

October 12, 1961

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

REVIEW

and Herald

★ Readings for the

WEEK OF PRAYER

November 11-18

Heavenly Fire

By Thais Cole

Do not put out this fire;
There burns a holy flame—
A spark ignited at one throne,
Rekindled by one Name.

On fire for Christ are we,
Reflecting Heaven's grace;
For glow we must, if we have seen
The radiance of His face.



Holy Bible

PHOTO, EWING GALLOWAY

Week of Prayer Appeal

THESE are strenuous days. The whole world is in agitation. Great changes are rapidly developing. Events are shaping up that indicate that we are about to enter "the narrows." Soon God's people will be faced with the last great trial of their faith. We have been told that trouble is usually greater in anticipation than it is in realization, but that this is not true concerning the ordeal through which the people of God are to pass. Moreover, we have been warned, in this connection, that we will need an experience with God that many do not now possess.

How thankful we should be for this, another Week of Prayer. As trouble stirs in practically every land of earth, we know that thousands of Seventh-day Adventists are sensing a great need and are earnestly longing for an experience that will enable them to face the future with confidence. May this Week of Prayer serve its Heaven-designed purpose for our people around the world.

Some of our earnest members have expressed concern that the Week of Prayer in certain places is not being faithfully observed, and that the articles that have been prepared for the Week of Prayer are not used in the church service. We are certain that this neglect is not general, but it will not be out of place to re-emphasize the good old Adventist custom of faithful observance of the Week of Prayer, and to appeal to all our pastors and church elders to gather the believers together in our churches wherever possible for the presentation of the readings that have been prepared for the occasion, and to unite in earnest seeking after God.

Further, we appeal to every Seventh-day Adventist to take part in this Week of Prayer for 1961. Let the isolated and infirm observe the week in their homes with their families, or in the privacy of their own rooms. Those who are able should, of course, endeavor to meet with fellow believers in the church or in cottage meetings. Give careful heed to the messages presented in the Week of Prayer readings. Pray for God's people around the world. Especially remember those who are enduring hardship and persecution because of their loyalty to the faith. Pray for personal victory over sin. Pray for a revival of primitive godliness. Pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain.

Pray too for the continued restraining hand of God over the affairs of men, and that as the angels hold back the winds of strife, we may be aroused to finish the work of the Lord in the earth. "Now is the time to lay hold of the arm of our strength. The prayer of David should be the prayer of pastors and laymen: 'It is time for Thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void Thy law.' Let the servants of the Lord weep between the porch and the altar, crying, 'Spare Thy people, O Lord, and give not Thine heritage to reproach.'"—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 452.

GENERAL CONFERENCE OFFICERS

Introducing the Writers . . .

SABBATH, November 11—For nearly three quarters of a century *Ellen G. White* bore messages of counsel, reproof, admonition, and encouragement to the remnant people. Her voice is now still, but the words God gave her to speak live on to guide us on our heavenward way.

SUNDAY, November 12—From his station on the flight deck of the Advent Movement, *W. R. Beach*, secretary of the General Conference, gives reports on the onward progress of the gospel in all the world.

MONDAY, November 13—*Alvin E. Cook*, successful Australian evangelist who has recently been conducting a series of major evangelistic campaigns in the South African Union, discusses the process of Christian growth.

TUESDAY, November 14—The relation of good health to good religion is the subject *R. E. Finney, Jr.*, deals with in the read-

ing for Tuesday. Elder Finney is president of the Wisconsin Conference.

WEDNESDAY, November 15—It is appropriate that the one who writes about God's great family around the world should be *Toshio Yamagata*, president of our Japan Missionary College.

THURSDAY, November 16—As house editor of the Sentinel Publishing Company, our press serving South Africa, *Bernard E. Seton* is well versed in world conditions that herald the soon coming of Christ.

FRIDAY, November 17—*J. R. Nelson* is associate secretary of the Young People's Missionary Volunteer Department of the General Conference. "Youth and Finishing the Work" is the great objective of his life and labor.

SABBATH, November 18—As leader of the great Advent family around the world, *R. R. Figuhr* closes the Week of Prayer with a solemn appeal to the church to be ready for the coming of the Lord.

The Children's Lessons for this Week of Prayer have been prepared by Lawrence Maxwell, editor of the *Junior Guide*, weekly publication for Adventist junior-age young people.

The Privilege of Prayer

"Through nature and revelation, through His providence, and by the influence of His Spirit, God speaks to us. But these are not enough; we need also to pour out our hearts to Him. In order to have spiritual life and energy, we must have actual intercourse with our heavenly Father. Our minds may be drawn out toward Him; we may meditate upon His works, His mercies, His blessings; but this is not, in the fullest sense, communing with Him. In order to commune with God, we must have something to say to Him concerning our actual life.

"Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary, in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 93.

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REVIEW AND HERALD, October 12, 1961

Preparing for Heaven*

By ELLEN G. WHITE

AND he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel." Zech. 3:1-3.

Here we find a representation of the people of God of to-day. As Joshua stood before the angel, "clothed with filthy garments," so we stand in the presence of Christ, clothed in garments of unrighteousness. Christ, the Angel before whom Joshua stood, is now interceding for us before His Father, as He is here represented as interceding for Joshua and his people who were in deep affliction; and Satan now, as then, stands by to resist His efforts.

Ever since his fall, it has been the work of Satan to oppose Christ's efforts to redeem the race. In the Bible he is called an accuser of the brethren. It is said that he accuses them before God day and night. Pointing to their sins, as he did to the filthy garments of Joshua, he says: "They profess to be Thy children; but they do not obey Thee. See the traces of sin upon them. They are my property."

This is the argument that he employs concerning God's people in all ages. He pleads their sinfulness as the reason why Christ's restraining power should not hold him back from exercising his cruelty upon them to its fullest extent. But to the accuser of His people the Saviour says, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; . . . is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Have I not thrust my own hand into the fire to gather this brand from the burning?"

So long as the people of God preserve their fidelity to Him, so long as they cling by living faith to Jesus, they are under the protection of heavenly angels, and Satan will not be permitted to exercise his hellish arts upon them to their destruction. But those who separate themselves from Christ by sin are in great peril. If they continue to disregard the requirements of God, they know not how soon He may give them over to

Satan, and permit him to do to them according to his will. There is, therefore, the greatest necessity of keeping the soul free from defilement, and the eye single to the glory of God; of thinking soberly and watching unto prayer continually.

On Constant Guard

Satan is now more earnestly engaged in playing the game of life for souls than at any previous time; and unless we are constantly on our guard, he will establish in our hearts, pride, love of self, love of the world, and many other evil traits. He will also use every possible device to unsettle our faith in God and in the truths of His Word. If we have not a deep experience in the things of God, if we have not a thorough knowledge of His Word, we shall be beguiled to our ruin by the errors and sophistries of the enemy. False doctrines will sap the foundations of many, because they have not learned to discern truth from error. Our only safeguard against the wiles of Satan is to study the Scriptures diligently, to have an intelligent understanding of the reasons of our faith, and faithfully to

perform every known duty. The indulgence of one known sin will cause weakness and darkness, and subject us to fierce temptation.

Joshua is represented as pleading with the Angel. Are we engaged in the same work? Are our supplications ascending to God in living faith? Are we opening the door of the heart to Jesus, and closing every means of entrance to Satan? Are we daily obtaining clearer light, and greater strength, that we may stand in Christ's righteousness? Are we emptying our hearts of all selfishness, and cleansing them, preparatory to receiving the latter rain from heaven?

Now is the time when we are to confess and forsake our sins, that they may go beforehand to judgment and be blotted out. Now is the time to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." It is dangerous to delay this work. Satan is even now seeking by disasters upon sea and land to seal the fate of as many as possible. What is the defense of the people of God at this time?—It is a living connection with heaven. If we would dwell in safety from the noisome pestilence, if we would be preserved from dangers seen and unseen, we must hide in God; we must secure the protecting care of Jesus and holy angels. In these days of peril, the Lord would have us walk before Him in humility. Instead of trying to cover our sins, He would have us confess them, as Joshua confessed the sins of ancient Israel. We profess to be the depositaries of God's law. We profess to be building up "the old waste places," and to be raising up "the foundations of many generations." If this great and solemn work has indeed been committed to us, how important that we depart from all iniquity!

The third angel's message is to lighten the earth with its glory; but only those who have withstood temptation in the strength of the Mighty One will be permitted to act a part in proclaiming it when it shall have swelled into the loud cry.

The Gift of Christ's Righteousness

As the intercession of Joshua was accepted, the command was given to those that stood by, "Take away the filthy garments from him." And unto Joshua

READINGS

for the

WEEK OF PRAYER

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To Be Read in All Our Churches

NOVEMBER 11 to 18

1961



* A reprint of the Week of Prayer reading for December 12, 1908.

the Angel said, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. . . . So they set a fair miter upon his head, and clothed him with garments." Even so will all those who come to Jesus in penitence and faith receive the robe of Christ's righteousness.

As we approach the perils of the last days the temptations of the enemy become stronger and more determined. Satan has come down in great power, knowing that his time is short; and he is working "with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish." The warning comes to us through God's Word that, if it were possible, he would deceive the very elect.

Wonderful events are soon to open before the world. The end of all things is at hand. The time of trouble is about to come upon the people of God. Then it is that the decree will go forth forbidding those who keep the Sabbath of the Lord to buy or sell, and threatening them with punishment, and even death, if they do not observe the first day of the week as the Sabbath.

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." By this we see the importance of having our names written in the book of life. All whose names are registered there will be delivered from Satan's power, and Christ will command that their filthy garments be removed, and that they be clothed with His righteousness. "And they shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

In the time of trouble, Satan stirs up the wicked, and they encircle the people of God to destroy them. But he does not know that "pardon" has been written opposite their names in the books of heaven. He does not know that the command has been given, "Take away the filthy garments" from them, clothe them with "change of raiment," and set "a fair miter" upon their heads.

If we could only see the many dangers from which we are daily preserved by the holy angels, instead of complaining of our trials and misfortunes, we would talk continually of the mercies of God. How precious in the sight of God are His people!

The exhortation of the prophet is, "Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you." "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek right-

eousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger."

Meekness and Lowliness of Mind

In view of what is soon to come upon the earth, I entreat you, brethren and sisters, to walk before God in all meekness and lowliness of mind, remembering the care that Jesus has for you. All the meek of the earth are exhorted to seek Him. Those who have wrought His judgments are to seek Him. Let self break in pieces before God. It is hard to do this; but we are warned to fall upon the Rock and be broken, else it will fall upon us, and grind us to powder. It is to the humble in heart that Jesus speaks; His everlasting arms encircle them, and He will not leave them to perish by the hands of the wicked.

What is it to be a Christian?—It is to be Christlike; it is to do the works of Christ. Some fail on one point, some on another. Some are naturally impatient. Satan understands their weakness, and manages to overcome them again and again. But let none be discouraged by this. Whenever little annoyances and trials arise, ask God in silent prayer to give you strength and grace to bear them

Help Us, Lord

By Myrtle Leora Nelson

Like a lighted candle
In a dreary place,
May our lives be lighted
By Thy matchless grace.

Many fear the future,
Groping for the Way;
May they find Thy guidepost
In our lives today.

patiently. There is a power in silence; do not speak a word until you have sent up your petition to the God of heaven. If you will always do this, you will soon overcome your hasty temper, and you will have a little heaven here to go to heaven in.

God wants His people to cleanse their hands and purify their hearts. Will it make them unhappy to do this? Will it bring unhappiness into their families if they are kind and patient, courteous and forbearing?—Far from it. The kindness they manifest toward their families will be reflected upon themselves. This is the work that should be carried forward in the home. If the members of a family are not prepared to dwell in peace here, they are not prepared to dwell in the family that shall gather around the great

white throne. Sin always brings darkness and bondage; but right-doing will bring peace and holy joy.

The work of overcoming is a great work. Shall we take hold of it with energy and perseverance? Unless we do, our "filthy garments" will not be taken from us. We need never expect that these will be torn from us violently; we must first show a desire to rid ourselves of them. We must seek to separate sin from us, relying upon the merits of the blood of Christ; and then in the day of affliction, when the enemy presses us, we shall walk among the angels. They will be like a wall of fire about us; and we shall one day walk with them in the city of God.

When tempted to sin, let us remember that Jesus is pleading for us in the heavenly sanctuary. When we put away our sins and come to Him in faith, He takes our names on His lips, and presents them to His Father, saying, "I have graven them upon the palms of My hands; I know them by name." And the command goes forth to the angels to protect them. Then in the day of fierce trial He will say, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." What are the chambers in which they are to hide?—They are the protection of Christ and holy angels. The people of God are not at this time all in one place. They are in different companies, and in all parts of the earth; and they will be tried singly, not in groups. Every one must stand the test for himself.

There has never been a time when the people of God have had greater need to claim His promises than now. Let the hand of faith pass through the darkness, and grasp the arm of infinite power. While we speak of the necessity of separating from sin, remember that Christ came to our world to save sinners, and that "he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." It is our privilege to believe that His blood is able to cleanse us from every spot and stain of sin. We must not limit the power of the Holy One of Israel. He wants us to come to Him just as we are, sinful and polluted. His blood is efficacious. I entreat you not to grieve His Spirit by continuing in sin. If you fall under temptation, do not become discouraged. This promise comes ringing down along the line to our time: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." I feel that for this one promise a continual song of thanksgiving ought to go forth from the lips of mortals. Let us gather up these precious jewels of promise, and when Satan accuses us of our great sinfulness, and tempts us to doubt the power of God to save, let us repeat the words of Christ, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

(Reading, Sunday, November 12, 1961)

Into All the World

By W. R. BEACH

THE Advent Movement came upon the scene of action as a direct response to the call of prophecy. At the appointed time the last messages of God were understood and the concluding phase of the gospel program began to move into focus. The church of the remnant started its march into all lands.

The achievements of the past 87 years afford unmistakable evidence of God's leading and blessing. Our faithful members make available through the General Conference budgets approximately \$29 million yearly. This, of course, is only a fraction of the total funds provided locally and regionally throughout the world, in church and institutional endeavors. And the glorious thought is that these activities have resulted in souls saved for the kingdom of God and a regular growth in membership.

However, it was not until 1925, after 62 years of arduous labor, that the baptized membership of the Advent Movement reached 250,988. In 1940 (15 years later), the membership stood at 504,752. It took only ten years to add the third quarter million members, for in 1950 the figure was 756,712. At the end of 1955 our membership was 1,006,218. Today it stands above 1,250,000.

The Challenge of Latin America

Daily reports from the world field indicate that this rhythm of progress is being maintained with unabated vigor in many areas of earth. Typical is the great Inter-American Division.

"About a quarter of a century ago," writes A. H. Roth, president of the Inter-American Division, "I heard E. E. Andross, the president of that field, which was organized in 1922, report that the church membership in and around the Caribbean Sea had reached 28,132. Baptisms in Inter-America in that year of 1935 totaled 3,365. Our hearts thrilled and rejoiced over that fine report. Today we have the privilege of seeing in one year four times the number of baptisms of 1935. For some years the Inter-American Division has had a goal of 1,000 baptisms per month. This goal has now been reached, and our new goal is 1,800 per month! Weekly more than 190,000 people attend Inter-American Sabbath schools."

To enhance further this progress, the leadership in Inter-America is busily at

work training 30,000 lay preachers to join the fine army of ministers and denominationally employed workers in prosecuting the task.

From the lands to the south of the Caribbean, J. J. Aitken, president of the South American Division, reports on the achievements and aspirations of that great field. "We thank God," he writes, "that the South American Division has now reached a membership of 105,000. That in the space of 44 years this great advance has been achieved is a modern miracle. Workers and laymen have marched together in evangelistic advance. This year approximately 5,000 lay efforts are in progress. Our program of integrated evangelism bids fair to bring yet greater victories."

Then Elder Aitken turns to the great challenge of South America and states:

"We must push back the frontiers of God's work across our great cities and jungles. A successful evangelistic campaign in Punta Arenas has resulted in more than 50 baptisms and the establishment of a strong church. But there remains so much unoccupied territory. We need more launches to reach the most important centers along the Amazon. Vast regions of Argentina have not been entered—to the north and on south to the frigid windswept mountains of Tierra del Fuego. We must enter these open doors of opportunity. In so doing tens of thousands of precious souls will be gathered quickly for the kingdom of God."

Rapid Advance in the Far East

Reporting to us from the Far Eastern Division, Chris P. Sorensen, president, paints a graphic picture of advance. In one year the baptisms totaled more than 10 per cent of the membership in the division at the beginning of the year. This growth taxes every resource to provide for the needs of schools, printed matter, church housing, and pastoral care. Illustrative of what Brother Sorensen has in mind is the situation in the Philippines and Korea: "In recent years baptisms have averaged more than 2,000 in the North Philippine Union alone. This year there is an increase for six months of more than 2,000, due perhaps to the opening of the Manila evangelistic center. It took ten years to achieve this project. What a joy was ours when

at the first baptismal service 104 were baptized into church fellowship."

A few short years ago Korea had an average of 500 baptisms yearly. In 1958 the number rose to more than 1,100. Then last year baptisms numbered 2,200 or approximately 25 per cent of the church membership at the start of the year. At the July reaping more than 1,100 were baptized in one day. Since early 1958, 96 church buildings have been erected or enlarged in Korea. Despite this building program, many churches are finding it necessary to have as many as five or six services, including Sabbath school, each Sabbath in order to accommodate the members.

Rich Fruitage in Australasia

The start made in Australia in 1885 has brought marvelous fruitage in the Pacific area. The work in the Far East first developed from the Australasian home base. The Australasian Division remains today a strong support for the world mission church. Workers go out from Australia and New Zealand to all parts of the world. Last year 77 workers accepted appointments overseas. Reporting for Australasia, F. G. Clifford, president, writes:

"During the last few years we have placed greater emphasis upon evangelism. One year we set aside approximately \$22,000 in support of conference organizations that would give young workers a first opportunity to conduct an evangelistic campaign. Then, some large city campaigns were organized. In Melbourne, for instance, more than 100 have been baptized into church membership."

"We never have had such a building program as that in Australia today. On every side our churches are being enlarged or renewed. We are building a new wing on the Warburton Sanitarium. A new three-story service block has been erected at the Sydney Sanitarium. At Avondale, our senior college, a new administration, classroom and library block has been built. Additions have been made at the Signs Publishing House and elsewhere. In a two-year period two modern health-food factories have been erected. We now operate 12 such factories, 20 warehouses, and 30 retail stores. A portion of the earnings from our health-food work is contributed to the

general church program and makes up a little less than one third of the entire division budget."

In Southern Asia

O. O. Mattison, president of the Southern Asia Division, reports on the work in that great field where 1,300 loyal national workers and 165 overseas families and workers witness consistently and effectively for God's truth. He writes:

"Today more than 23,000 members are rejoicing in church fellowship and 32,000 attend Sabbath school. The Voice of Prophecy operates 18 Bible schools in 15 languages, and lessons are sent out by the millions. Through public evangelism and the work of laymen we have been able to enter the countries of Sikkim and Bhutan, bordering Tibet. Back in the far reaches of the Himalayas, seekers after truth have come under the influence of the printed page and the Voice of Prophecy lessons. Through evangelism our work has been opened up in the Shan States in northern Burma and in Kashmir.

"Our first national graduates from Vellore Christian Medical College have now joined our forces. Twenty students are still in training. We expect great things from them. Our educational work is keeping step with every other phase of God's cause. . . . The circle of influence exercised by our medical work expands constantly."

Europe and Its Mission Fields

From every field, institution, and department in our European divisions come reports of heartening advance. This is evident in a statement from W. Mueller, president of the Central European Division.

Reporting for Northern Europe, A. F. Tarr, the president, says:

"Our last year's baptisms totaled 5,973. New church buildings have been erected in many places. Our members are giving most generously toward the world work. In many places churches rejoice in the realization of their long-cherished desire to have a place of worship. In Ethiopia a Seventh-day Adventist church now stands on the site of a former Moslem mosque.

"Twelve years ago a young man attended one of our mission schools in Ethiopia for a period of six months. Then he left and nothing more was heard of him until recently when he sent for a worker to come to his aid as he worked with his neighbors and friends. More than 100 interested people gathered in their recently constructed church to greet our worker. Another student of the school gathered 40 into a chapel he had built atop a hill. Such witnessing has opened a great door of opportunity and expansion in Ethiopia. It certainly will do likewise everywhere."

The Southern European Division has now reached a baptized membership of some 110,000. The Sabbath school attendance weekly is 157,000. Such is the over-all report of M. Fridlin, president of the division, who adds:

"Evangelism will remain the first concern of our division. New evangelistic centers have been opened in many parts of the division. Close to the Waterloo battlefield, victory has crowned the efforts of God's people in the construction of an evangelistic center.

"Italy has been awakened to evangelism through the fruitful evangelistic campaign conducted by Elder Walter Schubert, of the General Conference Ministerial Association, . . . at Milan and Turin. More than 65 people have been baptized.

"At Piazza Armerina, central Sicily, public lectures were held in our little rented hall with a seating capacity of about 50. The interest developed to a point where three meetings had to be held daily with a packed hall each time. Thanks to the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering overflow, a larger hall was purchased. After three years this one also has become too small. We now have more than 100 members and a host of children as well as interested friends. A piece of ground has been purchased and the Italian Union is looking forward to building an evangelistic center at Piazza Armerina."

Elder Fridlin adds this encouraging note also regarding the 1960 youth congress held in Zurich, Switzerland:

"Approximately 2,500 young people participated in this congress, principally from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. Evangelistic lectures for nonbaptized youth were held daily, and on Sabbath, at the close of the eleven o'clock service, 324 youth gave their hearts to the Lord and are now getting ready for baptism. The following day after another appeal approximately 150 boys and girls came forward signifying their desire to prepare for the Lord's work in our schools. Thus there may be hope for the future as the Lord's heritage makes ready for battle."

In Bible Lands

It was nearly 80 years ago that the first Seventh-day Adventists were baptized in the Middle East Division. This was in Alexandria, Egypt, by the blue waters of the Mediterranean. Today in these lands of supreme challenge God's church is astir with action. Roger A. Wilcox, president of the division, states the challenge and Middle East's hopes as follows:

"The populations of our 12 countries and more than a half dozen territories total 104 million. Arabic is the principal language and Islam, of course, is the religion of the masses. After 80 years of labor our church membership has now gone beyond 2,000, and 3,500 earnest seekers after truth attend our Sabbath

schools. In our territory one Seventh-day Adventist must evangelize approximately 50,000 inhabitants. The world ratio is one Seventh-day Adventist for every 2,400 inhabitants!

"We believe, however, in the triumph of God's cause in the Middle East. The Islamic peoples are now experiencing a great revival. Definitely there is more interest in religious things. Many now will attend our evangelistic meetings. They will read our literature and will study our Voice of Prophecy lessons."

Two large evangelistic centers have been opened, one in Beirut and the other in Cairo. It is hoped that we will be able to broadcast on the Egyptian radio and get programs on television.

Africa Alight With the Gospel

The achievements of the church in Africa have brought courage to God's people in every part of the world. Anxious eyes have been cast toward Africa in recent years. National and overseas workers have had to face trials and uncertainties. Yet despite confusion and tumult on a rapidly changing scene, it is remarkable how the work of God has prospered. This goes for all of Africa, as the following report from Robert H. Pierson, president of the Southern African Division, well bears out.

"Despite the unrest and open warfare that has been our lot in many parts of Southern Africa, the Lord has graciously held His hand over His work. More than 1,500 evangelistic efforts were planned for 12 months. Our workers set as their objective 50,000 decisions for Christ during this time and 10,000 backsliders reclaimed for His church!

"Lay workers are playing an active part in this great evangelistic advance. On one mission station in Tanganyika, 146 laymen took part in 15 lay efforts that brought in 736 converts and 95 backsliders. Those connected with these same efforts reported 62 persons healed as the result of 'team prayer' for the sick. One lay preacher reports 118 converts.

"In the great city of Johannesburg, 152 Europeans were baptized in what was perhaps one of the outstanding efforts for Europeans ever held in our division. In many of our other large cities—Nairobi, Durban, Elisabethville, and others—the Spirit of God has been at work.

"Political unrest, racial tensions, overt fighting may come, but the work of God moves on to destined victory. Nothing can thwart the plan of God for the early finishing of His work in Africa—and in all the world!"

Truly there is much to cheer the Adventist heart as we face the world today. What a victory could be ours, under God, should the rhythm of progress continue and grow as the final manifestations of divine power burst upon the universal scene. To this end we must keep our message and our work in proper focus.

Christianity being what it is, the message of God must be proclaimed by the life lived as well as by the word spoken. Practical Christianity must come more and more to the fore in our program. There must be no neglect of the divinely entrusted task. Our thrust in the world must

remain evangelical, that is, a proclamation, a service, a healing, a teaching, and a fellowship. This complete mission actuated by the compelling Spirit of God will present the message of hope and salvation to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

(Reading, Monday, November 13, 1961)

"While I Live I Grow"

By ALVIN E. COOK

WITH commendable vision, a trading firm in Australia adopted as its motto the words of our title, "While I live I grow." This business today is one of the largest department stores in the thriving city of Sydney. It employs scores of staff members and serves thousands of clients. But more important, it is still growing!

Jesus said His kingdom would live and grow. It would begin as a grain of mustard seed, one of the smallest of seeds. But, like the mustard seed that grows into the greatest of herbs, the kingdom of Christ was to enjoy unlimited development. It would live and grow not merely in quantity but also in quality. Men love to number Israel, and we all revel in statistics of progress. But God still looks upon the heart. Ought we not this Week of Prayer to ask ourselves the question, Is our progress in Christian culture keeping pace with our numerical and material gains?

Grace for Life and Growth

"In the matchless gift of His Son, God has encircled the whole world with an atmosphere of grace as real as the air which circulates around the globe. All who choose to breathe this life-giving atmosphere will live, and grow up to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus.

"As the flower turns to the sun, that the bright beams may aid in perfecting its beauty and symmetry, so should we turn to the Sun of Righteousness, that heaven's light may shine upon us, that our character may be developed into the likeness of Christ."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 68.

Two common inquiries always seem present in the hearts of our people regarding the public preaching of the message: Will the people respond? and then, Will they stand? Regarding the first question we can rest with confidence in the promise, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that

which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. 55:11). In reply to the second inquiry, let us sincerely hope that they will not merely stand, but go forward. Our aim and prayer should be that all who embrace the message will go onward and upward, ever growing in the grace of God. The truth is, none may stand still in the Christian life. Either we grow toward maturity in Christ or we suffer that tragedy no less common in the spiritual life than in the physical—infant mortality.

In the first great evangelistic venture of the Christian church, thousands were born into the kingdom in one day. The word of God multiplied, and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. But Peter recognized that the signal change taking place in so many lives was merely the beginning of spiritual growth. In his two Epistles the apostle insists that believers must not rest on the experience by which they came to Christ, but must add to their faith "virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity" (2 Peter 1:5-7). These graces must appear and abound in a satisfactory Christian life. The apostle's final appeal to the believers in the closing verse of this second letter is: "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Notice that Peter admonishes, "Grow in grace," not "Grow into grace." Some will wonder whether it is necessary to mention such an obvious distinction. After hearing many appraisals of our faith from an outside point of view, I believe we ought to emphasize this point for the benefit of friends both within and without the church.

One day a family who had attended our evangelistic meetings telephoned, urging us to come and meet some relatives and a preacher who claimed that he

would quickly show that there was little light in our teachings. In that quiet farmhouse gathering, this brother urged that we introduce the discussion by speaking first on why we keep the Sabbath. Sensing that several souls were at stake, we earnestly prayed for guidance as to where we should begin.

Where do we usually begin? I am sure that many who read these lines would take the Sinai express, climb quickly to the mountaintop, and begin to battle for the truth with a heavy barrage from the law. Too often we have done this. I decided to take a different route and to dig in on Mount Calvary, alongside the old rugged cross. Announcing our first scripture as Ephesians 2:8, I looked directly at my friend and read the precious words "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." His reaction was immediate. "You can't have that text," he asserted; "That is my text. Adventists don't believe it!" Confidently we assured him that this is our foundation and the basis of our message to men. After some explanation I continued, "Now we must turn to Romans 6:14." He looked even more perplexed, and again interjected, "But I don't understand. This is another of my texts. You're taking all my scriptures!"

Obedience Spontaneous and Complete

Without replying we read together, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." We pointed out how grace cancels the law's condemnation and sets us free in the service of Christ. Obedience to His revealed will is then spontaneous and complete. It is not in any sense the root of our salvation, but rather the fruit of it! It is not a down payment or an installment, for Jesus paid all on Calvary. Keeping the law and the Sabbath is merely our glad response to the grace and love that has redeemed us.

At the end of the presentation the man merely said, "I have nothing to say. If this is really the teaching of Adventists, then I have been misinformed. This is the gospel; I cannot speak against it."

Doubtless, this man's objections to our message were founded on experiences where our teachings had been presented in a graceless setting of cold legalism. Never let us forget Jonah's message, "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9). Salvation is ours—by grace through faith. It is not of works lest any man should boast. Grace is God's part; faith is man's part. Grace always flows downward, and reaches earthward in the gift of Christ. Faith on the contrary always looks upward. When a man's faith meets the grace of God in Christ Jesus, a soul is born again into the kingdom of God. It is from this point onward that the words of Peter apply, "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

The endless quest of the human soul has been for spiritual reality. The patriarch Job expressed it in that anguished cry, "Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat" (Job 23:3). Men have followed their desires for spiritual development in different, and sometimes unusual, ways. In the hope of holiness some afflict themselves physically, vainly expecting that the sufferings of the flesh will accomplish the purification of the spirit. In his search for sanctification, the Hindu measures his length along the dusty roads of India to the sacred waters of the Ganges, and the Mohammedan at least once in his life makes that weary pilgrimage to Mecca to pray at the tomb of the prophet.

False Ideas of Righteousness

Some of these ideas found their way into the Christian church and gave rise to such practices as monasticism, asceticism, pilgrimages, relic collecting, and the setting up of sacred shrines. For instance, Simeon Stylites desired holiness. Seeking the higher life, he forsook his fellows and went off into the desert, where he built a column on top of a rock. To begin with, it was some nine feet high. There he lived in splendid isolation on a tiny platform. Throughout life he continually raised that column until he finally earned sainthood by living 36 years on a platform 53 feet above the desert sand. Simeon the Younger is said to have begun the same sort of program at an earlier age. Records claim that he cut his second teeth sitting on top of his column! And there he stayed for 68 years until death must surely have been a welcome release. But Jesus made it clear that Christian growth would not be accomplished this way. He prayed to His Father, "not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil" (John 17:15).

No, the answer is not found in physical separation and solitude, nor is it waiting in the sacred shrines of far lands. "It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it" (Deut. 30:12-14). And what must we do? The tenth verse explains, "Turn unto the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." Living the life of faith day by day is the way to maturity and completeness in Christ.

"By faith you became Christ's, and by faith you are to grow up in Him,—by giving and taking. You are to give all,—your heart, your will, your service,—give yourself to Him, to obey all His requirements; and you must take all,—Christ,

the fullness of all blessing, to abide in your heart, to be your strength, your righteousness, your everlasting helper,—to give you power to obey."—*Ibid.*, p. 70.

The Saviour outlined the Christian's daily program thus: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23).

"Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, 'Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee.' This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ."—*Ibid.*

"As ye therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him" (Col. 2:6). We received Him by faith. We live in Him by faith. And, while we live we grow!

And now, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these" (Matt. 6:28, 29).

"The plants and flowers grow not by their own care or anxiety or effort, but by receiving that which God has furnished to minister to their life. The child cannot, by any anxiety or power of its own, add to its stature. No more can you, by anxiety or effort of yourself, secure spiritual growth. The plant, the child, grows by receiving from its surroundings that which ministers to its life,—air, sunshine, and food. What these gifts of nature are to animal and plant, such is Christ to those who trust in Him."—*Ibid.*, p. 68.

The Necessity of Feeding on the Word

Peter further counsels: "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Peter 2:2). The Corinthian believers evidently failed to do this. After years in the Christian way they were still "babes in Christ." Paul explains, "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able" (1 Cor. 3:1, 2). Spiritual immaturity manifested itself in dissension and division within the church. Members were still resting on what they received from Paul or Apollos, who had brought them to Christ. But thus far they had failed to find a faith of their own through diligent study of the Word. No amount of fine preaching or inspirational teaching of the weekly Sabbath school

lesson can take the place of diligent personal study. Can you say today with Job, "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23:12)?

Prayer and meditation open the windows of the soul toward the heavenly Jerusalem and sustain the spiritual nature. Jesus commended the private place of communion and the shut door, to all who seek to cultivate the inner life. Public prayer and family prayer certainly have their place, but secret communion with God sustains the inner life. What strength and confidence comes of waiting at the throne of grace until we know that our prayer has been heard and the Father has answered, "in the secret place of thunder" (Ps. 81:7).

A friend tells of standing on a large city railway platform when bells signaled departure time for two trains. To the right there was the sound of puffing and hissing as a country train moved laboriously off on its journey. To the left the other train, equally long, seemed to start in top gear and had disappeared around the bend while the other was barely moving. What made the difference? One was moving noisily under its own steam. Silently and swiftly the other raced down the tracks, propelled by power drawn from above. It was an electric train! Similarly, there are two kinds of Christians. Are you facing the onward, upward way under your own steam? You are in for a hard time. Why not determine to seek and find that secret place of power? "The plant grows by receiving that which God has provided to sustain its life. It sends down its roots into the earth. It drinks in the sunshine, the dew and the rain. . . . So the Christian is to grow by co-operating with divine agencies. . . . We are to open our hearts to the Holy Spirit."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 66, 67.

On the shelves of our city library last week I noticed an intriguing title, *No Man Is an Island*. Christian fellowship affords delightful opportunities for spiritual growth. That is why Paul counsels: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25). And David assures us, "They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God. . . . For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Ps. 84:7-10). Are you making the most of the opportunities of communion with God and fellowship with His children that come your way Sabbath by Sabbath? Do you pause in your busy program to renew your strength in the middle of the week when the prayer meeting proffers its opportunities for soul culture? Are you making the most of this Week of Prayer?

Sharing our faith in Christian service offers a fruitful avenue of spiritual growth. "There can be no growth or fruitfulness in a life that is centered in self. If you have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, you are to forget yourself, and try to help others. Talk of the love of Christ, tell of His goodness. Do every duty that presents itself. Carry the burden of souls upon your heart, and by every means in your power seek to save the lost. As you receive the spirit of Christ—the spirit of unselfish love and labor for others—you will grow and bring forth fruit. The graces of the Spirit will ripen in your character. Your faith will increase, your convictions deepen, your love be made perfect. More and more you will reflect the likeness of Christ in all that is pure, noble, and lovely."—*Ibid.*, pp. 67, 68.

The miracle of natural growth well illustrates the miracle of spiritual growth. "As in nature, so in grace; there can be no life without growth. The plant must either grow or die. As its growth is silent

and imperceptible, but continuous, so is the development of the Christian life. At every stage of development our life may be perfect; yet if God's purpose for us is fulfilled, there will be continual advancement. Sanctification is the work of a lifetime. As our opportunities multiply, our experience will enlarge, and our knowledge increase. We shall become strong to bear responsibility, and our maturity will be in proportion to our privileges."—*Ibid.*, pp. 65, 66.

"When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come" (Mark 4:29). As we strain all resources for the spreading of the truth and the finishing of the work in the world, may God finish His work in His people. "Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own."—*Ibid.*, p. 69.

So let it be, and so it shall be.

were written long before the advent of modern scientific nutrition, no better over-all guide is available today."

A point-by-point discussion of the instruction on health available through the Spirit of Prophecy writings would be far beyond the scope of this article. The instruction is available to the church and should be used and heeded. It is broad in its principles and in their application. No matter where or under what circumstances we live, principles will be found to meet our need. The important thing for each of us is to know, believe, and practice the principles so abundantly given.

A Blessing, Not a Stumbling Block

The health message was given to God's people not as a stumbling block, but for their blessing. This, of course, is true of all of God's instructions. We like to tell people that a blessing follows the keeping of the law of God, the paying of tithe, and going to church. It is equally true that a blessing comes from heeding the instruction that God has given for healthful living. This the messenger of the Lord has pointed out:

"The work of health reform is the Lord's means for lessening suffering in our world and for purifying His church. Teach the people that they can act as God's helping hand by co-operating with the Master Worker in restoring physical and spiritual health. This work bears the signature of heaven and will open doors for the entrance of other precious truths."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 112, 113.

Note well that one purpose of the health message is to lessen "suffering." If we will keep firmly in our minds that God's wish is always for the true happiness of His children, it will help us to be willing to cooperate with Him.

As a people we believe that Ellen G. White was an inspired messenger of God, to whom He gave instructions for His church. If so, and we choose to despise or reject this counsel, we either do not believe what we claim to believe in respect to the inspired origin of these instructions, or we deliberately rebel against them when we choose to do as we please.

It would thus seem that the problem of our attitude toward this matter involves far more than eating or not eating, drinking or not drinking, or doing or not doing anything else about which we have had plain instruction. Our attitude thus becomes a matter of great spiritual importance. If we say we believe but do not do, then we are hypocrites. We cannot evade this solemn fact if we are to be honest with ourselves, our church, and our God.

"The Laodicean message applies to the people of God who profess to believe present truth. . . . They profess to love the truth, yet are deficient in Christian fervor and devotion. They dare not give

(Reading, Tuesday, November 14, 1961)

Good Health and Good Religion

By R. E. FINNEY, JR.

GOD'S love for man, and His consequent concern for man's spiritual, mental, and physical well-being, began with Creation. We are familiar with the fact that the Creator provided an ideal diet in the Garden of Eden. The record reads, "And God said, Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. . . . And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it" (Gen. 1:29; 2:8-15).

God's provision for man's development thus involved environment and occupation as well as diet. Each factor was intended, we doubt not, to bring about perfection in physical, mental, and spiritual development. Heaven's concern did not cease with the entrance of sin into the world, nor has it ever ceased. We read in 3 John 2, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." God is as desirous that His people be in

health in the last days as He was in the first days.

In the early days of the Advent Movement, God gave His people special light regarding healthful living. This instruction did not contradict that given in the beginning, or since. The fact that the instruction given so many years ago, and in such specific detail in many instances, is still valid and accurate constitutes a major evidence that God was speaking through the one who bore these messages. Recently renowned authorities in the scientific world, not of our faith, have stepped forward unsolicited to testify to the value of this instruction.

An outstanding instance of this kind of endorsement appeared in *THE REVIEW AND HERALD* in February of 1959 in a series of articles by Dr. Clive M. McCay, professor of nutrition, Cornell University. Dr. McCay, who is not a Seventh-day Adventist, pays glowing tribute to the teachings of the Spirit of Prophecy writings in the field of nutrition. He sums up his remarks regarding the work of Mrs. White on this subject in the closing paragraph of the last article of the series: "In spite of the fact that the works of Mrs. White

up wholly and run the risk of the unbeliever, yet they are unwilling to die to self and follow out closely the principles of their faith."—*Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 87.

The Message Is for Us Today

Is the health message of great importance in our time? Did the Lord intend for us to make it prominent in our habits of life and in our preaching? There was a time, some think, when more emphasis was placed on the health message than now. In 1909 Ellen G. White came to Washington, D.C., to attend the General Conference session. This was her last trip East, and the last General Conference session she attended. She was 81 years old at the time, and must have realized that this might be the last opportunity she would have to address such a gathering. Among the subjects that she presented at this session was health reform. It would seem that she must have considered this a matter of great importance. This idea is borne out in her own words:

"I am instructed to bear a message to all our people on the subject of health reform, for many have backslidden from their former loyalty to health reform principles.

"God's purpose for His children is that they shall grow up to the full stature of men and women in Christ. In order to do this, they must use aright every power of mind, soul, and body. They cannot afford to waste any mental or physical strength.

"The question of how to preserve the health is one of primary importance. When we study this question in the fear of God we shall learn that it is best, for both our physical and our spiritual advancement, to observe simplicity in diet. Let us patiently study this question. We need knowledge and judgment in order to move wisely in this matter. Nature's laws are not to be resisted, but obeyed."—*Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 153.

Notice that "our physical and our spiritual advancement" are here linked together. This is in line with the Bible teaching of the nature of man. Seventh-day Adventists do not teach, nor do they believe, that a man's spiritual nature can be entirely separate from his physical being. On the contrary, they believe that neither the spiritual nor physical parts of our being can be injured without injuring the whole being.

Sister White continued: "There are some professed believers who accept certain portions of the *Testimonies* as the message of God, while they reject those portions that condemn their favorite indulgences. Such persons are working contrary to their own welfare and the welfare of the church. It is essential that we walk in the light while we have the light. Those who claim to believe in health reform, and yet work counter to its principles in the daily life practice, are hurt-

ing their own souls and are leaving wrong impressions upon the minds of believers and unbelievers.

"A solemn responsibility rests upon those who know the truth, that all their works shall correspond with their faith, and that their lives shall be refined and sanctified, and they be prepared for the work that must rapidly be done in these closing days of the message. . . . There are many among us who are deficient in spirituality and who, unless they are wholly converted, will certainly be lost. Can you afford to run the risk?"—*Ibid.*, pp. 154, 155.

Effect of the Physical Upon the Spiritual

These inspired statements make it plain that the physical and spiritual welfare of the individual cannot be separated. Again and again she reiterates this relationship.

"God requires of His people continual advancement. We need to learn that indulged appetite is the greatest hindrance to mental improvement and soul sanctification. . . . Indulgence of appetite is the greatest cause of physical and mental debility, and lies largely at the foundation of feebleness and premature death. . . .

"If we could be benefited by indulging the desire for flesh foods, I would not make this appeal to you; but I know we cannot. Flesh foods are injurious to the physical well-being, and we should learn to do without them. Those who are in a position where it is possible to secure a vegetarian diet, but who choose to follow their own preferences in this matter, eating and drinking as they please, will gradually grow careless of the instruction the Lord has given regarding other phases of the present truth and will lose their perception of what is truth; they will surely reap as they have sown."—*Ibid.*, pp. 156, 157.

The messenger of the Lord chose on this occasion to emphasize particularly

the matter of a flesh diet. At the same time she gave, as always, a practical and balanced presentation:

"We do not mark out any precise line to be followed in diet; but we do say that in countries where there are fruits, grains, and nuts in abundance, flesh food is not the right food for God's people. . . . If meat eating was ever healthful, it is not safe now. Cancer, tumors, and pulmonary diseases are largely caused by meat eating."—*Ibid.*, p. 159.

The message to the Laodicean church closes with a promise. The reproof within the message was given only for the blessing of the church. Just so, we reiterate, the health message was given for the good of God's people.

"The Lord has given me light that when the Israel of today humble themselves before Him, and cleanse the soul-temple from all defilement, He will hear their prayers in behalf of the sick and will bless in the use of His remedies for disease. When in faith the human agent does all he can to combat disease, using the simple methods of treatment that God has provided, his efforts will be blessed of God."—*Ibid.*, p. 164.

These were the words of one who had long been a servant of God, of one who had begun her ministry in feeble health yet through the practice of the principles of right living and through the special grace of God lived a long and exceedingly fruitful life. She knew how graciously God blesses those who sincerely and faithfully obey Him.

To the Laodicean church God speaks today. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3:19-21).

(Reading, Wednesday, November 15, 1961)

God's Family Around the World

By TOSHIO YAMAGATA

WE BELONG to the great family of God. Even though, because of sin, we were once separated from God, a way has since been opened for us to return to Him. By accepting the cross of Christ we have been received as members of God's family, a great privi-

lege made possible for us by the grace of God.

Christ is the head of this family that encircles the globe. In the world today we see racial problems and conflict between various social classes, but in God's family there is to be no such friction and

strife. As Paul said, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). Whatever may be a man's status or nationality, all are accepted into the family of God through the baptism of His Spirit. The condition of acceptance is the same for everyone. It is the experience of conversion. While there is to be diversity among the members of the family, yet there is also to be unity.

The outstanding characteristics of the material universe are unity and harmony. In nature we see variety in kind and in activity. Though appearing complicated and sometimes confusing to the casual observer, yet there is perfect unity and harmony. From the heavenly bodies to the atom, everything is under the perfect control of the Almighty.

Before sin entered there was unmarred unity in the spiritual world as well. It is reassuring to know that this former state is to be restored among the redeemed, even in this life. "It is the will of God that union and brotherly love should exist among His people."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 520.

The Unity for Which We Are to Strive

What is the unity that should exist among God's people?

Certainly it does not mean that everyone should be just alike. "The religion of Christ does not require us to lose our identity of character, but merely to adapt ourselves, in some measure, to the feelings and ways of others. Many people may be brought together in a unity of religious faith whose opinions, habits, and tastes in temporal matters are not in harmony; but if they have the love of Christ glowing in their bosoms, and are looking forward to the same heaven as their eternal home, they may have the sweetest and most intelligent communion together, and a unity the most wonderful."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 65.

While perfect harmony exists, individuality should be preserved. When Ezekiel saw in his vision "the wheel within a wheel, the appearance of living creatures connected with them, all seemed intricate and unexplainable. But the hand of Infinite Wisdom is seen among the wheels, and perfect order is the result of its work. Every wheel, directed by the hand of God, works in perfect harmony with every other wheel."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 489. When we are led by the hand of one God, this perfect harmony will be seen.

Paul likened the family of God to the human body. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ" (1 Cor. 12:12). Now, the human body is wonderfully made. Composed of various members with many offices to perform, every

part is nonetheless closely connected with every other. When one part is wounded, others parts suffer. There should be a similarly close love relationship among the people of God.

As each part of the body is necessary, so everyone in the family of God is to play an important role in doing his appointed work. God has set every one of us in the body of Christ, according to His will. He has a special purpose for each to perform in this world. "However small your talent, God has a place for it. That one talent, wisely used, will accomplish its appointed work."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 360. F. B. Meyer has written, "Every name is historic in God's estimate." Everybody is important in his appointed position and work. Your work may seem to be small and valueless, but if you are fulfilling your God-appointed work, your existence is valuable in the sight of God.

Christ's prayer for His disciples was, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:21). This "prayer of Christ embraces all His followers, to the close of time. Our Saviour foresaw the trials and dangers of His people; He is not unmindful of the dissensions and divisions that distract and weaken His church."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 237.

All true members of the family of God will work in harmony with this prayer. "God's people are not to be in confusion, lacking order and harmony, consistency and beauty. The Lord is greatly dishonored when disunion exists among His people. Truth is a unit. The unity that God requires must be cultivated day by day if we would answer the prayer of Christ."—*Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 174.

Oneness in Spirit and Practice

Paul describes the ideal condition of the church in the fourth chapter of Ephesians. "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:16). "As we approach the last crisis, it is of vital moment that harmony and unity exist among the Lord's instrumentalities."—*Ibid.*, vol. 7, p. 182.

"Satan is always seeking to cause dissension, for well he knows that by this means he can most effectually counteract the work of God. We should not give place to his devices. . . . In their efforts to advance the work all will manifest that oneness of sentiment and practice which reveals that they are God's witnesses, that they love one another. To a world that is broken up by discord and strife, their love and unity will testify to their connection with heaven. It is the convincing evidence of the divine char-

acter of their mission."—*Ibid.*, pp. 156, 157.

"He who says or does anything that tends to separate the members of Christ's church is counterworking the Lord's purpose."—*Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 145.

The climax of temporal history is hastening on toward fulfillment. There is not much earthly time remaining. In order to accelerate the work of the gospel, we need to remember our great need—unity. "If there was ever a time when the people of God should press together, it is now."—*Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 236. "If Christians were to act in concert, moving forward as one, under the direction of one Power, for the accomplishment of one purpose, they would move the world."—*Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 221.

How are the people of God to maintain unity?

Experience a genuine conversion. There can be no unity among the people in the world, for the carnal mind is incapable of it. Paul writes to the Corinthian brethren: "Ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" (1 Cor. 3:3).

The Christian's experience must be different. Having been thoroughly converted, he needs to be filled with love for the brethren. "The harmony and unity of the church are the credentials that they present to the world that Jesus is the Son of God. Genuine conversion will ever lead to genuine love for Jesus and for all those for whom He died."—*Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 279.

Draw near to Christ. The disciples of Christ varied widely in habits, disposition, and background. Each had serious defects of character. Yet Christ called them to His ministry. "In and through Christ they were to dwell in the family of God, learning to become one in faith, in doctrine, in spirit. They would have their tests, their grievances, their differences of opinion; but while Christ was abiding in the heart, there could be no dissension. His love would lead to love for one another; the lessons of the Master would lead to the harmonizing of all differences, bringing the disciples into unity, till they would be of one mind and one judgment. Christ is the great center, and they would approach one another just in proportion as they approached the center."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 296.

The same is true today. The degree of unity existing in the church indicates how much we have learned of Christ and how near we have drawn to Him.

Crucify self. Another experience that will bring unity is the crucifixion of self. Man is born selfish, with his thoughts focusing inward. But as long as he remains self-centered, there cannot be unity. "Crucify self; esteem others better than yourselves. Thus you will be brought into oneness with Christ."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 188. This is the coun-

sel, since oneness with Christ brings oneness with the brethren.

Walk in the Holy Spirit. When false teachers brought to the Galatian converts doctrines that were opposed to the gospel of Christ, there was danger of strife and division arising in the church. Paul therefore sought to impress upon his Galatian brethren the importance of trying to help one another in love.

"But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. . . . Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:15-21). Instead, he admonished, "Walk in the Spirit" (verse 16). "They must by constant prayer seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit, which would lead them to love and unity."—*Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 243.

We shall do well to give earnest heed to the following admonition: "When men are bound together, not by force or self-interest, but by love, they show the working of an influence that is above every human influence. Where this oneness exists, it is evidence that the image of God is being restored in humanity, that a new principle of life has been implanted."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 678.

What Hinders Unity?

What should we guard against in order to maintain unity?

"Jealousy, evil surmising, evil-speaking, are instigated by him [the great apostate], to produce discord and dissension."—*Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 182. Satan was the originator of confusion in heaven. Little by little he came to indulge the desire for self-exaltation. Instead of seeking to make God supreme, he sought to secure for himself the glory that belonged to Christ alone. Thus the perfect harmony of heaven was broken.

Down through the ages this same spirit of jealousy has been working in the hearts of men. More than anything else, it destroys the unity of God's family. A pastor once confessed that when he heard some other preacher deliver a sermon better than he, his heart became uneasy. To a man who has passed his zenith of popularity and power, it is often a severe test to see younger men stepping into positions he once held, and doing better.

The Bible records many instances of jealousy. For example, there was the attitude of Joseph's brethren toward him, of Korah, of Laban's sons, of the Babylonian princes toward Daniel, of Saul toward David, of the rabbis toward Christ and John, and so on. These ex-

periences all show that jealousy, an ugly human trait, is preceded by envy, pride, and self-exaltation. How can these vicious traits be overcome? John the Baptist showed an unusual spirit of humility and magnanimity when he said of Christ, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30).

John explained to his disciples, who were troubled about their master's relation to Jesus, that a man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. He realized that all the powers and influences he had were not his own, but gifts from God. So he had nothing of which to boast. Knowing his own limitations, he also recognized God's love for him and was completely satisfied with the plan the Lord had for him. Thinking of ourselves in this light, we see how foolish it is to envy others, because an all-wise and loving heavenly Father has planned a way that is best for us. Let us be thankful for the role in life the Lord has assigned us.

As with jealousy, evil surmising and evil-speaking originate with Satan. Often because of a lack of sympathy and by looking critically at others, trust among brethren is broken. Cold criticism and gossip are fearful sins that destroy unity.

"Difficulties are often caused by the vendors of gossip, whose whispered hints

and suggestions poison unsuspecting minds and separate the closest friends. Mischief-makers are seconded in their evil work by the many who stand with open ears and evil heart, saying: 'Report, and we will report it.' This sin should not be tolerated among the followers of Christ. No Christian parent should permit gossip to be repeated in the family circle, or remarks to be made disparaging the members of the church."—*Ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 241, 242.

Now is the time for the latter rain. However, "the Spirit can never be poured out while variance and bitterness toward one another are cherished by the members of the church. Envy, jealousy, evil surmising, and evil-speaking are of Satan, and they effectually bar the way against the Holy Spirit's working."—*Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 42.

"The world needs to see worked out before it the miracle that binds the hearts of God's people together in Christian love. It needs to see the Lord's people sitting together in heavenly places in Christ. Will you not give in your lives an evidence of what the truth of God can do for those who love and serve Him? God knows what you can be. He knows what divine grace can do for you if you will be partakers of the divine nature."—*Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 188.

(Reading, Thursday, November 16, 1961)

The End Draweth Near

By BERNARD E. SETON

SINCE the first disciples looked up from Olivet and watched the heavens receive their beloved Master, the church has awaited His return. But as the first century grew old, and as the original disciples fell asleep it was inevitable that the keen edge of that desire should be dulled. As the decades multiplied into passing centuries, the hope of Christ's literal return to His people grew more dim, until there were times when the casual observer might have been forgiven for thinking that the hope had died. The church came to accept the absence of her Master as normal. He was in heaven, the church was on earth; it was hard to believe that the situation would ever change.

The Dark Ages, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Reformation, and other eras followed one another on the pages of history while the church slumbered and slept, and the Bridegroom delayed

His coming. Then came the Biblical awakening, toward the end of the eighteenth century. The prophetic sections of the Word were studied with renewed interest and growing comprehension. Promises that had been read with little understanding glowed anew with reality. The level of interest may have fluctuated as years have rolled by, but the increasing gravity of events now nourishes a heightened sense of expectancy. There is a conviction that all things cannot continue as they were from the time of Creation, that there must be an end to the worsening folly of human history, and a resumption of divine rule on earth.

What are our grounds for the hope that history will soon take this dramatic turn? What evidence do we possess that this Christian expectation is anything more than wishful thinking? What proof can we present to those who sincerely seek to know the truth of so vital a mat-

ter? To similar questions asked by His disciples our Lord gave a detailed answer, and then added: "When ye shall see all these things [outlined in the preceding verses], know that it [or He] is near, even at the doors" (Matt. 24:33).

To what "things" is the Saviour referring? Most of us know the answer well. We can speak of "wars and rumours of wars," of "great tribulation," of the darkening of the sun, of the moon not giving her light, of the stars falling from heaven, of the "distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring" (Matt. 24:6, 21, 29; Luke 21:25). We know that "these things" have come to pass, and that Jesus' return must now be near, "even at the doors." With the eye of faith, aided by sure scriptural knowledge, we can see the Lord of history standing at the door of history, waiting for it to swing open and admit Him once more into personal, physical association with His human followers.

Present-Day Evidence

But our expectancy is not based only on the fulfillment of signs that are past. The present is pouring out evidence that the end is near. Hardly a day passes but our newspapers and radios give news that conforms to the divine forecast concerning the last days. For well-nigh a century the church has been proclaiming that such conditions would develop, and we in turn have taken up the refrain. We have been wise when we have not attempted to foretell the way in which each individual prophecy would be fulfilled, but have been content to state what prophecy has declared will come to pass. On the strength of the prophetic word we have warned the world of the disturbing shape of coming events, but now we stand aghast at the accuracy of our own message. Wherever we look we see the filling in of a picture previously known only in sketchiest outline, and the fuller revelation is rarely pleasing to our earthbound minds. It is one thing to view trouble from a comfortable distance in space and time, and quite another matter to find it sitting on one's doorstep, edging its way into every nook and cranny of a hitherto comfortable existence!

In this seventh decade of the twentieth century events are moving with such rapidity that specific comment is often outdated overnight. In a Week of Prayer, therefore, we can do no more than refer to general trends, knowing that our newspapers and magazines, our radios and television sets will supply more than enough detail. Indeed, confirmation of what the church has been preaching is sometimes so generous that the church herself is surprised and saddened. Think back through the last year and review worldwide news that may be fairly related to Biblical forecasts concerning the last days.

Physical. Nature has spoken with a dreadful voice that has solemnized our thinking and reminded us that in the midst of life we are rapidly nearing the end. Floods and famines, tidal waves and earthquakes, epidemics and droughts, disasters by land, sea, and air—before the mind recovers from one blow it staggers under another! Almost unbidden, the Master's words ring in the believer's ear: "There shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes," "the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken" (Matt. 24:7; Luke 21:25, 26).

Political. Since men first formed themselves into nations there have always been wars and rumors of war, but never have wars been on so gigantic a scale as those that are threatening today. A spark in one obscure corner of the world is liable to set the whole globe on fire. Never before has the whole population of our planet been so clearly divided into two camps, each of which is ready to annihilate the other in a thermonuclear war. In face of such a prospect, "wars and rumours of wars" seems an understatement. The prophecy that "nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" (Matt. 24:7) takes on a universal aspect: no section of the world is exempt; there is truly "no place to hide." And the spiritual point of the gloomy picture is this: Human history is drawing to its close; only the coming of Christ's kingdom can rescue man from the predicament into which he has fallen.

Social. The record of man's enslavement to sin is almost as long as that of his existence, but we may reasonably doubt that sinful practices have ever been so widely tolerated and so actively promoted as they are today. An even more saddening realization is that social sins are more brazenly rampant in the so-called Christian nations than in those that we label heathen or atheistic. Alcoholism, sexual immorality, dishonesty, violent crime, disrespect toward parents, and disregard of legitimate authority are virulent cancers eating away the heart of "Christian" society and causing its spiritual death. Still small voices of protest are drowned by the thunders of personal desire and vested interests, until it looks as if the champions of morality are fighting a losing battle.

No student of the Second Coming can fail to note the parallel between such conditions and Christ's own portrayal of society just prior to His return: "As in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, . . . so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. 24:38, 39). Even clearer is Paul's penetrating analysis of the character of those who live in the morally "perilous times" of the "last days." His list, given in 2

Timothy 3:1-5, covers most of our decade's prevalent sins and makes discouraging, though instructive, reading.

Religious. Some of the most impressive signs of our times lie in the realm of religion. There is a resurgence of vitality in non-Christian systems. Islam makes swifter progress than Christianity in many parts of Africa and exhibits renewed life in the Middle East. Buddhism not only holds her own in India but sends missionaries to Christian countries. Paganism tightens her grip on those who have heard but rejected the call of Christ. The cherished picture of the church triumphant as gathering all peoples into her fold needs some reappraisal in the light of current trends.

More significant still is the movement toward church unity. Protestant bodies that have carefully maintained separate traditions are sinking their differences in the belief that unity will bring greater strength. In turn, this solidifying Protestantism is wishfully considering reunion with Rome, with disturbing prospects of success—on Rome's terms. The interpretation of Revelation 13 has passed out of the realm of pious speculation and refers to present-day events. The fateful drama outlined in this chapter is being enacted before our very eyes.

The Most Disturbing Sign of All

But the most disturbing sign of all may lie nearer home than Rome. We live in the Laodicean period of church history, and unless we consciously strive to rise above its characteristics we shall share in its weaknesses. And who among us can claim complete exemption from the judgments contained in the following words:

"God's people who profess to believe present truth are not in a waiting, watching position. They are increasing in riches and are laying up their treasures upon the earth. They are becoming rich in worldly things, but not rich toward God. They do not believe in the shortness of time; they do not believe that the end of all things is at hand, that Christ is at the door. . . . Their preparations are being made to remain in this world. They are adding house to house, and land to land, and are citizens of this world."—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 196, 197.

Which of us dares deny the accuracy of this picture? If it were not true, the church would have accomplished far more than it has done during our lifetime. Fortunately, He who reveals the spiritual poverty of His Laodicean people also provides the means for making them spiritually rich. He has revealed our true condition to us that He may awaken our sense of need and impel us to seek and accept the remedies He has prepared for our use. We may buy of Him the gold, the raiment, the eyesalve, and thus be unashamed to meet Him who stands at the door and knocks.

A similar compassionate purpose lies behind every one of the prophecies that reveal the nearness of the end. They are not given to supply the curious with history in advance, but to provide time and incentive for the church to prepare for her Lord's return. To the world, the fulfillment of these prophecies brings a dread "for looking after those things which are coming on the earth" (Luke 21:26), or, to use words originally employed in another situation, "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation" (Heb. 10:27). To the believer, the multiplying fulfillments are harbingers of eternity, urging him to be ready for the greatest event in terrestrial history—the Second Advent. Through them he knows "that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand" (Luke 21:31). Through them he is led to ask the all-important question: "Am I ready?"

"Be Ye Also Ready"

When we sincerely ask ourselves that question we are thinking as the Lord intended. His prophecies concerning the last days all ended on the note: "Be ye also ready." If our study of those prophecies is to be profitable, it must lead us to get ready. Each unfolding fulfillment must be an added incentive to prepare to meet our God. The urgency of our times demands that we prepare today as if the Saviour were coming tomorrow.

How may we get ready for the approaching end? Christ and the apostles give a clear series of answers to that practical inquiry. They counsel us:

1. To watch and pray (Matt. 24:42)—to watch that the day come not on us unawares, and to pray that we may understand the signs of the times, that we may be spiritually ready to meet Him, and that we may not grow weary with waiting.

2. To take heed, to ourselves and not to the world, that sin does not deaden our spiritual perceptions and prevent our being aware of His soon coming (Luke 21:34).

3. To reform, by casting off our sinful habits and clothing ourselves with the character of our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 13:12-14).

4. To work, that our Master's business may be prosperously finished before His appearing (Matt. 24:45-47; 25:14-30).

This counsel may be expressed in a different and more homely way by saying that if we are to be ready we must be on right terms with our families, our fellows, our church, and our God. This calls for a high standard of consistent Christian conduct. It calls for divine control of every department of our lives. This is the ideal toward which all Christians must strive.

"We have now only a little time in which to prepare for eternity. May the Lord open the closed eyes of His people, and quicken their dulled senses, that they

may realize that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe. May they see the importance of giving so pure and righteous a representation of God that the world shall see Him in His beauty."—*Ibid.*, vol. 7, pp. 11, 12.

Brethren and sisters, the end draweth

near and will soon be upon us. "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" (1 John 2:28). Let the spirit of these inspired words mold our petitions during this Week of Prayer.

(Reading, Friday, November 17, 1961)

Youth and Finishing the Work

By J. R. NELSON

CHRIST is waiting to inspire the youth with power from above, that they may . . . work as He worked, to lead souls into safe paths, to plant the feet of many upon the Rock of Ages."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 405.

This is no time to keep God waiting. In such a day as this God calls our young people to make Christ supreme in their lives. Making that discovery is a transforming experience that changes our whole outlook, especially as we turn from ourselves and face Him with the sincerity and earnestness of youth, seeking the lasting things of life.

Wider, Deeper, Higher

Through His messenger God tells us that His purpose for youth "is wider, deeper, higher, than our restricted vision has comprehended."—*Education*, p. 262. The wider, deeper, higher concept that we are to seek as a directive for our lives is not something that cannot be understood. When youth cease to keep God waiting, He communicates to them the full import of that wider, deeper, higher purpose. Then He follows it up with the promised power that will lead to the culmination of His tremendous objectives.

The greatest asset of the church is its youth. The church links its God-given authority and resources with the home and the school in a mighty effort to cast the character of its youth in the heavenly mold. But these are only aids. There is no substitute for individual responsibility in dedicating the will. When by his own choice the life of a youth is characterized by the spirit of religious adventure, he will learn the mind of Christ and how to follow the way of life as He lived it.

How do youth keep God waiting? As we study our own attitudes we realize that it may be in many ways. The influences of the church, the home, and the school are totally effective only as the youth withholds nothing of himself. If the mind habitually works on selfish in-

dulgence, or is preoccupied even part of the time with self-centered ambitions, God must wait. He will not force upon anyone that "power from above" so clearly promised. That power cannot keep company with the interests of a divided heart.

What marks the way of readiness toward God? The answer to this question is the Christian youth's goal. It is abundantly clarified in messages from heaven sent for that purpose. The way is plainly marked with such guideposts as this:

"Amid the perils of these last days, the only safety of the youth lies in ever-increasing watchfulness and prayer. The youth who finds his joy in reading the word of God, and in the hour of prayer, will be constantly refreshed by drafts from the fountain of life. He will attain a height of moral excellence and a breadth of thought of which others cannot conceive. Communion with God encourages good thoughts, noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth, and lofty purposes of action. Those who thus connect themselves with God are acknowledged by Him as His sons and daughters. They are constantly reaching higher and still higher, obtaining clearer views of God and of eternity, until the Lord makes them channels of light and wisdom to the world."—*Messages to Young People*, p. 247.

To those youth who feel that such an experience is beyond them, who perhaps think they are just naturally "not religious," the call comes to give God a chance. The enemy of souls is responsible for the defeatist attitude, and if a youth yields to a feeling of futility he is placing the limited power of Satan above the power of God. Notice that when we co-operate with God He *changes* our likes and our dislikes, our attitudes, even our character traits. It is these steps in change that lead us toward eternal life and help us to take others with us. It is an overwhelming thought—that He makes us

"channels of light and wisdom to the world." He wants to do this for every youth. "He is waiting to inspire the youth with power from above."

For all of us it is true that many people will catch their first glimpse of the spirit and character of Christ through our personal influence. We must allow our faith to motivate us to action. Christianity becomes real to us only when it becomes a vital force in our lives. Jesus clearly pointed out to many questioners that being a Christian is no halfway matter. God is not waiting for do-gooders who work by automation. We must be completely captured by Christ and His service.

"Young men and young women, gather a stock of knowledge. Do not wait until some human examination pronounces you competent to work, but go out into the highways and hedges, and begin to work for God. Use wisely the knowledge you have. Exercise your ability with faithfulness, generously imparting the light that God gives you. Study how best to give to others peace and light and truth and the many other rich blessings of heaven. Constantly improve. Keep reaching higher and still higher. It is the ability to put to the tax the powers of mind and body, ever keeping eternal realities in view, that is of value now. Seek the Lord most earnestly, that you may become more and more refined, more spiritually cultured. Then you will have the very best diploma that anyone can have—the endorsement of God."—*Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 281.

Christ invites the youth to a personal Christian experience, to an open commitment of heart and hand to Christian tasks. Service is the reflection of such an individual experience. Bible study, personal devotions, the Missionary Volunteer Pledge with its time-honored and vital covenant relationship to Jesus Christ, participation in worship, cultivation of Christian friendships—these are at the foundation of sharing our faith. We must continually study and apply newly developed techniques that will aid us in presenting the truth in a fresh, effective manner.

Our space age demands the very best in technology—and tomorrow's advanced findings will displace today's outmoded ones. Christian techniques of catching the interest and winning men and women for God's kingdom must keep pace also—indeed, should be ahead of the times. In such an exacting situation as this God has pointed to the youth as His key witnesses, His most effective messengers of truth. What an assignment! How eagerly all heaven must be watching the response.

Youth can best work for youth. There is no easy way to win for Christ the vast multitude of young people who today are not being reached. Moreover, nothing is easy about the world task God has given

to man. What we comprehend perhaps more with our heads than our hearts is that God is abundantly qualified to enable us to do *difficult* things—even things "impossible" to the human mind. Youth can and must by faith take God at His word. Perhaps you have often wondered why God in His wisdom did not devise some easy way to make men come flocking to His church. Could He not cause some great supernatural sign to appear in the sky that would frighten people enough to make them believe in Him? That is, indeed, what the people were looking for in Jesus' day, but Jesus knew that was not God's way.

God Invites Us Into Partnership

"God might have committed the message of the gospel, and all the work of loving ministry, to the heavenly angels. He might have employed other means for accomplishing His purpose. But in His infinite love He chose to make us co-workers with Himself, with Christ and the angels, that we might share the blessing, the joy, the spiritual uplifting, which results from this unselfish ministry."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 79. The wisdom and love of heaven thus gave us the best means of fitness for eternal life.

Jesus suggests, when He talks of His work in terms of a harvest, that it takes a great deal of hard work to accomplish its purpose. A farmer does not put on a white collar when his wheat is ready to reap and wish that it would in some way gather itself into his barn. In spite of modern machinery, harvest still requires labor, and there is an urgency about his work. Long hours are spent willingly during harvesttime because the precious grain must be gathered before the rains come and ruin it.

Two lessons come to us from this thought of the harvest. First, it requires a great deal of time and effort to reap the harvest of unreached youth. Second, we ought to work with unprecedented urgency before storms come and destroy our opportunity.

"The most successful toilers are those who will cheerfully work to serve God in small things. Every human being is to work with his own individual thread, weave it into the fabric that composes the web, and complete the pattern. . . .

"Thousands of hearts can be reached in the most simple way."—*Messages to Young People*, p. 203.

God knows how to use us far better

Omnipresence

By Eugene Lincoln

The whereabouts of God? I do not know,
Nor do I hesitate to tell you so;
But this is sure: There is no single spot
In which I've ever been where God is not.

than we ourselves know, and He will effect a new, exhilarating life for the youth who gives Him a free hand. In the metamorphosis from mundane existence to spiritual excellence, only God knows how much we need to unlearn. Only He can lead us through the maze of confused human concepts to the state where His Spirit can possess us.

As the eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the earth, seeking those whose hearts are perfect toward Him, they light again and again on the fine, stalwart young men and the keen, thoughtful young women of our day. He longs that you will give yourselves unreservedly to Him. He has great tasks for you to perform, tasks calling for the highest courage, the steadiest nerve, the greatest endurance. Among your ranks He sees His strongest champions, who will maintain the honor of His name though the heavens fall.

To you He commits the task of taking to all mankind the last warning and saving message. It is for you, with all the power of your being, by voice and by pen, by preaching and visiting, by missionary service and printed page, to arouse young men and young women everywhere to a realization of the full significance of this solemn time. By loving ministry to the poor, the sick, and the needy God would have you reveal His love for men and woo them back from their evil ways to serve Him with all their hearts and be prepared for Christ's coming.

God's invitation to young people today is indeed a call to noble tasks. All who yield themselves to Him and throw themselves wholeheartedly on His side, determined to champion His cause against all opponents, and at all costs to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, will find that He will honor their faith and courage. He will not disappoint them.

Young men and young women, you have heard the call of the Lord. This is your moment of supreme opportunity. Listen with all care. Tell Him that you want to do His will, that you desire His help; and as He asks you to be His champion in this mighty hour, accept His commission. And say to Him as Isaiah said in his youth, "Here am I; send me." Such an act of surrender will bring you immediately into the company of His chosen ones and open the widest possibilities of rich and joyous fellowship and service with Him. You will become something far greater than you could ever have been without Him.

Right now, are you satisfied that God is doing His utmost in your life? He is waiting with the power to pour into your being that you may work as Christ worked. Will you decide that this very moment will mark the thrilling time when you decided not to keep Him waiting?

Readiness for the Day of the Lord

By R. R. FIGUHR

OUR God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice" (Ps. 50:3-5).

The teaching of the second coming of Christ in power and great glory is clearly set forth in both the Old and the New Testament. When sin with its resulting sorrow and death first entered this world, what we speak of as the second coming of Christ was pointed to as the final end of all evil and the beginning anew of an uninterrupted, glorious eternity. The faithful of all ages have looked and longed for this greatest of earthly events. It has ever remained the sustaining hope of the church.

This is not a new and strange doctrine to the Christian world. There have always been Christians who believed in this great event. It was proclaimed centuries and millenniums ago by seers and prophets, taught by our Lord, and taken up and repeated by His followers in succeeding centuries. One can give no recognition to the Bible and deny this fundamental teaching, for it runs all through the Sacred Volume from Genesis to Revelation.

Adventism, therefore, is not a strange doctrine in the Christian world. Every sincere Christian must necessarily be an Adventist, believing as verily in the Second Advent as he does in the first advent that took place nearly 2,000 years ago. The evidence of the Second Advent stands out clear and sharp, and the Bible refers to it fully as frequently as it does to the first advent.

Seventh-day Adventists have been raised up to give an emphasis to this great doctrine that Christians generally are neglecting. We believe that conditions shaping up in the world today, and events happening on every hand, clearly indicate that He is near, "even at the doors." We believe that the great work begun by our High Priest in 1844 is nearing completion and that soon the decree will go forth, "He which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still." Every case will soon forever have been decided. This climactic event is at hand.

Some may say that they have heard this said many times in the past. Let such not forget that many could, and doubtless did, make similar remarks about Noah's preaching. For 120 years he proclaimed the same message without variation or modification. Some must have grown weary of the monotony of its repetition. But the Flood, as predicted, did come. The unprepared were all destroyed. Those who were ready entered the ark and were saved. It is no argument against the truthfulness of a message that it has been proclaimed for years, that some have heard it preached from childhood. Such, if found unfaithful, will have all the more for which to answer. It must ever remain very real to us that "he that shall come will come," and that He is near, "even at the doors."

In the first vision given Sister White for the encouragement and guidance of this people, there was shown her the earnest band of believers in the Advent message, pursuing, despite trials and difficulties, their way to the distant city of light, the New Jerusalem. Some gave up because of hardships and turned back to the world. Others pressed on in the narrow way. She wrote:

The Sign of the Son of Man

"Soon our eyes were drawn to the east, for a small black cloud had appeared, about half as large as a man's hand, which we all knew was the sign of the Son of man. We all in solemn silence gazed on the cloud as it drew nearer, and became lighter, glorious, and still more glorious, till it was a great white cloud. . . .

"Then Jesus' silver trumpet sounded, as He descended on the cloud, wrapped in flames of fire. He gazed on the graves of the sleeping saints, then raised His eyes and hands to heaven, and cried, 'Awake! awake! awake! ye that sleep in the dust, and arise.' Then there was a mighty earthquake. The graves opened, and the dead came up clothed with immortality. . . .

"We all entered the cloud together, and were seven days ascending to the sea of glass, when Jesus brought the crowns, and with His own right hand placed them on our heads. He gave us harps of gold and palms of victory. . . . Jesus raised His mighty, glorious arm, laid hold of the pearly gate, swung it back on its glitter-

ing hinges, and said to us, 'You have washed your robes in My blood, stood stiffly for My truth, enter in.' We all marched in and felt that we had a perfect right in the city. . . .

"We all went under the tree, and sat down to look at the glory of the place, when Brethren Fitch and Stockman, who had preached the gospel of the kingdom, and whom God had laid in the grave to save them, came up to us and asked us what we had passed through while they were sleeping. We tried to call up our greatest trials, but they looked so small compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that surrounded us, that we could not speak them out, and we all cried out, 'Alleluia! heaven is cheap enough!' and we touched our glorious harps and made heaven's arches ring.

"I Had Seen a Better World"

"After I came out of vision, everything seemed changed; a gloom was spread over all that I beheld. Oh, how dark this world looked to me! I wept when I found myself here, and felt homesick. I had seen a better world, and it had spoiled this for me."

A glimpse of the glories of heaven given the messenger of the Lord spoiled her, she says, for all this world offers. She wept when she found herself still here, and felt homesick for heaven. Those who have tasted deeply of earth's sorrows can best enter into her feelings and yearnings.

Sister White was not alone in longing for that city of eternal light and endless peace. The faithful before her have all had the same deep yearnings. Abraham, the sojourner in the Land of Promise, looked and longed for that city whose builder and maker is God. By faith he beheld its glory and through faith he claimed a place within its shining walls. But Abraham was laid away in a grave on that small parcel of land he purchased of Ephron, the Hittite. The aging process that claimed him for the grave was not to be stayed in his day. His fading eye was not to brighten at the glorious appearing of his Lord. Abraham still sleeps in the Cave of Machpelah. But the day is now near when that grave shall burst open at the sound of the heavenly trumpet, and he who so long looked and longed for the celestial city shall enter it and feel that he has "a perfect right in the city." It shall far exceed in splendor, glory, and beauty, all that he ever dreamed of in his earthly sojourns. His trials, wanderings, and hardships will be forever ended. What he saw and claimed by faith will then become his in reality.

To some fortunately situated in this life, the return of our Lord may not be as urgent and sustaining a truth as it is to those whose lot is one of trial and affliction. Good health, freedom from suffering, material resources to supply all physical needs, many friends, may all re-

sult in enhancing what this life offers, and in dimming the glories of the life to come. But when hardship and sorrow are one's portion things take on an entirely different aspect. There are in the world today many fervent Adventists who steadfastly look heavenward and sincerely pray each day, "Come, Lord Jesus." They are denied the blessings that many daily receive as a matter of course. They contend continually for their faith. They see no hope for relief other than their Lord's coming. It will not be hard for these to leave all behind and take their flight to the realms of the blessed. None of these will look back as did Lot's wife, regretting to leave cherished possessions behind. They have waited for their Lord to come and are ready and eager to go with Him.

I think of that poor, distracted mother in a faraway land so nobly contending for her faith and for that of her family, who confided to us one night of her weariness. "How long must we endure this? We are becoming tired." Here, in a few words, is told a long story, one of hardship and longing for rest. Her feeling, like that of many others, is expressed in the hymn:

"How long, O Lord our Saviour,
Wilt Thou remain away?
Our hearts are growing weary
Of Thy so long delay.
O when shall come the moment,
When, brighter far than morn,
The sunshine of Thy glory
Shall on Thy people dawn?"

The answer is, "Our Lord shall come, and shall not keep silence." The events we see taking place in the world are those pointed out by Him as giving assurance that His coming is near. Stating the situation personally to His people, and referring to the evidences of His nearness, Jesus said, "When ye see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates" (Matt. 24:33, R.S.V.).

The picture portrays the Master as having approached the gate to open it and pass through. But He hesitates. He stops and waits. He is anxious to pass through but something causes Him to delay. What is it? There can be but one reason—the unpreparedness of His people, the unfinished task assigned His church. There is evidence to show that if God's people had been awake, if they had been diligent in performing the task assigned

The Sabbath

By *Harry Silbaugh*

The seventh day is the Sabbath,
Encircled in His love;
On which Jesus gives a blessing
From His holy place above.

them, the Lord would ere now have passed through the door and revealed Himself in glorious splendor to this world.

The important question before every Adventist therefore during this week dedicated to prayer is, Am I fully awake? Am I as diligent about the Lord's business as I ought to be? Spiritual awakening will result in spiritual diligence. It cannot be otherwise.

The Advent Hope Must Stir Us

The Advent hope that deeply stirred our spiritual forefathers, and that so directly affected their living, must stir the hearts and profoundly affect the lives of God's people of this generation. God has blessed His people beyond the dreams of the founders of the message. The impressive budgets we annually vote for the world work, our institutions that have grown in size, number, and influence, are beyond the expectations of our early predecessors. But that the world was to be plunged into trouble and perplexity such as never was since there was a nation, and that God's people would be called upon to act heroically, and by faith move steadily forward amid last-day troubles, they well understood. The prophecies of which they were diligent students revealed this to them. The counsels of the Lord's messenger added clarity and force to the revelations of God's Word. But what our forefathers in the flesh did not count on was the lapse of time from their day to ours. They fondly expected to be in the city of God long ere now.

From the parable of Matthew 25 and the ten virgins, they knew there would be a delay, beyond the expectations of the church, and that all, the wise and foolish alike, would slumber and sleep. But they did not think the sleep would be for such a long time. They expected to live to hear the thrilling cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." But the Bridegroom has delayed. Time

has lengthened out. In His divine wisdom God has seen fit to tarry. But the tarrying cannot be much longer. The winds of strife that the angels have held until now cannot be restrained much longer. Today, not only Adventists, but people generally, talk of an imminent world holocaust that could easily mean the extinction of our civilization, as well as the destruction of all those who dwell upon the earth.

Today there are a thousand more omens giving warning of the end of all things than ever the dwellers in Noah's day had of the coming Flood. These warning omens must not be lost, especially on those who are Adventists—a people that profess to be waiting and looking for the appearance of their Lord from heaven.

"And they that were ready," we are reminded in the parable, "went in with him . . . and the door was shut." What fateful words! With great force the parable teaches that no mere theoretical belief or casual acceptance of the doctrine of Christ's return will suffice. There must be a careful preparation for that great event. There must not only be oil in the lamps but sufficient oil must be on hand for any unexpected delay on the part of the Bridegroom.

This preparation must be made under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to whose full direction our lives must daily be yielded. As our consciences are quickened under the Spirit's influence, there may come the conviction that a change of habits, a reformation in our mode of living, is called for. It may be brought to our attention that misunderstanding exists between us and others within the church or without. This places upon us the obligation of seeking a reconciliation, even though we may feel we are the injured one. There may come other promptings of the Spirit. The process of preparation demands a heeding of the Spirit's impressions upon our conscience.

We sincerely hope and pray that this Week of Prayer will mark the beginning of a careful and earnest preparation on the part of each member. Like Paul, may each of us say, looking forward to the great day of Christ's coming, "By God's grace I will be ready, 'not having mine own righteousness . . . but that which is through the faith of Christ.'" A careful preparation leads into this blessed spiritual state of preparedness.

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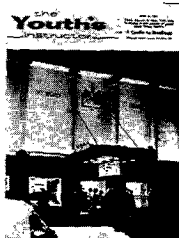
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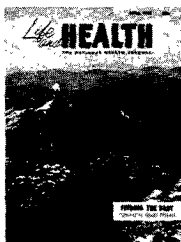
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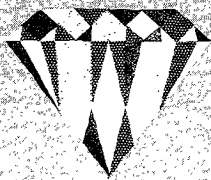
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A Message From the Editors

Dear Members of the Remnant Church:

This week the great Advent family around the world has been seeking God earnestly for a richer and deeper experience in things of eternal value. We have been praying for faith, patience, victory over besetting sins, and courage to be true to the best we know. We have been praying for dear ones, for friends, and for the witness and work of the church around the world. We have been praying for fellow believers who serve God under great difficulty. We have been praying that God would keep us all faithful unto the end, in the blessed hope that soon we may meet our Lord in joy and peace.

Here at the *Review* we have also been praying earnestly that our church paper, *THE REVIEW AND HERALD*, may become an ever more useful instrument in God's hands as He proceeds to answer all those other prayers. The great purpose of the *Review* is to help us, individually, to know how to cooperate more effectively with the agencies Heaven has ordained to finish the work in these climactic days of earth's history.

Looking forward to 1962, the editors have been planning now for more than a year, ways and means by which the *Review* can help you find God's answer to *your* prayers for personal strength along the Christian way, for a home that radiates the spirit of Christ, and for the success of the church in its worldwide task. It is

now possible to give you a preview of some of the good things in store for *Review* readers this coming year.

Early in 1962 there will be a series on marriage and the Christian home, prepared by one of our experienced leaders in this field. From a vice-president of the General Conference will come a series designed to bring the Sabbath into sharper focus, with practical suggestions on how it may become a means to more effective Christian living throughout the week.

A minister who was once a Mormon himself, and who has labored for many years among the Mormon people, will share with *Review* readers his mature understanding of Mormonism, and suggest how to work successfully for Mormons.

There is also to be a winsome, heart-warming series in which Alma E. McKibbin—our first church school teacher in California—reminisces about her long and eventful life, from a vantage point close to the century mark. Have you had dark and depressing hours? Reading her articles will give you new courage to believe that beyond the darkness rise the hills of light. Ever and anon the reader will catch a glint of the merry but earnest twinkle in her eye, with which all who know her are familiar.

Come December, the World Council of Churches will convene in New Delhi, India. In the person of a special correspondent on the scene, *Review* readers will be in a reserved front seat at what promises to be a historic session. One of the major sub-

jects on the agenda is the nature of the union for which Protestant churches are seeking today.

Many, many more good things are in store for the next twelve months. Also, from week to week the editors, with one eye on current world developments of special interest to Adventists and the other on the sure word of prophecy, will endeavor to help *Review* readers keep abreast of the rapid crystallization of last-day events.

Will the *Review* be bringing all this—and more—to your home on its regular weekly visit? As you know the subscription price has been cut to almost half of what it has been for some years. This unprecedented reduction in price has been made with the hope of bringing the *Review* to every Seventh-day Adventist home, including yours. It is an expression of the earnest conviction of the publishers that *you* will feel that from now on you cannot afford to be without it.

One and all, the time has come when we need to lay firm hold on eternal things, in preparation for the crucial days that lie just ahead. With this in view we earnestly hope that you will feel impressed to open your heart and home to the *Review*. As Moses said to Jethro on the way to the Land of Promise, "Come with us, and we will do you good!"

The Editors

Children's Lessons for the Week of Prayer, 1961

Prepared by LAWRENCE MAXWELL

Suggestions to Speakers

Here we are at the beginning of another Week of Prayer. When I was thirteen the preacher said, "This may well be the last Week of Prayer we shall ever have." But there have been a good many since then, and there will likely be more before the end comes.

Yet for some of the children who sit in front of you, this Week of Prayer may indeed be the last. So let us enter into the week with the earnest prayer that every child shall be converted.

Pray. The week will be a success only if the talks are mingled with much private prayer. If possible, visit the children in their homes and ask them to pray too.

There are eight lessons. They could be read to the children. But it's much better to read them ahead of time, think them through, then tell them in your own words. From time to time substitute personal experiences, especially in the lessons on confession, tithe, and prayer.

It is my opinion that it is best not to appeal for baptism until the sixth grade. But from the sixth grade up—that is, twelve years and older—make quite strong appeals. Younger children who ask for baptism are usually content if told they can be baptized in a year or two.

Emphasize that God is good, God is love, and that being a Christian is the happiest experience a person can ever enjoy. God wants to save all the children, and He has provided a way in which this can be done. This week we are trying to find that way and make use of it.

The main point in the lessons is that God will take His friends to heaven; let's be friends with God.

It is my prayer that these lessons will be a help to every speaker who uses them. Nevertheless, the speaker's greatest asset will not be these helps but his own knowledge of God. May He bless you all.

LESSON 1

The Girl Who Said No to Noah

Theme: As God provided a way of escape before the Flood, so He has provided a way of escape from the destruction at the end of the world.

Speaker's Preparation: Read *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 90-104, "The Flood"; also Genesis 6.

Text for the children to look up: John 3:16.

Theme Song: "I Want to Be Ready When Jesus Comes."

Prayer

When Noah was nearly five hundred years old, God told him that the people had become so wicked that He was going to send a flood to destroy them. But He wanted Noah to build a boat so everyone who wished could be saved.

Noah began work on the boat right away. His father, Lamech, helped, and so did his grandfather, Methuselah.

Exactly where Noah built the ark we do not know. Probably it was in the middle of a field.

If a man began building a boat nowadays in the middle of a field, a great many people would think he was crazy; and that's what the people in those days thought about Noah.

As the boat began to take shape, many stopped by to ask questions. It isn't hard to imagine that one of these was a boy named John.

Maybe John had been out playing with his best friends and was on his way home when one of the boys said, "Hey, look! There's Noah and his boat. Let's go over and see what he's doing."

So across the field the boys walked. One of the workmen—maybe it was Methuselah—saw them and laid down his saw and came over to chat.

"How come you're building a boat, Mister?" Johnny asked respectfully.

"Sit down on some of these planks, boys," Methuselah said kindly, flashing his lovely smile, "and I'll tell you." It had been more than eight hundred years since Methuselah was a boy, but he still liked to answer boys' questions, especially when they asked about the ark.

"It's this way, boys," he said. "Very soon God is going to send a flood—"

"But why will God do that?" Johnny's best pal asked.

"It is because there is so much sin in the world," Methuselah said. "There is so much quarreling and cheating and stealing and lying. And have you noticed that even many of the good people are much more interested in having a gay time Saturday night than they are in going to church on Sabbath morning? God says things can't go on like this much longer."

"But won't anyone escape from the flood?" Johnny asked. You could tell by the tone of his voice that he was worried.

Methuselah smiled again. "I'm glad you asked that question. You see, that's why we're building this boat. God doesn't want to destroy anyone, so He has asked Noah to build a boat so big that all who want to may come on board and be saved. Trouble is—" and Methuselah's face suddenly looked sad, "folks that start talking about

coming on board with us are laughed at."

"Well, we're going to come," Johnny said. "It would be silly not to. Thanks for telling us."

And Methuselah smiled as he turned to pick up his saw, and the boys rushed home to tell mother and dad what they had heard.

The years passed and no flood came. After a while Johnny married, and about a hundred years after that talk with Methuselah, we can imagine that a little girl came to Johnny's home, and he called her Mary.

One day when Mary was about ten she went past Noah's field. The boat seemed to be almost finished and she went over to have a close look at it.

One of the workmen saw her standing there and came down to chat. It could have been Methuselah. He was 959 years old now, but still working on the ark.

Mary asked him what the boat was for, and he explained, just as he had told her father nearly a century before. "It won't be long now, Mary," he said earnestly. "The boat is almost finished. One of these days God is going to bring the animals and birds into it. I hope when folks see that, they will believe what Noah has been preaching. There have been so few who have said they would come. They would much rather have fun than get ready for the flood." Suddenly he looked deep into Mary's eyes. "You'll accept God's mercy, won't you? You'll come into the ark."

It was the most solemn moment Mary had ever known. "I'll be there," she whispered.

"Promise?" Methuselah said.

"Promise," Mary said.

She meant it, too. She ran home and told her parents. But her father said, "Aw, don't get excited about that old boat. Noah's been preaching about a flood for more than a hundred years. When I was a boy Methuselah told me the very things he told you. But where's the flood? It never came. And it never will."

Mary was speechless. She hadn't expected dad to say *that*! Yet dad was partly right, at least. Everybody knew that Noah had been prophesying a flood for a very long time, and it hadn't come.

Mary went to the ark quite often in those days. She liked talking with Methuselah. He was such a kind man. And once in a while she got a chance to talk with Noah.

But as she grew into her teens there were so many things to do—so many parties and outings—that she didn't find time any more to go to the ark. It was much more fun talking about clothes and boy friends than it was thinking about a flood coming. The years slipped past quicker than Mary realized.

She was walking past the ark one day

when she suddenly remembered the good times she used to have with Methuselah. On an impulse she turned aside and went to the boat. But Methuselah wasn't there. "He died a few days ago," Noah explained.

Methuselah gone! Mary could hardly bear the thought. Dear old kind Methuselah. She could see him now, in her mind's eye, looking deep into her soul and saying, "You'll accept God's mercy, won't you? You'll come into the ark." She remembered that she had promised she would. Now he's gone, she thought. And I'm sure he wouldn't like some of the things I've been doing.

It seemed scarcely any time at all before there was tremendous excitement on the street where Mary lived. "The animals are going into the ark!" she heard someone shout.

Mary remembered Methuselah's words. This was the sign! The flood certainly would come! She ran to the ark. Already a crowd of people were standing around Noah, and he was doing his best to answer their questions. But most of the crowd were just standing and watching. It was all so exciting—the animals walking two by two out of the forest and into the boat, all in perfect order.

When all were inside Mary saw Noah go up into the doorway. She thought he looked terribly weary and discouraged. His wife was with him and their three sons and their wives—eight people. That was all.

Then Noah was holding up both hands. "Please," he pleaded, "some of you come into the ark." He sounded so earnest. "Please—it is your last opportunity. Why will you reject God's mercy? Why will you die when God gives you a chance to live?" Then he saw Mary. He held out a hand to her. "Mary, surely you will come."

Suddenly Mary knew she had to go. She stepped forward, toward the ramp that led into the ark. But right then someone laughed. She turned to see who it was and saw it was a friend. She hesitated. The laugh spread. Soon the whole crowd were laughing and jeering and telling Noah what a silly fellow he was, spending all this time and money building a boat.

She looked at Noah and shook her head. No! She saw his face sag with the weight of one hundred and twenty years of disappointment. But why should she care about that? What was Noah to her? Why should she be the only one to go on board, and be laughed at by her friends?

There was a flash of light. It hovered around the doorway. And when it went away, the door to the ark was shut.

In that moment Mary realized how very much she wanted to be on board. But it was too late. Too late!

A week after that the rains came. All the wicked were destroyed, including, I'm sad to say, both Mary and her father, John. The eight people inside the ark were safe. There was room for many more. What a pity that so few went in when they had the chance.

Soon God is going to destroy the earth again, not by flood but by fire. Before that happens, Jesus will come in the clouds and take everyone to heaven who is willing and ready. He says, "Whosoever believeth in him" shall "not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). As Noah made the ark to save the people from the waters of the Flood, so Jesus has made a place where we may be safe from the fires of destruction at the end of the world.

This week we will talk about how to get ready for the coming of Jesus so we can go to heaven instead of being destroyed.

How many of us this morning want to be ready when Jesus comes? Then let us be sure we come to these meetings every day this week so we will know how to get ready.

Let us bow our heads and ask Jesus to help us.

LESSON 2

The Man Who Lived in a Barn

Theme: The forgiveness of sin.

Specific objective: To get the children to believe that their sins really are forgiven.

Object lesson materials: Long nail, rosary, tape recorder; or blackboard, eraser, chalk.

Text for children to look up: 1 John 1:9.

I am holding in my hand a long nail. Imagine that I had a hundred or more of them and that they were all driven through a piece of wood so they stuck out several inches on the other side. Imagine that all this is about the size of a bed. Now lie down on it!

You think that sounds foolish. No one would do such a thing. But there are people actually lying on beds of nails at this very moment. They are doing it because they want their sins forgiven, and they believe that if the nails are sharp enough and they lie on them long enough, their gods will be sorry for them and forgive them.

Still others whip themselves with strings that have sharp hooks at the end, or push long needles through their flesh, or walk through fire. Right here in our own town there are people who buy candles and set them before images and count beads on a necklace while they mumble memorized prayers over and over again. All of them have one great desire—they want their sins forgiven and they think this is how to get it done.

This week we are trying to prepare for heaven, so of course we must have our sins forgiven. I'm very happy to tell you that we don't have to lie on nails. The Bible tells us what we have to do to be sure of forgiveness. Let's read it together: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

It's as simple as that. When we are sorry, we confess our sins to God; and He forgives us. That's all. No nails or beads. Nothing! Just repent, confess—and be forgiven.

Unfortunately, too many Seventh-day Adventist young people don't believe it! They want to have their sins forgiven. They repent. They confess. But then they don't believe that God has forgiven them. They aren't sure. They keep on feeling guilty about their sins long after God has cleansed the record.

They remind me of the man who lived in a barn. His name was Vaino. He lived in Finland. In the year 1921 he was drafted into the Finnish Army. He was told he had to ride a horse, but he didn't like horses; and the horse he was given to ride didn't do

anything to make friends. As soon as Vaino would get on, the horse would throw him off.

Vaino fell off that horse so many times that he determined he was going to quit the army and go home. But this was a serious thing to do. Men who leave the army without permission are called deserters, and they can be put in prison for a long time. Vaino became so battered and bruised that he didn't care what might happen. He left and went home. He told his parents he was going to live in the barn behind the house and asked them to bring him his food every day.

Vaino felt guilty for what he had done. He didn't dare leave the barn. Someone might see him and tell the police. Occasionally he risked going for a short walk, but only on very dark nights. It was a miserable way to live.

After several years his father died and he watched the funeral through a crack in the barn wall. Six years after that his mother died, and he watched her funeral through the same crack. Now his brother and sister brought him food.

This went on till 1959—thirty-eight years. A new policeman, checking the town records, noticed that beside the name of Vaino was the word "missing." He thought he would go over to the house and see if the family knew anything more about what had happened to the young man.

When he asked the sister, "What happened to Vaino?" she thought he had found out the secret (he hadn't) and called Vaino from the barn. Vaino asked the policeman, "Where are you going to take me?"

"Oh, I'm not going to take you anywhere," the policeman said. "If a deserter is not found after a certain number of years, he is forgiven. You have been free to leave that barn and go anywhere you wanted for many years."

Imagine living in a barn half your life, thinking you would be punished if you went out, when your crime was forgiven and you could go anywhere you wanted!

How very sad. Vaino lived almost like an animal for nearly forty years, weighed down with a guilty conscience, when he might have been free and happy.

Yet it is possible that some of you may be living in a barn right now! Here's how:

Jack did something he should not have done. He repeatedly asked Jesus to forgive him, but he couldn't believe that Jesus ever really did.

Well, as the story goes, the world came to an end, Jesus returned, and much to his surprise Jack went to heaven.

He was walking the streets of the New Jerusalem one day when Jesus came over. "How do you like heaven by now, Jack?" He asked.

"Oh, it's wonderful," Jack said. "But how did you ever manage to let me come after that terrible sin I committed?"

"What sin did you commit?" Jesus asked.

"Oh, don't You know?" Jack said. "It was awful."

"Tell me, Jack," Jesus said. "Did you ever ask Me to forgive you?"

"Oh, yes," Jack said. "I asked You over and over."

"That explains everything," Jesus said. "The very first time you asked Me to forgive you, I forgave you and forgot all about the sin. Don't worry about it any more."

Poor Jack. He had felt miserable all those

years because he refused to believe he was forgiven. If he had only believed, he could have been cheerful and happy. That's why I say he was living in a barn. If you have asked Jesus to forgive your sins and are still worrying about them, you are living in a barn too. Come out. Forget the sins you have confessed. Jesus died so He could forgive you. Accept that forgiveness today.

Here's how forgiveness works. I have a tape recorder (or use a blackboard). As you know, the angels are making a complete record of our lives. This machine records everything a person says. As you watch I am going to put onto the tape the record of that terrible sin Jack committed.

(Speaker, record) "This is the record of the life of Jack. Jack committed a terrible sin, so wicked that he couldn't possibly go to heaven."

There is the record. Now we shall play it back to be sure it is on right. (Play back.) It is correct, isn't it? And scientists tell us it will stay on that tape forever. That is, it will stay there forever unless it is cleaned off. Jack asked to have his sin forgiven. The Bible says that when a person confesses his sins the record is cleansed. Better yet, in the place of his sins are put all the lovely things Jesus did.

Watch! (Play "This is the record of the life of Jack." Stop, then record: "Jack never did anything wrong. He was always good and kind and obedient. All his life he was just like Jesus.")

Now we're going to play this back. (Play back.) Say! If you had a record like that in the books of heaven, would you be worried? Of course you wouldn't! If you have asked Jesus to forgive your sins, you have that lovely record right now! Let us bow our heads and thank Jesus for it.

NOTE: The simplicity of forgiveness is so stupendous that it is almost impossible for the mind to grasp. It would be wise to encourage discussion and questions before the closing prayer.

LESSON 3

Black Stone in the Bag

Theme: The confession of sin.

Specific objective: To get the children to make right any wrongs, such as quarreling, cheating, gossiping, that they have committed, especially at school.

Speaker's preparation: Read the story of Achan, in Joshua 6:17-19; 7:1-26.

Text for the children to look up: Proverbs 28:13.

Soon after Barbara went to bed one night mother heard her calling, "Please come here. I want to talk to you."

Mother went at once. Barbara told her that during spelling class that day she had spelled a word wrong. Teacher had told the children to exchange papers for marking, and when Barbara got her paper back, she found that Betty, the girl who had marked her paper, had changed the word she had spelled wrong so it looked right. Then instead of crediting her with nine points,

which Barbara knew she deserved, Betty had written "ten" on top of the paper.

"I know I didn't deserve ten," Barbara told her mother, "but I knew if I changed the score back to nine, Betty would think I was an oddball, or something. So when the teacher asked us to tell him what we got so he could write it in the record book, I said ten, but I shouldn't have, and now I don't know what to do."

"That's easy," mother said. "Go and tell the teacher in the morning."

"But I can't," Barbara sobbed. "He'll never like me again."

Mother answered, "The Bible says that if a person confesses his sins he will have mercy. I believe your teacher will be very nice to you if you tell him."

Next morning Barbara went to school early and fearfully told her teacher what she had done. The teacher said, "I like you all the better now, Barbara, because I know it took a lot of courage for you to come and tell me."

Yesterday we talked about having our sins forgiven. Our text said that God promises to forgive if we will confess. Confession is what we are talking about today. Let's read Proverbs 28:13: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." That's the text Barbara's mother referred to. And how true it is! Barbara found that out.

Another thing about confessing is that it makes us feel so good.

Pastor Mitchell went to a certain church school to hold a series of baptismal classes. The first day he told the children what I am telling you now, that all sins must be confessed before we can go to heaven. At the end of the class several boys told him that they had been taking candy from Mr. Kunkel's store without paying for it.

"You will have to confess to Mr. Kunkel what you have been doing. Figure out how much candy you stole and bring the money to school tomorrow," Elder Mitchell said. "I will go with you to see Mr. Kunkel."

During the night Elder Mitchell decided that after the boys had confessed to Mr. Kunkel he would take them to the store and get them ice cream to show them how much he appreciated their willingness to do right.

He met them at the appointed time next day and went with them to Mr. Kunkel's house. The boys told Mr. Kunkel what they had been doing and gave him the money.

Then they dashed for the door and raced back to the school. They ran so fast that Elder Mitchell could hardly catch up with them. Finally he managed to stop two or three.

"I'd like to take you to Mr. Kunkel's store and get you some ice cream," he said.

"Aw, we don't want any ice cream," the boys replied. "We feel too good the way it is."

But the Bible tells us about one man who tried to cover his sins. He certainly did not prosper. His name was Achan, and you know the story well.

Just before the Israelites took the city of Jericho, Joshua told them that everything they found inside the city made of gold or silver, brass or iron was to be taken to the tabernacle and given to God. Then the Israelites walked around the city, shouted, and the walls fell down.

Achan rushed into the ruins. Presently he

saw a pile of money and a very pretty coat. He looked this way—that way. No one was watching. Quick as a flash he grabbed the money and the coat and hid them under his coat.

Soon the trumpet sounded. The battle was over. Achan went back to his tent and showed his family what he had brought. They were thrilled. "But we daren't use them right away. We might be caught and punished," Achan said. So they dug a hole in the floor of the tent and buried them.

A few days later God told Joshua that someone had sinned and he had better find out who he was and punish him.

Joshua announced that next morning everybody in the whole camp was to come to a meeting and they would find out who had done wrong.

Achan had all night to confess. If he had gone to Joshua then, I am sure he would have been forgiven. But he looked at all the Israelites, two million of them, and felt certain he would not be discovered among so many.

Next morning everyone came to the meeting. Joshua explained that lots would be cast to find the guilty man.

I don't know how they cast lots in those days. When we draw straws nowadays we are casting lots. One method they might have used was to have a white stone and a black one in a bag. If a person reaching in brought out the white stone, he would be considered innocent. If he got the black one, he was guilty.

First Joshua called up the leaders of the twelve tribes. Achan belonged to the tribe of Judah. The man from the tribe of Reuben put his hand into the bag and got the white stone. He put it back and the man from Simeon tried. He got the white stone. Then the man from Levi came forward. He pulled out the white stone too. Then it was time for the man from Judah. He put his hand in—and brought out the black stone!

Achan still wasn't worried. Judah was the largest tribe of all. Joshua called up the great-grandfathers in the tribe of Judah—and Achan's great-grandfather got the black stone! Then the grandfathers came—and Achan's grandfather got the black stone. Pretty close! Still Achan did not confess. I think if he had, even this late, he would have been forgiven. But how embarrassing to confess before so many people! Achan kept still.

Now he had to go forward—his uncles, his father, his brothers, and himself. His oldest uncle reached in—and got the white stone. The next uncle got the same; so did his father. Soon it was big brother's turn. Then the next brother. If only one of them would get the black stone, everything would be all right for Achan. But they didn't.

Finally Joshua said, "It's your turn, Achan."

Can you see Achan as he steps forward? Joshua holds out the bag. He puts his hand in. Which is the black stone? He picks up one. Is it white or black? If only he could see! He lets it go and picks up the other. But maybe this is the black one. Probably he ought to take the first one after all.

He daren't take too long. People will be suspicious. Finally he grabs one and brings it out.

It's the black one!

Joshua asks him to tell what he's done, and he makes a full confession. Oh, yes, now that he's been caught he's willing to tell everything. But it's too late. Joshua sends two

men to Achan's tent. They dig in the floor and find the money and the coat, and bring them back to Joshua, who shows them to all the people.

A coat and a handful of money. How pitifully poor they seem now.

There is only one thing Joshua can do. "The wages of sin is death." Achan and all his family, who knew about the sin but didn't confess either, are stoned to death.

What a terribly sad story it is. I am glad none of us have to suffer as Achan did. In fact, that is one reason why God gives us these Weeks of Prayer, so we can make wrong things right.

Is there someone here who knows there is something he ought to confess to the class? Not a private sin, but something you've done at school. Your teacher tells me there has been some cheating. There has been quarreling on the playground. What a wonderful thing it would be if we could confess and apologize for those things today! You will feel so good when you do! Who will be the first?

NOTE: If the children are slow responding, have a short prayer. Close with prayer anyway, asking God's forgiveness for the wrongs that have been confessed.

LESSON 4

Worms That Counted the Offering

Theme: Jesus will take His friends to heaven. One way of getting better acquainted with Jesus is to pay tithe.

Specific objective: To get the children to tithe their allowance and earnings.

Speaker's preparation: This is a good lesson in which to tell a personal experience in tithe paying. Or read pages 49-53 in *God and I Are Partners*, by D. E. Rebok. It's a tremendous tithe story!

Object lesson material: A tithe envelope.

Texts for the children to look up: John 17:3; Malachi 3:10, 11; Deuteronomy 14:22; Proverbs 3:9.

It was one week before Bob's birthday. His mother said, "You can have a birthday party if you like, and I'll let you invite ten friends."

Bob was thrilled. He loved nothing better than birthday parties—especially when they were his own! He set to work at once making out the list of people he would invite.

But soon he ran into the kitchen where mother was working. "Please, Mom," he pleaded, "can't I invite more than ten? You see, I've got more than ten friends, and I don't want to leave any of my friends out."

That is exactly the way it will be when Jesus makes out the list of people He is going to take to heaven. He is going to include all His friends.

That is what the Bible says. Read John 17:3: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." We are talking this week about getting ready for heaven. The most important thing about getting ready is becoming a friend of Jesus. If we are His friend, we will have eternal life.

Today and the next three mornings we will talk about how to get acquainted with Jesus. One of the best ways is by paying tithe. You may not have thought of it that way, but read Malachi 3:10: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse . . . and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts."

"Prove me now" means "Find out about Me; get acquainted with Me."

Let's get acquainted with Jesus. Let's see if He does the things He says He will. I'm going to tell you two or three wonderful stories. While I am telling them, think whether paying tithe helps people to love Jesus more.

The first story is from New York.

In the year 1919 Elder Carlyle B. Haynes preached a sermon about tithing. After the meeting a dear old Irish woman named Sister Clancy stopped at the door and asked him if she really was supposed to pay tithe.

"You see," she explained, "I am all alone in the world. My only income is \$6.00 a week that the husband of my niece sends me, God bless him. I live in a single room and pay \$4.50 a week rent. That leaves me \$1.50 for myself for food, clothes, everything. If I pay tithe, it will be 60 cents, and that will leave me only 90 cents. Does the Lord expect me to pay tithe?"

Elder Haynes said, "God doesn't need your 60 cents, but you need the blessing He has promised. You should pay tithe."

Sister Clancy smiled. "I've trusted the Lord for many years. He has never failed me yet and He won't fail me now."

Next week she handed Elder Haynes her 60 cents, and the next week another 60 cents. She never missed.

One night she said, "My neighbors are being so kind to me! They bring me all sorts of things—loaves of bread, quarts of fruit, milk, cakes. They never used to. I am getting along better on my 90 cents than ever I did on \$1.50."

Then one evening there was a knock on the door of Elder Haynes's office and in came Sister Clancy, strutting like a peacock and with a playful smile on her face. "Sure and you'll have to show me proper respect after this!" she said to Elder Haynes. "I'm a rich woman now, that I am."

Finally Elder Haynes managed to get her to sit down and tell him what had happened. "You remember that husband of my niece that's been sending me \$6.00 a week?" she said. "Well, I got a letter from him today. He said he's been wanting to send me more, but couldn't. Now his wages have been raised. From now on he's going to send me \$10.00. Now listen, pastor. That means my tithe goes up to \$1.00. My rent is the same. So that will leave me \$4.50 for myself. That's five times as much as the 90 cents I've had. I don't know what I'm going to do with all my money. Oh, Pastor Haynes, the Lord's been good to me."

(Speaker: Tell a personal experience here, or the Rebok story mentioned above. Emphasize that tithepayers love God more.)

I have one more story. It's about the worms that counted the offering. Before I tell it though, here are some problems in tithe paying. What would you do about them?

1. Mary baby-sits for Mrs. Smith's little girl and is paid \$1.00. Should she pay tithe?

Suggested answer: Yes, of course. That's easy!

2. Dick is not baptized. He earns some

money, but he says, "Since I am not baptized, I don't need to pay tithe." Is he right?

Suggested answer: No. Tithe paying is for everybody.

3. Bill's parents give him an allowance of 50 cents a week, which he can spend as he pleases. His parents pay tithe. Should Bill pay tithe on his allowance?

Suggested answer: Yes. The money is now Bill's, and he should tithe it.

4. Margaret attends a church school where there is a grocery store right across the street. Her mother gives her \$3.00 every week and tells her to spend it buying her lunch at the store. Any money left over she must return. Should she pay tithe?

Suggested answer: No. The children's food is the parents' expense.

5. Robert wants to buy a new ball. He discovers that if he takes all his savings and all of this week's allowance, he will have just enough to buy the ball. He says, "I haven't paid tithe on this week's allowance yet, but I'll pay two tithes next week." Is this all right?

Suggested answer: No. Tithe the first fruits. Proverbs 3:9.

6. Alice has earned a dime. She knows it will be a long time before she earns any more. Should she pay a penny tithe, or is this too little to make the church treasurer worry about?

Suggested answer: She should pay tithe on it. Most church treasurers love making out receipts for children. But note, if the child will be earning regularly, let him save the tithe for perhaps a month and pay it all at once:

(Speaker: At this point hold up a tithe envelope and show how to use it.)

You did well on those answers. Now for the story of the worms and the offering.

In a small town in the eastern part of Canada there was a little Adventist church. Most of the members were farmers. One day the terrifying news went around that army worms were coming and were destroying everything.

But a wonderful thing happened. As the worms came to the edge of the Adventist farmers' property they turned aside and left the crops unharmed. But on one Adventist's farm they seemed to make a mistake. They ate his crops just as they ate all the other people's.

The church members were mystified. Had God blundered? This farmer was a good, faithful brother. But next Sabbath he got up in church and admitted that he had not been paying tithe. It really looked as if the worms had counted the offering, didn't it? They certainly knew which fields the angels would let them eat.

Don't you suppose that those tithepayers loved God a whole lot more for protecting their crops? And don't you suppose that poor brother decided he would begin paying a faithful tithe, so he could share in God's blessings too? I'm sure he did.

So you see, tithe paying does help us to love God better, and loving God better is the most important part about getting ready for heaven.

I'm wondering this morning whether we would like to promise God that we will tithe our allowance and earnings faithfully. If you would like to make that promise, put your hand up.

(Close with a short prayer sealing this decision.)

LESSON 5

Mike's Marvelous Mystery

Theme: Prayer will help us get better acquainted with Jesus.

Specific objective: To get the children to pray at home *every morning*.

Speaker's preparation: This is a good morning for telling about a time when God answered *your* prayer.

Text for the children to look up: John 14:13, 14.

May 1, 1873. It was night in an African village. An African lay curled up outside the door of a hut he had helped to build only two days before. He was lying there instead of in a bed because inside the hut was his beloved master, Dr. David Livingstone, and he was sick.

Something, we don't know what, awakened the sleeper at the door. He judged by the sights and sounds of the night that it was not long before sunrise.

Then he was startled to observe that Livingstone's candle was still burning. Fearfully, he peeked in. Livingstone was kneeling by the bed. Afraid of what it might mean, the African called Susi and Chuma, two of his friends, and together they slipped into the hut and touched their beloved master gently on the shoulder. There was no response. Livingstone had died on his knees, praying.

No one wants to die, but when we must, what better way could there be than this, talking to God? It didn't just happen that Livingstone died this way. For three years he had not seen another white person. During all that time he had received not even one letter from home. He was all alone. Yet not alone. For he spent a great deal of time praying and reading his Bible, until God became a very real friend to him.

God will become our friend too, if we pray. And remember, becoming Jesus' friend is the most important part of getting ready for heaven.

Jesus became real to Mike when he prayed. Mike came out from school one afternoon and saw that snow had been falling hard. All the buses were late, but he didn't realize it. He got on one at the usual place and at the usual time. It took him many miles before he realized that it was the wrong bus. It was taking him *away* from home, not *toward* it!

He got off immediately and went to a drugstore to keep warm and think what to do next. He found he had three nickels in his pocket and decided to telephone home and tell mother what had happened. He put a nickel in the phone—for this happened when a nickel was enough to pay for a phone call. He dialed the right number and heard the phone ring once at the other end. Then the phone went dead.

He hung up and looked for his nickel to come back, but it didn't. He tried again, putting in the second nickel. But the phone rang only once.

He put in another nickel, dialed, heard the bell ring—and the phone died again.

Suddenly he realized he had no more money. He was alone, miles from home, with

no one to help him—unless Jesus would. He knew Jesus *could*. He knew the stories in the Bible about how God helped important people in times past. But *would* Jesus? Would Jesus help an eleven-year-old boy in a drugstore when all he needed was a dime? Mike had figured it out. If he had a dime he could take the bus back to school. He had a friend near there who would let him use his telephone to call mother.

In that crowded drugstore Mike bowed his head. "Dear Jesus," he prayed, "please send me a dime."

He opened his eyes and the most remarkable thing happened. A man walked into the store, looked over all the boys—and there were many of them, all trying to keep warm—and pointed at Mike and said, "You, boy. Would you like to earn a dime?"

"Yes, SIR!" said Mike.

"My car has stalled outside," the man said. "There is a hill a short distance away. If I could get the car there, I'm sure it would start as it rolled down. If you will steer while I push, I'll pay you a dime."

A few minutes later, on the bus going home, Mike wondered at the marvelous mystery of it all. Why did the man's car stall just where it did? Why did the man offer to pay exactly a dime? Why did the man pick on *him*?

Today Mike is an Adventist minister teaching Bible in one of our colleges. He tells his students, "I know what the Bible says about God. But the thing that helped me most to believe in Him and to love Him was the way He answered my prayer that cold day in the drugstore."

Jesus will do wonderful things for you too, if you pray. Read John 14:13, 14: "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do. . . . If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it."

Terry found that out. Terry had a terrible temper and he was ashamed of it. But what could he do to stop it? Al and Tom had often seen him get angry, and they laughed at him behind his back.

One day the minister came to the school and held a Week of Prayer. He talked about what God will do for children who pray, and when he got through one morning he asked how many of the children would promise to pray morning and evening for God to help them overcome their bad habits.

To everyone's surprise, Terry put his hand up. Al nudged Tom and jerked his thumb in Terry's direction. "He'll never overcome that temper," Al sneered.

But Al was in for a surprise. Terry faithfully prayed every morning and evening. And when he felt that temper coming on, he would send up a quick request for help wherever he was. He didn't overcome the habit right away, but there was improvement.

Then one day, while the boys were playing baseball, the umpire called Terry out. Everybody could see the umpire had made a mistake, and Al whispered to Tom, "Watch Terry react to this one."

Tom watched. He saw Terry's face turn red. He saw Terry swallow. But that was all. No angry words came out. Terry dropped the bat and walked quietly to the side lines.

"Well," whispered Al to Tom, "Terry really has changed."

"Yes," said Tom, "and maybe we ought to begin praying more often ourselves. It would probably do us some good too."

(At this point it would be wise for the speaker to tell a personal experience of answered prayer.)

Dear children, remember God's promise, "If ye shall ask *any thing* in my name, I will do it." There is nothing too hard for God.

And the more you talk to Him, the better you will become acquainted with Him; and when He comes He will be sure to take you to heaven.

How many of you pray every night before you get into bed? Very good.

Now for a harder question. How many of you usually kneel beside your bed and pray in the morning before you go to school?

How many of you will promise that you will pray in the morning, beginning tomorrow morning?

(Pray for God to help them keep this promise.)

LESSON 6

Best Blessings for the Best Day

Theme: Sabbathkeeping helps us get better acquainted with Jesus.

Specific objective: To get the children to promise to be ready for Sabbath before the sun goes down this Friday.

Speaker's preparation: Read about the man at the pool of Bethesda, in John 5:1-16; and about the man born blind, in John 9.

Texts for the children to look up: Isaiah 58:13, 14; Leviticus 23:32.

The Bible tells us about a young man who got sick.

Doctors could not help him. Finally his friends took him to a pool in Jerusalem. They thought that every once in a while an angel made waves in the water of this pool, and the first sick person to get into the water after that happened would get well.

The sick young man waited hopefully, lying on a thin mat. One day a great cry went up, "The water is troubled!" The sick people at the edge of the pool surged into the water. The young man was too late.

This happened many times. Thirty-eight years went by, and he never once got into the water first. Bitterly he repented of the sins he had committed. Time and again he reconsecrated his life to God.

Then the news buzzed around the cripples at the pool that a Great Healer had come to Jerusalem. He only had to touch the eyes of the blind and they could see. He put His fingers into the ears of the deaf and they could hear.

If only He would come to me! the old man thought. For he was an old man now.

But weeks went by and the Healer didn't come. Sabbath dawned one week. The sick man was sure the Healer wouldn't come that day. He had been taught all his life that it was wrong to treat the sick on Sabbath. The Pharisees said you even had to take a bandage off on Friday afternoon. It was wrong to carry things too. You could take a handkerchief with you if you tied it around your waist; but if you put it in your pocket, you were sinning.

Now, on this Sabbath afternoon, as the sick old man lay beside the pool, he heard someone stop beside him. He looked up. The kindest face he had ever seen was looking down at him.

"Would you like to get better?" the Stranger asked.

Of course, he would! Then, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk," the Stranger said.

The man tried. Strength flowed into his muscles. He hadn't felt so good since he was a boy. He picked up his bed, swung it onto his shoulder, and turned to thank . . . But the Stranger was gone, and he didn't even know His name!

He went at once to the Temple to give a thank offering. On the way some Pharisees saw him. "You," they said, pointing at him. "Why are you carrying your bed on Sabbath?"

Well, now! He hadn't thought about that! He was so happy about being healed that he had forgotten the rule about not carrying things. "The man who healed me," he said, "told me to take up my bed and walk."

"Who was it that healed you?" the Pharisees asked.

"I don't know," the man said, which was true.

But the Pharisees knew without being told. There was only one man in the whole country who could heal like this. They were angry! They said to one another, "If this man Jesus goes on doing things like this on Sabbath, soon all the people will believe in Him."

And, of course, they were right! And Jesus went right on doing kind things on Sabbath. He opened the eyes of a man born blind (John 9) and healed a man with a withered arm (Mark 3:1-6). He kept many of His very best blessings for that day. And He still does.

It makes Satan so annoyed. He knows that if people keep the Sabbath right, Jesus will bless them; and then they will love Jesus and get ready to go to heaven with Him. That's why Satan works so hard to make people break the Sabbath.

You children know a lot about how to keep the Sabbath. How well can you answer these questions?

1. On Friday afternoon John hurries home from school, sweeps the front porch and mows the lawn, as his mother asks him to, then cleans his shoes and takes a shower. He is all ready for Sabbath a few minutes before the sun goes down. Is this a proper way to get ready for the Sabbath? (See Leviticus 23:32.)

2. Mary promises to give all the money she earns baby-sitting to the Investment Fund. One Friday night Mrs. Jones down the street telephones and asks her to baby-sit that evening. Is it all right for Mary to baby-sit for pay when she is going to turn all the money in for Investment?

Suggested answer: No. Money earned by breaking the commandments should not be used to pay for preaching the commandments. (See Deuteronomy 23:18.)

3. Nancy gets up early Sabbath morning; Jane sleeps in. Who does better?

4. Sabbath afternoon Jack goes for a walk with his boy friends and they talk about baseball and football most of the time. John goes for a walk with his family. They look for interesting things in the plants and trees they pass. Who are keeping Sabbath better? (See Isaiah 58:13, 14.)

5. Nancy's family get together a few minutes before the sun goes down. They sing awhile, mother reads some stories and the lesson from the *Junior Guide*, then they kneel while father prays. In Ellen's home they hardly ever have Sabbath evening worship. Which way do you think it ought to be in your home?

A Sabbath well kept brings a lot of happy blessings. Edwin came home from school one day and found a letter from his big brothers, Dave and Robert, saying they were coming home for the weekend to take him boating.

Edwin was thrilled. But when his brothers came on Friday afternoon they told him they were going *tomorrow morning*. You see, they had already grown up and left home before an evangelist came to town and told mother and Edwin how important Sabbathkeeping is.

Edwin didn't know what to do. He wanted to keep Sabbath. He wanted to go with his brothers. He thought that if he didn't go with them, they wouldn't like him, and then they would never be willing to keep the Sabbath. He couldn't sleep much that night. He couldn't eat his breakfast. Finally he told Dave he was going to go to church instead. Then he broke down and cried.

He had a wonderful time at church that day, the best ever. Jesus seemed so near to him. When he got home he found that Dave and Robert had come back from the lake! They said, "We didn't enjoy being there without you, so we came home to ask you to tell us what it is about the Sabbath that makes you prefer to go to church on Saturday instead of going boating."

All afternoon Edwin and his mother explained the Bible to Dave and Robert. Today Dave is a minister in the Adventist church and Robert soon will be too. Oh, yes. They all went boating on Sunday.

What a good thing it was that Edwin kept that Sabbath so carefully!

Charles—that's not his real name, since we want to embarrass no one—was a student in an Adventist college learning to be a doctor. He went walking with some of his friends one Sabbath afternoon. When they came to a lake they talked about how cool it would be to swim on such a hot day. "But, of course, that wouldn't be right to do on Sabbath," they agreed.

"However," one of them said, "if someone were drowning, it would be all right to swim out to rescue him."

"Or if someone fell in," another suggested.

Charles walked onto a little pier, leaned over, and "accidentally" fell in. "Help!" he called, but the others just laughed.

Then, suddenly, something went wrong. "Help!" Charles pleaded desperately. "I'm drowning!" His friends noticed the change in his voice. They started to go in after him. But it was too late. Charles went down and never came up.

What a sad, sad thing. I am sure that today Charles would be a successful doctor, telling hundreds of people about Jesus, if that group of young people had not been careless that one Sabbath afternoon.

How about you? Jesus will bless you if you keep Sabbath right. Will you promise to be more careful in the future?

Thank you. It's good to see so many hands go up. But now I want to be more specific. Will you promise that this Friday afternoon you will hurry home from school,

quickly do all the jobs mother asks, and get cleaned up by five minutes before sunset?

(Pray that God will help them keep this promise.)

LESSON 7

Kindest Man Who Ever Lived

Theme: Reading the Bible helps us get better acquainted with Jesus.

Specific objective: To get the children to read the Bible every day.

Speaker's preparation: Read about feeding the 5,000, in John 6:5-15; raising Jairus's daughter, in Matthew 5:22-43; healing Bartimaeus, in Luke 18:35-43. Also read about Jesus' suffering and death.

We want to be ready when Jesus comes, and to be ready we must become Jesus' friends. We have talked about several ways to get acquainted with Him—by paying tithe, keeping the Sabbath, praying. One of the best ways of all is to read the Bible.

The more we read about Jesus, the more we will love Him. He was such a kind, thoughtful, helpful person.

For instance, we read in the Bible that there was a little boy who went to listen to Jesus preach. Jesus told a story. When He got through the little boy thought, "I hope He tells another." And He did.

When He finished that one, the little boy thought, "I hope He tells another." And He did.

It was a wonderful story. The little boy listened to every word. When Jesus got through the boy thought, "I hope He tells another." And He did!

One story after another Jesus told, and as the boy listened he said to himself, "I want to be like that Man. He's so good and kind."

Then Jesus finished a story. The little boy thought, "I hope He tells another." But He didn't. The little boy looked at the sun. It was nearly down to the mountaintops! The day was nearly over! Jesus had preached all day long!

Then the boy felt something in his hand. His lunch! He hadn't eaten, yet here it was almost suppertime. That proves Jesus was a good storyteller. Any preacher who can talk right through dinnertime and the little boys not realize what time it is, must be good!

The boy was about to eat when he saw one of the disciples coming his way and asking, "Does anyone have food he would be willing to give to Jesus?"

The little boy thrilled with the idea. If Jesus was hungry, he'd be glad to give Him his lunch. The disciple took him to Jesus.

Jesus thanked him ever so kindly, then told the disciples to tell all the people to sit down for supper. The boy was amazed. Feed all these thousands of people on my five buns and two fish? Impossible! When the people were seated, Jesus said the blessing, then He broke the buns, and to the boy's amazement, where there had been five buns there were now ten, now twenty, forty, eighty, one hundred and sixty. Soon there were whole baskets full, and the disciples were taking them to the people.

How happy the people were that Jesus was there! The Bible tells us that they tried to make Him king. But I'm sure the happiest person in all that crowd was the little boy who gave his lunch to Jesus.

Jesus did so many lovely things! One day He raised a twelve-year-old girl to life. Her parents were thrilled when they saw her open her eyes. They couldn't thank Jesus enough. But then Jesus did something that showed He understands girls even better than their parents do. He said, "Give her something to eat." Her parents had forgotten that for several days she had been too sick to eat and was terribly hungry. Jesus remembered.

We can read in the Bible so many other kind things Jesus did. At a wedding feast He made fresh fruit juice by a miracle. He healed the eyes of blind Bartimaeus. Truly Jesus was the kindest man who ever lived.

You would think everyone would have loved Him, wouldn't you? But they didn't. You see, He told them they ought to be good, and some people don't like to be told that. They plotted how they could kill Him.

They tried to keep their plans secret, but Jesus knew all about them. One evening He told His disciples that He was going to be arrested and tried and crucified, and that all of them would run away. They were horrified. "We won't run away," they said. Peter said he would die first. Jesus looked at him and said, "Before the cock crows twice you will deny me three times."

He led them out to a garden and asked them to pray for Him. He went on a little farther and fell down and pleaded with His Father in heaven to make it so He wouldn't have to die. Satan pressed near. "Why are You going to die?" he sneered. "No one appreciates what You are doing, not even Your disciples. Go and look at them. They are sleeping."

Jesus went and looked. Sure enough, they were all asleep, even Peter. He woke them up and pleaded with them to pray, and I'm sure they said they would. But it was so hard to keep their eyes open! Jesus went away and prayed again. This time it seemed as if His own dear Father was blaming Him for all the sins that all the wicked people had committed since the world began. It's bad enough to be blamed for some little thing we didn't do. Jesus felt He was being blamed for everything. It seemed as if His Father was turning His back on Him and telling Him He was so ashamed of Him for the wicked things He had done that He would never speak to Him again.

Jesus felt so bad that He nearly died, and God sent an angel to strengthen Him.

Soon a mob came and arrested Him. When His disciples saw His hands tied with ropes they ran away.

The angry mob took Jesus into the city to try Him. They took off most of His clothes and whipped Him. Somebody shouted, "He called Himself a king. A king should have a crown. Let's make Him one." There was a sort of cactus there, with great long thorns. They made a crown out of it and pushed it onto His head. They put a reed in His hand, like a king's scepter. Someone snatched it away and hit Him on the head with it, so that the thorns went down under His skin. One wretch spat in His face.

Jesus looked at all their angry faces. So easily He could have called for angels and they would have come and destroyed those

cruel men. But Jesus said to Himself, "I mustn't do that. If I don't suffer like this, I will never be able to forgive these people for what they are doing. And I want so much to forgive them."

The mob took Him up the hill of Calvary. Soldiers threw Him to the ground and nailed Him to the cross. Then they lifted up the cross and dropped it into a hole, so that His weight pulled at all the places where the nails had gone in. Jesus only prayed, "Father, forgive them."

Then the crowd gathered around and teased Him. "He said He was the Son of God. Let Him come down now and we'll believe Him." He could have come down so easily. Satan told Him to. "Look at them," Satan said. "Not one of them appreciates what You are doing. You are dying; You are giving up heaven—for what? For nothing."

But Jesus answered, "That isn't so. Some of these men will yet learn to love Me. They will ask Me to forgive them, and I want to be able to forgive them and take them to heaven. Besides, there are going to be boys and girls in that church school in ——— [your town] who will hear about Me and love Me. I want to be able to take them to heaven."

"No," Satan said. "No children will ever love You."

"Yes, they will," Jesus answered. And He believed it so much that He stayed on that cross till He died.

What about it, children. Was Satan right or was Jesus right? Will the boys and girls of this school love Jesus and follow Him so He can forgive them and take them to heaven? Let's stand up and show Jesus we really mean it.

Now sit down. All these things we've heard about Jesus today we find out by reading the Bible. If we are going to learn what it means to follow Jesus and what He has done to save us, we need to study the Bible every day. Yesterday you promised to pray every morning. Today, thinking about what Jesus has done for us, I think we ought to promise that we will study the Bible every day, especially the Sabbath school lesson, don't you? Will you promise that you will make it a habit to study the lesson every day?

Let us pray.

LESSON 8

Jesus' Friends Go to Heaven

Theme: A brief account of what will happen between now and the time Jesus returns.

Specific objective: A full consecration.

Speaker's preparation: Read about the time of trouble and the return of Jesus in *The Great Controversy*, pages 613-652.

Texts for the children to look up: Revelation 22:11, 20, 21; Psalm 91; Isaiah 33:15, 16; Psalm 121:5, 6.

There isn't much time left to get ready for Jesus to come, for He is coming very soon. Let's read the last two verses in the Bible. Jesus says, "Surely I come quickly."

Some very interesting things will happen before He comes.

One of the first will be a demand for laws that will make it a crime to work on Sunday. Already such laws are being made in different places. But we believe that especially in the United States there will be a law making it a crime to buy and sell on Sunday. When this happens there will be a great deal of discussion over whether Sunday or Saturday is the day God wants people to keep holy. When that time comes everybody who truly loves Jesus will want to keep His Sabbath day holy. At last everyone will have decided whether he will keep Sunday or the Bible Sabbath, and when that decision has been made, probation will close. It will be like the day the door of the ark shut, and no one could get in. After probation closes no one can be forgiven. Jesus speaks of that day in Revelation 22:11. Let's read the verse together. You can see that it is important that we learn to let Jesus give us victory over every sin before that day comes.

When the Sunday law goes into effect, many Sabbathkeepers will be persecuted and put into prison. Others will manage to flee to the mountains. It will be a hard time for the good people. Their faith will be sorely tried.

But just in case you think the good people will have all the trouble, think about what the wicked will have to suffer.

Soon after probation closes the seven last plagues will begin to fall. You can read about them in Revelation 16. All of them fall on the wicked.

The first plague is an epidemic of sores that will fall on the people who decided they did not want to keep Jesus' Sabbath. The Bible calls this plague a "noisome and grievous sore." Any sore is bad, but these sores will be especially bad, possibly like very painful boils. As I said, they will fall on the wicked, but the Bible promises that they will not hurt the righteous. Read Psalm 91:3: God "shall deliver thee . . . from the noisome pestilence."

In the next plague the waters of the sea are turned to blood, and in the third plague the rivers also turn to blood. You know how thirsty you are when you are sick. Many of the wicked will still be sick with the sores, but when they want a drink of water there will be only blood. At this time the righteous will have pure, clear water, for God promises, "His waters shall be sure" (Isaiah 33:16).

Under the fourth plague the sun shines with such terrific heat that men are scorched by it. Again the righteous are protected. Read Psalm 121:5, 6: "The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee." The crops on the trees and in the fields will be burned up, and no doubt much of the food that has been stored will be spoiled. The wicked will be hungry, but the Bible promises the righteous, "bread shall be given him" (Isaiah 33:16).

The good people will not be entirely free from suffering. But though they are persecuted and suffer somewhat from lack of food, they will not die. God will care for them. Angels will protect them and provide for their needs.

There are wonderful texts in the Bible that we should learn now, to keep us encouraged when the time of trouble comes. Here are a few.

(Read together Isaiah 33:15, 16 and Psalm 91:3-10.)

As the time of trouble continues a date

will be set on which everyone who keeps the seventh-day Sabbath is to be killed. Evil men will gloat as they prepare to destroy the good people in one quick blow. Some will even try to kill them before the day comes. But when they attempt to strike the righteous, their arms will fall powerless at their sides, or angels of God, appearing like soldiers, will stand between them and the good people.

At the agreed time the wicked rush upon the little companies of the righteous, but suddenly a deep darkness falls on the earth. The shouts and jeers of the wicked die away, and a rainbow circles every group of praying Christians.

Black clouds that covered the sky come apart like a curtain, and the righteous look up and see Jesus sitting on His throne in heaven. They hear Him telling the Father that He wants these humble people to come to heaven to live with Him.

Although it looks like midnight, the sun suddenly shines. The whole world flies into commotion. Streams stop flowing. Clouds clash against one another, and a voice from heaven announces, "It is done!"

Then there is an earthquake, the worst the world has ever known. Mountains shake like sheets flapping on a clothesline; the water of the sea suddenly recedes, then rushes back, sweeping onto the land. Islands disappear. Cities along the coast sink beneath the waves. Winds sweep past, shrieking like demons, tearing loose huge boulders and rolling them into the valleys.

Hailstones fall from heaven, every one of them weighing nearly 66 pounds. Beautiful buildings crumble, and prison doors fly wide

open letting the captive righteous go free.

Graves are opened too. Up come people who died just before the plagues began to fall, and also wicked men like Herod and Caiaphas, who helped to crucify Christ.

The clouds roll back and the glory of heaven streams down. A hand appears holding two tables of stone folded together, and as the thunder rolls and lightning flashes, the tables are opened and everyone can see, in blazing fire, the words of the Ten Commandments, the law which the righteous have kept and which the wicked have despised. The fourth commandment will be especially bright.

Then the voice of God is heard declaring the day and hour of Jesus' coming. The words roll through the earth like peals of loudest thunder.

Soon there appears in the east a small black cloud about half the size of a man's hand. Jesus is on the way!

As the cloud draws closer it grows larger and glows like fire. The air seems filled with angels. Jesus sits in the midst, a crown of glory resting on His brow, His face shining brighter than the sun.

The angels have been singing. Now they stop, and there is an awesome hush, broken only by the cries of the wicked calling for the rocks and mountains to fall on them.

For a moment even the righteous are frightened. They have always worshiped and respected God, but they never realized He was as powerful as this.

Then Jesus, knowing they are afraid, smiles on them and says, "My grace is sufficient for you." Their faces light up and joy fills their hearts.

Jesus calls the righteous dead to awaken. Graves are opened and angels sweep down to pick up the saints and carry them to the cloud.

Then the living righteous who have stood true to Christ through all the time of trouble are caught up and borne to the cloud, and "so shall we ever be with the Lord."

All this will happen soon. Most likely you will be there. You will see Jesus come. You will see the righteous caught up to Jesus in the cloud.

Best of all, you can be one of those righteous. You can be lifted up to the cloud. You can be taken to heaven.

It pays to be one of Jesus' friends, doesn't it?

And now we have come to the end of our Week of Prayer. Who knows what will happen to us before another Week of Prayer rolls around? For some of us, indeed, this may be the last.

I'd like you all to think very seriously for a few minutes. Are you going to let some little sin keep you from going to heaven? Or will you say, "Jesus, whatever it costs, I'm going to be ready when You come"? Let me see your hands.

I'm so glad to see so many hands go up. When men make an agreement they often shake hands. It means, "I really will keep my promise." If you really mean the promise you just made, come up here and shake my hand.

(If there is a large group, let those from the front row come first, then the second row, et cetera. Close with a consecration prayer.)

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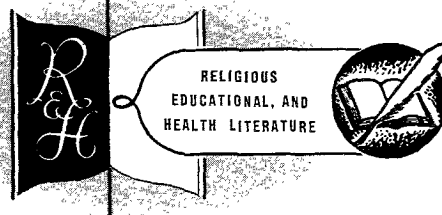
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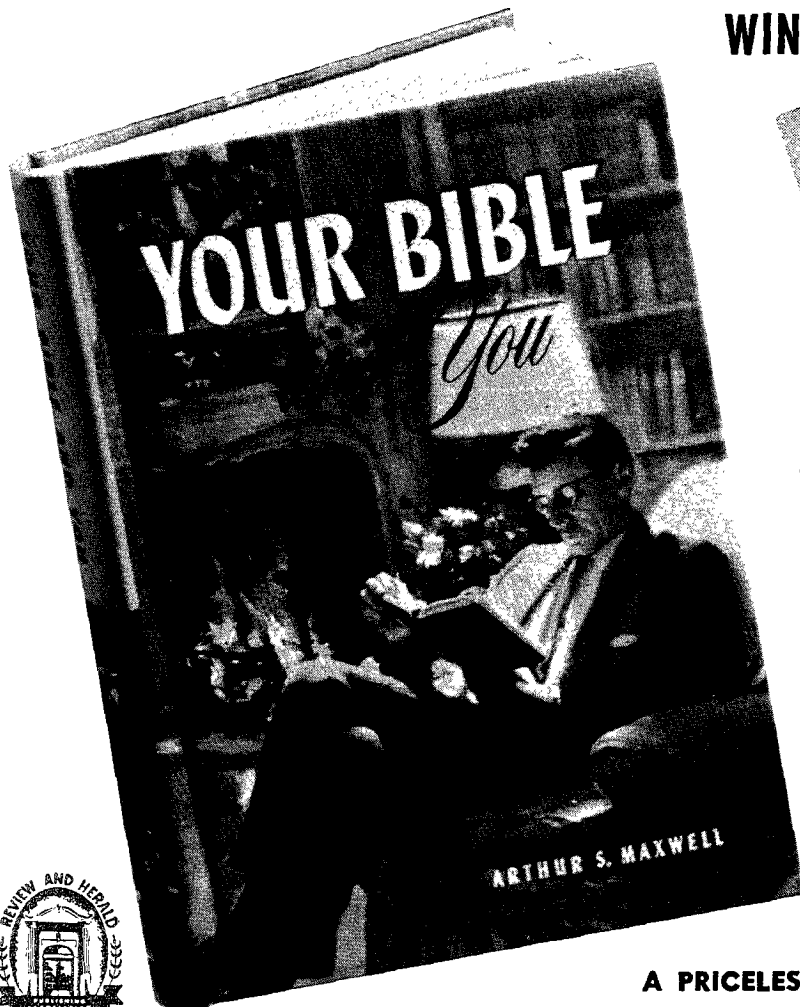
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That is why I feel it my duty to urge upon every one of you in the church, to have in your home week by week the official organ of the church that brings to you guidance and counsel from the leadership of the Advent people, accurate presentations of the plans and programs of the church, and thrilling reports of mission advance over the whole earth. We can journey more safely the Advent pathway if we have the blessing and strength of such weekly counsel.

I need not go into any details about the Review, for the matter is fully discussed elsewhere in this issue. As you read the announcement on pp. 18, 19, you will see that a most wonderful plan has been devised through the cooperation of the General Conference, the local conferences, and the Review and Herald, so that during this subscription campaign you may subscribe to the Review for only about half price. This is one of the best investments, in my opinion, that you can make for worthwhile living for 1962.

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It is my fervent prayer that the year 1962 may be the best in your Christian experience.

Faithfully yours in the blessed hope,

