


# MINISTRY

A MAGAZINE FOR CLERGY



The shaking up  
of Adventism?

MAY 1980



THE VICARIOUS SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH OF JESUS IS NOT JUST A WAY OF SPEAKING; IT IS THE WAY GRACE REIGNS THROUGH RIGHTEOUSNESS.

see page 4

# LETTERS

## What is sin?

Having received *MINISTRY* for some time, I really enjoy looking over each issue. I especially appreciated the article "God's Finger Wrote Freedom" (September, 1979). I am a Baptist preacher who believes that the law of God is His guideline for good and better living. People fight against God's law, but they have no other guideline for living except what they think best. So many evangelicals speak of sin in general terms that no one really knows what sin is.

Baptist minister  
New Hampshire

## Good tool

You produce a good tool for anyone trying to serve the Lord in His ministry. I glean a great deal from this quality publication.

United Methodist minister  
New York

## Letters amuse

I don't agree with every article, but I have found *MINISTRY* to be a sincere effort to extend a hand of brotherly love. I'm amused, as I read some of the letters you receive, at how dogmatic and inflexible some of your readers appear. Firmness is good, I believe, but many seem to have confused the "narrow way" with a "narrow mind." Reading your letters often causes me to rejoice that Christ will be the judge!

Nazarene minister  
Indiana

I have enjoyed reading *MINISTRY* for some time. What amuses me are the letters you receive from different ministers. From the same denomination, one will write praising the magazine and another will tell how he is burning it! It

makes me think that they are divided in their beliefs, and if so, in their preaching as well. I find *MINISTRY* very helpful and intelligently presented, showing the right kind of spirit.

Bible seminary president  
Colorado

## Continuing education

As an independent Christian minister pastoring a small church in a rural area, the resources I have for continuing education and edification are extremely limited. I find *MINISTRY* to be a potential source of great help to me in my ministry. We agree on many of the basics.

Independent Christian minister  
California

## Surprise and disappointment

The article "The Christ Alone" (January, 1980) was both a surprise and a disappointment. I expected a much wider discussion and application of this vital Christian concept. The discussion would have profited the reader more had there been mention of the concept as included in the Benedictine Rule, in the *Phileokalia* (the famous so-called "Jesus Prayer"), and in the pre-Coptic Christian writings from North Africa. The concept is not new. To be of true service to your readers, at least five more articles should appear on the subject.

Liberal Catholic Church priest  
Maryland

## From beginning to end

Include me among those who enjoy *MINISTRY* and appreciate your outstretched hand. I've just finished most of the January, 1980, issue. Working on a sermon revision, I was attracted to the analysis of Ralph W. Sockman's crafts-

manship. Then, since my name is Daniel, and since I've visited Qumran, I read about the dating of Daniel with interest. Next, I eagerly lapped up the pragmatism of Arnold Kurtz's "Short-Term Pastorates." Since a preacher likes to get a sermon starter out of an evening of reading, I've extracted a "Unitarian" theme from Martin J. Burne's treatment of Mark 6. I've even found the science article helpful. Though an evolutionist, I've never been satisfied that science has produced clear evidence of the "missing link."

Unitarian minister  
Florida

## Disagrees some; concurs often

I appreciate receiving *MINISTRY*. Although I disagree with some views it expounds, I often concur in its opinions. Generally, I enjoy it very much.

Christian Congregation minister  
Tennessee

## Strengthens views

*MINISTRY* has been a great help to strengthen my own doctrinal views. The articles have acted as a sounding board for my beliefs and for the Word of God as the final authority. I thank God for your help.

Baptist minister  
Michigan

## Keeps abreast of the times

I appreciate *MINISTRY* and believe it will help ministers to keep abreast of the times that are so rapidly fulfilling Bible prophecy and to escape those things that are coming to pass.

Church of Jesus Christ minister  
Indiana

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## An outstretched hand

If you are receiving *MINISTRY* bimonthly without having paid for a subscription (perhaps this is your first copy), it is not a mistake.

We believe the time has come for clergy everywhere to experience a resurgence of faith in the authority of Scripture and in the great truths that reveal the gospel of our salvation by grace, through faith alone in Jesus Christ. Since 1928 *MINISTRY* has been designed to meet the needs of Seventh-day Adventist ministers. However, we believe that we have much in common with the entire religious community and want to share with you, therefore, our aspirations and faith in a way that we trust will provide inspiration and help for you too.

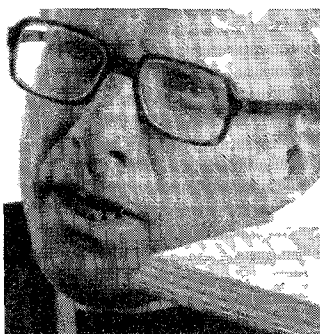
We hope you will accept this journal as our outstretched hand to you. We'd like to send you, without charge, a number of issues on a bimonthly basis. Look over our shoulders, take what you want and find helpful, and discard what you cannot use.

This offer is extended to all licensed and/or ordained clergy. We ask only that each request be on your letterhead (if possible), and that you include your name, address, denominational affiliation, and your position. Clergy outside the United States and Canada please remit \$2.00 postage. If you have ministerial colleagues who would also enjoy this outreach, we are prepared to include them upon their request.

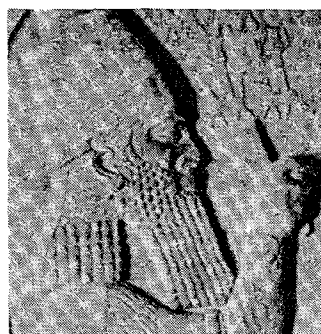
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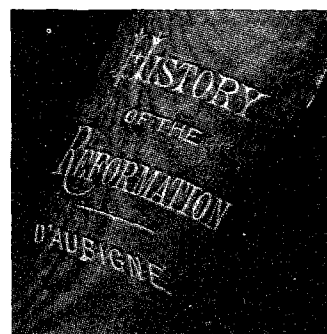
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# Grace finds a way

by J. C. Smuts van Rooyen

The grace of God expressed at Calvary does not operate as a mere moral influence independently of His righteousness.

Using as his text Romans 5:20, 21 Van Rooyen explores the meaning of the phrase "grace reigns through righteousness." He takes up two errors in the idea of the atonement—the first that grace reigns because of righteousness, and the second that grace reigns without righteousness. He rejects the first as nullifying the love of God and presenting the death of Jesus as a payment to God, and he rejects the second as incomplete because it views the cross only as a revelation of God's love and denies that it was a forensic substitute. According to the second view, the death of Christ is a mere moral influence. He concludes by expounding what is meant by grace reigning through righteousness. He sees this view as supporting the idea of substitution by which Jesus gave His life as a sacrifice not to placate God but to demonstrate both His justice and His love.

Without question, the discovery that God crushes death itself and gives to us eternal life is the single most significant discovery of life. Moved by mercy, God breaks into our death-history to take forceful and decisive action against our enemy. Where sin abounds He makes grace to abound much more. Where death reigns He executes a dramatic coup and establishes the reign of grace. No wonder Paul exults, "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 5:20, 21).

Grace reigns through righteousness! No truth is more beautiful or crucial. Yet no truth is subject to more abuse and misrepresentation. There seem to be two fundamental misconceptions about

the reign of grace. The first is the error that grace reigns *because* of righteousness. The second is that grace reigns *without* righteousness.

## Grace reigns because of righteousness?

Many a well-intentioned, cross-loving preacher has unwittingly distorted the very gospel he loves by pressing the truth of Calvary in such a way that the cross becomes the *cause* of grace. In this distortion, Jesus dies to give God a legal right to love us. The righteousness of Jesus creates mercy in the heart of an unwilling God. Calvary changes hatred to mercy, and grace reigns *because* of righteousness. This error is devastating to spiritual commitment.

Why? First of all, because it upsets God's sequence in salvation. To a great extent the uniqueness of Christianity depends on the order it sees in the plan

# "Calvary does not show divinity rubbing crossbeams together trying for a spark of mercy. The fire already leaps like sun flames."

of salvation. Christianity is not concerned with substance alone, but with sequence as well. What comes when is of fundamental importance to the Christian. Place works before justification, or overcoming before forgiveness, and the very being of Christianity is destroyed. The same is true of sacrifice and mercy. Make sacrifice the cause of mercy, and Christianity ceases to exist; it is now nothing more than rank paganism. A change in God's sequence is therefore nonnegotiable. We must maintain God's progression of truth. That there might be no doubt on this fundamental issue, the Saviour Himself explicitly stated, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Clearly God's love precedes His giving, and God's mercy precedes His sacrifice. This is the divine order of things pertaining to salvation.

The second objection to the notion that grace reigns *because* of righteousness is that if this is so, grace ceases to be grace. Grace by its very nature is gratis, spontaneous, undeserved. If righteousness earns grace, then grace is not a gift but a salary. Grace, like love, becomes prostitution when purchased. Paul says that election is by grace and then adds, "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work" (Rom. 11:6).

But one may object that the works that nullify grace are *man's* works and not Christ's. The truth is that no work, even Christ's work, *causes* grace. We insist that Calvary is not the cause but rather the expression of grace. At Golgotha we do not see love trying clumsily to get off the ground. Never. Love is already in action, soaring in unhampered, full-spread glory. Calvary does not show divinity rubbing crossbeams together trying for a spark of mercy. God forbid! The fire already leaps like sun flames on the surface of a great star. Grace is reigning!

But our third and foremost challenge to this concept is that it misrepresents the character of God and calls His love into question. We do not serve a God who changes from hatred to love because blood has appeased Him. God is not merely loving; He is love itself. We may understand love, then, by looking at what God is, and He is eternal. His love

is an unchanging fact. Never has there been a time when divine love was not, for there never has been a time when God Himself was not. This eternity precedes Calvary.

## Grace reigns without righteousness?

The second distortion of grace, namely, that grace reigns *without* righteousness, has been held in a variety of forms throughout history by such great men as Socinus, Horace Bushnell, and more recently, C. H. Dodd. The motivation for their theology is beyond reproach. They seek to remove the impression that God is a stern judge ready to pass sentence at the drop of a hat. Their concern for the character of God must be admired and upheld, but unfortunately such concern has not prevented their leaping from the pan directly into the fire.

What does this position claim? Perhaps we may understand it best by looking first at what it rejects and then at what it upholds. The thing it emphatically rejects is the legal, substitutionary death of Jesus. In this view, Jesus did not die in my place. He died for my benefit but not in my stead. For Him to die in my place, it claims, is unfair. No court has the right to accept one man's life for that of another. It rejects the idea that Jesus fulfilled the demands of the law by His death. The law had no demands; no penalty was paid; there were no legal requirements on the part of God. Grace alone is sufficient, and man is saved by grace without any legal righteousness. Grace reigns *without* righteousness.

What does this view uphold in place of the substitutionary life and death of Christ? If Jesus does not die in our stead, how, then, does He save us? We are saved, according to this position, by His *revelation* of love. Man turns to God when he grasps what Jesus reveals about God. God has been misunderstood and misrepresented throughout the centuries, thus alienating man from God. Man has a mental block about God and does not like Him, and is therefore incapable of accepting His forgiveness. Jesus came to help man by removing this mental block. This constitutes salvation. On the cross Jesus reveals God's great love for us, and as man sees this revelation of love, his mind is changed. He loves God back. God demands nothing more than this change of attitude on the part of man. God has no justice to be

satisfied. God does not need to be reconciled to man; only man needs to be reconciled to God. Grace reigns by revelation without righteousness.

On what grounds may we question the truth of this view? Is it not plain that the cross is a revelation of God's love? Certainly. Moreover, does not the cross in fact change man's attitude toward God? Of course. But the problem lies with how this truth is used to deny a companion truth. The position is wrong not because of what it affirms but because of what it denies.

Because this view rejects the legal, vicarious nature of the cross, it is decidedly inadequate as a means of atonement in a number of ways. In the first place, it leaves the generations of people that lived prior to Calvary without hope of salvation. If it is true (as this position claims) that a person is won back to God by the full revelation of His love, and if it is true that this demonstration of love came only at Calvary, then what about the millions that lived prior to the death of Christ? How was the mental block removed from their thinking if they did not have the benefit of this full demonstration of love? How were they reconciled to God?

In response, some may argue that men prior to the cross were reconciled to God by other evidences of His mercy. Then we must ask why Calvary was necessary at all? The horrendous death of Jesus becomes needless overkill if men were being saved prior to Calvary without the cross. If smaller love revelations were sufficient, why Calvary?

It is the forensic, substitutionary quality of the cross that enables it to reach back and save all generations. When that is denied and only the revelational aspects are affirmed (as this view does), a new form of Christian gnosticism is born. Knowledge, not righteousness, becomes the crux of salvation.

Moreover, to see Christ's death as a demonstration of mercy and nothing more fails in still another significant way. It presents an inadequate and maudlin conception of God's love that destroys the very love it seeks to establish. When substitution is denied, the love demonstrated at Calvary loses its rationale. What would we think of a man who had himself killed in order to convince his alienated wife that he really loved her? How convincing would his expression of love be? Would we not regard it as both senseless and unloving? Would we not



# “Scripture refuses to drive a wedge between the Father and the Son. It is not true that Christ gives His life as a propitiation to an unwilling Father.”

reject its rationale? Somehow death for demonstration purposes only doesn't ring true.

Scripture does not hesitate to tie the love of God to the now unpopular concept of propitiation. It is precisely at the point of sacrifice that love finds its expression. “Herein is love,” says John, “not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10). We must not separate love from propitiation. It must remain where revelation puts it.

And, finally, the revelational model of the atonement fails because it puts forth an insufficient concept of love and justice. Justice is seen simply as an action that sets things right. It does not include any element of penalty whatsoever. In terms of the cross, this means that Jesus sets things right without bearing any iniquity and without bearing any penalty. How then was justice done at the cross? Simply in the fact that Christ, by love, gave to men a new perspective. Love brings about reformation. Things are set right again. That is justice according to this idea.

But is reformation the equivalent of justice? If so, then the worst murderer must be released the instant he reforms. Should he change, even before his sentence begins, then he must not be punished at all. He has changed; justice is done. And if he never reforms, he must never be released. But is this justice? Clearly, a *penalty* must be paid for justice to be done. Reformation alone will not suffice. We may hope and pray for a transformation in the guilty, but such transformation can never be regarded as the equivalent of justice.

The clear teaching of Scripture is that justice entails punishment. Nor is that simply an Old Testament view. One who takes the Scriptures seriously cannot sidestep the issue of retribution. Punishment is Biblical (see 1 Chron. 21:8-14; 2 Peter 2:4-9; Matt. 23:29-33; 2 Cor. 5:10, 11).

Is retribution upheld as a matter of vengeance? No. Retribution is necessary because to abandon it is to destroy all law. No legal system could survive if it had no way of enforcing its broken laws. Remove the sting from the law and it is no more law but mere policy. For this reason the demonstration theory of the atonement is fundamentally antinomian by nature. In denying retribution it denies both justice and law as well. It

upholds love in such a way that justice is destroyed. It cannot see that justice is, in fact, the product of love.

## Grace reigns through righteousness

The grand summit of Romans 5 is found in that splendid text “That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ” (verse 21).

But what does Paul mean? He obviously desires that we understand something about the way grace operates. He is not satisfied with telling us simply that we are saved by grace but seeks in addition to inform us regarding the *how* of grace. Righteousness, he says, is the method grace uses to save us. Grace is God's disposition, His desire, to save us, but righteousness is the mechanism He uses to affect it.

This naturally brings us to the question, What is righteousness? What is included in this marvelous thing grace uses to save us? On this crucial issue Paul gives us very specific information in Romans 3. There he presents righteousness as something that comes from God. He alone is its source. It is “the righteousness of God.” It does not come from man's obedience because it is manifested “without the law” (verse 21). Rather, we receive righteousness by means of faith (verse 22). Yet this still does not tell exactly what righteousness is. But when Paul turns the light up all the way, we see that *Jesus Christ* Himself is the embodiment of the righteousness of God. Righteousness takes form; the abstract becomes concrete. When by faith we receive Jesus, we receive righteousness. The apostle points out that God sets forth Christ “to be a propitiation” for sin, and that God declares “his righteousness for the remission of sins” (verse 25). In other words, for Paul, righteousness consists in Jesus' dying for our sins. The propitiation Christ makes on the cross is righteousness—the righteousness through which grace reigns.

When we go to the immediate context of Romans 5:20, 21, we discover yet another fundamental characteristic of righteousness. Romans 5 indicates that righteousness is connected to the obedience of Jesus. “For as by one man's [Adam's] disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one [Jesus] shall many be made righteous” (verse 19). It cannot be more plain. The sinless action of Jesus is itself the right-

eousness that grace uses to save man. Again we are confronted and thrilled by a great substitutionary transaction. What Jesus did, what Jesus was, God now views us as being. Righteousness is His obedience on our behalf. This righteousness grace uses to reign.

By the phrase “might grace reign through righteousness . . . by Jesus Christ,” Paul simply means, then, that grace gives Christ to me in such a way that His death takes care of my penalty and His life meets the demands of the law on my behalf. Grace substitutes Christ for me. That is how it reigns.

Some have vigorously objected to such a system of salvation. To them it seems unfair. How can one man be a substitute for another and in effect hold his destiny in his hands? Is substitution just? Is it right for Jesus to take our place? If a college student should fail his math exam, would it be fair to have another student in the class rewrite it for him, so that the teacher could now pass him? Is substitution legitimate? In the example just cited the answer is No. Such substitution is clearly wrong. But the Biblical concept of substitution is not after this order. It is built on a wholly different foundation.

Biblical substitution is grounded on the rock of the everlasting covenant made by the Godhead before the Creation. In this transaction, the Trinity mapped out the procedure to be followed in the event man should fall. Here was laid down the legal framework that would operate should the salvation of men become necessary.

What did this covenant specify? The core of its contents can be summed up in the phrase, Christ is our surety, our guarantor. A guarantor is someone who is willing to assume an individual's legal obligations in the event the individual should fail to meet them. If man should fail, Christ would take his place before the law. This was agreed upon before man ever was made. And when man fell, the Godhead upheld their agreement. The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world became the Lamb of Calvary (see 1 Peter 1:18-21; Eph. 1:4; Rev. 13:8). He became our Substitute.

Is this wrong? Not when it is based on a voluntary agreement made beforehand. It is no more wrong for Christ to pay our debt before the law than it is wrong for someone who has cosigned a bank loan for a friend to pay the debt should delinquency occur. Christ volun-

# "We must accept God's grace in the form He has chosen to give it, namely the substitutionary life and death of Jesus."

teered to be our guarantor. He did not have to do so. That is grace. When we failed, He came forward and fulfilled the covenant made beforehand. He fulfilled the law. That is righteousness. Grace reigns through righteousness. But, some may object, by introducing the element of righteousness, have we not nullified the concept of grace? If grace *must* work by means of righteousness, is it still grace? Are legal obligations and grace not antithetical? Does grace ever *have* to act in a certain way? If it does, is it still grace?

Paul speaks to this important question: "To the praise of the glory of his *grace*, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have *redemption* through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, *according to the riches of his grace*; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all *wisdom and prudence*; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, *according to his good pleasure*, which he hath *purposed in himself*" (Eph. 1:6-9).

From this scripture we deduce the following: 1. Grace and redemption (the paying of a price) are not incompatible. Clearly the two concepts were not contradictory to Paul. He uses them in the same sentence. We cannot pit grace against redemption, as some do. We must not create a false dilemma for ourselves.

2. While grace is the *cause* of salvation, redemption is the *method* grace employs. In other words, grace expresses itself by means of redemption. Redemption is the expression of grace, grace in action. Paul praises grace precisely because it acts redemptively.

3. Neither grace nor redemption are compulsory for God, but are according to His good pleasure that He purposed in Himself. Let it be forever clear that God did not *have* to be gracious; grace is a free act. Its bestower is free to bestow or to withhold it as He pleases. Had God left us to die in our sins, He would have still remained the just and holy God of the universe. God extended grace because He chose to do so, not because He had to. Moreover, let it be forever clear that the death of Jesus was not an *absolute* necessity. Jesus did not *have* to die. God may well have left us in our sin to perish. God could have survived without Calvary, but we could not. Therefore grace found a way. The cross is a necessity only because it is God's will that it should be.

4. God has selected the best possible

way to magnify all His perfections. Paul calls His plan wise, prudent, glorious, and praiseworthy. We cannot improve on it by removing the scandal of redemption. It is the best there is.

All of the above mean that we must accept God's grace in the form He has chosen to give it, namely, the substitutionary life and death of Jesus. We are not at liberty to design a plan of salvation that fits our ideas of what grace is and how grace should act. Beggars cannot be choosers. God's attitude and way in salvation are decisive. Therefore we cannot be eager for grace but reluctant about substitution. Together they are a divine gift. We must allow the giver to determine the form he wants his gift to take. We must allow grace to reign, as the Bible says, through righteousness.

But, the objection continues, does this system of salvation in fact reveal the perfections of God to their best advantage? Does it not in reality do just the opposite when it presents a picture of a God who inflicts punishment on His innocent Son and then waits for Him to plead His blood and beg for the forgiveness of sinners? Is this not appeasement of the worst sort, sheer paganism?

If such a caricature of the truth were an accurate reflection of God's method, the accusation would be just. But such a sketch is unfair and unscriptural. The Biblical concept of the atonement is vastly different. Scripture refuses to drive a dividing wedge between the purpose of the Father and the purpose of the Son. Both seek to save man. Therefore it is not true that Christ gives His own life as a propitiation to an unwilling Father. John sets such distortion straight when he says, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). In other words, God Himself provides the propitiation and does so because of His love. Biblical propitiation is an expression of love.

Would God give a sacrifice to Himself? Is this not rather strange? At first it might seem so, but it is nevertheless precisely what the Bible teaches. We need only to recall the words of Abraham, "God will provide himself a lamb" (Gen. 22:8), or those of Isaiah, "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin" (Isa. 53:10).

Our perplexity over God providing a sacrifice for Himself vanishes when we realize that God occupies more than one

station in the universe. He is the Father of all as well as the Judge of all. Is it not, then, conceivable that, as Father, God would uphold that which as Judge He deems necessary? Can His mercy not provide that which His justice demands? Paul emphasizes that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto *Himself*" (2 Cor. 5:19). Obviously, God is both the reconciler and the reconciled. At the cross God's justice and God's mercy kiss. Grace reigns through righteousness by means of Christ's substitution.

But others object by saying that when all is said and done regarding the concept of substitution in Scripture, we must bear in mind that these are all merely cultural expressions used by the Bible writers. Are the Bible writers not simply attempting to express divine truth in such a way that men of their time could understand it? Is sacrifice not now an outdated cultural concept that must be totally reinterpreted for our time? Must we not now boldly discard it as an ugly vestige of the past, as we do polygamy and slavery? Shall we let the Jews foist a pagan practice on us in the name of true worship? Is this not all cultural talk rather than underlying truth?

Of course sacrifice was a cultural practice of Israel. But this is not the issue. The real issue is, How did Israel come by the sacrificial system? Did they pick it up from the pagans? When Scripture is taken seriously, we find that not to be the case. Scripture teaches us that sacrifice was introduced into human culture by God Himself at the gates of Eden before the Jewish nation or any other nation existed. Jesus was in fact the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (see 1 Peter 1:18-21). Sacrifice is of *heavenly* origin and thus belongs to that special group of cultural practices that includes the Sabbath and marriage.

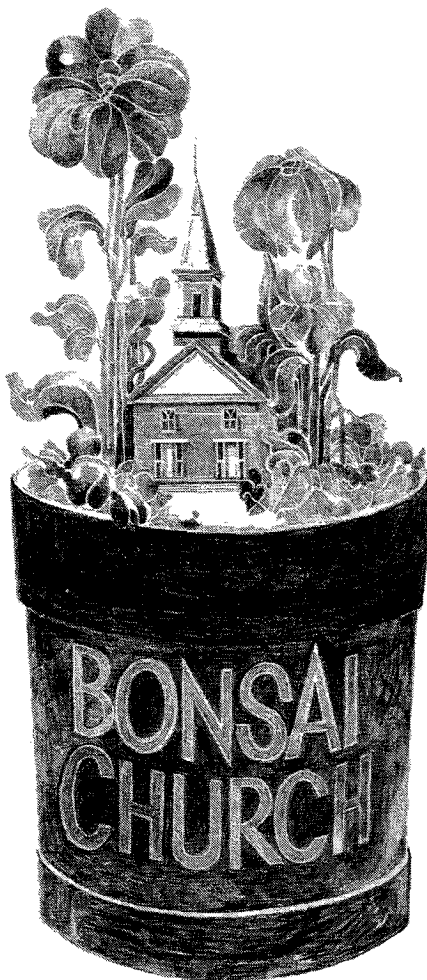
Clearly, God at times breaks into human culture to teach truth. Furthermore, when Christ penetrated human culture at His incarnation, a part of culture became the truth itself. The penal, vicarious, substitutionary death of Jesus is not merely a way of speaking; it is the substance of what is said, the truth itself. In this sacrificial way grace reigns through righteousness. ■

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# Ten ways to keep your church from growing

A practical guide for the pastor who already has enough problems.

by Ralph Blodgett



Many churches today struggle with the burden of crowded pews, packed children's divisions, and filled parking lots. Unfortunately, pastors in these situations have few places where they can turn for help. Scores of books on how to *increase* church membership line the shelves of Christian bookstores everywhere. But no one, apparently, has authored a single book on how to *avoid* growing, how to keep unwanted people from the community out of a church that already has too many members.

Keeping people away from a church can prove difficult at times, especially when they seem determined to attend. However, if you adhere to the following guidelines, you can feel confident that your church has done everything possible to keep them away, or at least prevent their return should they accidentally wander into your service. These ten rules really aren't too difficult to put into practice; many churches do so with apparent ease. By putting forth only a minimum effort, yours can too.

Check the box for each rule that you feel your church is following. Be as objective and honest as possible; if you aren't measuring up, leave the box blank and go to the next. At the end, add the number of boxes you have checked and find where your church stands by using the handy scoring device.

1

**Make your church difficult for visitors to find.** This is one of

the best ways to discourage visitors. When you build a church, get the cheapest piece of land you can buy—preferably well out of town and on a seldom-used road. (Better yet, have some member *donate* a piece of property for the new church. That way your chances of having the right kind of property for discouraging visi-

tors is almost guaranteed.)

Above all, don't put up any direction signs that would help strangers or out-of-town visitors locate your building. Don't provide brochures that reveal the location or time of your services to the local motels and service stations. Don't list your services in any community directory the local chamber of commerce or the local ministerial association might publish.

Be careful not to list your church or its services in the yellow pages of the phone book. That's one of the first places a person will look when trying to locate a church. Besides, think of the money you will save by not listing your church along with the others.

2

**Don't let your members invite people to attend your church.**

If you're serious about keeping strangers away, you naturally don't want to invite anyone to attend. One survey revealed that 40 percent of the people who started coming to church did so because someone *invited* them to attend.

Many people simply won't attend a new or different church without an invitation. They fear they won't be welcome, or hate to sit by themselves among total strangers. A personal invitation only makes it easier for them to decide to visit.

3

**Give all visitors a cold shoulder.** If a stranger is persistent enough to attend

your church in spite of the barriers you have erected, nothing will communicate a lack of welcome better than to ignore him or her. Giving visitors a cold shoulder is easy; you don't have to say a word. If perchance the stranger looks your way, simply turn your head. He will quickly understand from your excellent body language that you don't need him in your church. Few who have experienced such treatment will insist on returning.

4

**Be on your guard for strangers in your church.** When someone walks in the door

for the first time, be sure he finds no one posted there to greet him, give him a church bulletin, or show him to the dif-



ferent classrooms. Let him discover for himself where the cradle roll or youth department is located.

Also, be sure to change classes around frequently. That way the person who attends only occasionally will feel he's playing a game of musical chairs. Better yet, don't place the correct class name or age levels on the doors of the different classrooms. Maybe he will feel so embarrassed walking into the wrong class that he will never return.

**5**

**Don't encourage your members to invite visitors home.** If a

visitor insists on returning a second or third time—in spite of all your precautions—make sure no one invites that individual home for dinner. Dinner invitations are as dangerous as giving a bowl of milk to a stray cat; the person might *never* stop coming to your church.

**6**

**Have a limited church program.** A church with a lot of different programs

related to people's needs draws visitors like a winter feeder draws birds. Need-oriented programs can totally wreck your game plan for keeping people out of your church. Don't conduct Vacation Bible Schools—not only do they encourage children to attend your church, but they often inspire the parents to show up, too! Don't offer classes in "Family Enrichment," "Marriage Planning," or "Christian Finances." Too many people might be attracted to such topics.

**7**

**Make your church as uncomfortable for visitors as possible.** Anything goes in this

category. Don't print weekly church bulletins—all they do is help visitors understand your service and make them feel comfortable. Be sure your church has hard wooden pews. They keep people from getting comfortable and enjoying the service. After all, you wouldn't want anyone to fall asleep and miss the important message you have planned.

In addition, make sure someone talks about church finances from the pulpit every week. Nothing will turn people away from a church faster than a secular

service that focuses on money, fund raising, and charts. Even Jesus, visiting the Temple, got pretty upset over the money-changers of His day, didn't He?

Other tricks of the trade that will discourage all but the most hearty include lots of drafts and a lack of heat in the winter, slippery sidewalks when it snows, and of course a hot, stuffy service in the summer.

**8**

**Never conduct any community-outreach programs.** A quick

reading of Elmer Town's *The Ten Largest Sunday Schools and What Makes Them Grow* (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan) proves that rapidly growing churches always employ a variety of outreach programs—letters from the pastor to newlyweds, letters to new residents of the community (whose names are obtained through Welcome Wagon), cooking classes, sermon tapes for shut-ins, et cetera. Don't publish a monthly pastoral letter. Nonmembers might get hold of it and become interested in the announced topics and upcoming programs. They might even assume that your church has a progressive program and want to attend. Many people avoid churches because they don't realize how much the fellowship could benefit them personally; you don't want anyone deciding your church has something to offer!

**9**

**Keep your church out of the paper.** If you're serious about keeping visitors

away from your services, be sure to elect an ineffective, unconcerned individual to the office of public relations secretary. All those growing churches with their crowded sanctuaries and unfamiliar faces each week probably made the mistake of filling this post with someone who takes his job seriously. After all, stories in the local papers about the activities of the church and its members will only create a lot of good will in the community and encourage the unchurched to attend.

Also, don't allow the paper to list your services along with the other congregations'. Especially don't notify the paper of your sermon titles or when you have special services. A lot of lonely people and those searching for help in their lives


are just looking for some church to attend.

**10**

**Above all, keep the church building itself in a run-down condition.** Nothing will tell

the visitor you don't care about him or her better than forcing that individual to worship in an unkempt, shabby building. Little things say a lot: walls needing painting, water-stained ceilings, a piano out of tune, the absence of tissue paper in the restrooms, dogeared songbooks.

Many other techniques to keep the visitor (and member) away can be used, of course. The guidelines outlined here should serve only to stimulate your thinking. Most likely you have already detected the single motivating principle behind all ten: *if you want to keep visitors from attending your church, do nothing.*

However, if for some reason you should want people from the community to visit your church, you'll have to develop your own rules. But be forewarned—growing churches are always having problems. It's much easier just to keep people away! 

Ralph Blodgett is associate editor of *These Times*, published in Nashville, Tennessee.

## Score yourself

If the number of boxes you checked was:

10-8 You have no cause to fear rampant growth and its attendant problems. In fact, you have no cause to fear growth of any kind.

7-5 You're probably safe, but don't let down your guard. At the first sight of an unfamiliar face, put into practice the boxes you *didn't* check.

4-3 You're vulnerable and definitely ought to review these ten guidelines with your church as soon as possible. A segment of your congregation doesn't understand how important nongrowth can be.

2-0 Quite likely you're experiencing many of the difficulties of a growing church. Go back over the guidelines and determine to put into practice an active program of doing nothing. It's never too late!

# The shaking up of Adventism?

by the editors

Is the Seventh-day Adventist Church being "shaken up" by a crisis of "identity and authority," as an article in the February 8, 1980, *Christianity Today* seems to assert?

The "Shaking Up of Adventism," writer Ed Plowman, a *Christianity Today* editor, explains, involves "recent developments that are plunging the Seventh-day Adventist Church into a serious crisis of identity and authority." Among them: a challenge by theologian Desmond Ford to the "traditionalist" understanding of the investigative judgment. Ford, an Australian on temporary assignment to Pacific Union College, in Angwin, California, was invited to Adventist headquarters in Washington, D.C., after a speech he gave in late October at a lay-sponsored conference at the college resulted in protest. Church administrators have asked him to spend six months, on salary, preparing a paper detailing his views, which will then be studied by a committee of theologians and administrators.

Also in ferment, the *Christianity Today* editor suggests, are "the issues of authority and ecclesiology," issues, our readers will be aware, that are making headlines in churches ranging from Roman Catholic through evangelical to Mormon. Plowman refers further to charges that Ellen White borrowed "liberally" from other writers—a charge that is hardly news to most Adventists and that few would deny. The article quotes Neal Wilson, Adventist General Conference president, as saying in a letter that Mrs. White herself "acknowledged using other sources," including "biographical, historical, spiritual, and scientific material." The issue hardly seems likely to shake up Adventists, who have been reading such acknowledgments in church publications for a number of decades. Notable among authors treating the issue is former *Adventist Review* editor Francis D. Nichol (*Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, pp. 403-486, published in 1951). Even the assertion that early in Seventh-day Adventist history "many of the church's members placed Mrs. White's teachings on a level equal with Scripture, and they tended to require the Bible to square with her views, a practice that persists among some Adventists today" hardly

seems likely to register an upheaval of earthquake proportions on an ecclesiastical Richter scale. Ellen White herself, as most Adventists can document by a quick trip to their bookcase, ever pointed church members to the Bible for their authority and teaching (as Plowman also notes).

More worthy of concern is the article's identification of the current situation as a continuing plea "for the church to repent and to embrace Christ's finished work on the cross"—though, again, Plowman notes that the message of righteousness by faith was preached by two Adventist ministers in 1888, with the enthusiastic endorsement of Ellen White (and, we might add, by many ministers before and after 1888, though without the unity of belief we may wish to have seen). With the members of the early Seventh-day Adventist Church coming from a variety of existing denominations, belief in the finished work of Christ on the cross was simply assumed and thus tended to be neglected. In addition, attacks on such distinctive doctrines as the Sabbath and the investigative judgment caused many ministers to become more polemical than might have been desired; not a few might have been justly accused of preaching the law until they were as dry as the hills of Gilboa, that knew neither dew nor rain. What they should have been preaching was Christ in the law.

Certainly one could document the church's belief in the "finished work of Christ on the cross" throughout its history. Two recent sources would be *Questions on Doctrine*, a 1957 book that deals comprehensively with issues raised by a group of evangelical scholars who studied Adventist concepts at some depth, and Dr. L. E. Froom's monumental work, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* (1954).

Nevertheless, Plowman quotes from the book *The Shaking of Adventism* (with its self-evident contribution to his article) as concluding that it is this truth—the finished work of Christ on the cross—that is shaking Seventh-day Adventism "right down to its foundation."

If, indeed, this is happening, we can only rejoice, for "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3:11). A fuller ex-

position of Adventism's foundation, Jesus Christ, can result only in blessings both for the church and the world.

What is *MINISTRY's* perspective on the shaking? We would agree that some Seventh-day Adventist scholars (not most, as the article implies) are challenging positions long held by the church. Considering the emphasis the church long has placed on being students of the truth, rather than mere reflectors of other men's opinions, such a challenge will be met, we are sure, openly and honestly. Considering the independence of thought that has led many Adventists to disregard the traditional in joining the church in the first place, the wonder is that Adventists enjoy the high degree of unity they do. No Protestant church is more widely dispersed: of nearly 3.3 million members, only 585,050 are in North America (in 3,927 congregations); the rest are to be found in almost every country of the world, where, under a diversity of religious, cultural, social, and political systems, they profess, with a degree of unity equaled by few other religious bodies, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

At times we could wish for *more* diversity of opinion—if based on solid Biblical study. The stagnant unity of a church that rests on past laurels, past understanding of Bible truths, is not the dynamic "unity in truth" for which Christ prayed. Often quoted from Adventist pulpits is the Saviour's lament: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" (John 16:12).

We firmly believe that God yet has light ("that shineth more and more unto the perfect day") for us. We believe likewise that additional light will amplify—not destroy—previously confirmed truth. We acknowledge our indebtedness to the many denominations from which our forefathers came—Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, and others—for the fundamental truths of the gospel that characterize our preaching; and we claim no monopoly on truth today. Thus we can hardly be immune to scriptural insights suggested by our own theologians—and lay people, as well. The Seventh-day Adventist Church long has made provision for any church member to share his understanding of God's Word with colleagues in Christ from the level of the local church right up to the General Conference Committee itself. And, as

# It is our conviction that the Seventh-day Adventist Church does indeed need a "shaking up."

Richard Hammill, the General Conference official responsible for monitoring the current situation, observes: "The church has a history of being gentle with its creative people."

The *Christianity Today* report, we feel, was written with a genuine effort to be fair and evenhanded. Yet, there are differences in emphasis we would make. We think it gives greater weight to the "ferment over the issues of authority and ecclesiology" in Adventist ranks than reality warrants. Dissatisfaction with the status quo (or even the feelings of those who indulge in more radical criticism) does not, we believe, constitute a serious threat to Adventist church structure or unity. On the other hand, we would unblushingly confess that the Adventist family does not reflect a state of unalloyed bliss. But, despite problems, as Plowman himself observes, "Adventists enjoy a measure of sound health. Growth has been fairly rapid, especially overseas."

We could add that tithes and offerings—often an indicator either of approval or dissatisfaction—continue to indicate broad support and confidence in leadership. In North America alone SDA church members gave more than \$200 million in tithe during 1978 (the latest figures available). Members added \$150 million in various offerings, for a per capita of \$662.86 in North America—exceeding, according to the 1979 *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches*, that of any other major church group. And such commitment is needed: the church's operating expense worldwide in 1978 was nearly \$2 billion.

We do not cite these figures boastfully. God forbid that we take pride in anything that sinful beings do only by God's grace. The figures do support our assertion, we believe, that the "developments . . . plunging the Seventh-day Adventist Church into a serious crisis of identity and authority" are not so serious as the article alleges.

But we do not dismiss the charges. Particularly do we take to heart Plowman's report (he quotes unnamed Adventist leaders) that "many Adventists in actual practice have confused justification with sanctification and believe that their salvation rests on perfectionism and good works."

Though we don't think a canvass of Adventists would come up with quite such a dismal picture, we share the concern that some do indeed fail to under-

stand (and equally important, to experience) the fullness of Christ's redemptive ministry on their behalf, both as their Saviour and as their high priest.

We would add, with sorrow, that ignorance on these great themes is not unique to Adventism. The same issue of *Christianity Today* that carried Plowman's report on Adventism carried a perceptive interview with evangelical leader Martyn Lloyd-Jones, in which he deplored the emphasis in current evangelical preaching that emphasizes the need of the new birth to the neglect of the grand doctrines of atonement and justification. He spoke also of evangelical churches with "an identity crisis" and of "other compromised churches, many of whose leaders and teachers of students disown basic Christian doctrines."

As we have emphasized in those issues of *MINISTRY* shared with our colleagues of the cloth of many faiths, all God's children, in whatever fold, would please the Great Shepherd by mingling prayers and tears for one another, that all might have the assurance of salvation, through faith in Christ alone, as well as experiencing the freedom and victory that are the fruitage of the indwelling Christ, and, moreover, that the unity for which Christ prayed, a unity in truth, might soon characterize His shattered body.

Another Plowman observation, though not of great importance in the context of the article, could be nudged closer to the accurate. (With his passion for accuracy, Plowman might place as great a weight as we do on the corrective.) Here is Plowman on how Adventists came to their present understanding of the investigative aspect of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary:

"Ex-Methodist Hiram Edson and Ellen G. Harmon, the future Mrs. White, said they had visions showing that Christ had not come out of the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary [in 1844] after all, but had come out of the first compartment of the sanctuary and entered into the second, or most holy, to receive kingdom, dominion, and glory."

The statement leaves a wrong impression. The forerunners of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (not officially organized until 1863) did not develop their convictions concerning Christ's work in the second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary as the result of visions, but rather from thorough study of Bible

types and prophecies. In fact, Hiram Edson never claimed to have had a vision. Rather, he says that on the morning of October 23, 1844—the day after Christ was expected to return—"Heaven seemed open to my view, and I saw distinctly and clearly that instead of our High Priest coming out of the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary to this earth . . . He, for the first time, entered on that day into the second apartment of that sanctuary."—H. M. Kelley, "The Spirit of 1844," *Review and Herald*, June 23, 1921, p. 5.

This new scriptural understanding was not accepted by the developing Seventh-day Adventist Church on the basis of Edson's strong conviction. Instead, it came as the result of weeks and months of Bible study and prayer, and was later confirmed by Ellen White.

(Because of theological questions raised by the *Christianity Today* article, we are dealing further in a future article with the significance of 1844 and Christ's priestly ministry, as well as with the scriptural base for these and other doctrines.)

But there is something of sadness yet to be shared: our conviction that the Seventh-day Adventist Church does, indeed, need a "shaking up"—though not necessarily in the areas of current disagreements. A church that emphasizes the imminent return of Christ—which, moreover, in its very denominational name commits itself in perpetuity to that reality—must submit itself to a continuing question: Why isn't Jesus here yet? And the answer is, at least in part, Because of our failure—a failure we share with all others who have heralded that long-deferred event. It is a failure rooted, we believe, in all the liabilities of Laodicea—"lukewarm," "rich, and increased with goods" [materialistic], "have need of nothing" [an arrogance born of spiritual blindness]; but in reality "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev. 3:17). Thank God for the mercy that shares the prescription: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see" (verse 18).

Our fervent prayer for our own hearts, for the officers of the General Conference, for all our pastors, teachers, and

(Continued on page 19.)

Good, solid preaching is a top priority for most congregations, but far too many are unable to experience it. Many attend church who do so from no burning desire to hear the preacher; their loyalty is to the church.

*The late John Osborn was noted for his interest in helping to build ministers. This was true of him as a pastor and evangelist, as an administrator, and in a special way during the years he served as Ministerial Association director for the Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. He conducted many seminars for pastors, but the most popular were those dealing with his favorite subject and first love—preaching.*

*MINISTRY has arranged and condensed a tape transcript of the final seminar on preaching that John Osborn held before his death. We share his conviction that preaching is God's ordained method of saving men and women and that the person called of God to be a preacher should be constantly endeavoring to excel in this most vital aspect of his calling.*

*This article begins a series in which MINISTRY readers can benefit from the presentations that enriched so many pastors who were able to attend these seminars in person. Other articles will deal with such topics as the minister's personal preparation for preaching, expository versus topical preaching, and step-by-step instruction on sermon preparation.—The Editors.*



KURT REICHENBACH

“If the worst thing that can be said  
about a teacher is that he can’t teach, the worst thing that  
can be said about a preacher is that he can’t preach.”

## PREACHING THE WORD-1

# Poverty in the pulpit

by John Osborn

Preaching has fallen upon hard times. There are not many Biblical preachers in the pulpit today.” So observed Dr. James E. Stewart, the famous Scottish preacher, in a personal interview I had with him in Edinburgh. When I asked him whom he considered to be the outstanding Biblical preachers in America, he replied, “Right offhand none come to my mind.”

Now Dr. Stewart is considered an authority in the field of preaching—an outstanding Biblical preacher. So what he says regarding contemporary preaching he can say with authority.

During the decades of this century, and even the last, an increasing chorus of voices has deplored the growing impoverishment of the pulpit. As far back as 1920, Harry Emerson Fosdick stated that much preaching was characterized by futility and dullness. The great London preacher, Charles Spurgeon, must have listened to some of his colleagues before passionately declaiming, “It is infamous to ascend your pulpit and pour over your people rivers of language, cataracts of words, in which mere platitudes are held in solution like infinitesimal grains of homeopathic medicine in an Atlantic of utterance.”

Current books on preaching deplore the poor state of the art as well. One attributes inferior preaching to laziness, poor craftsmanship, and a depreciated role of preaching. I believe that assessment hits it right smack on the head. In fact, one young preacher in a seminar I

was conducting declared, “Preaching’s passé. It’s gone out. All we need to do is get up and talk for about ten minutes, then let the congregation respond for about twenty minutes.” And I replied, “What for? To pool their ignorance and personal opinions? That isn’t the Biblical concept of preaching.”

Not only do preachers decry the poverty of contemporary preaching, but also the laity, those who listen. They feel that most sermons are dull and uninteresting, that the preacher is talking down to them and using language unfamiliar to them, and that much preaching does not relate to their needs.

During the years that I served as president of the New Jersey Conference, laymen often came to me concerned about the preaching they were hearing. One lady said, “We have a wonderful pastor; we all love him. But he can’t preach. Is there anything you can do to help him?” Well, at least they loved him because he was a good pastor. But he couldn’t preach. And I heard that a good many times.

If the worst thing that can be said about a teacher is that he can’t teach, the worst thing that can be said about a preacher is that he can’t preach. What could be worse to hear about a doctor than the fact that he can’t doctor? What can be worse to hear about a preacher than the fact that he can’t preach? Preaching the everlasting gospel is our primary work. It is no wonder that many laymen are disappointed when we prove ineffective in this essential role.

It seems apparent that while the modern church is growing, the modern pulpit is not, which raises a few questions about the *kind* of growth the church is experiencing in these days of widespread religiosity. Many attend church who do so from no burning desire to hear the preacher. I’ve had members tell me, “The preaching we listen to each week is poor. We’re hoping for a change of pastors soon. Meanwhile, we plan to stay right here in our church. We were here before this pastor came; we plan to be here when he leaves.” Their motive in church attendance is not the preaching. It’s their loyalty to the church.

Good preaching is highly important to your members even if it isn’t to you. An extensive survey made by the United Methodist Church South indicated that most of the laity in this sample demanded good preaching. They fight to keep preachers who can preach. The re-

port further revealed that the most asked question regarding a potential new preacher is “Can he preach?” One interesting sidelight was revealed by a superintendent who discovered that a church in his district had raised the preacher’s salary \$3,000 for the next year. When he made inquiry regarding this large raise, the leadership of the church replied, “We couldn’t afford not to. He can preach, and people pack the church to hear him. He is the first good preacher we’ve had, and we hope to keep him. Our plan is to raise his salary so fast that you can’t move him!”

This illustration reveals not only the premium the laity places on good preaching but also preaching’s sad dearth. And what applies to the Methodist pulpit in this survey is equally applicable to the church in general, including our own. There is concern in the Seventh-day Adventist Church today over the mediocre and even poor quality of much of its preaching. An outstanding teacher of homiletics and a preacher in his own right has said, “There is a widespread discontent with the quality of Adventist preaching. Laymen who love and respect their ministers confide that they wish their pastor could preach better sermons. Men who travel from church to church and listen to many preachers are concerned about the quality of what they hear.”

As a part of my responsibilities, I travel over a large area stretching from Utah to the Hawaiian Islands and from Mexico to the Oregon boundary, visiting and assisting pastors in various aspects of ministry. Once a month I make it my business to listen to my colleagues preach. I hear some excellent pulpiteers, but for the most part the preaching is mediocre and even poor.

Recently I attended a church with a membership of about 600. The pastor’s sermon that morning was on a key Bible word. It became evident that he had looked the word up in a concordance, chosen six unrelated texts in which the word appeared, and strung them together with comments. He expressed some good thoughts, but the sermon was random, fragmented, and without point. It was obvious that he had put little thought or preparation into his message. It had little relevance to the needs of the congregation, and the sheep went away unfed. Perhaps the poverty of his sermonic content was an unusual aberration of that day only. If it is a sample of the



# “Although it is by the foolishness of preaching that some men will be saved, our preaching should be as little foolish as possible.”

spiritual diet his congregation is receiving, it is to be lamented.

In the face of such a chorus of dissatisfaction in the Christian church with current preaching, some have predicted its imminent demise. They feel that the day of preaching is fast passing, and that it is rapidly going out of style as a means of gospel presentation. The mass media are rendering the pulpit obsolete. Group dynamics, dialogue, and discussion are replacing it.

I don't share these pessimistic views, except to say that the symptoms do exist. I don't think preaching will ever die, because the gospel is to be preached unto all the world till the very end. What is passé is not the preaching of the Word of God but the common variety of contemporary preaching. It isn't preaching itself that is going out of style so much as it is our modern brand of preaching, and the sooner it does so, the better.

We are witnessing the dying of preaching that is not Biblical. Humanistic preaching is losing its appeal. Psychological gimmickry is becoming increasingly ineffective. Sociological emphasis is having little impact on the decaying social structure of our society. These types of preaching have already emptied the churches of Europe, and now the people of America are also rapidly moving away from the modern type of so-called preaching in quest of something better. The decline of such preaching is no call for pessimism or fatalism. On the contrary, it is a call to the revival of Biblical preaching!

Biblical evidence supports the opinion that preaching will survive its decline. God's promise regarding the effectiveness of His Word is still true. “For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return to me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isa. 55:10, 11).

Those who are interested in listening to a preacher want to hear what *God* has to say rather than the opinion of the preacher, no matter how great his intellectual brilliance. There's a tremendous cutting power in the Word of God, “for the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of

soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12).

Just how effective the proclamation of the Word can be is illustrated in an experience of the famous Charles Spurgeon, who was to speak in London's Crystal Palace. There being no public-address system in his day, Spurgeon went to the auditorium to practice the projection of his voice. Standing on the podium, he proclaimed with a loud voice, “Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). A custodian, working in the highest balcony, heard that fragment of the Word of God. It pierced his soul like a two-edged sword. He was not a Christian, but now, under deep conviction, he gave his heart to Christ. The proclamation of a Bible text for the purpose of speech practice changed his life! That was a miracle of God's Word not to be credited to Charles Spurgeon.

In practice, preaching may be either faltering or eloquent. Faltering preaching, if Biblical, can accomplish more for the salvation of its hearers than eloquent preaching that is not Biblical. It is not the instrument, but the Word of the living God, that brings blessed results to preaching. Wherever the Bible is faithfully expounded, the fulfillment of God's promise “My Word shall not return to Me empty” can be expected.

The Lord can more successfully use the humblest lay preacher who proclaims the Word than He can the greatest preacher who proclaims his *own* word.

Preaching will survive its decline because it is God's ordained method of winning men to Christ. Since “in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor. 1:21). God has ordained that men and women should be won to Him by the foolishness of preaching. Men may predict that preaching will become obsolete. The Lord plans otherwise.

The “foolishness of preaching” appears to be a strange expression. Actually, it is the *content* of preaching that is foolishness to the world. The gospel is a foolish act, in the eyes of man, contrary to all human logic. It consists of the humiliation of Christ in the historic reality of His life and death. And Christians, too, are always fools in the judgment of the world. They share in the folly of their

Saviour's humiliation. They preach such apparently foolish concepts of the gospel as turning the other cheek, going the second mile, loving your enemies, doing good to those that spitefully use you. Preaching of the crucified Christ is folly to the unbelieving heart.

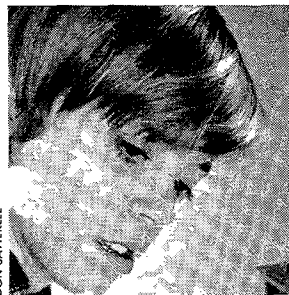
Yet, although it is by the foolishness of preaching that some men are to be saved, we need to be reminded that our preaching should be as little foolish as possible. In other words, every preacher should be improving his ability constantly, as a preacher of the Word. It is true that the Lord can bless any proclamation of His Word, no matter how humble. But it is also true that He can use more effectively a highly skilled preacher than an ill-trained one, assuming that both are consecrated to God. The Lord used mightily the humble Galilean fishermen who became his apostles. Their power and influence on souls saved through their ministry is boundless. However, it was the educated Paul, with his superior skills and knowledge, that made the greatest impact on the early church and its ministry.

God can use any kind of an instrument wholly dedicated to Him, but he can use a sharp tool more effectively than a dull one. A dull scythe will cut some grain. A sharp one will cut much more. Consequently, as a student of the Holy Scriptures and a proclaimer of its truths in the pulpit, the preacher must constantly strive to be better in both. There must be a continuous holy dissatisfaction with his attainments as a Bible student and a Bible preacher, goading him on to greater ability in both.

Preaching has fallen upon hard times. We are witnessing a sad decline. Some are predicting its ultimate end as a force in Christianity. Admittedly, preaching has experienced its ups and downs through the centuries, but it has always come back in power and vigor. Whenever there has been a revival in the study of God's Word, there has been a revival in preaching. Preaching has been a power in the church from its very beginning. Jesus came, preaching. His disciples came, preaching. Paul came, preaching. All down through the Christian centuries preaching has been God's means of saving men.

Biblical preaching will again revive and persist to the end. “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matt. 24:14).

Actually, "preachers' kids" are children—no more special than any other child, and no less, either.



DON SATTERLEE

# Ogres or cherubs?

by Brad Grabill

**A**mong the hallowed pews of the sanctuary and down in the catcombs of the fellowship hall one occasionally hears muted voices: "What makes the preacher's children so special? They're no different than any other kids." "The preacher's kids are the worst in the whole church school." "The pastor's children are very well behaved. They have to be; they're examples, you know."

The real truth about "preachers' kids" probably lies somewhere near the middle of all the clichés. They aren't ogres whose life goal is to besmirch the reputation of church and pastor. Nor are they cherubs who are too prim and proper to get grass stains on a trouser knee. Actually, "preachers' kids" are children—no more special than any other child, and no less either.

A "preacher's kid" is like *all* other children, because aspects of his childhood are universal to all. A "preacher's kid" is like *some* other children and unlike others. He may share with many, but not all, children such common factors as geographic location, economic status, and parental interest and ability in child rearing. No doubt the most familiar group the "preacher's kid" identifies with is other children of preachers. Obviously, there is also a sense in which "preachers' kids" are like *no* other children. No matter how similar the background or physical characteristics, no two children are exactly alike.

Is there anything particularly profound in the fact that each child in a pastor's home lives a life that is universal, similar, and individual all at the same time? Perhaps not. But a survey of more than 150 church pastors seems to underscore the fact and offers some insights that can help those who find themselves in the challenging position of being both a pastor and a parent.

The survey, taken among a representative sample of Missionary Church pastors across North America, revealed overwhelming agreement that a pastor's

personal attitude about his own role in the ministry is a primary factor affecting his children's decisions about their own future. Thus most parsonage children share the common understanding that "what Dad thinks about being a pastor and how he responds helps me imagine what my future could or should be like." Of course, such an attitude certainly is not exclusive to preachers' families. Every parent is both a model and a mirror to his or her children.

The pastors in the survey apparently placed a low priority on the importance of their children learning problem-solving skills. Asked to rank ten possible advantages of being raised in a pastor's home, the preachers put problem solving on the bottom. At the top of the list were having frequent guests in the home, strong influence of the church, and the example of Christian parents. As important as are these advantages, it seems surprising that pastors who have so many opportunities to minister to the varied needs and conflicts of humanity should consider such an environment of relatively little value to their children. And yet, perhaps in this attitude preachers' homes are not so different from the majority of American families. The great American struggle today seems to be to avoid problems rather than to accept and cope with them.

The truth is that although we cannot be totally in control of our environment, we can take personal responsibility through the Lord's help for responding appropriately in it and to it. Problem solving would seem to be a key element in developing that responding process, and a preacher's home would seem to be an ideal laboratory for this discovery and nurturing.

Interestingly, 90 percent of the survey questionnaires returned were filled out by preachers who were not themselves the child of a preacher! Such a fact says two things. It says that the previous generation of ministers' families in the Missionary Church were not primarily

responsible for the current group of pastors. This is not to say that the ministry should be some kind of monarchical hand-me-down system from father to son. But the statistics seem to show a clear trend in how church leaders are produced as well as to demonstrate one result of home influences upon a preacher's children.

Second, it seems to verify that there is no precut mold from which a pastor comes, and thus, no identical mold for a pastor's children, either. A child's individuality simply cannot be totally stamped out. It may be violated, ignored, and suppressed, but there is no such thing as cloning preachers.

Thus the results of this limited survey indicate that ministers recognize the impact on their children of their own relationship to the ministry, that they do not emphasize the importance of problem solving as an advantage to their children, and that pastors do not primarily come from pastors' homes.

Let's consider how this information can improve our understanding of what it means to be both a pastor and a parent by posing three questions to ourselves.

Why not make the ministerial situation of our families as full of purpose and enjoyable for our children as possible? This means keeping priorities in balance as we juggle ministerial duties and home responsibilities. Don't let a short-circuited relationship either with our God or with our family mar our children's opinion of full-time Christian service.

Why not realistically consider how much of our time and energy are given to confronting barriers and conflicts? By our positive attitude to such situations, we can affirm the problem-solving process and person and become a model for our children in coping with problems, not escaping or avoiding them.

Why not recognize that the peculiarities of our ministerial role affect our family's life? A "preacher's kid" *may* become a preacher himself, but he may not. Let's not try to mold him in advance by expectations and personal projections.

"Preachers' kids" are not a rare species to be kept in isolation for fear of extinction. Neither are they just one of the crowd. They are only trying, in common with all Christians, to serve and grow in the role God has called them to fill. It's true that "preachers' kids," as well as their moms and dads, are exam-

(Continued on page 19.)

# THREE ANGELS OF THE APOCALYPSE-2

The "everlasting gospel" is the key to unlocking God's most urgent messages to mankind.

In this second article exploring the meaning of Revelation 14:9-12, the key point is the relationship between "the everlasting gospel" proclaimed by the first angel (verse 6), the announcement of Babylon's fall by the second angel (verse 8), and the third angel's denunciation of a global system of deception, symbolized by the beast power (verses 9-12). First, however, perhaps we should recapitulate a few significant points made in the previous article (see the March, 1980, *MINISTRY*, pp. 18, 19):

1. The warning given in Revelation 14:9-12 constitutes the most vehement and fearful condemnation to be found in Scripture.

2. This fact is good reason to believe we can understand its meaning. A God of love would surely not impart to His servants an *incomprehensible* warning involving death as the ultimate penalty.

3. The beast, its image and mark, symbolizes a worldwide, influential power or system that is antagonistic to God and His people.

4. The negative aspects of this passage imply the existence of corresponding positive truth—a victorious group who refuse to worship the beast and who stand in stark contrast to those who capitulate to it.

5. The warning against beast worship is the last of the three messages whose context indicates that they are given with

peculiar force in the latter days to prepare a people to stand victoriously with the redeemed of all ages when the Saviour appears (chap. 1:1-5; 14:14-20).

6. All three messages are inseparably woven together, and cannot be fully understood unless studied as a whole.

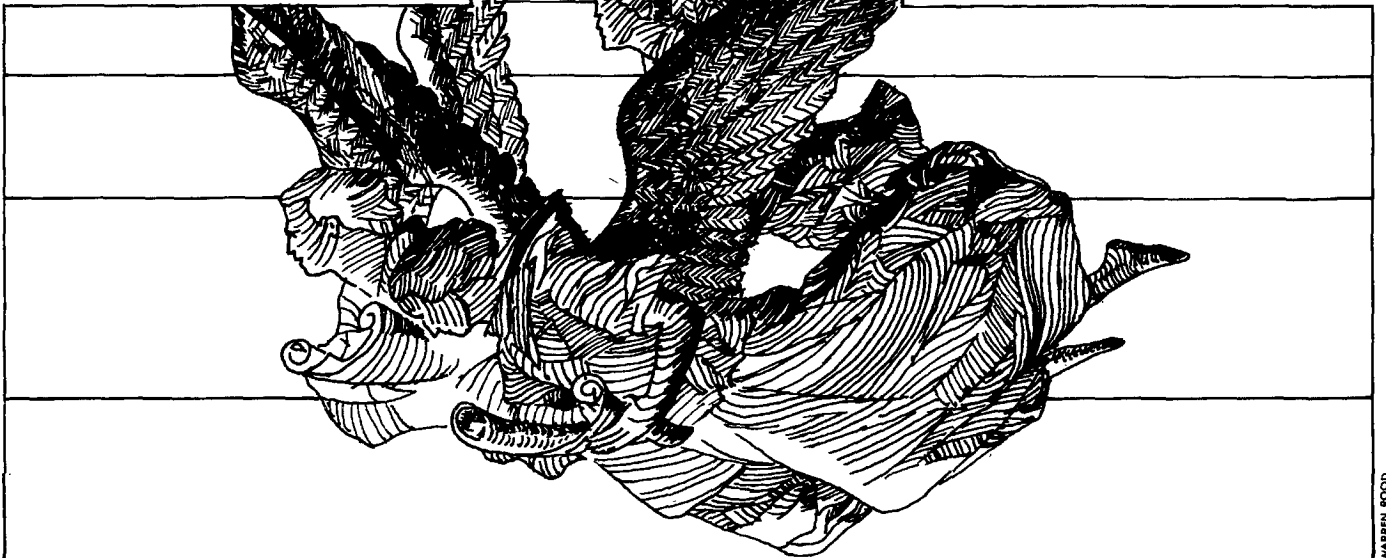
7. The first angel's message, involving the proclamation of "the everlasting gospel" to the entire world, is the foundation and unifying theme of all three messages, including the warning against worshipping the beast.

Let us continue, then, to examine the relationship between these three messages, using "the everlasting gospel" as the key to decipher their symbolism—especially that of the fall of Babylon and the mark of the beast. The grand, introductory theme of the first angel's message is the preaching of "the everlasting gospel" to earth dwellers of "every nation, tribe, language and people" (verse 6, N.I.V.).\* This "everlasting gospel" is basic to all that follows in this passage.

Some may wonder what is so unique or startling about the "everlasting gospel" to warrant the position of cruciality

that is given these end-time messages. The answer lies not so much in the nature of the gospel itself. Indeed, the fact that it is the *everlasting* gospel indicates that it is the same gospel that was delivered to Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Daniel, the New Testament apostles, and that has been preserved intact through the vicissitudes of church history to the present. The uniqueness of the gospel in this setting lies in its relationship to the succeeding messages of the second and third angels who accompany the first.

The announcements and warnings found in the second and third angels' messages must be seen in the context of right versus wrong, of the true (everlasting) gospel as opposed to a false gospel or gospels. In vivid contrast to the principles of the "everlasting gospel" a religious system undoubtedly composed of "every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:14) is brought to view, which defies not only the loyal subjects of Christ's spiritual kingdom but God Himself! For that reason it is proclaimed to be in a fallen condition, and dire warnings are issued against submitting oneself to it either voluntarily through deception or involuntarily through fear. With almost painful clarity, verse 12 draws this distinction between the genuine and the false—between those who retain the living principles of the "everlasting gos-



pel" and those who clutch to their bosoms the fatal counterfeit. Yet, amazingly, this rebellious system sweeps the world with its false gospel, deceiving all except those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life (chap. 13:13-18; 17:8).

God has not overreacted to this challenge against His gospel. He directs the third angel to deliver denunciations unequalled for severity against the beast and his worshipers precisely because the nature of the false gospel so insidiously attempts to negate all that He has intended to accomplish (and *will* accomplish) through His "everlasting gospel." It is significant that the word John uses thirty-six times in chapters 13-17, 19, and 20 to denote the "beast" is the Greek word *therion*, meaning a dangerous, wild, even venomous, beast. His choice of words leaves no doubt of the malignant, evil, malicious nature of this power.

When man sinned and came under the curse of death, all heaven was filled with the deepest sorrow. Then God's most precious Gift, Jesus, was given for the salvation of man. The result? Profound rejoicing when a lost sheep is found. Universal praise throughout all heaven when a single sinner is saved (see Luke 15:3-7).

The Incarnation, the cross, the Resurrection, the Second Coming, are the grand focal points of Scripture, and beautifully declare that nothing is of greater importance than the redemption of mankind. This is the theme, the gospel, of Scripture. Although proclaimed in a thousand ways through prophecy and parable, the point is that nothing can excel, or even equal, the "everlasting gospel." For that reason, nothing could be more execrable than a perversion of that gospel. What could equal in danger and deceptive terribleness a false plan of salvation that results not in salvation but in damnation? Jesus asked, "What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?" (Mark 8:36, N.I.V.).

When Pilate examined our Lord in regard to His kingship and work as the Saviour of men, He stated, "In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth" (John 18:37, N.I.V.). Christ came, lived, died, and was resurrected for the express purpose of seeking and saving "that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

When we contemplate the mystery of redemption—the unbelievable love of

God for a rebellious world—we must kneel before the Father and exclaim with Paul, Who can "grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge" (Eph. 3:18, 19, N.I.V.)! "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). From beginning to end, the "everlasting gospel" is the core, the theme, the foundation, of Scripture. It is the focal point of heaven, and it should receive the constant attention of all mankind, especially the clergy. Our business and joy is to know the true gospel, to have a deep relationship with our Lord, and to communicate this glorious truth in the most loving and persuasive manner possible.

Whatever precise identification one gives to the beast and his mark, it must ever be remembered that the basic concept is the irreconcilable conflict between the truth of the "everlasting gospel" on the one hand and the deceptive cunning of the beast on the other hand—a beast who is followed and worshiped by a majority of earth's multitudes. Both the issue and its results are delineated in Revelation 13 and 14. Those who, in loyalty to the Creator, refuse to worship and follow the beast and all that goes with it, will endure the wrath of man (chap. 13:8, 12, 15, 16). Those who yield allegiance to the beast and all that goes with it will endure the wrath of God (chap. 14:10).

Astonishingly, the controversy centers over the understanding or misunderstanding of the "everlasting gospel." Thus is emphasized the need for the first angel's proclamation of the "everlasting gospel" to all the inhabitants of earth. Thus is also emphasized the necessity of having a clear understanding of the gospel. Yet how many, even among Christians, clearly understand this all-important subject?

One may wonder how it is possible for persecution, penalties, and death decrees to be heaped upon those who accept the "everlasting gospel." Yet this should not be too surprising. Since the plan of salvation was put into effect, such opposition has been the case, although never on such a worldwide scale or with such intensity as is brought to view in Revelation 14:6-12.

The reality of Satan is expressly taught in Scripture. Jesus Himself not only knew the authenticity of Satan, but constantly felt the effects of the great conflict raging between Himself and Satan over His plan to save man. If the

gospel plan runs like a golden thread from Genesis to Revelation and constitutes the ultimate theme of Scripture, then what must be the battle plan of Satan? The answer is obvious! It is to destroy, wreck, pervert, oppose, downgrade, and make of none effect God's gospel with every artifice at his command. This is the great purpose of the enemy and his cohorts.

This conflict between Christ and Satan, between the true and the false gospel, can be seen at the gates of Eden itself in the antagonism of Cain toward Abel. Both were the sons of Adam. Both were sinners. Both were acquainted with the plan of salvation, as illustrated in the system of sacrificial offerings. Both knew that without the shedding of blood there was no remission of sins. Both acknowledged God's claim for reverence and worship. Both knew that the sacrificial system typified the coming of the Redeemer. Both erected altars. Both brought an offering. But now comes the difference, and it is a vast one! Cain followed his own wishes by bringing a bloodless offering, the fruits of his own labor. But Abel, in submissive obedience, by faith "offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain" (Heb. 11:4). Note carefully that the wrath of Cain, symbolic of the world's wrath upon those who follow Jesus fully and explicitly in these last days, was directed toward his brother, and his jealousy, which turned into hatred, found fruitage in murder! He murdered Abel, not for any wrong Abel had done, but "because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous" (1 John 3:12, N.I.V.). How true it is that "everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed" (John 3:20, N.I.V.).

Here, very early in Scripture, one sees what may be called the "mark of the beast" principle, as opposed to the "seal of God" principle. In Revelation 7, John speaks of the servants of God who are sealed by Him, as opposed to those described in chapters 13 and 14 who are marked by the beast as a symbol of their allegiance to his system. Although this mark and seal principle may be traced throughout Scripture, there are unique, identifiable elements in the seal and mark that have fulfillment only in these last days. The same opposing principles underlying the seal and mark that are to be found throughout sacred history are brought to their universal and ultimate struggle and resolution in these verses. Indeed, despite the fearful exco-

riation of the beast, his worshipers, and their false gospel, the entire passage carries a triumphant ring. Every word seems to breathe ultimate victory over the enemies of God and His truth.

The context of this passage shows that from a chronological viewpoint these messages are designed for the last days, both to confront every individual on earth with the inescapable responsibility to decide for or against God's everlasting gospel, and also to prepare and enable those who choose God to stand with heaven in spite of almost overwhelming pressure from the worshipers and followers of the beast. John gives these messages their proper place in prophetic history when in the verses following

them he relates that he saw "a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle" (Rev. 14:14). (The sectional title for the verses following the three angels' messages as given by the translators of the *New International Version* highlights the eschatological nature of those messages—"The Harvest of the Earth.")

In conclusion, what is the true gospel? How is it distinguished from the false gospel? How much of the true gospel must one understand before being safe from worshiping the beast power? Can professed Christians be among beast worshipers? From Adam until now, the issue confronting all men is that of being

lost or saved. And being saved is not an accident. Salvation is a plan instituted by God, given to man repeatedly over the centuries, and yet no plan has ever been under such fierce attack. When the gospel is correctly understood and believed, man has true freedom and assurance. Only then does man have realistic hope. Satan's aim is to rob man of this assurance and hope.

In our next article we will take up these and other questions regarding the mark of the beast and the seal of God.

J.R.S.

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## WHO WANTS TO BE A HYPOCRITE?

One of our readers recently wrote, "I appreciated your editorial entitled 'A Surprise or a Secret?' but would like to see sometime a little more complete treatment of one aspect that was only alluded to. I agree that the *time* of Christ's return is a secret, and would interpret this to mean particularly the day and the hour (see Mark 13:32). But is the Christian to be in ignorance with regard to the *season* (see verse 28)? I would interpret this to mean that we can know that the time is really close, even within a decade (when the time does, indeed, get within a decade). Is this trying to be too specific?"

In answer to this legitimate question, I must confess that we have been negligent in not publishing more articles on the signs of Christ's coming and its nearness. This we plan to do. We are firm believers in the soon return of our Lord. My own personal belief is that we are living in the very last days of this earth's history. May I add to that the fact that my near-90-year-old father still continues to make the major part of every letter to me a treatise on the soon coming of Jesus.

But here is the catch. Some years ago (more than I like to think about), when I was in full-time public evangelism, many of my sermons centered on the soon return of Jesus. Several of them dealt exclusively with such signs of His return as wars, crime, infidelity, parental problems with children, worldliness in the

church, lawlessness, famine, earthquakes, floods, et cetera. During those years of the second world war and shortly thereafter, one almost had to search consciously for items or happenings to illustrate the point. Well do I remember when atomic power was first realized by the masses after the bombing of Hiroshima. The fantastic power of the split atom boggled the mind. But what happened? Gradually the unexpected, the uncommon, and the spectacular became the expected, the common, and unspectacular. As every kind, type, and breed of happening that could be categorized as a sign of the end took place, it seems that Christians paid less and less attention. We hardly realize anymore that Paul's declaration to Timothy reads like our morning newspaper. There will be "terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power" (2 Tim. 3:1-5, N.I.V.).\*

Of course the same quality of sins were performed thirty, forty, fifty, one hundred, even one thousand, years ago. But in quantity and intensity, nothing seems to match the mess our planet is in today, especially when one considers the

enormous amount of gospel truth available to our civilization. Some of our older readers may remember the concept of man's inevitable and glorious progress in both the moral and material world that was the theme song of many a preacher and scientist a few decades ago. Anyone who raised the idea that the world was getting worse was looked upon as some wide-eyed, Bible-thumping, fundamentalist maniac. But today who would deny that the notion of ever-ascending human progress is hopelessly on the defensive? A man whose profession is in the financial world called me as I was writing this piece. Among other things he said, "There is a horrendous amount of uncertainty in our world." As he spoke, I could almost hear the voice of Jesus loudly declaring the signs of the end: "Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world" (Luke 21:26, N.I.V.).

The point I am trying to make is that there are so many awful events that the Bible-believing Christian can equate with the signs of the end, so many calamities daily piercing our eyes and ears via print, radio, and TV, that we are numb. Nothing seems to awaken us; nothing is real. Even words have changed. *Great*, *fantastic*, and *big* are archaic. To be current, we now speak of *mega* this and *mega* that. Even millionaires are a dime a dozen. Only the billionaire attracts our attention today.

We could go on and on, but we must not let the microwave intensity of shattering world events pummel our brains and anesthetize us. We must not become victims of electronic overkill. Rather, wake up; banish fear, shout for joy! Why? Jesus said it—"When these



things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near" (verse 28, N.I.V.).

To the Pharisees and Sadducees of His day, Jesus exclaimed, "When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red

and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" (Matt. 16:2, 3).

Who wants to be a hypocrite? J.R.S.

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## SUPER BOWL CHRISTIANITY

Have you read the latest best seller from the evangelical religious press? The one everyone is talking about—*Was Blind But Now I See*?

The publisher's promotional piece says, "Follow the odysseys of Paul, a liberal theologian whose contempt for evangelical, fundamentalist Christians is dramatically changed when he finds himself unexpectedly born again in a blinding experience with the Lord. You'll thrill at his miraculous conversion; weep as he patiently endures suspicion and hostility in the local church; and find yourself praising the Lord as the former staid scholar careens from one narrow escape to another in his unconventional witnessing ministry. Here is a man whom the Lord has used mightily, and now you can share his intimate story. Look for *Was Blind But Now I See* at your local Christian bookstore."

You're right; it isn't on anyone's best-seller list. Thankfully, it hasn't even been written, but only because Paul lived

too long ago by a few hundred years. Today we would never allow such a fantastic (not to mention lucrative) story to escape.

Thumb through almost any evangelical magazine nowadays and you can't avoid noticing a disturbing trend—more and more we are focusing on people and less and less on the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, maybe that's not a really fair accusation. Evangelical publishing is producing some solid meat, but the glorification of individuals and the search for the most exciting story is escalating—rapidly. Nor is the trend confined to publishing. The lecture circuit, the TV and radio talk show, and the cassette "ministry" are all involved. Everyone has something that he is pushing, and if it can be tied to a celebrity or a sensational experience, so much the better for sales, especially if the copywriter can somehow get in the words *born again*.

Of course, there is nothing wrong with a person's giving his Christian witness.

Even Paul told his story on two or three occasions. But according to the record, he didn't send out a direct-mail piece urging Christians to see him in person at the sports arena flanked by the recently born-again coach and halfback of the Super Bowl champions. Nor did he go coast to coast on color television where his testimony was scheduled to follow right behind a country-music star singing her latest country gospel hit. It's hard to picture Paul promoting tapes of his latest crusade in Athens, perhaps because the transcript of that crusade as given in Acts 17 doesn't seem to have quite the charismatic intensity needed to make it in today's tape market.

It could be that times *have* changed since Paul lived. Maybe if he were here today, he *would* be a guest on the celebrity talk shows and hire a press agent to get his books published. But maybe, just maybe, he would still stay with the method he outlined to the Corinthian Christians, "When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:1, 2, N.I.V.).\*

The approach sounds rather low-key to accomplish very much. But Paul found it successful as churches all over Asia testified. Who knows? It might still work today!

B.R.H.

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## The Shaking Up of Adventism?

(Continued from page 11.)

people (and for all who acknowledge their need) is that we might, as Christ so graciously invites, "be zealous therefore, and repent" (verse 19).

Plowman quotes a cross-section of Adventists as saying that the "church *must* get the issues out into the open and deal with them responsibly."

We would suggest that the issues are well on their way into the open—if, in fact, they have ever been hidden. And we believe they will be dealt with responsibly, through the authority Christ has invested in His church, and in the spirit of love and compassion for both people and truth He desires His church to reflect.

But to put it straight: We do not see our greatest need to be a re-evaluation of 1844 and the investigative judgment, nor

even to settle questions of identity and authority. Our greatest need is twofold: first, our need for gold, white raiment, and eyesalve, which, when applied, will settle all other matters "in spirit and in truth"; and second, in a collapsing world, reeking with death and hopelessness, we need to be about our Father's business of proclaiming the good news of salvation to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Rev. 14:6).

## Ogres or Cherubs?

(Continued from page 15.)

ples in a sense. But the whole benefit of an example lies not in the fact that it is so

perfect that it becomes distant and unreachable, but rather that it is sufficiently like us that we can identify and emulate. With a little mutual understanding we can stop those muted mumblings about "preacher's kids," as well

as the reasons for them.

Brad Grabill, a "preacher's kid" himself, is minister of youth and Christian education at the Missionary Church of Van Nuys, California.

# WHEN THE DOCTOR IS BAFFLED

What about faith healing? When the doctor has done all he can, and the symptoms persist, what may we expect of God?

by Leo R. Van Dolson

A pastor's wife, who suffered a severe type of arthritis for ten years, at times had such severe pain that she had to walk and work bent over, unable to straighten her knees.

Joyce, her little 4-year-old daughter, was "helping" can tomatoes in the kitchen one day. The little girl sat nearby on the floor praying, although no one noticed her bowed head and moving lips.

Later she asked, "Mommy, how are your knees now?"

"Why," her mother exclaimed in sudden realization, "they don't pain me at all! I'm walking just like I used to!"

"I know why," Joyce told her. "While you were canning tomatoes I asked God to take your arthritis away."

Many have found that when the doctor has done all he can to help, but the symptoms and pain still persist, prayer actually works. Of course, not everyone who asks God for healing is cured, but there have been many spectacular answers to prayer for divine healing. Whether healed or not, however, we need to keep in mind that God's way, although perhaps not exactly what we might wish for ourselves, is wiser and better for us than our own limited viewpoint can anticipate. Therefore, when we pray for healing for ourselves or for others, we should always pray in accordance with His will for us, trusting Him to do what He knows is best.

Contrary to popular belief, divine healing is not a subject that is limited to certain cults or religious fanatics. Divine healing is practiced by a substantial number of clergy in Protestant churches, as is pointed out in an article by Charles S. Braden in *Pastoral Psychology* recounting the results of a survey on the subject. From a total of 982 questionnaires mailed, 460 replies were received. The question, "Have you, as a minister, ever attempted to perform a spiritual healing?" was answered in the affirmative by 34.5 percent of those responding. Braden reports that "of the 460, only 248 gave an unqualified No answer to the question. This is just under 54 percent. Forty-eight, or 10.4 percent of our respondents, qualified their negative answers. . . . Percentage-wise the Episcopalians rated highest in the number of healings in proportion to the number reporting; 65 percent had engaged in heal-

ing by spiritual means. Other percentages were: Presbyterians, 39 percent; Lutherans, 33 percent; United Brethren, 30 percent; Methodists and Disciples, 29 percent; and Baptists, 25 percent. Actually a much larger number of Methodists responded to the questionnaire than from any other denomination."<sup>1</sup>

It may be surprising to find this much approval of divine healing among religious groups not usually known for their emphasis of it, but after all, is there *any* healing other than divine healing? When the surgeon removes an offending organ, has he "healed" the patient, or has he just made it more likely that healing will occur? What goes on in the patient's body after the surgeon has sewn the cut edges of the wound together? Does he control the healing process, or is he merely cooperating with recuperative forces planned long ago in the mind of the Creator?

Obviously, the hand that made man's body is still at work in its healing and restoration. God has made provision for the body to fight infection and disease and to heal itself when overcome.

Is it unrealistic, then, for human beings to turn to their Creator when sick? If God is interested in us, as the Bible indicates, can't we expect a sympathetic response to our prayers for healing?

Not only *can* we expect it, but God Himself has established a plan for us to follow when we turn to Him for the healing of our physical infirmities, just as He has established a plan for our recovery from spiritual infirmity. The plan He has instituted is not just for those fully

committed to Him but is also one that He has provided in order that those who have not yet learned to know and trust Him may be impressed by His love for and interest in them.

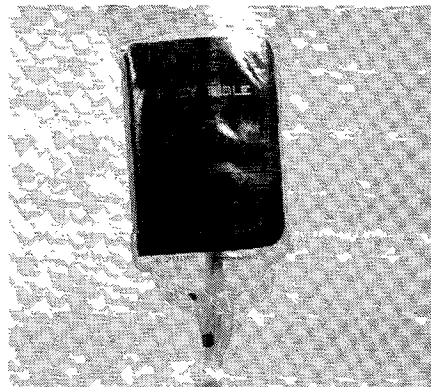
Dr. William A. Nolen, author of the popular book *The Making of a Surgeon*, reports on his extensive investigation of faith healers in a recent work entitled *Healing: A Doctor in Search of a Miracle*. He claims that in spite of his honest attempts to do so, he could not find one specific "cure" that could be medically substantiated as having been the result of faith healing.

The fact that Dr. Nolen was unable to establish a single case in which organic disease was undeniably cured through faith healing does not mean, of course, that there are no such instances. The Bible is full of reports of miraculous healings.

One of the most spectacular of such cases that I'm acquainted with is the one documented in Rose Slaybaugh's book *Escape From Death*.<sup>2</sup> Rose tells how her husband Roy was critically injured in an automobile accident near Gold Beach, Oregon. He was not expected to live when Rose called the ministers of her church and asked them to pray at Roy's hospital bedside. As they did so, he was healed instantly!

Soon after I became pastor of the Brookings-Gold Beach district in Oregon, Rose and Roy, who were members of my Brookings church, began to travel around the Northwest at the invitation of other churches to tell the story of Roy's miraculous healing. The officials of my employing conference asked me to investigate the facts of the matter quietly, since the story, being such a sensational one, was drawing a lot of attention and interest.

In the course of my investigation I talked with those principals involved who still lived in the Gold Beach area. The doctor who treated Roy told me that as a result of the terrible auto accident, Roy sustained a severely fractured skull. The cerebral fluid was coming from his left ear and eye, and the doctor had not been able to stop it. Roy's ear was torn loose in such a manner that it was hanging on the side of his head. His jaw was fractured. The doctor did what he could, but he told me that he was sure there



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hadn't been much hope for Roy's recovery. When I asked him how he could explain what happened, he shrugged his shoulders and said, "Well, I'm an atheist; I don't believe in God; but I do know that Roy did not recover because of anything that I did."

Mrs. Jenny Schneidau was one of the nurses who took care of Roy. In fact, when she went off duty the morning before Roy was healed, she told Rose that she would probably not see her again because she didn't think Roy would live through the day. She was greatly surprised when she later found Roy completely healed. She told me that there was no way that this could be explained—it was just a miracle.

As a consequence of seeing the direct results of anointing and prayer, Jenny Schneidau was so impressed that she asked Rose for Christian literature from her church. In a little while Mrs. Schneidau and others of her family were baptized. She was only one of several whose conversion can be traced directly either to witnessing or hearing of this miracle that took place in Gold Beach.

I talked to another of Roy's nurses. She told me that she believed in miracles but had never seen one before. When I talked to her, she was convinced that this time she had actually witnessed one. Remember, Roy had a fractured jaw, and it was impossible for him to eat anything in that condition, but she had gone into his room chewing on some hard candy shortly after he was healed. Roy was starved and asked her to give him a couple of pieces of her candy. She did so, thinking that he might be able to suck on them. Instead he chewed them up and asked for more. Knowing that it was impossible for him to do that because of his broken jaw, she ran out to try to learn what had happened to him.

The last time I saw Roy was in Portland, Oregon, several years ago. He said to me, "Leo, come look at my right eye."

As I did so, I could see that it was very bloodshot. "See, that eye isn't so good anymore; it's going bad," he said. "But now look at my left eye."

Looking into his left eye, I could see that it was just as clear as it could be. He enthusiastically explained, "This eye is still perfect. This is the eye that God gave me when He healed me, and it still works fine!"

Although God expects us to do everything possible to take advantage of the modern scientific knowledge of healing, when the physicians have done all they

can and all human help has failed, we can claim the promise of James 5:14-16 that God will heal the sick.

Pastor Paul Eldridge, a friend of mine, tells how he and his wife, Reatha, were concerned about their daughter's leg being deformed. When it was suggested that they might anoint her, Paul responded, "Why? She isn't dying!" Telling about it later, he explained that as they thought it over, they realized that the promise of James 5 wasn't given just for those who are dying. The scripture says, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." It doesn't say, "Is anyone dying?" but "Is any sick among you?"

For too long many Christians have thought of the anointing service called for in James 5 as sort of an "extreme unction." But the Catholic Church itself, since 1972, has changed the name of its sacrament from "extreme unction" to "the anointing of the sick." It's administered to those who are sick, not just those who are dying.

We need to understand, however, in analyzing this text that God does not heal people promiscuously. He doesn't restore us to health in order that we may go about wasting our lives and strength again. He expects that we will eliminate those harmful habits that are causing our sickness, putting into practice the good preventive measures that He has given us in order that we may stay healthy.

This pinpoints one of the greatest problems with "faith healing." Most of its practitioners do *not* teach people to live according to God's laws of life and health. Would God be doing that which is best for us if He allowed us to "burn the candle at both ends," disregarding all the laws of life and health and then, when we experience the natural consequences of such recklessness, heal us from the consequent illness upon demand?

The health classic *The Ministry of Healing* explains how actually to present our prayers in such a way as to express quiet confidence in and submissiveness to the will of God: "In prayer for the sick, it should be remembered that 'we know not what we should pray for as we ought.' Romans 8:26. We do not know whether the blessing we desire will be best or not. Therefore our prayers should include this thought: 'Lord, Thou knowest every secret of the soul. Thou art acquainted with these persons. . . . If, therefore, it is for Thy glory and the


good of the afflicted ones, we ask, in the name of Jesus, that they may be restored to health. If it be not Thy will that they may be restored, we ask that Thy grace may comfort and Thy presence sustain them in their sufferings.'

"God knows the end from the beginning. He is acquainted with the hearts of all men. He reads every secret of the soul. He knows whether those for whom prayer is offered would or would not be able to endure the trials that would come upon them should they live. He knows whether their lives would be a blessing or a curse to themselves and to the world. This is one reason why, while presenting our petitions with earnestness, we should say, 'Nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done.' Luke 22:42. . . . The consistent course is to commit our desires to our all-wise heavenly Father, and then, in perfect confidence, trust all to Him."—Pages 229, 230.

God may not always answer our prayers in the way we wish that He would. But often He does so.

Many years ago in Kansas a boy named David injured his leg in a farm accident. At first he paid little attention to the injury, but soon it became infected and the boy became very ill. When the doctor came, he decided that there was nothing to do but to amputate.

When David heard that, he called his big brother to the side of his bed, making him promise that he wouldn't let the doctor take off his leg. The older boy kept his promise. He wouldn't allow the doctor to come near. Not being able to perform the amputation, the doctor left, telling the family the boy couldn't possibly live very long.

David asked the family to pray for him. And they did—for many long hours through the difficult crisis that followed. After a while David began to feel better; the swelling in his leg was reduced. David did not lose his leg. Instead, he went on to become President of the United States, and Dwight David Eisenhower always gave the credit for saving his leg and his life to his family's prayers and God's answer. 

<sup>1</sup> *Pastoral Psychology*, May, 1954, p. 10. This survey was sponsored in 1950 by the Commission on Religion and Health of the then Federal Council of Churches.

<sup>2</sup> Rose Slaybaugh, *Escape From Death: The Slaybaugh Story* (Nashville, Tenn.: Southern Publishing Assn., 1953). 144 pages; \$3.50, paper.

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# THE FLOOD AND THE ICE AGE

Fitting an ice age into the time constraints of the Bible has seemed impossible to some. A global flood could provide solutions.

by Michael J. Oard

Certain areas of the historical sciences compete with the witness of the Bible for objective truth regarding origins. There are four key assumptions involved in the customary pursuit of these sciences: (1) the past can be adequately explained without supernatural interventions; (2) the inorganic universe, organic life, and societies have been evolving in a general trend toward higher levels of complexity and organization; (3) the uniform operation of presently observable processes adequately accounts for the physical features of our planet (and the rest of the universe); and (4) the development of our world to its present state has extended over vast periods of time.

The concept of long ages for earth history has been difficult to reconcile with the time frame outlined in the Bible. The long-ages viewpoint is bolstered by appeal to events and geologic features that seemingly require more time than the Bible allows. The ice age and the ice caps presently on Greenland and Antarctica are prime examples. However, creationist scientists are confident that many, if not all, of these features can be explained best by a global flood and its aftermath. This article is an effort to describe a model for a rapid development of continental glaciation, based on reasonable assumptions of the climatic consequences of the Genesis 6-8 flood.

For an ice age to occur, cooler temperatures, especially in summer, and a larger supply of moisture are needed at mid and high latitudes than are produced by the present climate. However, the moisture content of the air is directly proportional to the temperature. Cooler temperatures mean less moisture in the air. For example, the interior of Antarctica is one of the driest and coldest regions on earth, receiving only about two inches of precipitation a year. This is a major difficulty in most of the many theories on the origin of the ice age. This difficulty is even more acute for efforts to explain a rapid formation of continental glaciers by present processes.

According to the Flood model developed by many creationist scientists (for example, Whitcomb and Morris in *The Genesis Flood*), the earth before the Flood was surrounded with a water vapor canopy above the atmosphere (Gen. 1:6, 7). It is presumed that such a

canopy would be stable under certain atmospheric conditions and would cause a warm worldwide climate by the greenhouse effect. Not only would the land be warm, but the oceans also would be universally warm as a consequence.

The mechanisms for the Flood are eruption of the "fountains of the great deep" and rain over a period of forty days and nights (chap. 7:11, 12). The implications of the specification that "all the fountains of the great deep burst forth" (R.S.V.) are worldwide violent volcanic explosions, ejecting water, steam, and lava onto the surface until all the pre-Flood land surface was covered by water. (Continental subsidence probably also contributed to this process.) One could expect that a large amount of either warm or hot water was involved. These events would produce two unique climatic characteristics immediately following the Flood. First, the oceans would be relatively warm from top to bottom and from pole to pole. Second, a vast shroud of volcanic dust would remain suspended in the upper atmosphere.

Volcanic dust trapped in the upper atmosphere immediately following the global flood would gradually settle to the ground in about two years in the tropics and over more than 12 years at high latitudes. Volcanic eruptions probably would not cease abruptly at the end of the Flood, but would most likely diminish gradually until the present level of activity was reached. There is evidence for much volcanic activity soon after the Flood—for example, the volcanic cones

along the western edge of North America. The decline of post-Flood volcanism may have extended over several hundred years. During this period the dust canopy would have been continuously replenished. Observation associated with recent volcanic eruptions has shown that volcanic dust causes a significant cooling effect by reflecting some of the sun's radiation back to space. Consequently, the dust veil following the Flood would have produced much cooler temperatures than today, particularly over mid- and high-latitude continental regions in summer.

There is another cooling mechanism that would begin operating soon after the Flood. This cooling mechanism would be a widespread, year-round snow surface over many areas of mid- and high-latitude continental regions once the "ice age" started. The reason for this is that snow reflects sunlight back to space, and also insulates the air from the warmer ground.

Warm ocean temperatures at mid and high latitudes following the Flood would have major consequences in providing copious amounts of moisture for snow. The average ocean temperature is now 38°F., which is presumably much cooler than was the case immediately after the Flood. Evaporation from the ocean is directly proportional to the dryness of the air, the wind speed, the instability of the air, and the ocean surface temperature. An ocean at a surface temperature of 75°F. would evaporate more than four times the amount of water than at a surface temperature of 32°F., under the same atmospheric conditions. Therefore a warm ocean would produce the abundant moisture needed for an ice age.

Besides providing abundant moisture, evaporation would also transfer 590 calories of heat from the ocean to the air for every gram of water evaporated. This would be in the form of latent heat, which would be expressed as sensible heat when the water vapor condensed. In addition to this latent heat of water vapor, up to approximately 33 percent more heat would be added to the oceanic air by the direct contact with warmer water. Thus, the air above the oceans at mid and high latitudes would remain fairly warm for a long time following the Flood.



As a result of the cooling of land surfaces and the heating of air over the ocean in mid and high latitudes, cool continents would lie adjacent to warm oceanic air. The greatest horizontal change in temperature would be near the continental shoreline. It is within this zone that storms would develop and move, being steered by upper-level strong winds that would generally blow parallel to the isotherms (lines of equal temperature). The main storm track for the North Atlantic Ocean would be along the East Coasts of North America and Greenland, ending somewhere in the Norwegian Sea or the Arctic Ocean.

In these storms along the East Coast of North America, cold continental air would blow strongly over the warm ocean south of the storm center. This air would be heated and moistened rapidly. The ocean water in contact with the cold air would be cooled and sink, being replaced by warmer water from below and from lower latitudes. The cooler water that sinks would form a layer of cool "bottom water" that would spread out over the ocean bottom, becoming colder and thicker with time. In winter storms, most of the precipitation falls on the colder side of the storm. This would correspond to the cold continents in the post-Flood climate. As the air circulates around the storm center, it will meet the cold continental air to the north and east of the storm center. However, because of the greater density of the cold air, this warmer circulating air would be forced up and over the colder air. This is a potent mechanism for widespread heavy snowfall.

To visualize the possibilities of this situation, I will assume that over a 250-year period one of these East Coast storms develops each week and moves northeast along the coast. These storms would be similar to the northeasters that clobber Eastern North America every winter. The storms soon after the Flood not only would be more frequent than today but also would be much larger with much more moisture. A modern-day northeaster drops about one inch of precipitation along the Eastern Seaboard. Assuming this same conservative snowfall in the post-Flood storms, about 1,200 feet of ice and snow would accumulate in a 250-year period in locations that were cold enough to retain frozen water.

The preceding scenario seems ideal for a rapid development of an ice age. Once the oceans cooled, there no longer would be an abundant supply of moisture, the climate would have changed to

much drier, warmer conditions, and the continental glaciers would have begun to recede. Details of quantitative estimates for these processes have been published in the June, 1979, issue of the *Creation Research Society Quarterly* (2717 Cranbrook Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104).

A net cooling of the oceans would occur primarily where cold continental air blows over warm water in storms. Even though weaker cooling mechanisms would operate over the remainder of the ocean, they would be more than balanced by warming mechanisms. Since the net cooling would occur in a small area of the oceans near the coasts of mid- and high-latitude continental regions by a well-known physical process that occurs today in winter, estimating a length of time and the amount of ice is not as speculative as it first appears. Three fourths of the net cooling of the oceans would be by evaporation, based on modern-day situations. From conservative estimates of the average ocean temperature following the Flood, the area of net cooling, the cooling rate, the horizontal precipitation distribution, and the available moisture for snow and ice from the cooling oceans can be found. Adding this to a small contribution from present-day moisture processes that would be operating at that time, an estimate of the total ice volume for both hemispheres may be calculated. Using the standard ice-covered area assumed for the ice age, an estimate of 1,400 feet may be obtained for the average depth of ice in the Northern Hemisphere. The corresponding estimate for the average depth of ice over Antarctica is 2,300 feet. These values are about one third of the estimates made by glaciation specialists for the maximum thickness of ice-age accumulations. Since many uncertainties are involved in such estimation of nonobservable events, the discrepancy is not necessarily significant.

Taking into account the heating and cooling mechanisms from the heat-budget equation for the oceans, and using modern situations that would apply in the post-Flood, oceans could have cooled in approximately 250 years. This would be the length of time to reach maximum glaciation. Scientific evidence indicates that after the oceans cooled and the volcanic dust cleared considerably, the climate in the Northern Hemisphere would be cooler and drier than it is today. This condition would continue until the ice sheets (except Greenland) melted. Under such circumstances very

little snow or ice accumulation would occur on the ice sheets in winter, and summers would produce rapid melting, especially along the southern edge. Using the mountains of Washington and Oregon as an example, it is possible to estimate that during a period of warm, dry weather the continental glaciers might have melted at the rate of about six feet of thickness per year. At this rate, it would take on the order of 250 years to remove the ice sheets. Therefore, the total time for a post-Flood ice age might be as little as approximately 500 years.

The present-day ice sheets on Greenland and Antarctica can be explained by a 500-year ice age followed by the present climate. The depth of ice at maximum accumulation in a rapid ice age would have large horizontal variability. A thicker ice sheet would be found over those areas nearest to the warm oceans and to the main storm tracks. Greenland and Antarctica would be favored by both. Therefore, most of the present volume of ice would likely be accumulated within 500 years following the global flood. The remainder of ice needed to reach present thicknesses can be accumulated by the present climate. The average precipitation today on Greenland and Antarctica is about 12 inches per year and 6 inches per year, respectively, with large horizontal differences. These ice sheets are now approximately in equilibrium, with the amount of ice and snow gained by precipitation balanced by that lost from icebergs and other processes. However, when the ice sheets were smaller, accumulation would exceed loss. Therefore the present climate over a period of 4,000 years or more is able to produce the present ice thickness, if it was not already attained in a rapid ice age.

The climatic consequences of a global flood have been used to model a post-Flood ice age of possibly only about 500 years' duration. This is but one example of how a universal flood model can be used to explain events and earth structures that under uniformitarian assumptions would require much more time than the Bible allows. We need to keep in mind that there are alternates to certain conclusions proposed within the historical sciences, and that our "faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2:5). ■

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# ASSYRIA'S END

## Contacts between Israel and Assyria during its last century illuminate the Scripture record.

Following Sennacherib's death in 681 B.C., two strong kings, Esarhaddon (681-669 B.C.) and Ashurbanipal (669-626 B.C.), ruled Assyria through most of that century. Then the Assyrian Empire fell into pieces after two decades of chaotic internal politics. This concluding article in the series on Israel and Assyria will deal with several points of contact between the Biblical text and both Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, as well as a brief view of the fall of Nineveh and the subsequent demise of Assyria as a political entity. Thus the relations between the two Hebrew kingdoms and Assyria as they have been discussed in this series of articles are brought down to the time when Assyria is no more.

### Esarhaddon's succession

Both the Bible and an inscription of Esarhaddon refer to his irregular accession to the throne of Assyria. "Then Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went home, and dwelt at Nineveh. And as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, slew him with the sword, and escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead" (2 Kings, 19:36, 37, R.S.V.).\*

The juxtaposition of this verse with the encounter between Hezekiah and Sennacherib (chaps. 18, 19) appears to imply that Sennacherib was assassinated soon after he returned to Nineveh. However, Hezekiah died in 686 B.C. and Sennacherib in 681 B.C., five years or more after the main events of 2 Kings 18 and 19.

Esarhaddon was not the eldest son, yet Sennacherib apparently named him as his successor. Says Esarhaddon's inscription: "I was indeed their youngest brother among my elder brothers, but my own father . . . has chosen me . . . saying: 'This is the son to be elevated to the position of a successor of mine.'"

Sennacherib's older sons assassinated their father in an evident attempt to circumvent Esarhaddon's succession. He tells of his brothers' efforts to take over the kingship but does not say that they killed their father: "Thereupon, my brothers went out of their senses, doing everything that is wicked in the eyes of the gods and mankind, and continued in

by William H. Shea

their evil machinations. They even drew weapons in the midst of Nineveh, which is against the will of the gods, and butted each other—like kids—to take over the kingship."

Esarhaddon's brothers carried out their plot while he was away on a military campaign. Consequently he had to march on Nineveh with his troops when he received word of the assassination. "Ishtar, the lady of battle, who likes me to be her high priest, stood at my side breaking their bows [of the troops of his brothers], scattering their orderly battle array. And then they spoke among themselves: 'This is our king.' Upon her lofty command they went over in masses to me and rallied behind me. . . . The

King Esarhaddon holding two royal captives. (From Zinjirli, in Berlin; ANEP 447.)



people of Assyria who had sworn an oath by the life of the great gods on my behalf, came to meet me and kissed my feet. But they, the usurpers, who had started the rebellion, deserted their most trustworthy troops when they heard the approach of my expeditionary corps, and fled to an unknown country."

### Esarhaddon and Manasseh

The regnal years recorded in 2 Kings for the kings of Judah through the seventh century B.C. total ten years more than the figures indicated by well-fixed dates from Assyria and Babylon. The discrepancy is most reasonably attributed to a coregency between Hezekiah and Manasseh from 696 to 686 B.C. The 55 regnal years attributed to Manasseh in 2 Kings 21:1 began when he was installed as coregent with his father Hezekiah, which means that he ruled until 641 B.C., a period spanning the whole of Esarhaddon's reign in Assyria and more than half the reign of his successor, Ashurbanipal. Hence we should not be surprised to find Manasseh named in the inscriptions of both these kings. Esarhaddon lists him among those kings of the west who had to provide building materials for his palace: "I called up the kings of the country of Hatti [Syro-Palestine in general] on the other side of the [Euphrates] river. . . . Together twenty-two kings of Hatti, the seashore and the islands; all these I sent out and made them transport . . . building materials for my palace." Manasseh, king of Judah, appears in the list of the twenty-two kings.

Assyria had a three-step foreign policy toward the peoples it subjugated: First, they were to pay tribute. As long as they paid, all was well. The army marched through some portion of the empire each year to stimulate such payments and to ensure the loyalty of the political entities in that area. Second, those political entities who did not remain loyal were reconquered. At this stage some rebels would be executed, while others, including hostages from the nobility and royalty, would be deported, and the king would be replaced with a pro-Assyrian ruler. Finally, if a city-state or kingdom persisted in rebellion, its cities would be destroyed and part of its population executed, while the rest would be deported. By uprooting the population

from their land, the Assyrians hoped to quench rebellion. Esarhaddon is mentioned in the Bible (Ezra 4:2) as one of the kings who settled foreign deportees in Samaria.

As noted in a previous article, large numbers were deported from Samaria when it fell, and later from Judah in Sennacherib's time. In Ezra 4:2 we see the reverse process—deported peoples from other countries were brought in to settle the former territory of the northern kingdom of Israel. The Samaritans in the time of Zerubbabel spoke of "Esarhaddon king of Assyria who brought us here."

#### Ashurbanipal and Manasseh

With Assyrian power at its peak and Judah at its weakest, Manasseh became abjectly subservient to Ashurbanipal. When the latter passed through Judah on his way to subjugate Egypt, he demanded contingents of troops from the kings in the west, including Manasseh. "In my first campaign I marched against Egypt and Ethiopia. Tirhakah king of Egypt and Ethiopia . . . forgot the might of Ashur . . . and put his trust in his own power. . . . During my march to Egypt twenty-two kings from the seashore, the islands, and the mainland . . . [the list that follows includes Manasseh of Judah], servants who belong to me, brought heavy gifts to me and kissed my feet. I made these kings accompany my army over the land, as well as over the sea route, with their armed forces and ships."

Ashurbanipal is mentioned in Ezra 4 under the name of Osnappar (certain phonetic shifts between the two languages involved explain this Hebrew form of the name). Ashurbanipal is credited here, like Esarhaddon, with having settled deportees in Samaria—"The Persians, the men of Erech, the Babylonians, the men of Susa, that is, the Elamites, and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Osnappar deported and settled in the cities of Samaria and in the rest of the province Beyond the River" (Ezra 4:9, 10).

An interesting episode in the life of Manasseh that may be related to Ashurbanipal is described in 2 Chronicles 33:11-13: "The commanders of the army of the king of Assyria . . . took Manasseh with hooks and bound him with fetters of bronze and brought him to Babylon. And when he was in distress he entreated the favor of the Lord his God. . . . And God received his entreaty and heard his supplication and brought him again to Jeru-

salem into his kingdom."

This unnamed king of Assyria could have been either Esarhaddon or Ashurbanipal. However, from the mention of Babylon (verse 11) as the place to which Manasseh was taken, and from certain Assyrian and Babylonian texts, we can suggest the following as a reasonable setting for this incident.

Esarhaddon, hoping to avoid another fight between brothers at his death, decreed that one son, Ashurbanipal, should be king of Assyria and another, Shamash-shum-ukin, king of Babylon. He ensured his succession by covenant with some of the subject peoples involved, and the arrangement worked reasonably well for a decade and a half. But war eventually broke out between the brothers, lasting from 652 to 648 B.C. and ending with the defeat of Shamash-shum-ukin at Babylon. The victorious Ashurbanipal could then turn his attention to those vassal kings who had taken the opportunity to rebel or who were suspected of having disloyal tendencies.

Ashurbanipal carrying a basket for rebuilding of Esquila in Babylon. (From Babylon, in British Museum; ANEP 450.)



To bring them to the site of his most recent victory over a powerful enemy and to have them pledge allegiance to Assyria in full view of that conquest would be a deterrent to future rebellion. This situation would provide a logical reason for bringing Manasseh to Babylon, instead of Nineveh, to pledge loyalty to Ashurbanipal.

The return of Manasseh to his throne in Jerusalem is paralleled by a similar experience of Necho I. When Ashurbanipal conquered Egypt in the campaign mentioned above, he reconfirmed the Delta princes as local rulers. When, however, they rebelled after he left, Ashurbanipal's officers in Egypt rounded them up and sent them to Nineveh. The monarch picked Necho alone to return home to Sais, in the western Delta, to be his effective ruler in that area. "Those kings who had repeatedly schemed, they brought alive to me to Nineveh. From all of them I had only mercy upon Necho and granted him life. I made a treaty with him. . . . I sent with him and for his assistance, officers of mine as governors. I returned him to Sais as residence, the place where my own father had appointed him king."

Manasseh has the unenviable reputation of being the worst king ever to sit upon the throne of Judah or of Israel. Some scholars have suggested, in excuse for his apostasy, that the Assyrians to some extent forced their religion upon him. Recent study has indicated, however, that Assyrian foreign policy left subject peoples free to worship their own gods. In that case there is no political excuse for Manasseh's religious apostasy.

#### The fall of Nineveh

Until recently the precise date of Ashurbanipal's death was in doubt. However, Nabonidus' inscriptions at Haran have now pinned down the date to 627/626 B.C. Nabonidus' mother, a priestess of the moon-god Sin who lived to the age of 104, tells in her inscription how many years she lived under each king. This information, correlated with what was already known about Ashurbanipal's reign, pinpointed the date for his death. When he died, Babylonia immediately broke away from Assyria, and Nabopolassar, the father of the famous Nebuchadnezzar, set himself up as its independent ruler. Two more kings ruled Assyria after Ashurbanipal—Ashur-etillu-ili and Sin-shar-ishkun, but their dates, relationships, and the territory they controlled are not clear.

Obviously a quick decline of Assyria had set in, and the end was only a matter of time. In 614 B.C. the Medes attacked Nineveh, only to turn away and conquer the city of Ashur instead. Says Nabopolassar's chronicle: "The Mede . . . encamped against Ashur. He made an attack upon the town. . . . He inflicted a terrible massacre upon the greater part of the people." The final blow fell two years later (612 B.C.) in the joint Medo-Babylonian attack on Nineveh: "[Nabopolassar] the king of Babylon and [Cyaxares] the king of the Medes . . . met each other. They marched along the bank of the river Tigris and . . . against Nineveh . . . they encamped. From the month of Sivan to the month of Ab . . . a strong attack they made upon the city, and in the month of Ab [the city was captured], a great defeat of the chief people was made. The great spoil of the city and temple they carried off and turned the city into a ruin-mound and heaps of debris."

This event was referred to by the Biblical prophet Nahum: "Nineveh is like a pool whose waters run away. 'Halt! Halt!' they cry; but none turns back. Plunder the silver, plunder the gold! There is no end of treasure, or wealth of every precious thing. Desolate! Desolation and ruin!" "Your shepherds are asleep, O king of Assyria; your nobles slumber. Your people are scattered on the mountains with none to gather them. There is no assuaging your hurt, your wound is grievous. All who hear the news of you clap their hands over you. For upon whom has not come your unceasing evil?" (chaps. 2:8-10; 3:18, 19).

### The last vestige

Sin-shar-ishkun, king of Assyria, apparently was killed when Nineveh fell, in 612 B.C., according to a broken passage in Nabopolassar's chronicle. In 610 B.C. the Medes and Babylonians attacked the remaining Assyrians who had retreated to the city of Haran and set up a small "rump" kingdom under Ashur-uballit in the upper Euphrates Valley. The Assyrians retreated across the Euphrates to Carchemish. There, the next year, Pharaoh Necho II of Egypt came to aid Ashuruballit. In an unsuccessful attempt to retake Haran, their combined armies attacked the Babylonian garrison across the river, but it held out until help came from Nabopolassar.

The Babylonian account of Egypt's aid to the Assyrians throws light on the translation of a Bible passage. It was this same year (609 B.C.) in which Josiah of

Judah died trying to intercept Necho at Megiddo (2 Kings 23:29) when the latter was on his way north to aid the Assyrian king. The King James Version renders this verse: "In his [Josiah's] days Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates." The Revised Standard Version, on the other hand, translates it: "In

Upper, chronicle recording the fall of Nineveh (British Museum; Wiseman); lower, chronicle of the years 616-609 B.C. (British Museum; Wiseman).



PLATE II



his [Josiah's] days Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt went up to the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates." The difference lies in the rendering of the preposition involved. Prepositions are difficult to translate; one must select one meaning from a number of possible meanings. The Hebrew preposition here generally means "over, on, upon," or "to, unto." In specific military contexts, such as this passage, it commonly means "against." The K.J.V. translators employed the usual meaning because they had no way of knowing that Necho was going up to Carchemish, not "against" the Assyrian king but "to him" for a joint attack on Babylonian-held Haran. This bit of history has helped clarify the meaning of this Bible verse.

Ashur-uballit and the Assyrians at Carchemish are never heard of again. When the Babylonians attacked Carchemish in 605 B.C., only the Egyptians are mentioned. The Assyrians had disappeared from history. The Babylonians took Carchemish and thus came into possession of all Syria-Palestine. A new colossus now occupied center stage in the ancient Near East, and this was the power with which the kingdom of Judah henceforth had to deal. ■

### Notes

For the inscriptions of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal see *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, edited by J. B. Pritchard (Princeton: Princeton University, 1955).

For the Vassal Treaties of Esarhaddon, which assured the accession of Ashurbanipal and Shammash-shum-ukin to their respective thrones, and for the inscriptions of Nabonidus from Haran, see *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, Supplement, edited by J. B. Pritchard (Princeton: Princeton University, 1969).

For Nabopolassar's Chronicle see D. J. Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldean Kings* (London: British Museum, 1956).

For the chronology of the coregency between Hezekiah and Manasseh see E. R. Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965).

For a denial that there was any pressure upon Manasseh to accept Assyrian religious practices see M. Cogan, *Imperialism and Religion: Assyria, Judah and Israel in the 8th and 7th Centuries B.C.* (Mishola: Scholar's Press, 1974).

For a general history of Assyria including the reigns of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, see H. W. F. Saggs, *The Greatness That Was Babylon* (New York: Hawthorn, 1962).

For a more detailed study of the relations between Judah and Assyria in the seventh century see W. W. Hallo, "From Qarqar to Carchemish," *The Biblical Archaeologist* 23 (1960): 33-61.

\* All texts in this article are quoted from the Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted.

William H. Shea, Ph.D., is an associate professor of Old Testament at Andrews University Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

# **What difference?**

I particularly enjoyed "The Disciples' Prayer" (March, 1980), by James J. C. Cox. I feel, however, that the author, along with many others, has erred by changing "in earth" (Matt. 6:10; Luke 11:2, K.J.V.) to "on earth" (R.S.V.). What difference does it make? There never will be peace on earth until the millennium, but the prayer asks us to pray for God's will to be done in our earthly body as it is in the heavenly bodies. That is, each believer is to let God's will have complete control in his earthly body.

You still have a good magazine and a very interesting one. Because I disagree with you once in a while doesn't mean I don't love you.

Christian minister  
Maine

*We can't agree that the prayer refers to earthly and heavenly bodies. The context seems clearly to indicate geographical location—the earth as opposed to heaven. Therefore we can't see much difference between in or on. However, as noted, disagreement doesn't mean we can't love each other. We love you, too!—The Editors.*

# **God's Word is the cure**

In the March issue you ask the question What do you do when a church gets sick? My answer is that almost all the churches are sick because people do not want to hear the Word of God.

Independent minister  
North Carolina

# **Discover MINISTRY**

I was introduced to your publication by a fellow minister and was impressed with the concept of the magazine. The layout and content are very good. Please include me in your bimonthly gift subscriptions.

Christian minister  
Nebraska

I discovered the November, 1979, MINISTRY while waiting to visit a patient in the hospital. I felt the articles on singles and checking up on one's marriage were both well written and practical. Thank you for the opportunity to receive a number of issues on a bimonthly basis.

Baptist minister  
Michigan

I recently stumbled across your magazine in the library of the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries. I am im-

pressed by the variety and quality of the articles. Your gift subscription offer is exciting, and I look forward to receiving future issues.

Mennonite minister  
Indiana

I thoroughly enjoy MINISTRY and especially like those articles dealing with pastoring, Biblical archeology, and Biblical studies. Thank you for sending it to me.

Christian minister  
Kansas

*Word about MINISTRY seems to be going by word of mouth. Our circulation currently stands at approximately 268,000. As noted at the bottom of page 2, bimonthly subscriptions are still available to those clergy who request them.—The Editors.*

# **Practical interpretation**

The articles on "The Three Angels of the Apocalypse," by J. R. Spangler, beginning March, 1980, are absolutely the best practical interpretation I have read of the book of Revelation. You are doing a great job in MINISTRY. God will bless you richly for making this contribution to the work of extending God's kingdom on earth.

Lutheran minister

# **A long way toward unity**

I feel you are really extending an "outstretched hand," if I may use your own phrase, in MINISTRY. I strongly agree that it is time that clergy of all faiths experience a united faith in the authority of the Holy Scriptures, the deity of our Lord, and the principle of salvation by grace through faith—especially as there appears to be such an increase in apostasy from these points in various denominations. Your fine magazine goes a long way in the right direction.

Freewill Baptist minister  
Arkansas

# **Meeting needs**

Thank you for MINISTRY. It has been a super magazine and certainly seems designed to meet all ministers' needs.

Baptist minister  
Texas

Your articles are provocative and thoughtful—just what this minister needs.

Episcopal minister  
California

# **No deprivation**

Although I have moved, it would be unfortunate to be deprived of your excellent publication. Please change my address.

Christian minister  
Illinois

# **Driving wedges or healing splits?**

I agree that we have much in common in spite of many differences. Doctrine and creed can be argued forever, yet the arguments are not drawing the various churches together in the unity of Christ. Many of us are better at driving wedges than at healing splits. What this says to a world waiting to see how we love one another is nothing less than tragic. Your magazine, and the manner in which you offer it, can heal at least some of our divisions.

United Church of Canada minister  
British Columbia

# **Sounds good**

Your free subscription offer to *Liberty* sounds good. I have received MINISTRY for some time and have found interesting material in it (as well as some I definitely disagree with). Thank you for sending it.

Baptist pastor  
New York

I would be happy to accept your offer of a year's subscription to *Liberty* without charge. I have appreciated the strong defense of separation of church and state made by Seventh-day Adventists. The battle for this, unfortunately, is one that is never over.

Unitarian minister  
New Hampshire

*In our November, 1979, issue we offered our readers a free year's subscription to Liberty (six issues). To date, more than 400 readers have taken us up on our offer, but we still have a limited number of subscriptions available. If you missed our offer the first time, write on your church letterhead, and we'll see that you get on the list. Send your request to: Liberty, Periodical Department, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 6856 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.—Editors.*

# **Well done**

I read MINISTRY from cover to cover and find it well done.

United Methodist minister  
New York

# KEEP GROWING

**“You never stay status quo; you either grow or diminish.” A young mission wife takes to heart the advice of an older friend.**

by LaVerne Beeler

*Dear Shepherdess: As ministers' wives we find that our husbands are being encouraged to read widely. But it is easy for us, overwhelmed by the routine of living, to consider "continuing education" as an option and to give it a "back seat" in our schedule.*

*"In many a home the wife and mother has no time to read, to keep herself well informed, no time to . . . keep in touch with the developing minds of her children. There is no time for the precious Saviour to be a close, dear companion. Little by little she sinks into a mere household drudge. . . . Too late she awakes to find herself almost a stranger in her own home. The precious opportunities once hers to influence her dear ones for the higher life, unimproved, have passed away forever."—The Ministry of Healing, pp. 368, 369.*

*From the various newsletters put out by groups of ministers' wives around the country I've gleaned a number of references to books that will lift you spiritually and broaden your horizons. I'm listing them for you on page 29.*

*Marianette Johnston, writing on this subject to the ministers' wives in her area, says, "You've heard it said, 'Reading maketh a full man.' I'd just like to paraphrase that as 'Reading can help make a fulfilled woman.' As ministers' wives we find our husbands are constantly challenged to wide reading and new studies. With the demands of husband, family, and church, when do we find time to expand our horizons? I believe a well-planned reading and study program can provide the answer."*

*The problem, of course, is how to sandwich into your overcrowded schedule time for Bible study and the other top-priority items that so easily get pushed aside, as well as find time for personal growth. It isn't easy, I'll admit. But if it is important enough to us, we will find some time somehow. In fact, one of the books listed deals with this very question—How Do You Find the Time? La Verne Beeler's article ought to encourage you to grow too.*

*I do hope you'll make a habit of doing really helpful reading. I plan to. With love, Kay.*

*"Look what I found for \$1.25," my husband announced as he came through*

the kitchen door, five tattered volumes in his hands. "You'll love reading them too," he told me. I read the faded title—*History of the Reformation*, by D'Aubigne.

Not those ugly-looking books in our bookcase! I thought. "They will look fine," Charles assured me, "when I cover them with brown paper and print the title on the spine."

And how I did enjoy reading them! As the depression era wore away, so did the wrapping paper on these treasured volumes. Red bindings eventually replaced the old covers. The stories of Martin Luther and other Reformers took their place along with the Bible, *Josephus*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, and other treasured volumes as part of my life. Then there were titles by contemporary authors, and those books necessary for keeping pace in my profession as a teacher. These, along with the journals that came to our home, made up my repertoire of must reading.

When I was young and just awakening to the demands of a parish minister's wife, I spent a memorable afternoon with Evangeline Mattison, who with her husband, Howard, was home on furlough from mission service in India. Our family, with two small daughters, was under mission appointment to the Dominican Republic. Evangeline and I sat looking at Indian saris and art mementos that she and Howard used in telling their experiences. Then we settled back in our chairs for an hour or so of talk.

"You never stay status quo," Evangeline told me. "You either grow or diminish." That was her special message to me—advice I took to heart.

The importance of this advice was



SKIP BAKER PHOTO

later underlined by whispered references that came to my ears regarding the wives of certain political figures in Washington. They were referred to as "the girls they married in their youth." They had not kept pace with their husbands' political and intellectual growth.

Few ministers' wives—or wives of other public figures—deliberately choose the lives they lead. Each wife fell in love with a dreaming youth—little realizing the scope of his dreams. As his dreams matured and he grew in his career, she either grew with him or was left behind.

The early professional years offer priceless opportunities for the minister and his wife to develop acquaintances with community leaders and with persons of different religious beliefs and racial cultures. Even during the full years, with children at home, a minister's wife can become an authority in some field of interest or activity. Perhaps her contribution to her family, church, and community is in demonstrating the art of running a home, expertly combining a job with homemaking, making friends, or being a good conversationalist or superb cook.

To read good books, to appreciate inspirational music and a variety of art forms, to love people and understand different cultures, customs, and geographical backgrounds—these things feed the soul and make a full life. A minister's wife often has greater access to such experiences and materials than others do. She can share these with a wide range of persons and groups through various avenues—book reviews, study groups, children's stories, or talks before parents', women's, or youth groups.

To grow spiritually as well as intellectually, the minister's wife will constantly seek to broaden her horizons. She will learn, with God's help, to rise above self-doubt, hurt feelings, and discouragement. With a praying heart and serving hands, the trend of her life will be so glowing and radiant that it will light up her environment. Keeping pace with her husband, she will be at ease serving by his side.

La Verne Beeler is a minister's wife, mother, and receptionist at the Christian Record Braille Foundation in Lincoln, Nebraska.



## Books for growing

**The Art of Listening With Love**, by Abraham Schmitt, Word Books, Waco, Texas 76703, 1977, \$5.95.

**Communicating Love Through Prayer**, by Rosalind Rinker, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506, 1966, \$1.75.

**The Compleat Marriage**, by Nancy Van Pelt, Southern Publishing Association, Nashville, Tennessee 37202, 1979, \$2.95.

**The Disciplines of the Beautiful Woman**, by Anne Ortlund, Word Books, Waco, Texas 76703, 1977, \$6.95.

**The Fight: A Practical Handbook to Christian Living**, by John White, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois 60516, 1976, \$3.95.

**How Do You Find the Time?** by Patricia King, Women's Aglow Fellowship, Lynwood, Washington 98036, \$3.45.

**How to Be Happy Though Married**, by Tim La Haye, Creation-Life, San Diego, California 92115, \$3.95.

**Knowing God**, by J. I. Packer, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois 60516, \$4.95.

**Lord, Change Me**, by Evelyn Christenson, Victor Books, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, 1977, \$2.25.

**Make Love Your Aim**, by Eugenia Price, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506, 1972, \$1.95.

**Prayer: Conversing With God**, by Rosalind Rinker, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506, \$1.95.

**Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger**, by Ronald Sider, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois 60516, 1977, \$4.95.

**You Can Pray as You Ought**, by Arnold Prater, Thomas Nelson, Inc., Nashville, Tennessee 27203, 1977, \$2.95.

**What Happens When Women Pray?** by Evelyn Christenson and Viola Blake, Victor Books, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, 1975, \$2.25.

**Where Is God When It Hurts?** by Philip Yancey, Osterhus Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55422, \$3.95.

**Why Teen-agers Reject Religion and What to Do About It**, by Roger L. Dudley, Review and Herald Publishing Association, Washington, D.C. 20012, 1977, \$4.50.

## Prayers from the parsonage

by Cherry B. Habenicht

Lord, bless these few faithful workers who volunteer their time to the church's Community Services for the routine jobs of sorting, washing, mending, and packing. Since most of the clothing they process is shipped overseas they do not have the joy of distributing it or of hearing a thank-you for their concern.

Each week they face new piles of donated clothes, toys, or household items. Sometimes they mutter about a careless contribution—unwashed garments, hopeless castoffs—but usually they look

on the bright side. The clothes need mending? At least they are clean. The toys need repair? At least they are good quality.

Bless the willing hands that scrub stains, thread needles, and fold clothes until the label "Gift of the Seventh-day Adventist Churches" can be attached with pride to each object.

You who ordered that fragments be saved must certainly approve the frugality of these workers. Outdated suits are cut apart for usable fabric. Material scraps are snipped for quilt blocks. Brocades and satins are saved for Vacation

Bible School crafts. Recovered blankets make warm bedding. Clean, worn-out hosiery stuffs soft toys. Long before recycling was popular, these workers transformed people's discards into something useful.

Perhaps if each member understood what these individuals accomplish, there would be more help and fewer gifts of garage-sale leftovers. Then perhaps this group could stretch out their hand to the poor and reach forth their hands to the needy, providing *more* than material goods (see Prov. 31:20). What can I do, Lord, to achieve that goal?



# WORLD VIEW

## Khomeini-like

If you want to really insult a person or organization and are tired of the tried and true but also trite and blue (as in old cheese), here's a new pejorative for you: Khomeini-like. Credit the Couple to Couple League, an advocate of natural family planning, which has announced that it has discovered "unfortunate parallels" between the "operating principles" of the Planned Parenthood organization and the Ayatollah Khomeini.

How's that?

Well, it seems that "in his pursuit of happiness [getting the Shah], the Ayatollah reflects the view of the contraceptive birth-control movement that the end justifies the means," explains an official of the Couple to Couple League.

The possibilities for use of the insult in ecclesiastical circles seems endless: "The pastor runs the church by Khomeini-like methods." "The moderator used Khomeini-like tactics to get elected."

One must wonder, however, whether use of such a descriptive is really Christlike. Now, *there's* a word that hasn't suffered from overuse in the church. Imagine hearing, "The pastor really runs the church in a Christlike manner." "The school board settled its dispute in a most Christlike way." An old term, to be sure, but hardly trite. It just hasn't been used that much.

## Gook lovers

Parishioners of Grace Episcopal church in Hulmeville, Pennsylvania, have a new name: "gook lovers." Members of the 250-member congregation got the name by offering to provide a new home in the area for Vietnamese refugees. Members had already rented and furnished an apartment in the nearby blue-collar community of Penndel, and were awaiting the arrival of their Vietnamese "family"—two brothers and their female cousin. However, just before Christmas, church board members and residents near the rented apartment began receiving anonymous phone calls warning of trouble if the Vietnamese came.

"We're gonna get those gooks when they get here. And we're gonna get those gook lovers for letting them come in here," one church member recalls being told.

Richard C. Ditterline, rector of the church, halted plans to resettle the refugees when the threatening calls per-

by Roland R. Hegstad

sisted. Explained a church member: "We couldn't put these people in the position of having risked their lives and come halfway around the world to get here, and then place them in a situation where their lives might be in danger all over again."

It was a wise decision. But the church has gained a name it should wear with honor: gook lovers. Carve it on the communion table. Put it in the advertisement for church services. Let it be known that here are disciples who walk in the steps of One who ate with publicans and sinners, fellowshipped with Samaritans, and died between two thieves. For His "offenses" He, too, was called His day's equivalent of gook lover. But in so doing He was fulfilling the mission given Him by the Father: to go and to love a whole world of gooks. And to tell them that the Father, too, is a gook lover. To the Grace Episcopal church members, from one gook lover to another: Thanks.

## Coalition supports religious amendment

Would you believe that such evils as drugs, crimes, the holding of Americans hostage in Iran, and the invasion of Afghanistan all can be traced to "expelling God from the classroom"? That's the view of an ad hoc coalition of evangelicals pledged to renew the fight for prayer in public schools.

The group, called the Coalition for the First Amendment, announced its organization and purpose during the 1980 meeting of the National Association of Religious Broadcasters in Washington, D.C.

Already adopted by the Senate is a measure, introduced by Senator Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), that would remove the issue from jurisdiction of the courts. The coalition urged radio and television broadcasters to support a discharge petition to get a similar measure out of the House Judiciary Committee and onto the House floor. Members of the coalition include television evangelists Jerry Falwell, of the Old-time Gospel Hour; Pat Robertson, of the 700 Club; Jim Bakker, of the PTL Club; and Bili Bright, of Campus Crusade for Christ. The television evangelists, whose yearly contributions exceed \$150 million, are also supporting the Christian Voice (see *MINISTRY*, December, 1979, p. 4) in its

attempt to create a "Christian republic." Bright was the founder of the Christian Embassy, which also promoted a religious amendment to the Constitution.

Support of the ad hoc coalition by Southern Baptist president Adrian Rogers brought an expression of dismay from Baptist Joint Committee executive director James E. Wood, Jr. The SBC president, said Wood, has "completely repudiated the official resolutions of the Southern Baptist Convention."

The SBC adopted resolutions supporting the Supreme Court decisions against enforced Bible reading and prayer in its 1964 and 1971 sessions.

Said Wood, who has announced his resignation and subsequent return to the faculty of Baylor University in Waco, Texas: "Dr. Rogers did not consult with anyone on our staff about the serious First Amendment questions raised by the position of the coalition." Wood added that Rogers' stance "in fact runs precisely contrary to that taken repeatedly through the years by the Southern Baptist Convention, the Baptist Joint Committee, and its other member bodies."

Wood promised that the Baptist Joint Committee would continue "a vigorous fight" against "all attempts to undermine the First Amendment's ban on establishment of religion by the state."

## Hot potato or rehash

Shorn of faith in the Resurrection, increasing numbers of Christians and Jews are turning to reincarnation, says Pascal Kaplan, a specialist in parapsychology and mysticism.

According to Kaplan, reincarnation will become a "hot potato" in mainline Christianity and Judaism within ten years.

Dr. Kaplan, 33, is founder-director of the Institute of Mystical and Parapsychological Studies at John F. Kennedy University in Orinda, California.

Whatever the future of reincarnation, not many Christians and Jews can be expected to agree with Kaplan that reincarnation was "part of Orthodox Christian teaching until 553, the Second Council of Constantinople," or that "reincarnation has been part of the Jewish tradition for at least 2,000 years."

Kaplan should be sentenced to twenty minutes of Bible study. It shouldn't take longer than that to define the distinction between resurrection and reincarnation, and to find that the Bible gives no credence to the latter.

# SHOP TALK

## CPE positions open

Four positions in a twelve-month residency in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) are presently open at Kettering Medical Center, Kettering, Ohio.

The program is directed toward those who wish to improve their pastoral care and counseling skills for the parish ministry or to work toward certification as a hospital chaplain. The training is designed to build on an individual's Seminary training and ministerial experience. The program begins the first of September each year. Early application is important. Stipends up to \$10,000 are available.

The Medical Center also offers basic, advanced, and supervisory CPE in eleven-week quarters. Kettering has been accredited as a training center by the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education for eleven years.

Respond to Chaplain Darrell Nicola, Kettering Medical Center, 3535 Southern Boulevard, Kettering, Ohio 45429, or call (513) 296-7240.

## Please note

MINISTRY has received word of computer problems in the mailing of certain *New International Version* Bibles from Zondervan that were ordered through our special arrangement with the publisher. Please report any irregularities in your order to us; we have maintained lists of original orders and will help you receive the proper shipment.

If you have not yet received the Bible you ordered, it doesn't mean that your order has gone astray. Please allow at least four to six weeks for shipment after placing your order.

## Affirming marriage

With marriage and the home under attack from many quarters, why not place appropriate emphasis on the beauty, sanctity, and stability of Christian marriage? We do this through a beautiful and inspiring service in which each participating couple reaffirms their vows to each other. On one occasion two dozen couples took part, representing nearly 500 years of married life!

For several weeks prior to this special service, usually scheduled in early June, a committee collects the names and wedding dates of each couple planning to attend. A member skilled in calligraphy produces a personalized, hand-lettered certificate, which is framed for presentation.

On the day of the service

the couples assemble outside the sanctuary. Each "bride" receives a sweetheart rose; each "groom" a boutonniere. As the organist plays the "Wedding March" the couples come down the aisle and stand before the altar to join in the "Ritual of Reaffirmation" (an appropriate revision of the vows of marriage).

Following the ceremony, the couples are seated in reserved sections at the front of the sanctuary. The music and sermon focus on Christian marriage and the home. A reception hour (with a cake, of course) completes the occasion.

Several couples have commented, "Pastor, this was the beautiful church wedding we never had!"—William Poteet, Melrose, Massachusetts.

## Your turn

Have you thought of a good, new idea that makes your ministry more effective? Have you run across a new product, a shortcut, a better way of doing something? Would your fellow pastors be interested in it? Give us the chance to print it in "Shop Talk" and make yourself \$10! For each idea or helpful hint printed in this column, MINISTRY will pay \$10 to the person who first sends us the item. Keep your contribution short (no more than 250 words) and mail to Shop Talk Editor, MINISTRY, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.

In the event of duplicate items being submitted, the one bearing the earliest postmark will be given precedence.

## Sermon evaluation

A pastor of my acquaintance makes available to his congregations cards on which they can evaluate his sermon and jot down items that seem worth remembering. This card has a space for the date, the Scripture reference, and the sermon title. A major portion is reserved for two items—important truths the individual gleans from the sermon, and a statement of how the Holy Spirit used the message to speak to his or her life. The card could even be expanded to include a rating of the sermon and suggestions for improvement or topics for future sermons.

One caution: the preacher who uses this card had better be one who has something to say, rather than a mere pulpit pounder!—Fred W. Gibson, Kansas City, Missouri.

## Seminars for May

MINISTRY magazine professional-growth seminars continue to meet, with much excitement among clergy of all faiths. If you have not yet found one close enough to make attendance possible, try the following list! Clergy in the locale of the seminar should receive an invitation in the mail, but just in case you miss getting yours, we are listing upcoming seminars by city, together with a local telephone contact for early registration or additional information. Remember, each seminar is absolutely without cost to you.

May 5

Madison, Wisconsin  
Wesley Jaster  
(608) 241-5235

May 6

Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Wesley Jaster  
(608) 241-5235

May 7

Green Bay, Wisconsin  
Wesley Jaster  
(608) 241-5235

May 8

Chicago, Illinois  
Leon Cox  
(312) 224-7700

May 19

Detroit, Michigan  
Myron Voegelé  
(517) 485-2226

May 20

Battle Creek, Michigan  
Myron Voegelé  
(517) 485-2226

May 22

Benton Harbor, Michigan  
Myron Voegelé  
(517) 485-2226

May 29

Casper, Wyoming  
Ben J. Liebelt  
(307) 237-2503

# RECOMMENDED READING

## PAUL: APOSTLE OF THE HEART SET FREE

F. F. Bruce, *Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979, 491 pages, \$13.95.*

Out of a lifetime of study, F. F. Bruce has produced yet another book, this time embracing all of Paul's life and thought in a single volume. The primary concern of the book, to be sure, is to portray the life and times of the apostle, thus providing a historical context for a better understanding of his teaching. Still, Paul's theology, as set forth in his letters, is also carefully examined. Among the subjects Bruce discusses are Christ, the Mosaic law, the flesh and the spirit, the church, baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the gospel according to Paul.

It is evident throughout the volume that Bruce, who is Rylands professor of Biblical criticism and exegesis at the University of Manchester, England, views the essence of Paul's life and thought as based on the apostle's appreciation of his new-found freedom in Christ—hence the title *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (U.S.A.), or *Paul: Apostle of the Free Spirit* (England). Professor Bruce has woven the results of years of New Testament study into a volume extensively footnoted, yet written in a nontechnical style that makes it readily accessible to the general reader.

Raoul Dederen

## MAKING THE MOST OF FAMILY LIVING

Elden and Esther Chalmers, *Pacific Press, Mountain View, California, 1979, 173 pages, \$4.95.*

What the title indicates is what the book delivers. It speaks to every member of

the family with sound principles for family enrichment, many of which are largely ignored in other family-help books. The Chalmers take up such practical subjects as "What Makes You Tick?" "How You Can Become Different," "How to Prevent or Solve Problems," "Family Feuds and Fantasies." Separate chapters discuss "The Developing Child," "The Challenging Adolescent," and "The Older Generation." Up-to-date methods of psychology are employed in harmony with Christian principles.

Dr. Chalmers is professor of pastoral care at Andrews University. He combines a background of pastoral ministry with a degree in psychology. Mrs. Chalmers has been a schoolteacher. As a team they devote much time to giving seminars on marriage and family life.

Orley Berg

## GOD, REVELATION AND AUTHORITY

Volumes III and IV  
Carl F. H. Henry, *Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1979, 536 and 674 pages, respectively, \$24.95 each.*

The original projection of *God, Revelation and Authority* envisioned four volumes, the last of these to concentrate specifically on the doctrine of God. However, the exposition on divine revelation, begun in Volume II, has required more space than anticipated and extends through Volumes III and IV. Few, I am sure, will complain.

Volume III deals with the incarnation and Jesus as God's personal revelation; Jesus as the Lord, the Word or spoken revelation of God; and revelation as rational-verbal

communication. Volume IV covers the Bible as the authoritative norm and more particularly the ministries of the Holy Spirit and of the church in the proclamation of God's revelation.

As in his previous volumes, the former editor of *Christianity Today* not only analyzes the Biblical position but also takes on certain modern reductions of Biblical authority, including those of K. Barth, E. Brunner, R. Bultmann, C. H. Dodd, P. Tillich, and Schubert Ogden. He also deals with evangelical views that he feels do less than justice to the Biblical teaching. Henry, while rejecting any form of inspiration as the product of mechanical divine dictation, holds firmly to the inerrancy of the Biblical autographs.

The writing is brilliant, though at times lengthy; Henry's knowledge of theology, both historical and contemporary, is astounding. The whole series will certainly prove to be a very valuable collection of source books.

Raoul Dederen

## THE LITERATURE OF THEOLOGY: A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS AND PASTORS

John A. Bollier, *The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, Pa., 1979, 208 pages, \$5.95.*

Priests and ministers need help in finding the books, the journal articles, and the information they need in the pursuit of their professional ministry. The vast amount of material that keeps pouring from the press each year is simply bewildering without standards for judging and selecting topics and titles. *The Literature of Theology* intends to offer such guidelines.

This volume, prepared by one of the librarians of the

Yale Divinity School, lists more than 540 reference tools, such as bibliographies, encyclopedias, dictionaries, indexes, abstracts, handbooks, guides, manuals, catalogs, and commentaries that provide the information or literature citations for just about any subject. Brief descriptive statements are given in most instances to help the reader determine whether to consult a particular volume for the need at hand.

Obviously this is a selective bibliography. But a pastor for eighteen years, Bollier, has chosen those works that he regards as most helpful to the theological student and the parish minister. This guide to the literature of theology will most certainly be a valuable time saver for those engaged in academic study or the practice of ministry.

Raoul Dederen

## MINISTRY

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