



# HUMAN LONGEVITY: LONG, SHORT AND FUTURE?

By Wilfred Hahn



Economists and pension analysts around the world are gnashing their teeth. How are the world’s present and future retirees going to be cared for? A “perfect storm” is therefore bearing down on the world’s stretched financial systems. There couldn’t be more contributing factors coinciding at the same time. Just what is happening? And, does the Bible have anything to say on this topic?

Firstly, the situation unfolding at present really shouldn’t be news. It concerns demographics. After all, “demographics is destiny.” This saying reflects that fact that changing birth rates and longevity (length of life) can have a long-running impact on societies, spanning a half century and more. Birth rates have been plunging around the world since the mid-1960s, a trend now extending to most nations. At the same time, most countries are experiencing increasing longevity ... i.e. people living longer than before.

It sounds like an “economics” problem and is popularly treated as such. But that would be wrong. In reality, the rapid demographic shifts the world is witnessing are more a function of

“changing values” than anything else. We will try to explain.

This writer has published many warnings about the impending future impact of changing demographics since the early 1990s. That future has arrived—the chickens having come home to roost, as the saying goes. And so, the time has arrived where the crisis has now become evident to most. This has unleashed a desperate response. People are clamoring to save for their retirement years and to find sufficient financial income. But as almost always is the case, by the time a crisis becomes broadly recognized, it is usually much too late to respond.

Just what is happening? A brew of five major factors is giving boil to a burgeon-

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ing demographic and retirement dilemma.

**1. Slumping Fertility Rate:** The world fertility rate (the number of births per female)—from third-world to developed nations—has been plunging over the past half-century. It is a global phenomenon ... even to the extent that immigrant groups in nations such as Germany actually have lower birthrates than domestics. There are many reasons for this plunge (not all of which we will have space to review). The main consequence of this development is that populations are aging.

**2. Increasing Urbanization:** Says *Stratfor* with respect to slowing birth rates, “[...] The process is essentially irreversible.” Why? They argue that it is primarily a matter of urbanization. “[...] In a mature urban society, the economic value of children declines. In fact, children turn from instruments of production into objects of massive consumption.”<sup>1</sup>

**3. Extending Longevity:** An unprecedented phenomenon that is sweeping the world today is that people are living longer (see *Midnight Call* article “Pension Frenzy, the Aged and Final Judgment,” August 2015 for further perspectives). Never before has there been a worldwide boom in longevity. In fact, actuaries (analysts that calculate mortality trends) have been consistently proven wrong over the past two decades. People keep living longer than expected. There-

fore, pension funds discover that they have greater liabilities (future pension payments that they have to make) than they originally thought.

**4. Productivity Slowdown.** Some analysts have argued that the world would witness a massive productivity boom. Therefore, less people could generate the incomes that would be required to maintain a reasonable retirement lifestyle for the elderly. Instead, the opposite is evident. Productivity growth rates have declined around the world in recent years.

**5. Shrinking Investment Income.** Given the deflationary impact of an aging population, interest rate levels have fallen. Central bankers around the world have responded to slowing economic growth by slashing interest rates to 5,000 year lows. This virtually guarantees future investment income will be low.

How significant are these trends? Consider that never before in world history have the above five factors occurred at the same time. Never before in history has a world population boom been followed by a population bust.

Quoting a report by Fabius Maximus (a respected political research site), the future impact will be shattering. We quote: “The 2nd generation after the present one will be only 40% as large as



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today’s. The 4th generation will be only 15% as large. These are astonishing numbers. The worst large-scale pandemics killed 1/4 to 1/3 of the affected population. Only the most severe inflicted such damage.”

There can be no doubt: the scale of these trends is unprecedented. The resultant financial and social pressures upon the world are truly profound.

Analysts may argue about the causes with mathematical and economic theories, as if isolated from the reality that it is a “human” world. Crises are the consequence of the choices in values that mankind has made. There we find the ultimate causes, and not in movements of the stars, mathematics or economics. The consequences of “human choices” cannot be escaped. “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows” (Galatians 6:7).

Already today, we live in societies where it has become (in some cases) prohibitively expensive to raise children. Children are widely considered to be too costly to raise. According to various studies, having children sharply increases the likelihood of personal bankruptcy (most certainly so for single-parent families). We now live in an era of “post-familialism.”

### **The Perverse Wisdom of the Age**

Thus, the wisdom of the current human (Anthropocene) era. Financial markets are expected to deliver secure retirement benefits in lieu of shrinking families and fertility. Impossible. Biology and morphology (the physical designs of creatures and humans that God has made) are mocked. Feminists are angry at “evolution” for having given them child-bearing organs. Raising children is something that is now looked down upon as a lower caste career. Families are considered to be fluid arrangements. One dare not deny that sexual orientation and child-rearing is to be entirely independent of biology.

Again, how dare the obvious physical plumbing of male and female and genetic differences dictate sexual orientation? Few stop to consider that the theory of evolution does not support the idea that homosexuality or feminism could result from a “carrier gene.” If so, it would have been a gene that would have become extinct over the supposed millennia of evolutionary process, as it would have been a non-perpetuating gene for the most part.

The dispositions and values implicit in the above-mentioned trends play a causal role in the world’s current demographic challenges. At least in part, they give rise to it. While it is wonderful that longevity is increasing and that the quality of life is generally improving for the aged, the plunging birth rates have severe consequences that cannot be escaped.

God allows humanity (and each of us individually) to make choices. We can choose good or evil, or define morality

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as we wish. But God has the last say. As we already have identified, demography is destiny. That destiny is near. Judgment will come.

### Anti-Familialism in History

Voluntary population implosions (i.e., not associated with pandemics or war) have happened before, though not on a global scale as today. Roman aristocrats, for example, eventually became so reluctant to accept the burdens of heading a family that Caesar Augustus felt compelled to enact steep “bachelor taxes” and otherwise punish those who remained unwed and childless.

Polybius, the Greek historian, writes of the people of Hellas of the 3rd century BC (in *The Histories*, his work covers the period of 264-146 BC in great detail): “[... The people of Hellas had entered the false path of ostentation, avarice and laziness, and were therefore becoming unwilling to marry, or, if they did marry, to bring up the children born to them; the majority were only willing to bring up at most one or two, in order to leave them wealthy and to spoil them in their childhood; and in consequence of all this the evil had been spreading rapidly before it was observed.”

What Polybius describes is today playing out on a global level.

### Longevity in the Bible

Throughout the course of human history, there will be two global disasters in which longevity will have been involved. The first major longevity shock took place early in the history of the world. Following the Flood, lifespans started to shorten significantly for those born thereafter. Up to the time of the

Flood, the average lifespan, according to the Bible, was around 930 years. A “longevity” collapse then ensued.

However, falling longevity in the post-Flood time had a major consequence. All patriarchs that would have known Noah and heard verbal history from him and others directly, died off over a very short period of 200 years. To be precise, eleven generations died within a two century time period. Consider that during the lifetime of Abraham, eight generations died. Imagine over your lifespan, eight generations of great, great, great ... etc. ancestor grandfathers passing away.

There were disastrous repercussions. Mankind had quickly fallen to godlessness and sin. Only a little more than a century after Noah died, Nimrod was busy pursuing humanist endeavors. God needed to disperse the citizens of Babel, who were intent to make a “name for [themselves]” (Genesis 11:4). As such, the plans of Nimrod were thwarted for a time.

With so few acknowledging the Creator, Jehovah decided to call out a people for himself; one that would be a light to the world ... His Servant Israel (Isaiah 44). Therefore he selected Abram, a man of faith, and called out a people—namely the Hebrews—to be a light unto the world.

### Thoughts to Ponder

Oswald Spengler, the German historian and philosopher, once observed, “When the ordinary thought of a highly cultivated people begins to regard ‘having children’ as a question of pro’s and con’s, the great turning point has come.” That point has most certainly arrived for most developed nations.



Fertility rates are difficult to change, as many governments have discovered. The social trends that produced this change—such as new contraceptives, feminism, materialism, narcissism (self-love), humanism ... etc.—continue to wax worse. Male contraceptives (a male pill) is another development that will depress birth rates.



The trend will not reverse as the point of return has passed.

Patriarchal societies (which have provided societal stability for millennia) are under attack. Fertility rates are difficult to change, as many governments have discovered. The social trends that produced this change—such as new contraceptives, feminism, materialism, narcissism (self-love), humanism ... etc.—continue to wax worse. Male contraceptives (a male pill) is another development that will depress birth rates.

Looking ahead, few economists give proper attribution to the role of lengthening lifespans in the boom of prosperity and material/financial wealth that has been generated in the past two centuries. Now that past demographic trends are reversing, they are dumbfounded and frustrated. Policymakers,

strive as they might at manipulating interest rates and money, cannot overcome the influences of extended longevity and low fertility.

What is the solution? To date, supposed answers offered by the collective wealth establishment around the world are entirely fraudulent. In so doing, they may succeed in deferring the ultimate reckoning day. But what a day that will be when it comes! The longer consequences are deferred, the more perversion increases, the more cataclysmic the final outcome.

God intervened in the days of Noah and Abram. He will do so again in the future, as the Bible clearly outlines.©

### ENDNOTE

- 1 "Population Decline and the Great Economic Reversal," George Friedman, *Stratfor*, February 17, 2015.