



Messages from Jesus or Dad are denoted by bold type. Notes from the editors are either in italics or are preceded by "Editor." Short quotes from the Letters are preceded by a bullet and are followed by the reference.

## WHEN WILL JESUS RETURN?

**A**S we enter 1998, I can't help but think about how close we must be to the Second Coming—when the Lord will return for His church and personally rule over the Earth for 1,000 years.

Oh, I know, some of you don't believe in such things. You think it's just a bunch of silly superstition. You prefer I stick to writing about news events of the physical world rather than arcane spiritual matters.

But, as a journalist, I can't ignore hard evidence—no matter where it may lead me. And the more I study the prophetic scriptures of the Holy Bible and look at the condition of our world today, the more convinced I become that we are nearing that time. In fact, I think we are very close.

For just as Jesus' virgin birth in Bethlehem was foretold by the Hebrew prophets hundreds of years earlier, so, too, was His return to Earth predicted. The only question is when.

The most dramatic evidence for His imminent return our generation has witnessed was the rebirth of the nation of Israel 50 years ago. The Jews were, as prophesied, scattered over the whole earth for nearly two millennia beginning shortly after Jesus' death on the cross. Yet, the scriptures leave no doubt that the Jewish state would exist once again before He returned.

Interestingly, Orthodox Jews have long taught that the world would last for 6,000 years before the Messiah would come and usher in a

1,000-year period of restful human history. Since God created the world in six days, according to Genesis 1:31, and rested on the seventh day, according to Genesis 2:2, they reasoned the world's history would climax the same way. They cite Psalm 90:4, which says: "For a thousand years in Thy sight are like yesterday when it passes by."

Likewise, Christians have looked to II Peter 3:8: "But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

The early church understood this "six-day theory" of world history. It was widely accepted teaching for the first three centuries of the church. From the time of Adam, we've got genealogical records to show that 4,000 years passed until the time of Christ. From Jesus' time until the present age represents another 2,000 years, for a total of 6,000 years or six days.

There's also a three-day theory: Jesus rose on the third day. Would the beginning of the third millennium—or thousand-year period—not be the likely time for His return to earth?

In 1776, Edward Gibbon published "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," in which he cites early documents suggesting the Christian disciples of the first century were taught that Jesus would return after 2000 years. We'll soon find out if they were right.

For many reasons, I believe Jesus is returning soon—if not in the year 2000, certainly

By JOSEPH FARAH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE WESTERN JOURNALISM CENTER

thereabouts. But I'm especially drawn to II Timothy 3:1-5, which describes the state of the world in the "last days." Tell me if this doesn't sound like our world: "But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these."

Jesus came 2,000 years ago and died for our sins. Now we should be hopeful and expectant of His imminent return.

**(Dad:) Wow, whatta witness! Sometimes people have to hear it from someone who isn't part of what they consider a "cult" or from a scientific standpoint before they'll sit up and take notice. I like this article! I believe it was written by a sincere man who has discerned the signs of the times. You ought to get excited when you see these things! You ought to get moved and motivated to get out the witness. Look up, for your redemption draweth nigh! It won't be long now!**

### ◆ Big Brother May Be Listening

#### Tracking of mobile phone users

ZURICH (*Reuters*) — Swiss police have secretly tracked the whereabouts of mobile phone users via a telephone company computer that records billions of movements going back more than half a year, the *Sonntags Zeitung* newspaper reported.

"Swisscom has stored data on the movements of more than a million mobile phone users. It can call up the location of all its mobile subscribers down to a few hundred meters and going back at least half a year," the paper reported.

"When it has to, it can exactly reconstruct down to the minute who met whom, where and for how long for a confidential tête-à-tête," it said.

Some 3,000 base stations across the country track the location of mobile phones as soon as they are switched on, not just when customers are having conversations.

**(Dad:) Control—it's a dangerous tool! There are many advantages to having this equipment, but you'd better be willing to pay the price of having your communications watched. I think it would be good for people to be aware of this when they invest in a mobile phone. They'd better really pray about it and be sure that this is what the Lord wants them to do. Remember, sometimes you have to give up a bit of convenience for the sake of your security. So before you buy one, make sure that you have prayed about it and have found the Lord's will on it.**

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### Notable Quotes

(*Los Angeles Times*) "What a disappointment the 20th century has been. We have seen in every country a dissolution, a weakening of the bonds, a challenge to those principles, a decay of faith, an abridgement of hope, on which the structure and ultimate existence of civilized society depends."—Winston Churchill, 1922.

**Editor:** In one day last July, the Thai baht plunged more than 12% in value against the U.S. dollar. Other Asian currencies followed suit. In the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and later South Korea, government officials were forced to devalue their currencies. That triggered a region-wide crisis, in which stock markets lost as much as 35% of their value, inflated real estate prices fell through the floor, banks collapsed, and hundreds of thousands of Southeast Asians, rich and poor, lost their jobs and fortunes.

South Korea, its economy on the brink of total collapse, accepted a \$60 billion international bailout from the IMF (with many strings attached). Indonesia and Thailand signed on to a similar \$40 billion bailout package, while Malaysia has so far refused international aid, correctly fearing that it would lead to foreign control over its economy. As Dad has taught, the IMF and the big money boys pull the rug out from under countries' economies, then loan them billions of dollars to save them from complete destruction—on the condition that they get to dictate the rules by which their economies will be run in the future! The following articles examine the continuing—and worsening—effects of this crash.

## The ultimate “doomsday” scenario?

BY ERIC MARGOLIS

Wobbly South Korean banks, many technically insolvent, owe billions to Japanese banks and industry. A major South Korean default on debts to Japan would likely trigger a run on Japanese banks, which are also in terrible shape.

A financial meltdown in Japan, the world's second biggest economy, would provoke international panic. This might produce bankers' ultimate “doomsday” scenario: massive redemption of Japan's holdings of \$230 billion of US Treasury bonds, causing a potentially fatal liquidity crisis in North America.

## Spreading unemployment

(*The Times*) Malaysia is threatening to send home half of its two million foreign workers. Police officials are said to be worried about the possible effects of thousands of unemployed foreign workers roaming the streets. In South Korea, anti-foreign sentiment is on the rise, and 270,000 guest workers may be sent home.

In China, the Communist Party said it would start selling off its tens of thousands of loss-making state-run enterprises, a scheme that could add to instability by making tens of millions more Chinese unemployed.

## Debt defaults loom

(*International Herald Tribune*) Currencies in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines have tumbled to record lows, bringing closer the specter of large-scale corporate defaults.

Analysts said that the downward spiral in currency values was undermining confidence in the ability of governments to restore stability.

“We have seen a major wave of foreign capital flight from Southeast Asia,” said Simon Ogus, chief economist for Asia in the Hong Kong office of SBC Warburg Dillon Read.

“Now we are seeing domestic capital flight. People just don't trust their policymakers in sorting this mess out.”

Some bankers and economists said that if the downward currency spiral continued, Indonesia and Thailand—the region's two most heavily indebted nations—might be forced to declare a moratorium on repaying private-sector debts, which total more than \$150 billion, to save many companies from going bust. Creditors can either agree to roll over their loans or face outright default.



## The Domino Effect

(*New York Times*) Many experts on Asia worry that growing economic frustrations risk provoking political and social upheavals. The economic crisis has already toppled one government, Thailand's, and some analysts believe that more could follow. “Leaders are generally vulnerable across the region,” said William H. Overholt, a Hong Kong-based managing director of Bankers Trust Co. Then there is the giant of the region, China—a domino that towers so high that it could produce a crash whose political, social and economic consequences would shake the world.

## The view from China

(*Reuters*) By imposing harsh terms on financial aid to troubled Asian nations, the United States was forcing into submission economic rivals in the region, the *People's Daily* newspaper said. “By giving help, [the U.S.] is forcing East Asia into submission, promoting the U.S. economic and political model, and easing East Asia's threat to the U.S. economy.”

## Malaysia

(*Reuters*) Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia exhorted his compatriots to join together to stem the slide of the ringgit by refraining from seeking refuge in more stable foreign currencies. He said Malaysia risked being “recolonized” by foreign powers if it failed to act. “The fall in our currency's value has made us poorer, exposing us to the possibility of being controlled by foreign powers. If this happens, we will lose the freedom to run our country's economy and with it our political freedom also. In short, we will be recolonized indirectly,” he said.

**(Dad:) Of course, this is just what the ACs want! They want to control the world, and they've finally found a safe, easy way of doing it. They don't have to have a war to conquer a country; now they can bring it to its knees through the economic markets of the world.**

## Soros says global finance system breaking down

LONDON (*Reuters*) — U.S. financier George Soros said the international financial system was suffering a systemic breakdown thanks to the crisis in Southeast Asia.



Writing in Britain's *Financial Times* newspaper, the multi-billionaire said the financial community should grab the opportunity to set up a new global authority to guarantee international loans for a fee.

“What started out as a minor imbalance (in Asia) has become a much bigger one that threatens to engulf not only international credit but also international trade. We are on the verge of worldwide deflation.”

**(Dad:) The ACs are just waiting until the time is right for them to set up their one-world government. They're working like mad to try to get people prepared for it by gradually applying more and more pressure and trying to convince people that it's a good idea. How better to do it than to appeal to people's pocketbooks by showing them that their money will be safer and not as likely to devalue and crash again. George Soros is right in there with them. You know that he wouldn't be where he is today and have the same influence and financial power if he weren't a cooperative player in their game.**

### Feeding frenzy by the vulture capitalists

BY PATRICK BUCHANAN

As Korea's plunging currency and stock prices kill its economy, 45 companies a day go belly up. But to some, that is not bad news. "Korean Companies are Looking Ripe to Foreign Buyers: Selling Spree Expected," ran the headline in *The New York Times*. The vulture capitalists will be feeding on Korea's carcass a long, long time.

Transnational corporations are poised to swoop in and snap up Korea's properties as in a game of Monopoly. Says Sen. Robert Toricelli: "The country is about to see a fire sale of some of its major assets." And when the U.S. corporations buy up these companies at bankruptcy-sale prices, they will find that Korea's currency collapse means that the dollar wages of Korean workers are now only half what they were in July. Isn't the Global Economy wonderful?

**(Dad:) They're buying up South Korea. They have sold their soul to the ACs, who are just cleaning them out now. They sold their souls on promises of riches, and now look where it has brought them. Pray for these people, that they may turn to the Lord in their hour of need and not to the Enemy. He (the AC) is creating the climate ready for his arrival—panic, turmoil and confusion—all of which will help his rise to the world throne. Reach this nation while you have the time, because the night is coming.**

### Castro warns of global crisis

HAVANA (Reuters)

Cuban President Fidel Castro has warned his parliament that "the world is on the brink of a crisis worse than that of 1929 caused by unscrupulous speculative practices and globalization."



Castro denounced "the financial practices of big speculators who, without producing any commodities, take advantage of the economic weaknesses of less developed nations to earn million of dollars in financial or stock market operations, leading to the virtual bankruptcy of those countries. They are like wolves, attacking the weakest animals of the pack."

**(Dad:) He's so right on! God bless this man who has stood his ground for so long and has fought the evils of the western world. God bless him for being willing to buck the tide and be among the few who are in the know but that haven't surrendered to the Enemy's plan. The Lord keeps him in power. He has been good to the humble people of Cuba, so the Lord is good to him. I love him and I have prayed many a prayer for him.**

**It is because of these prayers and the prayers of my children that the country is opening up. Keep the dear ones in your prayers who are willing to lay down their lives daily to bring these people the Gospel.**

### Return of the dollar

(*Washington Post Service*) The Almighty Dollar is back. With Asian financial markets in turmoil, Europe in an economic funk and the price of just about everything falling around the world, it seems everyone wants to have and hold dollars. Once investors fled to gold, as they had for centuries. But gold prices today are at their lowest levels in 17 years after having declined 25 percent over the past year.

### South Korea

(*Los Angeles Times*) South Korea is in serious trouble, and personal dreams have been shattered. Thus the hiking trails at Pukhansan National Park have become a sort of hide-out for newly unemployed businessmen. Too embarrassed to tell their families the bad news, the men continue to leave their homes each morning dressed in work attire but head for the mountains instead of their offices.

The human toll can also be measured by the increase in suicide and crimes such as theft, burglary and kidnapping, according to local newspapers. By one count, business executives are killing themselves at a rate of one a day.

These harsh new times are being dubbed the "IMF era," just as the rising lawlessness is sometimes characterized as "IMF crime"—reflecting the fact that some Koreans blame it not on their own national policies but on the reforms demanded by the IMF to address the country's woes.

(*New York Times News Service*) Korea is as proud and prickly a nation as any on the globe. For an A-plus student like South Korea to be sent to the corner with what feels like a dunce cap is a torture more psychological than economic, and the heartbreak on the frosty streets of Seoul is almost palpable.

This sense of humiliation may have far-reaching consequences. There is a deep anger in South Korea at Washington because of the conditions imposed as part of the bail-out.

In most of Asia the anxiety has been focused on personal fears about unemployment, tumbling stock prices, lost savings. In South Korea, the sense of injury encompasses all that but is centered on something broader and



vaguer—the sting to national honor, the fear that Korea itself has lost face before the world.

**(Dad:) I pity these dear Easterners who are so concerned about saving face. They have been dealt a rough hand by the big money boys and are having to live with it. But this humbling is good for them, as it will make them more receptive to the message. Now is a good time to show them the Endtime message. But show it in love, for they are broken and cast down right now and need encouragement. Show them that there is a brighter world tomorrow where they will be ruled in love and peace and without such evil men to torment them. Give them the Lord's love!**

### Thailand

(*New York Times News Service*) Six weeks ago, the seamstresses at the PAR Garment Factory on the outskirts of Bangkok arrived at work to find a sign on the gate that read: "The company is closed."

Uniformed guards told them to go home. The factory was bankrupt. But many of the workers—migrants from poor rural areas—had nowhere else to go. So they stayed, sleeping on straw mats on the sidewalk by the factory gate, waiting for some stroke of good fortune they know will never come.

"We can't find work at another factory because other factories are closing too," said Song Siwang, a 37-year-old seamstress. "And we don't want to go back to our home villages because there is no work there either." Poor workers throughout Southeast Asia in growing numbers are expected to lose their jobs in the months to come, some of the last to benefit and the first to suffer in the region's economic rise and fall.

**(Dad:) The people are desperate and needy. Never have they needed Jesus as much as they do today. Don't fail them! As you pour out, God will pour in. Remember, His shovel is far bigger than yours, and you can never outgive Him.**

## "Bienvenido, Juan Pablo"



(*Miami Herald*) It was historic. In a dramatic encounter between two men in their 70s who have strongly influenced the course of history in the second half of the 20th Century, Castro greeted the pope with an almost childlike wave when he appeared at the door of his Alitalia jetliner. Using a cane, John Paul walked slowly to the Cuban president and gripped his hands warmly.

Castro welcomed the visitor with a politically charged speech accusing Washington of committing "genocide" against Cuba. At the same time Castro tried to align his revolution with the Catholic Church. "We think alike" on a host of world calamities ranging from child prostitution to hunger, from outrageous national debts to racism and drugs, Castro said.

John Paul replied with a strong call to Castro and Cuba to "provide everyone with an atmosphere of freedom, of mutual trust, of social justice and lasting peace." He added: "May Cuba, with all its magnificent possibilities, open itself to the world."

Even before his jetliner touched down in Cuba, the pontiff had blasted communism and the U.S. embargo of Cuba.

"Unlike the revolution supported by ... Lenin, the revolution of Christ means the revolution of love," he said during a midflight news conference.

John Paul, who has traditionally opposed all economic sanctions against countries, also said he wants Washington to "change, change" its 36-year-old trade embargo on Cuba.

(*The Washington Post*) The U.S. embargo, which limits travel and prohibits Americans from selling things to Cubans or buying things from them, has been in place for nearly 40 years—with absolutely no beneficial results.

If we Americans truly believe in economic freedom, how can we perpetuate a policy that not only flouts that principle but has not worked anyway?

The Pope's most pressing complaint about capitalism involves a country that professes to practice it but which enforces an embargo that mocks it.

(*Miami Herald*) Cuba today has one of

the best public health records in the world, with one doctor for every 254 people, an infant survival rate that rivals Sweden's, and the United Nations' top rank for a massive child inoculation network that has eradicated four diseases.

Yet aspirin is hard to find, and many patients going into surgery must bring their own anesthesia and sheets. The shortage of soap has brought cases of human mange, and stomach disorders are rampant because Cuba can't afford the chemicals that keep water clean.

Castro's Cuba today has one of the lowest illiteracy rates in the hemisphere, offers free schools for everyone, and guarantees each student one uniform per year plus books, pencils and notebooks.

But there is now a huge and growing gap between the 60 to 70 percent of the people who earn pesos and the 30 to 40 percent with access to U.S. dollars.

"Today, if you're a loyal revolutionary, you're poor and your family is hungry," Miami sociologist Juan Clark said. "But if you have a cousin in Miami, if you deal in the black market, then your family eats."

(*Miami Herald*) Havana's Revolution Plaza has been transformed by a vivid eight-story-high painting of Jesus. Until six years ago, atheism was the creed of President Fidel Castro's Cuba. And many Cubans can barely contain their astonishment at the sight of the huge image of Jesus at the city's principal crossroads. (*See photo above of painting being put up.*)

The bright bluish-green and red image adorns most of the side of the towering National Library. The image is even larger than the metal silhouette of Ernesto "Che" Guevara, the revolutionary icon, that graces the facade of the nearby Interior Ministry.

A 63-year-old widow who said she had remained a faithful Catholic through the years said she had been told she would get a free ticket for the bus ride to the plaza for the pope's mass. She shook her head: "All these years they made us crawl or silenced us. Now they're giving us rides to hear the man they said was the enemy of the revolution. If you want to think that is a miracle, that's all right."

## Dad on ...

### Pope John Paul II

"This pope has traveled more and gone to more countries than any other pope in history, and I believe he has a genuine love for the world, for lost people, and he's worked hard at winning them. ... I think he's a very good and sincere man. He's like a true shepherd who is reaping the last reaping! I don't agree with him about everything, but I heartily agree with him on most things. He's ... sacrificing his life and endangering his life trying to visit his whole flock in all the world! I think that guy is willing to really risk his life to love those people!" (ML #2927:54-55; 1897:71).

### Cuba

Cuba is a "beautiful combination of Florida and California on one big island!—One of the most beautiful places on earth, with mountains and trees and tropical jungles like Hawaii and a beautiful tropical climate, as well as the sweetest and most lovely people you can find almost anywhere on Earth!" (ML #1224).

### Castro

"I really believe dear ol' Castro loves the Lord. I even heard him say on the radio once what Cubans need to be is more Christian, and I believe he meant it. He really tried to be more Christian by sharing the wealth, the vast wealth and lands of the rich, with Cuba's very poverty-stricken poor. That's what made so many people, especially the rich Americans who nearly owned Cuba, so angry at him, and they haven't forgiven him to this very day." (ML #1224. See also ML #1783:29-39.)

### The U.S. embargo of Cuba

"The U.S. is the one that's making a mess out of Cuba. It's not the fault of the Cubans or Castro. Castro has made his mistakes, but the U.S. is the main one to blame. The U.S. is trying to blame Cuba's poverty and troubles and everything else on Castro, when for 30 years the U.S. has devastated Cuba through American sanctions and embargoes. It's those embargoes that have made it so hard on the Cubans, just like the sanctions ... are doing to the Iraqis. It's hurting the poor of Cuba more than anybody, whom they claim they want to help! If the U.S. would just drop the embargoes, Cuba would thrive and prosper even under Castro; but the U.S. doesn't want to. The U.S. is a big bully, and big bullies have a lot of pride and cannot stand to be defied, opposed or challenged!" (ML #2954:1,2,7-10. See also ML #2940:13.)

## ◆ NORTH AMERICA

### God, miracles and religion

WASHINGTON (AP) — A new survey finds that more Americans now believe in God and in miracles than they did a decade ago.

A poll commissioned by the Pew Research Center reported 71 percent of respondents say they never doubt the existence of God. In a similar poll in 1987, the figure was 60 percent.

The poll also found that 61 percent of Americans believe miracles come from the power of God—an increase of 14 percentage points from a decade ago.

53 percent said prayer is important to daily life; in 1987, it was 41 percent.

But at the same time, radio talk show host Laura Schlessinger asserted on NBC's "Meet the Press" that the U.S. is in the midst of a morality crisis. Americans "don't seem to have much of a moral framework," she said.

Schlessinger said the clergy bears responsibility, too. "I yell at the clergy all the time," she said. "I think the clergy—with all due respect—have become more like camp counselors than leaders.

"What they're doing is saying, 'I want the people to come back next week. You can't challenge them too much, can't ask too much, can't tell them that religion demands something of them.' God demands something of you.

"Since they're not doing that, it's like the inmates are running the institution," Schlessinger said.

**(Dad:) She's right! God bless her! Make it sting, girl! Get those priests and preachers moving! It's true, the Bible says it: "Because sin doth abound, grace doth much more abound" (Rom.5:20).**

## ◆ MIDEAST

### Israeli police say Jews plan to harm Islamic shrine

JERUSALEM (Reuters) — Israeli police know of plans by Jewish extremists to damage Islamic shrines at Jerusalem's Temple Mount, Israel's outgoing police chief said in an interview.

"We know there are elements in the extremist right that are planning to harm the mosques on the Temple Mount," police chief Assaf Hefetz told the *Yedioth Ahronoth* newspaper.

The Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa mosque, Islam's third holiest shrine, stand on the Temple Mount on ground where Judaism's ancient sacred temple was razed by the Romans in the year 70 AD.

Some messianic Jewish groups hope to see the temple rebuilt on the site.

(AP) Vast water reservoirs underneath the al-Aqsa mosque compound are in danger of collapse, threatening sites sacred to Islam and Judaism, a British archaeologist warns.

The risk goes beyond the prospect of a natural disaster: A calamity in the most sensitive spot in the Israeli-Arab conflict could trigger widespread violence. Muslim authorities have long-standing suspicions that Jews want to re-establish the Jewish Temple on the site. Given the distrust and suspicion, such a collapse would likely trigger Arab-Israeli conflict.

"It would be like a brush fire," said Joseph

## The end of the world is virtually nigh

ISRAEL IS to use the latest in computer technology to provide millions of pilgrims flocking to the Holy Land with the ultimate experience at the spot marking the world's ultimate battlefield.

The biblical site of Armageddon, which in Hebrew means the Mount of Megiddo, is to be transformed for the millennium into an "intellectual theme park" where pilgrims will experience the final battle between good and evil that many Christians believe will signal the end of the world.

At a cost of millions of pounds and in cooperation with computer giant IBM, Israel will begin work in creating what the planners describe as a "virtual Armageddon."

The project involves using a combination of computer graphics created in a system known as "magic windows," holograms, sound and light shows and the imaginative siting of 14 new multimedia "visitor centers" on the historic mound where the final battle is supposed to be fought.

The project involves a controversial attempt to bring the past alive while trying to put flesh and blood on the words of Old Testament prophecy in Joel 2:1, describing the future battle meant to usher in the end of days: "Let all who live in the land tremble. For the day of the Lord is coming." —THE TIMES

**(Dad:) There will be a show, all right! One of these days Jesus is going to come riding down on a white stallion and split the Mount of Olives in two. There will be a show, but there won't be many just watching it. It will be an awful battle and defeat for the Enemy—blood up to the horses' bridles! Talk about winning wars! This one we can't lose, because God's on our side. PTL! I am looking forward to wiping out our enemies in this battle, and you'll all be there too. Together we're gonna vanquish the power of the Devil. Whatta fight! I love it!**

**Don't you miss it! Don't be ashamed of Him! Stand strong, and you will be strong to fight against the Antichrist and all his little devils. What a day that will be when Jesus comes back with all of us behind Him to finish, once and for all, the Antichrist's reign. Talk about a coup! This will be the coup of all ages, to topple the AC's government and set up one ruled in love by Christ and His servants!**

**Let's get this job done! Time's almost up! The last grains of sand are tumbling through the hourglass, and the End is nigh.**

*(Editor: For more on Armageddon, see Zec.14:1-5; Rev.16:16; 19:11-21.)*

Alpher, a Middle East political analyst. "A cry would go out to the entire Muslim world to rally against the Jews."

**(Dad:) The skies are red with warning and black with clouds! Be prepared, for the Great Confusion will come on you suddenly. Those stubborn Jews want a new temple and want to start their sacrifices again. Stay tuned in for further developments!**

## ◆ RUSSIA

### Back-page news

New York Times News Service

MOSCOW — Sometimes you can tell a lot about a country by what's on the front pages of its newspapers. Sometimes you can tell even more by what's on the back.

Here's some back-page news from Russia: The pilots of a helicopter based in southern Russia had not been paid for so many months that they flew their chopper to a secluded spot and hid it. They said they would only return it when they received their back pay. Or, how about this for back-page news? The employees of the Ministry of Atomic Energy—the folks responsible for maintaining Russia's nuclear warheads—haven't been paid in 10 weeks.

Discovering what is back-page news in Russia helps one better understand why Russia responds differently than America to the prospects of Iran or Iraq acquiring weapons of mass destruction. Russia is otherwise engaged. It's hard to worry about Iraq's weapons when your own nuclear employees are going unpaid and crews are hiding their helicopters.

Iraq and Iran for America are twin evils. Iraq and Iran for Russia are sources of back pay. Iraq owes Russia \$7 billion.

The United States and Russia today are no longer playing on the same global chessboard. They are each playing on many different chessboards. Some overlap, some don't. For instance, says the Russian foreign policy expert Vyacheslav Mikonov, "Russia simply does not consider Iranian Muslim fundamentalists the worst thing in the world." For Russia, the Saudi fundamentalists are worse because the Saudis supported the Chechen separatists.

**(Dad:) They are all intertwined in one big game, all tangled in each other's web of deceit. Their master pulls the strings and they jump just like a bunch of marionettes. "Wave now." "Smile, be friends. Peace." "Strike now!" They just follow his commands like puppets. (Editor: See ML #3152, GN 757.)**

### Warning from John Major

(JVIM) At a business conference in Washington, D.C., former British Prime Minister John Major warned U.S. and other policy makers: "Western policy would be very wise indeed to be sensitive to Russia while she is weak, because if they are not, there may be a price to be paid when she is strong."

**(Dad:) He's right! It's all there in the Scriptures. The Russian Bear will awake and go on a rampage. Be prepared! (Editor: See Ezekiel 38-39.)**

# SIGNS, SIGNS, SIGNS OF THE TIMES

➤ **“And there shall be famines...” (Mat.24.7).**

## The coexistence of feast and famine

LOS ANGELES TIMES

In the second half of the 20th century, famine no longer is a scourge of nature but results from war, politics and other misdeeds of man.

Thanks to breakthroughs in science and agriculture, the world now produces enough food to feed every man, woman and child on the planet. But hunger and starvation persist. And in many places, they appear to be worsening.

Despite a worldwide glut of food, 18 million people die of starvation, malnutrition and related causes every year, according to a newly released Johns Hopkins University study. And more than 800 million people are chronically undernourished, U.N. statistics show.

More often than not, the reasons for this cruel paradox—hunger in the midst of global plenty—have little to do with natural causes. Of the millions who go hungry every day, “we estimate that only 10% are victims of disaster,” said World Food Program Executive Director Catherine Bertini.

At last year’s World Food Summit in Rome, a U.S. Department of Agriculture report identified some of the forces that create hunger: war and civil strife, misguided national policies, trade barriers such as crop subsidies, technology, environmental degradation, poverty, and gender inequality.

The most dramatic moment at the Summit came when Cuba’s aging revolutionary Fidel Castro rose and asked the audience, “If the world has more than enough food to feed all its people, why should even one person starve? Why should even one child go hungry?”

“Hunger, the inseparable companion of the poor, is the offspring of the unequal distribution of the wealth and the injustices in this world. The rich do not know hunger” said Castro. “What kind of cosmetic solutions are we going to provide so that in 20 years from now there will only be 400 million instead of 800 million starving people?”

**(Dad:) I like Castro. The Lord has put a real special love in my heart for him. He’s a good man and genuinely wants to help the poor. I’ve been saying these things for the past 20 years, and now finally the world is starting to wake up and listen. God bless Castro for his conviction!**

➤ **“And pestilences ...”**

## When a new flu appears, health officials are wary

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

A “bird flu” strain of influenza virus has caused only 20 confirmed or suspected cases of human illness in Hong Kong. Yet Hong Kong health officials are so worried about the virus that they slaughtered all 1.2 million chickens in the territory. And virologists around the

world have been burning the midnight oil for several weeks, studying the strain and attempting to make a vaccine for it.

Why should so few cases cause such drastic measures locally and apprehension globally?

There is nothing like a new strain of influenza virus to make health officials shiver. They have long warned that a worldwide influenza epidemic like the one that killed 21 million people in 1918 and 1919 could strike again without warning.

Influenza’s impact can far exceed the range of the most ferocious hurricane. In about the time it takes a hurricane to sweep through a region, sneezes and coughs can begin spreading the virus through the world. Few other infectious diseases have the potential to kill millions of people of all ages so quickly.

**(Jesus:) I said in My Word that there would be famines and pestilences in the Last Days (Mat.24:7). All this is a fulfillment of My Word. Look now and behold the many scourges and diseases that are upon the people of this world. Look now and compare this with My Words. See if you don’t see all that I have spoken coming to pass in your lifetime. Surely the End is nigh. Look up and praise Me, for I shall return soon to rescue My Own!**

## Killer cells invade North Sea

BBC

LONDON — A potentially lethal micro-organism, dubbed the “cell from hell,” has begun to invade the North Sea. The cells, called *pfisteria piscicida*, were originally a harmless plant. But in North Carolina, pollution has caused *pfisteria* to mutate into a highly toxic killer preying on fish.



Pfisteria cell

When *pfisteria* attacks, it uses its poison to stun the fish, who lose all orientation. Then the organism proceeds to eat the fish alive. American fishermen complain that *pfisteria* kills millions of fish. Marine experts warn that the same could happen in the North Sea.

Humans became targets too. More and more people living and working along the U.S. coast began to suffer from open sores which would not heal, had headaches and memory loss. The culprit: *pfisteria*. In one experiment, *pfisteria* cells were put into human blood. They immediately attacked and swallowed all blood cells.

The organism is almost indestructible. When *pfisteria* cysts are put into sulphuric acid they survive for 30 minutes. A human body thrown into sulphuric acid would quickly dissolve.

➤ **“And earthquakes ...”**

## Earthquakes more deadly

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Geological Survey reports there were fewer earthquakes than usual in 1997, but they killed more people.

The agency said it recorded 17 major tremors during the year, meaning those with a magnitude of 7.0 or more and thus capable of widespread, heavy damage. The annual average is 20 major quakes.

Despite the decline in temblors, the 1997 death toll was at least 2,913, up from 449 in 1996.

The year’s deadliest earthquake struck northern Iran on May 10 with a magnitude of 7.1. It caused at least 1,567 deaths, 2,300 injuries and left 50,000 homeless.

**(Dad:) If you don’t believe that you’re living in the Endtime, just look around you! There are signs everywhere. Don’t let the Devil blind you into thinking that there’s enough time to relax and do as you please. Time is short, and you’ve gotta work like there’s no tomorrow. Your time is always ready. What if you had been one of those people killed in an earthquake? Would you be able to face the Lord with a clear conscience knowing that you did your best for Him? I hope so!**

## Climate change sparks age of the volcano

THE SUNDAY TIMES

LONDON — Sea level changes caused by global warming could trigger the eruption of hundreds of new or dormant volcanoes, turning the 21st century into the fiercest on record, according to a study by British scientists.



Mt. St. Helens

They predict that the rise in volcanic activity would have catastrophic effects on the Earth’s climate, damage many cities and affect air quality so badly that “millions” could die from respiratory ailments.

Worldwide there are 1,500 active volcanoes, with a surge apparent in Europe over the past few years. Geologists recently reported that a volcano near Rome which has been dormant for millennia is waking and that a huge bubble of magma has formed three miles underground and 10 miles north of the city.

**(Dad:) Don’t say that it’s just a “natural phenomenon,” because it isn’t. Nothing happens by accident! Everything has a cause, and this is all coming to pass to fulfill God’s Word. He spoke it and we’ve preached it, and now it’s happening! All those scoffers are soon gonna see just how right we were and how wrong they were to criticize us and condemn us. When their towers start to fall and their riches lie in ruins, they will lament and weep because they didn’t listen to us, God’s prophets. So pay attention, there is more to come!**

➤ **Wars and rumors of wars**

## World hot spots

LONDON (AP) — In 1998, military analysts warn of potential hot spots throughout a troubled world.

# SIGNS, SIGNS, SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Serbia's restive Kosovo province could be a flash point. Israel's northern border with Syria and Lebanon may heat up. There's a risk of another border conflict between Peru and Ecuador. Tensions in Rwanda and Burundi may blow up again, and the United States can expect more problems with Saddam Hussein. The analysts predict more difficulties for Israel with Hamas, further trouble for Egypt with Islamic extremists, and no end to civil wars in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka.

Greece and Turkey remain at odds over the ethnically divided island of Cyprus, where tensions have risen following the European Union's decision to leave Turkey off the list of potential members. The situation is compounded by the Greek Cypriot government's expected receipt of Russian surface-to-air missiles and Turkey's pledge to destroy them if they are deployed.

**(Dad:) Wars and rumors of wars! It's gotta get worse before it can get better, folks, and boy, it's gonna get a lot worse! You see, people won't be willing to accept the Antichrist imposing his plans on them unless it's so bad that they're willing to do anything just for a solution to all the problems, and they're convinced that he's able to save the world from the mess that it's in. In other words, you can't be convinced that you need a savior until you first realize that you can't save yourself. When the world finally realizes that things are just going to keep getting worse and not better and that there's nothing they can do about it, that's when they'll be ready for the AC to take control.**

## Missiles stay at the ready

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

Burns, Wyo. — Awesome nuclear power still sleeps below the Great Plains in mid-America. Many of the weapons, and their keepers, still remain on watch.

It is easy to forget that the U.S. military still spends about \$28 billion a year to keep about 7,500 nuclear warheads ready for use. This is roughly the equivalent of 145,000 Hiroshima bombs.

*(MSNBC)* Bologoye, Russia — Deep below ground in a hardened nuclear-command bunker, Cmdr. Alexander Kapryushkin of Russia's Strategic Rocket Forces has his finger on Russia's nuclear button.

The days of Cold War confrontation are over, but down in the bunker, 34-year-old Kapryushkin still sees America as Russia's enemy. "We can clearly see that the imperialist world, led by the United States, is rapidly advancing toward us," he says with conviction. "Their goal is to destroy our state."

Russia's estimated 6,000 nuclear warheads are no longer aimed at the United States, but they are capable of being re-targeted in a few minutes. An SS-25 missile



Russian ICBM in silo

of the type that Kapryushkin controls from his bunker at the Bologoye rocket base north of Moscow can obliterate an American city just ten minutes after launch. And the ability to launch the missiles lies literally at the fingertips of low-level officers like Kapryushkin. There's no fail-safe system to prevent an accidental launch or keep a rogue commander from triggering nuclear Armageddon.

**(Dad:) Watch out! They're planning to use them, too. All this hogwash about peace and brotherhood is just a load of nonsense. They're just trying to lull the world to sleep. They know that there will come a time when such a show of force is necessary. This "world peace" will not last forever. The Bible says in one hour they are going to be destroyed (Rev.18:10,17,19). And it will be without warning because they didn't heed the voices of all the prophets the Lord sent to warn them of things to come. They rejected us, and now the Lord will reject them. My stance is still the same on the evil system of America. She's still an ugly whore in spirit, and one day she will get what she deserves for her wickedness. God help those who will not repent!**

## ➤ "A falling away" (2Thes.2:3).



Waning church attendance

## 70 Church of England ministers admit they no longer believe in God

THE SUNDAY TIMES

LONDON — More than 70 serving Anglican priests are members of an organization that does not believe in the literal truth of the Bible, the existence of God, or the resurrection. The clergymen have joined Sea of Faith, an organization which dismisses the traditional beliefs in God. Instead, it believes that God is a mystical and personal experience which has no physical incarnation.

Sea of Faith, which started in the early 1980s, has grown in the past few years and now has a membership estimated at 800. Among clerical sympathizers are Roman Catholics as well as ministers from evangelical Protestant denominations.

When asked how in conscience he could prepare his people for Christmas while not himself believing in the virgin birth, one clergyman, who asked not to be identified, said: "I wouldn't tell people that Father Christmas didn't exist — it's the same as that."

**(Dad:) There shall come a great falling away first (2Thes.2:3). Those hypocrites! People are looking to them for guidance, and all they can say is that they don't believe in God. How ridiculous can they get! Well, some of them have probably seen a dandy bad example or two that has turned their hearts away from the Lord, along with all that nonsense they teach in the cemeteries (seminaries) these days. God help them.**

Some are sincere, but if they don't believe in God, then what the hell are they doing in the church in the first place? If they'd obeyed God's command to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, they wouldn't be having these problems. But because they chose to settle down, look where it has gotten them. Let that be a lesson to never let yourselves get too settled down and conformed to this world! We've gotta stay dropped out like Jesus and His disciples were. Preach the Word, be instant Christians, and there will be no time to settle down. Hallelujah!

I always get riled up when I think of all those hypocritical churches! By not saving souls, they're sending people to Hell, and are causing more trouble than they're worth! It's time for some real persecution of the church to strengthen their convictions and get them moving. If they won't move on their own, then the Lord has to give them an Acts 8:1 shove to get them going. Thank God for those who are doing the job! Great is their reward in Heaven. PTL!

## ➤ "Distress of nations, with perplexity" (Luk.21:25).

### The paradox of prosperity

TIME

The world as we knew it has changed forever, and the American Century looks to conclude with a huge party. But if we are so rich, how come we're not happy? "There is not a lot of euphoria out there," says Tom Smith of the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, whose survey finds that job satisfaction, financial satisfaction and overall happiness are all lower now than the average for the past 20 years.

New technology may be fueling gains in productivity, but that means many people are working harder than before. Americans are working 160 hours more each year than they did 20 years ago, moonlighting is on the rise and nearly half the respondents in one survey said they have less time for lunch. Anxiety disorders affect more people than depression or substance abuse. "People were saying, 'As soon as things get good, I'm going to take some time off,'" says pollster Celinda Lake. "And now they say, 'Oh, my God, things have gotten as good as they can get, and I can't take time off or stop that second job.'"

In this climate, it is easy to find people like the Jorjorians in affluent Wilmette, Ill., who are raising two children and finding it tough to get by on their \$170,000 joint income. "I earn more in a month than my dad did in a year," says Greg, 52, managing director for a chemical-sales company. "But I feel my life is more difficult."

**(Dad:) These poor people are trying to fill their lives with everything but the answer. They've been told that money would make them happy and they believed it. Now they are finding out that it is empty, vain and worthless. Let's give 'm Jesus! He is the only solution to their problems and the only one who can give happiness.**

# SIGNS, SIGNS, SIGNS OF THE TIMES

## ➤ Racing Toward the Mark!



### I am a microchip!

THE INDEPENDENT

Formerly best-known as a TV sports commentator and leading spokesman for the British Green Party, David Icke (45) now tours the world spilling the beans about government conspiracies such as the international drug trade involving George Bush, Bill Clinton and other big names, the Oklahoma City bombing, collective and individual mind control, to mention but a few topics.

The fact that no one has sued him only lends further credence to his claims. A tireless campaigner for truth, Icke has written 10 books showing that the same few people, secret societies and organizations control the daily directions of our lives. They engineer wars, revolutions, terrorist outrages and political assassinations; they control the world market in hard drugs and the media.

"The secret government of the world is manipulating the human mind to accept a centralized global tyranny, as we speak. This tyranny is called the New World Order, and unless we wake up it will manifest as a world government; a world central bank, currency and army and a microchipped population linked to a global computer.

"Already domestic animals are being microchipped and linked to a computer. The Queen of England has had her pet corgis microchipped. Prince Charles will be next, you watch," he laughs.

Only it's no laughing matter. Icke says the move to phase out the use of coins and notes is underway and all money transactions will become electronic via a credit or smart card.

"Today if you go into a shop to buy anything and your credit card is refused by the computer, you can pay with cash. What happens when there is no cash? If the computer refuses your card or microchip, you have no means to buy anything. We will then be robots in every sense of the word, an extension of a computer program."

Icke says The Elite plan includes the microchipping of all babies at birth. "The technology already exists, and all that remains is to persuade the public to accept it. One way this will be done is to highlight missing children stories, including the abduction of babies from maternity wards.

"Another selling point of this would be the phasing out of passports. In the UK people are already being microchipped with their medical records. Even more frightening is that the microchip can be used to modify behavior."

**(Dad:) You can see it coming, can't you? I'm not the only one who has been telling you this. God bless this fighter for standing up for the truth in spite of all the opposition and threats. Pray that he can stand strong and continue until it's the Lord's time to take him Home. I love him and I pray for him. You should too.**

**“Those who refuse to worship the Beast or accept his Mark or number will neither be able to buy or sell. So we who worship God will starve, suffer, be persecuted, and even slain! But our faith in God will save us, and after 3½ years of this awful time of the Great Tribulation under the Beast's new economic and religious system, Christ will come and rescue us and destroy the Antichrist government of the world and set up His Own Kingdom here on Earth!” (ML #243:51).**

## Scientists step closer to connecting brain to a computer

THE SUNDAY TIMES

LONDON — The mind-expanding prospect of an electronic implant in the brain to extend human intelligence has come a step nearer with the growth of living nerves on a silicon chip.

Scientists have grown the nerve cells of a rat, which are almost identical to those of humans, on a silicon chip and transmitted electrical impulses along the nerves to sensors within the device.

The findings are being hailed as a crucial first step in developing direct connections between computers and the brain. This will lead to silicon-based enhancements for the body, ranging from memory devices inside the head to "bionic" eyes that allow blind people to see.

Stefano Vassenelli, a member of the research team at the Max Planck Institute for Biochemistry in Germany, said the experiment showed it was theoretically possible to connect human nerve cells to a similar microchip. "This is an important step needed to take cells from a human and to connect them to a chip. It shows it may be possible to connect the human brain to a computer," said Mr. Vassenelli.

Colin Humphreys, a professor at Cambridge University, said the latest research raised the frightening prospect of one day being able to control someone's mind through silicon chip implants.

**(Dad:) It says it right there: It may one day be used to control a human's mind through the use of a microchip. The technology is rapidly developing and will soon be upon you—the Mark of the Beast. "Oh, what a handy device to boost my memory," or, "Now we can keep track of criminals!" Control is what it's all about. Some people want to control others' minds. There's really not very much good about this new technology; it's all headed towards the Mark.**

## Mind over matter

HIMEJI, Japan (AP) — Something spooky's afoot. Lights turn on without warning. The TV flashes channels at random. But there are no poltergeists here. A scientist-entrepreneur decked out in pink goggles is controlling everything—apparently with his brain waves.

Hidenori Onishi is using a device that senses brain wave patterns and converts them into signals used to operate electrical appliances. The device looks like a pair of ski goggles—it holds electrodes to the head, attached to a laptop-sized computer. It is called the Mind Control Tool Operating System, or MCTOS.

"The system requires no training by the user, because the brain waves the machine responds to are emitted simply by exercising the will," Onishi said. Any strong mental affirmation sends out a brain signal that the electrodes apparently intercept and feed to the computer. The computer then activates the appropriate appliance.

An AP reporter who tested the system easily mastered simple tasks like turning on lights. More demanding activities such as channel surfing took a bit of extra thought, however.

## The extinction of privacy in the information age

MELBOURNE AGE

If Robin Hood had lived in the information age, he'd never have escaped the Sheriff of Nottingham. These days They always know where you are and what you are doing.

More than likely They will know your size in underwear and whether it's boxer shorts. They'll know which petrol stations and restaurants you patronize. They will have a good idea of what you have in your pantry and refrigerator, the brand of beer and wine you drink, whether you smoke, what kind of car you drive and how well you look after it.

If you use a credit card or make a call on your mobile phone, the networks know exactly where you are and, to some extent, what you are doing. By studying spending patterns, much may be learnt about your tastes and habits.

All of this and much more have been brought to us by the digital technology that surrounds us and permeates our lives so efficiently that today most of it goes unnoticed and unchecked. It is the iceberg beneath the shining, convenient, everyone-has-to-have-one, plastic tip.

The mechanics of life have changed irrevocably. Where once you went to the bank to get money or drew it from a brown pay envelope, now you take a sliver of plastic to a hole in the wall. Soon even that will go, replaced by a slot in your home PC or your telephone.

Cash is disappearing, even for parking meters. Plastic cards with magnetic strips or, now more commonly, embedded computer chips are replacing notes and coins. Money has all but ceased to exist. Now it's just a digital message between computers.

Ultimately the smart card with its built-in microprocessor is the key to almost everything, from the lock on your front door to proof of identity at the bank or the polling booth. It is the information age ID card and, far from questioning it, we are about to embrace it. Privacy is one of those words going rapidly out of fashion.

**(Editor: "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" [Rev.13:16-17].)**