this theory, soon to become 150 years old, so prevalent? What is its basis and how firmly is it rooted? To some it has supplanted religion—and also become a religion.

“Next to the Bible,” anthropologist Ashley Montagu claims, “no work has been quite as influential, in virtually every aspect of human thought, as *The Origin of Species*” (*The Origin of Species*, 1958, Mentor edition, quote on the back cover).

Surely the theory must have impressive proofs for it to be supported so vocally by so many scientists and college professors. Yet, surprisingly, some of these same scientists, in more candid moments, have admitted that Darwin’s book did not really explain what its title refers to—the *origin* of species.

If the theory of evolution is, as some scientists claim, as sure as the theory of gravity, then why do we see so much wrangling and doubt? In the United States, for example, a nationwide poll in 2005 revealed that only 22 percent, a little more than one in five, believed human beings evolved from earlier species as the theory of evolution claims.

What natural selection can and cannot do

It is important, first of all, to distinguish what Darwin discovered from what he did not. He *did* find out that natural selection can *preserve* advantageous changes in a species. He did *not* find out how these variations *originate*.

Darwin noted in *The Origin of Species*: “Natural selection acts exclusively by the *preservation* and *accumulation* of variations, which are beneficial under the organic and inorganic conditions to which each creature is exposed at all periods of life. The ultimate result is that each creature tends to become more and more improved in relation to its condition . . . This principle of *preservation*, or the sur-

No direct evidence to support evolution

Very few have actually read *The Origin of Species* from cover to cover—and admittedly, to most it is a very tedious book. Darwin himself called it “one long argument” (p. 435).

Darwin was a dedicated naturalist and loaded the book with numerous observations from the natural world in an attempt to convince his readers of his assumptions. Yet he himself confessed in his book that he did not have any *direct* evidence for his theory, only analogies and *possible* examples from nature.

He mentions in the introduction of his book, “For I am well aware that scarcely a single point is discussed in this volume on which facts cannot be adduced, often apparently leading to conclusions *directly opposite* to those which I have arrived” (p. 28).

In another candid moment, Darwin acknowledged to a friend, “I do not *pretend* to adduce *direct evidence* of one species changing into another” (Letter to F.W. Hutton, April 20, 1861).

He admits in his book: “If my theory

be true, *numberless intermediate varieties*, linking closely together all the species of the same group, *must assuredly* have existed; but the very process of natural selection constantly tends, as has been so often remarked, to *exterminate* the parent-forms and the *intermediate links*. Consequently *evidence* of their former existence *could* be found *only* amongst *fossil* remains, which are preserved, as we shall attempt to show in a future chapter, in an extremely imperfect and intermittent record” (p. 166).

So he recognizes that there aren’t any *living* species in transitional forms he can point to as evidence and says we must go to the ancient fossils for any support.

most obvious and serious objection which can be urged against the theory. The explanation lies, as I believe, in the extreme imperfection of the geologic record” (pp. 293-294).

A bit later, he concedes: “The number of intermediate and transitional links, between all living and extinct species, *must have been inconceivably great*. But assuredly, *if this theory be true*, such *have* lived upon the earth. Independently of our *not* finding fossil remains of such infinitely numerous connecting links, it may be objected that time cannot have sufficed for so great an amount of organic change” (p. 295).

With a clever sleight of hand, he says the proof can’t be found presently on the

evidence as in any other scientific theory? Because Darwin’s theory is not just another scientific theory, but a *philosophical viewpoint*—and, for many, a *belief system*. It promotes materialistic naturalism—the idea that all that exists in the universe is matter and its laws, and that all things evolved without the need for a Creator!

“It is ironic to recall,” says Dr. Denton, “that it was the increasingly secular outlook in the nineteenth century which initially eased the way for the acceptance of evolution, while today it is perhaps the Darwinian view of nature more than any other that is responsible for the *agnostic* and *skeptical* outlook of the twentieth century. What was once a deduction from *materialism* has today become its foundation” (*Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, p. 358).

No true missing links

Now what about the geological evidence? After another 150 years of digging and searching on every continent, have scientists found the vital fossils Darwin called “the connecting links”?

“Since Darwin’s time,” Dr. Denton goes on to say, “the search for missing links in the fossil record has continued on an ever-increasing scale. So vast has been the expansion of paleontological activity over the past one hundred years that probably 99.9% of all paleontological work has been carried out since 1860” (p. 160).

“Despite the tremendous increase in geological activity in every corner of the globe,” he adds, “and despite the discovery of many strange and hitherto unknown forms, the infinitude of connecting links has still *not* been discovered and the fossil record is about as *discontinuous* as it was when Darwin was writing the *Origin*. The intermediates have remained as elusive as ever and *their absence remains, a century later, one of the most striking characteristics of the fossil record*” (p. 162).

There is, consequently, no “smoking gun” found in the fossil record that backs Darwin’s theory.

How about some of the examples Darwin used in his book? How have they fared? Incredibly, they have *all* turned out to be myths about evolution! Let’s look at some of those supposed proofs.

From flying fish to flying birds

Darwin, for example, imagined flying fish could gradually turn into birds. He wrote, “Seeing that a few members of such water-breathing classes as the Crustacea and Mollusca are adapted to live on the



Why not just present the concrete evidence as in any other scientific theory? Because Darwin’s theory is not just another scientific theory, but a philosophical viewpoint—and, for many, a belief system.

Ironically, he also explains that natural selection does not *preserve* the transitional forms, but actually *exterminates* them.

This is a clever way of disposing of the corpse! In other words, he can’t find the evidence among living things for his theory because the chief method of evolution, natural selection, has eliminated the proofs!

Evidence missing from the fossil record

What about the fossil record? Surely here, one thinks, Darwin will present the clear evidence for his case. However, he later admits it’s not there as well! “Why then,” he reluctantly asks, “is not every geological formation and every stratum *full* of such intermediate links? Geology *assuredly does not* reveal any such finely graduated organic chain; and this, perhaps, is the

earth but in the past—and then later says it’s not in the past either, and blames the fossil record for not showing the support he needed!

800 examples of the subjunctive mood

So what was he to do without genuine evidence? He supposed, conjectured, guessed and concocted. One enterprising reviewer of Darwin’s book counted some 800 examples of the subjunctive mood—of suppositions about the theory—using “if,” “maybe,” “perhaps,” “possibly,” “might,” “could,” “conceivably” and many fictional illustrations.

If this theory is backed, as evolutionist Richard Dawkins claims, by proofs certain as “the earth going around the sun,” then why is there so much speculation?

Why not just present the concrete

land; and seeing that we have flying birds . . . it is *conceivable* that flying-fish, which now glide far through the air, slightly rising and turning by the aid of their fluttering fins, *might* have been modified into *perfectly winged animals*" (*The Origin of Species*, p. 168).

Does he present any evidence of the gradual change of this flying fish? No, he doesn't have any evidence from living animals or fossils. So what does he do?

He resorts to an imaginary explanation. "Thus, to return to our *imaginary illustration* of the flying-fish," he says, "it does not seem *probable* that fishes capable of true flight *would* have been developed under many subordinate forms . . . Hence the *chance* of discovering species with transitional grades of structure in a fossil condition will always be *less*, from their having existed in lesser numbers, than in the case of species with fully developed structures" (p. 169).

Since he doesn't have any examples of how flying fish evolve into something else, he then explains away the evidence by saying that the chance of finding transitional forms will always be "less" than species with fully developed structures. But "less" does not mean "none." In fact, he doesn't

elongated for this purpose, through natural selection and the effects of increased use" (p. 205, 207). No examples are given, no fossil ancestors are cited, just speculation.

Today, we know animals can't acquire characteristics through increased use or disuse. Scientists have cut the tails of mice for hundreds of generations and none have ever been born without tails. Darwin didn't



What would happen to an animal that grows a longer neck? To survive, it would also have to *simultaneously* develop stronger bronchial arches, greater musculature and a bigger heart or else it would be a *disadvantage* to have a longer neck—and probably lethal.

present a single example to back his claim. His book is full of such baseless and speculative illustrations used as supposed proofs.

Modern evolutionists, it should be noted, have long since rejected Darwin's proposal that birds came from flying fish. The current popular conception is that they came from dinosaurs.

The long neck of the giraffe

Darwin was aware of a notable case against his theory—the giraffe, the tallest living animal. How could this creature develop its long neck—and where are its previous ancestors?

This is his explanation: "The giraffe, by its lofty stature, much elongated neck, forelegs, head and tongue, has its whole frame beautifully adapted for browsing on the higher branches of trees . . . In every district some one kind of animal will almost certainly be able to browse higher than the others; and it is *almost equally certain* that this one kind alone *could* have its neck

know the truth about the laws of heredity that were being discovered by Gregor Mendel and others that revealed fixed genetic walls on living things, and so he erroneously thought creatures could acquire elongated characteristics by continually stretching their necks.

Also, could he show examples of the gradual development of the giraffe's neck? No he couldn't, so he again resorted to conjectures. When pressed by the critics of his time to present the evidence for the gradual elongated necks, he admitted, "Why, in other quarters of the world, various animals belonging to the same order have not acquired either an elongated neck or a proboscis *cannot be distinctly answered*; but it is as *unreasonable* to expect a distinct *answer* to such a question, as why some event in the history of mankind did not occur in one country, whilst it did in another" (p. 207).

Here we see Darwin confessing his ignorance as to how the giraffe developed

its elongated neck! Then, when helpless to provide solid evidence for his theory, he resorted to a meaningless comparison to man's historical events!

He ends the section on the giraffe by admitting, "Except by assigning such general and vague reasons, we *cannot explain* why, in many quarters of the world, hoofed quadrupeds have *not* acquired much elongated necks or other means for browsing on the higher branches of trees" (p. 208).

One scientist, after considering this brazen flight of fantasy about giraffes, was so dismayed with the theory that he said, "I have always been slightly suspicious of the theory of evolution because of its ability to account for any property of living beings (the long neck of the giraffe, for example). I have therefore tried to see whether biological discoveries over the last thirty years or so fit in with Darwin's theory. I do not think that they do. To my mind, the theory *does not stand up at all*" (H.S. Lipson, "A Physicist Looks at Evolution," *Physics Bulletin*, 1980, p. 138).

What would happen to an animal that grows a longer neck? To survive, it would also have to *simultaneously* develop stronger bronchial arches, greater musculature and a bigger heart or else it would be a *disadvantage* to have a longer neck—and probably lethal.

As Francis Hitching says, "Looking at the lifestyle of giraffes, it is hard to see that the traditional Darwinian selection pressures of competition for survival in conditions of overcrowding, and predation by other species, have very much to do with their extraordinary shape . . . The need to survive by reaching ever higher for food is, like so many Darwinian explanations of its kind, little more than a *post hoc* speculation" (*The Neck of the Giraffe*, 1982, pp. 178-179).

In a future issue we will examine more examples of the myths of evolution. **GN**

Recommended Reading

The theory of evolution dominates so much of the world's thinking. But why? And is it all it's cracked up to be? This article has scratched the surface of some of the striking evidence that proves evolution's shortfalls. You'll learn much more in our free booklet *Creation or Evolution: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?* Download or request your free copy today!



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God, Science and the Bible

News from the world of science about God and the Bible

by Mario Seiglie, Tom Robinson and Scott Ashley

Tomb of Biblical King Herod Likely Found

After 35 long years of searching (from 1972 to 2007), Israeli archaeologist Ehud Netzer thinks he has finally found his long-sought prize—the tomb of Herod the Great. If true, it sheds more light on this important biblical figure.

Back in 1983 Professor Netzer wrote: “Whether

Review, May-June 1983, online edition).

At a news conference on May 9, 2007, Professor Netzer joyously announced, “The long search for Herod the Great’s tomb has ended with the exposure of the remains of his grave, sarcophagus and mausoleum on Mount Herodium’s northeastern slope” (“At Herod’s Site, New Hopes and Fears,” *Washington Post*, May 9, 2007, online edition).

Herod is called “the Great” not because of his conquests or greatness as a king—for he was a brutal ruler—but because he was a prolific and magnificent builder. Besides many great works inside and outside of Israel, he helped rebuild and greatly expand the Second Temple in Jerusalem.

The beauty of the temple so impressed Jesus Christ’s disciples that one of them exclaimed, “Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!” Jesus responded, “Do you see these great buildings?

Not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down” (Mark 13:1-2). This prophecy was fulfilled some 40 years later when Roman armies destroyed the temple, crushing a Jewish revolt.

Matthew 2:1-18 records that Herod the Great ordered the massacre of the infants in Bethlehem in an unsuccessful attempt to murder Jesus the Messiah. Herod died shortly thereafter of a horrible illness.

Of several great palace complexes Herod built, Herodium was the only one he named after himself. He loved it so much he chose to be buried there. The

palace looked like it was built on top of a volcano. He equipped it with aqueducts, a Roman bathhouse and lush gardens.

After his death, his son and heir-apparent, Archelaus, resided there. When Judea became a Roman province, its governors made it their residence. With the outbreak of the Jewish revolt against the Romans, Herodium was briefly conquered by the Jewish insurgents, but was surrendered to the Romans after Jerusalem fell in A.D. 70.

What Netzer discovered is instructive. Among other tomb objects, he found the shattered remains of an ornate sarcophagus, with evidence that it had been intentionally destroyed. The elegant sarcophagus “had been smashed in ancient times, likely by participants of the First Jewish Revolt against Rome (67-70 A.D.)—a reflection of how widely hated Herod was by his subjects, who saw him as a cruel puppet of Rome” (“Herod’s Tomb Found,” Biblical Archaeological Society, May 8, 2007, online edition).

Decorations from the sarcophagus were virtually identical with decorations found in the great temple complex in Jerusalem. These may indicate that even in death, Herod wanted to be remembered for the magnificent temple he constructed.

Hershel Shanks, editor of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, recently visited Herodium with Netzer and reported: “Ehud Netzer is 100 percent certain he’s found King Herod’s tomb . . . but recognizes that because he did not find an inscription with Herod’s name not all scholars will accept his conclusion that this is indeed the tomb of ancient Judea’s at-times mad king . . .

“Netzer has been living with Herod the Great for 50 years, so he feels the man. He also brings an architect’s eye to his work,” he added. “If anyone understands Herod, it’s Ehud Netzer” (“Herod’s Tomb Update,” Biblical Archaeology Society, May 10, 2007, online edition).



The biblical king Herod the Great constructed this massive hilltop fortress/palace complex, called Herodium, near Bethlehem. Archaeologists have apparently recently discovered his tomb there after a decades-long search.

I will eventually achieve my goal is still an open question, but the search itself is instructive and enjoyable. Although I cannot, in all honesty, conceal my desire to find the tomb of the Holy Land’s greatest builder, I shall nevertheless consider myself richly rewarded even if I continue to fail.

“We know that Herod was buried at Herodium because Josephus tells us so. On a matter such as this, there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of this well-known, first-century Jewish historian, who was born in Palestine about 40 years after Herod’s death in 4 B.C.” (“Searching for Herod’s Tomb,” *Biblical Archaeology*

Six-Day War

Continued from page 9

surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it . . .

“It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem” (Zechariah 12:2-3, 9).

Zechariah 14:4 makes clear that this is referring to events immediately prior to the coming of the Messiah in power and glory: “And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of

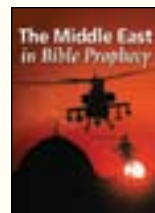
Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south.”

Although Jesus Christ did walk on the Mount of Olives 2,000 years ago, He will walk there again when this prophecy is ultimately fulfilled.

The desire to destroy Israel continues to inspire leaders throughout the Middle East. An added threat is set to increase in the immediate years ahead as Iran becomes a nuclear power. Others in the region may follow in this. But the Bible shows us that the Jewish nation will continue to exist until the end-time events that precede Christ’s return. **GN**

Recommended Reading

Why has the Middle East been such a source of conflict over the centuries? Who is fighting whom for what, and why? Will it ever end? Does Bible prophecy offer any answers? Sadly, war in the Middle East is far from being over. Believe it or not, events in the Middle East will ignite a crisis that will bring the world to the brink of annihilation just before Jesus Christ returns to earth to finally bring peace to a war-torn planet! You need to understand—request or download your free copy of *The Middle East in Bible Prophecy* today!



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

www.gnmagazine.org/booklets

Can You Believe the Bible?

Both God and the Bible have long been under attack. What are some of the motives of critics? And, far more important, what does the evidence dug from the dust of the Middle East reveal?

by Scott Ashley

A crucial battle is taking place in Western culture—a battle over God and the Bible. To boil that conflict down to its essence, many people don't like the idea of having someone tell them what to do, so they reject the idea of a God who has any say in how they are to live.

Some famous evolutionists have openly admitted as much. The well-known author and evolution proponent Aldous Huxley, for example, wrote: "I had motives for not wanting the world to have a meaning; consequently assumed that it had none, and was able without any difficulty to find satisfying reasons for this assumption . . .

"Those who detect no meaning in the world generally do so because, for one reason or another, it suits their [purpose] that the world should be meaningless" (*Ends and Means*, 1938, p. 270).

"For myself, as, no doubt, for most of my contemporaries, the philosophy of meaninglessness was essentially an instrument of liberation. The liberation we desired was . . . liberation from a certain system of morality. We objected to the morality because it interfered with our sexual freedom . . ." (*ibid.*, p. 273).

Julian Huxley, brother of Aldous Huxley and also a leading proponent of evolution, later wrote: "The sense of spiritual relief which comes from rejecting the idea of God as a super-human being is enormous" (*Essays of a Humanist*, 1964, p. 219).

Of course, those who reject the idea of God also have to reject the idea that the Bible is true and could be His inspired Word. It's no coincidence that the Bible has been essentially banned from U.S. classrooms.

What does the evidence reveal?

But what do the facts show? Can we believe the Bible? What does the evidence—the historical facts dug up from the dirt of the Middle East—reveal? For those willing to examine it objectively, the evidence is quite clear that the Bible is accurate and true.

The books of the Bible have existed for millennia—the youngest around 1,900 years and the oldest around 3,500. In recording events of the time, they mention many specific details—people, places, cities, towns, customs and events. When the Bible began to be trans-

lated into more modern languages in recent centuries, virtually no independent evidence had been found to support the biblical story.

Yes, historians knew of the empires of Greece and Rome and of their rulers as mentioned in the Bible, but little else was known. Even as late as the 19th century, when criticism of and disbelief in the Bible began to take hold, it was easy to dismiss the Bible because scant supporting evidence had been found.

But with the emergence of the science of archaeology, that soon changed. As scholars and archaeologists explored and excavated ancient sites, they began to uncover abundant evidence that supported the accuracy of the Bible.

Since then entire empires that were unknown outside the Bible have been brought to light. Inscriptions or other artifacts mentioning specific people in the Bible, ranging from kings to court officials to common people, have been uncovered.

Cities and strongholds mentioned in Scripture have risen from the dust. Many events recorded in the Bible, and even minor details such as customs mentioned in passing, have been confirmed by independent discoveries. Even specific buildings and structures mentioned in Scripture have been identified!

In late 2006 I was privileged to visit one of the world's great historical treasure-houses, the Istanbul Archaeology Museum. From the 16th century until the end of World War I, the Ottoman Empire ruled much of the Middle East from its capital in present-day Turkey. During that period many priceless archaeological pieces made their way from the far reaches of the empire to the Ottoman rulers in Istanbul. Eventually more than a million artifacts were gathered in the museum.

Several items on display confirm people, customs and events mentioned in the Bible. Although we don't have space to cover all of them, we'll discuss some of the most notable.

Did the Hittites really exist?

For centuries the only known references to Hittites were those found in the Bible. Because of this, some Bible critics assumed they were simply invented, just one of many myths in the Bible. After all, they reasoned, how could an entire culture and people have

existed and not left any physical evidence behind?

The Hittites are mentioned in connection with the patriarch Abraham in Genesis 23 where he purchased a cave from Ephron the Hittite to use as a burial place for his beloved wife Sarah. (Abraham himself would later be buried there.)

Later Abraham's grandson Esau married two Hittite women (Genesis 26:34), and still later the Hittites were among the peoples God promised to drive out so the Israelites could inherit the Promised Land (Exodus



This panel from a Hittite palace shows Hittite musicians playing various instruments.

23:28; 33:2; 34:11). King Solomon later married Hittite women (1 Kings 11:1), probably as part of political alliances with Hittite rulers. The Hittites were still an influential power in the time of Elisha around 840 B.C. (see 2 Kings 7:6). But did they really exist?

As the lands of the Middle East were later explored, particularly in what is today central Turkey where the Hittite empire was centered, archaeologists found abundant evidence of the existence of the Hittites. Their findings correlated with the mentions of the Hittites in the Bible.

Their empire had existed for centuries alongside the other peoples mentioned in the Scriptures—at times waxing and at other times waning alongside other kingdoms and empires such as Syria, Egypt and Assyria before diminishing and eventually disappearing not long after their last mention in the Bible.

Ashtoreth (Astarte), goddess of fertility

A major sin mentioned again and again

in the Old Testament was idolatry and the worship of foreign gods. God repeatedly condemned the worship of Baal and Ashtoreth, the primary male and female



Astarte figurines such as this testify to the popularity of the worship of this ancient fertility goddess.

deities of the Canaanites and other surrounding peoples.

Baal and Ashtoreth were the primary god and goddess of fertility. As such, their worship typically involved ritual sex with a priest or priestess, for which an offering was given. This essentially amounted to sex for pay, which is why the Bible often equates worship of these gods and goddesses with prostitution.

The common name of the goddess in Babylonia and Mesopotamia was *Ishtar*, which survives today in the name of the holiday *Easter*. Her name among the nations around Israel was *Astarte*, but the biblical writers apparently deliberately distorted the name to *Ashtoreth* to make it sound like the Hebrew word for “shame”—as indeed the way she was worshipped, involving sex with her priests and priestesses, was degrading and shameful.

Small figurines of this and other fertility goddesses are commonly found in Israel and the surrounding countries, clear evidence of the popularity of such worship. Worship of this goddess is mentioned from soon after the death of Joshua in Judges 2:13 (ca. 1210 B.C.) until the reign of King Josiah in 2 Kings 23:13 (ca. 640 B.C.).

Assyria devastates the kingdom of Israel

As a result of the sins of idolatry and rejecting God’s laws over several centuries, and their absolute refusal to repent, God warned the Israelites that since they refused to serve Him in their own land, they would serve other gods in foreign lands. He began to punish them through the Assyrian Empire, a new superpower emerging in what is today the country of Iraq.

The Bible records a whole series of Assyrian kings who made war on Israel, and archaeologists have uncovered abundant evidence testifying to the existence of these same kings. Their capital cities, palaces, archives and in some cases even their portraits and

statues have been found. Much of this material is in the great museums of Europe, but evidence of these kings is also displayed in the Istanbul Archaeology Museum.

Tiglath-Pileser III

We find the names of the first two Assyrian kings mentioned in the Bible inscribed on a stone stele commemorating the achievements of a high Assyrian official named Bel-harran-beli-usur. He served in the royal court of Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 B.C.) and Shalmaneser V (727-722 B.C.). The inscription describes how he served in the court of these two Assyrian kings and founded a city he named after himself.

This same Tiglath-Pileser is referred to by a shortened form of his name, Pul, in 2 Kings 15:19-20, which states that he received tribute money from the Israelite King Menahem (ca. 743 B.C.). Exacting tribute was a common practice at the time. It amounted to extortion on a national scale since the Assyrians would invade and plunder the land, destroying its cities and enslaving its inhabitants, if the Israelites didn’t pay this protection money.



This stone stele mentions two Assyrian rulers found in the Bible, Tiglath-Pileser III and Shalmaneser V.

to enlist the Assyrian king’s help in fighting against Pekah and the king of Syria (2 Kings 16:5-9). Syria, like Israel, was devastated by the Assyrian invasion.

Shalmaneser V

Tiglath-Pileser died in 727 B.C. and was succeeded by Shalmaneser V. Picking up the story in 2 Kings 17:3, we learn that Shalmaneser marched against the Israelite King Hoshea, who paid him off with tribute. A few years later Shalmaneser returned and besieged Israel’s capital, Samaria, for three years before its fall in 722 B.C., then exiled the remaining Israelites to other Assyrian-

controlled territories (verses 5-6).

This marked the end of the kingdom of Israel; its exiled people would then lose their identity and become known in history as “the lost 10 tribes.”

Sargon II

The next Assyrian monarch mentioned in Scripture is Shalmaneser’s successor, Sargon II (722-705 B.C.), who had been Shalmaneser’s field commander in the conquest of Samaria. Sargon is mentioned in Isaiah 20:1, which refers to him sending one of his generals in 712 B.C. to capture the Philistine city of Ashdod on the Mediterranean coast west of Jerusalem.

Sargon, while marching against other kingdoms around Judah, did not attack Judah itself—apparently honoring the alliance the Judean king Ahaz had forged with Tiglath-Pileser several years earlier.

Sennacherib

After Sargon died in 705 B.C., Sennacherib (705-682 B.C.) followed him on the throne. Sennacherib is mentioned prominently in Scripture, chiefly for his invasion of the kingdom of Judah in 701 B.C. during the reign of Hezekiah. The Bible records this invasion in 2 Kings 18:13–19:37, 2 Chronicles 32:1–22 and Isaiah 36–37.

Hezekiah refused to pay the oppressive tribute his father Ahaz had paid, prompting Sennacherib’s campaign against Judah. Both the Bible and Sennacherib’s archives record that the Assyrians captured virtually all of the



The rim of this altar bears the inscription “Dedicated to [the] god Sibtiti by Sargon.”

Judean kingdom save its capital, Jerusalem. Hezekiah initially paid off the Assyrian king with tribute, but was only delivered by a great miracle—the divine destruction of the



This Assyrian stele shows King Sennacherib praying to his gods.

Assyrian army outside the walls of Jerusalem (2 Kings 19:35).

Sennacherib, defeated and humiliated, returned to his capital where he was later assassinated by his own sons.

Hezekiah's tunnel inscription

While it is fairly common to find inscriptions or other evidence of specific individuals and places mentioned in the Bible, it's much rarer to find archaeological verification of



This ancient Hebrew inscription records King Hezekiah's construction of a tunnel to safeguard Jerusalem's water supply in the face of Assyrian invasion.

specific events recorded in Scripture. Events by their nature are transitory and seldom recorded in ways that can survive the ravages of time. Yet proof of an event from the reign of Hezekiah is on display in the Istanbul Archaeology Museum.

In 2 Kings 20:20 we read the following about King Hezekiah: "Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah—all his might, and how he made a pool and a tunnel and brought water into the city—are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?"

Today visitors to Jerusalem can walk through this very tunnel by which Hezekiah's engineers managed to divert the normal flow of the Gihon Spring, which normally flowed outside the city, by carving a tunnel under the city so the water would flow to a pool inside the city walls.

The 1,750-foot tunnel, constructed in or about the year 701 B.C., is one of the great engineering marvels of the ancient world. Discovered by the famed American archaeologist Edward Robinson in 1838, the tunnel yielded up a secret to its method of construction in 1880 when an Arab boy found an ancient Hebrew inscription carved on the tunnel wall describing how two teams of men, working from opposite ends, tunneled toward each other to meet in the middle. The inscription was later removed to Istanbul by order of the Ottoman rulers of the city.

Nebuchadnezzar II, king of Babylon

After the miraculous destruction of Sennacherib's army during Hezekiah's reign,

Assyria never again invaded Judah. Assyria, from that point forward, was on the wane as a new empire rose to become the superpower in the Middle East—Babylon.

The greatest ruler of the Babylonian Empire is a figure well known to Bible readers, King Nebuchadnezzar, who ruled from 605 to 562 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar is mentioned 88 times in the Bible, in the books of 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel.

Nebuchadnezzar marched on the kingdom of Judah multiple times. The first was in 605 B.C. when he drove an Egyptian army out of Syria back to Egypt as part of his overthrow of the Assyrian Empire. The next was when Judah's King Jehoiakim refused to pay tribute to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar stripped the Jerusalem temple of many of its valuables and took them back to Babylon.

After subsequent rebellions, Nebuchadnezzar resolved to put a permanent end to the problem. After a siege of about two years, Jerusalem fell in 586 B.C. and the city, including its walls and temple, were utterly destroyed. Nearly all the remaining Jews in the land were then taken away captive to Babylon where they would stay until the fall of Babylon decades later.

Many Babylonian records have been found detailing Nebuchadnezzar's reign. Many of the Bible's mentions of him are found in the book of Daniel, as Daniel interacted with Nebuchadnezzar as a high-ranking official in the king's government.

Daniel 4:30 records how at one point Nebuchadnezzar boasted, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?" And Babylon truly was magnificent, one of the major cities of the ancient world for many centuries.



This clay cylinder records some of the building projects of the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar II.

leading up to it. The actual gate itself has been reconstructed in Berlin, where the German archaeologists who excavated it rebuilt it using the original brightly colored glazed bricks.

However, parts of the processional way leading up to the gate can be seen today in the Istanbul Museum. It's truly an amazing experience to see parts of the elaborate decorations of ancient Babylon that Nebuchadnezzar and the prophet Daniel had no doubt walked past many times.

Bel/Marduk, chief god of Babylon

The primary god of Babylon, Marduk, also called Bel, was represented by a dragon prominently displayed in the processional way. The prophet Jeremiah, in foretelling the downfall of Babylon, twice mentions this particular Babylonian god:

"The word that the LORD spoke against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet. 'Declare among the nations . . . "Babylon is taken, Bel is shamed. Merodach [Marduk] is broken in pieces; her [Babylon's] idols are humiliated, her images



Elaborate glazed tile depictions of Bel/Marduk adorned the primary processional way of ancient Babylon.

are broken in pieces" (Jeremiah 50:1-2).

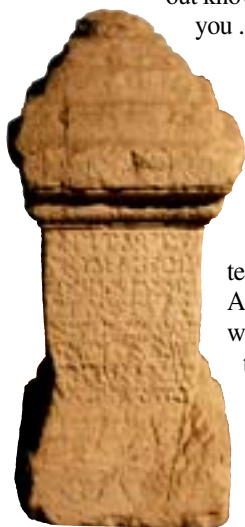
"I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring out of his mouth what he has swallowed; and the nations shall not stream to him anymore. Yes, the wall of Babylon shall fall" (Jeremiah 51:44).

Indeed Babylon did fall in 539 B.C., 47 years after Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed Jerusalem. The Babylonian Empire was succeeded by the Medo-Persian Empire, which in turn was followed by the Greco-Macedonian Empire of Alexander the Great and his successors, and then by the Roman Empire—all as foretold in the book of Daniel.

"To the unknown god"

From New Testament times we find two items in particular that relate to the apostle Paul and events from his life. Acts 17:22-23 tells us that when Paul visited Athens, he "stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, 'Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with

this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you . . .”



This small altar is dedicated “to the nameless god.”

This particular area of Athens was surrounded by temples and shrines to the various gods and goddesses the Greeks and Romans worshipped. Major temples to Zeus and Athena stood there, as well as altars and shrines to various lesser deities.

To be sure that they had all their bases covered, the Athenians also had an altar inscribed, “to the Unknown God” for any they may have inadvertently left out.

Several such inscriptions and shrines have been found among ruins of the ancient Roman Empire. Three are on display in the Istanbul Archaeology Museum, all dedicated “to the nameless god”—i.e., a god whose name they did not know. These came from other cities in the Roman Empire, so it wasn’t just Athens that had an altar and inscription like this.

Warning sign from the temple

Acts 21 records an event from Paul’s life that set in motion the chain of events that would lead to his arrest, his appearances before two Roman governors, his fateful journey to Rome and his confinement there.

Paul and several companions were in Jerusalem at the temple when a tumult broke out that almost cost Paul his life. Verses 27-32 vividly capture the events:

“The Jews from Asia [the Roman province in what is now western Turkey], seeing him [Paul] in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him, crying out, ‘Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against the people, the law, and this place; and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.’ (For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)

“And all the city was disturbed; and the people ran together, seized Paul, and dragged him out of the temple; and immediately the doors were shut. Now as they were seeking to kill him, news came to the commander

of the garrison that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. He immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them. And when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.”

Paul barely escaped with his life, and likely would’ve been killed had the Roman military commander nearby not intervened and rescued him.

So what was this uproar about? As we read here, they wanted to kill Paul because they thought he had defiled the temple by bringing gentiles into a part of the temple complex where only Israelites were allowed to go. This was something the Jews had originated, going far beyond anything God had instructed.

We see stark evidence of this attitude in a carved warning sign from the temple, one of many that were erected at regular intervals along a five-foot-high barrier wall in the temple area in the time of Jesus and the apostles. Two of these have been found, a partial one on display in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem and a complete one discovered in Jerusalem under Ottoman rule and shipped to Istanbul.



Inscribed signs like this from the Jerusalem temple warned gentiles not to go into areas restricted only to Jews.

Originally these were white with the inscribed letters painted in red to make them stand out. The sign warns: “No gentile is allowed beyond this barrier in the plaza of the temple zone. Whoever enters will have himself to blame for his ensuing death.”

Gentiles were allowed in the outer courtyard of the temple, but the area beyond that was restricted to Israelites only. If you were a gentile, to go beyond that was considered defiling the temple, an offense punishable by death. In Paul’s case, His Jewish religious opponents thought he had brought a gentile beyond that barrier, thus defiling the temple, and were about to kill him when the Roman military force intervened and rescued him.

Later, when Paul was under house arrest in Rome awaiting trial, he was likely reflecting back on this event when he wrote to the

church in Ephesus that Jesus Christ “has broken down the middle wall of separation” between Jews and gentiles, “reconcil[ing] them both to God in one body,” the Church, through His sacrificial death (Ephesians 2:14-16).

The term “middle wall of separation,” most commentators agree, refers to the barrier in the temple complex beyond which gentiles could not go, the same one in which these warning signs were imbedded.

More evidence available for viewing

A battle is indeed being waged in Western culture over God and the Bible. This article covers some of the evidence from one museum in Turkey. You could visit several others around the world displaying similar finds that verify many other parts of the Bible—the British Museum in London, the Louvre in Paris, the Pergamon Museum in Berlin, the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago and the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, among others.

Oddly enough, those who argue against the Bible typically say that those of us

who believe in it base our beliefs in ignorance and superstition. But in reality, once one seriously examines the evidence, *the truth is the opposite*. It’s those who *don’t* believe the Bible who show that their beliefs are based in superstition and ignorance.

Often they’ve simply never seriously looked at the evidence and in many cases seem unaware that such things as those described in this article even exist. But you need not be ignorant.

You certainly *can* believe the Bible. Its accuracy has been proven time and time again, and continues to be proven year after year as archaeologists and scholars continue their work digging up history in the lands of the Bible. **GN**

Recommended Reading

The Good News published a 24-part series of articles titled “The Bible and Archaeology” that goes through the Bible book by book, showing how archaeological finds confirm and illuminate the biblical record. While not in print, this series can be downloaded at www.gnmagazine.org/booklets. Be sure to also download or request our free booklet *Is the Bible True?*, which examines other scientific evidence showing that the Bible truly is the inspired Word of God.



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

www.gnmagazine.org/booklets

Don't touch! Put that down! No! Wait! Stop! (*CRASH . . .*) Sound vaguely familiar? Hmmm, you must have a 2-year-old in the house—or at least remember what it was like in days long gone.

A few stereotypes come to mind when talking about the twos: turbulent, testing, tantrum, terrible. But what about *terrific*?

Terrific twos? Is that even possible? With a little strategic parenting and the blessing of even remotely cooperative genes, yes, the twos can be terrific!

A 2-year-old child's development is exploding on all fronts—language, motor, cognitive and emotional. This God-designed stage of rapid learning and exploration is an exciting time for your child, but coping with this incessant curiosity can be exhausting and sometimes frustrating for a parent.

This is a time when your 2-year-old may surprise you with unexpected tenderness—when he or she squats down to examine the “broken” flower or rushes to the side of an injured playmate with a gentle pat and a concerned tilt of the head.

The next moment she may shriek with indignation while placing a stranglehold on her stuffed bunny that big brother is teasingly trying to steal away. The parent of a 2-year-old can experience parental whiplash—unless you know how to expect the unexpected.

Children's personalities are different

Personalities are often evident from birth. Some children are born protesting and continue to carry a chip on their shoulder for the next couple of years. Some are easier, more compliant children. Genetically, you get what you get, and a parent's job involves shaping the rough materials through consistent loving discipline.

Is your child one of the strong-willed kind? Congratulations! Yes, you'll have your work cut out for you; but strong children can grow into strong adults who, once committed, will not veer from God's way. These are the types who often grow into bold, adventurous leaders—the Joshuas, Deborahs and Peters.

So how about some strategy? Let's start with basic needs. Dr. Ross Campbell, in his 2003 book *How to Really Love Your Child*, explains that children have four basic needs: 1) eye contact, 2) physical contact, 3) focused attention and 4) discipline. When these four areas are met, your child's “emotional tank” gets full.

The result is a connection between you and your child, where your child is more eager to please. It doesn't mean there won't be conflict and challenge in your child rearing, but even for those bold types, it builds a strong foundation of love and greater willingness to respect parental boundaries. In my opinion, Dr. Campbell's book is a “must read.”

Foreseeing the “evil”

With that as a foundation, let's build on it. Much of parenting a 2-year-old involves the principle of “foreseeing the evil” and avoiding it (Proverbs 22:3).

For example, one of the biggest mistakes parents of 2-year-olds make is ignoring them and then getting upset when they do something “bad.” Two-year-olds *explore*. It's part of their job description! They are full of discovery and busily learning about everything around them—that baby brother's pacifier makes a splash when you drop it in the dog's water dish, some toys, with enough effort, fit in the VCR, and things disappear when you flush them down the toilet.

One of the most fun parts of parenting a 2-year-old is opening

up the world of learning and exploration to them. It involves proactive parenting, joining in the excitement and guiding those learning experiences in constructive ways. It absolutely involves setting clear limits on what your 2-year-old is and is not allowed to do or to touch, but a child's every move should not be accompanied by a harsh shout of “NO!” Instead, take charge. Be your child's teacher.

Consider this example: You're in the backyard with your 2-year-old and he picks up a rock. You know he will a) throw it, b) eat it or c) conk the dog on the head with it. Being the wise and loving parent you are, your instincts tell you to a) grab it away as quickly as possible, b) shout “Put that down! Dirty!” or c) call the vet.

How about alternative “d”: In a whispering, excited voice, as you reach one hand around your toddler and the other around the rock, say, “Wow! What did you find? Is that a rock? Cool. Oh, look! It sparkles. Are there any more just like it?”

At which point you may end up gathering a whole rock family—daddy rock, mommy rock, brother and sister rock. You get the picture. With his full attention, you can then teach that rocks are not for throwing (or eating). At 2, he may not fully register that, but you are using a receptive moment for positive instruction.

Will your child become a geologist because of this experience? Maybe not, but by taking charge in a positive, proactive way, you keep your child's curiosity ignited and direct his actions—and avoid a trip to the doctor or the vet.

Recognize your child's developmental abilities

Another way to “foresee the evil,” so to speak, is to keep your expectations within your child's developmental abilities. For example, a mother gives her 2-year-old a cup without a “sippy” lid and spill after spill leads to frustration. “Why can't you just . . . !” Yes, eventually a child will need to learn to drink without the lid, but it will come only when the child's fine motor skills are ready.

Many books are available on what to expect at each stage of development, as well as Web sites such as www.parentcenter.baby-

How Many Hours of Sleep Does a Child Need?

Age	Nighttime	Daytime	Total Sleep
12 months	11¼	2½ (2 naps)	13¾ hours
18 months	11¼	2¼ (1 nap)	13½ hours
2 years	11	2 (1 nap)	13 hours
3 years	10½	1½ (1 nap)	12 hours

Recommended Reading

The Bible contains a treasure trove of practical, helpful ways husbands and wives can build closer, stronger families and marriages. It also offers many crucial principles for proper parenting to help couples bring up happy, healthy, well-adjusted and successful children. You'll find much of this timeless guidance in our free booklet *Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension*. It's yours free for the asking!



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

www.gnmagazine.org/booklets

center.com that are loaded with articles on toddler development. Just as our Heavenly Father never gives us more than we can bear (see 1 Corinthians 10:13), we should extend the same courtesy to our children and not burden them with expectations outside their abilities.

Another thing to be prepared for is the notorious “melt-down.” A child can fall into a whining, crying, angry heap for several reasons. Not to dismiss the possibility that your child, complete with human nature, is simply having an ornery moment because he isn’t getting his way—something every parent must deal with—but there is often fuel for that fire that can make it rage out of control, resulting in the embarrassing meltdown.

The fatal combination is expecting too much from a child who is too stimulated and too tired. This combination is the true “*terrible twos*.”

If you are struggling with behavior issues, are the “twos” a contributing factor? Begin by taking a second look at how much quality sleep and quiet time your child is actually getting.

Parenting: The Terrible Twos or the Terrific Twos?

With all the stereotypes about two-year-old children, what strategies can parents follow to help make this year terrific?

by Nancy Capo

Are you occasionally skipping afternoon nap times? Is the rest of the day loaded with hyperstimulation of kids’ TV shows, DVDs, playgroup or tumbling classes? Does your child eat on the run, nap in the car seat and stay up in the evening until you drop from exhaustion? Chances are *neither* of you is getting enough sleep.

At times like these, even a simple parental directive can tip an overstimulated, overtired child out of control. Feeling frustrated and overwhelmed, he can react with grouchiness or hostility.

Correction and punishment

Finally, times will come when discipline (meaning training by instruction and practice) requires correction and sometimes punishment. Verbal correction alone is suitable when your child has simply made a mistake or had an accident. Toddlers are walking accidents. They haven’t quite merged their cognitive and motor capabilities yet. A parent

can use an accident as a teaching opportunity: “Next time, let’s remember to . . .”

Punishment, however, needs to accompany correction when it’s a matter of your child’s obedience and attitude. The goal of punishment isn’t to crush the child’s spirit but to begin the lesson of cause and effect—or consequences. It is to plant the seeds of wisdom, self-control and foresight regarding their own thoughts and actions.

It also is to build trust in the parent-child relationship. Privileges that come later are earned as a result of the “trust” bank that a child builds with his parents.

It’s vitally important that a parent retains calm self-control and doesn’t deal with his or her child’s intentional misbehavior with frustration and anger. We often get most frustrated when we feel like it’s not a good time



to deal with them. That’s when some parents try counting: “I mean it! . . . 1, 2, 3 . . .”

But your child knows you don’t mean it. And “threats” like this encourage testing, challenge and defiance. If you say it, mean it the first time. If he or she doesn’t do it, act on it—lovingly, but swiftly and surely.

When your child is unruly or disobedient, that’s the most important time to stop what you’re doing and be a parent first. It may mean leaving the full grocery cart in the store and going out to the car or home to teach your child proper conduct and attitude. It could involve stopping a conversation at church to take your child aside for correction. These things are inconvenient and take time—but, guess what? Parenting is not convenient. It’s *vital*.

The toddler years, especially the twos, are intense. But by choosing to proactively parent with knowledge, excitement and love during the twos, the twos can be terrific! **GN**

Television Log

All channels and times listed are for cable TV unless stated otherwise. For additional information and the most current airing times, or to download or view programs online, visit www.beyondtoday.tv.

UNITED STATES

Alabama	
Scottsboro	ch. 2, Fridays 8:30 p.m.;
Arizona	
Prescott	ch. 13, Sundays 5 p.m.;
	Saturdays 3:30 p.m.
Prescott Valley	ch. 13, Sundays 9 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.
Tucson	ch. 73, 98, Sundays 7:30 a.m.;
	Saturdays 10 a.m.
Arkansas	
Fayetteville	ch. 18, Sundays 10 a.m.; Wednes-
	days 6 p.m.; Saturdays 9 a.m.
Mena	ch. 19, Sundays 8:30 a.m.
Mountain Home	ch. 7, 22, Sundays 9 a.m.
California	
Alamo	ch. 26, Thursdays 7:30 p.m.;
	2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.
Berkeley	ch. 26, Thursdays 9 p.m.
Clayton	ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.
Concord	ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.
Danville	ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.
Dublin	ch. 26, Fridays 4 p.m.
El Cerrito	ch. 26, Thursdays 9 p.m.
El Sobrante	ch. 26, Thursdays 9 p.m.
Emeryville	ch. 26, Thursdays 8 a.m.
Eureka	ch. 10, Fridays 8 p.m.
Hayward	ch. 28, Thursdays 10 p.m.
Hemet	ch. 3, Fridays 3 p.m.
Hercules	ch. 26, Thursdays 9 p.m.
Lafayette	ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.
Livermore	ch. 26, Fridays 4 p.m.
Marin County	ch. 26, Tuesdays 10:30 p.m.
Martinez	ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.
Modesto	ch. 26, Thursdays 8:30 p.m.;
	Fridays 6 p.m.
Monrovia	ch. 16, 98, Tuesdays, Thursdays
	and Saturdays 4:30 p.m.
Moraga	ch. 26, Thursdays 7:30 p.m.;
	2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.
Novato	ch. 71, Tuesdays 9:30 p.m.
Oakland	ch. 26, Sundays 8 a.m.
Orinda	ch. 26, Thursdays 7:30 p.m.;
	2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.
Palo Cedro	DCA cable link, Thursdays 10 a.m.
Pasadena	ch. 56, Sundays 6 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Petaluma	ch. 26, Sundays 9 p.m.
Piedmont	ch. 26, Sundays 8 a.m.
Pittsburg	ch. 26, Thursdays 12 midnight
Pleasant Hill	ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.
Pleasanton	ch. 26, Fridays 4 p.m.
Redding	ch. 11, Sundays 11:30 a.m.
Richmond	ch. 26, Thursdays 9 p.m.
Rossmore	ch. 26, Thursdays 7:30 p.m.;
	2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.
Sacramento	ch. 18, Thursdays 6 p.m.
San Diego	ch. 18, 23, Thursdays 10 p.m.;
	Sundays 3:30 p.m.
San Francisco	ch. 29, Sundays 11 a.m.
San Jose	ch. 15A, Wednesdays 4:30 p.m.
San Rafael	ch. 26, Tuesdays 8 p.m.
Santa Clara	ch. 15A, Wednesdays 4:30 p.m.
Santa Rosa	ch. 72, Sundays 7:30 p.m.;
	Saturdays 10:30 a.m.
S. Pasadena	ch. 6, Thursdays 4:30 p.m.
Verdugo Hills	ch. 20, Thursdays 9:30 p.m.
Walnut Creek	ch. 26, 2nd & 4th Mondays 9:30 p.m.
Colorado	
Boulder	ch. 43, Fridays 1 p.m.
Florida	
Clearwater	ch. 21, 96, Sundays 6 a.m.;
	Tuesdays 6 p.m.; Fridays 10:30 a.m.
St. Petersburg	ch. 21, 96, Sundays 6 a.m.;
	Tuesdays 6 p.m.; Fridays 10:30 a.m.
Tampa	ch. 20, 30, Sundays 11 a.m.;
	ch. 19, 36, Thursdays 1 p.m.
Georgia	
Cornelia	ch. 4, Sundays 2 p.m.
Hawaii	
Hilo	ch. 53, Sundays 10 a.m.;
	Thursdays 7:30 p.m.
Lanai	ch. 13, Fridays 7 p.m.;
Maui	Saturdays 7 a.m.
Molokai	ch. 52, Fridays 7 p.m.;
	Saturdays 7 a.m.
Idaho	
Boise	ch. 13, Fridays 7 p.m.;
	Saturdays 7 a.m.
Illinois	
Arlington Heights	ch. 11, Wednesdays 7:30 p.m.
Bartlett	ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Buffalo Grove	ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Chicago	ch. 36, times vary
Des Plaines	ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
East St. Louis	ch. 18, Saturdays 5:30 p.m.
Elk Grove Village	ch. 19, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Glenview	ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Golf	ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Hanover Park	ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Hoffman Estates	ch. 19, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Lincolnwood	ch. 19, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Morton Grove	ch. 19, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Mt. Prospect	ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.

Naperville	ch. 17, Sundays 10 a.m.
Niles	ch. 19, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Normal	ch. 20, Sundays 6 p.m.
Northbrook	ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Palatine	ch. 19, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Park Ridge	ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Prospect Heights	ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Rolling Meadows	ch. 19, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Romeoville	ch. 6, Sundays 9 a.m.
Schaumburg	ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Skokie	ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Springfield	ch. 4, Fridays 3 a.m., 11 a.m. & 8 p.m.
Streamwood	ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Wheeling	ch. 35, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Wilmette	ch. 19, Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.
Indiana	
Bloomington	ch. 3, Sundays 9:30 p.m.
Elkhart	ch. 99, Mondays 4:30 p.m.
Evansville	ch. 7, Mondays 5:30 p.m.
Ft. Wayne	ch. 57, Sundays 12 noon
Valparaiso	ch. 99, Tuesdays 8:30 p.m.
Iowa	
Des Moines	ch. 15, Sundays 11:30 a.m.
Kentucky	
Berea	ch. 5, Fridays 9 & 9:30 p.m.
Hopkinsville	ch. 23, Wednesdays and Fridays 11 a.m.
Owensboro	ch. 52, Sundays 8 a.m. & 7 p.m.
Paducah	ch. 2, Sundays 2 p.m.
Richmond	ch. 5, Fridays 9 & 9:30 p.m.
Massachusetts	
Amherst	ch. 12, Tuesdays 9 p.m.
Boston	ch. 22, 23, 83, Sundays 7 a.m.;
	Wednesdays 10 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.
	ch. 22, 23, 83, Sundays 7 a.m.;
	Wednesdays 10 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.
Cambridge	ch. 5, Sundays 11:30 a.m.
East Longmeadow	ch. 17, Tuesdays 4 p.m.;
Greenfield	Wednesdays 10:30 a.m.
Palmer	ch. 15, Sundays 12, 2:30 & 8 p.m.
Shrewsbury	ch. 33, Wednesdays 10 p.m.;
	Thursdays 7 a.m.
Worcester	ch. 13, Thursdays 10 a.m.
Michigan	
Ann Arbor	ch. 17, Thursdays 4:30 p.m.
Grand Haven	ch. 22, Mondays 4 p.m.
Grand Rapids	ch. 25, Tuesdays or Wednesdays 11 a.m.
Kalamazoo	ch. 19, Sundays 8:30 a.m.
Midland	ch. 3, Fridays 5:30 p.m.
Mt. Pleasant	ch. 3, times vary
Traverse City	ch. 2, Sundays 11:30 a.m.
Minnesota	
Albert Lea	ch. 6, Sundays 9:55 a.m.
Austin	ch. 6, Sundays 7 p.m.
Blaine	ch. 14, Sundays 1 & 9 a.m.;
	Saturdays 5 p.m.
Brooklyn Center	ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.;
	4 p.m.;
Brooklyn Park	Saturdays 5 p.m.
Burnsville	ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.;
	4 p.m.;
	Saturdays 10 p.m.
	ch. 14, Mondays, Wednesdays,
	Fridays 4:30 p.m.;
	Sundays 12:30 p.m.;
	Thursdays, Saturdays 4:30 a.m.
Centerville	ch. 14, Sundays 1 & 9 a.m.;
	Saturdays 5 p.m.
Circle Pines	ch. 14, Sundays 1 & 9 a.m.;
	Saturdays 5 p.m.
Eagan	ch. 15, Sundays 6:30 a.m.;
	Mondays 12:30 a.m.;
	Tuesdays 9:30 p.m.;
	Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.;
	Thursdays 3:30 p.m.;
	Fridays 12:30 p.m.;
	Saturdays 9:30 a.m.
Golden Valley	ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.;
	4 p.m.;
	Saturdays 10 p.m.
Ham Lake	ch. 14, Sundays 1 & 9 a.m.;
	Saturdays 5 p.m.
Inver Grove Hts.	ch. 15, Sundays 6:30 a.m.;
	Mondays 12:30 a.m.;
	Tuesdays 9:30 p.m.;
	Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.;
	Thursdays 3:30 p.m.;
	Fridays 12:30 p.m.;
	Saturdays 9:30 a.m.
Lexington	ch. 14, Sundays 1 & 9 a.m.;
	Saturdays 5 p.m.
Lino Lakes	ch. 14, Sundays 1 & 9 a.m.;
	Saturdays 5 p.m.
Litchfield	ch. 10, Sundays 2 a.m., 8:30 a.m.;
	1 p.m., 7 p.m.;
	Wednesdays 1 a.m., 3 a.m., 8:30 a.m., 6:30 p.m.
Maple Grove	ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.;
	4 p.m.;
	Saturdays 10 p.m.
Minneapolis	ch. 75, Mondays 6:30 p.m.
New Hope	ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.;
	4 p.m.;
	Saturdays 10 p.m.
New Ulm	ch. 72, Sundays 5 p.m.;
	Thursdays 10 a.m.;
	Fridays 7 p.m.
Osseo	ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.;
	4 p.m.;
	Saturdays 10 p.m.
Plymouth	ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.;
	4 p.m.;
	Saturdays 10 p.m.
Robbinsdale	ch. 19, Sundays 4 a.m., 10 a.m.;
	4 p.m.;
	Saturdays 10 p.m.
Rochester	ch. 10, Sundays 10 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.;
	Saturdays 10 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.
St. Charles	ch. 20, Sundays 2 p.m.;
	Wednesdays 3 p.m.
Spring Lake Park	ch. 14, Sundays 1 & 9 a.m.;
	Saturdays 5 p.m.
Willmar	ch. 8, Thursdays 11 a.m. & 8 p.m.;
	Saturdays 5 p.m.
Winona	ch. 20, Sundays 2 p.m.;

Wabasha	Wednesdays 3 p.m.
	ch. 20, Sundays 2 p.m.;
	Wednesdays 3 p.m.
Missouri	
Cape Girardeau	ch. 5, Tuesdays 6:30 p.m.
Jackson	ch. 5, Tuesdays 6:30 p.m.
Jefferson City	ch. 3, Wednesdays 6 p.m.
Poplar Bluff	ch. 54, Tuesdays 4 p.m.
Springfield	ch. 26, Sundays 8:30 a.m.;
	Wednesdays 7 p.m.;
	Saturdays 8:30 a.m.
St. Charles	ch. 18, Sundays 8 a.m.;
	Saturdays 10 p.m.
	ch. 18, Saturdays 5:30 p.m.
St. Louis	ch. 7, Sundays 6 p.m.;
	Saturdays 11 a.m.
Montana	
Billings	ch. 7, Sundays 6 p.m.;
Helena	Saturdays 11 a.m.
Missoula	ch. 7, Sundays 11 a.m.
Nevada	
Carson City	ch. 10, Wednesdays 7:30 p.m.
Reno/Sparks	ch. 16, Wednesdays 7 p.m.
New Hampshire	
LaConia	ch. 25, 26, Sundays 7:30 a.m. & 4:30 p.m.
New Jersey	
Newark	ch. 19, Sundays 6:30 a.m.
New Mexico	
Albuquerque	ch. 27, Sundays 10:30 p.m.
Santa Fe	ch. 16, Sundays 10 a.m.;
	Mondays 6:30 p.m.
New York	
Binghamton	ch. 4, Thursdays 5:30 p.m.
Brooklyn	ch. 56, 69, Sundays 10 a.m.
Canandaigua	ch. 12, Sundays 2 p.m.
Manhattan	ch. 57, Sundays 7 a.m.
Olean	ch. 6, Thursdays 9:30 p.m.
Oneonta	ch. 23, Mondays 6 p.m.;
	Wednesdays 9 p.m.
Queens	ch. 35, Tuesdays 8 p.m.;
	Thursdays 3 p.m.
	ch. 56, Sundays 10 p.m.;
	Thursdays 4:30 p.m.
	ch. 15, Tuesdays & Thursdays 8 a.m.
	ch. 115, Thursdays 6 p.m.
Rochester	ch. 20, Sundays 1 p.m.;
Woodbury	ch. 5, 10, Sundays 10 a.m.
North Carolina	
Asheville	ch. 21, Saturdays 2 p.m.
Burlington	ch. 8, Wednesdays 7:30 a.m.
Charlotte	ch. 8, Sundays 10:30 & 12:30 a.m.
Durham	ch. 8, Sundays 7 p.m.
Greensboro	ch. 5, 10, Sundays 10 a.m.
Hickory	ch. 22, Tuesdays 6:30 p.m.
Mebane	ch. 12, Sundays 2:30 p.m.
Raleigh	ch. 12, Tuesdays 10:30 a.m.
North Dakota	
Bismarck	ch. 12, Sundays 2:30 p.m.
Fargo	ch. 12, Tuesdays 10:30 a.m.
Ohio	
Akron	ch. 15, Sundays 9:30 a.m.;
	Mondays 11 p.m.
Athens	ch. 23, Sundays 7 p.m.;
	Wednesdays 7 p.m.
Brunswick	ch. 21, Tuesdays 7 p.m.;
	Wednesdays 12:30, 4:30 & 8:30 a.m.;
	2:30, 6:30 & 9:30 p.m.
Bryan	ch. 12, Wednesdays 10 a.m. & 3 p.m.
Cincinnati	ch. 18, Sundays 10:30 a.m.;
	Tuesdays 10 p.m.;
	Thursdays 11 p.m.;
	Saturdays 6:30 a.m.
Cincinnati (Union Twp.)	ch. 8, Sundays 2:30 a.m.;
	Tuesdays 9:30 a.m.;
	Wednesdays 11 p.m.;
	Saturdays 2:30 p.m.
Cleveland W. suburbs	ch. 21, Sundays 11:30 a.m.
Dayton	ch. 12, Tuesdays 11 a.m.;
	Saturdays 3 p.m.
Defiance	ch. 5, Sundays 12 noon;
	Thursdays 6 p.m.
Fairborn	ch. 23, Sundays 5:30 p.m.
Greenville	ch. 3, Thursdays 8 p.m.
Oberlin/Wellington	ch. 12, Sundays & Saturdays 9 a.m.
Springfield	ch. 23, Sundays 5:30 p.m.
Trotwood	ch. 23, Sundays 5:30 p.m.
Urbana	ch. 1, daily 8 a.m., 2 p.m. & 11 p.m.
Vandalia	ch. 23, Sundays 5:30 p.m.
Wash. Court House	ch. 3, Wednesdays 2 p.m.;
	Saturdays 10 a.m.
Xenia	ch. 23, Sundays 5:30 p.m.
Oregon	
Eugene	ch. 29, Tuesdays 2 p.m.
Minimville	ch. 11, Sundays 5:30 p.m.;
	Wednesdays 8 p.m.
Medford	ch. 15, 95, Sundays 5 p.m.
Oregon City	ch. 21, Mondays 8 p.m.
Portland	ch. 22, Sundays 7:30 p.m.
Salem	ch. 23, Sundays 12:30 p.m.;
	Fridays 2 p.m.;
	Saturdays 11:30 a.m.
Penndysburg	ch. 11, Sundays 9 a.m.
Pennsylvania	
Pittsburgh	ch. 21, Sundays 11 a.m.
York	ch. 16, Sundays 8:30 p.m.;
	Mondays 4:30 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.
Rhode Island	
Providence	ch. 14, Fridays 10:30 a.m.
Texas	
Austin	ch. 11, Mondays 8:30 p.m.
Dallas	ch. 14B, 74, Sundays 12:30 p.m.;
	Thursdays 9:30 p.m.;
Del Rio	ch. 19, Sundays 9 a.m.;
	Wednesdays 5 p.m.
El Paso	ch. 15, Mondays, Fridays,

Fort Worth	Saturdays 1 p.m.
	ch. 28, Tuesdays 5:30 p.m.;
	Thursdays 1 p.m.
Houston	ch. 17, 98, Sundays 1:30 p.m.
Longview	ch. 26, Tuesdays 2 p.m.;
	Wednesdays 10 p.m.;
	Saturdays 9 p.m.
Virginia	
Hampton Roads	ch. 71, 74, Sundays 10 a.m.
Washington	
Everett	ch. 77, Wednesday 5 p.m.
Kennewick	ch. 13, Sundays & Tuesdays 8:30 p.m.
Olympia	ch. 22, 29, Sundays 9 a.m.;
	Thursdays 10:30 p.m.
Seattle	ch. 29, 77, Sundays 9 a.m.
Vancouver	ch. 11, Sundays 1 p.m.;
	Tuesdays 3:30 p.m.;
	Thursdays 12 noon;
	Fridays 8 p.m.
West Virginia	
Morgantown	ch. 3, Mondays, Wednesdays,
	Fridays 3 p.m.;
	Saturdays 10 a.m.
Wisconsin	
Beloit	ch. 12, Thursdays 6:30 p.m.
Eau Claire	ch. 11, Sundays 2 p.m.
Kenosha	ch. 14, Sundays & Mondays 7:30 p.m.
Madison	ch. 4, Sundays 12:30 p.m.
Milwaukee	ch. 96, Mondays 2 p.m.;
	Wednesdays 7:30 p.m.;
	Thursdays 12 noon
Oshkosh	ch. 2, Mondays 4 p.m.;
	Tuesdays 2 p.m.;
	Fridays 1 p.m.;
	Saturdays 8 p.m.
Stevens Point	ch. 3, Mondays 5 & 9:30 p.m.;
	Tuesdays 10 a.m. & 3:30 p.m.
Wausau	ch. 10, Sundays 8:30 a.m.;
	Saturdays 9 a.m.
West Allis	ch. 14, times vary

CANADA

Nationwide	View TV, Sundays 11 p.m. (PST)
Star Choice Digital Channel 399	Sundays 10:30 a.m. (EST)
Alberta	
The Christian Channel Telus	ch. 158, Sundays 8:30 a.m.
British Columbia	
The Christian Channel Telus	ch. 158, Sundays 7:30 a.m.
Manitoba	
The Christian Channel MTS	ch. 21, Sundays 9:30 a.m.
New Brunswick	
The Christian Channel Rogers	ch. 396, Sundays 11:30 a.m.
Newfoundland and Labrador	
The Christian Channel Rogers	ch. 396, Sundays 12 noon
Northwest Territory	
The Christian Channel Northwest	ch. 226, Sundays 8:30 a.m.
Ontario	
The Christian Channel Rogers	ch. 396, Sundays 10:30 a.m.
The Christian Channel Cogeco	ch. 186, Sundays 10:30 a.m.
Saskatchewan	
The Christian Channel SaskTel	ch. 282, Sundays 8:30 a.m.

AFRICA AND EUROPE

The Omega Channel, INSAT 10, orbital position 68.5 degrees east, frequency 12682MHz, 11 p.m. daily

Radio Log

For additional information and the most current airing times, or to download or view programs online, visit www.beyondtoday.tv/radio/.

Nationwide	live365.com, Sundays 9 a.m. (PST)
Internet Radio	
Alabama	
Birmingham	1070 AM, Sundays 7:30 a.m.
Arizona	
Douglas	930 AM, Saturdays 10:30 a.m.
Globe	1240 AM, Saturdays 10:30 a.m.
Sierra Vista	1470 AM, Saturdays 10:30 a.m.
Tucson	940 AM, Saturdays 10:30 a.m.
California	
San Diego	760 AM, Sundays 6 a.m.
Florida	
Jacksonville	690 AM/106.5 FM, Sundays 7 a.m.
Indiana	
Ft. Wayne	1190 AM, Sundays 10 a.m.
Louisiana	
New Orleans	870 AM, Saturdays 9:30 p.m.
Montana	
Helena	101.9 FM, Mondays 8 p.m.; Fridays 8 p.m.; Saturdays 8 a.m.
Nebraska	
Omaha	1110 AM, Sundays 7:30 a.m.
New York	
Buffalo	930 AM, Sundays 6:30 a.m.
Ohio	
Cincinnati	1360 AM, Sundays 7:30 a.m.
Oklahoma	
Tulsa	740 AM, Sundays 8 a.m.
Washington	
Seattle	770 AM, Sundays 7:30 a.m.
West Virginia	
Wheeling	1170 AM, Mondays 11 p.m.; Fridays 8:15 p.m.



The Role of a Watchman, Part 2: Who Are Today's Watchmen?

In ancient times, watchmen stood guard on a city's walls to see to the welfare of its citizens and to warn of coming trouble. Who is to do that job today in a dangerous world moving closer to the crisis of the close of the age?

by **Beyond Today** host **Darris McNeely**

Through Isaiah the prophet, God promises the watchful eye of servants who will hold day and night vigils for the peace of Jerusalem and its inhabitants:

"I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the LORD, do not keep silent, and give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth" (Isaiah 62:6-7).

God charges this group to watch for the safety of the city and its citizens.

These special servants understand the dangers of the present world. They see the dark clouds gathering on the world's horizon and are moved to proclaim a warning message to all who will hear.

The message would also include teaching the way to personal peace for those who listen. It will show the true teaching of God and the way to salvation. It will show how one could choose to escape the judgment God will bring on the world.

Do you see yourself in this group of watchmen? Is there a role for you among those who watch today's world and yearn to make it better? Putting a number of scriptural commands and principles together, it becomes clear that today's true Christians are meant to shoulder this grave responsibility now in the last days. We are to share in the role of standing vigil like a watchman of old, and showing the way forward through the suffering and evil in much of our world.

Sigh and cry

We saw in part 1 of this article that Ezekiel was set as a watchman to the house of Israel (Ezekiel 3). God took Ezekiel in vision back to Jerusalem to observe the lifestyle of those

Jews who were left behind when Nebuchadnezzar captured the city and took many captive to Babylon.

It seems that the majority of the populace had not learned from the many warnings to change their wicked ways. In Jerusalem the people continued to worship false gods and strange customs completely different from what God had given their forefathers. Violence was an everyday occurrence.

While in the temple—the heart of the city and the place representative of the presence of God—Ezekiel saw six men (angels actually) approach, each carrying a battle-ax. Another angel had a writer's inkhorn; they all came and stood beside the altar (Ezekiel 9:1-2).

Next, God "called to the man clothed with linen, who had the writer's inkhorn at his side; and the LORD said to him, 'Go through the midst . . . of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it'" (verses 3-4).

God was going to send the six angels through the city to kill the disobedient. But those who were not caught up in sin and rebellion against God would be spared. Those who prayed from a heart sick with grief over the

state of society were granted a mark that protected them from God's judgment.



Do we sigh and cry for the moral condition of our nation? Do we see the world through God's eyes and understand how far people have strayed from His righteous commandments?

What was their distinguishing feature? *Their active concern for the moral and ethical condition of the society.* God honored that attitude.

Does this describe you or me? Do we sigh and cry for the moral condition of our nation? Do we see the world through God's eyes and understand how far people have strayed from His righteous commandments?

If so, then we have a duty to help others understand what is coming when God sets His hand in judgment on the nations.

A national affliction

Today America and Great Britain stand

at a crossroads. For more than 200 years they have dominated the world in virtually every arena. As Great Britain retreated from its empire after World War II, America was there to take its place and continue the legacy set by the English through their peak years.

But America's dominant power is under siege from many sectors. Its will to stay the course in Iraq is being tested, its military machine strained under the pressure of the extended fighting. Though it is the primary engine for the world's economy, a weakened dollar and a trade balance deficit are both troubling indicators of a major crisis ahead.

God warns us through the message of the prophets that sins will demand a day of reckoning. People cannot continue worshipping the false gods of materialism and self, blindly stumbling along in their own righteousness, and expect their affluent standard of living to continue.

God's Word confirms there will be an accounting; the lesson of history is that any people who corrupt their moral core will eventually fade from power. God calls on America and Great Britain to wake up, acknowledge their sins and repent before national calamity descends on them.

"Do this and live"

Amos the prophet walked into the city of Samaria, capital of the northern kingdom of Israel, and boldly told the king and city leaders to repent or face captivity at the hands of the Assyrians. He pointed to neighboring states that had fallen and said, "You are no better than they were."

He rebuked those who did not want to hear a "message of doom." To those who stocked their homes with the finest luxury goods and gourmet foods, trusting that affluence was a sign of God's blessing, he said, "Don't trust in materialism." The citizenry, at all levels, looked only to their comfort and ease and did not grieve "for the affliction of Joseph" (Amos 6:6).

Those who "grieve" and "sigh and cry" over societal sins are called to a unique role. They are part of God's elect, called to the duty of proclaiming the announcement of the Kingdom of God. That message includes the good news of Jesus Christ's return to restore all things (see Acts 3:19-21). The message also contains a warning to repent and receive God's blessing or ignore the warning and face the judgment of God. It is a double-edged message—plain-spoken, yet full of hope.

Fulfilling this role requires courage, perseverance and a love for the people addressed. One of the best examples of this was the prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah spent more than

40 years in the role of a watchman to the nation of Judah, urging people to heed his warnings and return to the ways of God.

Notice this passage: "Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it'" (Jeremiah 6:16).

God's main message throughout the Bible is to return to His paths, His teachings, as the solution for the suffering and pain of human life. "Do this and live," He says.

Jeremiah and others like him have stood in the role of a watchman. "Also, I set watchmen over you, saying, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, 'We will not listen.' Therefore hear, you nations . . . Behold, I will certainly bring calamity on this people—the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not heeded My words nor My law, but rejected it" (Jeremiah 6:17-19).

Today's watchmen

Examining the concept of watching in the New Testament helps to complete the picture of this role. The Greek word *gregoreo*, translated as "watch," means to keep awake, to watch and to take heed. Through neglect or laziness we could let down and be overcome with sin, or a sudden calamity could overwhelm us spiritually.

Notice in Mark 13:32-37, in Jesus' prophecy of the end time, that He urges His disciples three times to "watch" during the times leading to His second coming. The emphasis is on a personal watch through prayer to know the times.

By prayer and righteous living, we stay tuned to Jesus Christ. Through this way of life one can discern the moral climate of the times and avoid being tossed around with every shifting ideology of modern culture. Walking in God's laws and instruction insulates us from the course of the world and its deceptions.

Revelation 16 describes a massive end-time deception perpetrated by Satan and demons that work through the human instruments called "the Beast" and "the False Prophet" (verse 13). Their influence gathers the leaders of the earth "to the battle of that great day of God Almighty . . . to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon" (verses 14, 16).

In our fascination over these otherworldly figures, we can easily skip over Christ's charge: "Behold, I am coming as a thief"—suddenly and unexpectedly. "Blessed is *he who watches*, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame" (verse 15, emphasis added throughout).

Jesus pronounces a blessing for those who,

during mankind's darkest moment, watch. That is, they are living prudently and properly. The natural by-product of this close relationship with God is being alert to religious deception. Those who frame their life around the coming Kingdom of God will watch and keep themselves from the wiles of the devil.

This is the end result of fulfilling the role of a watchman within the Body of Christ—to be found standing in the faith, blessed of God at the dawn of His Kingdom on this earth.

Our world is moving toward this time of global cataclysm. Revelation 16 describes a future moment when people will be caught up in events engineered through the Beast and False Prophet. The former is a political leader of compelling personality and ability; and the other, a religious leader unlike any in modern times.

Together they will convince armies to move toward Jerusalem to fight Jesus Christ at His coming.

Warning and hope

This is a time for the watchmen to mount the walls and sound a clear, unmistakable warning message of the dangers facing not just the English-speaking peoples but also the whole world. It is a time to make known the hope of the coming Kingdom of God.

Isaiah's message stands bright and clear today: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns!' *Your watchmen shall lift up their voices*, with their voices they shall sing together; for they shall see eye to eye when the LORD brings back Zion" (Isaiah 52:7).

Come, take your place on the walls, work for the Kingdom and pray for its speedy arrival! **GN**

Recommended Reading

The United States, Britain, Canada, Australia and other English-speaking peoples have played a major role in modern world history. Does Bible prophecy have anything to say about them? Several relatively minor nations are mentioned in end-time prophecy. Are the major English-speaking nations left out, or do we just not understand their prophetic identity? To see what the Bible says about the role they will play in the future, request or download your free copy of *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*.



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

www.gnmagazine.org/booklets

Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension

I do not actually know what prompted me to subscribe to *The Good News*. And I couldn't believe it when the issues started to arrive at my door. Yet I initially neglected them. I am a young man of 27 married to a young lady of 23 with a 20-month-old daughter. So many matrimonial problems started knocking at our door. With that stress, I one day decided to browse through one of your booklets, *Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension*.

Words cannot describe how helpful that booklet has been. It saved my marriage. It is absolutely and brilliantly packed with so much information and teaching that could save any broken home if read with sufficient spiritual attention and concentration. As we look forward to our second child, I already believe the recent *Good News* issue on "How Can You Help Your Child Succeed?" will be as interesting.

Reader in England

I wanted to let you know that I enjoyed your magazine. This is the first time I had read it, and as a mom I found the articles very informative. I have just started going to church and along with regular attendance and reading your magazine, I feel I will become closer to God. Both are helping me in my prayer time and in dealing with the challenges of being a parent in these troubled times.

J.S., Renshaw, Pennsylvania

Thank you for your magazines you have been sending me over the years. As a new father, I have benefited from your articles on the role of the father, which have been eye-openers. I downloaded your booklet on family matters [*Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension*] and it is helping me a lot.

J.S., Accra, Ghana

I subscribe to *The Good News* via the Internet. I can't tell you how important this magazine is to my life and family. So I now want it in hard copy so I can read it with my family. I would especially like to have all the magazines, articles and booklets regarding youth, marriage and family.

S.M., Eritrea

"The European Union: Blessing or Modern Tower of Babel?"

I just finished reading the article "The European Union: Blessing or Modern Tower of Babel?" and I must say I enjoyed it very much. As far as the European Union goes—I cannot help but think that it will work for a period of time. But the many countries that have joined themselves together for economic stability to compete with the West [mainly the United States and Canada] will eventually fragment along diverse cultural lines and will desire to return to the status quo that existed in the 19th and 20th centuries.

R.C., Palmersville, Tennessee

If it weren't for what the Bible actually says will happen in Central Europe, we would tend to agree with you. And even so this union will fragment after it has achieved its biblical role. As prophesied, it will be like "iron mixed with clay" (Daniel 2:40-44). To understand more, request or download our free booklet Are We Living in the Time of the End?

Readers from Asia and the Middle East

I have read many issues of *The Good News* and several of your booklets. Your magazine is eye-opening and gives me a good and thoughtful knowledge about Christianity. And now I am attending weekly Sabbath services in Sri Lanka.

A.P., Sri Lanka

Thank you for responding and sending me these two booklets. I read them both already. They are both wonderful and I am learning a lot from them. May God bless and expand your ministry more and more—that through the booklets you are sending people they will come to know the truth of God.

J.T.B., Hong Kong

Thank you so much for *The Good News*. I'm very grateful, as it is an eye-opener for me to understand the Bible in a deeper sense, especially with your booklet *The Book of Revelation Unveiled*.

M.P., Singapore

I would like to thank everybody at the United Church of God for your Web site

and the booklets. I have learned a great deal and can't help wanting to read and learn more. I am so acutely aware of all of our wrongdoings—it's just so sad. I just hope and pray that God will have mercy on all of us.

Reader, Auckland, New Zealand

I just discovered your Web site and I am keenly interested in knowing about the United Church of God. I will access this site, and I'll look forward to reading what's on it.

Reader, George Town, Tasmania

Our free booklet This Is the United Church of God may be of help.

Thank you for sending *The Good News*. I am impressed by the articles in it. It is a fruitful magazine as it gives the knowledge of social, personal, family and domestic matters, politics and other important issues.

S.M., Nepal

I am trying to sign up for a free subscription to *The Good News*. I am in the U.S. Army and currently in Iraq. The Web site won't let me put in an APO AE address, so here are my details. I hope I can still receive it.

S.S., Iraq

Please bear with my letter. I am conducting underground Bible studies with 17 people. If it is not a burden to *The Good News*, I am asking you to mail me any materials that could help in preparing my teachings. I managed to read one of your Web site publications and am eager to visit it, but due to lack of access to the Internet from our work site, we have no way to visit it.

Reader, Saudi Arabia

Is the Sabbath on Saturday or Sunday?

I have read your magazine for a while and it is great. But a huge question plays on my mind. Is the Sabbath on Saturday or Sunday? Are we breaking the commandment if we do not celebrate the Sabbath on the right day in worshipping the Lord?

K.C.S., New South Wales, Australia

The answers are readily available in our free booklets Sunset to Sunset: God's Sabbath Rest and The Ten Commandments. The true biblical Sabbath is from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset. See Genesis 2:2-3.

Cancel my subscription

I thought your ideas seemed to be more and more far out with each issue, but when I realized that you do not believe in the holy Trinity, that was the final straw. Your teachings are clearly in contrast to what the Bible says, and I no longer wish to receive your magazine.

R.P., Kamay, Texas

Rather than "God in three Persons," we believe the biblical revelation of the Father and Son as two divine beings and the Holy Spirit as God's divine power and essence. The Oxford Companion to the Bible honestly states: "Because the Trinity is such an important part of later Christian doctrine, it is striking that the term does not appear in the New Testament. Likewise, the developed concept of three coequal partners in the Godhead cannot be clearly detected within the confines of the [New Testament] Canon" (1993, p. 782). Our free booklet Who Is God? contains two chapters that address and answer all the major arguments attached to this unbiblical doctrine.

Q&A on baptism

I really appreciated the way you answered J.F. in the Q&A regarding baptism [March/April issue]. You taught me so much through your succinct answer. Not only were you direct, but very gentle in showing the Scriptures of God's loving plan for mankind.

K.B., Liberty, South Carolina

I really love your message. Finally a Church that speaks the truth.

J.M., Internet

Published letters may be edited for clarity and space. Address your letters to *The Good News*, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, Ohio 45254-1027, U.S.A., or e-mail gninfo@ucg.org (please be sure to include your full name, city, state or province, and country).

Is the Bible Relevant and Reliable?

A lot of people claim to be Christians, but many aren't really sure how accurate or how meaningful the Bible is for their lives today. Few read it or know much about it, and fewer still discover the wisdom and practical help found in its ancient passages. Where can you start?

by Mike Bennett

Who was Joan of Arc? One out of 10 U.S. citizens thinks she was Noah's wife. (You know, the guy in the Flood with the floating ark and all the animals. Joan of Arc lived only about 4,000 years later in France and was burned at the stake before she turned 20.)

What about Sodom and Gomorrah? Half of U.S. high school seniors think "they" were married. (They were actually evil cities God wiped out.)

Surveys show most Americans, even religious Americans, don't know much about the Bible. Results like these sparked the cover of the April 2, 2007, issue of *Time* magazine: "Why We Should Teach the Bible in Public School (but Very, Very Carefully)."

But even if Bible facts and literary allusions were added back into the curriculum of modern public education, would it really address the deeper issues? Unlikely. The accuracy of the Bible has been under attack for decades, and few today would think of looking to this ancient book for advice.

Relevant: The book about relationships and real-life issues

Is the Bible relevant to your life today? Though written thousands of years ago, its wisdom and advice is amazingly up-to-date. Consider what it says about these modern issues:

Dadlessness: Forty percent of American young people live in homes without their father. God says we can come to Him—He is a Father to the fatherless (Psalm 68:5) and He encourages the Church to be a supportive family to the fatherless and widows (James 1:27).

Peer pressure: In a recent poll on the drug habits of British young people, 22 percent said they tried drugs because of peer pressure (www.teachernet.gov.uk). The Bible has advice about choosing friends carefully, the effects of controlled substances and not following the mistakes of others (Proverbs 4:14-15; 12:26; 14:7; 20:1; 23:20-21, 29-35; 27:12).

Sex: The vast majority of teenagers



Is the Bible relevant to your life today? Though written thousands of years ago, its wisdom and advice is amazingly up-to-date.

who have had sex, 72 percent of girls and 55 percent of boys, admit regret over early sexual activity. The Bible teaches the blessings of saving sex for marriage and warns of the allure of illicit sex (Song of Solomon 2:7; Proverbs 4:23; 5:3-23; 6:24-35; Hebrews 13:4).

Big decisions: Facing choices of college and career? How can you achieve success? Consider these verses: Proverbs 3:5-6; 15:22; 18:17; 21:5; 22:29.

Stress: One third of U.S. teens say they feel stressed out on a daily basis, reports Reuters Health. What can you do when the worries and pressures are mounting? Check out Matthew 6:25-34, 11:28-30,

Hebrews 13:5-6 and 1 Peter 5:6-7.

These few verses are only a starting point. To find more on these and other subjects, do a search on the VerticalThought.org Web site. Also, the book of Proverbs is full of relevant advice. You can find a subject index for Proverbs at www.ucg.org/brp/pdf/brp0611.pdf.

A reliable book

Many today question the accuracy of the Bible. But consider a few facts and quotes about this amazing book:

"Altogether about forty persons, in all stations of life, were engaged in the writing of these oracles, the work of which was spread over a period of about 1,600 years" (Sidney Collett, *All About the Bible*, 20th edition, p. 11).

In spite of all those authors and all that time, the Bible "is found to contain in itself a well-considered plan throughout, showing that each part belongs to, and contributes towards the beauty and perfection of, the whole" (p. 159). This we see as a tribute to God's inspiration.

Gleason Archer, a scholar of biblical studies, also wrote about the trustworthiness of the Bible: "As I have dealt with one apparent discrepancy after another

and have studied the alleged contradictions between the biblical record and the evidence of linguistics, archaeology, or science, my confidence in the trustworthiness of Scripture has been repeatedly verified and strengthened by the discovery that almost every problem in Scripture that has ever been discovered by man, from ancient times until now, has been dealt with in a completely satisfactory manner by the biblical text itself—or else by objective archaeological information" (*Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, 1982, p. 12).

The Bible claims to be true and inspired by God (see John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16),

Events That Happened Just as God Foretold

Dozens of biblical prophecies have already been fulfilled, helping to confirm the validity of the Bible and of its prophecies for the future. Here are a few of the fulfilled prophecies and resources that describe them in more detail:

Soon after the kingdom of Israel split from Judah in 931 B.C., God began warning that Israel would be taken into captivity “beyond the River” Euphrates if they didn’t end their idol worship (1 Kings 14:15). God’s patient warnings continued for nearly 200 years through prophets such as Micah (approximately 735-710 B.C.), who foresaw the destruction of the capital, Samaria (Micah 1:6).

These prophecies were fulfilled when Assyria took Israel captive in successive invasions culminating about 722 B.C. (See our booklet *You Can Understand Bible Prophecy*, p. 12.)

The people of Judah were also warned of impending captivity for their sins. Jeremiah even foretold the length of their captivity. They would “serve the king of Babylon seventy years” (Jeremiah 25:11).

Even more amazingly, Isaiah recorded the name of the ruler—Cyrus, king of Persia—who would, many decades in the future, permit the Jews’ return (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1-4). These prophecies were fulfilled down to the last detail. (See our booklet *You Can Understand Bible Prophecy*, pp. 12-13).

Daniel 11 records the Bible’s most detailed prophecy. Much of the prophecy has already been fulfilled, as can be verified by a study of the Persian and Greek empires. No person on his own could foresee such fine historical detail. (See our

booklet *Is the Bible True?* pp. 19-21.)

The Jewish New Testament lists 52 prophecies fulfilled in Jesus Christ’s birth, life and death as foretold in 81 Old Testament passages (pp. xxv-xxix). Some of these include:

He would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1).

The price of His betrayal would be 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12; Matthew 26:15).

The 30 pieces of silver would buy a potter’s field (Zechariah 11:13; Matthew 27:3-10).

Wicked people would pierce His hands and feet (Psalm 22:16; Luke 23:33; 24:38-40). David wrote this some 800 years before the Romans adopted crucifixion as a form of punishment for criminals. (See our booklets *You Can Understand Bible Prophecy*, p. 6, and *Jesus Christ: The Real Story*, pp. 26-28 for more details.)

The prophecies that descendants of Abraham through Isaac, Jacob and Joseph would become a great nation and a great company of nations (Genesis 35:11) have been fulfilled, though most do not realize it. The biblical and historical details are presented in our well-researched, full-color booklet *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*.

The prophecy that humanity would be able to annihilate itself (Matthew 24:21) was not possible with bows and arrows or even automatic weapons, but began to be possible when nuclear weapons were developed in 1945. Thankfully the other part of that prophecy—the promise that the time of tribulation will be cut short and humanity will be saved by Christ’s return—will also come true!

and millions of people through history have embraced that claim.

Sir Isaac Newton said, “There are more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible than in any profane history.”

George Washington said, “It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible.”

Napoleon said, “The Bible is no mere book, but a Living Creature, with a power that conquers all that oppose it”

(quoted in *Halley’s Bible Handbook*, 1965, pp. 18-19).

In spite of many attempts to destroy it through history, today the Bible is the most widely published and widely translated book in the world. For more evidence of the Bible’s validity, see “Events That Happened Just as God Foretold” above and download or request *Is the Bible True?* at www.gnmagazine.org/booklets. **GN**



If you like reading our articles for teens and young adults in *The Good News*, be sure to take a look at our companion magazine, *Vertical Thought*, at www.VerticalThought.org.

This magazine is specially written for our younger *Good News* audience. Each issue is packed with helpful insight and eye-opening articles to help today’s young adults get the most out of life—both now and in the future.

You’ll uncover lots of fascinating facts, meet many interesting people, discover what’s really going on behind the scenes in our world, learn answers to your questions and find practical, down-to-earth guidance on all kinds of subjects.

Visit VerticalThought.org today!



Does God Exist?

What question has more impact on your life, your future, your decisions, your plans than any other? What question has the greatest bearing on your family, your relationships, on everything you do?

The most vital question of all time is this: *Does God exist?*

If there is no God, then we are free to do as we want, to choose how we'll live and how we'll treat one another. We can make up our own rules because, in the end, this life is all there is and nothing really matters except the here and now.

But if there is a Creator, how does that affect our choices? What does that mean for how we think and how we choose to live? Does that Being have a purpose and plan for us? These questions are crucial!

Can you know whether God exists? In this eye-opening booklet you'll be amazed to learn what many scientists admit. You'll discover many scientific finds that point to one inescapable conclusion: The universe is the result of an intelligence far greater than anything we can imagine. Be sure to request your free copy today!



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