



OUR TIMES

DECEMBER 1965



EVENTS and TRENDS

The Edge of the Precipice—3

THE GREATEST PROBLEM IN WORLD HISTORY

by Thomas A. Davis

A COCKED and loaded revolver is a dangerous weapon to be in the hands of a scared and nervous man. And if the situation in which he finds himself continues for a long period, or becomes more tense, he is bound to pull the trigger sooner or later. Sheer nervousness if nothing else will drive him to it.

The situation becomes infinitely more dangerous and complicated when the weapon is a nuclear bomb capable of destroying all life, which is precisely what it can do, as we discussed in this column last month. And many world leaders know that if global tensions continue and multiply as they have been, one of the growing number of nations possessing the bomb is sure to pull the trigger sooner or later. This is the grim, inescapable, dilemma to which humanity has come.

But the nuclear bomb is not by any means our only problem. Nor is it our greatest. In fact, some scientists might put it third or fourth down the list. Our greatest problem, "the greatest problem in the history of the world," according to one scientist, is the global population explosion.

Let us see why he makes this alarming statement.

In dealing with a subject so vast as world population it is obviously impossible to arrive at any complete facts or figures. But sufficient information is available to give us a reliable, and very disturbing, picture of the over-all situation.

Today the world's population is about three and a half billion. Forty years ago it was only two billion. One hundred years before that it was one billion. And it took 5,000 years to reach that first billion.

Look at the figures again. Five thousand years for the first billion. One hundred years to double to the second billion. And, with the torrent of births swelling the world's population by some seventy million yearly according to one report, it will double again to four billion in 1980. Thereafter, it will double every thirty-five or forty years, unless something drastic happens, to eight billion around 2020, sixteen billion in 2060, and so on.

At present India itself has a population growth of from nine to ten million every year.

What are the implications of the population explosion?

We can consider only a few major ones. Some we shall think about now; some we shall consider later. Prof. Dennis Gabor, of Imperial College, London, comments on the subject: "Unless the world's soaring

birthrate is drastically checked civilization as we know it is doomed. Governments will collapse, law and order will vanish, mass rioting, plagues and disease will sweep the earth."

One of the major implications of the population upsurge is that we are going to run out of living space in a very few years. "Today's mushrooming population has one acre of land which it calls its own per person," claims Prof. Dana E. Harlow, of the University of Massachusetts, U.S.A. "Scientists predict that by the year 2,000 there will be one square foot of land for each human being throughout the world. By land I mean all land from grazing meadows and ploughed fields to lofty mountains and dry deserts."

One square foot; a tiny bit of land twelve inches by twelve inches for every man, woman, and child living upon the earth forty or so years from now. One square foot to supply all his needs, including food. It is an impossible picture, of course. But how do we escape from the situation?

One scientist has done some calculating and has come up with the exact date of Doomsday for the human race. He is physicist Heinz von Foerster of the University of Illinois, U.S.A. He has estimated that on Friday, November 13, 2026, a mere sixty years from now, the human race will literally squeeze itself to death for lack of living space.

Obviously, our race could not survive to die in that manner. Starvation, plagues and disease, horrible world-wide bloodshed and a host of other woeful scourges would play havoc with mankind long before that situation could develop. But the frightful point of the whole matter is this: An ever-increasing horde of humanity is rushing along at an accelerating rate toward racial extinction.

"After us the deluge," King Louis XV of France is reported to have remarked. We can make no such statement. The deluge has begun; it threatens to sweep us away. If it continues it will certainly destroy our children. And again we repeat, where is escape to be found?

A few paragraphs back we stated that we would consider some of the major implications of the population explosion, which a scientist termed "the greatest problem in the history of the world." We have looked briefly at one or two. Next month we shall discuss another, which one writer has said will be "History's Greatest Disaster."

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A SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST PUBLICATION issued monthly by the ORIENTAL WATCHMAN PUBLISHING HOUSE, P. O. Box 35, Poona 1, India.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: India, Rs. 4:75; Pakistan, Rs. 4:75; Burma, Ks. 4:75; Ceylon, Rs. 4:75.

SUBSCRIPTION PAYMENTS: Our representatives are authorized to receive cash or cheques and to issue official receipts for same. For orders sent to publishers, make cheque or money order payable to Oriental Watchman Publishing House, Salisbury Park, Poona 1.

REGIONAL OFFICES: Andhra, Kerala, Madras and Mysore—13, Cunningham Road, Bangalore 1; Gujarat and Maharashtra—16, Club Road, Bombay 8; Uttar Pradesh, East Punjab, Delhi and Adjacent States—27, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi; Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal—Morabadi Villa, Ranchi, Bihar; Assam—Nongthymmai, Shillong; East Pakistan—130/C Dhanmandi Road, Dacca; Ceylon—15/2 Alfred House Gardens, Colpetty, Colombo 3; West Pakistan—Oriental Watchman Publishing House, 32 Mozang Road, Lahore; Burma—Book & Bible House, 68 U Wisara Road, Rangoon.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Send new address, with wrapper from magazine, or reference number on wrapper, to indicate old address.

NON-RECEIPT OF MAGAZINES: Inquire at local post office before informing us. If possible, send magazine wrapper when writing regarding non-receipt.

EXPIRY NOTICE: X on wrapper of magazine indicates subscription has expired.

Owned by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (Southern Asia Division), Salisbury Park, Poona. Printed and published by V. Raju at and for the Oriental Watchman Publishing House, Salisbury Park, Poona 1, 1352-65.

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Astronomers of the Mt. Palomar and Mt. Wilson observatories in California have discovered five starlike bodies further from the earth than any previously discovered. One of them, the most distant, is racing away from us at 149,000 miles per second, or at 80% the speed of light. Commenting on the discovery, Dr. Allen Sandage of Mt. Palomar said: "The discovery of the new blue galaxies, reaching out to the horizon of present observation and probably far beyond, is like the opening of a giant barn door on the heavens."

*

Two men have spent thirty days 205 feet below the surface of the Pacific. One of them was U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander Scott Carpenter, who was one of the first U. S. astronauts to orbit the earth.

On his first day below Carpenter talked with astronauts Gordon Cooper and Charles Conrad as they sped by 100 miles above the earth in Gemini-5.

The thirty days were spent, for the most part, in a fifty-seven-foot-long cigar-shaped steel cylinder. During the day the men donned aqualungs and diving suits to work in the ocean.

The two men were members of one of three ten-man teams. The other men spent fifteen days each on the ocean floor.

*

What will be the world's longest underseas tunnel is under construction in Japan. When it is completed, some seven years from now, it will be 22.6 miles long. The tunnel will link two Japanese islands.

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THE brilliant and busy Hindu lawyer leaned back in his chair and looked at his client. The client expected to hear that their business was finished for the present, and that he might go. Instead, the lawyer said, "You are a Christian. Tell me something about your Jesus. I have been reading about Him recently for the first time in my life. He is the most amazing person that ever lived. Tell me about Him."

The Hindu lawyer was right. Jesus is the most amazing person, the greatest teacher, that ever lived.

Consider the following.

On one occasion Jesus made the claim: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father [God], but by me" (John 14:6). Jesus did not need to spend months or years in solitude searching for truth before He could teach it to others. At the age of twelve He was able to confound the most brilliant religious teachers of His nation with the greatest truths.

How could He do this? Because He Himself was truth. And being the Source of pure truth, truth personified, there was obviously no need for Him to search for truth, for Himself.

Jesus did not need to grope for the way of the full life before He could point it to others. He Himself was that Way. He had come from the dwelling place of God and knew the way. Men have only to believe in Him, follow Him, and copy His life to walk in the Way.

More than that. Not only is Jesus the Source of truth, and the Way to the pure and full life. He Himself is the Originator and Source of life. He proved this by calling the dead from the grave, and—most marvellous proof of all—by Himself rising from the tomb after being crucified.

Before Jesus was born to a simple family some nineteen hundred years ago, this prophecy was made concerning Him: "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matthew 1:23).

"God with us." Here is the great secret of it all. Here is why Jesus was the greatest One ever to walk the paths of earth. He was God with us.

Editorial



by

Clifford R. Anderson, M.D.

The Miracle of CREATION

THERE ARE so many wonderful things in the great universe about us that our human minds can hardly comprehend its magnitude. But the most wonderful thing of all is the fact of *life* itself. Living plants and animals abound everywhere. They continue on from generation to generation, each fulfilling its own destiny.

How did all this great system of life come into being? Let us step back in thought to the very beginning of time, to that day when our world was young and fresh from the hand of the Creator. Its surface is warmed and brightened by the sun. Its temperature is perfect. With an ideal climate and a suitable atmosphere containing sufficient oxygen, the surface of the planet is now capable of sustaining life. Now comes that thrilling moment when, at the command of God, all the many forms of life spring into being.

In that perfect environment God placed the first of the plants and the animals. Each was bidden to "bring forth" "after his kind." Thus each living organism began to fill its own place in the great cycle of life. At the word of the Creator, trees, grasses, flowers, and vegetation rapidly covered the surface of the planet, providing food for the myriads of animals that were so soon to follow. So the great cycle of life was set in motion.

The spark of life from the Creator is found only in *living things*. It can be transmitted only by things that are themselves *alive*. It has continued within each species throughout all generations from the very beginning of time. Whence did it come? The greatest scientist can only bow his head and repeat the words of Moses, "In the beginning God."

Biologists long ago abandoned the foolish old idea of spontaneous generation. Experiments by highly trained research workers all over the world continue to demonstrate that *living cells arise only from other living cells*, and from nowhere else.

Louis Pasteur, who founded the modern science of bacteriology, became world famous by demonstrating that living things can arise only from other living things. This he found to be true even with the tiniest bacteria. Lister, the father of modern surgical technique, carried Pasteur's discovery still further. By removing germs from the operating room he made

surgery safe for everyone, thus saving hundreds of thousands of lives every year. He also proved that even disease-bearing germs can arise only from parent cells of the same type.

Botanists and zoologists everywhere agree that there is no such thing as "spontaneous generation." Nor does one kind of animal ever change into another. All of life follows a definite pattern. This is equally true whether one is studying mushrooms, mosquitoes, mice or men. *All things bring forth after their own kind*. This is the basic law of nature. It can be readily demonstrated in every part of the globe. No scientific discoveries or experiments have ever revealed anything to the contrary.

If we study one of the lowest forms of life, such as fungus, we find that it never changes into anything else. It remains fungus regardless of how many generations we may watch. In the same manner the cells of the human body retain their own distinct human characteristics. They never turn into fish or frogs or flies.

A number of years ago a famous scientist took a few cells from the living heart of an unhatched chick embryo. He carefully cultured these cells and kept them alive for many years, long beyond the normal life span of that chicken. These cells continued to grow and multiply because they were kept in a suitable environment at the right temperature, but regardless of how many generations they passed through they still retained their original characteristics. They didn't change into anything else. This law of genetics was set in motion from the dawn of life upon this planet. It has never been changed.

How do living plants and animals reproduce

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THE WAR BEHIND THE COLD WAR

Last of two parts
by Roy Allan Anderson

In the first part of this two-part article the author described a terrible struggle between the forces of good and evil over the soul of a certain magistrate. For a time it seemed that good had triumphed. Then, suddenly, the situation changed. "I'm through with God," the man stated, with hate-filled eyes.

But Mr. Anderson prayed to God for guidance, and kept on talking to the official.

"We spent two hours together in that office that morning," Mr. Anderson wrote. "That was but the beginning of the final battle. For days some of us fasted and prayed for this man's deliverance. It came very dramatically." Now, read on.

ONE EVENING following a wonderful day of worship I felt impressed to go and see this man, for he had absented himself from church that day. I took a friend with me, a courageous man who had been decorated for gallantry in the world war.

As we walked into the home that evening, I was not surprised to discover this magistrate holding a seance again in his living-room. It was a silent communion. Walking into the room, I sensed the presence of an evil power. Our conversation was casual at first, but then I opened up things I wanted to discuss. His opposing attitude during the hour and a half made me realize that we were getting nowhere. As I rose to leave, I said, "I have always prayed before leaving this home, and I will again tonight."

The Last Desperate Attempt of Demons

This man did not want to pray, but out of respect he knelt. He had the same leering smirk I had seen before when he had been communing with evil spirits. I asked the friend I had brought to pray, but soon I sensed something was wrong. I knew what it was, for I was experiencing the same thing. We were being "pressured" by the spirits until it seemed impossible to breathe. It is a harrowing experience to feel every inch of one's body under terrific pressure. This was a crisis. Even to pray aloud seemed impossible.

Then the door of its own accord opened silently. The next instant something appeared that made that powerful and otherwise fearless magistrate spring from his place and cling to me like a frightened child. He described the being that had entered as looking like an armed military officer holding aloft a weapon as if to strike him.

The situation was desperate. With all the power left in me I said, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command the devils to leave this house."

Never have I heard a more horrifying noise. It seemed as if all hell was let loose. Windows rattled, doors slammed, and the whole house shook as if by

an earthquake. Such shrieking and yelling of demons was beyond description. We stayed on our knees till the uproar ceased and all became quiet. How long it lasted I do not know. It was probably only minutes, but it seemed like hours.

The calm that followed was even more impressive than the tumult. It helped us to understand those words descriptive of the quiet that followed the storm on the Sea of Galilee. The Bible says simply, "And there was a great calm." We, too, were experiencing "a great calm," a heavenly calm.

As we rose from our knees, that man's look of terror had passed, but he was still shaking. He realized now that God was in his home, a home which a few minutes before had been rattled by the powers of hell.

God Has Not Given the Spirit of Fear

Deliverance came that night. The spirits never invaded that home again. Living through these and other such experiences has helped me to understand Paul's statement: "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).

The devil does not always reveal himself in such demonstrations. He more often is a deceiver. But whatever role he plays, the Bible is our defence. Jesus told us that just before His return in glory the whole world will be caught in the snare of the wicked one. But those who believe the Scriptures will be shielded from the delusion that grips the nations when Satan himself will appear as Christ. There have been antichrists before, but this will be the greatest of the ages.

A few years ago I picked up my newspaper in London and noticed this somewhat startling prediction by a leading astrologer:

"A great new leader who will deliver the world from chaos is about to arise. . . . He will be an orator with a bewitching voice. He will speak poetry naturally, and there will be music in his gestures. His knowledge will be colossal, and his judgments as nearly perfect as we can imagine. In everything he does there will be this uncanny accuracy, and it is possible those who have come into contact with him will feel they have never before met anyone so sweet of temper, so gracious in manner, or so good to look upon. Wherever he goes the common people will love him and follow him.

"His chief work will be the breaking up of all the militarist ideas and institutions we know today. From the moment he begins his mission the arma-



ments industry will use every ounce of energy, every penny at its disposal, to smash him. But he will win in a dramatic manner which will put an end to all those who have been building up the industry. His chief interests will be entirely public. That is to say, he will concern himself continuously with the alteration of social conditions, and for the first time in modern history democracy will have found one superb leader. There will be no chance whatsoever for other interests to get a look in. This man will sweep the board with his opponents, and his work will succeed because he will be above nationality, and above sect."

That surely is arresting. But now let me read from "*The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*." On page 624 the author says:

"As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour's advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. (Revelation 1:13-15.) The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air. 'Christ has come! Christ has come!' The people prostrate themselves in adoration before him, while he lifts up his hands, and pronounces a blessing upon them, as Christ blessed His disciples when He was upon the earth. His voice is soft and subdued, yet full of melody."

The astrologer said, "He will speak poetry naturally," "he will be an orator with a bewitching voice," and "his knowledge will be colossal."

The author of "*The Great Controversy*" goes on to say, "In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Saviour uttered; he heals the diseases of the people. . . . This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion."

A strong delusion indeed! But God's people will not be deceived.

*"Never had I heard a more horri-
fying noise,
Windows rattled, doors slammed,
and the whole house shook. Such shrieking
and yelling of demons was
beyond description."*

The Scriptures a Safeguard Against Delusion

Never have God's people needed so much to understand His Word. These great events are right before us. If you were listening to your radio sometime when a report came of a being of dazzling brightness that had appeared, who was healing the sick and relieving the oppressed, and speaking peace to the nations, repeating many of the words of Christ, how would it affect you? Would you believe it was really Christ? Something like that may well happen soon.

There is one thing Satan cannot do, however; he cannot imitate the *manner* of Christ's coming. When our Lord returns, He will not come silently or as a great political leader. He will come as King of kings and Lord of lords, descending the flaming skies, accompanied by the glory of all the heavenly host. (Matthew 24:30; Revelation 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17.) No true Christian need be deceived, however great or powerful the delusion. If we receive the love of the truth in our hearts, we will be kept in that hour of crisis.

When this greatest of all antichrists, Satan himself, the real general in the war behind the cold war, appears in all his subtle deception, it will be for only a very short time. But it will be long enough to test the whole world to see who will be loyal to God and His truth. Soon the devil and all his hosts will be destroyed for ever.

In this dramatic hour the Holy Spirit is calling us into a closer fellowship with our risen Lord that we might be prepared to "stand against the wiles of the devil" and to be numbered at last with those who will welcome our Lord and Saviour, who comes to reap the harvest of the earth and take His people home.



Is it Right to Change One's Beliefs?

by *W. Austin Townend*

FEW QUESTIONS that come to mortal man, fallible as he is, can be more taxing than this one. Here is where one must be sure—much more sure than one's feelings might indicate.

Few decisions could have a more telling influence on life, both here and hereafter, than that which brings about a change of faith.

Tension, and even sleepless nights, are by no means uncommon with those grappling with the problem of whether they should change their religious beliefs. Doubtless some reader of these very lines is already experiencing that. I sincerely trust that this article can help you. I believe that it will.

A prominent Australian university professor, of no declared religious affiliation, was asked about this matter in a question-and-answer feature of a newspaper. In reply he gave his questioner food for more than casual thought.

"You are, you tell me, a firm believer in Christianity," wrote the professor. "Don't you see that when you condemn a person for upsetting somebody's simple faith, you are condemning all Christian missions? What is the missionary doing on a South Sea island or in the forests of darkest Africa, if he is not upsetting the simple faith of whole tribes? Do you condemn the missionary for rudely assailing somebody's touchingly simple faith in Mumbo Jumbo?"

Now the professor's questions may sound somewhat extreme.

However they touch upon a principle; the fact "that anyone who cares passionately for the truth must desire to share with others any glimpse of the truth that has been vouchsafed to him." This is what the professor calls "the principle of human progress towards the light."

This learned man considers that one is justified in changing his beliefs if the change follows a new and further revelation of truth.

Naturally enough, the question will be asked, "What is truth?"

The most reliable answer to this old yet answerable question employs the words of Jesus Christ Himself. There is safety in what He declared.

Praying to His Father in behalf of all His true followers, the Lord Jesus petitioned, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). The Scriptures are the Word. It must follow, then, that the more we know of the Scriptures, the clearer will be our knowledge of truth.

God is truth, and His Word is a revelation of truth—of Himself. Therefore, it seems reasonable that we are doing right in changing our religious views after we have seen the increasing light of truth in God's Word.

But before accepting as truth a new teaching, or for that matter before continuing to accept as truth some well-established religious teaching, we ought to make doubly certain that the doctrine in question has been thoroughly winnowed from the kind of religious tradition that has no Scriptural foundation.

Earnest churchmen often are severely shocked when they discover that some of their central and most widely accepted doctrines have only men's tradition, not Scripture, as their foundation.

Exemplifying the traditions of Christ's day were the practices of the Jews, who had a multitude of minor regulations concerning Sabbath observance. They also taught that one must not partake of food until he had performed certain washings of the hands. They observed human-devised customs regarding the washing of eating utensils, succession of property, and so on.

To say that the Master opposed such deep-rooted tradition may be a surprise to many sincerely devout Christians. The facts are, however, that Jesus did. Each time that He came face to face with unscriptural tradition, He hit it—and hit it hard.

Not once is it recorded that the Master followed, or in any other way supported, tradition when it was applied to matters of

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I WILL NEVER FORGET IT. It was a night to remember as I stood on the ancient Shepherds' Field near Bethlehem. This was the culmination of a beautiful dream.

Only a few hours earlier our Air-Jordan plane had put down on the sloping runway bordered on one side by the old road to Emmaus. We visited Jerusalem briefly, making our way through the narrow streets lined with old-world buildings, grottoes, mosques, and bazaars. It was almost Christmas Eve.

Down the street a few blocks were, by the loosest definition possible, buses. Excitedly we boarded a bus of ancient vintage and found an olive-skinned bus driver wearing the characteristic Jordanian headgear draping his back. He had a sense of humour—he had to in order to be able to drive a nondescript motor carriage such as that. My first guess was that this was an over-sized bathtub on wheels propelled by a motor. He described it, however, as having a Mercedes chassis. We settled for that and rolled, bumped, zigged, and zagged our way through Dung Gate, the back door of Jerusalem, the only gate that admits automotive traffic.

Down the side of the city, past the Garden of Gethsemane, we made our way to Bethlehem. Darkness rapidly settled in on us. Because of the hills and bumps and curves across the Valley of

A large crowd of Christian pilgrims had assembled to reflect on our dear Saviour's birth. The YMCA organization annually sponsors these outdoor services.

Nearby was the field of Boaz where Ruth gleaned. In another spot was the traditional tomb of Rachel. Many things of Biblical significance centred around this area. I looked around. Next to me was a Greek Orthodox priest—unshaven, with dark cap and long flowing robe, gesturing me down into the Shepherds' Cave, a huge underground room, now a shrine, believed to be the place where at one time the shepherds slept and warmed themselves.

Up again from the cave, I listened. A young man was telling the familiar Christmas story. Then a Christian Arab spoke eloquently in his own tongue of how the busy world is still too busy to receive the King. There followed the reading of the account of the Nativity, so vividly described in Luke's Gospel. I joined in the singing of many old Christmas carols. My mind raced across the miles to my home, where I was sure my family and friends were joining in the same Christmas songs: "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "Silent Night," and others.

Then back to Shepherds' Field and the unforgettable moment I was living. From where I stood I could see the lights of Bethlehem three miles away atop a terraced



A part of Manger Square, Bethlehem.

I WAS IN BETHLEHEM ON CHRISTMAS EVE

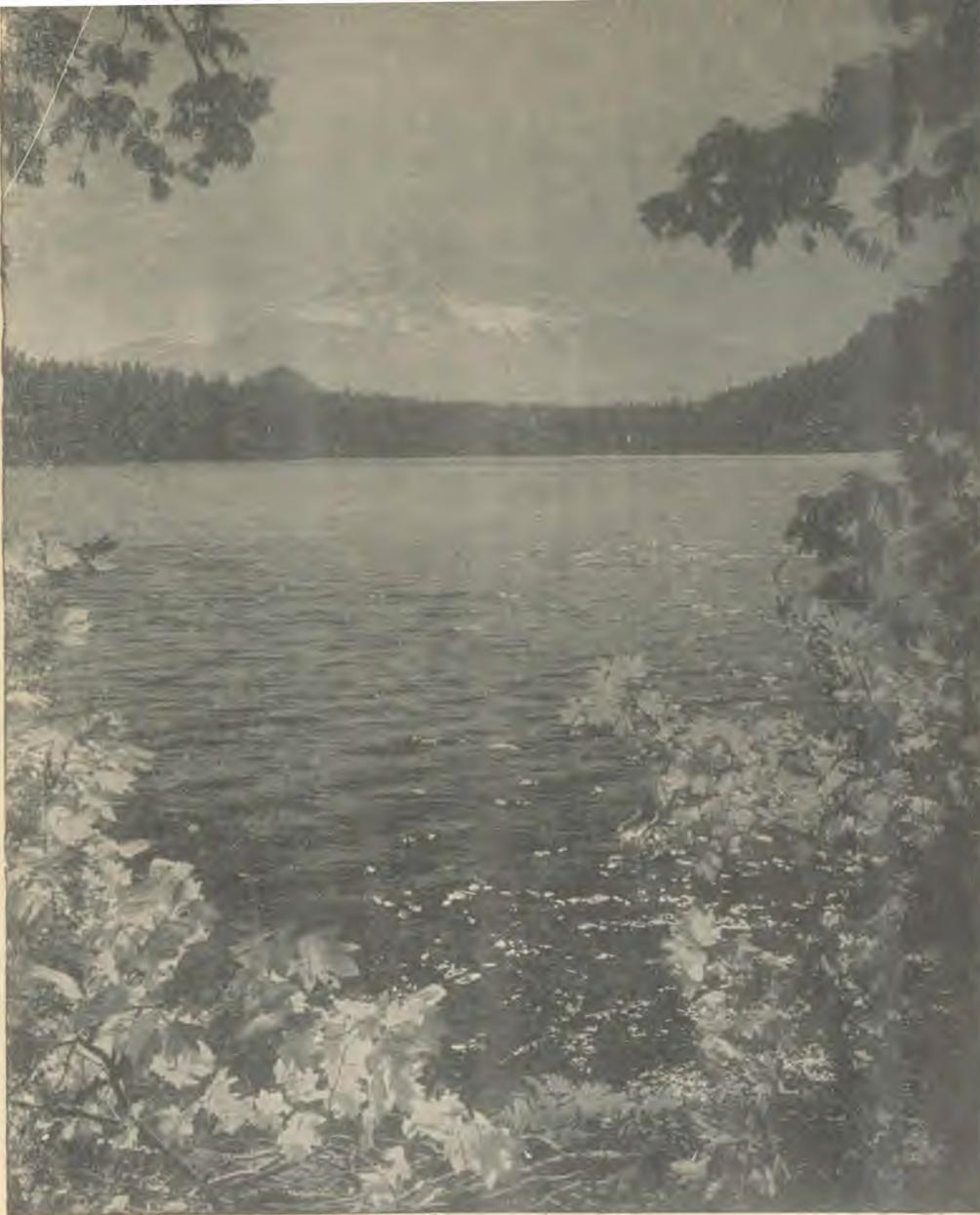
Rephaim, the actual distance of ten miles from Jerusalem to Bethlehem seemed much longer—and it was. The old road with the ten-mile signpost had depreciated from lack of use, because there was no longer "peace on earth." The old road crossed Israeli territory, but a correction line was drawn by the United Nations in 1948 to avoid trespassing. This had stretched the old road from ten to sixteen miles.

Finally the bus pulled to the side of the road in what seemed to be the middle of nowhere. We were taken through a cobblestone corridor with the open sky above. Before us was the Field of the Shepherds. The eight-foot stone walls give protection to the tenders of sheep during the windy nights,

hill, with olive trees, vineyards, fig and almond trees, lining the terrace. Between where I stood and the little town of Bethlehem I could see the open sky. The stars twinkled brightly. Right above and toward the village was the constellation Orion. I wondered whether it might have been through the corridor of Orion that the angels passed when they heralded the good news of Christ's first advent, to the shepherds.

"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good
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by J. O. Iversen



*Before evil entered the world
both man and nature
were perfect.*

by

Ellen G. White

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

TO MANY MINDS, the origin of sin and the reason for its existence are a source of great perplexity. They see the work of evil, with its terrible results of woe and desolation, and they question how all this can exist under the sovereignty of One who is infinite in wisdom, in power, and in love. Here is a mystery, of which they find no explanation. And in their uncertainty and doubt, they are blinded to truths plainly revealed in God's word, and essential to salvation.

There are those who, in their inquiries concerning the existence of sin, endeavour to search into that which God has never revealed; hence they find no solution of their difficulties; and such as are actuated by a disposition to doubt and cavil, seize upon this as an excuse for rejecting the words of Holy Writ. Others, however, fail of a satisfactory understanding of the great problem of evil, from the fact that tradition and misinterpretation have obscured the teaching of the Bible concerning the character of God, the

nature of His government, and the principles of His dealing with sin.

It is impossible to explain the origin of sin so as to give a reason for its existence. Yet enough may be understood concerning both the origin and the final disposition of sin, to make fully manifest the justice and benevolence of God in all His dealings with evil. Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that God was in no wise responsible for the entrance of sin; that there was no arbitrary withdrawal of divine grace, no deficiency in the divine government, that gave occasion for the uprising of rebellion. Sin is an intruder, for whose presence no reason can be given. It is mysterious, unaccountable; to excuse it, is to defend it. Could excuse for it be found, or cause be shown for its existence, it would cease to be sin. Our only definition of sin is that given in the word of God; it is "the transgression of the law"; it is the outworking of a principle at war with the great law of love which is the foundation of the divine government.

Before the entrance of evil, there was peace and joy throughout the universe. All was in perfect harmony with the Creator's will. Love for God was supreme, love for one another impartial. Christ the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father—one in nature, in character, and in purpose—the only being in all the universe that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God. By Christ, the Father wrought in the creation of all heavenly beings. "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, . . . whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers" (Colossians 1:16); and to Christ, equally with the Father, all heaven gave allegiance.

The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all created beings depended upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God desires from all His creatures the service of love—homage that springs from an intelligent appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced allegiance, and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service.

The Origin of Sin

But there was one that chose to pervert this freedom. Sin originated with him who, next to Christ, had been most honoured of God, and who stood highest in power and glory among the inhabitants of heaven. Before his fall, Lucifer was first of the covering cherubs, holy and undefiled. "Thus saith the Lord God: Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering. . . . Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee" (Ezekiel 28:12-15).

Lucifer might have remained in favour with God, beloved and honoured by all the angelic host, exercising his noble powers to bless others and to glorify his Maker. But, says the prophet, "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness" (Verse 17). Little by little, Lucifer came to indulge a desire for self-exaltation. "Thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God" (Verse 6.) "Thou hast said, . . . I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation. . . . I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High" (Isaiah 14:13, 14). Instead of seeking to make God supreme in the affection and allegiance of His creatures, it was Lucifer's endeavour to win their service and homage to himself. And coveting the honour which the infinite Father had bestowed upon His Son, this prince of angels aspired to power which it was the prerogative of Christ alone to wield.

Leaving his place in the immediate presence of God, Lucifer went forth to diffuse the spirit of discontent among the angels. Working with mysterious secrecy, and for a time concealing his real purpose under an appearance of reverence for God, he endeavoured to excite dissatisfaction concerning the laws that governed heavenly beings, intimating that

they imposed an unnecessary restraint. Since their natures were holy, he urged that the angels should obey the dictates of their own will. He sought to create sympathy for himself, by representing that God had dealt unjustly with him in bestowing supreme honour upon Christ. He claimed that in aspiring to greater power and honour he was not aiming at self-exaltation, but was seeking to secure liberty for all the inhabitants of heaven, that by this means they might attain to a higher state of existence.

God, in His great mercy, bore long with Lucifer. He was not immediately degraded from his exalted station when he first indulged the spirit of discontent, nor even when he began to present his false claims before the loyal angels. Long was he retained in heaven. Again and again he was offered pardon, on condition of repentance and submission. Such efforts as only infinite love and wisdom could devise, were made to convince him of his error. The spirit of discontent had never before been known in heaven. Lucifer himself did not at first see whither he was drifting; he did not understand the real nature of his feelings. But as his dissatisfaction was proved to be without cause, Lucifer was convinced that he was in the wrong, that the divine claims were just, and that he ought to acknowledge them as such before all heaven. Had he done this, he might have saved himself and many angels. He had not at this time fully cast off his allegiance to God. Though he had forsaken his position as covering cherub, yet if he had been willing to return to God, acknowledging the Creator's wisdom, and satisfied to fill the place appointed him in God's great plan, he would have been reinstated in his office. But pride forbade him to submit. He persistently defended his own course, maintained that he had no need of repentance, and fully committed himself, in the great controversy, against his Maker.

The discord which his own course had caused in heaven, Satan charged upon the law and government of God. All evil he declared to be the result of the divine administration. He claimed that it was his own object to improve upon the statutes of Jehovah. Therefore it was necessary that he should demonstrate the nature of his claims, and show the working out of his proposed changes in the divine law. His own work must condemn him. Satan had claimed from the first that he was not in rebellion. The whole universe must see the deceiver unmasked.

Even when it was decided that he could no longer remain in heaven, infinite Wisdom did not destroy Satan. Since the service of love can alone be acceptable to God, the allegiance of His creatures must rest upon a conviction of His justice and benevolence. The inhabitants of heaven and of other worlds, being unprepared to comprehend the nature or consequences of sin, could not then have seen the justice and mercy of God in the destruction of Satan. Had he been immediately blotted from existence, they would have served God from fear, rather than from love. The influence of the deceiver would not have been fully destroyed, nor would the spirit of rebellion have been utterly eradicated. Evil must be permitted to come to maturity. For the good of the entire universe through ceaseless ages, Satan must more fully develop his principles, that his charges against the divine government might be seen in their true light by all created

beings, that the justice and mercy of God and the immutability of His law might forever be placed beyond all question.

Satan's rebellion was to be a lesson to the universe through all coming ages, a perpetual testimony to the nature and terrible results of sin. The working out of Satan's rule, its effects upon both men and angels, would show what must be the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. It would testify that with the existence of God's government and His law is bound up the well-being of all the creatures He has made. Thus the history of this terrible experiment of rebellion was to be a perpetual safeguard to all holy intelligences, to prevent them from being deceived as to the nature of transgression, to save them from committing sin and suffering its punishment.

To the very close of the controversy in heaven, the great usurper continued to justify himself. When it was announced that with all his sympathizers he must be expelled from the abodes of bliss, then the rebel leader boldly avowed his contempt for the Creator's law. He reiterated his claim that angels needed no control, but should be left to follow their own will, which would ever guide them right. He denounced the divine statutes as a restriction of their liberty, and declared that it was his purpose to secure the abolition of law; that, freed from this restraint, the hosts of heaven might enter upon a more exalted, more glorious state of existence.

With one accord, Satan and his host threw the blame of their rebellion wholly upon Christ, declaring that if they had not been reprov'd, they would never have rebelled. Thus stubborn and defiant in their disloyalty, seeking vainly to overthrow the government of God, yet blasphemously claiming to be themselves the innocent victims of oppressive power, the arch-rebel and all his sympathizers were at last banished from heaven.

The same spirit that prompted rebellion in heaven, still inspires rebellion on earth. Satan has continued with men the same policy which he pursued with the angels. His spirit now reigns in the children of disobedience. Like him they seek to break down the restraints of the law of God, and promise

men liberty through transgression of its precepts. Reproof of sin still arouses the spirit of hatred and resistance. When God's messages of warning are brought home to the conscience, Satan leads men to justify themselves, and to seek the sympathy of others in their course of sin. Instead of correcting their errors, they excite indignation against the reprov'er, as if he were the sole cause of difficulty. From the days of righteous Abel to our own time, such is the spirit which has been displayed toward those who dare to condemn sin.

In the banishment of Satan from

Seven "Minds"

Mind your tongue. Don't let it speak hasty, cruel, unkind, or wicked words.

Mind your eyes. Don't permit them to look on bad books, pictures, or objects.

Mind your ears. Don't suffer them to listen to wicked speeches, songs, or words.

Mind your lips. Don't let the foods of gluttony enter between them.

Mind your hands. Don't let them steal or fight, or write any evil words.

Mind your feet. Don't let them walk in the steps of bad people.

Mind your heart. Don't let anything but good get into your heart—to think good, to do good, to love good.

—Selected.

heaven, God declared His justice and maintained the honour of His throne. But when man had sinned through yielding to the deceptions of this apostate spirit, God gave an evidence of His love by yielding up his only begotten Son to die for the fallen race. In the atonement the character of God is revealed. The mighty argument of the cross demonstrates to the whole universe that the course of sin which Lucifer had chosen was in no wise chargeable upon the government of God.

The Universe in Amazement

In the contest between Christ and Satan, during the Saviour's

earthly ministry, the character of the great deceiver was unmasked. Nothing could so effectually have uprooted Satan from the affections of the heavenly angels and the whole loyal universe as did his cruel warfare upon the world's Redeemer. The daring blasphemy of his demand that Christ should pay him homage, his presumptuous boldness in bearing Him to the mountain summit and the pinnacle of the temple, the malicious intent betrayed in urging Him to cast Himself down from the dizzy height, the unsleeping malice that hunted Him from place to place, inspiring the hearts of priests and people to reject His love, and at the last to cry, "Crucify Him! crucify Him!"—all this excited the amazement and indignation of the universe.

When the great sacrifice had been consummated, Christ ascended on high, refusing the adoration of angels until He had presented the request: "I will that they also, whom thou hast give me, be with me where I am" (John 17:24). Then with inexpressible love and power came forth the answer from the Father's throne: "Let all the angels of God worship Him" (Hebrews 1:6). Not a stain rested upon Jesus. His humiliation ended, His sacrifice completed, there was given unto Him a name that is above every name.

Now the guilt of Satan stood forth without excuse. He had revealed his true character as a liar and a murderer. It was seen that the very same spirit with which he ruled the children of men, who were under his power, he would have manifested had he been permitted to control the inhabitants of heaven. He had claimed that the transgression of God's law would bring liberty and exaltation; but it was seen to result in bondage and degradation.

In the final execution of the judgment it will be seen that no cause for sin exists. When the Judge of all the earth shall demand of Satan, "Why hast thou rebelled against Me, and robbed Me of My kingdom?" the originator of evil can render no excuse. Every mouth will be stopped, and all the hosts of rebellion will be speechless.

The cross of Calvary, while it declares the law immutable, proclaims to the universe that the

wages of sin is death. In the Saviour's expiring cry, "It is finished," the death knell of Satan was rung. The great controversy which had been so long in progress was then decided, and the final eradication of evil was made certain. The Son of God passed through the portals of the tomb, that "through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14).

The whole universe will have become witnesses to the nature and results of sin. And its utter extermination, which in the beginning would have brought fear to angels and dishonour to God, will now vindicate His love and establish His honour before the universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law. Never will evil again be manifest. Says the word of God: "Affliction shall not rise up the second time" (Nahum 1:9). The law of God, which Satan has reproached as the yoke of bondage, will be honoured as the law of liberty. A tested and proved creation will never again be turned from allegiance to Him whose character has been fully manifested before them as fathomless love and infinite wisdom.

I WAS IN BETHLEHEM

From page 9

tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:9-14).

My thoughts hurried back to the present. The simple but beautiful service had ended. The memory of it will never be forgotten.

We followed the shepherds in the direction of Bethlehem and to the Church of the Nativity, the focal point of attention this wonderful eve. The narrow streets were packed with people. Some had followed in the trail of the Magi from Persia and India; others from

Egypt, into which land Joseph and Mary fled at the edict of the suspicious and jealous Herod. Pilgrims were on hand from Rome whence came the command many years before that the whole world should be taxed. From England, Germany, America, and from all over the world, people had gathered for the Christmas season.

"Peace, Good Will"

For one night the thought of "peace, good will toward men" brushed aside political and national animosities among the people present. There was even a momentary defrosting in the cold war between the Jew and the Arab. For thirty-six hours the iron-clad Mendelbaum Gate swung open to allow Christians from the Jewish sector to worship at this hallowed spot.

The ordinarily quiet village of Bethlehem, with its people dressed in practically the same garb as was worn twenty centuries before, awakened to this night and the immediate weeks to follow. Those of many faiths claim much in common at the scene of the Nativity—Protestants, Roman Catholics, Coptics, and the various Orthodox churches provide a heavy schedule of special services beginning Christmas Eve, and the services continue till January 19 with the conclusion of the Armenian Christmas. You see, the Western churches follow the Gregorian calendar and the Eastern, the Julian.

We made our way to the plaza called the Manger Square, and through the long dark corridor of the basilica. The Christmas bells had rung, inviting worshippers to the nine o'clock Anglican service in the courtyard. How interesting it was to watch people rub elbows in Bethlehem—a veritable babel of tongues. There were consuls in smart official attire, long-robed priests in black and brown, shepherds in the Arab dress that Jesus wore, Indians in saris, Arab army officers in khaki uniforms and red-and-white checkered head-dress, young Boy Scouts, and choir boys in white. The birth of Christ seemed to be a common denominator that factored into every strata of society at the humble manger.

Back into the church we

descended a long series of polished stone steps leading into a grotto—a cave dug out of a rock—the place believed by many to be the birth-place of Christ.

As I saw the manger I could not but breathe a prayer of thanks that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." While we have no record of the exact date for the birth of Christ, nor the exact place, we know that it was in Bethlehem that the Son of God was born.

I slipped quietly through the crowd and onto the street outside. The town was alive with festivities. The streets were jammed with unwashed urchins begging baksheesh, women carrying baskets, and bearded old men. Towns-people who carve out a living with olive-wood products and brooches of mother-of-pearl had seized upon this night to dispose of their wares. Shopkeepers, eager for another *denar* and an extra handful of *filis*, had opened their shops, and from the entryway on the busy street they stood bargaining and enticing the passer-by with their wares. Young people were laughing gaily. Older ones were arguing or discussing local issues, and street vendors were doing extraordinarily well selling roasted nuts and non-descript "delicacies."

A Moment of Confusion

I continued my way down the dimly lighted narrow street with old stone buildings pressing their walls against me, punctuated every few feet by a darkened recess leading into a place someone calls "home." Across the street from an upstairs room I could hear a dance band beating out an Oriental counterpart of sentimental swing. Again I remembered the reference of the young Christian Arab lad out in the Field of the Shepherds earlier that evening who said that even on the night that Joseph and Mary sought a place of lodging there was no room in the inn. The people that night were too busy with their trivia to be aware that history was taking place, prophecy was being fulfilled, and salvation was made possible.

Once more my heart thrilled. I had been in Bethlehem on Christmas Eve. I'll never forget it. It was a night to remember.

(Note: That this study might be of permanent value, readers are invited to underline all the texts and to follow a simple plan of annotating alongside each text in the margin of their Bibles the next text in the study. Begin by entering the following information about the study on the flyleaf of your Bible as tabled below: serial number, title, first text, code letters, and total number of texts used. Then turn to the first text and write in the margin alongside it the second text with code letters and so on in chain reference fashion to the end.)

2 S W
2 Jan 3:16

29 Je'-sus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, / not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.
30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.
31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by

MARK YOUR BIBLE

Conducted by Bernard Pinghe
Bernard Pinghe

No.	Title	First Text	Code	No. of Texts
15	Bethlehem Reviewed	Gen. 3:15	BR	11

BETHLEHEM REVIEWED IN PROPHECY

THE AMERICAN poet Henry W. Longfellow, gave utterance to the universal hunger for peace that has eluded humanity through many millenniums when he wrote:

"I heard the bells on Christmas day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men!"

1. What Messianic hope did God give to the disillusioned first parents soon after they became victims of sin?

Genesis 3:15. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (2 BR Gen. 17:7.)

"Adam and Eve stood as criminals before the righteous Judge, awaiting the sentence which transgression had incurred; but before they heard of the life of toil and sorrow which must be their portion, or of the decree that they must return to dust, they listened to words that could not fail to give them hope."—E. G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 66.

2. What was the hope-awakening promise of God to Abraham that the Messiah would be born through him?

Genesis 17:7. "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." [See the inspired interpretation of the text in Galatians 3:16.] (3 BR Gen. 49:1, 10.)

3. How certain was Jacob that the Promised One would come?

Genesis 49:1, 10. "And Jacob called unto his sons, and said . . . The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." (4 BR Num. 24:17.)

"The pure King, the Son of Justice, the Prince

of Peace, the Son of man by God, the Saviour, the Anointed, whom the prophets had foretold in the twilight of sorrow and affliction; who had been seen by apocalyptic writers descending upon the earth like lightning, in the fullness of victory and glory; . . . the Son of God and of Man, the Man who hid God in human flesh, the God who cloaked His divinity in Adam's clay."—Giovanni Papini, *Life of Christ*, p. 289.

4. In what words did the reluctant and unfaithful prophet Balaam give utterance to his prophecy of the arrival of the Messiah?

Numbers 24:17. "I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel." (5 BR Dan. 9:25.)

"Christ has indeed been the Star to lead man from darkness to light for all men. Even those who have renounced Christianity and attacked it, in their inmost being still follow the Christian ideal, for hitherto neither their subtlety nor the ardour of their hearts have been able to create a higher ideal of man and virtue than the ideal given by Christ of old. When it has been attempted, the result has been only grotesque."—F. Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, Part II, Book IV, Chapter I.

5. How accurately did Daniel forecast the time of the Redeemer's arrival on earth?

Daniel 9:25. "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks." (6 BR Isa. 7:14.)

It is not within the scope of this study to show how this prophecy was fulfilled. Any reader interested in a full explanation may write us, requesting it.

"The Saviour's coming was foretold in Eden. When Adam and Eve first heard the promise, they looked for its speedy fulfilment. They joyfully welcomed their first-born son, hoping that he might be the Deliverer. But the fulfilment of the promise tarried. . . . The prophecy of Daniel revealed the time of His advent, but not all rightly interpreted the message."—E. G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 31.

6. With what clarity did God predict the unique, virgin birth of Jesus?

Isaiah 7:14. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (7 BR Isa. 9:6.)



"Our little Lord, we give Thee praise
That thou hast deigned to take our ways,
Born of a maid—a man to be,
And all the angels sing to Thee,
What the globe could not enwrap
Nestled lies in Mary's lap,
Just a baby very wee,
Yet Lord of all the world is He."

—Martin Luther

7. What prediction was made by Isaiah indicating Christ's divinity and power?

Isaiah 9:6. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (8 BR Micah 5:2.)

One Christmas eve during World War I a French officer gave the command, "Get ready. . . . It is almost time for the charge!" While his soldiers were preparing, the stillness of the night was broken by men's

voices singing in German. Though the words were not understood, the message was clear. They sang:

"Silent night, holy night, All is calm, all is bright;
Round yon virgin mother and Child! Holy infant,
so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace."

Then the officer gave the command, "Charge! Vive la France!" Not a man moved; they had begun to sing. He lowered his sword and said, "Very well, no charge tonight. Let us also sing!" May the Lord make it possible for all striving nations to achieve peace through Christ this Christmas.

8. What revelation was available to the student of Scripture regarding the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem?

Micah 5:2. "But thou, Bethlehem . . . though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." (9 BR Mal. 3:1.)

9. What announcement had been made regarding the birth of John the Baptist—the herald of Jesus?

Malachi 3:1. "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple." (10 BR Revelation 22:20.)

"Already to Zacharias the priest, as he ministered before the altar, the nearness of Christ's coming had been announced. Already the forerunner was born, his mission attested by miracle and prophecy."—E. G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 44.

10. What did Jesus say regarding His second coming?

Revelation 22:20. "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly." (11 BR Matthew 24:44.)

It is said that the second coming of Christ is mentioned 1518 times in the Bible, and over 300 times in the New Testament. This goes to prove God's emphasis on this important doctrine. "From the milder tones proceeding from some of the parables of Jesus the music rises to a magnificent crescendo and grand finale in the book of Revelation." Arthur E. Lickey, *God Speaks to Modern Man*, p. 229.

11. In order that we may not be unprepared as many were at Christ's first coming, what is the appeal that proceeds from Christ to us?

Matthew 24:44. "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." (BR//.)

"God is indeed the Lord of history because the Son of God who lived on earth is to appear again on the earth to bring history to a victorious and glorious consummation."—George E. Ladd, *Crucial Questions About the Kingdom of God*, pp. 45, 46.

May the signs of Christ's second coming that crowd our age, help you to be prepared to meet Him in peace.

BELIEFS

From page 8

worship. When some of Christ's disciples ignored tradition, the religious rulers asked Christ, "Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders?" (Mark 7:5). This question gave Christ His opportunity for clearly stating just where He stood on the matter.

Listen to Christ's words as Mark's Gospel records them: "Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mark 7:6, 7).

"Vain worship" is what heaven's King labels the tradition. This He made crystal clear when He stated that the Pharisees made the Word of God (truth) of "none effect" through their tradition. (Mark 7:13.)

Anything that makes any of the agencies of salvation of none effect is dangerous. Christ wants us to keep away from danger. He wants us to keep away from religious traditions that would replace the Word of God.

Clearly, then, God will be well pleased with the man or woman who changes his or her religious beliefs when it is discovered that these are man-made.

That it takes much courage to make such a change in the face of perhaps a family background of certain beliefs, or perhaps in the face of ridicule and scorn from one's loved ones, no one will deny.

Long and impressive is the line of brave souls who down through the centuries changed their religious beliefs. Think of the Apostle Paul. *What a revolutionary change he made.* In his sermons and letters he often referred to it, as every Bible reader well knows.

What is more, as you read Paul's life work as recorded in the New Testament you find that most of his time was given over to leading other people to make the radical change he himself had made. Paul was a crusader for a change—a change from traditional beliefs (and very popular ones too), to

what Christ had revealed to him—unpopular religious truth. The churches of the day often united against Paul. *But*, at the end of it all he wrote: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day" (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

"I have kept the faith," confessed Paul. It was *not* the faith of his fathers. It was not the faith of the popular churches of his day. *But* it was the faith of Jesus. Tradition was forsaken. Jesus was accepted. It was what Jesus actually said, not what the fathers said about what Jesus said, that settled the matter for Paul.

Heaven, the earth made new, and eternity are for those who follow, not tradition, but Jesus.

Every man who has changed his religious beliefs to more closely follow in the steps of his Master surely stands justified in the eyes of God.

Yes, on the authority of the Holy Scriptures we can boldly state that it is right to change one's religious beliefs, provided the change is from a combination of the Scriptures (most likely only part of them) *plus* tradition, to the whole of the Holy Scriptures, and the Scriptures alone.

MIRACLE OF CREATION

From page 5

themselves? All forms of life, except the tiniest single-celled organisms, reproduce themselves by some kind of *seed*. In plants this is usually a rather simple cellular structure. If the soil is good, and if there is sufficient warmth and moisture, the seed will germinate and grow. From that one single cell innumerable other cells will develop, with many different functions. Thus a new plant will come into being.

The same occurs with insects and most of the lower forms of life. Usually the mother prepares a

suitable nest wherein she lays her eggs. If conditions are favourable, a new cycle of life will commence. This in turn gives rise to still other generations. Such are the unchanging laws of nature. Each new cycle follows in exactly the same pattern as the one which preceded it.

In the higher animals also life begins with one tiny cell, but the process of growth is much more complex than in the lower forms. In the human the fertilized ovum, or egg cell, remains within the body of the mother for about forty weeks. There it continues to grow and develop until it becomes a baby weighing seven or eight pounds. That fully developed baby is now many millions of times the size of the one original cell—and all of that happens in nine months! Never again will that young human grow so rapidly.

During this long period of growth within the mother all the various parts of the body are formed. At first they are very tiny, but each part is already capable of some function. Nothing is overlooked. Everything is perfect, so that at birth we are presented with a beautiful baby possessing the ability to live a complete human life. The spark of life within that first tiny cell has now expanded and multiplied until it has become the most distinguished of all living things, another human being to reflect the presence of the divine.

How did it all happen? Let me explain. As soon as the ovum is fertilized, it begins to grow and enlarge rapidly. From each parent cell it has already drawn the genes which determine its sex, its height, its colouring, and to some extent even its life span. All the eccentricities, such as peculiar skin-markings, extra toes or fingers, and other family characteristics, are already concentrated in that one rapidly growing cell. Some characteristics are dominant, others are recessive. But they are all there from the moment of conception. Such is the miracle of life.

After a few hours the ovum or egg cell has grown to about double its original size. It then rapidly divides into two daughter cells, which in turn go through these same phases of growth. After another similar period each one of these daughter cells again divide into two more daughter cells. And

again each one of these cells continues to carry the same family characteristics that were present in the first cell at the moment of conception. This remarkable process of growth and division continues at more or less the same rate until eventually there are untold billions of cells, all carrying out their own special functions, and each serving the others in some necessary capacity.

Some of these cells serve as a covering for the body. They become skin, hair, nails, and mucous membranes. Others are formed into muscles and bones and sinews. Still others seem to arrange themselves into groups to form the various internal organs, such as the liver, the kidneys, the heart, and the blood-vessels. All of these organs play a definite part in the baby's life before he is born. But what is even more remarkable is that some organs, such as the eyes, the ears, and the lungs, are already prepared for the place that they are to fill long *before* they are needed or can even be used. Such is the extraordinary wisdom revealed in the design and creation of the human body. The unborn baby, living and growing within the mother, is a phenomenon at which we never cease to marvel. Every step of the growth process reveals that human life was no accident. Each part of its development follows a distinct plan of organization. If this plan is interfered with, the whole body will soon be out of balance, and the spark of life within may be dimmed by sickness.

Life is a fascinating study in all of its various forms. But nowhere does it mean quite so much as when we watch that one tiny cell growing into a strong, noble man, capable not only of understanding himself, but also of unravelling some of the mysteries of the wonderful universe of which he forms so small but so important a part. To him has been granted one tiny spark of life. It is his to guard and to use, but not to destroy.

Life's greatest gift to man is his own marvellous human brain, with all its faculties of memory, reason, and judgment. It is his responsibility to avoid everything that would corrupt the mind or weaken the body, for what destroys these destroys the masterpiece of creation.

DECEMBER 1965

FOR JUNIORS



The Way to Share

by Vivian G. Ross

KUMAR sat quietly in his room counting the days. One, two, three, four. He could hardly wait! Only four more days till Christmas. He sat thinking of all the things he wanted—a toy car, a train and a wagon. Oh, yes, and the new shirt he and mother had seen in the shop. It was grey and had a checked design. It was just like daddy's. He wanted very much to have one.

Suddenly Kumar remembered something! Mother had asked him to pick out some toys to take to a little boy who would not have a happy Christmas. The little boy's daddy was sick. He had several sisters and a new baby brother. There would be no money for Christmas presents.

Kumar got up and went over to the shelves where he kept his toys. "Let me see," said Kumar. "I don't need this old green truck any more. One wheel is gone, and it doesn't roll very good. I'll give him this old tractor, too. The paint is all off anyway."

It did not take Kumar long to fill a box with the toys he had picked out. He carried the box to the kitchen and set it down in front of mother.

"There," sighed Kumar, quite proudly. "I found lots of things I will not need any more."

Mother smiled. "Fine, Kumar. I am so glad. May I see what you have?" She reached down and took out the green truck. Her smile suddenly disappeared. She picked up the old tractor. A frown began to creep across her face.

"Kumar," mother began, "suppose you were the little boy who was going to get these toys for

Christmas. Would you be happy?"

Kumar started to explain, but mother kept right on talking. "How about this nice green truck, with the wheel missing? Would you have fun with that? And this pretty tractor with the paint all off—"

Mother did not have to finish. Kumar understood exactly what she meant. He was already sorry that he had been so selfish. Without another word he picked up the box and went back to his room. He looked at the red fire-engine on his toy shelf. It was still like new, but he really did not play with it much any more. Should he give it away? He remembered what mother had said.

"Suppose you were the little boy who was going to get these toys for Christmas. Would you be happy?"

Kumar picked up the bright-red fire-engine and put it in the box. He also put in the truck, a trailer truck and a new Bible story book. Then Kumar went back to the kitchen with his box. This time there were no broken trucks or worn-out tractors.

On Christmas Eve, when Kumar went with mother to take the presents, he was happy that he had not given his broken toys. He was happy all the way home. He was happy when he climbed into bed. In fact, he was so happy that he almost forgot about the things that he wanted for himself for Christmas.

That is what happens when we learn to give to others. We forget about ourselves. That is what Jesus wants each one of us to do. That is what really makes a good Christmas.

ANSWERS FROM THE BOOK

Conducted by the Voice of Prophecy

Questions related to Bible subjects or personal spiritual problems are invited. Address to "From the Book", Box 35, Poona 1, India.



Christ and Creation

I would like an explanation whether Jesus was in creation.

The Scriptures clearly teach that Christ was co-Creator with the Father in the creation of the world. Of Him, who in John 1:1-3 is called the Word, it is said, "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made."

"For by him [Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him" (Colossians 1:16).

"God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds" (Hebrews 1:1, 2).

Health and Christianity

Does healthful living have anything to do with the Christian religion?

Very definitely. The Bible teaches that a man's body is the temple of God, and that we are to treat it as a temple. Here is what it says: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you?" (1 Corinthians 6:19, RSV).

As no normal person would think of desecrating the temple in which he worships his God, so he should not do anything to desecrate the temple of his body. This means that he will do everything he possibly can to be as healthy as he is capable of being.

In another place the Bible says, "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

What is Faith?

What is your definition of faith?

Let us try to define it with a little story. A man who did a lot of travelling tried to bring some little

present to his small girl each time he returned home. On one occasion when he came back from a trip she came racing down the road to meet him, asking, "Daddy, what did you bring me?"

"I brought you an orange."

Immediately the little girl turned and ran toward home, calling, "I have an orange! I have an orange!"

Surprised, her father called her back. "How do you know you have an orange? You haven't seen it."

Tears came to the little girl's eyes. "But you do have an orange for me, don't you?"

"Yes."

So again the little girl started toward home, once more calling, "I have an orange! I have an orange!"

That is faith. It is taking God at His word. The Bible puts the same truth this way: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1, RSV).

The Gospel

What does "gospel" mean, and what gospel is meant in Matthew 24:14?

The verse reads: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

The word "gospel" means good news or good tidings. The gospel is the good news that Christ, the Son of God, died for our sins, rose from the dead, and will come again. Before His ascension He commissioned His followers to preach it in all the world. Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47.

That the gospel will be proclaimed with great power in the last days is clearly stated in Revelation 14:6, 7: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

When this work shall have been accomplished, the end will come. (Matthew 24:14)

HOW HAPPY ARE YOU?

by Vanessa Webb

IF SOMEONE asked you pointblank now if you were happy, you would probably hesitate before you replied. It is easy to say that one is ill or well, hungry, or thirsty, feeling active or lazy; but happiness is something far more tricky.

Nowadays one may get the impression that few people are happy. The more civilized we become the more reluctant we are to admit being anything so naive as happy. It seems more sophisticated to be miserable or fed up or bored—and far more fashionable.

Happiness is a strange thing. No fairy story was ever complete unless it ended "... and they lived happily ever after." No marriage is celebrated without wishes for future happiness of the bride and bridegroom from all and sundry. But how rarely do we check later to find out whether our wishes are coming true.

Let us suppose for a moment that you are ready to admit that you are tired and irritated. Maybe you have had a quarrel with your husband, wife, or a friend.

Or perhaps you have not done anything very exciting lately and feel that everyday life is a boring business.

None of this means that your life is unhappy, because life can never be all one thing, even all pleasantness and holidays; it is only the alternation and contrast which throw up into sharp relief what we like and what we dislike, good times and bad times. Even the boring in-between spells enable us to recuperate, ready to appreciate the next pleasant or unpleasant experience.

School days are often labelled "the happiest days of your life" but if most of us could relive them exactly as they happened, few would agree on this.

The sensation-mongers would have every day packed with ecstasies, delights, thrills, and joys. They ask nothing less than an unending honeymoon on a sunlit isle, without possibility of illness, rain, or a change of mood.

There must be some singular lack of imagination in this vast group. To all but the most strong-minded, one of several things must surely happen. Boredom from surfeit—as surely as an infant turns ill from eating a lot of *jelabies*; misery from being plunged into a strange new way of life; the impossibility of returning to normal life when funds are exhausted.

Cleverness and unhappiness are often associated. Even the very newest biographies of great men and women in all walks of life harp on the wretched aspects of their lives. "The Anatomy of Melancholy" doesn't begin to depict all the misfortunes that can befall mankind.

Most marriages are happy and sad, like the rest of daily life; just as the weather is sometimes sunny and sometimes rainy and very often just dull. It all adds up to happiness in the sum total if only we had the wit to see it. If today one's home life is a bit unpredictable there should be all the more reason for



looking forward to the future because like flowers, joy blooms again and again.

There is perhaps no place where happiness cannot abound. It has been found even in concentration camps, among people suffering from all manner of incurable and agonizing diseases, and certainly it is no respecter of this world's goods, age, or status.

What can we do to put a lease on this fleeting happiness? We can bait our trap with wholesome living, moderate eating and drinking and indulgence of the positive emotions, adequate sleep, work and exercise without strain, commonsense love towards others, eager participation in our day's labour and in the leisure-time pursuits of our choice.

Wise living and straight thinking breed the happy frame of mind, just as excesses of all kinds and harbouring negative emotions—jealousy, hate, fear—destroy it.

How happy are you? Far happier than you would confess to your best friend. It might be a good idea to let the world see how happy you really feel. It only wants advertising a bit more to be the most popular line in today's emotions.

THE GOLDEN TORCH OF FREEDOM

by D. A. Delafield

OVER the main entrance of the north block of the Central Government Secretariat in New Delhi is an inscription that arrests the attention of all who pass through it. It is:

"Liberty will not descend to a people. A people must raise themselves to liberty. It is a blessing that must be earned before it can be enjoyed."

Freedom is the inalienable right of all men. There is no such thing as freedom for some men and servitude for others, in the ultimate scheme of things. If our minds are fettered by intolerance, and we find ourselves the unhappy slaves of prejudice, it is time to change our thinking.

"Liberty is the only thing you cannot have unless you are willing to give it to others," declared William Allen White. This is just another way of saying that no man is truly free in his own spirit who is opposed to freedom for others. Perhaps that is why the ancient ruler gave the command to "proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." Liberty is an everlasting gospel that must be preached and shared if it is to be preserved.



Said the free Spartans to a Persian envoy who urged them to submit to Xerxes: "You do not know what you are advising us to do, for you know what it is to be a slave, but the sweetness of freedom you have never tasted. If you felt it you would tell us to fight for it, not with spears only but with axes."

Freedom to worship God or not to worship God, freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom to choose our leaders, freedom to vote, freedom to hold property, and freedom to a trial by jury are the just rights of all men.

We must be vigilant to keep this golden torch aflame at all times. If we do this, we will find that there is plenty of liberty for all. We cannot sit down to the feast of good things and eat the sweet bread of freedom alone. We must bring others to the feast with us. This is a basic philosophy of life to be applied if it is to be understood and appreciated, whether in the nation, the community, the home, or the temple.