

# *Signs* OF THE TIMES



Prophecy in the Early Church

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# Signs of the TIMES

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**Editor . . . . .** ARTHUR S. MAXWELL  
**Assistant Editors** Charles D. Utt, Donald A. Webster  
**Art Director . . . . .** Robert E. Kutsch  
**Circulation Manager . . . . .** H. K. Christman

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### REGULAR FEATURE

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## RELIGION IN ACTION

by M. CAROL HETZELL

● The Lutheran Church will begin work on a \$430,000 Lutheran center in Hong Kong before the end of the year. The center will include a church, parish hall, parsonage, primary school, and secondary school.

● Around 300 missionaries to overseas fields are processed annually by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The denomination's world mission program, running well over \$20,000,000 each year (not counting U.S.), extends into 183 of the 205 countries of the globe. It encompasses 726 languages.

● Young people of the United Presbyterian Church pooled their funds recently to provide eight of the denomination's educational institutions with station wagons. The vehicles will be used to transport college and seminary students scheduled to give programs in churches during the school year.

● Seventh-day Adventists have produced an official standardized highway sign designed to serve a dual purpose. It will welcome travelers to the town or city they are approaching, and inform them as to the location of the Adventist church there. The black, blue, and white sign will be used throughout North America.

● Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, has been chosen to be the site for a village of individual homes for retired ministers and missionaries of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Work on the project will begin next spring with ten to twenty-five homes as a starter. If this plan proves successful, the church will establish similar villages in different sections of the country.

● The Lutheran Braille Evangelism Association of Minneapolis, Minnesota, is now publishing a devotional magazine designed for those who are not blind, but who have very poor sight. It is called the *Christian Magnifier* and does away with the need for a magnifying glass by printing all its contents in 18-point Cairo bold type, readable with normal vision at eight or ten feet away. Some 2,300 copies are printed each month. Subscription price: \$1 a year.

### OUR COVER

An official of the Theological Institute in Utrecht, Holland, is here seen piecing together a portion of a scroll of ancient Scriptures recently found in Egypt. It is remarkable how many ancient manuscripts have been discovered of late, all bearing testimony to the essential historical and doctrinal accuracy of the Bible as it has come down to us. Truth is unchanged by changing years. Prolonged research has proved that even interpretations of prophecy published in the *Signs* today are identical with those of the earliest Christian writers. See "Prophecy in the Early Church," by C. Mervyn Maxwell, on page 10 of this issue.

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This is a tail-end view of a Navy F2H-2P Banshee jet streaking toward an opening in storm clouds over the Caribbean. Attached to a photographic squadron at Jacksonville, Florida, the plane was on a mission for the Joint Hurricane Warning Service, which tracks and provides warnings on hurricanes and tropical storms.



In Cairo, Egypt, a National Guard officer tells native Egyptian women, in the newly-created Liberation Army, how to handle a rifle. The army was formed by President Gamal Abdel Nasser's decree to stand by the regular army in the Suez Canal crisis.



The 20,000-ton Nevasa, Britain's largest and fastest troopship, sailed recently on her maiden voyage, carrying 1,302 servicemen from Southampton, England, to Limassol, Cyprus, with the object of strengthening Britain's position in the Eastern Mediterranean during the Suez Canal crisis.

PHOTOS: UNITED PRESS

## the flight of **TIME**



### Harnessing the Atom

ON SEPTEMBER 20 the representatives of eighty-one nations met with the purpose of setting up a "World Atomic Agency." It was convened by the United Nations, and grew out of a proposal made in 1953 by President Eisenhower.

Present were delegates from twenty-two Asian, twenty-one American, and seven African nations, plus Australia and New Zealand. Even the Vatican was represented as a European state. Arabs and Israelis, communists and capitalists, sat together in the conference room.

Never was world interest in any matter so widespread, and with good reason. All seemed to perceive that the discovery of atomic power had brought mankind to the most vital crossroads in history. They saw that they must learn to live together with this new source of power, or die together through its misuse.

Emphasizing the urgency of the meeting was an announcement made in San Francisco on the very day it opened. Discussing the atom-powered ships of the future, an expert warned of the perils of atomic shipwreck.

"If the 'Andrea Doria' had been atom-powered," he said, "hundreds of passengers would have suffered from the effects of radiation. If the American freighter which sank near the Arctic Circle had been atom-powered, Norway's fishing grounds would have been ruined. Ships that sink in harbors or along coast lines will create a serious hazard."

Obviously some agency is needed to devise and enforce precautions against these and other dangers associated with the rapidly multiplying uses of atomic energy. Controls will be required in the disposal of atomic waste materials and to prevent the pollution of the atmosphere through repeated atomic explosions.

No doubt all these problems were considered at the New York meeting, and the final report should be a document of universal interest. However, the most important phase of this matter of atomic-control was probably overlooked. That is the development of the character of the men in whose hands the future of atomic power resides. Unless these leaders are God-controlled, they cannot long control the atom for peace. Unless their personal ambitions are harnessed by the love of Christ, they will be unable to hold in check the vast powers placed in their hands by science.

Because of the enormous potential latent in this latest and greatest of inventions, the need for truly converted men and women is greater than ever. Should the control of atomic power ever get into the hands of men who put nationalism above brotherhood and private gain above the good of their fellow men, catastrophe stark and terrible will descend upon us all.

What actually confronts us is a race between character





Somewhat resembling a flying saucer, a new type of radar antenna is readied for tests at the Lockheed plant in Burbank, California. The antenna is mounted on a U.S. Navy WV-2 Super Constellation like those now in operation on guard against surprise attack.

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and knowledge. If character keeps ahead there is nothing to fear from the most brilliant inventions of science. But if it lags behind, and the higher values of life lose their meaning to the rising generation, nothing can prevent disaster, total, global, and final.

As the apostle Peter warned long ago, something very much like atomic fission will one day occur in connection with the second coming of Christ, when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Peter 3:10.

Such a day of judgment looms ahead for all who, because of unharnessed hearts, cannot harness the forces their minds have released. No wonder the apostle added this pointed, personal question: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God?" Verses 11, 12. A. S. M.

## Religion of Prosperity

SIXTY PER CENT, or approximately 100,000,000, of the population of the United States are said to hold membership in a religious body, and membership is increasing faster in proportion than the population. Fifty per cent of the members attend church more or less regularly.

In an article entitled, "What's Happening on Church Street, U.S.A.?" in the October number of *Better Homes and Gardens*, Dr. Marcus Bach, of the School of Religion, University of Iowa, gives an illuminating picture of the new churchward trend. He discusses more than one aspect of it, but here we shall note only the one that we might call the economic motive for joining a church.

"The first big, noticeable change along Church Street," says the author, "is the trend toward a personalized faith," which seems to mean a "faith" that will aid one in making the most of himself economically. The present attitude toward religion is, "What can I get out of it?" The author tells, for example, of a young businessman who, when he decided to join a church, "drove around one Sunday morning to see which church had the most Cadillacs parked around

it." The religion that appeared to be a potential producer of Cadillacs was the one for him!

The author indicates that this philosophy of religion is not the exception, either on the part of religious leaders or people. He says, "Religion in America is an endorsement of the American way. Religion all along Church Street is no longer a pie-in-the-sky promise of future rewards. It is a foretaste of heaven here and now, and very few faiths are exempt from this point of view.

"Church Street has sanctioned this personalized gospel of abundance with a phrase. It calls it 'Christian materialism.' It asks men to appreciate what they get and be stewards of what they have. Some may condemn it, but even the severest of its critics are participants in its philosophy.

"Religion as a way of salvation, religion as a spiritual fellowship, religion as an ethic still exist, to be sure, but these expressions are currently subordinated to religion as a personal adventure in richer, fuller, more successful living."

The make-the-most-of-yourself type of religion has produced a number of best-selling books under such titles as *Peace of Mind, Peace of Soul*, and *The Power of Positive Thinking*. Such books are popular, according to Dr. Bach, because they were "accepted by the people in the pews as scholarly endorsement of the gospel of getting on."

If the picture of the religious situation as provided by this author is correct (he has spent fifteen years in travel and research among more than forty different religious groups throughout the world), it is evident that the churchward flow is not to be interpreted as any deep-moving current of spirituality.

A serious questioner of the popular "gospel of abundance" and of the confused thinking that equates the "American way" with God's way is Dr. Cornelius Loew, associate professor of religion at Lake Forest College, in Illinois. In his book *Modern Rivals to Christian Faith*\* he says:

"Undoubtedly we are witnessing a 'return to religion' in our generation. The question is: return to *what* religion? What is going on in the churches to which people are 'returning'? What is happening 'inside Christianity,' where it is precisely Christian believers who face the most subtle temptation of all—the temptation to clothe the worship of something less than God in the garments of the Christian faith? Is there real debate and inner struggle among Christians in the churches concerning the nature and meaning of the Christian faith?"—Page 62.

"I am absolutely certain that much of our Protestant religion is built on a blasphemous conception of God as an indulgent Father who merely asks us to give a little time and effort to 'the Christian way of life' and who winks at our halfhearted loyalty. This God is an idol. He is the product of our wishful thinking, a tool of our self-seeking, a reflection of our self-indulgence."—Page 90.

When Christ dwelt among men He recognized that some sought Him not because they had seen the manifestation of His power but because they "did eat of the loaves." John 6:26. It is the same today. If professing Christ's name will help toward "more successful living," many will say, "Lord, Lord," without any real intention of knowing and doing God's will. Materialism, even though it is called "Christian," will lead only to bitter disappointment in the judgment, when those whose eyes have been blinded by earthly things will hear Him say, "I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." Matthew 7:21-23.

C. D. U.

\* The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1956.



# Lessons in Love

by ROY F. COTTRELL

NOT long ago a lad of some eleven years, while walking along the Merced River just above the beautiful Vernal Falls of Yosemite Park, dropped his canteen into the surging waters. While endeavoring to retrieve it, he fell into the stream, and the turbulent current carried him swiftly toward the falls.

A youthful cadet from the U.S. Navy, wearing his country's uniform, leaped over the railing and swam rapidly toward the struggling boy. He almost succeeded in rescuing him, but before he could secure a firm grip on the lad's clothing both were swept over the roaring cataract to death.

The noble youth did his best, yet he was unable to save either himself or the unfortunate lad. But of Christ Jesus it is written, "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." Hebrews 7:25. This is the good news that the loving heavenly Father would convey to every person on earth.

Some thirty-four centuries ago the nation of Israel was miraculously delivered from Egyptian bondage. As a race of slaves forced to labor in the mines, brickyards, and architectural activities of old Egypt, they had been largely deprived of educational advantages. Few of them could read or write. They likewise retained but a twilight knowledge

Moses, favored with a vision of God's dwelling place in heaven, was instructed to construct a miniature model in the camp of Israel.

STANLEY HALL



for November 6, 1956



The pillar of fire which led the children of Israel by night was just one indication of God's love for His people.

of the Creator, His law, and the coming Redeemer. Under these circumstances a wise and loving Father instituted an elaborate and impressive system of object lessons to remind His people of His love and acquaint them with His plan of salvation.

God favored Moses with a vision of His dwelling place in heaven, known as "the true sanctuary," and directed him to construct a miniature model in the camp of Israel. Said the Lord:

"Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." Exodus 25:8, 9.

This house of worship, which was approximately eighteen feet wide by fifty-five feet in length, was divided into two rooms. In the "holy place," which was twice the size of the "most holy," was located the table of shewbread that was to remind the people that Christ is the Lord of the harvest, the bountiful Provider of all physical needs, and the spiritual "Bread of life."

There also stood the golden candlestick, with its seven lamps which were to burn continually. It represented Christ and His people as "the light of the world." John 8:12; Matthew 5:14.

The other article of furniture in the first apartment was



the golden altar, where incense was offered. As the smoke of the incense ascended during morning and evening worship, the people were led to realize that every sincere prayer ascends to the throne of God, who hears and answers the petitions offered. Psalm 141:2.

In the most holy place there was but one article of furniture—the sacred ark, or chest, containing the law of Ten Commandments; while above this was a covering of gold known as the “mercy seat.” This was a little earthly model of the Father’s glorious throne in heaven.

This impressive arrangement was to teach the great truth that divine mercy and justice blend at the mercy seat. Says the psalmist, “Justice and judgment are the habitation of Thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before Thy face.” Psalm 89:14.

In many ways that ancient tabernacle erected in the wilderness of Sinai radiated the glorious light of the gospel. To this sacred place the people came bringing their various offerings. In the springtime, as the first golden heads of ripening grain appeared, a sheaf of these was brought to the sanctuary. This was recognized as a token of a bountiful harvest to be gathered, and the priest, clothed in his sacred robes, presented the “first fruits” before the Lord. Leviticus 23:10, 11.

On this colorful yearly occasion the paschal lamb was also sacrificed as a burnt offering. For many centuries this significant rite was solemnly observed, until at length “Christ our Passover” yielded His life on Calvary, and “was sacrificed for us.” But on the third day came the glorious resurrection; Christ arose from the tomb to become “the first fruits of them that slept.” 1 Corinthians 15:20. The sheaf of ripening grain was but a type, while the resurrected Son of God was the exalted anti-type.

When God prepared the way for His chosen people to locate in Palestine, He designed that their sojourn in that country should be as delightful “as the days of heaven upon the earth.” He desired them to be a happy, thankful people. Accordingly He instructed them to bring their “thank offerings into the house of the Lord.” These were of various kinds. When a son or daughter was born, the mother brought an offering. Leviticus 12:6-8. If an individual was healed of leprosy, he would present three lambs without blemish, together with a portion of flour and oil.

The so-called “meat offering,” or cereal offering (see Leviticus 2:1-3,

R.S.V.), consisted of such vegetable products as flour, oil, grain, and wine, with salt and frankincense. This offering was termed “a sweet savor unto the Lord.” Leviticus 2:9. In like manner when an individual’s sins are forgiven, and he lays all upon the altar to be used in God’s service, such dedication is recognized as “an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.” Philippians 4:18.

The “peace offering” is a term derived from a Hebrew root word meaning “to make peace,” “to be at peace,” or “to make restitution.” When wrongs had been righted and misunderstandings cleared away, the person, or persons, involved might make their own choice of an offering. They then assembled in the precincts of the sanctuary to eat together in happy fellowship with priests, Levites, relatives, and servants. This was not a gathering to effect peace, but was an occasion of rejoicing that peace already prevailed between God and man, and between man and man.

While He loves the sinner, God abhors that odious thing called *sin*. Accordingly in the ancient sanctuary, one of the vitally important sacrifices was the sin offering. When an individual sinned through ignorance, the penitent person was to confess his sins upon the head of an innocent lamb or goat. The officiating priest would then carry some of the victim’s blood into the tabernacle, or eat some of the flesh of the sin offering in the holy place. By this service the pardoned sinner was taught the wondrous truth of the Lamb of God who would shed His blood and bear all our “sins in His own body on the

tree.” See Leviticus 4:1-35; 1 Peter 2:24.

Once each year on the tenth day of the seventh month, which was called “the Day of Atonement,” God required a spiritual audit and trial balance. All secular work was to be laid aside, and the time devoted to fasting, prayer, and deep searching of heart, that every wrong might be acknowledged and forgiven. On this day, also, the high priest conducted a most solemn and unique service known as the “cleansing of the sanctuary.”

This was only “a figure for the time then present,” and “a shadow of good things to come.” Hebrews 9:9; 10:1. At length Christ, the divine Lamb of God, gave His life on Calvary’s cross, then ascended to heaven as our “merciful and faithful High Priest.” Hebrews 2:17.

This glorious fact is set forth as the very heart of the gospel. We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” Hebrews 8:1, 2.

Again, as this earthly house of worship required cleansing, so it is “necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices”—not with the blood of animals, but with the precious blood of Christ. Hebrews 9:23.

The ancient cleansing of the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement was a day of vital decisions. In like manner the Scriptures reveal that the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary is the time of final awards when “we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” 2 Corinthians 5:10.

God be praised for the comforting promise: “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. With every wrong confessed, every stain of defilement removed, and clothed in the flawless robe of Christ’s righteousness, we may face that fateful moment of decisions with calm peace and confidence. He who paid the supreme penalty for our sins on Calvary, will then officiate as our “Advocate with the Father,” to plead His own blood in our behalf.

Again, we exclaim, “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.” 2 Corinthians 9:15.

## TWILIGHT

by ENOLA CHAMBERLIN

The sun’s red banners now have turned to gray,

Like smoke along the hill-horizon line.

The evening star has set its early shrine  
Between oncoming night, departing day.

Unleashed by cooling ground; the small  
winds play

In shade-soft tones around the trumpet  
vine.

The whippoorwill’s blue velvet calls  
combine

With mocker’s songs to make a sound  
bouquet.

O twilight, what serenity you hold,  
When sky and mountains blend and  
coalesce,

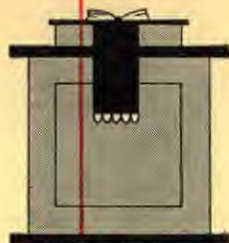
When all the tales of day are once more  
told,

And small heads nod in tired drowsiness;  
When breath is hushed, when far-off watch-  
dogs bark—

And hearts find peace in God’s all-healing  
dark.



# SIGNS COUNSEL CORNER



Conducted by

*Pastor William A. Fagal*

Director, "Faith for Today" TV Program

If you have a question, address it to "Signs" Counsel Corner, "Signs of the Times," Mountain View, California. Enclose a three-cent stamp and your name and address. Anonymous questions cannot be answered.

## SHOULD PARENTS SEPARATE?

**QUESTION:** My husband and I are both past sixty-five and have been married for almost fifty years. However, it seems that the longer we live together the less we seem to be able to see things the same way. Our children have suggested that we separate. What do you think?

**ANSWER:** I disagree with your children. Any couple who have been able to weather the storms of life together for almost fifty years should certainly be able to find a basis of agreement for the rest of the journey. Perhaps each of you has grown more determined in his way of looking at things and this presents problems. However, separation brings its own problems, and my prophecy is that both of you would be desperately unhappy. Don't try it. You are nearing the end of the journey. Live so from day to day that there will be no regrets.

## CHRIST AND YOUR PAST

**QUESTION:** I am concerned about my past life, and wonder how God will judge me. I know that I have made many mistakes, but I wonder to what extent God feels that I have sinned in my life. What is the criterion by which I may judge my past life as being either sinful or not sinful?

**ANSWER:** God's Ten Commandment law is the standard by which we are all judged. However, no individual may ever consider that his life is anything but sinful, for the Bible teaches, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23. Therefore, everyone stands in need of a Saviour. We should never attempt to justify ourselves or reason that we are good enough to be saved or too bad to be saved. God is the only righteous judge, and He will judge us fairly. If a person has repented of and forsaken his past life of sin, he stands before God exactly as if he had not sinned. Concern yourself with finding and accepting Jesus Christ as your own Saviour, study to find His will for your life; and you can regard your past sins to be removed from you "as far as the east is from the west." Psalm 103:12.

## RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES IN FAMILY

**QUESTION:** My husband and I are of different faiths, so neither one of us attends church. Our religious differences create a real strain on our marriage. Would it be wrong of me to join his church and raise our children in that church,

## IMPORTANT THINGS

by MARY O'CONNOR

The things that count are never weighed on scales  
Nor measured by the dollar's gruesome face;  
They are the friendly smile that never fails,  
The handclasp that no bribery can replace.  
The things that count are not of mansion size  
Nor lined with jeweled satin or brocade;  
They are the simple trust in children's eyes  
And prayer that helps the person who has prayed.  
The things that count are courage in distress,  
And hope that shines as brightly as a star,  
And vision and humility that bless  
With God's true plan all living things that are.  
These are the things that have the deepest worth,  
These are the most important things on earth.

even though I cannot possibly accept its teachings; or do you think I should go to my church and he to his? If so, what about our children? He won't agree to their going to my church.

**ANSWER:** To young people who are considering marriage, differences in religious outlook never seem to be a very great handicap in the path of true love. However, the problems are many and great after such marriages are contracted. Surely you should not unite with a church whose teachings you cannot conscientiously accept. Our faith is a matter of the mind and heart, and someday we must account for it to God. Rather than for you or your husband to stifle your convictions, or to force the other into his way, would it not be far better for you both earnestly and prayerfully to study God's word together? Many blessings would be yours and you would be able to recognize the church which is in complete harmony with the teachings of Scripture. This would satisfy both of you. Pray a great deal about this and study God's word more earnestly than ever before. He will lead you. Our free Bible Correspondence Course can be a real help to you in your study.





YOUR RADIO DOCTOR WARNS OF

# Drugs That Kill!

by CLIFFORD R. ANDERSON, M.D.

THE last passengers for the four-o'clock train were rushing down the platform. There was just half a minute to go. People were idly looking at their watches, as they always do at such moments. No one dreamed of the awful tragedy that lay ahead. At the proper signal the express moved smoothly forward, rapidly gaining speed. Soon it was out of sight.

All went well until suddenly, on rounding a bend at seventy miles an hour, the train left the tracks, turned over on its side, and buried hundreds of helpless passengers under a mass of splintered wreckage. It was a frightful scene. Hundreds of victims were battered and bleeding. Some were unconscious, others were crying piteously for help.

Quickly the call went out for volunteers to help rescue the victims. Doctors, nurses, ambulance men, and rescue workers poured in from all the nearby hospitals. Everyone was anxious to render what help he could. It was a desperate situation. Within a few minutes men with axes, saws, and acetylene torches were busy cutting away at the wreckage, trying to free the victims. At the same time doctors and nurses were down on their hands and knees giving injections to people trapped helplessly under the ruined coaches. Bandages were applied to control the bleeding, and rough splints were used to support the broken bones.

As soon as a victim could be released, he was quickly carried to the nearest hospital for further treatment. All night long those volunteers worked in teams, bringing hope and comfort to hundreds

who might have died from hemorrhage and exposure if left much longer. Some did die, for their wounds were too grave. But many lived, thanks to the skill and devotion of those who came to rescue them. And everywhere those merciful pain-killing drugs were being used to combat shock, to help prevent hemorrhage, and to relieve the intolerable suffering from burns and crushing injuries.

The help that is given during the first minutes and hours of such an overwhelming emergency may well make all the difference between life and death for many a victim. And among the most important life-saving measures are those remarkable pain-killing drugs. For in relieving the frightful agony of an injury they allow the body to conserve its vital fluids supporting the heart and the blood vessels, and help to preserve the fluid balance of the body in its hour of need. What a blessing such medicines can be!

But not always so, for there are times when the use of such powerful drugs may be truly dangerous. That is why all civilized governments have placed so many restrictions around the manufacture and use of such powerful medicines. They are truly wonderful in an hour of emergency, such as a train accident or any other overwhelming catastrophe; but their unrestricted use may lead to serious consequences, especially if they are taken over a long period of time, or for some chronic nervous condition.

Let me tell you about a very successful young doctor. His case is typical of many thousands of people all over the

world whose lives have been ruined by addiction to powerful narcotic drugs. For long years this man had toiled and struggled to gain a medical education. At last the day came when he was graduated with honors. Now he could really take the title of "Doctor." He opened his office in a fine location, and soon he was a very popular young physician. Patients came to him from other nearby towns, and before long he didn't have a moment to call his own. His life was one long round of patients and their endless problems, day and night.

Five years passed, and his practice was still growing. He was so busy that his family scarcely saw him any more. Every time they planned to take a day off, something would come up and the mother and children would have to go on alone. The doctor was just too devoted to his patients—or perhaps to the money they brought in!

But whatever the real reason was, his nerves were tense and highly strung. At one time he was calm and well controlled. But now he would jump at the sound of the telephone. His patients began to notice the change that had come over their doctor, and many felt that he was doing too much. Some of them also noticed that he had become a chain smoker. He would light the next cigarette from the butt of the last one he had smoked. His hands were no longer steady. His voice had lost that soothing, confident tone that had brought hope to so many who were sick.

To calm his nerves he now began to drink heavily. At first he used to drink only in company with others. But later he began to feel the need for more and



more alcohol. So he became a solitary drinker. Late at night he would feel the need of solace. And then early in the morning he just had to have another "chaser" to wake him up. Poor man! He was in a sad plight.

### *Trapped by Narcotics!*

The next step came quite naturally. For several nights he had been up nearly all night taking care of a critical patient. But the next day, of course, there was always another long line of patients to be cared for. When he did crawl into bed he just lay there restless and worrying about everything. He foolishly took several sleeping capsules; but, try as he would, sleep just would not come. He tossed and turned, but still he was as wide awake as ever. He had a splitting headache, and his nerves were just about at the breaking point. He was desperate for some relief.

Then it was that he suddenly remembered his medical bag. It was there right on a chair beside his bed. He felt he just had to do something to get relief from that throbbing headache. If only he could sleep, everything would soon be all right. Of course, he well knew the danger of using powerful drugs. But he was strong. He was sure he had nothing to fear. All he needed was a little rest just now. Hadn't he relieved the severe pains of hundreds of others in their hour of need? The temptation proved too much for him. Quickly he sat on the side of the bed, opened his bag, took out a syringe, and gave himself the first injection. It was all so easy, and at the time it seemed so harmless.

Quietly he lay back on the pillow. Within a few minutes the narcotic drug began to work. Soon his splitting headache began to leave him. His nerves were quiet and calm for the first time in months. It was all so unreal, this world of quiet relief into which he was drifting, drifting, drifting on billowy clouds that seemed so remote from all his worries and cares. It was a remarkable feeling, and one that he would never forget, and one from which he would never escape as long as he lived. He didn't realize it then, but he was now in the toils of a frightful monster, a habit that would never let him go.

It was an act of mercy when he gave an injection to some poor victim of a severe heart attack or a fractured spine. But it was a tragedy when he used the same medicine to relieve his own throbbing pains that had been brought on by extreme nervous tension and overwork.

### *In the Spider's Web*

Under the influence of that pain-killing drug he soon dropped off to sleep. It was the most wonderful sensation he had experienced for years. But he was now caught in the spider's web. Never would he forget those glorious moments of relief from anxiety. And in the future, whenever things would get too bad, he would inevitably return to that drug that had brought relief at that time. Such is the extreme danger of powerful medicines. In an emergency these drugs might even save a life, but they can also kill.

For a time the doctor felt better. His mind was clear. He kept up his appointments, and no one knew anything about what he had done. But soon the pressures of work began to pile up again, and before long he took another injection, then another, and another. After a time his own supply of narcotics was gone. Now he began to write false prescriptions and collect the drugs for himself. He was needing more and more of the drug. After a time his patients noticed that he was not the same person that he used to be. He was no longer reliable. They could not depend on him. He was irritable and erratic in his behavior. His judgment was poor, and he was beginning to make all kinds of obvious errors in his work. One night his wife discovered him in the act of giving himself an injection.

He was very angry and threatened to kill her if she said a word. At last she could understand why he had become so difficult to live with. She longed to help him, but he did not feel the need of any help. There was nothing she could do but just hope that he might find some way through his problem.

### *Finger Prints on the Window*

Finally his false prescriptions were traced back to him. He was brought to trial, and then sent to a large institution for special treatment. After he was released, his friends hoped that he was cured. But he soon went back to his old ways. Again he was caught, and once more he went back to the hospital for special treatment. This time when he was released he was no longer allowed to practice medicine. He had to take another type of work that was distasteful to him. Soon he began to consort with thieves and crooks in order to get the drug.

One day he broke into a doctor's car and stole his medical bag. But he left his fingerprints on the window, and he was again picked up by the police. This time he was sentenced to prison for five long years. His career was gone. Now he was regarded as a criminal. Home and family were gone. His life was completely wrecked. A brilliant doctor confined to jail, a hopeless, tragic victim of

*(Continued on page 14)*

## I HAVE A QUESTION, DOCTOR--

### *Your Health Questions Answered*

by "YOUR RADIO DOCTOR"

#### **ADDICTED TO VITAMIN B**

**Q.** "Can a person get addicted to vitamin B? Ten years ago I was so exhausted from overwork that I began taking vitamin B. I felt so much better that I continued to take it. Lately I have tried to do without it but I get unbearably tired and nervous. Have I formed a habit that is going to be hard to break?"

**A.** I doubt whether you have anything to worry about. Vitamin B is essential to every cell in the body. There are many worse habits on which you might spend your hard-earned money. Vitamin B will certainly do you no harm if taken in moderation. In your case your body probably needs an extra lift. However, I suspect your diet needs a little careful inspection.

You must be going short somewhere if your body demands extra vitamins all the time. Better check into it.

#### **KNEE JERKS**

**Q.** "What does it mean when one fails to respond to a tap on the leg just below the knee? Even though my leg is completely relaxed, there is no response. Is there something wrong with my nervous system?"

**A.** Probably not, unless you have other symptoms that indicate trouble. Some people seem to have very little response to the knee-jerk reflex. Talk it over with your doctor. He may wish to test your blood and spinal fluid. Probably you have nothing to worry about.





H. AYRES, ARTIST

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# Prophecy

## IN THE EARLY CHURCH

by C. MERVYN MAXWELL

**D**ID you know that Martin Luther began his translation of the Old Testament with the book of Daniel because he felt his followers needed to understand Bible prophecy? Did you know that the first sermon preached by John Knox, founder of the Scottish Presbyterian Church, was based on the prophecies of Daniel 7? Did you know that many a martyr prepared himself for death by staking his hopes on the fulfillment of Bible prophecy?

In most history books, little is said

about the part prophecy played in the lives and teachings of the great leaders of the Christian church through the ages. But according to a seventeen-year research project just concluded by L. E. Froom, professor of church history at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, the study and interpretation of prophecy occupied a major role in the work of virtually every great exponent of truth since the church began. Justin Martyr, Clement of Rome, Tertullian, Joachim of Floris, Martin Luther, John Knox, and many others

were deep students of Bible prophecy.

To begin with, let us go right back to the founding of the Christian church. Unquestionably, Christ's apostles believed in prophecy. Peter wrote, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed." 2 Peter 1:19. Paul spoke of prophecy as one of the gifts of the Spirit, in 1 Corinthians 12:10, and John pronounced a blessing upon those who hear the words of prophecy. Revelation 1:3.

In emphasizing the value of prophecy, the apostles were but heeding the admonition of Christ, who called people "fools" who were "slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." Luke 24:25.

Writers in the *Signs of the Times* frequently use fulfilled prophecies as proof of the inspiration of the Bible. It is nothing new! Tertullian did it 1,800 years ago. In combating the paganism of his day this forthright bishop of Carthage, perhaps the most conspicuous religious writer of his times (A.D. 160-240), declared that the fulfillment of Bible prophecy demonstrated clearly the supremacy of the Scriptures over any heathen writings. "We point to the majesty of our Scriptures," he said. "We offer proof that they are divine. And you may convince yourselves of this at once, and without going very far. . . . All that is taking place around you was foreannounced. . . . The truth of a prophecy, I think, is the demonstration of its being from above."<sup>1</sup>

Justin Martyr was even more emphatic. Converted from heathenism about the year A.D. 150, he was very active in the defense of the faith against the attacks of Roman idolaters. He is known as the "first Christian apologist." In his first apology to the emperor he

### NOTE

This series is based on material contained in the monumental four-volume set, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, by LeRoy Edwin Froom. Requiring over twenty years of time, twenty thousand miles of travel, and the willing co-operation of numerous librarians and scholars in Europe and America, this work has evoked the praise of hundreds of leading churchmen and university professors.

C. M. M.



declared, "Since, then, we prove that all things which have already happened had been predicted by the prophets before they came to pass, we must necessarily believe also that those things which are in like manner predicted, but are yet to come to pass, shall certainly happen."<sup>2</sup>

### The Second Coming

What were the unfulfilled prophecies that gripped the attention of these early Christians? Foremost were those that speak of the return of Christ. Clement, bishop of Rome, in his famous letter to the believers in Corinth, written in A.D. 95, assured his fellow Christians, "Of a truth, soon and suddenly shall His will be accomplished, as the Scripture also bears witness, saying, 'Speedily will He come, and will not tarry.'"<sup>3</sup>

Justin Martyr wrote, "For the prophets have proclaimed two advents of His: the one, that which is already past, when He came as a dishonored and suffering Man; but the second, when, according to prophecy, He shall come from heaven with glory, accompanied by His angelic host."<sup>4</sup>

Victorinus, bishop of Pettau, near modern Vienna, around the year A.D. 300 expressed his faith in the literal return of Christ, by writing, "Behold, He shall come with clouds, and every eye shall see Him." For He who at first came hidden in the manhood that He had undertaken, shall after a little while come to judgment manifest in majesty and glory."<sup>5</sup>

As a matter of fact, the advent hope was so general among the early Christians that Justin Martyr also said, "Those out of all the nations who are pious and righteous through the faith of Christ, look for His future appearance."<sup>6</sup>

### The Millennium

An important prophetic concept, closely associated with the second coming, is the millennium. In our day many questions revolve around this subject, basically as to whether or not Christ's return will be at its beginning (premillennial) or at its close (postmillennial). The ancients generally were clear that the second coming and the resurrection of the righteous would be premillennial. They believed that the resurrection of the wicked would occur at the close of the thousand years.

Bishop Papias, prior to his martyrdom in A.D. 163, wrote, "There will be a millennium after the resurrection from the dead."<sup>7</sup>

Justin Martyr spoke of the righteous

being resurrected and dwelling with Christ for a thousand years, after which would occur the general resurrection and the judgment.<sup>8</sup>

Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons in France, wrote around the year A.D. 200 that the millennial kingdom and the resurrection are actualities, not allegories, and that the promised kingdom would be introduced between the two resurrections.<sup>9</sup>

Thus again, in the matters of the pre-millennial Advent and the two literal resurrections, modern research has revealed that the *Signs of the Times* and the early church leaders stand shoulder to shoulder!

## Your Bible Question Answered

### POLYGAMY

**The Old Testament states that many good men had more than one wife at the same time. They appeared acceptable to God. If those men were holy, why did Jesus forbid polygamy?** O. Z. B.

There is a difference between recording the acts of men and approving these acts. A man-made book would probably have omitted the polygamy and other sins of its heroes; the Bible shows their weaknesses and mistakes and sins in addition to their good qualities. It also reveals the results of polygamy. Most of the sorrow and trouble that came to Abraham, Jacob, David, and others resulted from the jealousies and hatreds among their wives and children. It was Solomon's wives who led him away from God into sin and idolatry.

Polygamy originated with the evil descendants of Cain. See Genesis 4:17-19. The practice continued after the Flood, and it exists in many parts of the world today. Unfortunately many famous Old Testament leaders were affected by the custom of the lands where they lived. God did not reject them for their polygamy, because He saw something good in them. At heart they wanted to do His will, so He took them where He found them.

Jesus' teaching in regard to marriage went back to God's original plan, instituted at the creation of mankind. He said, when questioned about divorce, "But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh." Mark 10:6-8. See also Matthew 19:4-6. If God had designed for man to have more than one wife, it would seem that He would have given Adam more than one. Genesis 2:22-24.

What a world of unhappiness and misery the human race would have been spared if God's plan had been followed!

C. D. U.

The same is true in regard to the great prophecies of Daniel, chapters 2 and 7, in which the history of the world is outlined by a metal image and by four beasts. In the writings of the early church, as in the *Signs* today, these prophecies occupied an important place.

Hippolytus, who died in the year 236, was bishop of Porto Romanus, not far from Rome. His writings were so widely accepted that they were translated into many different languages. Paralleling Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 he wrote, "Let us look at what is before us more carefully, and scan it, as it were, with open eye. The 'golden head of the image' is identical with the 'lioness,' by which the Babylonians were represented. 'The golden shoulders and the arms of silver' are the same with the 'bear,' by which the Persians and Medes are meant. 'The belly and thighs of brass' are the 'leopard,' by which the Greeks who ruled from Alexander onwards are intended. The 'legs of iron' are the 'dreadful and terrible beast,' by which the Romans who hold the empire now are meant. The 'toes of clay and iron' are the 'ten horns' which are [yet] to be"<sup>10</sup>—"emblems of the kingdoms that are yet to rise."<sup>11</sup>

From the foregoing it is clear that the study of prophecy occupied a prominent place in the early church, that it was understood to teach a personal, premillennial return of Christ, and that the fourth world power of Daniel 7 was Rome, soon to be divided into ten kingdoms.

These early-church concepts though still taught in the *Signs of the Times* are nowadays not believed in by the great body of Christians. Why not? What has happened to the early church's faith in Bible prophecy?

Our study next week will begin to answer that question.

<sup>1</sup> Tertullian, "Apology," ch. 20, in ANF, vol. 3, p. 33. Cited in LeRoy Edwin Froom, "The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers," vol. 1, pp. 256, 257.

<sup>2</sup> Justin, "First Apology," ch. 52, in ANF, vol. 1, p. 180. Cited in Froom, op. cit., pp. 231, 232.

<sup>3</sup> "The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians," ch. 23, in ANF, vol. 1, p. 11. Cited in Froom, op. cit., p. 208.

<sup>4</sup> Justin, op. cit., p. 232.

<sup>5</sup> Victorinus, "Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John," "From the First Chapter," verse 7, in ANF, vol. 7, p. 344. Cited in Froom, op. cit., pp. 338, 339.

<sup>6</sup> Justin, "Dialogue With Trypho," ch. 52, in ANF, vol. 1, p. 221. Cited in Froom, op. cit., p. 232.

<sup>7</sup> "Fragments of Papias," VI, in ANF, vol. 1, p. 154. Cited in Froom, op. cit., pp. 215, 216.

<sup>8</sup> Justin, op. cit., chs. 80, 81, in ANF, vol. 1, pp. 239, 240. Cited in Froom, op. cit., p. 234.

<sup>9</sup> Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," b. 5, chs. 32-35, in ANF, vol. 1, pp. 561-566. Cited in Froom, op. cit., p. 250.

<sup>10</sup> Hippolytus, "Fragments From Commentaries," "On Daniel," fragment 2, ch. 3, in ANF, vol. 5, pp. 178, 179. Cited in Froom, op. cit., p. 272.

<sup>11</sup> Hippolytus, "Treatise on Christ and Antichrist," ch. 28, in ANF, vol. 5, p. 210. Cited in Froom, op. cit., p. 273.



# Psalms:

## THE HEBREW HYMNAL

by TAYLOR G. BUNCH

THE Hebrews divided the Old Testament into three main divisions which they called The Law, The Prophets, and The Psalms; and Jesus recognized this arrangement. See Luke 24:44. The book of Psalms constitutes the most important of the poetic books of the Bible. It is a collection of the religious poetry of the ancient Hebrews which was set to music and sung to the accompaniment of instrumental music. The word "Psalms" means "Praises," and it is therefore "The Book of Praises," which indicates its general character and purpose. It has also been called "The Psalter," after the psaltery which was doubtless the chief stringed instrument used by the Hebrews to accompany their songs.

This book is a collection of poems and songs composed by many different writers over a period of a thousand years, beginning with Moses and reaching almost to the Christian Era. Each psalm was evidently produced on a special occasion and for a special purpose, and is therefore a song of experience and contains a message.

It is believed that the collection of psalms was made in and since the days of Ezra, perhaps reaching as far down as the Maccabean period. Ezra is given credit for the chief part of the collection and may have been assisted by Nehemiah and some of the scribes. The collection was made to be used in the services of the restored temple after the return from captivity.

The origin, date, and authorship of most of the psalms are uncertain, although David is given credit for about half of the collection. In 2 Samuel 23:1, 2 David is called "the sweet psalmist of Israel," who said, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue." This could doubtless also have been said by the other writers. Because he composed so many of the psalms, the entire collection is sometimes called "The Psalms of David." Besides David, the names of seven other authors appear in the psalms, those of Asaph, Korah, Moses, Heman, Ethan, Solomon, and Jeduthun. It is also believed that Daniel was among the authors. Seventy-three of the psalms carry the superscription "of David," and make up what is designated the "Davidic Collection." Twelve of the psalms are credited to Asaph, the chief musician of David and the leader of the temple music, and eleven carry the superscription, "for the sons of Korah." Hebrew tradition lists more than fifty of the psalms as anonymous in authorship and calls them "Orphan Psalms."

Hebrew tradition divided the Psalms into five books, each of



P. SHIELDS, ARTIST

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David held communion with heaven and obtained hope, faith, and courage through the medium of sacred song.



which ended with a doxology similar in character. This division is very old, and those responsible for the group arrangement are unknown, although the credit has been given to Ezra and Nehemiah. These five books have forty-one, thirty-one, seventeen, seventeen, and forty-four psalms respectively. The first three end with "Amen and amen," the fourth with "Amen, Hallelujah," and the fifth with "Hallelujah." This five-fold division is recognized in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament.

The Jews considered these five books of the Psalms as a second Pentateuch. They declared that David gave to the Israelites the five books of the Psalms as a counterpart to the five books of the Law given them by Moses. Delitzsch said, "The Psalter is also a Pentateuch, the echo of the Mosaic Pentateuch from the heart of Israel; it is the fivefold book of the congregation to Jehovah, as the Law is the fivefold book of Jehovah to the congregation."

The Psalms have been further divided into groups according to subjects. There are the "Hallelujah Psalms," the "Messianic Psalms," the "Penitential Psalms," and the "Alphabetic Psalms." There are seven in the latter group, the chief one being the one hundred nineteenth. In these psalms the number of stanzas are determined by the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. As written in Hebrew, each line of a stanza begins with the same letter. The word "Selah," which is used more than seventy times at the end of verses rather than psalms, is unknown in origin and meaning, and the many conjectures have no basis in fact. It is generally believed to be an ancient musical term for a pause, break, or interlude; but this is a mere supposition.

The authenticity of the Psalms and their place in the canon of Scripture have been established by the most convincing evidence. Besides the many internal and historic proofs, Jesus and His disciples quoted from them more than seventy times, which is more than they did from any other Old Testament book. All through the book of Psalms Jesus was able to find Himself and His mission. His life and work fulfilled the many predictions of the Messiah as set forth in this ancient Hebrew hymnal.

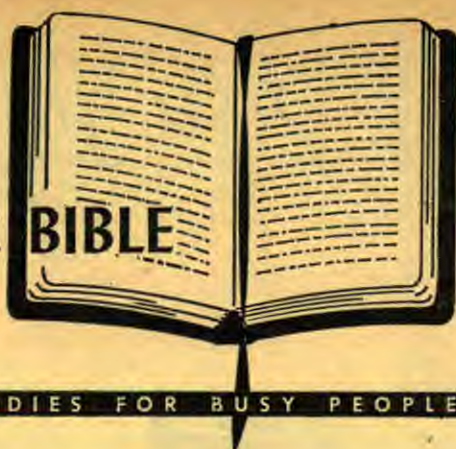
No person can read these ancient poems without feeling a deepening conviction that they are of divine origin, and that the Hebrew poets were inspired of God and were holy men with clean minds and pure hearts. They are the

(Continued on page 15)

# STUDY YOUR BIBLE

BY ROBERT H. PIERSON

BRIEF BIBLE STUDIES FOR BUSY PEOPLE



## 41. Whence Came Spiritism?

### I. MEMORY GEM

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." 2 Corinthians 11:14, 15.

### II. INTRODUCTION

Modern spiritism had its birth in Hydesville, New York, March 31, 1848, when the Fox sisters answered queer rappings they heard. It is merely a revival of a system which had its beginnings in the Garden of Eden when the serpent declared that man would not really die. Today spiritism in its various forms is sweeping the world as one of Satan's crowning deceptions to cause man to misunderstand and disbelieve God.

### III. BIBLE STUDY

*What does the revelator say concerning Satan's increased activities as the end of the world draws near?*

"The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Revelation 12:12.

*How does Paul describe the effect of Satan's accelerated influence upon men?*

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." 2 Timothy 3:13.

*What great lie did Satan tell in Eden?*

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die." Genesis 3:4.

*How did God warn the Israelites against those who claimed to have "familiar spirits"?*

"Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God." Leviticus 19:31.

*What punishment was to be dealt to those who practiced this forbidden art?*

"A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death." Leviticus 20:27. See also Deuteronomy 18:10-12.

*What great mistake did Saul make?*

"And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor." 1 Samuel 28:5-7.

*What was the result?*

"So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it." 1 Chronicles 10:13.

*How are the claims of spiritism contrary to the teachings of God's word?*

Spiritism teaches the conscious state of the dead.

The Bible says, "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten." "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10.

Spiritism teaches that the dead can return from the grave.

The Bible says, "He that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more. He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more." Job 7:9, 10.

*How should we test the claims of spiritism?*

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but



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try the spirits whether they are of God." 1 John 4:1.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20.

*Against what are we warned?*

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." 1 Timothy 4:1. See also 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12; 2 Timothy 4:3, 4; Revelation 16:14.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Spiritism is contrary to the teaching of the Holy Scriptures concerning the state of the dead. God has condemned it from ancient times. As Christians, we should have nothing to do with it.

## V. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Have I fortified myself with the word of God that I will not be found "giving heed to seducing spirits"?

## Drugs That Kill!

(Continued from page 9)

narcotic drugs! He could be trusted no longer, for his mind was ruined by narcotics.

If there is one thing above all others that the medical profession is constantly being warned about, it is the use of powerful habit-forming drugs. That which is such a blessing in treating a victim who may be lying under a wrecked train may prove to be the greatest curse in wrecking a useful life. Doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and scientists are only human, after all. They are not immune to the effects of such drugs. That is why all medical workers take an oath never to administer to themselves any pain-killing drug. The danger is too great.

## How Drug Addiction Starts

Any pain-killing drug is potentially dangerous. No one is immune to the effects of such medicines. Any of us can become addicted to their use. The more tense we are, the greater the danger. This is the usual pattern by which this habit develops. First comes overwork and worry. Then chain smoking. Then heavy social drinking, followed by solitary drinking at all hours of the day and night. Then stronger drugs are needed in the hope of getting some rest. And finally narcotics. But always at the bottom of it all is the fact that such a person has reached the place where he can no longer cope with life.

The chain smoking and heavy drinking are only symptoms of a deep-seated



personality disorder which has been brought on by some situation that is too difficult for that person to handle. It may be aggravated by long hours of work, without adequate rest, or perhaps undue worry over things that cannot be changed. But, whatever the cause, there is *no healing power in nicotine, or alcohol, or narcotic drugs*. Such things will never cure any underlying nervous disorder. There is no excuse for becoming addicted to such drugs. Those who do so must accept the consequences of their own folly.

Remember that no matter how beneficial these medicines may sometimes be in treating the victims of a train accident, they have no place in controlling the illnesses that arise from chronic nervous tension. Such conditions can only be safely treated by knowing and understanding ourselves, by making the necessary adjustments to life, and finally by living in harmony with the laws of nature and with God.

## Psalms

(Continued from page 18)

most ancient and lofty of all the collections of poetic literature, reaching further into antiquity than the poems of the Greeks and Romans, most of which were so corrupt in morals that it is difficult to extract from them even the most common maxims of moral decency. The fact that such deeply spiritual and sublime productions as the psalms came out of such a corrupt age is convincing evidence of their divine origin.

In spiritual and literary quality the Psalms have never been equaled or surpassed. They exhibit a profound conception of God as the Creator, Redeemer, Lawgiver, Preserver, Benefactor, and Ruler. To the present day the Psalms are recognized as the most spiritual and deeply devotional literature of the poetic variety ever produced. Issuing out of the background of personal experience and written under divine inspiration, they have outlived all other poetry and music. To the very close of earthly time every individual who longs for a godly character will be able to find in the Psalms the very experiences and deliverances peculiar to his case and appropriate to his individual needs. There he will discover help, comfort, and joy to fulfill the longing of his soul. The songs of praise, prayer, confession, and thanksgiving are ageless in their application and are as up to date as if they

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were written especially for those "upon whom the ends of the world are come."

In all ages the Psalms have been regarded with special affection by both Jews and Christians. As the hosts of Israel journeyed through the wilderness toward the Promised Land, they cheered their way by the music of sacred song. Songs of praise constituted the battle cry that brought deliverance to the armies of Israel under King Jehoshaphat, and through the vicissitudes of his experiences as a shepherd boy and ruling sovereign, David held communion with heaven and obtained hope, faith, and courage through the medium of sacred song. During His earthly life, Jesus, the Son of David, sang psalms, and amid the deepening shadows of earth's last crisis "the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isaiah 35:10. They, too, like ancient Israel, will be cheered on their journey to the heavenly Canaan by singing the songs of Zion. Jerome said, "The Psalms were continually to be heard in the fields and vineyards of Palestine. The plowman as he held his plow, chanted the Hallelujah; and the reaper and vinedresser and the shepherd sang something from

the songs of David. Where the meadows were covered with flowers, and the singing birds made their complaints, the psalms sounded even more sweetly." What a splendid example for Christians to imitate in this present age of stress and strain!

According to Jeremy Taylor, the primitive Christian church "would admit no man to the superior orders of the clergy unless, among other pre-required dispositions, he could say all of David's Psalter by heart." Ambrose, bishop of Milan, said of the purpose and value of the Psalms: "Although all divine Scripture breathes the grace of God, yet sweet beyond all others is the book of Psalms. History instructs, the Law teaches, prophecy announces, rebuke chastens, morality persuades; in the book of Psalms we have the fruit of all these, and a kind of medicine for the salvation of man."

A more recent writer sums up the opinions of church leaders concerning the value of the Psalms in the following statement: "As flame enkindles flame, so the fervor of the psalmists in their prayers and praises passes on from them to us, and warms us to a glow of love and thankfulness which is something more than a pale reflex of their own. Without the Psalms, without the constant use of them, Christian life tends to become dead and dull, like the ashes of an extinguished fire."—*The Pulpit Commentary*.

The Psalms contain the very essence of the Christian religion and therefore constitute, as one writer has stated, "a perfect theology." In them is set forth to a surprising extent the Saviour of man and the plan of redemption. For this reason no other book of the Bible has been more fully discussed in pulpit and press. The commentaries on the Psalms would make a large library, and their importance will continue to increase to the very end of the spiritual conflict when many of them will apply with peculiar force and be sung by the remnant people of God who come "out of great tribulation" and wash their character robes and make them "white in the blood of the Lamb." Revelation 7:14.

In anticipation of the final crisis as described in Bible prophecy, one can almost hear the saints of God singing the forty-sixth psalm: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea."





DEVANEY

## "Be ye therefore perfect"

by RICHARD LEWIS

"MR. LAMOTTE?" I queried as I saw the old gentleman in the gardening togs come around the corner of the old mansion. "Yes, I'm Mr. Lamotte," he replied in cultivated tones. "What can I do for you?" As he started up the steps to join me at the front door, he glanced at the violin case under my arm and a friendly light came over his face.

"I have a violin I wanted you to look at. They tell me you know more about violins than anyone else in this city." All I knew about Mr. Lamotte was that he was a fabulously wealthy retired banker who knew about violins.

"I can't play a single tune on a fiddle," he said with a shrug, as he ushered me into his ancient, high-ceilinged house.

"I bought this instrument because I thought it sounded good," I began, as I uncased my odd violin. "I believe it is handmade,—not factory made,—and it looks rather well made to me. But it does have a rather odd shape." By this time Mr. Lamotte had sat down on a sofa and had taken the violin into his hands.

"Anyone who would make a violin like this ought to be hanged," he said, but his genial smile softened his verdict. "It may play well enough, but look at it! You see, I'm a collector. I owned one of the finest collections in the country, including seven Strads, until a year ago, when I gave it to my son."

Already I liked Mr. Lamotte, as he talked with me in an easy and immediate friendliness. Seven Strads! And many others—he must be extremely wealthy.

"But I kept one Strad, my favorite," he went on, reaching under the sofa to draw out an alligator-skin violin case. Before my excited and hardly credulous eyes, he brought out the Stradivarius, the first I had ever seen and—oh, glory!—handed it to me.

"That is the way a violin ought to look," he said. "It is one of the best in the world, perhaps the very best. It can be evaluated only by being offered for sale, and that will never happen as long as I live."

It is a wonder I remembered anything that happened in the next few minutes. To hold a famous Stradivarius violin in my hands!

"I've heard a lot about these violins," I said. "What is the secret of their great value?"

"There have been many foolish theories about Strads," he said, the warmth in his voice telling me that he loved his subject. "Some say it is the grain of the wood in the top, but I have seen a hundred violin tops with grain like that, some of them not worth their weight in kindling. Your fiddle here has the same kind of grain."

"Some say it's the shape of the f-holes, or the outline shape, or the varying thickness of the back and top, or the shape of the base bar. But violin makers for nearly two hundred years have been duplicating Strads, using every measuring device their ingenuity could think of. But none of them have equaled the real Strads."

"You mean you can always tell a real Strad from a copy?" I asked.

"Yes, I can," he answered, without egotism.

"It has beautiful varnish," I said. I had heard that the varnish was one of the secrets.

"Yes, it is beautiful," he said, guessing my thought. "But it doesn't make the fiddle. Chemists have taken the varnish from Strads, analyzed it, and duplicated it. They can make the varnish, but they can't make it *look* like that on a violin."

"Then it's really a mystery?" I was ready to give up.

"The Stradivarius violin is no mystery," he said with assurance. "It is just a very fine violin, made by a genius who devoted his life to his art. Old Antonio knew how to pick his wood and season it. He shaped every part with amazing skill and rejected every piece that was not perfect. He fitted and refitted until everything was right, even the head, which has no part in the music." Looking down at the beautiful instrument I held, I was filled with strange, long thoughts. Mr. Lamotte leaned back in the sofa, his eyes fixed on the ceiling. I waited quietly, for I thought he would speak again. In a moment he went on softly.

"A great violin is like a great man. Everything has to be right. Most of them, even the near great, have faults that could be corrected. The really great have to be their best in *every* way."

In another moment he straightened and looked at me with his calm blue eyes. The visit was over.

I suppose I thanked him profusely as we packed away our fiddles and went to the door. I really don't remember, for my thoughts were far from the wonderful old gentleman and the stately old mansion. The words kept going through my mind: "Be ye therefore perfect." Perfect? Yes, perfect. "Even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Even as Antonio Stradivari was a perfect workman? Yes, that and more. "Even as your Father . . . in heaven." Not to *strive* for that is to fail in God's sight. Knowingly to put an imperfect part in my character, willfully to reject what is perfectly fitting, this is to fall short of my Lord's command. If I should devote myself as thoroughly to character building as Stradivari did to violin making, wouldn't I make surprising progress?

The rich, masculine tone of the violin has long charmed me. And it tells me, "Be ye therefore perfect."