

Publishing Editor's column

THE MAGAZINE *Newsweek* published a Special Edition at the end of 2005 entitled "Issues 2006". A major theme of this Special Edition is that of the knowledge revolution. The editor, Fareed Zakaria, says in his summary at the beginning of the introductory article, "The scientific revolution that began 300 years ago has accelerated exponentially. It is moving so fast that the spread of knowledge defines our times". In the article itself he says, "The diffusion of knowledge is the dominant trend of our time and goes well beyond the purely scientific". We think of the words of Daniel 12:4: "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased".

Later in the same issue an article about the Internet search company Google refers to its aim, "to organise the world's information and make it universally available, accessible and useful". We think of "many shall run to and fro" as referring to the enormous increase in actual travelling in recent years, but the activities of Google provide another way of considering this phrase. By means of the World Wide Web, people can run to and fro across the world electronically in order to increase their knowledge, thus linking the two phrases in a way that we never envisaged. Like television, however, the Web has an enormous potential for purveying evil, and is often used for this purpose. As such it is a major contributor to the corrupting of the world, bringing it to a state parallel to that existing before the Flood.

The article quoted above concludes on a very significant note: "knowledge is not the same thing as wisdom. Knowledge can produce . . . powerful ways to destroy life, intentionally and unintentionally. It can produce hate and seek destruction . . . it does not produce the farsightedness that will allow us all to live together—and grow together—on this world without causing war, chaos and catastrophe. For that we need wisdom". Many years ago Job posed the question, "But where shall wisdom be found?", and he provides God's answer to this question: "And unto man He said, Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding" (Job 28:12,28). The leaders of this world have no fear of God, nor any respect for His Word, and hence we live in a world with enormous knowledge, very little true wisdom and many problems.

Another writer comments on how a relatively small proportion of the people of the world are

experiencing growing prosperity by using up far more than their share of the world's resources while the rest of the world lives in poverty. He goes on to say, "To continue down the current path will mean mounting economic inequality, growing class divides and, eventually, worsening political tension and unrest". In another article we read, "We have not made significant progress in the fight against terrorism, in eliminating global economic imbalances, in tackling climate change, in addressing the global health crisis or in creating sufficient jobs even in a growing economy". The result is "a generalised sense of insecurity and helplessness". The oft-quoted words of our Lord come to mind regarding the days before his return: "distress of nations, with perplexity: the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth" (Lk. 21:25,26).

The last quoted contributor goes on to give his views on how these problems should be resolved, prefacing his remarks with the following: "it would be wrong to look for the one great solution or the one great leader". In saying this he of course rejects the only solution to these problems, the Kingdom of God ruled by the Lord Jesus Christ. It is good that men should recognise the problems facing the world and the need for wisdom to be used to solve them, but this does not take things very far. It will take the coming of Christ, "the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:24), to stop the world's descent into chaos. He can resolve the world's problems because it was said of him, "the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD" (Isa. 11:2,3).

But what of ourselves? The knowledge revolution has given us unprecedented access to information about the Bible; we can consult versions, concordances, dictionaries, commentaries and writings about the Bible, Christadelphian and otherwise. By this means we can become very knowledgeable about the Bible. But it is true also for us that "knowledge is not wisdom", and we can only become wise in the things of God by taking His Word into our hearts and minds and allowing it to work in us.

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