

verticalthought

a magazine of understanding for tomorrow's leaders

Good News About Bible Prophecy ²

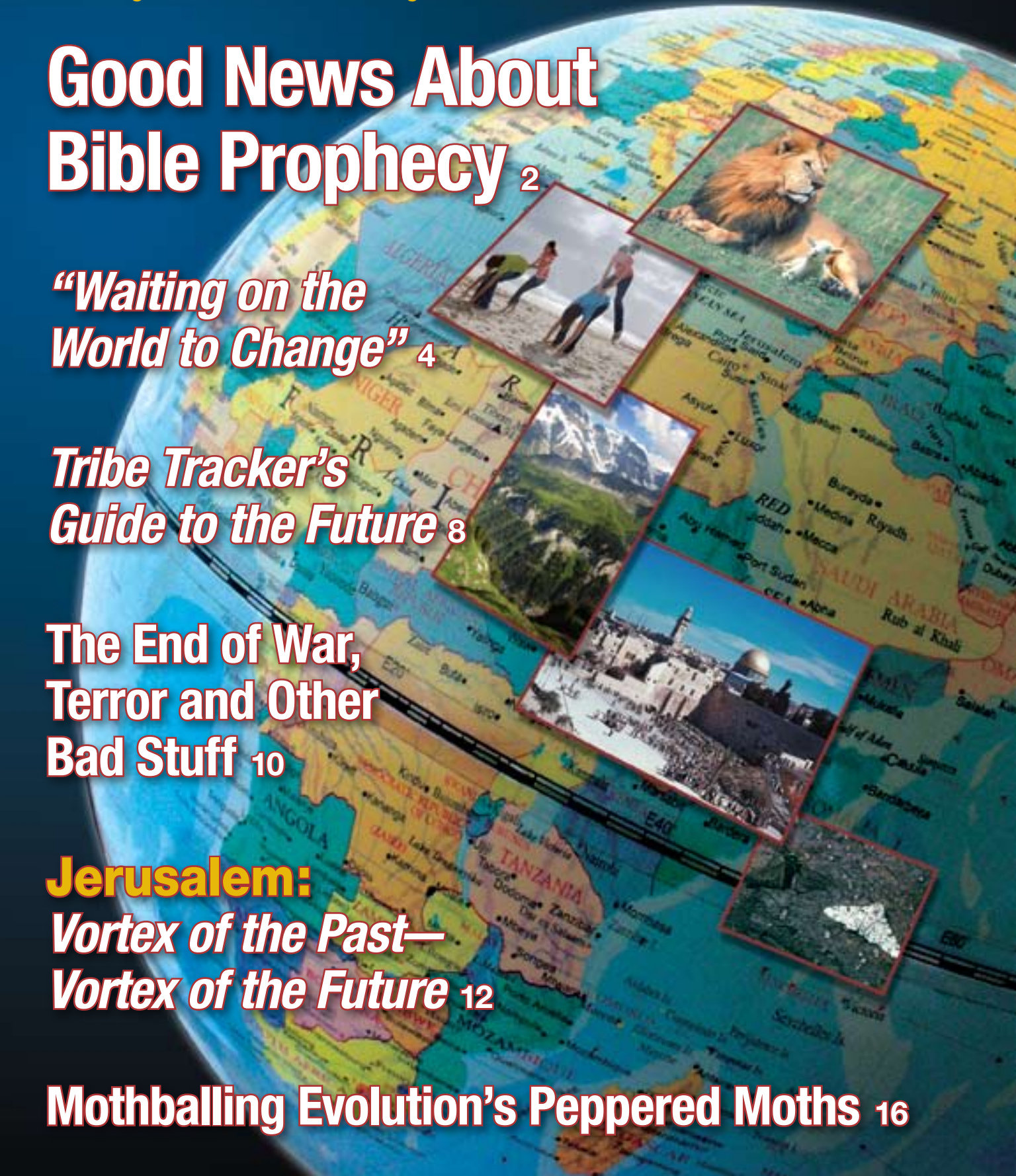
“Waiting on the World to Change” ⁴

Tribe Tracker's Guide to the Future ⁸

The End of War, Terror and Other Bad Stuff ¹⁰

Jerusalem:
Vortex of the Past—Vortex of the Future ¹²

Mothballing Evolution's Peppered Moths ¹⁶



Good News About Bible Prophecy

When some read Bible prophecies of strange beasts representing world powers or of a miracle-working deceiver or of an overly controlling government that will force its religion on everyone else, they simply dismiss these as crazy stories not to be taken seriously. Like a bad horror movie, some shun these parts of the Bible as mystical, strange and irrelevant in today's world.

What about you? What's your view of Bible prophecy? As a reader of this magazine—whose name encourages thinking about God—you probably already know that God exists and that His Word, the Bible, includes prophecies about the future. So it's likely that you already believe that Bible prophecy is true. Perhaps your view is that Bible prophecy is scary but true. If so, that's a good start!

But with this issue we invite you to upgrade your view of Bible prophecy to that of good news! If you already have this perspective, we hope this issue will reinforce your understanding.

As a vertical thinker, I hope you're already asking yourself the question: What difference does it make how I view Bible prophecy? The answer is that it makes a *huge* difference. Here's why.

Like a bad horror movie, some shun prophetic parts of the Bible as mystical, strange and irrelevant in today's world.

The greatest of all the prophets who delivered Bible prophecies is Jesus Christ (Luke 24:19; John 6:14). He came to this earth "preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God" (Mark 1:14). The word *gospel* means "good news." As such, Jesus was giving everyone then and us today good news about the coming Kingdom of God.

This good news is the foundation for all Bible prophecy. Everything we read about in prophecy ties in with the establishment of

God's government here on earth and God giving human beings the opportunity to be part of His family and assist Him in ruling over the earth.

This good news is God's plan of salvation for every human being. It's the plan God prepared before the foundation of the world (Matthew 24:34; Ephesians 1:4), and it's the plan He has been carefully working out ever since.

To give you more insight into what God is doing now and what He will do in the future, this issue focuses on prophecies about the return of Jesus Christ, how God works with nations, how war and terror will cease, how today's conflicts over Jerusalem will finally be resolved and how to understand the main characters and concepts in the book of Revelation.

The fulfillment of Bible prophecies will bring about a magnificent world free of poverty, disease, warfare, hunger and dishonest leaders. This world will be built on peace, good health for all, financial prosperity and the true knowledge of God's way of life. This future truly is good news!

Of course, the best news is that each of us can ultimately experience the wonderful destiny God has planned for us. As you read the exciting news of how His Kingdom will be established, why not picture yourself in the scenario? It's right where God wants you.

David Treybig, Managing editor



Vertical Thought is a biblically based magazine of understanding for young people ages 12-22. Our name, *Vertical Thought*, is derived from Colossians 3:1-2, which tells us to think about godly things "which are above, where Christ is." *Vertical Thought* is published quarterly by the United Church of God, an International Association, 555 Technecenter Drive, Milford, OH 45150. © 2007 United Church of God, an International Association. Printed in U.S.A. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any form without written permission is prohibited.

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*“Me and all my friends,
we’re all misunderstood*

*They say we stand for nothing,
there’s no way we ever could*

*Now we see everything is going wrong
with the world and those who lead it*

*We just feel like we don’t have the means
to rise above and beat it
So we keep waiting,
waiting on the world to change . . .”*

These poignant lyrics from John Mayer’s song “Waiting on the World to Change,” from his CD *Continuum*, make a statement about what many of his generation have—a desire to make a difference in a world that needs help. War, terrorism, corruption, disease, pollution and moral decadence abound. It’s no secret that we live in a world that has problems—*big* problems.

As in the song, many know that this world needs to be changed. Yet the whole idea of changing or repairing the world seems like a fantasy—something that could only happen in a dream or be wished for in a song! Surely it’s not something that could be accomplished by any man or government today.

In the Bible, our Creator revealed that this world would, in time, fall into deep trouble—trouble so bad it could bring life as we know it to an end! (Matthew 24:21-22). Yet that same Creator said that He really does have a plan to set this troubled world right. This plan will involve millions of people learning a different way of life—a way of life based on peace and the law of God.

The prophet Micah wrote of this plan: “Many nations shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.’”

“For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and rebuke strong nations afar off; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore” (Micah 4:2-3).

Fixing a broken world is not an easy task. And God is not planning to do it alone! He tells us He is preparing people to assist Him in transforming this world into a better one (Revelation 5:10; Daniel 12:3). To a great degree, this is what the Christian life is all about—being prepared by God to assist Him and His Son in ushering in a *new world* with a new government that will bring about the true happiness and peace that has eluded mankind for thousands of years!

This past August, seven young adults from the United States served as United Youth Corps volunteers at United Youth Camps in Ghana and Nigeria. These nations are located on the continent of Africa—a part of the world that is rich

in colorful tradition and natural resources, yet also a region that continues to suffer from poverty, disease and government corruption.

After they visited West Africa and worked with the youth at the camps, I asked the volunteers about the impact this experience had on their view of life, their view of the needs of others and whether or not this experience helped them see the need for change in our world.

In addition to expressing their appreciation for the wonderful, talented and generous young people they got to know at the camps, they also shared insights from their travel experiences.

Taking abundance for granted

Those who travel the world know that the wealth Americans and other Westerners enjoy is the exception among nations and not the rule! The other 5 billion people live in a different world. In fact, hundreds of millions of people on this planet live every day without electricity, indoor plumbing or adequate food—let alone refrigeration.

Kirstin Korthuis said: “I have caught myself whenever I have wanted to complain about physical comfort since I’ve been back from Africa. This includes water not hot enough, temperature too hot, no air conditioning, not enough living space, not enough clothes, etc.”



United Youth Corp volunteers (front row, from left): Kirstin Korthuis, Zachary Smith, Francesca Nixon, Mark Mirigian, Michal Lisa Capo and Laura Beth Childers. Back row: Ministers Doug Horchak and Melvin Rhodes.

In addition to the material things we enjoy, something else is greatly needed in the world—education.

Laura Beth Childers wrote: “It is easy to take this Western life for granted when it is all you have known. I always thought that the differences between the Western world and the third world were related only to possessions and technology.

“This trip made me realize that there is more to it than that. Not only do I appreciate the blessings of possessions and technology, but I appreciate my education more. I am not only talking about my high school and college education, but basics that I was taught growing up, such as hygiene and health.”

While many in developing nations may be lacking in basic education, many in the West are sorely in need of reeducation about God, creation, morality and right relationships. Only

when you gain the perspective that getting to know people from other nations and cultures brings can you truly understand the desperate need for *education* and *reeducation* in a new world.

Of course, travel provides the traveler with the chance to *appreciate* the blessings he or she has.

Zach Smith wrote: "What amazed me most is that with all of the blessings we have, we are not even a fraction as appreciative as we should be. It seemed to me that even though the Ghanaian people had just enough to get by and survive, they were happy and content—far more so than people in the West, who seem to have it all."

It is a sad reality that many people in the Western, developed countries just don't appreciate the level of abundance and blessings they have! Being blinded by wealth is one of the great curses that can affect both those in this world and those in the Church (see 1 Timothy 6:10). It can prevent us from seeing the need for drastic change in a world gone wrong.

Seeing the need for God's Kingdom

During His earthly ministry, Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Your kingdom come" (Matthew 6:10). Jesus was teaching that His servants should desire His promised Kingdom and the new world it will bring.

However, *seeing the need* for that Kingdom must often come first before one can have the desire. Unless we understand the real mess this world is in, it is unlikely that we will truly desire the new world of which Jesus Christ and the prophets of God spoke (Acts 3:18-21).

We also have to remember that it is not only in the poorer, developing nations of the world that humanity is reaping the horrible results of sin. The consequences of breaking the laws of God abound in the United States and other Western countries too. Sadly, the fruits of disobedience in these more prosperous countries are often masked or overlooked by the wealth and abundance that people continue to pursue and enjoy.

Commenting about the need for big changes in this world, Kirstin said: "I am more cynical about this world than I was before I traveled to Ghana, and I am still dealing with that outlook. But I can definitely say that I understand better why God will wipe this world clean when Christ returns.

"There was so much trash and pollution (including in the air and water) in West Africa, and I know this represents much of the developing world. There simply isn't the money, the knowledge or perhaps the heart to care, to clean it all up. Yet Jesus Christ said He will. And we will be there to help Him. Even places that early on had much natural beauty have

been polluted and filled with disease and scarring."

As Kirstin's comments make clear, nothing takes the place of seeing the rest of the world firsthand—particularly the developing world, where most of the population on this planet lives! And while much of the scarring and filth in Western countries is cloaked by their relative wealth and prosperity, they are no less in need of this new world!

Commenting on how hard it would be to correct the many problems that exist in Nigeria, Greg Peoples, who served at the camp there, said: "A new world is necessary to repair not only the physical damage of this country, but also the hearts and minds of the Nigerian people. I saw in person what Nigerians live with every day in Lagos: a lack of clean water, open sewers, a filthy environment, a lack of personal security and air pollution. A new world is the only answer I see that would be able to fix such conditions.

"It has opened my eyes to the daily struggle millions of native Nigerians have in order to survive. I saw a mother with twin babies trying to survive by begging from car to car in order to supply their daily needs, and this seemed to be the norm!"

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“Waiting on the World to Change”

by Doug Horchak

Generations have thrilled to the exploits of Superman, the comic book hero who rescues people from evil. Couldn't our world use a real Superman about now?

by Larry Greider

With world events creeping closer and closer to the precipice of international mayhem, it would be nice to know that a superhero was ready to save the day. Not only do the starving in Africa need relief, but the angst and anxiety of wondering where the terrorists will next vent their rage on America and the West is exhausting. The growing nuclear club increases exponentially the chance of nuclear war and nuclear terrorism. Many times in history humanity has sought for a "superman" to come and save the day, but he's never been more needed than today.

Hero emerges from the Depression

In the late 1930s and early 1940s a caped man of steel from the planet Krypton (a planet said to be full of light and brightness), was sent to challenge evil. The "Man of Steel" was created by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster when both were still in high school.

Siegel and Shuster were teenagers at a time called the Great Depression, when more than a quarter of a million U.S. teenagers lived on the road, hoping to find work to send money back home or simply because they felt they'd become a financial burden on their families (www.redboots.net/comics/supe_history.htm).

The cover of the original Superman comic written by Siegel and Shuster in 1938 describes this imaginary superhero as able to "leap over skyscrapers, run faster than an express train, spring distances and heights, lifting and smashing tremendous weights; possessing an impenetrable skin."

These are the amazing attributes that Superman, champion of the helpless and oppressed, uses as he battles the forces of evil and injustice. Superman would be fitted with new capes and repackaged right up until the 21st century, his challenges growing with each new generation of villains.

This fantasy world is a faint echo of the hope for a *real* superhero who can save the world. This hope has been expressed in many ways through history.

World powers

Powerful people over the centuries have felt that they alone could bring world order by spreading their brand of government. World dominion and political control have been the dream of warrior emperors from Nimrod, Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander the Great and the emperors of Rome, down to the 20th century with Adolf Hitler and Vladimir Lenin.

One thing seems certain: Empires fall almost as quickly as they rise and never seem to achieve the peace and prosperity they promise. Instead of being champions of the helpless and oppressed, the record shows that the murder, misery and destruction that occur in the establishment of a new

power has generally allowed only a limited few to live luxuriously off the backs of the many.

Besides those who have wielded military and governmental power, there have also been religious leaders who have stirred hopes in the masses.

Now rumblings in the Middle East suggest growing belief that an Islamic prophet will be returning. "According to Shi'ite Muslim teaching, Abul-Qassem Mohammad, the 12th leader whom Shi'ites consider descended from the Prophet Mohammed, disappeared in 941 but will return at the end of time to lead an era of Islamic justice" (www.iranian.ws/iran_news/publish/article_10945.shtml).

A real Messiah

The truth of the matter is that there is a real Messiah who was prophesied centuries ago to return to the earth and save humanity from itself (Matthew 24:22). This is necessary because mankind doesn't know how to achieve peace. Speaking of human efforts to make peace, the Scriptures say, "Destruction and misery are in their ways; and *the way of peace they have not known*" (Romans 3:16-17, emphasis added).

The comic book character Superman was invested with an innate sense of justice and fairness and could uncover the plots of evil men with his X-ray vision.

In reality, the hearts of all people need to be changed to desire to seek peace. "Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it" (1 Peter 3:11). This quest is not easy in a world of tension and conflict.

The return of the real Messiah, Jesus Christ, to the earth will end all war and teach mankind the way of peace. While on earth, Christ taught His disciples to pray for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:10).

Sadly, His second coming will be met with huge armies and end with the destruction of man's fighting machines and those who direct them. "Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war . . . And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse" (Revelation 19:11, 19). Thankfully the misguided attacks of men will soon end and true peace will come.

When this new world order is established in Jerusalem, the city of peace (which isn't peaceful now), the Son of God will bear the government on His shoulder. Notice what the

In Search of

Scriptures say about this amazing time that we eagerly await: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and

From Our Readers...

“Really been helpful”

Your materials—*Vertical Thought*, *The Good News*, *World News & Prophecy*, etc.—have really been helpful, especially in this age and time. May God Almighty bless you and all that are involved in making this knowledge available especially in print. And may He strengthen and uphold you in this Great Commission.

—Oto

“Most important issue”

Your literature has become the most important thing to enlighten and feed our spiritual growth. We are eternally grateful for your organization. We are able to understand the true meaning of the Scriptures from reading your material. We were very confused before the presence of your literature brought a simple understanding to this most important issue. We can never thank you enough.

—Daniel, Sarah & Summer

“Wonderful Web site”

Thank you for your wonderful, informative Web site [www.verticalthought.org]. I appreciate the Q&A section on the Web site and the answers to the questions I have submitted.

—Rebecca

Spreading the word

Recently I subscribed to *Vertical Thought* and received two issues. Even though I haven't yet received the latest issue, I can download it onto my laptop. I wanted to tell you how very much I enjoy your magazine and the impact that it is having not only on my life, but on four other teenagers. They are now going to subscribe on their own, and I am asking that you please not stop sending me the magazines.

Thank you so very much for your help. And God bless you for what you are doing for so many of us.

—Kim

Suggestions

I only just started reading *The Good News* and *Vertical Thought*, and I must say both are very interesting and pretty cool. Forgive me if you have already done this—I have only just found out about your magazines, so I wouldn't know about your past issues—but if you haven't already done so, why don't you include an article about peer pressure and/or bullying in a future issue of *The Good News* or *Vertical Thought*?

Both issues have some very damaging effects on today's youth and society. I have witnessed a lot of them and have even experienced some myself. I think it's a relevant topic for the type of magazine you put out. I appreciate all the trouble you go to in making these awesome magazines. Thank you.

—Marion

Thanks very much for your suggestions. We will keep these

subjects in mind for future issues. In the meantime, you can find the previous material we have done on peer pressure and bullying on our Web site at www.verticalthought.org using the search function at the top of the page. —Ed.

Via the Internet

I am 15, and with great interest I've been reading your wonderful booklets and magazine via the Internet. I am very grateful for them.

—Hendson

“Addicted”

I am a fervent reader of the *VT* magazine, and my whole household has been addicted to the spiritual bread.

—Kayode

“Kudos”

It was thrilling to read the articles on friendship in *Vertical Thought*. Let me say that on receiving the magazine I finish the entire issue before doing anything else. It is so gripping. Kudos to all the team.

—Lobby

over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this” (Isaiah 9:6-7).

But knowing what the Bible says about this resolution of man's conflicts doesn't mean that this time prior to His return will be easy. There will be many challenges leading up to the time when there will finally be peace on earth. Christ was asked by His disciples when these things would be. His response—a prophetic discourse known today as the Olivet Prophecy, after the location where He spoke it—is still the main guidepost of end-time events.

You can read about this in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. Matthew 24:24 says, “For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if

planet except for the great Creator God—who made man in His image—to rescue mankind from himself.

Are you interested in peace? Do you fantasize about a Superman who will use his forces for the good of mankind, thwarting evil? Perhaps you can make a difference now by learning the way to real peace, which is imparted in our hearts and minds by the aid of God's Holy Spirit. “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God” (Matthew 5:9).

Start now to find the way to true peace by transforming your life. For help on how to do this, request our free booklet *Transforming Your Life: The Process of Conversion*. It's available to be read, downloaded or ordered at www.ucg.org/booklets.

To be sure, we live in exciting and terrifying times, where wars and threats of war abound. What seems difficult is having and maintaining peace in our own lives. When you seek this and begin to live by God's laws, developing a deeper relationship with God, “the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7).

Let's do our part to be a “superman” who is a champion of the helpless and oppressed—as we battle the forces of evil and injustice while waiting on the real hero of mankind, Jesus Christ.

Larry Greider is chairman of the UCG Youth Education Team and coordinator of the United Youth Camps. He also serves as a United Church of God pastor in Los Angeles, California.

f Superman

possible, even the elect.” Will these imposters fool you?

Man has dreamt about a world of order, with peace and prosperity for all. History shows that that goal has yet to be realized. Due to man's determination to leave God out of the picture or to fall for a false god, there is little hope for the

What in the world has God been doing? What will God do with the world in the future? Here's how you can track ancient tribes through history to understand prophecy. Think of it as a portal to God's plan for all mankind and your personal guide to the future.

from their homeland to Assyria's northern and northeastern borderlands. They became known in history as the "lost 10 tribes of Israel."

But these "lost" tribes of Israel did not just vanish. If you know what to look for, you can track them across the continents and through the centuries to the time of Christ and on to modern times as nations in northwestern Europe, Britain, her former colonies and the United States.

Obviously, not every modern nation is descended from the ancient tribes of Israel. But apply tribe-tracking principles and you'll plainly see evidence of God working with all

The Tribe Tracker's Guide to the Future

by Randy Stiver

Today's nations started as ancient tribes—or groups of tribes. Even today many people in Africa, Asia, North and South America and elsewhere carefully maintain their tribal identities.

All people and tribes come from one human source—Adam and Eve. "And He has made from one blood every

nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings" (Acts 17:26). God planned eras of greatness and natural borders—the overview of history.

God Himself chose one nation to be a model for all other nations, starting with the patriarch Abraham (Genesis 12), his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob. God changed Jacob's name to Israel, and his 12 sons became the patriarchs, or fathers, of the 12 tribes of Israel.

For several centuries after the Exodus from Egypt they existed as a confederacy of tribes in the Promised Land (largely where the nation-state of Israel is today). From around 1050 to 930 B.C. the 12 were united into a single nation under the famous kings Saul, David and Solomon.

Due to Solomon's disobedience, God divided the 12 tribes into two nations: two tribes in the south formed the house of Judah (ancestors of the Jewish people of today) and 10 tribes in the north formed the house of Israel (who were never known as Jews).

Rebelling against God's way, the northern house of Israel adopted sinful, pagan beliefs and practices. Consequently, from around 740 to 720 B.C. God allowed Assyria to attack, conquer and take them captive, deporting them

the tribes and nations in the world.

Modern fulfillment of ancient prophecies

The first key in tribe tracking is prophecy. A prime example from the time of Jacob (also called Israel) describes the ancestors of the American and the British nations.

Many know the story of Joseph, one of the 12 sons of Israel, who was betrayed and sold by his brothers into Egyptian slavery. There he served time unjustly in prison. Finally God freed Joseph and he ultimately rose to the position of the pharaoh's prime minister.

Through necessity born of famine, God reunited Jacob and his other 11 sons with Joseph in Egypt. There, near the end of his life, Jacob formally adopted Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, thus raising each to tribal status (Genesis 48:8-16).

Then he pronounced prophetic blessings upon the lads. Manasseh was to become a great nation near the time of Christ's second coming. Ephraim would be even greater, for he would become a multitude or company of nations (Genesis 48:17-20).

Israel (God's chosen model nation) was to receive the greatest blessings among the world's nations. And the tribes and nations fathered by Joseph's two sons were to receive the greatest blessings of all the tribes of Israel—thus, greatest among the greatest.

Can we identify these people today? Consider that the greatest company of nations in world history in terms of wealth, prestige, influence and power in its heyday was the British Empire. The greatest single nation in the history of the world is clearly the United States of America. (Detailed

evidence for this is given in our booklet *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*.)

Bear in mind that although God promised great blessings for the tribes and nations of Israel, He expected them to live up to the high and holy standard of His law. If they did, they were blessed, but when they didn't, He punished them—or will punish them—severely.

There is no room for arrogance among the descendants of ancient Israel. And there is no room for envy among the other nations. "God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him" (Acts 10:34-35).

Direct fulfillment of divine prophecy leaves an obvious track from history to the future. There are more prophecies about the tribes in Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33 as well as prophecies about other nations in the Bible. However, the prophesied identity of the two most powerful nations during the final 200 to 300 years of the end of the age leaves the clearest tracks a tribe tracker can find.

Names of the tribes

A second key principle of tracking the tribes of Israel from past to future is discovering the names they bore during their wanderings. Let's look at two primary group names of the wandering Israelites.

King Omri ruled the house of Israel in the early 800s B.C., about 160 years before the fall of the northern kingdom (1 Kings 16). The Assyrians used his name to refer to the whole nation.

In the Assyrian language Omri was called *Ghomri* or *Khumri*, and in London we find a historical record of the house of Israel under subjugation to Assyria.

The famous Black Obelisk, prominently displayed in the British Museum, includes a pictorial record of King Jehu of Israel paying homage to the Assyrian king Shalmaneser. The inscription translates as: "The tribute of Jehu son of Khumri." And the Assyrians referred to the land of Israel as *mat bit-Khumri*—"land of the house of Omri."

Variations of Omri as a national name can be tracked

initially as *Ghomri* or *Khumri* in Assyrian clay tablets, then *Gamir*, *Gamera* or *Gamira*, *Cimmeri* or *Kimmeroi*, as *Cimmerians* across Europe, and finally as the *Cymry* or people of Wales today. The Cimmerians were later called Celts and Gauls in northwestern Europe by the Greeks and Romans.

Remember, these linguistic transformations took place over hundreds of years and hundreds of miles. (Again, the details and some of the historical evidence can be found in our booklet *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*.)

Next, God promised that Isaac, the son of Abraham and Sarah, would leave the track of his name on history: "In Isaac your seed shall be called" (Genesis 21:12). Ancient written Hebrew didn't include vowels, so the written letters for Isaac were the SC or SK sound.

"In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria, and placed them in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes" (2 Kings 17:6). Their tribal wanderings began on Assyria's northern and northeastern borders, south of the Black and Caspian Seas and in the southern edges of modern Russia about 720 B.C.

By 700 B.C. the Cimmerians began to overrun northern Asia Minor (modern Turkey), commencing centuries of migration west and north into Europe. Simultaneously another group of the tribes shook off Assyrian rule, moving to the north and east. Known variously as *Izkuza*, *Sacasene*, *Scythians*, *Saka*, *Sakka*, *Sacas* and *Sacae*—the SK or SC of *Isaac* formed the core of these names.

Those migrating north around the Black Sea to Europe were called *Scythians*. The eastern branch initially between Persia and China were the *Sakka* or *Saka*. Later in Europe they became *Sacesones* (sons of Saka) and finally *Saxons*—settling in England and later America. The SK/SC sound is found yet today among descendant nations of some of the tribes: Scotland, Scotia, Scandinavia, etc.

Greek and Roman scholars wrote about the Scythians and Cimmerians as they moved across the continents and through history, listing their names on ancient maps. Knowing the "lost" tribes of Israel as Cimmerians and Scythians enables us to track them across land, sea and time as we read histories, study historical maps and read about or participate in archaeology.

But far more importantly, by tracking the tribes prophetically and historically we see God's hand working in the affairs of man. If God has worked so clearly in the lives of tribes and nations of the past, He most certainly can and will work with nations and people today. He can reveal to you the world's troubled, near-term future, plus the most incredible, eternal, long-term future in the great Kingdom of God.

For further study of the modern locations of the tribes of Israel and their destiny, be sure to read our free booklet *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*. This booklet may be read, downloaded or ordered from www.ucg.org/booklets.

Randy Stiver is the pastor of United Church of God congregations in Columbus and Cambridge, Ohio, and is a regular guest on *Beyond Today* television.

"The Tribe Tracker's Guide to the Future"

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The End of War, Terror and Other Bad Stuff

Many young people today fear for their personal safety. Most everyone can document the problems, but this article dares to aim for the solution.

by David Treybig

and live in neighborhoods where they have to contend with gangs and bullies who think nothing of beating others up and even killing them if they don't comply. Many gangs also have turf wars with competing gangs over who controls a particular neighborhood. Innocent people are often hit by random bullets exchanged in such battles.

School and college campuses are not safe either. In recent months there have been multiple reports of someone going insane and shooting students.

Between nations, we see multiple ongoing wars and skirmishes, including those in Afghanistan and Iraq—not to mention the recent conflicts between Hamas, Hezbollah and Israel. Regarding the latter conflicts, all sides acknowledge that any peace between the combatants will only be temporary. These enemies expect to continue the war at some point in the future.

Why all the killing?

Enough of all this conflict! Everyone knows about the wars, terrorism and fighting taking place today. So why don't people make peace? Why can't we all just get along? The answers to these questions are found in the biblical account of the first recorded human act of violence.



recently missed a flight to visit family in Minnesota. I had arrived at the airport 40 minutes before my flight was scheduled to leave, but I wasn't allowed to board the plane. Due to heightened airport security, I learned that I had to be there 45 minutes prior to departure. So I was rerouted. At the end of the day, having taken multiple flights on a standby basis instead of the nonstop flight I wanted to take, I reached my intended destination but only after much inconvenience and wasted time.

Missing my flight was a stark reminder that the world we live in isn't a peaceful place where everyone gets along. And the reason for increased security at so many airports around the world today is to prevent terrorists from blowing up airplanes or using them to destroy others.

Sept. 11, 2001—the date terrorists hijacked four airplanes and killed thousands of Americans—is burned into our memories. This incident and many others over past decades have made us all aware of Muslim extremists willing to give their lives to kill innocent men, women and children.

In our local communities many young people go to schools

“The way of peace they have not known, and there is no justice in their ways; they have made themselves crooked paths; whoever takes that way shall not know peace.”

Cain and Abel were the first two sons born to Adam and Eve—the father and mother of today's human race. In time, Cain became very angry with his younger brother Abel because God had accepted Abel's offering but rejected his.

Rather than acknowledge that he was responsible for his relationship with God, Cain became very angry over the situation. I suspect he thought it was unfair that his offering was not accepted. He probably thought he was not being respected.

Similarly, thinking that things aren't fair and that they aren't being shown enough respect has led many nations to war. And deciding to solve their problems apart from God hasn't helped either.

As James 4:1-3 says: “Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.”

Now back to Cain. As Cain angrily stewed about his situation, God said to him: “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it” (Genesis 4:6-7).

God told Cain that he needed to rule over his misguided emotions. Doing this could have brought about peace between the two brothers. After all, one of God’s names is “Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6), so He certainly knows what produces peace and what doesn’t.

Sadly, Cain didn’t follow God’s instruction. Instead, he gave in to his anger and killed his brother (Genesis 4:8). Sadly, most people and nations have followed Cain’s example—and

The end of all this bad stuff

So how will mankind be rescued from all the wars, terrorism and other bad things prophesied to afflict humanity at the end of “this present evil age” (Galatians 1:4)? We will be saved by the return of Jesus Christ to the earth. Notice some of the wonderful things that are going to happen when Jesus returns to establish the Kingdom of God.

In destroying a multinational army gathered in the Megiddo Valley of Israel that marches to Jerusalem to fight against Him (Revelation 16:13-16; Joel 3; Zechariah 14:2), Jesus will fulfill this much anticipated heavenly announcement: “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!” (Revelation 11:15).

One of Jesus’ first acts of leadership will be to rid the earth of weapons of war. The ancient prophet Micah was inspired to explain the event this way:

“Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it . . . He shall judge between many



that of Cain’s parents too—in rejecting God’s instructions. They are therefore incapable of consistently making good decisions.

Speaking of those who reject His commands, God says, “The way of peace they have not known, and there is no justice in their ways; they have made themselves crooked paths; whoever takes that way shall not know peace” (Isaiah 59:8).

History shows that most people have taken and continue to take the path that leads to conflict rather than peace. In fact, Bible prophecy reveals that before Jesus returns to earth, wars are going to increase.

In explaining to His disciples what conditions would be like just before His coming, Jesus said: “You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom” (Matthew 24:6-7).

Jesus further said that conditions on earth will get so bad at this time that “unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved [alive]; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened” (verse 22).

peoples, and rebuke strong nations afar off; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken” (Micah 4:1-4).

In conjunction with the destruction of weapons used to kill other human beings, Jesus will offer people the opportunity to transform their minds into ones filled with love and respect for others. This will occur as people repent of their sins and submit to God’s laws—laws that teach us how to love God and our neighbors.

The earth will then undergo many other exciting changes in terms of health, wealth and prosperity. Yet the foundation for enjoying all these wonderful blessings will be universal peace ushered in by the Prince of Peace. To learn more about this exciting future, request, download or read online *The Gospel of the Kingdom* and *God’s Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind*.

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Jerusalem:

Vortex of the Past—Vortex of the Future

Why does this relatively small city evoke so much passion and conflict? History and prophecy provide the answer.

by **Ken Treybig**

Over the centuries three of the great religions of the world—Christianity, Islam and Judaism—have been drawn to the same city: Jerusalem. And in the future, as the Bible foretells, all nations—not just followers of these three major religions—will become intimately involved in earthshaking events that will occur in and around this city.

To better understand this unstoppable vortex that will eventually envelop all nations, let's take a brief look at the history and future of this biblically significant city.

Interestingly, Christianity, Islam and Judaism all trace their roots back to one central figure—a patriarch by the name of Abraham who wandered in the area of the Middle East after receiving a call from God to leave his homeland. On what was later the Jerusalem Temple Mount, Mount Moriah, Abraham faced his great test in being willing to offer his son Isaac to God (see Genesis 22).

Jerusalem rose to regional importance some 800 years after his death, after his descendants (the Israelites, who had been slaves in Egypt) were freed by God's miraculous intervention and after they had taken over the Promised Land.

Soon after Abraham, in the 19th century B.C., Egyptian maps apparently referred to the city as Urusalimum, but later inhabitants called it Jebus. Shortly before 1000 B.C., King David conquered the Jebusite stronghold and renamed it the "City of David" (2 Samuel 5; 1 Chronicles 11:5). But over time, a form of the older name eventually took hold and it became Jerusalem, which in Hebrew means "possession (or foundation) of peace"

It is one of the ironies of history that a city with such a beautiful name would have such little peace. Instead it has had a long

history of changes, revolutions, sieges, surrenders and famines. Its streets have seen rivers of blood shed over the past 3,000 years.

With no harbor, no major river nearby and being situated off the beaten path—a good distance from the main highways between Asia Minor and Egypt—it seems odd that this city would ever become important in world history. But the fact that King David conquered it and made it the capital of the ancient nation of Israel placed it squarely in the vortex of conflict for thousands of years.

Greatest glory

Jerusalem's greatest physical glory was reached under King Solomon, son of King David, when Solomon built a temple for God as well as his own elaborate palace and greatly enlarged the city. The Bible describes the wealth of Solomon and says that he received about 25 tons of gold each year (1 Kings 10:14). It goes on to say that gold was so plentiful that nothing in the palace was made from silver because it was considered of little value (verse 21). No wonder the city was such a target for attack when Israel began to decline.

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon conquered and destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C. Seventy years later, during the rule of the Persian Empire, the temple was rebuilt under Zerubbabel. Then after more than 50 years the city walls were rebuilt under Nehemiah. Thus began a cycle of destruction and rebuilding that has spanned thousands of years.

In A.D. 70, Titus, general of the Roman army, destroyed the city. The Jewish historian Josephus said that more than a million people died in the Roman campaign against Jerusalem, though the exact number is disputed. The Jews briefly reestablished Jerusalem as their capital only to have it destroyed again by Emperor Hadrian.

In the 300s, the mother of Emperor Constantine the Great visited Jerusalem and had churches built on sites she associated with events in the life of Jesus Christ. In the 600s, shortly after the death of Muhammad, Muslims gained control of the city and built

holy sites for Islam. By then Christianity had become a major religion in the world and the Crusades followed in the Middle Ages—with much blood shed as a great deal of the known world was drawn into the battle over control of Jerusalem.

In 1917, as World War I was ending, Gen. Edmund Allenby entered Jerusalem and it came under the jurisdiction of Britain. In 1947 the nations of the world, via the United Nations, passed a resolution that partitioned the land and set the stage for the birth of the modern nation of Israel.

Today this portion of the world continues to find its way into the headlines of the world's newspapers as Jews and Arabs fight over the territory occupied by Israel with Jerusalem as its capital.

The continual conflict over this relatively small amount of land is destined to increase and involve all nations before Christ returns. God prophesied that He would “make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all the peoples; all that burden themselves with it shall be sore wounded; and all the nations of the earth shall be gathered together against it” (Zechariah 12:3, American Standard Bible).

Better times ahead

The Bible also says Jerusalem is destined to be the center of good things to come. This time the vortex will draw all people to it for good, instead of siege, famine and bloodshed. In Zechariah 1:14-17 God says that even though He brought punishment on His people, He would once again return “to Jerusalem with mercy” and that the surveyor's line would be “stretched out over Jerusalem” for the purpose of rebuilding the city. God says in verse 17 that He “will again choose Jerusalem.”

One of the promises Jesus Christ gave His followers is that He would return to this planet. In Zechariah 14:3-4 we are told where He will return—to the Mount of Olives, just to the east of Jerusalem.

Once Jesus puts down the armies of the Beast and False Prophet that fight against Him at His return (Revelation 19:16-21), He will transform Jerusalem from a “burdensome stone” to a source of life—described poetically as pouring forth “living water” (Zechariah 14:8-9)—as He establishes Himself as ruler over the whole earth.

The next six verses speak of Jerusalem being raised up (verse 10) and safely inhabited (verse 11) and of God destroying by a terrible plague those who fought against Him (verses 12-15).

Once the Lord sets up His government in Jerusalem, all nations will come to that city, His world capital, to worship Him. Notice that they find themselves drawn to Jerusalem like a leaf being sucked into a whirlpool, not for destruction, but for peace, prosperity and good.

God used the prophet Isaiah to proclaim many warnings of punishment on His people for disobeying Him. But Isaiah was also used as the mouthpiece to explain the ultimate outcome for both Judah and Jerusalem.

Isaiah 2:1-4 begins by specifically mentioning Jerusalem and says the Lord's mountain (government) will be established above all the other governments, and all nations will flow to Jerusalem to be taught the right way to live. Jerusalem, the “city of peace,” will indeed become the source for the teaching

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Waiting on the World

Continued from page 5

Mark Mirigian added: "Also, much of the country is run on bribery and corruption, and it won't be straightened out by ordinary means. Anything short of Christ's return will be unsuccessful at rebuilding a country that has such fundamental issues."

These young adults had a glimpse into the other side of the world—the world that is the real world for most of humanity. Few in the more affluent countries see or even understand this world. Yet the affluent nations are filled with secularism and moral decay that is arguably worse than all the developing world's problems. So there is a need for a drastic overhaul of all nations.

Back to the song

We began with a snippet from a popular song, "Waiting on the World to Change." God's Word, through the writings of His prophets, reveals that the world, indeed, will change! It promises a time of restitution and a fresh start.

The apostle Peter told of the time in the future when a change in the heart of man will usher in a time of renewal and refreshment for this embattled earth:

"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:19-21).

One of the great quests throughout history has been man's search for meaning in life. Yet after thousands of years of searching, man's search has come to include a more sobering goal. In addition to searching for the meaning of life, humanity now also finds itself in a desperate struggle to find a way out of the mess it has made of life on earth.

John Mayer ends his song with these words:

". . . One day our generation is gonna rule the population
So we keep waiting, waiting on the world to change . . ."

It's an interesting phrase: "One day our generation is gonna rule the population." As these song lyrics show, John Mayer and many of today's generation realize they will be ruling in the future. But little do they know just *how* true these words really are. Today's young people will likely be the ones that assist Jesus Christ in building a changed world—a new world of tomorrow that will begin when the Kingdom of God comes to earth.

Waiting on the world to change is something you and I can be directly involved in. God has invited us to be a part of the only effort that will bring real change—permanent change to a world in need. In the next few years of your life your *waiting* can be filled with purpose and focus as you yield to God and become part of His chosen people. Prepare now to assist the Messiah in bringing welcome change to this world!

Doug Horchak, husband, father and director of the Challenger II canoeing program on the Buffalo River in northern Arkansas, pastors congregations in Dallas and Sherman, Texas.

Revelation's Cast of Characters

The last book of the Bible is full of intriguing symbols and mysterious characters. Knowing who the actors are helps us understand the plot.

by Mike Bennett

The book of Revelation, written more than 1,900 years ago in a foreign land, with symbolic language that depends on knowledge of the prophetic literature that went before, can seem mysterious and concealed. But the following brief plot summary and cast of characters can begin to reveal its meaning. It's a book that has great significance for your life today!

Revelation plot summary

The Lamb (Jesus Christ) fulfills His promise to return to the earth and free the deceived and enslaved human race from its hidden ruler, the dragon (Satan) and his coconspirators, especially the Beast and False Prophet.

The battle plan unfolds in a series of seven-part events. First, seven sections of a scroll or book that had been sealed shut are opened, section by section. The first four seals open to reveal four horsemen, earlier interpreted by Christ: white horse = false religion; red horse = war; black horse = famine; pale horse = widespread death through disease epidemics and natural disasters. These events have been occurring for many years but intensify at the time of the end of man's rule. The fifth seal is martyrdom and the Great Tribulation, which begins 3½ years before Christ's return. The sixth seal opens to reveal heavenly signs, signaling the beginning of the Day of the Lord, "the great day of His wrath" (Revelation 6:17), which seems to be the last year of the 3½-year period.

The seventh seal includes seven plagues announced by seven angels with trumpets. The seventh trumpet includes seven last plagues and Christ's triumphant return to banish Satan and save the world from total destruction.

That's a whirlwind tour, but one person summarized the message for God's people in even fewer words: "I've read the end of the book, and we win!"

For more information about the mysterious symbols and events revealed in the book of Revelation, download or request a free copy of *The Book of Revelation Unveiled*. Other helpful booklets include *You Can Understand Bible Prophecy* and *Are We Living in the Time of the End?*

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| Characters | A.K.A. (also known as) | Identity |
|--|---|--|
| The Lamb (5:8-13) | Jesus Christ (1:1), Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End (1:8), Son of Man (1:12-16), Lion of the tribe of Judah, Root of David (5:5), Bridegroom (19:7-9), King of Kings and Lord of Lords (19:16) | Jesus Christ |
| The Seven Churches (chapters 2 and 3) | The Lamb's wife (19:7), kings and priests (1:6), overcomers (2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21), saints (8:3-4), the woman who fled to the wilderness (12:6) | The Church of God (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 10:32) |
| 144,000 (7:3-8) | 144,000 Israelites, sealed by God and protected during the Day of the Lord | 12,000 Christians of each of the 12 tribes of Israel |
| Great Multitude (7:9) | "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation" (7:14) | People converted during the Great Tribulation |
| Two Witnesses (11:3-6) | The two olive trees and the two lampstands (11:4; allusion to Zechariah 4:3, 14), God's servants who will prophesy and perform miracles for 3½ years in Jerusalem | Two servants of God whose identities are not known at present |
| Four Horsemen (6:1-8) | The beginning of sorrows (Matthew 24:4-8): white horse = false religion; red = war; black = famine; pale = plagues | False religion, war, famine and death by disease and disaster |
| Seven Angels Who Blow the Seven Trumpets (chapters 8 and 9; 11:15) | Angels given the job of bringing plagues as punishment during the Day of the Lord; the first four blow on the earth, trees, seas, rivers and sun, moon and stars, while the fifth (destruction caused by the European Beast power), sixth (army of 200 million that kills a third of mankind) and seventh (seven last plagues) are called the three woes (8:13; 9:12) | Seven angels |
| The Dragon (12:3) | That serpent of old, called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world (12:9); accuser of the brethren (12:10) | Satan the devil |
| The Beast (13:4) | The Beast from the sea with seven heads and 10 horns (13:1) [combination of the empires pictured by the beasts of Daniel 7 with leopard, bear and lion], the king of the North (Daniel 11:40-45) | Leader of a group of 10 national rulers; resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire in Europe |
| The False Prophet (16:13) | Great harlot who rides the Beast (17:1); another beast with two horns like a lamb who spoke like a dragon (13:11), working miracles, exercising the authority of the first Beast; Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth (17:5); man of sin, the lawless one (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, 8-10) | Leader of a great false religion based in Rome |
| 200 Million-Man Army (9:16) | Army that crosses the Euphrates River to attack the Beast power; news from the east and the north that troubles the king of the North (Daniel 11:44) | Eurasian army that comes against the European Beast |

A number of years ago, I distinctly remember going through some of the supposed “proofs” of evolution in my high school biology class that seemed to be quite convincing at the time.

One of those that caught my attention was the evidence of peppered moths changing their color from light to dark due to industrial pollution. This supposedly shows how natural selection can change a species into another type, and eminent scientists have emphasized the importance of this supposed proof of evolution.

Professor John Maynard Smith stated: “We should expect to find the most rapid evolutionary changes in populations suddenly exposed to new conditions. It is therefore natural that one of the most striking changes which has been observed in a wild population . . . is the phenomenon of ‘industrial melanism,’ the appearance and spread of dark forms of a number of species of moths” (*The Theory of Evolution*, 1966, p. 137).

Sir Gavin De Beer, writing in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, said, “One of the most striking examples of observable evolution is the phenomenon known as industrial melanism” (1974, Vol. 7, “Evolution,” p. 14).

As I glanced at a recent biology book, I noticed that the same evidence I read many years ago was still being given today. Here is a summary from the textbook *Biology*, by John Kimball (online version), updated in 2006:

Many species of moths in the British Isles began to become darker in color in the 19th century.

of toxic gases and soot has killed the lichens and blackened the trunks. Against such a background, the light form stands out sharply.

The moth is preyed upon by birds that pluck it from its resting place by day. In polluted woods, the dark form has a much better chance of surviving undetected. When the English geneticist H.B.D. Kettlewell . . . released moths of both types in the woods, he observed that birds did, indeed, eat a much higher fraction of the light moths he released than of the dark.

Since pollution abatement programs were put in place after World War II, the light form has been making a comeback in the Liverpool and Manchester areas.

And now, the rest of the story

It is regrettable that much of the information given in this biology textbook and in many others with similar explanations turns out to be grossly inaccurate. It shows why it’s so important to get both sides of an argument and not just one. As the Bible says, “The first one to plead his cause seems right, until his neighbor comes and examines him” (Proverbs 18:17).

We will see that this so-called “proof” of the evolution of the peppered moth shows that even supposedly careful and impartial scientists cannot be trusted to leave their bias aside when it comes to teaching Darwinian evolution.

Mothballing Evolution's Peppered Moths



A supposed proof of evolution turns out to be flawed.

by Mario Seiglie

The best-studied example is the *peppered moth*, *Biston betularia*. The moth gets its name from the scattered dark markings on its wings and body.

In 1849, a coal-black mutant was found near Manchester, England. Within a century, this black form had increased to 90% of the population in this region.

The moth flies at night and rests by day on tree trunks. In areas far from industrial activity, the trunks of trees are encrusted with lichens . . . the light form . . . is practically invisible against this background.

In areas where air pollution is severe, the combination

Further investigation on the peppered moth phenomenon has shown Kettlewell’s classic experiments with these moths to be deeply flawed. Here is what Jerry Coyne, professor of evolutionary biology at the University of Chicago, explained in a prestigious British scientific journal:

From time to time, evolutionists re-examine a classic experimental study and find, to their horror, that it is flawed or downright wrong . . . The prize horse in our stable of examples has been the evolution of “industrial melanism” in the peppered moth, *Biston betularia*, presented by most teachers and textbooks as the paradigm of natural selection and evolution

occurring within a human lifetime.

The re-examination of this tale is the centrepiece of Michael Majerus's book, *Melanism: Evolution in Action*. Depressingly, Majerus shows that this classic example is in bad shape, and, while not yet ready for the glue factory, needs serious attention . . .

Majerus notes that the most serious problem is that *B. betularia* probably does not rest on tree trunks—exactly two moths have been seen in such a position in more than 40 years of intensive search.

The natural resting spots are, in fact, a mystery. This alone invalidates Kettlewell's release-recapture experiments, as moths were released by placing them directly onto tree trunks, where they are highly visible to bird predators. (Kettlewell also released his moths during the day, while they normally choose resting places at night.)

The story is further eroded by noting that the resurgence of *typica* [light-colored moths] occurred well before lichens recolonized the polluted trees, and that a parallel increase and decrease of the melanic form also occurred in industrial areas of the United States, where there was no change in the abundance of the lichens that supposedly play such an important role.

Finally, the results of Kettlewell's behavioural experiments were not replicated in later studies: moths have no tendency to choose matching backgrounds. Majerus finds many other flaws in the work, but they are too numerous to list here. I unearthed additional problems when, embarrassed at having taught the standard *Biston* story for years, I read Kettlewell's papers for the first time.

Majerus concludes, reasonably, that all we can deduce from this story is that it is a case of rapid evolution, probably involving pollution and bird predation. I would, however, replace "probably" with "perhaps." *B. betularia* shows the footprint of natural selection, but we have not yet seen the feet.

Majerus finds some solace in his analysis, claiming that the true story is likely to be more complex and therefore more interesting, but one senses that he is making a virtue of necessity. My own reaction resembles the dismay attending my discovery, at the age of six, that it was my father and not Santa who brought

the presents on Christmas Eve. (Source: *Nature*, Nov. 5, 1998, pp. 35–36.)

"Proof" full of holes

What are the conclusions today about the supposed proof of the evolution of peppered moths?

- Both specimens of moths already existed at the time of the experiments—no *new* species appeared.
- Only the *population ratio* of the dark and light moths changed from the 19th and 20th centuries due to a number of conditions, not all well understood. There was *no* creation of or evolution into a new species.
- The photographs of moths on tree trunks were *staged* according to inaccurate assumptions, and further investigation showed these moths do not normally perch on trunks.
- The increase of the dark moths and the decrease of the light moths were likely due to various environmental factors, including bird predation, but these examples only show how resilient God's creation is.
- In the beginning of the 20th century, the dark moths predominated due in part to the darkening of the environment through industrial pollution. When the environment was cleaned up, the lighter moths became the dominant type. But there was *no* change in color or structure of the moths—they both had existed before industrial contamination began.

Regrettably, in their desperation for presenting evidence of their molecule-to-man theory of evolution—which effectively removes from the scene the Creator God described in the Bible—many scientists writing biology books continue to present this myth of evolution to millions of unsuspecting students.

So, given the evidence on both sides, let's mothball another false claim of evolution and, instead, give glory to God for having created a variety of moths that have shown in recent history how they can survive under different circumstances.

For further reading, we recommend our free booklet *Creation or Evolution—Does It Really Matter What You Believe?* (www.ucg.org/booklets/EV). You may also want to read Jonathan Wells' *Icons of Evolution* and Judith Hooper's *Of Moths and Men*, available through your local library or bookstore.

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Jerusalem

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that leads to peace! And all peoples and nations will be drawn to it, anxious to learn what is taught there.

It would seem things could not get any better. Yet in the next-to-last chapter of the book of Revelation, the apostle John was shown a vision of one more crowning step in God's plan to transform Jerusalem from a "burdensome stone" to the crowning capstone of peace for eternity.

In Revelation 21 John describes the *New Jerusalem*, constructed of material unlike any that human beings have ever been able to produce. It is described in verses 18 to 23 as pure gold, yet

clear like glass, and adorned with massive and beautiful precious stones. God the Father and the Lamb will dwell there with people transformed to spirit (verse 3), since the only ones allowed there will be those written in the Book of Life (verse 27).

God will choose the name "Jerusalem" for His new city, completing the process of bringing lasting peace and eternal life to those who accept His terms for salvation.

A vortex—or perfect storm of events—is building around the city of Jerusalem. What will you do with this important understanding? Will you be part of this New Jerusalem?

Ken Treybig is the director of United Youth Camp Carter and pastor of United Church of God congregations in East Texas.

A Holy Day Provides Comfort

I'd enjoyed a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day with my family and friends. Little did I know how important the meaning of this final Holy Day was going to be when I returned home.

by Kristin Yarbrough

My sunburn from Family Day at the beach still stung as I walked through my front door. I wished we hadn't had to leave so quickly after services on the Last Great Day, but my brother and I had to be back at school the next day.

I heard a car in the driveway and thought it was just my father pulling into the garage after unloading our suitcases. I was surprised to hear my friend's voice in the living room. I ran to greet her, full of stories from a week away from school. But before I could get close, I could tell something was wrong.

While I was gone, our friend Tony had been in a car accident with his family, she told me. Someone ran a stop sign on a country road near their house and hit their car. His parents were out of the hospital. One of his younger brothers was fine; the other had emerged from a coma that day.

She gulped.

Tony was dead. He wasn't wearing his seat belt and was ejected from the car. The doctors took him off life support yesterday. He was only 16 years old, my age.

We talked for almost half an hour, though I don't remember a word of it. A random thought popped into my head: The homecoming football game and dance were this week. There would be no more homecomings for Tony. No proms. No college. No family. Nothing.

I didn't know whether Tony went to church or considered himself a Christian. But either way, I knew he still had a chance.

I trudged back to my room, making a halfhearted effort to unpack. Littered with Jekyll Island sand, my suitcase mocked me. After staring into the bag for a while, I gave up and went to bed. You usually get a chance to ease back into the world after the Feast, I thought. Reality sank in a little more harshly that year.

I didn't get much sleep that night. I cried until I was numb. How could God let this happen? It wasn't fair. People are supposed to die when they are old, not when they're still in high school. How could this happen when I was gone? I would



have prayed for him if I had only known. Would God have even cared? Would it have made a difference?

The rambling, rapid-fire questions continued in my mind through the night. Then a chill went down my spine. Had I left without saying good-bye? A trickle of tears started, then a river. Would I ever see Tony again?

Notes to the rescue

A nagging voice popped up in the back of my head: *You know you will. Did you just spend an entire week at the Feast and learn nothing? It wasn't just a trip to the beach.* I turned on my reading light and pulled my Bible and notebook for sermon notes out of my suitcase. The scriptures should be easy to find; they were the last ones I'd written down.

I didn't know whether Tony went to church or considered himself a Christian. But either way, I knew he still had a chance, according to the Bible. Revelation 20:5 says that God will resurrect the *rest* of the dead—those who didn't have an opportunity to know God's way—after the thousand-year reign of Christ, assisted by true believers.

The next scripture I had scrawled in my notes was Revelation 20:12. It spoke of the billions of people who had ever lived being brought back to life and having the opportunity to learn God's truth and live His way. This includes people who were born before Christ's time (and could have never heard about Him) and children who were born in foreign countries where the Bible was outlawed.

It also includes my Great Aunt Jo, who seemed misguided, though sincere, about her religion, and the boy in my eighth-

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Career Tips

Choosing a career or dealing with challenges on the job can be daunting. These *Vertical Thought* readers share their experiences.

How I became a teacher

I recently graduated from the University of Texas with a bachelor's degree in applied learning development (education) and am now a certified teacher for prekindergarten through fourth grade.

But I didn't start out with the intention of becoming a teacher. For my first two years, I studied business. During this time

it was a struggle to stay motivated in my classes, and I just couldn't see myself making a living in the field of business.

It was a scary feeling not knowing what I wanted to do. I felt lost and helpless. I knew I needed to find something I would enjoy and feel positive about as a career. But what?

Seeking an answer, I asked God for His help. Growing up, anytime I had a problem my mom would always ask, "Did you pray about it?" I had already learned that this

was some of the best advice I'd ever received, so I put it into practice. I asked God to help me discover a field I would enjoy, and I spent some time thinking about what I liked to do in my spare time. Summer camp came to mind. Serving at camp was something I looked forward to every year.

Realizing that I liked working with youth, I came to the conclusion that I should try teaching. I truly believe God led me to this decision because I never considered teaching before. When I was in school, I wondered why anyone would want to teach and why anyone would willingly get up early every morning to come teach for the rest of his or her life. Now I began looking at teaching from a different perspective.

Summoning my courage, I walked into an advisor's office and, in the span of less than a week, I changed my course of study. The results were amazing.

My grades went up dramatically. I rarely missed classes, because I now enjoyed them. I even liked the reading and assignments that accompanied my classes. I had a wonderful picture of myself graduating with a degree in education, teaching in my own classroom and loving the work I would do.

Looking back, I thank God every day for the blessings He has given me. Without His guidance, I would not have made it through college. I also asked Him to help me find a job where I could use my abilities to make a difference in children's lives. God answered this prayer too.

Just before summer began, I was hired as a fourth grade math teacher in Cleveland, Texas. As I write this, I am excited and a bit nervous as I begin my first year of teaching. But it's comforting to know that God helped me get this far, and I know He will also be there for me in the future.



Crystal Whitley, 24
Fourth Grade
Math Teacher,
Cleveland, Texas

How I chose my career in engineering

Have you ever imagined yourself working as an engineer in a nuclear power plant? I hadn't either until I was a sophomore in college, but the path to my current job as a system engineer began long before then.

As a high school student, I always tried to do *everything*. I took the hardest classes, played three sports and joined as many clubs as I could. I was always searching for a challenge. Looking back, I now realize that my career in engineering began because I thought it would be one of the most challenging.

Engineering is a field based on taking problems and using knowledge, resources at hand and creativity to form innovative solutions. There's a great deal of "thinking outside the box."

Growing up, I always enjoyed watching the television show *MacGyver*. He was constantly thinking outside the box, usually to save his life or others. Perhaps this character was my inspiration.

In my junior year of high school I decided to become a computer engineer, then applied to a handful of universities. I finally decided to attend the University of Montevallo, a small educational institution without an engineering school, to reduce the cost of my education. There I completed the general courses all freshmen take. Then it was off to Auburn University's engineering school to pursue my engineering degree.

At the beginning of my sophomore year, I was on track to be a computer engineer. I thought I might become a consultant or work at a software company. I felt I would enjoy helping businesses resolve software application problems.

Also, I had a strong interest in the French language and thought that speaking French would allow me to be a consultant on the international level one day. Halfway through my sophomore year, I decided to add a French study abroad experience to my college education. I spent four months in Nice, France, taking classes in French language and culture.

I came back from France as a junior with a minor in French and two full years of courses left in computer engineering. This paid off sooner than I thought it would. By the end of my junior year, I had been accepted as a summer engineering intern for a large French company. My assignment was at a nuclear power plant in northern France, where I was further immersed in the French language. Also, I knew that Southern Company, my eventual employer, wanted me to be an intern the following summer. Suddenly, before finishing college, I had launched my career as an engineer!

My last year of college went well, as did the internships. Southern Company was so pleased with my performance that they gave me time to go to Ambassador Bible Center before starting work full-time as a system engineer at a nuclear power plant.

My work is not what I expected to be doing with my degree, but I enjoy it. I enjoy the challenge of learning and solving problems. My career is still just beginning, though. I still have my sights set on working internationally one day, and I am working hard right now toward that end. I thank God daily for what He has given me, and I ask Him daily to continue developing me into an effective servant, an ambassador to this world of His way of life.



Daniel Harper, 25
System Engineer
at Vogtle Nuclear
Electric Generating
Plant, Waynesboro,
Georgia

COMFORT ZONES: MEANT TO

by Debbie Whitlark

In the midst of the Swiss Alps, I clung desperately to a cliff face that demanded both proper gear and experience, and reflected that I had neither. My right hand clutched a tuft of grass, my left hand knocked away loose stones, and my feet were splayed against the rock as I felt a sickeningly slow loss of traction. There was no other human being in sight, and I knew I must either keep moving or fall.

I had lost the path heading over the ridge—and though I soon realized the error, the slope was too steep to descend safely. I kept going, realizing too late that a disastrous mix of misguided optimism, perceived necessity and stubbornness had brought me to a very dangerous position, maintained only by rapidly tiring muscles.

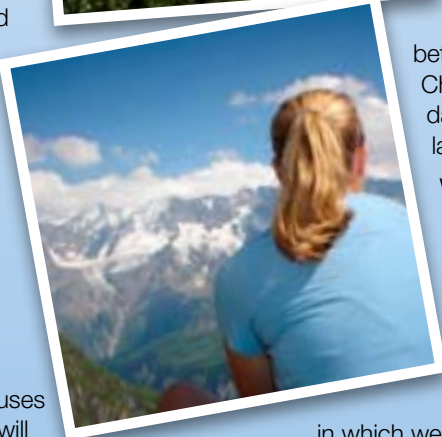
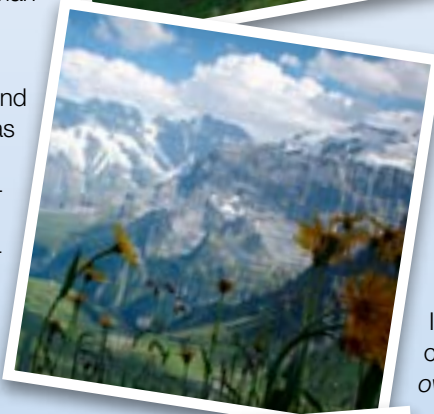
I was two weeks into a month of backpacking solo through nine European countries, and the past five days alone had brought six languages, four currencies and countless border crossings.

As I set off from home, many mistakenly chalked the adventure up to bravery. But I did not go because I am a fearless adventurer. As a methodical, organized and reserved perfectionist with a deep need to feel competent, my comfort zone was nowhere to be found.

It was not until after I returned home that I finally realized that was the point. I had set off from the United States not completely sure how I would survive a month on my own, and returned a relatively experienced traveler, with priceless life lessons and a deeper knowledge of myself that could not have been learned except through facing the challenging situations I encountered. Although the wisdom of my choices can be questioned (I deeply appreciate God's mercy and protection!), the lessons I learned are important ones.

In both physical and spiritual matters, people often meet every challenge—and thus every opportunity—with a well-practiced list of excuses for why they will avoid the issue or why they will only expect a mediocre performance from themselves. But fears are conquered only through action, and they are only intensified by avoidance.

Failed attempts can be painful and humbling, but refusing to make a legitimate effort to reach a worthwhile goal leads without exception to the ultimate failure: forfeiting that uniquely



human ability to choose who we are. God did not grant us that ability merely for us to neglect it! He expects that we use it and take control of how we live, even—or especially—when a challenge puts us outside our comfort zone.

Though parents love their newborn child, they do not expect the infant to remain an infant. A child will learn, grow, stumble and try again until he or she learns to walk with confidence.

Likewise, when it comes to both our actions and our character, God does not accept stagnancy. We should see our weaknesses as areas of potential growth rather than viewing them with an attitude of, "Well, that's just the way I am!" Christ emphasizes that when He comes He will reward the person "who overcomes" (Revelation 21:7).

Growing in Christ

In Ephesians 4:13, we are told to continue in the work of God and the edifying of the Body of Christ, "till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

We don't have license to ignore our problem areas; we have the responsibility to face them! Far from being a destination, conversion is a process of continual growth in which we learn better and better each day how to imitate Christ. We must press on until the very day Christ returns and rewards us for our labor.

When God liberated the Israelites from Egypt, the Promised Land given to them was still full of sin and idolatry. Likewise, when we are baptized, our battle has only begun. We must continually clear ourselves of the sin inherent in our carnal minds and steadfastly refuse to be influenced by the evils of the world

in which we live.

While we should enjoy our progress along the way, there is no destination in this life and no time at which we can sit down, take off our armor and rest. God will be with us in our battle, but we must not test God by claiming the battle is too difficult. The fact that it is difficult is part of the point and is what makes our learning process so powerful.

DO BE BROKEN

God has called us to be warriors, and it is our minimum duty to be faithful, unyielding, courageous and obedient. We should remember that every challenge in life is a priceless opportunity to grow. In the face of the enemy, we need not beg God to take away the problem while reciting a long list of explanations as to why we won't be able to overcome the challenge at hand. Instead, we can confidently trust that God will see us *through* the trial, not necessarily lift it from us.

When God asked whom He could send to do His work, Isaiah did not try to avoid His calling. Instead, he responded: "Here am I! Send me" (Isaiah 6:8). Likewise, we must be eager to try the unknown in order to allow God to perfect us and use us as a tool in His hands.

Back to the mountain

After an hour of agonizingly slow progress, I still clung to the side of the mountain in the Alps. Though I found myself near the top, the way was impassable without gear, and I had no other options. I half-slid, half-fell down the steep slope and eventually stumbled upon the path I had lost an hour and a half earlier.

Though back to square one, I was oddly excited to climb 300 meters of rough switchbacks back to the top of the ridge. I eventually reached the 3,000-meter (nearly 10,000-foot) summit after my eight-hour hike and then began the grueling descent. Back at the youth hostel, other travelers shared their pasta and wine with me, and I crawled into bed covered in a layer of sweat, blood and dirt, which I hardly even noticed.

My European trip and its purposes came full circle at my final stop, Amsterdam. Wandering the rooms of the Vincent van Gogh museum, I read a quote by Pablo Picasso that perfectly captured the challenges of life and true Christianity: *"I am always doing what I cannot yet do, in order to learn how to do it."*

That approach to life will inevitably lead to occasional disappointment and failure. But growth cannot occur within familiar, comfortable territory. We must choose to keep discovering and expanding what we are capable of, rather than always staying within a comfort zone that would insulate us not only from nominal failure, but also from real success.

So have the courage to challenge who you are and see what you might be! Whether it's trying out for a new sport at school, meeting someone new, learning to get the most out of college, finding a new job, taking a once-in-a-lifetime trip or overcoming a character flaw, we must, in wisdom, forge new and worthwhile paths without using the crutch of complacency.

Let us never grow weary in using every opportunity in this adventure called life to learn about God and to exercise our uniquely human ability to respond to His divine calling by saying: "Here I am, God. Send me!"

Debbie Whitlark is a first-year student at Harvard Law School in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

A Holy Day Provides Comfort

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grade class who had committed suicide after years of teasing and ridicule. This was the real meaning behind the Holy Day I'd just celebrated.

I flipped to the last verse in my notes: Revelation 21:4. I was reminded that after the fulfillment of the Last Great Day, God will rid the world of sorrow and pain. He Himself will wipe away the tears. Since I had shed more than a couple over the past few hours, this hit home. God cared. Suffering in this life was a result of man's actions, not God's. And when the time is right, God will be there to heal.

I closed my Bible, finally ready for sleep. I'd have to be at school in five hours. Now maybe I'd be a little more prepared for the difficult days that lay ahead.

Moving on with hope

A funeral was the last place I had expected to be Homecoming Day, but I found myself that morning in the pine pews of a country church. I was uncomfortable. Besides the sadness, I had never attended a Baptist funeral before. Still, I knew what to expect. The pastor would preach that Tony was looking down on us from heaven. But I knew that teaching was nowhere in the Bible. The Bible compares death to unconscious sleep—awaiting the resurrection.

As the preacher started explaining that Tony was with God, watching all of us, I thought how little consolation this belief really offered. He would have seen his father hobble up the stairs, forced to walk with a cane from injuries he had suffered in the accident. Next to his father sat Tony's younger brothers, all in tears. If he were really looking down from heaven, what could he do to ease their suffering? What a terrible feeling that would be.

I remembered my reading from the other night. God wasn't cruel. During the rest of the service, I rehearsed the scriptures in my mind. What a blessing to understand God's real plan for mankind.

Still, I cried as they moved Tony's coffin from the hearse to the burial plot. For now, I'd miss his bright, sunny smile and his practical jokes. Even that stupid Yankees cap he insisted on wearing among the sea of Cleveland Indians fans. It's okay to cry, I told myself.

After a prayer and a word from Tony's father, the service was over. I took a red carnation from the top of the coffin and walked away. Time was running short. My friends and I had agreed to meet for dinner before the homecoming dance, to talk about Tony's life, to get a little closure and to give ourselves permission to try to have fun that night. Tony would want it that way. Maybe I'll even tell Tony about it someday.

For more information about death, heaven and God's plan for human beings, read our free booklets What Happens After Death?, Heaven and Hell: What Does the Bible Really Teach? and God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind—all of which can be ordered, downloaded or read from www.ucg.org/booklets.

Kristin Yarbrough works at the Home Shopping Network as a copywriter. She and her husband Sean live in Brandon, Florida.



IN THE NEWS

Compiled by Amanda Stiver

Bring on the Omega-3 Oils!

Recent research suggests that an excess of omega-6 fatty acid coupled with a lack of omega-3 fatty acid, a combination common in the typical highly-processed Western diet, could be causing significant development problems in brain structures, resulting in aggressive and violent behavior.



An American researcher, Joseph Hibbeln, has conducted experiments in the United States. Other researchers have completed similar studies at a maximum security prison in the United Kingdom in which prisoners convicted of violent crimes were administered a series of supplements, chief among them omega-3 fish oils. The result has been that assaults

and violent incidents in the prison decreased by 26 percent (Felicity Lawrence, "Omega-3, Junk Food and the Link Between Violence and What We Eat," *The Guardian*, Oct. 17, 2006).

Hibbeln's research suggests that omega-3 oils are essential to proper brain function. The effective functioning of serotonin and dopamine seem especially critical, as they must work efficiently to avoid depression. When a person is without enough omega-3, he or she is more susceptible to violence and aggression.

Over the past century, the modern Western diet has achieved an excess of omega-6 oils (destructive to brain function) through the excessive use of soy, corn and sunflower oils in foods, and a corresponding lack of consumption of fish, fish oils and green leafy vegetables with omega-3 oils.

Trans-Fatty Acids on the Run

The average American eats 4.7 pounds of artificial trans-fatty acids a year, an unhealthy dose by any standard. The New York City Board of Health has enabled the "Big Apple" to become the first U.S. city to ban this dangerous, artery-clogging additive. The result is that fast-food giants are making massive efforts to rid their products of trans-fatty acids.

Kentucky Fried Chicken Corporation has announced that it will stop using partially hydrogenated vegetable oil, a primary source of trans-fatty acids, in some of its menu items. Wendy's restaurant has already made the switch, but McDonald's has yet to go through with its announced plan to remove the oil (David Caruso, "New York City Trans-Fat Ban Expected to Alter KFC Recipe," *The Columbus Dispatch*, Oct. 30, 2006).

God created many healthful foods for human beings, but attempts in the last century to improve on what is available in the natural world are beginning to show their inherent flaws. The more processing foods go through and the further they are taken from the state in which God created them, the worse they tend to be for human consumption.

To Seek Higher Education or Not

Bill Gates' incredible wealth and success, despite his being a Harvard University dropout, has caused some in the entrepreneurial business world to wonder if getting a college degree is really necessary to achieve success.

However, an analysis of *Inc.* magazine's "500 list" of companies finds that 85 percent of CEOs and founders have at least a bachelor's degree and 36 percent have a postgraduate degree. This is a significant showing in favor of seeking higher education (November 2006).

Inc. magazine further encourages the young and business-minded that the college experience provides students with intellectual capital that is as important to business success as monetary capital. Also, students who attend a university will have the advantage of developing a network of future business colleagues and connections that may help them in their ventures.

Whether one is interested in entrepreneurial business or some other field of work, a higher level of education offers significant benefits.

Global Investment Doesn't Equal Global Wealth

Despite high levels of foreign investment, many of Africa's poorest nations fail to benefit from increased global business. Foreign investment rose 78 percent from the previous year, but the benefits were unevenly spread among the nations of Africa.

South Africa, Egypt, Nigeria and Tunisia received the majority of foreign funding, which left many of the poorest countries with a drastic decline in investment (Angela Balakrishnan, "Foreign Investment Failing Africa," *The Guardian*, Oct. 17, 2006).

Because of human greed and misrule, there are no easy answers for some of the world's poorest nations. It leads us to pray to God, "Your kingdom come" (Matthew 6:10).



This Just In: TV More Important Than Newspapers

TV was rated the easiest-to-use and most accurate news source, according to teens surveyed in a recent First Amendment study. TV was followed closely by the Internet as a news source, with 66 percent of respondents getting news from Web sites sponsored by search engines.

Only 21 percent of those surveyed used national newspaper Web sites for information on current events and even fewer used actual daily newspapers (Tracey Wong Briggs, "Teens Turn to TV, Internet for News," *USA Today*, Sept. 22, 2006).

While TV may be a popular news source, it is still a source of information tightly controlled by a small group of people. It is an essential skill to be wisely critical of what is presented on the TV or at Internet sites. Understanding the bias of those

who report the news is crucial in a world that is flooded by large quantities of information every day.

What's in a Name?

A tour of a road map of the United States yields some interesting place names. In Pennsylvania you can travel through Philadelphia, Bethlehem and Nazareth in a few hours, not to mention a few other locations with biblical names.

In states from California to Texas you will find plenty of names with biblical significance. America has more Bible names than anywhere else in the world except the lands where the histories of the Bible occurred (Daniel Lapin, "Cultural Impact," *Louisiana Family Forum*, Sept. 11, 2006).

The reason for this biblical infusion is that America was founded and traversed by individuals for whom the Bible played a strong role in daily life. For many generations the Bible was the only book owned by most people, and for their children it served as both a spiritual tool and a textbook of the English language.

While modern America may not always appreciate or abide by the Bible, its history and future are inextricably linked with the impact of that book.

Unfeeling, Unloving

Today's world has often been called a throwaway society. One German entrepreneur, Bernd Dressler, is capitalizing on this trend. His business is to deal the final blow in relationships (married or non-married), by phone or in person, and tell one partner that the other doesn't want to see him or her anymore.

Most of his clients are female and unwilling or uncomfortable with the confrontation of dissolving a relationship. Dressler is unemotional about his chosen career and feels little for the individual on whom he is unloading bad news (Stefanie Marsh, "Das Boot," *The Times* [London], Oct. 17, 2006).

This really is the polar opposite of what God intended for dating and marriage. Were friendship to first serve as a foundation, gradually leading to deep married love, Dressler's unfeeling dumping services would not be in demand.

Cruel and mixed-up, the dark side of human nature illustrates why God's way is so necessary to untangle the mess that has been made of human relationships.

Technology and Tradition

Older business workers are looking at new recruits, born in the early 1980s, and finding it a challenge to combine the new technology culture with the best of face-to-face and more formal business practices.

Young workers are used to text messaging, scanning and Googling, writing in incomplete sentences, dressing too casually and being overly familiar with their superiors. While older executives find that these skills are productive for multitasking, there are gaps in the education of young workers that need to be filled.

Large firms like J.P. Morgan, Chase and Goldman Sachs are instituting training and mentoring programs to introduce younger workers to the face-to-face aspects of conducting and succeeding in business.

Stan Smith, human resources executive at Deloitte, says of his newest employees: "While the Gen Y crowd has shown a wider gap than their predecessors between college life and readiness for the workforce, they do generally show a willingness to learn. A lot of them actually do want to be mentored; they respond well to smart adults" (Tom Van Riper, "Text-message Generation Entering Workplace," *Forbes*, Aug. 30, 2006).

Common courtesy and good manners apply, no matter the level of technology at which an individual functions. Those skills are at a premium when entering any new field of work. A wise, older person who is gifted in courtesy, good manners and common sense makes an excellent mentor for those seeking to learn.

Niceness Wins at Last

A new crop of business advice books for women is highlighting the fact that nice people can actually do better in business than traditionally aggressive ones. In particular, the concept



that women in positions of power must act like men is being questioned and replaced with the idea that female leadership can be both strong and feminine.

The Power of Nice: How to Conquer the Business World With Kindness by Linda Kaplan Thaler and Robin Koval is based on their experience using a "nice" approach to running their advertising agency, the Kaplan Thaler Group.

"We completely disagree with the conventional wisdom that 'nice guys finish last' and 'no good deed goes unpunished.' Our culture has helped to propagate the myth of social Darwinism—of the survival of the fittest—that the cutthroat 'me vs. you philosophy' wins the day," say Thaler and Koval (Andrea Sachs, "Nice Girls Get Even," *Time*, Nov. 6, 2006).

The world's oldest, most effective self-help book has long advocated niceness, or as is commonly stated, "doing to others what you would have them do to you" (a paraphrase of Matthew 7:12). God invented nice, and when it is applied as He instructs, it can work wonders in business and life.

Royal Palace Found at Ramat Rahel?

In Israel, archaeological expeditions have unearthed a royal Judean fortress with a sophisticated water system dating to the seventh century B.C. The site is at Kibbutz Ramat Rahel, south of Jerusalem.

The location, with a large palace, served as an administrative center through various historical periods. Evidence of its royal connection is seen in a large collection of seals marked "The King," "Lion" and "Yehud," all names referring to the tribe of Judah and its rulers (Judy Siegel-Itzkovich, "Dig Shows Ramat Rahel Was Royal Judean Site," *The Jerusalem Post*, Aug. 21, 2006).

Archaeologists, headed by Dr. Oded Lifschits of Tel Aviv University, believe it is one of the finest and most important archaeological sites found in Israel. Archaeology fills in a breadth of details that help to make the histories and characters of the Bible seem more real, even though we are separated by thousands of years of history.

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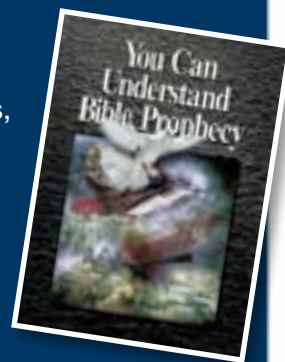
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