



# ETERNAL VALUE REVIEW

## MONEY MONITOR & GLOBAL TRENDS REPORT

ISSUE 3, VOLUME 11

"For thinking Christians seeking to understand the times."

June 2008

## FEATURE REPORT

### Food Crisis and the Coming Anti-joseph

"The seven years of abundance in Egypt came to an end, and the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had said. There was famine in all the other lands, but in the whole land of Egypt there was food. When all Egypt began to feel the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food. Then Pharaoh told all the Egyptians, 'Go to Joseph and do what he tells you'" (Genesis 41: 53-55).

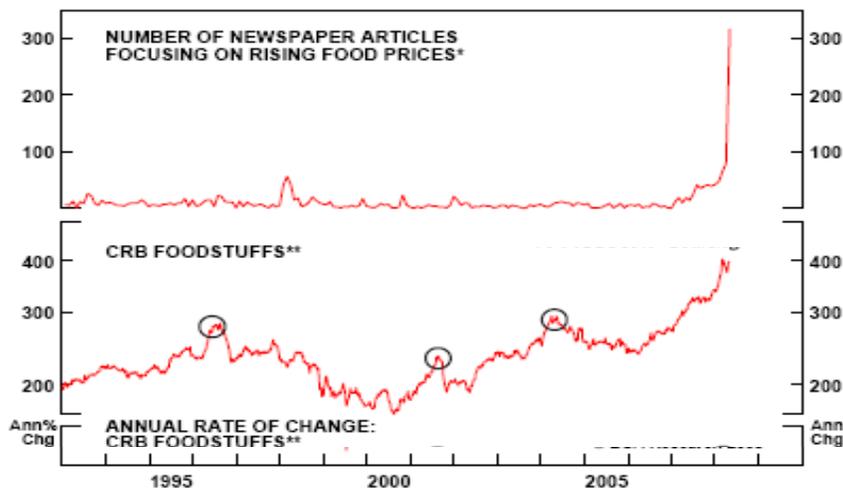
It is heart-rending to learn what people in unfortunate circumstances will sometimes do to quell the pangs of hunger. In a desperate response to food shortages, they may riot and steal as is being witnessed in various countries around the world in recent times. In the story of Joseph, we see that people were prepared to do everything that he said in order to avoid starvation. Put in such a situation, acts of desperation to avoid immediate tragedy are understandable.

Such was the case in Egypt almost 4,000 years ago when Joseph reigned as vice-regent. He had been put in charge of the entire kingdom of the Pharaoh and was commissioned to prepare the nation for a coming seven-year famine. He ended up being an economic potentate. The entire commercial structure of the known world at that time, as well as almost all the land in Egypt came under the control of this one man.

Thankfully, Joseph was a godly person and his actions led to the saved lives of perhaps millions of people. Yet, the Bible remains silent on its judgment of his techniques. However, it is evident to any reader that the consequences of his actions were not entirely ideal. The entire ownership structure of the land of Egypt was changed virtually overnight from private ownership to vassalage. Also, as a result of Joseph's policies, a system of onerous taxation

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### Global Food Worries: A Foreshadowing?



Source: BCA Research, Commodity Research Bureau

## WORLD MONEY UPDATE

### Locust Ranks Led by the Prince

Watching the storm-driven money affairs of the world in recent years, the specter is becoming ever more similar to the action of locust swarms. These clouds of insects are intent upon devouring fodder... frenetically focused on the accumulation of gain and wealth.

These days, there is just so much financial capital in the world that is managed by portfolio managers or corporate executives—in other words, money and capital that is centrally commandeered by an ever smaller cadre of elites—that a value-free, locust-like rapaciousness has become ever more pronounced. Past conventions and precedents are ignored as the primary emphasis is financial survival and the big pay-off.

However, today, financial survival is not only defined quantitatively but also in relative terms. Post-modernism is everywhere, not just affecting religions and social mores. If serving God has become a definitional morass with ever-moving boundary stones and doctrine, you can be

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*"You have increased the number of your merchants till they are more than the stars of the sky, but like locusts they strip the land and then fly away."*

Nahum 3:16

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sure that serving Mammon is equally so. In the name of gain, the enterprising experts in greed (2 Peter 2:14) will have the upper hand.

Lately, the locusts have been pouncing upon new prospects of gain now that previous sources have been denuded. Energy and agricultural commodities have been soaring. It is a sign of the times in at least two senses. Firstly, commodities are usually the last game in any speculative investment cycle. They are usually part of the inflationary, over-heating phase. However, that is not to say that there are not special reasons behind recently soaring oil and food stuff prices.

The second significance of this recent rush into commodities is the growing “locust” factor affecting world markets. Investment capital is so aggressive and driven by the quest for gains, that virtually anything goes. Portfolio managers and corporate executives are so incited by big pay-offs for success—tens of millions in bonuses ... even billions in gains—that such type of behavior is richly rewarded.

For example, recently, we have seen consumable food items such as corn and rice hoarded in the hope of making gains. New types of investment vehicles which seek to profit from commodity price gains have been formed. Large institutional investors such as pension funds and private investors alike have been piling in. Some argue that these new types of investments funds can add to the upward pressure on various commodity prices. It does seem rather remarkable that perishable items such as food (*unlike, for example, a metal such as gold or silver*) should be a storehouse of wealth.

Elsewhere, there are reports of oil tankers being hired to store crude oil, thus keeping it from market in the expectation of higher prices. Whatever the means of these and other strategies, the point is that enormous amounts of capital are sloshing around the world today that are quick to settle upon the latest money-making opportunity in

swarm-like fashion. This contributes to an environment of careening prices and serial financial bubbles.

Watching the ferocity of these money flows, it can be seen that the world’s poor are being disadvantaged. For example, those with the lowest living standards—the ones that are already on the bottom of the rung—are facing the greatest hardships as food and energy prices soar. Hedge fund investors and commodity speculators may be exulting; the poor are crying out. This can be seen to line up with the picture of the last days prophesied by James: *“The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty”* (James 5:4).

While that specific time is not here yet, we can today certainly discern these insidious and blaring impulses at work. While part of the world grows ever richer—stockpiling riches and *“hoarding up wealth in the last days”* (James 5:3)—the workers of the field are increasingly disenfranchised. There is no telling how far such conditions could yet worsen. If the recent devastation in the world’s financial system ends up leading to a period of wild and massive monetary malfeasance (*a not unlikely development*), the world could plausibly succumb to a frightening “crack up” boom. That would be a period where a world of relativistic human beings (*with no reference or hope of eternity*) runs after anything that can soar in price, in a panicked effort to preserve wealth.

What about the financial troubles of the world’s banking and financial systems? Before we venture an answer, it is worth stopping to ask: Just who is the boss of the rampaging locusts? To answer, we must first affirm the reference point of the Judeo-Christian perspective of good and evil; the rebellion of Satan; and the cosmology of the things of both the beginning and the end.

There are only two masters, namely God and Mammon. Mammon, in a sense, represents the spiritual entity that seeks to organize the temporal and fleshly lusts of the world away from the glory of God. It is materialistic toxology versus doxology. Therefore, if God disciplines those that He loves (Hebrews 12:8-10), we can also surmise that the spirit behind Mammon disciplines those that do not conform with its plan.

If Satan, the “prince of this world,” (John 12:31) has the power to reward his servants with *“authority and splendor”* (Luke 4:5) we can know that he surely orchestrates the last-day Mammonism enveloping the world. Of course, to do so, he must also chasten his servants from time to time, lest they get too greedy and undermine the goals of a carefully planned last-day trap for the world. (Luke 21:34)

The writer of Proverbs was correct when he observed that *“locusts have no king, yet they advance together in ranks”* (Proverbs 20:27). Rather, they are led by the Prince who controls his ranks of servants through the soft reins of



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temptation and idol affections.

That leads us back to the current state of affairs. Indeed, the world's financial system will entirely collapse one day. However, that event cannot take place until sometime in the Tribulation period. Until that time, a financial system is required to control the world; to assist in creating the stresses of the cares of this world (Luke 8:14); and to create the conditions where the faith of many grows cold (Matthew 24:12). That process is well underway, but not quite finished.

No doubt, there will continue to occur both localized and increasingly global financial busts, but of a lesser type. Yet, these must be significant enough to periodically induce new fear so as to foment the conditions and permissiveness that will further drive humanity into the arms of globalism. That process is also rapidly underway. Consider that the most recent financial tremors this past year led to the most globally co-ordinated financial rescue efforts yet. Before this financial shaking of the world's financial system is over, you can be sure that globalism and centralized monetarism will have hopped forward by leaps and bounds. So, even while a large part of the Western financial system appeared to be in a death spiral (*and given that the Tribulation period obviously has not yet started*) the world's financial system will yet continue to become more controlling and powerful.

But that is not to say that the current bout of financial troubles is over and certainly not for America and other parts of the Western world. And, though financial conditions again appear to have improved since mid-March of this year—that being the time point that the US Federal Reserve broke precedent and prevented the collapse of Bear Stearns from melting down the broader financial system—more difficulties lie ahead that need solutions and a patch over.

To date, the hottest fires have rampaged inside the house of finance. Steep financial crashes have taken place inside of this world, many of these tremors not necessarily translating into severe crunches for individual households (*assuming that they have avoided real estate troubles*). Of course, private investors also suffered collateral damage to the extent that they had investments in financial stocks, or mortgage funds or perhaps highly-leveraged holdings. However, in recent years, the financial world has indeed operated as if separate from the real world.

In reality, of course, the real economic and its financial systems are connected through the linkages of interest payments and income as well as the impact of financial wealth transfer into consumption and income. Only recently are these factors starting to deeply cut into economic growth. As such, economic conditions are likely to get worse and probably for much longer than most forecasters are willing to imagine. Be that as it may, we are best to remember that financial markets are run by locusts. As such, we should be on guard to expect deception and the unexpected.

**EVR**

**Food Crisis and the Coming Anti-joseph**

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resulted that is "*still in force to today*" (Genesis 47:26).

Just imagine what would happen if this type of power were given to a diabolical person?

### **A Sometime Misinterpreted Story**

The Bible story of Joseph, one of the 12 sons of Jacob, is a popular favorite. Not only does it celebrate the ultimate blessings that accrued to a righteous man, the story also shows how God can miraculously enter into the seemingly unfortunate occurrences of our lives and ultimately work them out for good (Romans 8:28). Yet, it may also be true that some aspects of Joseph's life have been sometimes misinterpreted. For one, more than a few twist this Biblical account as a proof reference for the existence of modern day Josephs.

For example, an organization called the Joseph Company exists today whose mission involves people who they claim have the "*anointing of Joseph. People who have been prepared by God to be to our generation as Joseph was to his, with focus on preservation of life and the awareness of God-ordained transfers of wealth and power.*"<sup>1</sup> The Bible does not say that Joseph was anointed nor that there is any such special anointing today. There surely are people who are "double-gifted" in business just as there are talented violinists.

Also, the story of Joseph is often used by those who wish to legitimize their quest for riches or claim a basis for a Spirit-led ability to profitably forecast financial markets and economic trends. If anything, the story of Joseph counsels the exact opposite as we will see. What also may not be immediately obvious, is that there are many levels of prophetic foreshadowing to be found in this account, not to mention endtime warnings for Christians living today. We will only scratch the surface of these possible meanings here. There is little harm in availing ourselves of the interpretive modes of both "remez" (*prophetic hints*) and "midrash" (*parallels and allegories*), so long as we do not obviate or revise any literal plain meanings of the entirety of Scripture.

In fact, doing so, we see that the account of Joseph found in the first book of the Bible actually foreshadows the great dangers of an economic enslavement of the world in the last days—what is today the growing result of globalization. (*What is globalization? It is the present-day process bringing about a world-controlling, materialistic structure under the common incentives of prosperity and gain.*) It makes for a very interesting and surprising perspective.

### **Joseph: The Picture of an Economic Savior**

Many see Joseph as an Old Testament picture of Christ. He suffered so that he might be able to save his family in Egypt; to go ahead and prepare a place for them. Much is also made of the fact that Joseph is the only character in the entire Bible besides Christ of which no character flaw

or sin is explicitly mentioned. While this is true, Joseph was a sinner like every other human being. The only difference is that his sins and misdeeds are a little more hidden. In fact, through his errors, this great man of God like all the others from Abraham to King David can be seen to have bequeathed lessons to mankind that are very relevant for our day.

A closer examination of his life reveals that the results of his actions were not entirely virtuous. While it is true that he served to save many lives, his mission was not performed entirely in the spirit of a merciful rescue operation. In the end, he instituted an oppressive system of control over the people of Egypt. Egyptians had to virtually sell their souls and freedoms to gain access to food. With the exception of a few—mainly Egyptian priests, the immediate family of Joseph and probably other high-ranking elites—the entire land of Egypt came under the direct ownership of Pharaoh.

It is instructive to review how this all happened. When the famine first spread over the whole country, *“Joseph opened the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians”* (Genesis 41: 56). Notice that he did not donate the grain to needy people, but instead required payment. Think of it. People were starving and he asked for money. Few Christian aid organizations today would think that they are fulfilling Christ’s command to *“feed the poor”*<sup>2</sup> if they were profiting from their ministries. Another aspect to notice is that *“... all the countries came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the world.”* (verse 57) Here in the first book of the Bible we find the very roots of modern-day “globalization.” The whole world converged together for reasons of “bread.” Egypt had become the world commercial center and its grain became the common currency. Pharaoh came to this position of controlling the entire world by dispensing the means of economic sustenance. Here we see that the incentive of gaining “bread” had been harnessed by one centralized system ... even one man. This same process is sweeping the entire world today under the guise of “globalization”—the promise of bread for the entire world.”

In time, because the famine was so severe, Scripture tells us that Joseph collected all the money that was found in Egypt and Canaan. No doubt, he deposited the funds in Pharaoh’s coffers. He took every last penny in return for grain so that people might eat and be saved from the famine. What was the result? Now, the entire monetary system of that time was under his control.

Once all the monetary savings of the people had been used up, they then faced a cash-crunch. The famine continued yet they had no grain and no money. What to do next? They begged Joseph to give them food. What did Joseph do in response? He next took control of the nation’s industry. He demanded their livestock. *“So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and he gave them food in exchange for their horses, their sheep and goats, their*

*cattle and donkeys. And he brought them through that year with food in exchange for all their livestock”* (Genesis 47:17).

Now Joseph was in control of a large part of the capital stock of Egypt. For Pharaoh he now had secured the ownership of the land-based transportation system (*donkeys and horses*) and the productive capacity of factories ... in other words, livestock. After all, in an agrarian society as existed during that time, livestock represented assets that generated food and a large part of household income. Now that Joseph had control of the key “factories” he could also now sell the outputs of milk and meat, as well as transportation services.

However, the takeover by the state didn’t stop there. The famine continued. People needed more grain and they became desperate. *“Buy us and our land in exchange for food, and we with our land will be in bondage to Pharaoh,”* they now said. (verse 19) So Joseph did exactly that. He completely reduced the people to servitude and all the land—from one end of Egypt to the other—became the property of the state and under the control of one man.

Yes, Joseph saved many lives by storing up grain during the seven good years. That was good. But were his specific techniques ordered by God? He may have even gathered all the excess grain in the land by decree. No mention is made of him buying the surplus grain, though it specifically states that he later sold it. Scripture simply says that he gathered it. In fact, the text strongly suggests that he did not buy the grain, stating that the stockpiles eventually became so large that he was no longer able to keep an account of their size (Genesis 41:49). Had he purchased the grain with money from the Pharaoh’s treasury, this problem would likely not have occurred. We can be reasonably sure that the Pharaoh would have required an accounting of how his money was being spent.

Whatever the case, whether or not policies of confiscation were pursued, in the end all the people of the land ended up in complete servitude. It doesn’t appear so much a work of mercy, when it becomes clear that the whole saga turned out to be a giant opportunity for the secular Pharaoh to gain power and wealth at the expense of those in need.

### **An Endtime Trap Foreshadowed**

How long did it take for the entire known world to come under economic bondage to the Pharaoh? Scripture suggests possibly three and one half years. Three one year periods appear to be indicated, two of them mentioned specifically. Livestock was used in payment for one year of grain supply (Genesis 47:17). Another year was survived by giving up ownership of land. (verse 18) Before these two years, Joseph had already taken all the money in the land (verses 13-15). For several reasons we could conclude that this period could not have taken any longer than one year. As most wealth was represented by livestock and land in that day,

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## Signs of the Times



Approximately a half year ago we published an article entitled *Food Inflation Today and the Black Horse of the Apocalypse*. ([http://www.eternalvalue.com/MCM/MET\\_0801.pdf](http://www.eternalvalue.com/MCM/MET_0801.pdf)). In that article, we related the scenario described in Revelation 6:6 to our day. There, it is written: “I looked, and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying, ‘A quart of wheat for a day’s wages, and three quarts of barley for a day’s wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!’”

Of course, that time is not yet today. All the same, a detailed study of this prophecy suggests that if these conditions were to happen today, the average household would need to spend 100% and more of their income on food. What made the article seem timely was the fact that various food commodities had already been soaring in price. That was then. Today, prices have risen even much higher. Sadly, this development has been crushing households in some of the lower-income countries where food costs already accounted for 80% of household budgets. They are being pinched badly. Now, some of these households will think that they are already experiencing the conditions expressed in Revelation 6:6. Due to the sharply rising prices of such staple foods as rice and wheat, many households in the lower-income countries are facing serious hardship. Public uprisings and riots have been reported in many parts of the world—from Indonesia to Egypt. To date this year alone, rice prices have more than doubled before falling back somewhat.

While the food affordability crisis that will occur in the Tribulation period (*likely during the first half ... “the beginning of sorrows”*) is directly the cause of Jesus Christ removing the third seal. We do not know what manifestation or causes will lead to the food shortage at that time. Will it be the result of supply issue, bad weather, blight, war or something supernatural? Yet, there surely are some relevant illustrations in the currently unfolding food crisis in some of the poorer countries of the world.

For one, we can identify some of the global structural conditions that have hastened the recent price advances in food commodities. There are many contributing reasons why this is happening. However, with reference to the *Signs of the Times*, we here only want to point out how vulnerable world conditions are to a food crisis. Even though people living in the rich countries of the world cannot imagine the possibility of food shortages, that food should be so important is no surprise. It is a life and death matter. Even though food prices have risen sharply, only 11.6% of disposable income is spent on food in America, ... hardly having risen and still down significantly from the 20% level back in 1960.

But consider these points. To begin with, major food

staples (*cereal grains, corn, rice ... and others*) are commodities, meaning that their prices are set on the world markets. The Biblical account of Joseph and the great 7-year famine documents that grains were already international food commodities a long, long time ago. Today, this condition is much advanced applying to every major food staple. The highest bidder in the world therefore sets a price for both poor and rich people alike everywhere. Obviously, it is the higher-income nations that can afford the higher prices, not so the people of poorer countries.

(In this issue, we feature an update of an article written in 2004, but never run in this publication, entitled “Food Crisis and the Coming Anti-joseph,” which points out some interesting parallels between that ancient 7-year famine and the 7-year Tribulation period. See page 1.)

Only 9% of all food consumption in the world is imported (*or exported*). Yet, it is this smaller portion of demand that mainly drives the global price for agricultural commodities, whether or not imported.

Agricultural production has a high energy intensity. Tractor fuel and fertilizers are petroleum based. High oil prices have therefore contributed a double-whammy on agricultural prices. The production of bio-fuels—for example, producing ethanol from corn, wheat or sugar—has risen in response to high oil prices.. That has contributed more supply pressures on agricultural commodities.

Globalization is another factor. For example, the European Union, which is the world’s leading food importer, has increased imports 20% in the last 5 years. In the US, the value of fresh fruit and vegetables imported nearly doubled between 2000 and 2006. Such trends have caused international shipping to soar, an activity requiring fuel. For example, food accounts for 25% of truck shipments in Britain.

And, aggravating the situation even further, are investors. Seeing the rising prices, investment capital has surged into the commodity arena. In today’s world of enormous pools of financial capital, which are rapaciously scouring the earth for returns, money has been piling into food commodities. This is unfortunate. Food items are not ideally suited to investment demand. Agricultural products, by nature, are perishable. That makes them poorly suited as a store of wealth. Yet, such investment demand has probably contributed to soaring food prices.

While there are other factors that are playing a role in the current agricultural commodity price rise, the point we simply make is that the world is becoming increasingly vulnerable to a sudden food crisis. While the food affordability situation depicted in the book of Revelation is not yet at the doorstep for the entire world, the conditions that can give rise to such a disaster are appearing now. Rising materialism and globalization are running against the production constraints of declining arable land (*land that can be planted*) and a slowing in agricultural productivity gains. It now only requires a small imbalance in food supply, by whatever cause, to cause conditions fitting of the black horse of the apocalypse.

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physical money did not play as significant a role in the livelihoods of people. If only one year's grain was purchased with livestock, then their money would certainly not have lasted any longer than a one year period either. And, as already suggested, Joseph may not have bought the grain in the first place. Therefore, the seven years of plenty would not have produced a big cash horde in people's pockets.

On this logic, we so far count no more than three years. One additional half year is accounted for by the fact that it would have required at least one crop cycle for people to run out of food. As the Nile basin at times could support two grain harvests each year, it would be logical to assume that people would only have had laid aside provisions for one half-year, long enough to last until the next harvest. In any case, Joseph's massive gathering program of excess grain would have ensured that not much more would have been laid aside by private farmers. That suggests that six-months of drought would have first taken place before food shortages occurred.

If our postulations here are correct, we can conclude that it required a three and one-half year period to bring the entire world under the control of one system that was under the authority of one man. From that time on they were in bondage, required to pay a 20% tax on the output of their labors.

This first 3 1/2 year period of the 7-year famine (*"the beginning of birth pains"* - *Mathew 24:8*) can be seen to foreshadow the first half of the 7-year Tribulation. It is during this period that a great world ruler gains increasing power, the Antichrist. He first brings the world under his control in the name of peace and prosperity. Then, once he has much of the world in his grip, he tightens the noose and brings doom to the earth. Later yet, starts the Great Tribulation, the second three and one-half years (*also known as Jacob's trouble* - *Jeremiah 30:7*).

Is the alignment between Joseph and the Antichrist a coincidence ... perhaps even a sacrilege of the beautiful story of Joseph? Not any more than is the recognition that this diabolical last-day ruler is specifically also conjured up to be a false christ, the Antichrist. If you agree Joseph was a type of Christ, then wouldn't it only follow that the Antichrist would also be an Anti-joseph? Whereas Joseph had a benevolent calling ordered by God to save physical lives, the Antichrist is a demonically-inspired person that seeks to physically entrap mankind for the purpose of destruction and his worship. Jesus Christ came to offer spiritual life for an eternity. The Antichrist comes to do the opposite.

Even if the three and one-half year period required by Joseph to enslave all of Egypt is an inappropriate parallel to the timeline of the first half of the Tribulation, the process of the enslavement of the people is highly significant. For the sake of bread, the people first gave up

their money, then their livelihoods and professions, then their land and bodies and souls.

### Points to Ponder

Today, many people are looking for a modern-day Joseph—an economic savior. They want to find solace in a comfortable life, low mortgage payments, a secure job, growing financial wealth, expanding export markets and an unfettered playing field for the globe's burgeoning multinational corporations.

Globalization is the sure route to that outcome, say many leaders and politicians. It is the sure route to a "World free of poverty" (*the slogan of the World Bank*). However, we must freely participate with our hearts, land and factories to serve this global system, so that we might take part in the fruits of a world-wide economic order. So it may be. However, humanity risks falling captive to an Anti-joseph.

As the world looks to this system for sustenance, they become enslaved to its rulers and potentates. Eventually one man—the Antichrist—will arrive at its pinnacle of power to take control. And, most likely, he at first will appear as an Anti-joseph. After all, today, people are more interested in an economic savior than a spiritual one. Much of the world—certainly the societies in the Western World—have already forfeited their spiritual futures in their primary pursuit of earthly prosperity and happiness. Anyone who offers workable solutions to that end will be gladly received.

Were the people angry with Joseph when he enslaved them? Not at all. *"You have saved our lives," they said. 'May we find favor in the eyes of our lord; we will be in bondage to Pharaoh'"* (Genesis 47:25). Here we see that they willingly gave themselves up for bondage to the Pharaoh so that they might eat.

The entire world will do so again the Bible indicates. Only this time it will be in response to Anti-joseph. They will willingly allow themselves to become economically and financially enslaved to a diabolically-inspired person. Why? So that they might eat ... that they may have economic security and hopes of a material quality of life.

This process is already long underway on a broader scale in the form of a world "globalization," accelerating in leaps and bounds these past few decades. This phenomenon itself has virtually become a god of prosperity and is already advanced to the point where Anti-joseph could arise at any time. That day could be very near. Only the Lord tarries, the Church and the Paraclete first to be removed.

### Notes

1. The Joseph Company, International House of Prayer. <http://www.ihop.org/Group/Group.aspx?id=23144>. Accessed April 25, 2008.
2. If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. Proverbs 25:21. Also see Matthew 25:34-46.

## Facts & Stats ... Ends & Trends



## TOPICAL QUOTES

Of 196 countries around the world, 131 rely on food imports to feed their citizens, according to the World Bank's latest figures from 2005. In 1980, just 107 countries had to look beyond their borders to put food on the table.

*Foreign Policy Magazine, March/April 2008*

Nearly 40 percent of the roughly 130 million births that take place each year worldwide go unregistered, though such births are generally projected in population estimates. It's believed that two-thirds of the world's deaths also go undocumented.

*World Health Organization*

Drug-resistant tuberculosis is spreading even faster than medical experts had feared. The rate of TB patients infected with the drug-resistant strain topped 20 percent in some countries, the highest ever recorded. Globally, about 500,000 of the estimated 9 million new cases each year—5 percent—are drug resistant.

*World Health Organization*

America is the most heavily armed country in the world. Some 270 million of the world's 875 million firearms are in the country; nine guns for every ten people.

*The Economist, September 2007*

In an omega-3-crazed world hungry for fish, the earth's oceans are getting tapped out. Today, 96 percent of all wild fish considered edible are endangered, and as a result, marine capture is leveling off, while aquaculture is on the rise. Carp, popular in Asia, is the mostly widely farmed fish.

*Wired Magazine*

America may be the land of Mickey Mouse and Goofy, but the US isn't exactly the happiest place on Earth. Anti-depressants are the most commonly popped pills in the country,

accounting for 227 million prescriptions filled last year alone.

*Wired Magazine*

Last year, more than 34 million Chinese traveled abroad, a 300-percent increase from 2000. By 2020, 115 million Chinese are expected to vacation overseas, which will make them the largest bloc of tourists in the world.

*Foreign Policy Magazine*

The drugs business is by far the most profitable illicit global trade. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, earning some \$320 billion annually, it compares with estimates of \$32 billion for human trafficking and \$1 billion for illegal firearms.

*The Economist*

Since the beginning of mankind, wars have become more cruel and costly with the advance of civilization. A few years ago a Dutch professor took time to calculate the cost of an enemy soldier's death at different epochs in history. He estimated that during the reign of Julius Caesar, to kill an enemy soldier cost less than one dollar. At the time of Napoleon, it had considerably inflated—to more than \$2,000. At the end of World War I, it had multiplied several times to reach the figure of some \$17,000. During World War II, it was about \$40,000. And in Vietnam, in 1970, to kill an enemy soldier cost the United States \$200,000.

*Tomorrow's World*

There are now more slaves on the planet than at any time in human history. Most people imagine that slavery died in the 19th century. Since 1817, more than a dozen international conventions have been signed banning the slave trade. Yet, today there are more slaves that at any time in human history.

*E. Benjamin Skinner, writing in Foreign Policy Magazine*

“Let me issue and control a nation's money supply and I care not who makes its laws.”

*Mayer Amschel Rothschild, Founder of the Rothschild Dynasty.*

“During times of universal deceit, telling the truth becomes a revolutionary act.”

*George Orwell*

“You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift. You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. You cannot help the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer. You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich. You cannot establish sound security on borrowed money. You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than you earn. You cannot build character and courage by taking away man's initiative and independence. You cannot help men permanently by doing for them that they could and should do for themselves.”

*Abraham Lincoln*

“Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you have not; but remember that what you now have was once among the things you only hoped for.”

*Epicurus*



## Letters to the Editor

*(Editor's Note: In this section we provide answers to a few of the letters we receive. We appreciate them. Here we focus on the practical issues of stewardship in this age, interesting questions as well as general feedback and insights. Please note that questions may be edited.)*

**READER:** I read EVR all the time. I don't see how we can be living like heathens here in America and expect to continue to be blessed. Judgment always manifests itself in some form economically. But, what I don't see in your articles is advice on how to protect our savings. Do you have any advice about how the "little guy" can protect himself or where I can get that advice?—**JT, USA**

**EVR:** This is a tough question. As you have observed, EVR deliberately does not present itself as an investment letter. We specifically focus on the endtime roles of money ... and try to avoid losing friends at the risk of offering bad investment advice. Yet, we'll at least try to provide some useful and general answers to questions such as yours in a balanced manner in this Q&A section. After all, many Christians are simply only wanting to preserve or grow their savings for retirement purposes and wish to do so in a godly way. But how ... and, in what investment? Unfortunately, specific and certain answers are few. That is so because environments change (*very much so lately*) and everyone's particular situation and financial aptitude is unique. A good recommendation for one person is not sure to be suitable for another. Firstly, it is absolutely necessary to remember this Biblical maxim: In this presentation dispensation, we live in a world, "where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal" (Matthew 6:19). You can be sure that someone ... the collective world system ... the laws of the markets ... etc. ... are trying to part you from your savings. As such, any stewardship recommendation must comprise two aspects—Preservation and Opportunity. Most people only focus on the latter, rarely ever thinking about preservation, protection or scrutiny. It is each savers' responsibility to discern and to check out every investment thoroughly. If one is fortunate enough to have an advisor whom one can truly trust, this is still not sufficient to protect in all environments. There are no advisors or investment managers with perfect foresight. Those with outstanding forecasting records are no more prevalent than probability theory would predict. The most helpful advice that I can give is that which will enable others to make decisions for themselves. To that end, here is my standard advice: 1. Research and scrutinize every investment, thoroughly understanding the costs and fees associated with it and the underlying content (*for example, many people buy mutual funds and often have no idea what investments are held inside of these funds*). 2. Understand the risk involved and make sure that you can afford it. 3. Diversify, diversify, and diversify. If you do have savings capital to invest, spread it across different types of investments that are not

susceptible to the same risks. For example, you may want to mix some fixed-income investments with real estate, equities, foreign investments ... etc. I count tens of different asset types around the world with which to construct diversified portfolios. 4. Try not to take the popular path, for "wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it" (Matthew 7:13). While that verse refers to salvation, it also holds a general principle that is active in the world. When God created the earth for mankind to populate and subdue, He ordered it in such a way that wealth should be deceitful (Matthew 13:22). As soon as many people run after one "sure investment" (*in other words, an idol*) it must prove itself to be a false god ... a disappointing hope. God will only allow himself to receive glory. Certain mathematical laws underlie this economic dynamic. It involves the expectational affections of mankind, mobilized through unthinking crowd behavior. Both greed and fear act to accentuate these dynamics. Neither of these emotions are held in high repute in the Bible. It would be a better life if we could avoid experiencing either of these emotional extremes. Finally, I would point readers to the article entitled *Practical Stewardship Guidelines*. It can be found on our website on the Topical Articles page.

**READER:** In your booklet "*Final Combustion: Oil, Islam and the Christian West*," you speculate about the possibility of finding great amounts of oil outside the Muslim or Communist world. That may well happen in Canada. You also interestingly speculated on oil findings in Israel or in its international waters. From a Biblical perspective, it certainly wouldn't be God's will that Israel would one day find a huge amount of oil ... at least, not enough to become self-sufficient. Of course, and in fact, God created the people of Israel and its Promised Land—overflowing with milk and honey—to have a special covenant relationship with his people. That is, God created the people of Israel to be dependent upon Him. Possessing lots of oil makes a nation rich, greedy ... i.e. economically and financially independent. In the case of Israel, were it to find substantial amounts of oil, that would completely contradict God's purpose with His people, and even to some extent with the world. So, I would say that the possibility of finding huge amounts of oil in Israel is zero ... since God made the world according to His purposes and will.—**WW, Netherlands**

**EVR:** Vis-à-vis oil discovery potential in the world, this is not a topic I can speak about with expert knowledge. Canada, of course, has much oil ... in fact, more than Saudi Arabia according to some surveys. Unfortunately, it is high-cost, dirty, bitumen-based hydrocarbons. As for Israel having oil, I would of course wish that some is found to the country's benefit. However, it is here that I am very skeptical. The whole region of the Middle East has been drilled like no other over the past half century. The various Bible references that are cited to prove that Israel will find oil some day, in my view, are all questionable and open to subjective interpretation. Christians (*as a group*) I observe, are all too easily parted with their money when an

investment might have some "religious" connection to it. It indeed would be a surprise if substantial amounts of oil were found at this late date in Israel. Again, I hope to be proven wrong. But, on a purely analytical basis, as an investor—with some knowledge of the typical hype of the junior resource financing game—I would recommend being very careful about investing in Israeli oil ventures, Christian or not. Of course, if people want to invest in oil prospecting companies with claimed Christian connections, and treat it as a donation, that is fine. Otherwise, investing in an Israeli oil venture is highly speculative as it would be with any other such venture.

**READER:** I am just trying to get things clear in my mind. You were saying that Muslims won't take part in financial interest, but I understand in their teachings all is fair in business (*lying, cheating, interest ... etc.*). This has to do with their god being tricky and that's OK in business and warfare but not in private domestic relations. I have wondered if some of the turmoil we have seen in the stock market was an attack by oil-rich Muslims, causing market swings. It certainly wasn't average investors or mutual funds. After all, the attack was against the World Trade Center (*the US economy*). You noted the effect of leveraged interest-rate instruments amplifying the swing. I am wondering if it isn't extremely rich Muslims that are aggressively causing financial tremors to happen today. Is there any way to tell? Thanks again for the articles. I discovered I knew very little about what I was doing investing. Though I was just looking for "reasonable returns," I was in the mammon world.—**CN, USA**

**EVR:** The question you pose stirs up a unsettling issue. Middle Eastern financial dealings are quite puzzling, given Islam's teaching on "al riba" (*financial interest*). I was always of the opinion that Islam would never be a major factor in the Top 10X financial/economic system of the world. (*The latter is an acronym for the top-10, historically-Christian rich nations of the world.*) But this opinion is being tested. Some of the largest Sovereign Wealth Funds (SWFs) of Islamic nations and major Middle East billionaires do not at all seem to be limited by the teachings of their religion. They are freely participating in corrupt Western financial markets (*as they would see it*) and have also made some very convenient deals with Western nations (*including military protection*). As you allude, the Koran allows deceit in times of war. Could this be the motive behind the movements of Middle Eastern investment capital of these nations or are their money mavens becoming Islamic moderates? It is very difficult to identify the source of money that is coming into America. Secretive investors go through the UK or tax havens using dummy companies and third-party conduits. Also, consider that more than 50% of all global trade is booked through tax havens. I have heard reports that some of the Wall Street banks and other major corporations may be more than 50% owned by Middle East interests. However, this has not been confirmed.

**READER:** So many believers—especially those who

follow mega television ministries—are not looking for His imminent return, because they are convinced that a huge end-time wealth transfer must take place ... where all the money comes into the hands of believers. Then, their belief is that after the money is acquired, a huge outpouring of signs and wonders will occur in the land ... millions will accept Jesus in this time of wealth, signs and wonders ... revival will occur and so forth and so on. I do not see any of this to be scripturally accurate, so that is why I wanted to question you to hear your insights on this matter. Thank you very much for your time and all your dedication to our Lord and Savior Jesus the Messiah and King. —**HBC, Europe**

**EVR.** A very intriguing perspective indeed ... and one that has been gaining more adherents in recent years. I am quite familiar with these views (*Third Wave, Kingdom Now, Reconstructionism ... etc.*) directly also having had contact with some of its leaders ... C. Peter Wagner, for example. Unfortunately, I will not be able to respond here at length, other than to agree that these views do not line up with Scripture. Far from it. There are a number of errors. In response, we have written a separate article entitled "Wicked Money and the Great Endtime Wealth Transfer" which will be published in the Midnight Call magazine of July ([www.midnightcall.com](http://www.midnightcall.com)) Here is a brief excerpt: "*The Bible does prophesy a major endtime wealth transfer. It is not to the Church, but rather to Israel and the righteous of the Millennial Kingdom. The true Church of the last days is more of a remnant than it is resplendent with wealth. Revelation 3:8 says that the church of the 'open door' is weak and feeble; far from being imbued with worldly power and wealth. It is this little Philadelphian band of believers, to which is promised, 'Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth' (Revelation.3:10). If the Third Wave movements are correct, one wonders why it is the rich Laodicean church that is reprimanded by Christ.*"

**READER:** I read your book, *The Endtime Money Snare: How to Live Free*. Thank you very much for this very important information. The book helped me to understand better what is going on and to protect myself from the great danger which goes out from our monetary system. —**DR, USA** **EVR**

### Wilfred's 2008 Itinerary: *The Mulberry Ministry*

- **September 27-29—Midnight Call Ministries, Atlantic Prophecy Conference—Charleston, South Carolina**  
[www.midnightcall.com](http://www.midnightcall.com) or call 1-800-845-2420
- **October 17-19 —3rd Annual Saskatoon Prophecy Conference —Berean Watchmen Ministries, Saskatoon, SK, Canada**  
<http://www.bereanwatchmen.com/conferences/index.php>
- **December 8-10—Pre-Trib Research Conference, Dallas, Texas—**[www.pre-trib.org/conference.php](http://www.pre-trib.org/conference.php)

Contact us at [mulberryministry@telus.net](mailto:mulberryministry@telus.net)



# Personal Perspectives

## Shifting Global Waves

One thing human beings cannot do reliably—if at all—is to peer into the future. As George Will is to have said, “*The future has a way of arriving unannounced.*” In some respects that might be so. However, major things about the future are known ahead of time. God indeed does know the things of the future (*and also the ancient things before humans walked the earth*), and has revealed some of these things through His prophets. In fact, this power is the major proof to mankind of His existence. He says, “[...] *who foils the signs of false prophets and makes fools of diviners, who overthrows the learning of the wise and turns it into nonsense, who carries out the words of his servants and fulfills the predictions of his messengers*” (Isaiah 44:24-26).

But, even though we have the “*more sure word of prophecy*” (2 Peter 1:19) and may know how some things end prophetically, the shorter-term timing of various developments and trends that play a part in this timeline remains unknown. Therefore, a bustling business of forecasting sprung up already thousands of years ago. Prophesying, forecasting, divining—whatever it is called—was and remains big business today! Among this group can also be counted Bible prophecy buffs who may go well

beyond God’s word in their interpretations. The odds are against fleshly forecasters of all kinds. Hegel, the philosopher noted that thinkers understand a concept just as it ceases to be relevant, implying that by the time people had discerned a trend it was likely to reverse. More often than not, our perceptions of what will be tomorrow is heavily colored by what we have experienced today and can extrapolate from the recent past. But rarely do such techniques result in reliable forecasts, much less, accurate predictions. Therein lies the danger for both prophecy students and global investment strategists alike. Our supposedly certain interpretations are likely to suffer from hubris and short-term extrapolation.

In recent times, major world-wide trends have emerged that have caught virtually everyone’s attention. Looking in the rear view mirror, of course, it all looks so obvious. We here show 4 such trends as well as a fifth—rising food prices—on the front page in the form of graphs. These outline the recent past. But what of the future?

One thing we can know with certainty is that things will fluctuate. To the surprise of many, some trends will have interruptions only to continue; others may entirely reverse. Can you guess which? It will be the same way that day in the future around the world when as a sure prediction “*they will cry peace and safety.*” (1 Thess: 5:3). Then, a sudden trend change will take place: “[...] *destruction will come on them suddenly.*”

And that, as best as I can tell, is the truth.  **EVR**

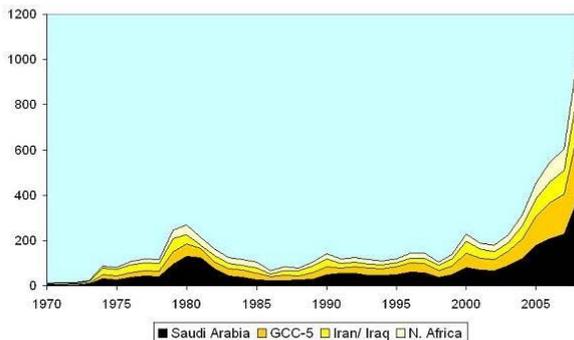
**Fig. #1: Personal Saving Rate (US, 1959 to 2008)** American households will never start to save again ... whether good times or severe recession. Could this ever change?



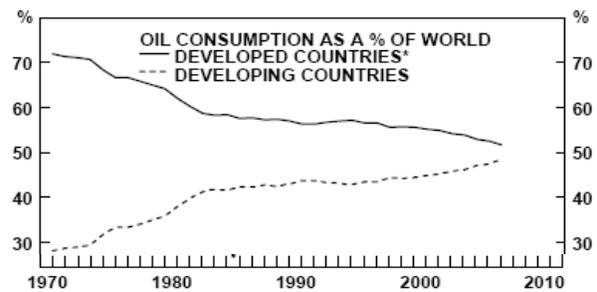
SOURCE: Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce.

**Fig. #2: The Oil Exporters Will Take Over The World.** At the price of \$130 per barrel, oil exporters may accumulate as much as \$1 trillion this year. Where will it stop?

Middle East: Oil export revenues, \$ billion

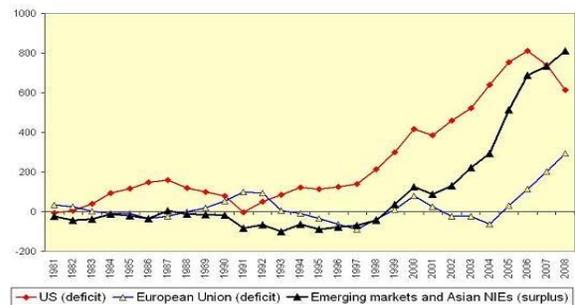


**Fig. #3: Asia is Causing Commodity and Oil Prices to Surge.** As a consequence, commodities prices will continue rising as far as the eye can see. Is this right or wrong?



**Fig. #4: Asia and the Emerging World Will Soon Take Over the World Financially.** As trade surpluses pile up, external deficits and debts soar in the Western world.

US and European deficits v the surplus of the emerging world



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