

# **Signs**

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## **OF THE TIMES**



**Are Christians Sitting on a Hollow Egg?**



# Signs OF THE TIMES

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## LETTERS

### STIMULATING!

I would like to tell you how much I enjoy Wayne Judd's "Why Not Ask?" and Ivan Crawford's "Your Bible Questions Answered." Although not always totally agreeing with them, I find them very interesting and have found myself "searching the Scriptures" because of some question or answer that appears in one or the other of their columns. How much printed material today stimulates one to turn to God's holy Bible? Not much. Thank you for Signs.

*Jeanne Pickett  
Cave City, Arkansas*

### MY AUNT'S FRIEND

My mother sent the Signs for years to her sister. My aunt never seemed to absorb anything in the Signs, but she had a very good friend who visited her often. This friend would read the Signs at my aunt's, and she became a Seventh-day Adventist. I have a

letter that she wrote to my mother telling her about this:

"I was a member of a \_\_\_\_\_ church, but two years ago I accepted the Sabbath truth. I am so glad I did, and I know it will make your heart rejoice, for it was the papers that you used to send Violet."

My mother and her friend are both sleeping, waiting for Jesus to come, but my aunt is still alive. I have determined to add her name to my Signs list. If she won't accept the Sabbath truth, perhaps she has another friend who will.

*Name withheld.  
Placerville, California*

### "SIGNS" IN PRISON

The Signs magazines that you sent us have been accepted very warmly. Many of the men here at the prison have requested that it be sent into the prison chapel as a monthly magazine. We can use 100 copies a month. These will be divided between the women prisoners and the minimum security areas of the prison, plus the main yard chapel.

The state does not allot any money to the

prison chapel for any religious matters. I am asking that in Christian charity you will be able to donate the 100 copies that are needed here at the Arizona State Prison.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

*Chaplain John W. Voth  
Arizona State Prison  
Florence, Arizona*

### MIXED UP

I was raised a Seventh-day Adventist. After leaving home I didn't follow the Sabbath, but of late I keep the Sabbath. I belong to the Methodist church. I know the seventh day is the right day. But what do you say about 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2 and Acts 20:7? I am some mixed up. I want to do the right thing.

*Owen Howard  
Brentwood, California*

Giving an offering or going to church on Monday doesn't make Monday holy. It doesn't make Sunday holy either. Only God can make a day holy, and He chose Saturday. See Genesis 2:1-3.—Ed.

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## SOONER THAN MANY EXPECT

If you think the second coming of Christ will not occur for a long time yet—

If you think the Signs is naïve and simplistic because we say that the prophecies relating to Christ's coming and the end of the world will certainly be fulfilled soon—

I invite you to ask a friendly Jew why his people are observing Passover this month.

The celebration goes back some 3500 years to an event called the Exodus that marks the beginning of the Jews as a nation. Jews count their calendar from the Exodus as Christians of the Western world count their calendar from Christ.

There is an interesting article in this issue reporting recent discoveries regarding the great event. The Exodus demonstrates that God fulfills His prophecies with absolute certainty and, if necessary, with astonishing speed.

Back at the time of the Exodus the Jews were known as Israelites, because they were all descended from a wealthy cattle owner named Israel, the grandson of Abraham.

The Israelites were living in Egypt. They had immigrated there at the invitation of a friendly pharaoh to escape the effects of a devastating famine. He gave them fertile land for their herds to graze, and they prospered greatly.

When the Israelites went into Egypt, Israel was still alive and the entire family numbered only 70 people. But 200 years later the count approached two million, and the new pharaoh and his government feared that in an

invasion the Israelites might join with the invaders against the Egyptians. To stop the rapid growth, pharaoh ordered all baby Israelite boys to be thrown into the Nile. But the plan fizzled when the king's daughter discovered a little Israelite boy "thrown" into the Nile in a basket and adopted him as her son. She—or her father—reversed the order. She called the little boy Moses and had him trained in the wisdom and skills of the finest Egyptian schools.

So the government tried another tack. It put the Israelites into slavery and forced them to engage in back-breaking construction projects under cruel taskmasters.

Now, before the Israelites went into Egypt, God had called Israel's grandfather, Abraham, out of his home in Ur of the Chaldees to be a pilgrim and a stranger in the land of Palestine. Several years later God told him that his descendants would be oppressed for 400 years, a period that began when Abraham's son, Isaac, was persecuted by his brother, 30 years after God first called Abraham. See Galatians 4:29. During the 400 years the descendants would go into a foreign land and be enslaved. Finally, God would judge the land, and the Israelites would leave and return to Palestine. See Genesis 12:1; 15:13-15; Acts 7:6; Galatians 3:17; 4:29.

That was the prophecy, and it was very exact, even giving a length of time totaling 430 years. How well was it fulfilled?

As the 430 years drew to a close, many of the details had already been fulfilled. Abraham's descendants—the

Israelites—were in the foreign land of Egypt. And they were slaves. But as for getting out of Egypt at the end of the 430 years, there was no hope at all.

If you had visited Egypt a short while—let's say four months—before the Exodus, you would probably have decided, on the evidence, that the Israelites would be there for a very long time. Egypt was riding close to the height of her power with no evidence of an immediate decline, and the Israelites were totally locked into slavery.

That is what it looked like.

But in four months—maybe less—God put Moses in charge of the Israelites. He turned the Nile to blood, filled the Egyptians' homes with frogs, covered their bodies with lice, destroyed their crops with locusts and their cattle by lightning and disease, snuffed out the life of every firstborn son and drowned the whole army—including pharaoh—in the depths of the sea.

God took the most powerful nation in the world, shook it to its core, hurled it to its knees, trampled it in the dust, and got His people out on the very day the 430 years came to an end—just as He had said He would. See Exodus 12:40.

He did it in four months, maybe less.

So far, one prophecy after another pertaining to the second coming has been fulfilled. We say with absolute confidence that the remaining prophecies will likewise be fulfilled and Jesus will certainly come—and very much sooner than many people expect.

Remember the Exodus!

L. M.



# Faith Is No Leap in the Dark

The great controversy is not over who has the most power but over who is really telling the truth.

Can  
God Be Trusted?—4

A. Graham Maxwell

In one of the saddest chapters in the history of the United States, the President was publicly accused by some of his closest associates of willful dishonesty and deceit.

What a spectacle for the onlooking world to see! The highest officer of one of the greatest nations on earth charged with selfish abuse of presidential power and violation of the trust placed in him by the people who had elected him.

The charges were categorically denied. In dramatic appeals to the loyalty of the people, the accusations were dismissed as the fabrication of disgruntled enemies. And out of affection for the President and respect for the high office he occupied, many of us were willing to believe his earnest claims. As citizens of the land that stamps its currency "In God We Trust," we wanted so much also to honor our President as someone we could trust.

But now we know that mere denials are not enough. Though coming from the seat of highest authority and power, mere claims do not change falsehood into truth.

The Creator of the universe has also been accused. By a disgruntled enemy He has been charged with selfish abuse of divine authority and willful distortion of truth.

Mere denials are not enough to meet such accusations. Though they came from the Infinite One Himself, how



D. TANK



## God has provided us a basis for full confidence in Him.

**Faith in God means being willing to believe whatever He says, to accept whatever He offers, and to do whatever He wishes—without reservation—for eternity.**

would we know whether they were true? Satan has also made claims, and with a great show of authority and force.

But neither claims nor superior show of power can establish integrity or trustworthiness. Jesus warned against believing mere claims, even when apparently supported by supernatural signs. He spoke of religious leaders that would arise, making all kinds of false claims—even claiming to be Christ! They would perform great miracles and wonders to prove the truthfulness of their claims. "But don't believe them," Jesus said. See Matthew 24:11, 23-26.

"Watch out," He warned, "and do not let anyone fool you. Many men, claiming to speak for me, will come and say, 'I am the Messiah!' and they will fool many people." Matthew 24:5, T.E.V.

"My dear friends," John later advised, "do not believe all who claim to have the Spirit, but test them to find out if the spirit they have comes from God. For many false prophets have gone out everywhere." 1 John 4:1, T.E.V.

In his description of Satan's effort to sweep the whole world into his camp just before Christ's return, John wrote of the use of authority and force accompanied by the performance of great miracles, even making "fire come down out of heaven to earth in the sight of everyone." As a result, "all the people living on earth" are deceived "by means of the miracles"—except God's true people. See Revelation 13:8, 12-14, T.E.V.

Long ago Moses warned the children of Israel not to be misled by miracles. "A prophet or an interpreter of dreams may promise a miracle or a wonder, in order to lead you to worship and serve gods that you have not worshiped before. Even if what he promises comes true, do not pay any attention to him." Deuteronomy 13:1-3, T.E.V.

The great controversy is not over who can perform the greatest miracles

but over who is telling the truth. As the former Lucifer, Satan has seen the awesome power and majesty of God. Whenever he thinks of the One who hung the whole vast universe in space, he trembles with fear (James 2:19) and "knows that his time is short" (Revelation 12:12, R.S.V.).

God has not been charged with lack of power but with its abuse. The controversy is over the character of God.

How can we know who is telling the truth?

When believers in Thessalonica were being misled by messages purporting to have come from Paul, the apostle warned them not to be deceived by such false claims but to "test everything; hold fast what is good." 1 Thessalonians 5:21, R.S.V.

When God took His case into court, He was inviting the universe to test His claims and to believe only what proved to be true. Since the truth was on His side, He had nothing to fear from the most searching investigation. Nor was there any need for Him to tamper with the evidence or intimidate His inquirers.

All that was needed for God to win His case was the clearest possible demonstration of truth. The more openness and light the better! Only cheats and liars fear to be questioned.

"Here lies the test," Jesus explained to Nicodemus. "Bad men all hate the light and avoid it, for fear their practices should be shown up. The honest man comes to the light so that it may be clearly seen that God is in all he does." John 3:19-21, N.E.B.

God Himself has come to the light. And the universe has clearly seen that the truth is with Him. No lie has been found in the mouth of God. "How right and true are your ways!" all heaven agrees. Revelation 15:3, T.E.V. Compare Revelation 16:7; 19:2. We can safely place our trust in Him.

Surely such faith is no leap in the dark—unless one should believe that God has left us without light. And if God has really left us in the dark,

without sufficient evidence of His trustworthiness, then Satan's charges have not been met, and trust in God would indeed be an unenlightened risk.

The first angel of Revelation 14 calls on all men everywhere to make up their minds about God. But he does not ask us to trust a God we do not know. The angel comes first with the everlasting truth, the eternal good news. In the light of this evidence, do we find God worthy of our faith?

This is the faith the Bible speaks of so often, the trust in God that makes it possible for Him to save and heal. This is the faith described in Hebrews 11:1 as having "full confidence in the things we hope for, it means being certain of things we cannot see." Phillips.

In the familiar wording of the King James Version, faith is defined as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

The Greek word translated "evidence" occurs very rarely in the New Testament. In secular usage it often means "testing," "scrutiny," "cross-examination," and the resulting "evidence," "proof," and "conviction." The verb form of this word is much more common in the Bible. It is used to describe the work of the Holy Spirit when He comes to "convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment." John 16:8, R.S.V. It occurs also in the explanation of the reluctance of a dishonest man to come to the light "lest his deeds should be exposed." John 3:20, R.S.V. Paul uses the same word in his advice to the Ephesians to "take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them." Ephesians 5:11, R.S.V.

The Bible consistently associates faith in God with light, revelation, truth, evidence, testing, investigation.

Another term of special significance in the definition of faith in Hebrews 11 is the Greek word rendered in the King James Version "substance." One meaning of this Greek term is "sub-



stantial nature," "essence," "reality," which is why the King James committee chose "substance."

But a related meaning is "conviction," "confident assurance." And this is the meaning the King James committee preferred when translating this same Greek word in an earlier chapter of the same epistle. "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end." Hebrews 3:14. Twice in his second letter to the Corinthians Paul uses this same term to mean "confidence." See 2 Corinthians 9:4, N.E.B.; 11:17, R.S.V. Many scholars agree that this is the more appropriate meaning in Hebrews 11:1.

Near the end of the last century, archaeologists working in the Near East began discovering ancient papyrus documents which were records of business transactions, bills of sale, title deeds to property, guarantees. The common term for these documents was none other than this Greek word translated "substance."

This discovery made it possible to understand Hebrews 11:1 to mean that faith is, as it were, a transaction entered into, a covenant, an agreement between the believer and God.

God has much to offer us: forgiveness, healing, eternal life. But He never asks His intelligent creatures to believe anything for which He does not provide adequate evidence that appeals to reason. God does not expect us to have faith in a stranger. Instead, He first reveals Himself. Through His Son, through the Scriptures, through the world of nature around us, in so many ways, He seeks to make Himself well-known.

If in the light of this revelation, this ample evidence about God, we should choose to trust Him, to love Him, to accept His gifts and direction, then we have entered into that transaction with God which the New Testament calls faith.

"To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see." This is the translation of Hebrews 11:1 in the 1976 American Bible Society *Good News Bible*, T.E.V.

Faith, as I understand it, is a word we use to describe a relationship with God as with a person well-known. The

better we know Him, the better this relationship may be.

Faith implies an attitude toward God of love, trust, and deepest admiration. It means having enough confidence in Him, based on the more than adequate evidence revealed, to be willing to believe whatever He says, to accept whatever He offers, and to do whatever He wishes—without reservation—for the rest of eternity.

Anyone who has such faith is perfectly safe to save. This is why faith is the only requirement for heaven.

A faith like this is far from blind. It is based soundly upon evidence. As Paul explains in Romans 10:17, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

The earlier manuscripts have the name "Christ" instead of "God." Thus Goodspeed translates the same passage, "Faith comes from hearing what is told, and that hearing comes through the message about Christ."

It adds meaning to this passage to read it in its larger setting in Paul's letter to the Romans:

"Scripture says, 'Everyone who has faith in him will be saved from shame'—everyone: there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, because the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich enough for the need of all who invoke him. For everyone, as it says again—'everyone who invokes the name of the Lord will be saved'. How could they

invoke one in whom they had no faith? And how could they have faith in one they had never heard of? And how hear without someone to spread the news? And how could anyone spread the news without a commission to do so? And that is what scripture affirms: 'How welcome are the feet of the messengers of good news!'

"But not all have responded to the good news. For Isaiah says, 'Lord, who has believed our message?' We conclude that faith is awakened by the message, and the message that awakens it comes through the word of Christ." Romans 10:11-17, N.E.B.

In Paul's day there was little opportunity for a man to read this message for himself. If he wished to learn the truth about God, it was necessary for him to go to the synagogue or church and listen as the rare and costly manuscripts of the Bible were read out loud for all to hear.

This is why the introduction to Revelation says of John's book, "This is his [John's] report concerning the message from God and the truth revealed by Jesus Christ. Happy is the one who reads this book, and happy are those who listen." Revelation 1:2, 3, T.E.V.

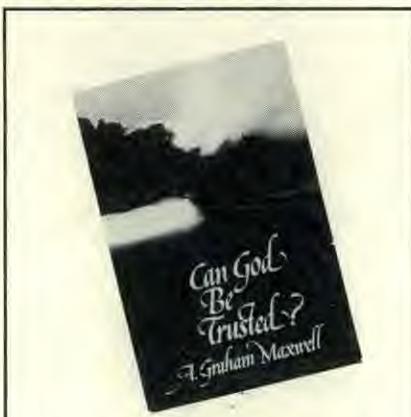
In our own time, when Bibles are so readily available, Paul might have written, "Faith comes by studying the Word of God" or "Faith comes by reading the message about Christ."

Those of us who have learned to read the Bible as an inspired account of God's long and costly revelation of the truth find in its pages more than sufficient evidence for our faith. When God invites us to trust Him, He is not asking us to take a chance, to risk a leap in the dark. Nor is He expecting us to accept mere claims or to trust some inner feeling or some sign or miracle that Satan could counterfeit.

God is simply asking that we consider the evidence, so readily available, especially in His Word, and that we freely make up our minds whether or not we can regard Him as worthy of our trust.

All this assumes, of course, that the Bible itself is true. How confident can we be that the books of the Old and New Testaments are telling us the truth?

(To be continued.)



This article is a chapter from Dr. Graham Maxwell's latest book, *Can God Be Trusted?* You will enjoy reading the entire volume. Available for just \$1.95, postpaid. Send your order to ABC Mailing Service, P. O. Box 37485, Omaha, NE 68137. Please include check or money order.



# Are Christians Sitting on a Hollow Egg?

Geoffrey E. Garne

**Why does the Bible caution patience in expectant Christians?**



SHIRLEY RUSCH

## **Is belief in the second coming of Christ a false hope?**

Ostrich feathers were big business in the 1920s, and while the boom lasted, the ostrich farmers struck it rich. Then the fashion designers decreed ostrich feathers "out," and the bottom suddenly fell from the lucrative industry.

Whether or not the whims of the fashion dictators will ever order a revival in the trade only time will tell. Maybe the few farmers who still maintain their ostrich flocks do so in the hope that someday the fashion tide will turn in favor of feathers again. In the meantime these farmers earn income from their ostriches in another way—as a tourist attraction!

You see, ostriches are notoriously stupid—and their stupidity makes humorous entertainment. Visitors to an ostrich farm can enjoy anything ranging from an exhilarating ride bareback (using the ostrich's neck not

only as a steering column but as a gear-change lever—for slow and fast forward, or reverse) to watching a trained keeper shove a whole soda pop bottle all the way down the bird's neck and then bring it all the way back up! The bird doesn't seem to mind.

On display at one ostrich farm is a hen which has been sitting on an enormous egg for more than five years! The poor creature is too stupid to know that the egg has been hollowed out and that, even if she continues to sit on it for another five years, it will never hatch. So day in and day out, week in and week out, month in and month out, year in and year out, she faithfully and patiently waits for the fulfillment of a vain hope—much to the amusement of tourists.

Scoffers are inclined to view believers in the second coming of Christ as

victims of the same kind of naïve stupidity. In the words of the apostle Peter they accost believers with the retort, "He promised to come, didn't he? Where is he? Our fathers have already died, but everything is still the same as it was since the creation of the world!" 2 Peter 3:4, T.E.V.

Could it be that they are right? After all, the church has expectantly looked for the second advent of the Lord for nearly 2000 years! What has gone wrong? Has the hope been misplaced? Are Christians like that ostrich hen—sitting on an egg that will never hatch, patiently waiting for the fulfillment of a vain hope?

Let us go back to the Garden of Eden and listen in on a conversation between God and His disobedient son and daughter, Adam and Eve, after they had fallen into sin. Immediately after the Fall they had been faced with the consequences of their sin; now God proceeded to tell them about the solution to the sin problem. He promised them that of the seed of the woman a Saviour would be born who would destroy the enemy, Satan, who had beguiled them into disobedience. You can read the account of the conversation in Genesis 3:1-15.

We can imagine how eagerly Adam and Eve anticipated the fulfillment of this promise! When their first son, Cain, was born, they must have looked fondly into each other's eyes and asked the unspoken question, "Is this baby boy the promised Saviour?" Alas, instead of being the promised Deliverer, Cain turned out to be the first murderer!

The mothers of each generation that followed Eve in turn cherished the hope that one of their sons would be the Sent of God. You can trace this hope by studying the names of the long line of patriarchs reaching down from Adam to the end of the Old Testament era. All through that time the flame of hope burned in the hearts of the parents—sometimes brightly, sometimes dimly, but ever burning!

After centuries of agonizing waiting, there must have been times when God's faithful people wondered, Will the promise ever be fulfilled? Has God forgotten His promise? Have we been deceived?

Eventually God's church on earth—



the Jewish nation—gave up hope. As the hour approached for the promise to be fulfilled, they were seeking the fulfillment of the promise along materialistic, humanistic and political lines.

Only a handful of faithful souls kept the flame of hope alive. A few are mentioned by name. We read of Simeon, a “just and devout” man who was “waiting for the consolation of Israel.” Luke 2:25. Another was Anna, who “served God with fastings and prayers night and day” and “spoke of him [the Saviour] to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.” Verses 37, 38.

Finally when the hour struck, it was not to the church’s leaders but to humble shepherds herding flocks that angels announced that the Saviour had at last been born. And it was to strangers from the East that the star appeared, guiding them in their search for the newborn King that they might worship Him.

God had made an appointment with His people, and though the promise tarried long, when the hour struck, “when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his son.” Galatians 4:4.

“Century after century passed away. . . . Many were ready to exclaim, ‘The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth.’ Ezekiel 12:22. But like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God’s purposes know no haste and no delay. . . . In heaven’s council the hour for the coming of Christ had been determined. When the great clock of time pointed to that hour, Jesus was born in Bethlehem.”—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 31, 32.

Ever since Christ returned to heaven at the close of His earthly mission, His disciples in all ages of the world’s history have waited for the fulfillment of another promise—that spoken by angel messengers while the disciples watched Jesus going into heaven. “When he [Jesus] had spoken these things, while they [the disciples] beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee,

why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” Acts 1:9-11.

Once again, God made an appointment with His people!

Jesus Himself declared, “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” John 14:1-3.

Peter endorsed his Master’s testimony in Second Peter 3:10: “The day of the Lord will come.”

Paul added his testimony in Second Thessalonians 4:16: “The Lord himself shall descend from heaven,” and again in Hebrews 10:37: “He that shall come will come.”

The beloved John took up the refrain in First John 3:2: “He shall appear; . . . we shall see him as he is,” and again in Revelation 1:7: “Behold, he cometh . . . ; and every eye shall see him.”

Jesus Himself sealed the testimony of the Scriptures with these words in the closing chapter of the Bible: “Behold, I come.” “Surely I come.” Revelation 22:12, 20.

Like the patriarchs and prophets of old who waited patiently for the fulfillment of God’s promise to send the Messiah, the church of Christ waits for the fulfillment of these promises that Christ will come a second time. Even though it may seem at times that we have waited a long, long time, the fact should never be forgotten or lost sight of, that *we have waited only half as long as did those who waited for His first advent!*

We can have the fullest assurance that the God who did not fail to keep His first appointment with His people, will also keep His second! “Like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God’s purposes know no haste and no delay.” When His purpose on earth has been completely accomplished, His promise will be fulfilled. Jesus will come again. The divine purpose which waits to be accomplished has a twofold aspect: (1) to give to the universe a *complete*

demonstration of the results of Satan’s rebellion against God; (2) to give to the universe a *complete* demonstration of the efficacy of God’s plan to save men from ruin in the face of Satan’s apostasy. As soon as this twofold purpose has been totally accomplished, Jesus will come again just as He promised He would.

When that hour strikes, the glorious description given in Revelation 14:14-16 will become reality: “I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.”

The equally glorious portrayal in Isaiah 25:9 will also come true: “It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

No, “we have not followed cunningly devised fables” (2 Peter 1:16) in cherishing the hope of our Lord’s return. “That blessed hope, . . . the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13), is not a false hope! It is not a hollow egg! It is a valid expectation which will not disappoint those who cherish it—valid because it rests on the word of a reliable God who has kept His appointments with His people in the past and who can be depended on to keep His appointments with them in the future!

“Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” Hebrews 10:35-37.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 15:58. ◇



# The Cave Dwellers

Marjorie Lewis Lloyd

**From the darkness of a cave comes hope for a higher kind of life.**

**Will mankind seek out caves as shelters in the future?**



PAUL B. RICCHIUTI

Are you fascinated by the mystery of a dark, unexplored cave? Have you ever made your way inside one of those underground caverns—alone—and wondered who had been there before you? Did you panic at the thought of being lost in one of those dark passageways—and never found?

Is it possible that caves will yet play a significant role in the experience of man? Could it be that you and I just might become cave dwellers of a sort ourselves one day not far in the future?

Let's talk about caves—caves through the centuries. And you say,

"Of course you're going to start with the cave dwellers—the cave men."

No. I'm familiar, just as you are, with the popular explanation of our beginnings—that life, in the distant past, began in the sea. That finally something swung down from the trees and entered a cave—and eventually emerged as man.

But according to God's Book, it didn't happen that way at all. There is no mention whatever of caves or cave men in the Genesis account of Creation. According to the Word of God, human life didn't begin in the seas, or

in the trees, or in the caves. Life, for man, began in a beautiful garden not very long ago.

We read simply that "God created man in his own image." Genesis 1:27.

And how did He do it? "The Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." Genesis 2:7, N.A.S.B.

And God has never changed His mind about what happened!

But you say, "There were cave men. Then where did they come from? Where do they fit in?"



Could it be that the cave men were simply descendants of Noah who were dispersed into various parts of the earth after the Tower of Babel?

You recall that in the early centuries after the Flood, in defiance of God, men attempted to build a tower that would reach into the sky. But God interrupted the builders by confusing their language. Unable to communicate, they scattered over the earth. In other words, the primitive cave men came after—not before. Man did not start out primitive. But some men became primitive.

Caves are mentioned a number of times in the Bible. Lot and his daughters took refuge in a cave after being rescued from Sodom. Abraham was buried in a cave. David hid from King Saul in a cave. And most likely the tomb of Jesus, where He rested until His resurrection, was a man-made cave cut into rock.

For centuries the early Christians were persecuted. Sometimes they were accused of the most dreadful crimes. Or they were accused of being the cause of great calamities—earthquakes and epidemics and famine. Great numbers were thrown to wild beasts or were burned alive in the amphitheaters. Some were crucified.

Wherever they took refuge, the followers of Christ were hunted like beasts of prey. They had to seek out the most desolate and solitary places. Thousands found shelter in the catacombs. Beneath the hills outside the city of Rome long galleries had been tunneled through earth and rock. The dark and intricate network of passages extended for miles. The Christians buried their dead in these caves. And when they were in danger, these gloomy caverns were their home.

Closer to our own time were the faithful Waldenses, who for centuries worshiped God in the Piedmont Valleys of northern Italy and the surrounding mountains. Today you can crouch down on hands and knees and enter underground chapels where the Waldenses worshiped for many years. But the day came when they were detected. Soldiers built fires at the entrance of many caves. The Waldenses sang praises to God until the last oxygen was gone. They would not deny their Lord.

Said the apostle Paul, as he recounted the experience of God's persecuted ones through the ages, "The world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground." Hebrews 11:38, N.I.V.

Did you know that caves, in the future, will play a role in the exciting, tragic, climactic, final days of our history? Hopelessly tragic for some—wonderfully happy for others?

No, I'm not talking about a nuclear holocaust that wipes out civilization and forces the few survivors to begin all over again in a cave. In fact, we can be sure that that will never happen—because God has other plans!

Listen to these words of the prophet Isaiah: "Men will go into caves of the rocks, and into holes of the ground before the terror of the Lord, and before the splendor of His majesty, when He arises to make the earth tremble. In that day men will cast away to the moles and the bats their idols of silver and

their idols of gold, which they made for themselves to worship, in order to go into the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs, before the terror of the Lord and the splendor of His majesty, when He arises to make the earth tremble." Isaiah 2:19-21, N.A.S.B.

What is the prophet talking about? He's talking about the day not far distant when the Lord Jesus Christ will return to the earth. The apostle John describes it in the book of Revelation: "The kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. They called to the mountains and the rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?'" Revelation 6:15-17, N.I.V.

The Saviour of men will descend the blazing skies. And strong and weak alike, all who are unprepared, will actually cry for the inanimate rocks to protect them—not from physical destruction, but from the searching eyes of the Saviour they have rejected.

But where can they hide from the face of the One who gave His own lifeblood to try to save them? Where can they find refuge? Not in the mountains. Not in the caves. Not even in the deepest caverns. As if a few yards of earth could hide a man from his Creator! Yet they will try it!

But is it possible that when men flee in panic into the caves, they will find evidence that others have been there before them? I have reason to believe they will. I don't believe they will be the first to have taken refuge there.

Isn't it logical, isn't it probable, that in those final days, when all the guns of satanic wrath are turned against God's faithful people, determined to destroy every last one of them from the face of the earth—isn't it possible that, just as in the ages past, God's persecuted ones will take refuge in the caves of the earth? I think so.

But I don't think God's people will be huddling there in abject, hopeless fear. I believe those caves will be bright with the light of heaven as angels come and go, encouraging the faithful to hold on a little longer. And when Jesus

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N.A.S.B.



comes, no matter where they are, no matter how isolated or concealed, He won't miss a one! Every one will be rescued. Every one will be safe forever!

And then, as those who flee in panic from their Lord enter the caves just vacated, I believe they will find some documents there. Not leather scrolls from the distant past. But books, periodicals, letters that God's people have been reading—and which they have left behind at the moment of rescue. Books left open, Bibles left open where the redeemed were reading when rescue interrupted them.

The eyes of lost men and women, trying to escape their Lord, will fall upon words that would have saved them, truths that would have protected them from this day—if only they had listened. There before their eyes, penetrating the panic and despair of their pounding hearts, they will see in those words the heartbreak of a rejected Saviour. A Saviour who isn't calling anymore. A Saviour who's only asking, from beyond the point of no

return, and out of a broken, disappointed heart, "Why will you die? I would have saved you. But you wouldn't let Me!"

I wonder if you realize how hard He has tried. I wonder if you realize the risk He took to make life possible for you and me.

We read of men who have gone into the caves of the earth and taken tremendous risks. They have climbed down too deep. They have run out of air. They have become lost. They have gone far into unexplored caves when no one knew they were there. Deep inside a mountain, they have lost their way. And they knew that if they shouted at the top of their voices till breath was gone, no one could ever hear. They were alone—inside the earth!

They did it to find gold. They did it to find clay statues. Or just to see what was there. Or just because no one had ever done it before.

But no cave explorer ever took the risk that Jesus took. No man was ever

so isolated, so cut off from help, as Jesus was. No cave was ever so dark as the darkness about the cross that Friday afternoon!

Many a cave explorer has panicked because he was cut off from other men. But Jesus was surrounded with men—men who didn't care. Men who scoffed. Men who derided Him. Men who hurled insults at Him. Men who dared Him to come down from the cross if He was the Son of God.

Little did they know what was happening. Little did they know that if He had answered their challenge, if He had accepted their dare, if He had come down from the cross and left unfinished the work He came to do, every person on earth would have been doomed. There would have been no hope for anyone—ever!

Do you realize that Jesus might have failed? Do you realize that even His own future trembled in the balance? Do you realize the risk He took?

You say He was the Son of God. You say there was no question but that He would come through all right.

Ah, but there was! It's true that He had told His disciples He would be resurrected—though His words didn't register with them. He had promised to meet them after the resurrection. He had known the outcome of His terrible ordeal.

But now on the cross, surrounded by the blackest darkness there has ever been, it was all different. Now, because of the sins He bore—other people's sins, the sins of the world—His Father's presence was withdrawn. He couldn't see the future. What if the sin He had taken upon Himself should separate Him from His Father forever? He knew He would be laid in a tomb—a cave carved out of the rock. But at that moment, hope did not assure Him that He would come out of that cave-tomb. He feared that His separation from the Father would be eternal. He cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Jesus plunged deeper into human woe than any man. He searched every inch of this dark world—not for gold or artifacts or fame, but for lost men and women who could be restored to His image as He had created them. You can be one of them. What a tragedy not to be!

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BOB TAYLOR





# The Homemaker's Commission

LaVonne Neff

**One busy mother found a pulpit nearby and an audience as well.**

It was time to put my younger daughter, then three years old, to bed. I sat down beside her on her red-and-yellow-flowered quilt to read a Bible story before turning out the light. The story that evening was about the crucifixion.

Heidi listened, brow furrowed and brown eyes enormous, as I read about the evil men who didn't love the gentle Jesus. "So they decided they would catch Him and kill Him," I read.

Heidi cried out in alarm, "Oh, they didn't kill Him, did they, Mommy?"

"Yes," I said, "they nailed Him up to a big wooden cross—like this." I showed her the picture in her book.

Heidi started to cry. "They couldn't kill Jesus, Mommy. They couldn't! It must not be a true story. It must be a silly made-up story." For all of her three years she had known Jesus as her Friend. Was I taking Him away from her now?

"Heidi," I said, "let me tell you the rest of the story. It's true—the bad men did kill Jesus. But that's not the end. You see, God watched over Jesus the whole time. He watched Him when the bad men caught Him. He watched Him on the cross. He watched Him as He lay dead in the tomb Friday night and all day Sabbath. Then do you know what God did early Sunday morning?"

"What?" asked Heidi, not sure she was going to like this story.

"He raised Him up from the dead!"

I had wondered how an evangelist must feel when people come down the aisle at his invitation and give their hearts to the Lord. I had wondered how a missionary feels when a heathen learns about his Saviour and falls in love with Jesus. I had wondered how a minister feels when someone from his town decides to join his church. As a housewife, I had never had these experiences.

But I no longer feel that evangelists and missionaries and pastors are luck-

ier than I am. Because that evening, sitting on a red-and-yellow-flowered quilt on the bed of my three-year-old daughter, I saw someone learn the gospel message.

"He raised Him from the dead!" Heidi echoed. The worry lines disappeared from her forehead, and her mouth opened into a wide grin. "Jesus came back to life again!" The sagging little body was sitting up in bed now, the tired little eyes were dancing. "Molly!" she called to her five-year-old sister. "You know what? They killed Jesus, but God raised Him from the dead!"

For a week Heidi kept coming back to her discovery. She wanted me to read her the same story every night. She chanted with me, "But God raised Him from the dead!" She pointed out a picture of Jesus to the manager of a local book store and said, "You know what? He came back to life again."

We talked about the meaning of Christ's death on the cross—how because of Jesus, Heidi would not have to die forever. She might live to see Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven; but even if she died, she could be sure that God would raise her back to life, just as He raised Jesus. We talked about the kind of love that gives of itself, the relationship between sin and death, God's wonderful offer of forgiveness.

I don't know how evangelists and missionaries and pastors feel when somebody hears about Jesus for the first time, but I'm sure they couldn't be as thrilled as I was the day I brought the gospel to Heidi. Today she's a wise five-year-old. The magical moment of hearing the gospel for the first time is two years distant. But my work as a Christian educator continues.

A few weeks ago my seven-year-old was wondering about last-day events. What would happen when Jesus comes back to earth? We got out the Bible—the Good News Bible is not

hard to understand—and read Matthew 24 and First Thessalonians 4:13 to 5:6 and First Corinthians 15:51, 52.

A few days ago we read First Corinthians 13, the love chapter, and the girls presented me with a problem. If I give away everything to the poor but I don't have love, it's worth nothing. What if I don't give anything to the poor but I have love? My girls are asking the same questions that are being discussed in seminaries: What is the relationship between faith and works? In seminaries they call that subject "soteriology," the study of salvation. In our house we call it "bedtime."

Jesus said that His followers should go "into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15. Christians call it the great commission. But what can mothers do about it? Should they feel guilty about having children? Should they turn their children over to a day-care center and get a job preaching somewhere and demand the right to be ordained?

I believe Jesus asks us to bloom where we're planted. He has asked us all to preach the gospel. So we must start with those closest to us, our children, before we ever think of going to a foreign country or even next door. But children grow up. They go to school. They get married. They may even go to the mission field themselves. Then what should a mother do for her Lord?

That, of course, depends on the mother. Some will go back to school. Some will resume an interrupted career. Some will continue with the jobs they have held all along. A few will continue ministering to children.

Yesterday, out of curiosity, I attended a meeting of the Christian Foster Home Association. I was impressed with the people I met.

One couple had driven half a day





JOAN WALTER

from Idaho to meet with the group. They live on a farm with up to five foster children at a time. The kids they take in aren't the angelic blonds of Ivory Snow advertisements. Some are mentally retarded. Some are physically disabled and must have a great deal of care. If it weren't for foster parents, these children would be in institutions. But instead they can go to a warm, caring Christian home where they are not only dressed and fed but also loved. The wife laughed as she admitted, "Sometimes I bring my 'family' to church and suddenly realize everyone's staring at us. We must be quite a sight." But her heart is big, and she is not ashamed.

A middle-aged woman seemed to speak for the group when she said, "Our children were grown, and we

had two extra bedrooms. We didn't feel right living in that big old house and not sharing it with anybody." So she and her husband agreed to take in disturbed adults: young women who needed to make a cushioned transition from institutional confinement to a more normal life.

Another woman has a mixed family—children born to her, adopted children, and foster children. Another lives in a trailer with her husband and her two small children as well as a severely crippled foster child or two. A woman who cares for unwed mothers reported that the 17-year-old who now lives with her "doesn't want to have her baby because then she'll have to leave me. She says she wants me to be her mommy."

As far as I could tell, nobody at the

meeting was rolling in money. Nobody had graduate education. Nobody gave the impression that life with foster children is a bed of roses. All seemed to agree that many problems can be solved only by the Lord, that some days would be impossible without frequent prayer breaks. The common denominator in the group was a sincere love for little people, forgotten people, troubled people.

Foster parents who belong to the Christian Foster Home Association are not preachers. They are not trying to impose their religious beliefs on the people they care for. In what way, then, is caring for hurting children a way of fulfilling the great commission?

The gospel is the good news that God loves humanity, that there is a way—through Jesus Christ—to be saved from our sins and problems. Some people spend their lives telling the gospel story, and this is vital. But others, like the foster parents I met yesterday, spend their lives illustrating the good news. Imagine a child who can barely talk, has trouble walking, and cannot be cared for by his mother. Good news! There are those who love him and will care for him as if he were their own child. Imagine a teen-ager, rebellious and in trouble, hurting. Good news! Somebody will take her in and will be her friend without constantly reminding her of her mistakes. Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:16. That's what Christian foster parents do.

God gives us all different gifts. Not everyone should be a parent. Not everyone should be a foster parent. But no Christian should ever go along with the popular idea that staying home with children doesn't amount to much.

Parents can be evangelists in every sense of the word. They can bring the good news to those who receive it most readily, absorb it most thoroughly, and live it most completely. Even if parents do not go around the world to preach the gospel, their work can set the world on fire. And when that happens, Jesus said, "Then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14), the end that is really the beginning. ◇



# Rainbow Over the River



Juanita Ravencroft

**In drought a blessing.  
In flood a promise.**

Spring came early to the valley east of the Rogue River. It came like a burst of light, reaching out like tendrils toward the green earth.

Day by day the sky grew brighter. Wild flowers bloomed along the sun-kissed slopes, their roots deep in the ground still damp from winter rains.

The oaks stood gaunt and bare. Thick grass grew beneath them, as dark green as the pines surrounding the meadow. Here and there shafts of sunlight danced on the scene, giving joyful promise to a new day.

The old man advanced toward an area of open field. He knelt upon one knee and felt the crunch of rheumatism in his bones, but as he scooped up a handful of dirt and let it sift through his fingers, a new vigor flooded his soul. The weather was perfect, and the soil was good! He would plant a garden!

His faded blue eyes searched the landscape knowingly. Long ago he had been a country boy, and his main chore had been to help his father tend the garden and orchard. Now, many

years later, he could still see the fruit hanging from the trees; the tepees of Kentucky wonder beans, their mature pods corded like wood on his young arm. And the red tomatoes, firm yet juicy upon his dinner plate at night; the plump melons with their mouth-watering sweetness, and the fat pea pods that snapped crisply when his mother shelled them for canning.

It was good to remember those days. And whatever anyone might say, he was still strong enough to grow at least a small garden.



With a new spring to his step, the man made his way to the old farmhouse. It was a red box of a place. The wall planks and the roof were weathered and warped. The door, sagging on its hinges, creaked as he went in. Inside was a heavy, musty smell his wife had scrubbed very hard to remove when they had moved in the previous fall.

They had never lived in such a home, but ever since his wife had become a Christian it seemed as if the Lord had multiplied their problems instead of their blessings—as she had staunchly believed He would.

"They are tests," she would say. "Tests that will not only humble us but strengthen our faith and character. This house may be old and inconvenient, but look outside!"

He knew what she meant. The smog-filled city where they had lived seemed far away to him now. Even the pain of being laid off his job of 18 years seemed bearable, though he knew that at his age and in his condition work would be hard to find. These five acres in Oregon had been bought with a down payment. The place was a retirement dream. It would have to be used sooner, that was all.

"The Lord will watch over us," his wife had assured him. "You can plant your garden, and I can learn to can. We'll manage."

"Yes," he thought as he rummaged through the boxes of seeds he had bought on sale, "we'll have to manage. There's no other place to go."

In the field west of the house, the old man toiled. Soon the ground was plowed, and now the hoe and rake sank into the earth. Sweat ran down the man's weathered features, and his arms and back ached till he winced. The soil was not as loamy as he had supposed. He wondered whether the tender shoots would break through the hard clay close to the surface.

For days the work went on. He planted the seeds and marked each row with stakes and empty packets, the pictures holding a promise of the garden soon to grow.

As he watered and weeded in the days that followed, his mind dwelt often upon the Bible, which he had begun to study. No garden could supply a man all his needs any more

than written words could pay bills. Still, was his wife right? Would God show them a way for that too?

When the first green shoots sprang out of the warm soil, the man's faith returned. Indeed, God was in control. There was no need to worry. But as so often happens, the pageant of early spring suddenly shifted. One day the sky turned menacing. Wind came up, sweeping through the narrow trough of the valley with icy fingers. The temperature dropped. In the morning, when the man went to inspect his garden, he saw the dark, wilted leaves of the young crop, frozen.

All seemed lost!

The calm of the morning mocked him as he gazed at the mountain peak. The rising fog left a vaporous cloud over the river. For a moment he was caught in its fathomless beauty, and as the air touched his nostrils with a sharp tang he suddenly felt a great calm. No smog-filled city could match the glory of this changing countryside. He would have to adjust to the days. Thankfully there were seeds left. He would replant the rows that had been destroyed.

Again the hoe sank into the ground. The seeds were planted and shortly came to life. The days were hot now, sultry and parched under a relentless sun. The young plants wilted from lack of water. "It's that old pump," the man complained to his wife one day. "Or the well may be running dry. Another thing!" he added, his voice rising. "The bugs have found us. And you know those deer tracks I saw the other morning? Well, the deer ate the spinach and turnips last night."

"That's a shame!" cried his wife. "But I'm sure you'll find a way to keep the deer out. And look to the west!" She pointed out the window, "Those look like rain clouds."

"Yes, but they won't fill the well if it's running dry," he grumbled.

The promise of rain evaporated, and the water supply remained low. The deer returned, destroying another part of the garden. What was the use? Nothing worked. Soon they might even have to beg for food. The old man was very despondent.

And for the first time in his life, he felt compelled to kneel down and pray.

He was there in the garden, a bent

figure, with the lengthening shadows of yet another day deepening about him. Eyes closed, he did not see the clouds that were forming above him like black and white giants warring in the sky. He could only cry deep down in his heart for the long years of struggle, and for the small rewards his struggling had reaped for him and his family. He was but a broken-down old man—a failure. "But, oh, God," he prayed, "show me the way. Take my hand and give me courage. Please, Lord!"

At that moment of despair he felt it—rain! Just a few drops at first, splashing upon the dry earth to be sucked up like ink on a blotter. Pat, pat, patter, pat. The staccato increased until puddles formed in the pockets at his knees. He gazed skyward and removed his cap in reverent salute. Tears of gratitude mingled with the rain on his cheeks.

All night it rained and all the next day. At day's end, heralding the setting sun, an opening appeared in the clouds. A burst of sunlight touched the pines beyond the river. And on the river it was like a flame, sparkling and dancing on the ripples.

The man and his wife stood at the window and marveled at the miracle. There, arched above the river, was a perfect rainbow, each end dipped in the Rogue like an arrow of molten gold.

A rainbow in the river! Evening sunlight! Life-giving rain! How well they symbolized God's love and tender care.

The old man saw it all. We grub the soil and bend our backs to the plow, seldom looking upward to the sun or the rainbow. We walk through the city jungle, too busy to listen to the magic of God's Word, which like the pattering rain can bring us a message of glory.

It is there for you—the promise of the rainbow. Like the old man in the garden, you can toil and worry and hope and despair; but you can always get down on your knees and pray, though it may be for the first time. Believe! And the light will shine on you, pointing the way. That is the love of Jesus! He will give you the water of life, greater than any other gift on earth. ◇



# The Exodus: Fact or Legend?

Who hasn't heard the story of the night the Red Sea opened up? The Israelites, escaping from slavery, walked safely through the passage in the sea, but when the Egyptian army tried to follow them, the water returned and drowned them all.

The Exodus, as the story is called, is associated with the Passover, which Jews around the world are celebrating this month. It's a tremendous story. It is not at all difficult to understand why the Jews still consider it a highlight of their national heritage. And Christians have claimed it as a part of their heritage too.

But, and it is an important but, is the story true? Did it really happen?

I first heard about the Exodus when I was a child, as you probably did too. And I taught it to my children. The Bible gives a very clear account of the event—if it really was an event. The question is, Can you trust the Bible to be accurate about historical details?

Several years ago I determined to find out about the Exodus. Surely, I reasoned—and I find that a great many people have reasoned the same way—an event of such enormous magnitude, if it really happened, must have been recorded not only in the Bible, but also among the archives of Egypt and the surrounding nations.

My search began. I hoped for a quick answer. Happy hope! I soon learned that scholars have been studying the subject for a full century and have not settled it yet. One reason for the delay seems to be that some scholars have taken the position that there is no Supreme Being, and even if there is, He never participates in the affairs of men. I know it doesn't sound like a very scholarly position to take; surely a scholar would hold his mind open on this question just as he does on others. But here is a direct quote from one such scholar:

"We must therefore be prepared to reject as later embellishment the story as it appears in the Book of Exodus, and to imagine the actual event as of much more humble nature."<sup>1</sup>

It seemed to me—considering how much supernatural intervention the Exodus story claims—that to be "prepared to reject" the supernatural even before one began his research would place a researcher under a massive handicap.

My third basic discovery was that, in dealing with this problem, as with the account of Joseph's famine [see *Signs*, October 1977], we have to rely heavily on ancient inscriptions. But the Egyptians hated to write about catastrophe and defeat when they were the victims of the calamity. And it is very clear that the Exodus was a catastrophic defeat for the Egyptians. Therefore I soon saw that I would never find much about the Exodus in Egyptian archives, but if I should ever run across any reference, however fragmentary, it would be important. And if such an account could be dated to the right point in time, it would be enormously significant even if brief.

That brought up the question: *When* was the Exodus? Two dates are proposed by different scholars, and each is the subject of severe criticism by the proponents of the other. It seems to me that the fact that this long-continued controversy has never been satisfactorily settled is evidence in itself that neither date is satisfactory. My pessimism is not unique to me! It has been expressed by several scholars. Here are two examples:

"It is safe to say that there will never be any general agreement on the chronological problems which lie at the base of our inquiry [relative to the placement of the Exodus]."<sup>2</sup>

"These modern researches have also shown that some of the most important features in the legends can not possibly be reconciled with the records of the monuments; as for example that the Pharaoh of the Exodus was certainly not overwhelmed in the Red Sea."<sup>3</sup>

The older view had placed the incident during, or just after, the reign of Rameses II. This date was based on the assumption that Rameses II was the

reigning pharaoh when the store cities (sometimes called "treasure cities") Pithom and Raamses were built by the Israelites. Exodus 1:8-11 says that a "new king" put the Israelites into slavery. Under his orders, the Egyptians set over the Israelites "taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses." These statements in the Bible were interpreted as *requiring* that the ruling king during the oppression must have had the name Rameses. Several pharaohs had that name. Rameses II was selected for several reasons. He reigned 67 years, a long time, long enough to include at least the late years of the oppression as well as the Exodus. This identification seemed to be solidly confirmed when archaeologists discovered in the area of the Nile Delta the ruins of a city containing many, many bricks stamped with the name of Rameses II. It seemed most reasonable to identify the destroyed city as that originally built by the Israelites under slavery.

Sounds like good sound reasoning, doesn't it? I thought so too for a while. My research continued.

In the early days of modern archaeology, the Exodus problem was not hampered by chronological considerations. The suggested dates for the reign of Rameses II were recognized as only crudely approximate. It was tacitly assumed that when an exact date could be established, there would be no conflict with Scripture. So Rameses II as the pharaoh of the Exodus was acceptable to orthodox scholars and skeptics alike. To the skeptic, any details that did not seem to agree with Scripture could be taken care of by the premise that Scripture is not necessarily dependable anyway. And the orthodox scholar could wait for further information, confident that it would "certainly" confirm the biblical data.

*This expectation did not materialize.* Instead, as more and more information was accumulated, dates were



## Does history hold open a door of credibility for the Joseph-in-Egypt story?

assigned to Rameses II that were about 150 years *too late* to allow agreement with Scripture. Exact dates for Rameses II are still a matter of debate. Some scholars think his reign began in 1292 B.C., others in 1304 B.C. Neither date is acceptable to orthodox scholars as the date for the Exodus, and I'll tell you why. There is a statement in First Kings 6:1 that calls for the date of the Exodus to be set 480 years prior to the beginning of construction on the temple of Solomon. Let me read it to you: "And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of

Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord."

Scholars are agreed that the date for the construction of Solomon's temple belongs in the first half of the 10th century B.C.—between 990 and 950 B.C.—though the exact date is still a matter of debate. By simple calculation the Exodus must be dated to the mid-15th century B.C. A date 1446/1445 B.C. though not established is now widely accepted.<sup>4</sup>

When it was finally determined that Rameses II and dynasty XIX must be dated (by the developing chronology)

to the early 13th century B.C., most conservative Bible scholars moved away from this setting. They preferred to place the Exodus in the XVIIIth dynasty in the reign of Thutmose III or early in the reign of his successor Amenhotep II. By the developed chronology of Egypt, that period encompasses the year 1446/1445 B.C. and leaves a degree of leeway for a more exact date when such has been established. If one assumes that the incident occurred on the death of Thutmose III, then his death might be taken to agree with the death of the Exodus pharaoh in the Red Sea.<sup>5</sup> See Exodus 14:27, 28; Psalm 106:9, 11.

However, this identification leaves to be explained the discovery of the mummy of Thutmose III. If the Exodus pharaoh lost his life in the Red Sea, how could he have been given a normal Egyptian burial? It has been suggested that the body was recovered somehow—perhaps it was washed to shore by the waves. However, since the "Pharaoh and his chosen captains" would be the ones above all others in the army who were wearing armor, they would be among the first to sink "into the bottom as a stone." See Exodus 15:4, 5. A more recent explanation proposes that the mummy discovered is not that of Thutmose III, though it was found in a tomb bearing the name of Thutmose III. Such explanations only emphasize the severity of the difficulty in rejecting the biblical detail.

This placement of the Exodus also makes it necessary to reject the strong inference of Exodus 1:11 that the ruling king during the oppression had the name Rameses. There was no king by this name in dynasty XVIII. All of the kings of this dynasty ruled from Thebes, far to the south of the delta region where the Israelites lived. How then could any one of these kings be the pharaoh of the oppression? Scripture pictures the pharaoh as residing in close proximity to the enslaved Israelites. He was there at the time of Joseph (Genesis 46:31); he was there at

J. STEEL, ARTIST, © PIPA 1961





the birth of Moses (Exodus 1:15); he was there at the time of Moses' flight (Exodus 2:15); he was there when the store cities were built (Exodus 1:11); and he was certainly there at the Exodus. To assume—as some do—that the XVIIIth dynasty pharaoh resided in the delta from time to time is hardly credible.

As I thought about all this controversy between the proponents of the two views, it seemed to me that the one detail which is most definitely demanded by the biblical account was not being adequately considered by either side. If the biblical account has any resemblance to fact, there was a dire crisis in Egypt, so severe it could not possibly have been concealed in the subsequent history of Egypt. If the details of the Exodus story have grown a little vague to you, may I suggest you reread chapters 7 to 15 of the book of Exodus. I have read them again and again. The Exodus certainly spelled disaster for Egypt. Recovery would take a very long time.

**T**he crops were destroyed in the plagues of hail and of locusts. Exodus 9:25; 10:12. The cattle were largely destroyed by the plague on the cattle. Exodus 9:6. The firstborn throughout the land died in the tenth plague. Exodus 12:30. It may be logically supposed that many had already died from the preceding plagues. The army was lost in the Red Sea. Exodus 14:27, 28. Egypt was totally without military protection. Not only so, the king was dead and the heir apparent likewise, throwing the political structure of the nation into utter confusion. There was a sudden loss of perhaps a million slaves from the work force. Exodus 12:37. And the Israelites took with them much of the country's wealth when they left. Exodus 12:36. The sudden loss of so many slaves would in itself have precipitated a major national crisis.

"If the numbers of the emigrants were nearly 2,000,000, which is a legitimate deduction from Exodus 12:37, the movement was one which would have shaken Egypt to its very foundations."<sup>6</sup> Yet the loss of the work force was only one of many devastating events.

As I looked again at that enormous list of casualties, I thought, What

would happen to a wealthy country that was suddenly plunged into such confusion and weakness? Suppose that country had been not only wealthy but also hated for its habit of oppressing its neighbors and demanding tribute from them? One thing that could be expected to happen would be an invasion by a foreign people. And with the king dead and the army gone, with morale crushed by disease and death, with the people hungry from the loss of their crops, the invading army would face no opposition. It could come and go as it pleased and do what it wanted with the nation's buildings and its people.

**M**ost likely, such an invasion would never be recorded in the ordinary archives of Egypt.

Well, with that insight illuminating my mind and quickening my pulse, I continued my research. It became clear to me that there is no evidence in the ancient Egyptian inscriptions to indicate that any such crisis occurred at any time during the period of the XVIIIth dynasty, certainly not during the reigns of Thutmose III and his son Amenhotep II. It is a well-established fact that during the reign of Thutmose III the Egyptian Empire suffered no major crisis whatever. Quite the opposite. Under his leadership the Egyptian Empire extended to the widest limits of its entire history, reaching all the way to the Euphrates River in Mesopotamia. Certainly no successful revolt occurred when Thutmose III was on the throne.

After the death of Thutmose III, the tribute-paying peoples to the north of Palestine attempted such a revolt—and bitterly regretted it. The failure was so complete that no one tried again through all the reign of his successor Amenhotep II. J. H. Breasted, a noted authority on Egyptology, describes the situation this way.

**"A**s so often in similar empires of later age, when the great king died the tributary princes revolted. Thus when the news of Thutmose III's death reached Asia the opportunity was improved and the dynasts made every preparation to throw off the irksome obligation of the annual tribute. . . . With all the father's energy the young king had collected a large army. . . . In

this encounter [at Shemesh-Edom] he led his forces in person. . . . The [rebellious] army was routed. . . . He fought a skirmish with the Nahar in advance just after crossing the river, but pushed rapidly on and captured seven of the rebellious dynasts. . . . He arrived in Niy, which opened its gates to him. . . . He entered the place in triumph. . . . Ten days later . . . he rescued a garrison of his troops from the treachery of the revolting town of Ikathi and punished the inhabitants. . . . 'The chiefs of Mitanni came to him with their tribute upon their backs.' . . . The work of Amenhotep's great father was so thoroughly done, however, that as far as we know, he was not obliged to invade either Asia or Nubia again. . . . His unexpected energy had evidently crushed the revolt before it had been able to muster all its forces. . . . The lesson was so effective that no further attempt was made against his suzerainty in Asia."<sup>7</sup> This hardly sounds like the crisis expected of the Exodus!

When I considered the total absence of the expected evidence for crisis in Egypt and the failure of the tribute-paying peoples to revolt successfully at any time during the reigns of Thutmose III or Amenhotep II, it seemed obvious to me that dynasty XVIII does not provide the proper background for the incidents of the oppression and Exodus. The period is just too peaceful and prosperous for such a placement of these events. Yet it would be folly for conservative Bible scholars to return to a setting of the Exodus in the XIXth dynasty. The reasons for moving away from this setting are just as valid now as they were earlier. When I put all these objections together, I came to the conclusion that a serious mistake has been made in accepting, as established, a grossly erroneous chronology of Egypt. This chronology has its dates set too far back in time by several centuries, thus resulting in a placement of the biblical incidents against backgrounds offset from their true backgrounds by these many centuries. Is it not at all surprising that there are discrepancies between the traditional dates and the biblical stories? The proper backgrounds for these incidents should be sought in a period of Egyptian history now dated centuries



earlier than the time of Thutmose III. I now believe that the incident belongs to the era of the late XIIIth dynasty. Let me explain why.

In previous articles I have showed that severe difficulties rise also from attempts to provide proper backgrounds for the famine of Joseph and for the fallen walls at Jericho [see *Signs*, July and October 1977]. I showed also that these difficulties are eliminated when we recognize that the traditional chronology of antiquity gives dates that are several centuries too early. These dates must be moved forward on the time scale by several centuries. When this is done, Thutmose III finds his place just after the reign of Solomon. Rameses II, with the unsettled conditions in Palestine, belongs to the period of the Assyrian invasions of the 8th century. It follows that the Exodus also occurred several centuries earlier than proposed by either of the current placements and centuries earlier than Thutmose III.

If you remember my article about Joseph, I demonstrated that the famine of Joseph belongs to the early XIIth dynasty, since the famine inscription is dated to the reign of an early XIIth dynasty king. Allowing a suitable length of time for the interval from Joseph to the Exodus, this incident should find its background in the era of dynasty XIII. But Joseph's name was found in an Egyptianized form among the early kings of the same dynasty. It

follows that dynasties XII and XIII were parallel in time. As was the case with Joseph, the many other names in the Turin list of dynasty XIII were not full kings but only prominent officials under the kings of dynasty XII. At the end of dynasty XII the rule must have passed peacefully to one of these prominent officials, the line continuing to the point of the Exodus. Thus even though the Exodus occurred shortly after the end of dynasty XII, this was late in dynasty XIII. The failure of scholars generally to recognize this situation has been a major factor in preventing a proper interpretation of the pertinent evidence.

This is a most interesting situation. It now becomes possible to set the Exodus incident exactly in terms of the history of Egypt. A point of dire calamity to Egypt has long been recognized by scholars as having occurred late in the XIIIth dynasty. This tragedy resulted from an invasion by a foreign people known as the Hyksos. This people were not only invaders; they were also vandals, destroying the cities and desecrating the temples wantonly. The magnitude of the disaster from the incidents related to the Exodus was multiplied by the invading Hyksos. We can now understand why the Egyptians made no contemporary reference to this disaster in their inscriptions. Our information relative to this invasion comes largely from sources outside Egypt. Josephus, for example, wrote a brief account of the situation.

"There was a king of ours whose name was Timaus. . . . Under him, men of ignoble birth out of the eastern parts . . . had boldness enough to make an expedition into our country, and with ease subdued it by force, yet without our hazarding a battle with them. So when they had gotten those that governed us under their power, they afterwards burnt down our cities and demolished the temples of the gods, and used all the inhabitants after a most barbarous manner; nay, some they slew, and led their children and their wives into slavery. At length, they made one of themselves king, whose name was Salitis; he also lived at Memphis, and made both upper and lower regions pay tribute and left garrisons in places that were the most proper for them."<sup>8</sup>

This explains how the Hyksos could conquer Egypt without a battle. Egypt had already been beaten to her knees by the series of disasters associated with the Exodus and was powerless to resist the invaders.

An inscription known as the *Ipuwer Papyrus*<sup>9</sup> was found in Egypt. It also tells of a serious crisis in Egypt—so serious that scholars are at a loss to locate a point in Egyptian history to match the disaster. The inscription is not dated to any specific situation beyond that of a contemporary invasion by a foreign people. The identity of the invading people is not given. Two placements have been considered—one following dynasty VI, the

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# How Will Jesus Return?

Richard H. Utt

## A DRAMATIC EVENT

**1. Will Christ come secretly or publicly?** "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." Revelation 1:7.

**2. To what did Jesus compare the glory of His appearing?** "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:27.

**3. Who will come with Him?** "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his works." Matthew 16:27.

## NOT A SECRET

**4. If someone tells us Christ has already come, should we believe it?** "Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." Matthew 24:11. "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." Matthew 24:4, 5.

**5. What are some common rumors about His coming?** "If anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Messiah!' [Christ] or 'There he is!'—do not believe him. For false Messiahs and false prophets will appear; they will perform great miracles and wonders in order to deceive even God's chosen people, if possible. . . . Or, if people should tell you, 'Look, he is out in the desert!'—don't go there; or if they say, 'Look, he is hiding here!'—don't believe it. For the Son of Man will come like the lightning which flashes across the whole sky from the east to the west." Matthew 24:23-27, T.E.V.

**6. When Jesus ascended to heaven, what were His disciples told?** "Galileans, why are you standing looking up at the sky? This Jesus, who was taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way that you saw

him go to heaven." Acts 1:11, T.E.V.

**7. How had Jesus ascended to heaven?** "While they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." Acts 1:9.

## THE HAPPIEST REUNION

**8. What great meeting is soon to take place?** "The Lord himself will come down from heaven with a mighty shout and with the soul-stirring cry of the archangel and the great trumpet-call of God. And the believers who are dead will be the first to rise to meet the Lord. Then we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and remain with him forever. So comfort and encourage each other with this news." 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18, L.B.

**9. Why doesn't Christ return right now?** "Remember why he is waiting. He is giving us time to get his message of salvation out to others." 2 Peter 3:15, L.B.

**10. In view of these tremendous coming events, what should we be doing?** "The free gift of eternal salvation is now being offered to everyone; and along with this gift comes the realization that God wants us to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures and to live good, god-fearing lives day after day, looking forward to that wonderful time we've been expecting, when his glory shall be seen—the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." Titus 2:11-13, L.B.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Live a sober, righteous life. Titus 2:12, 13.

Always be ready to meet Him. Matthew 24:44.

Look for Christ's coming. Hebrews 9:28.

other at the Hyksos invasion in dynasty XIII. John Van Seeters researched the problem in depth and concluded that a placement at the Hyksos invasion was the more probable.<sup>10</sup> However, as I have showed in the article on Joseph, dynasty VI was also roughly parallel with dynasty XII. Hence the two points are one and the same and both interpretations are correct. The traditional chronology did not permit such an interpretation. There is only one point in all of Egyptian history to match the crisis expected from the biblical account of the Exodus. That point is late in dynasty XIII but also contemporary with late dynasty VI.

But now comes the clincher.

The document contains numerous expressions suggesting plague in general and includes reference to such plagues as the destruction of vegetation, a plague on the animals, waters turned to blood, a plague of darkness, and widespread death among the Egyptians.<sup>11</sup> One gets the distinct impression from reading a translation of the inscription that its author actually went through the experience of the plagues—that the inscription is an eyewitness account—though he may have been totally unaware of any relation to the enslaved Israelites.

A second inscription (the *Ermitage Papyrus* now housed in Leningrad) provides a similar description of dire crisis. From this document we quote excerpts as translated by A. H. Gardiner and quoted by Velikovskiy.

"The land is utterly perished and nought remains. Perished is this land. . . . The sun is veiled and shines not in the sight of men. . . . The river is dry [even the river] of Egypt. . . . The earth is fallen into misery. . . . Bedouins pervade the land. . . . I show thee the land upside down, happened that which never [yet] happened. . . . Men laugh with the laughter of pain. None weepeth because of death."<sup>12</sup>

As with many other inscriptions, scholars did not recognize the proper interpretation. There was no recognized basis for associating these inscriptions with the Exodus incident. They tried to fit these inscriptions into wrong time periods of Bible history. By rejecting Scripture as not dependable, they set aside the very source that



would have provided a proper setting of these documents. There was one exception.

It is of interest, I think, that this is the same point in time assigned to these documents by Immanuel Velikovsky, who saw in them the proper background for the Exodus. I accept this view, not because of any general acceptance of others of his views, but because this is the only place in the history of Egypt that provides the proper background. And how well it provides it!

Who then was the pharaoh of the Exodus? An identification of this king is possible through a comparison of the Sothis king list, the Turin list of XIIIth dynasty names, and the Karnak king list. No two of these lists are alike. Such a comparison was made by the noted Egyptologist, Henry Brugsch-Bey.<sup>13</sup> Please follow the accompanying comparative table of Egyptian rulers from these three sources as we proceed. The numbers are those of the name-positions in the individual lists.

The first king of the Hyksos, as noted by Josephus, had the name Salitis. This is name number 26 in the Sothis list column. This name is separated from a line of seven names which for the most part are derived from the name Rameses. Scripture strongly infers that a king by this name was ruling during the period of oppression. But this inference extends to the use of this name, as a family name, reaching back

to the time of Joseph. See Genesis 47:11.

These Ramessides of the Sothis list are then alternate names for the kings of dynasty XII, since the famine of Joseph's time is dated to the reign of Sesostri I, an early king of dynasty XII. We may then expect to locate among these names the pharaoh who enslaved the Israelites and the pharaoh under whom they served in building the cities Pithom and Raamses. Since dynasty XII ruled from the delta region, we now have a king by the name Rameses ruling at the time of the oppression with his palace in proximity to the enslaved Israelites as pictured in Scripture. Thus this major discrepancy in the XVIIIth dynasty placement is eliminated.

The bases for identifications of each of these Ramessides with specific kings of dynasty XII are given in my published volumes on the Exodus problem.<sup>14</sup> We are primarily interested here in identifying the pharaoh of the Exodus. Note that one name (Koncharis) separates the name of the first Hyksos king (Salitis) from this line of Ramessides. We could tentatively deduce that this name Koncharis is the name of the pharaoh of the Exodus. However, the Sothis list is obviously incomplete, leaving the possibility that other names have been omitted between Koncharis and the first Hyksos king. This possibility is remote when we recognize the preceding names as those of the XIIth dynasty

kings. Evidently when dynasty XII came to its end, the rule passed peaceably to one of the prominent officials of the XIIIth dynasty, the Hyksos invasion and the Exodus of the Jewish slaves occurring shortly thereafter.

Furthermore, the name Koncharis is clearly a Greek rendering of the name Kha-ankh-re, number 9 of the Karnak list. The previous names in this list match those of the Turin list as shown by horizontal lines in the table. The missing numbers indicate omissions of other names from the more complete Turin list. However, the names in the Turin list numbered 24 to 27 are in sequence. Hence Kha-ankh-re is the same king as the destroyed name number 27. Brugsch was able by comparison of the names in these lists with names on other monuments to identify this Kha-ankh-re as also having the name Sebekhotep VI. The tomb of this king has never been found. Is it difficult to understand why?

It is at this very point that scholars have placed the Hyksos invasion in the sequence of XIIIth dynasty rulers. The periods of rule assigned to the subsequent names average about three years each, with some being less than a year. This situation indicates extreme instability in Egypt and can be reasonably equated with the point of the Hyksos invasion and hence the point of the Exodus.

The series of ultra-unique incidents  
(Continued on page 27)

#### Comparison of Names of Kings in Kings Lists\*

Turin List	Karnak List	Sothis List
8. Sankhabra _____	2. Sut-en-re	17. Uses
16. Ra-Sokhemkhutai _____	3. Sankhabra	18. Rameses
21. Ra-Sokhem _____	4. Re-Sokhemkhutai	19. Ramessomenes
22. Khasesheshre _____	5. Re-Sokhemauttai	20. Usimares
24. Khanoferre _____	6. Khasesheshre	21. Ramessessos
25. K. . . . . _____	7. Khanoferre	22. Ramessameno
26. destroyed _____	8. Khakara	23. Ramesse
27. destroyed _____	9. Kha-ankh-re _____	24. Rameses
	10. Khahotepre	25. Koncharis
		26. Salites (Hyksos)

\* Horizontal lines between names indicate recognized identities. Where these are lacking, a rough approximation in time may hold, but not necessarily so.





## The Kitchen Corner

Marcella Lynch

# Don't Desert the Desserts

So, what's all the fuss about sugar? Is there anything wrong with it?

First, let me say that sugar is not a poison. Nutritionists do agree, however, that there is no dietary need for refined sugar. Sugar has had all the bulk and all the fiber removed from it, plus all the vitamins and minerals. You have only a pure chemical left called sucrose.

The problem with sugar is not so much what it contains, but what it *does* not contain. Sugar consists of empty calories. Refining a product destroys its natural balance of nutritive values so some of its functions as a food have been lost.

Many major diseases of our modern age are now being related to our high-sugar, highly refined diets, including heart disease, elevated triglycerides, diabetes, and obesity.

Sugar gets its bad reputation because it crowds other more essential foods out of the American diet.

Obviously we can't blame sugar for causing heart disease any more than we can blame the sun for causing sunburn. Someone has to eat sugar. So, will you do something for me? Become a label reader! Whenever you shop for packaged and canned foods, take a minute to read the list of ingredients. Check to see if sugar and other sweeteners are high on the list. Buy the ones with no sugar or with low amounts of added sugar. You will be doing your whole family a favor, healthwise.

You don't have to desert the desserts. Healthful desserts don't have to be dull! They can be mouth-wateringly delicious and beautifully garnished with slices of colorful fruits and a sprig of mint. Natural ingredients have a wonderful flavor.

Fruits and fruit juices do a superb job of sweetening desserts. Keep in mind that natural sweets still do add up your daily calories. The good news is that these calories are loaded with minerals and vitamins and other nutrients. They are not empty calories as sugar is.

So, remember to plan your dessert as a part of the meal so that its nutritional content and calorie count, as well as its attrac-

tiveness, will be taken into consideration.

At our house I am making a big effort to wipe out the high-fat and high-sugar dessert recipes and replace them with wholesome treats. It is a challenge! But my collection is growing. The following are a few of our favorites.

### Polynesian Bars

- 1½ cups whole wheat flour (fine)
- 1½ cups rolled or quick rolled oats
- ½ tsp. salt
- Orange or pineapple juice to moisten
- ½ cup unsweetened, shredded coconut (optional)
- ½ cup chopped nuts (optional)

Mix above together using just enough orange juice to hold dry ingredients together.

#### Filling:

- 4 cups chopped dates
- ¾ cup water
- 2 cups crushed pineapple, undrained
- 1 tsp. vanilla

Cook together until thick and smooth.

Pat half of crumb mixture into greased pyrex pan (9 x 12). Cover with date mixture, then rest of crumb mixture. Pat down well. Bake 30 minutes at 350° F. Let cool and cut into squares.

This is a cookie that you mound into a haystack with an ice cream scoop. Our kids love them in their school lunchboxes. It uses coconut for the "straw."

### Haystacks

- 4 cups unsweetened, shredded coconut
- ¾ cup whole wheat pastry flour
- ⅓ cup rolled oats, old-fashioned
- 3 cups chopped dates

⅓ tsp. salt

¼ cup honey or orange juice

1½ cups chopped walnuts

¾ cup cold water

Mix all ingredients together. Scoop onto ungreased cookie sheet with ice-cream scoop. Bake until browned—about 20 minutes at 350° F.

### Hi "C" Fruit Delight

Toss some sliced bananas in a small amount of undiluted frozen orange juice concentrate.

Spoon mixture into pretty sherbet glasses.

Top with fresh or frozen strawberries (unsweetened) that have first been whizzed in blender to make a sauce. Sweeten with honey, if needed.

Garnish with a dollop of whipped cream and a whole berry.

You will be surprised! This apple pie is plenty sweet enough without sugar. The secret is using sweet eating apples and naturally sweet apple juice.

### No-Sugar Apple Pie

- 1 12-oz. can frozen apple juice concentrate
- 3 Tbsp. cornstarch or arrowroot powder
- 1 tsp. cinnamon or cardamom
- Pinch salt
- 5 large sweet eating apples such as golden delicious (peeled, sliced)

Combine juice, cornstarch, cinnamon, and salt. Heat until thickened. Add sliced apples and simmer until partially cooked. Pour into unbaked pie shell and cover with top crust or Crumb Topping. Bake at 350° F. for 45 minutes.



# Every Inch Pure Gold

A  
Story  
for  
Children



BOB TAYLOR

It didn't rain often on the lonely filling station in the desert, but when it did, the rain fell with such fury that it seemed nature was making up for lost time. Wind shrieked across the open desert, gathering speed as it came, and whipped the little building till it shook and shuddered.

During such a storm recently, three or four truck drivers gathered around the radio in that filling station, listening to the news, waiting for the weather report.

The door opened, and for a moment the wind rushed in, pushing the rain ahead of it.

"Shut that door, can't—" one of the men snarled from beside the radio. Then he glanced up, saw who had entered, and changed his growl to a smile.

Rod joined the group with a couple of easy steps, and Ci, the man with the growl, pulled up a chair for him. Rod had a big strong body, but there was a twinkle in his eye that told you he'd lift a baby bird back to its nest.

Rod was just going to sit down when he stopped, straightened, and walked to the corner. On a pile of rags lay a beagle puppy, sound asleep.

"Well, Jo!" he exclaimed. "You've gone and got yourself a pup! Good for you."

Jo was the man who took care of the

gas station. "Well, not exactly," he explained. "That is, maybe I have, maybe I haven't. I didn't mean to, anyhow. But that little pup's been around all day. Jumped out of somebody's car when they stopped for gas. Can't for the life of me figure who it was."

"He's sure a pretty pup." Rod was finally sitting on the chair, but this time the pup was on his lap. "Must belong to a child somewhere. Bet he's feeling sad right now."

"Listen!" That was Ci's loud voice again. "The weather report!"

"Heavy rains and high winds over most of the area tonight. Drivers should be on the alert for hazardous driving conditions and slippery roads. Temperatures tomorrow—"

Ci swung down from the counter he had been sitting on. "Got to get back into my truck and hit the trail."

The little group was breaking up. Suddenly Ci shouted, "Hold everything!" His hand was held in a gesture of silence, his ear glued to the radio.

"... phoned in a moment ago. She says she lost her puppy today while driving across the desert. He's just about three months old, a beagle, and Kathy says he's got a black patch on the side of his nose. If anybody finds him, Kathy lives on Route 58 ten miles east of the grade school."

Ci snapped off the radio. "Rod!" he exclaimed. "That's the very dog you've got in your lap!"

"Been thinking the same thing," Rod smiled. "Well, little puppy, guess I'll be taking you home."

Ci almost exploded. "You can't, Rod! You aren't going anywhere near where that girl lives. It's miles out of your way!"

"Fifty, as I figure it," Rod said quietly. "So?"

"Well, but—" Ci spluttered. "In all this rain, and the roads so slippery, and the wind, and—"

"So?" Rod repeated. "What's that got to do with it? I figure this little pup and that little girl need each other."

Three hours later Rod was pulling away from an isolated farmhouse. "Was she happy to have him back!" He smiled at the memory. "And that little pup! I thought he'd never get straightened out, he wiggled so much! It sure was worth it." His smile broke into a grin.

Two hundred miles away Ci braked for a red light at the edge of Los Angeles. The wind had calmed, and the rain had begun to ease. "That Rod," he muttered. "Strong as an ox, big as a mountain, and every inch of him pure gold."

Your friend,

*Uncle Lawrence*



# Why Not Ask?

Wayne Judd

## CHRISTMAS AND GOOD FRIDAY

All over the world people celebrate the twenty-fifth day of December as the day of our Lord's birth. Is it true that Jesus was born on that day? Also, most of the Christian world seems to celebrate Good Friday to remember the death of Christ, but why do some people not celebrate Good Friday? Is it not essential?

Jesus was almost certainly not born on December 25. It wasn't until around A.D. 350 that December 25 was generally accepted as the day on which Christians would celebrate Christmas. Other traditional dates in early church history considered as Christ's birth date are January 6, March 28, April 19, and May 29. It seems strange that the precise date of the birth of the great King of the ages should go unchronicled, doesn't it? But then we remember that, on that historic night, the world sent the King to a stable, not to a throne. The confusion regarding the date of His birth confirms the Bible story that very few even noticed the event.

I know of one or two churches that do not celebrate Good Friday, but I'm not aware that any church officially protests the Christian celebration of Christ's passion. As an alternative to Good Friday, the Bible teaches that the most appropriate way to celebrate Christ's death is through the communion service. "For as often as you eat

this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." 1 Corinthians 11:26, R.S.V.

Celebrating Christmas and Good Friday are historic traditions, not biblical teachings.

## SEXLESS MARRIAGE?

What's wrong with a couple's deciding not to have sex as part of their marriage? I know it sounds strange, but do you have to have sex to be married?

Sex doesn't marry people, God does. Indeed, there are circumstances in some marriages that necessitate sexual abstinence, which means that a good marriage must be built on much, much more than sex. However, most good marriages will include sex. Paul counsels: "The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not rule over her own body, but the husband does; likewise the husband does not rule over his own body, but the wife does. Do not refuse one another except perhaps by agreement for a season, that you may devote your-

**WHY NOT ASK?** Do you have a youth question? Why not ask Wayne Judd to help you? Write to Wayne Judd, Signs of the Times, 1350 Villa Street, Mountain View, California 94042. Please include your name, age, and address. We are sorry we cannot help you with pen pals, school fees, or personal financial aid.

selves to prayer; but then come together again, lest Satan tempt you through lack of self-control." 1 Corinthians 7:3-5, R.S.V.

If two married people agree that they are not interested in sex, it may not be essential to the relationship. But, hopefully, none will conclude that avoiding sex will somehow make a person more holy! It would be a great mistake to believe that God created sex to be something we must abstain from as a test of our spiritual strength!

## JOBS FOR EX-CONS

Please advise "Just Out of Prison" in your February issue that there is an organization that can help him. "Job Therapy" is so named because the best therapy for an ex-con is a job and a lay person who will work with him on a one-to-one basis. Also, these lay persons are almost always Christians who are following the injunction of Christ to help prisoners, among others.

"Job Therapy" of Seattle, the originator of this work, was asked by many people all over the U.S. to help them set up similar operations. One near you is in Hayward, California, and their phone is (415) 886-3113.

Thank you for your suggestion. Hopefully, ex-convicts will look for a "Job Therapy" organization in their communities.

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## KISSING, HUGGING, AND SEX

I am 13 years old, and my boyfriend and I do things like kissing and hugging. Now he is asking me to have sex with him. I read that the sex act shouldn't be practiced until marriage. I would like to have sex with him, but I'm afraid. Do you think that I should do it with him, just to keep my body fit, or am I supposed to just sit and wait?

Don't have sex, and don't just sit and wait. When sex becomes so all consuming that it becomes the focus of your life—like “sitting and waiting” until you can FINALLY do it—all of the other important things two people can do together are neglected.

I suspect that kissing and hugging can be fun at age 13, but I wouldn't be completely honest if I didn't tell you that these activities need to be more than fun. They need to fulfill a permanent, mature love relationship for married people. You would do yourself a great favor if you would avoid any type of physical affections with boys until you are older. I'm not suggesting that it's wrong to have strong feelings for another person at age 13. But because it is so many years before you will be mature enough to marry, you should slam on the affection brakes immediately. Spend your social times with groups of young people, rather than dating one person.

The Bible gives you the best answer of all. “Shun youthful passions and aim at righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call upon the Lord from a pure heart.” 2 Timothy 2:22, R.S.V.

## ANGELS AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

What is the relationship between the work of angels and the work of the Holy Spirit? It appears that they do just about the same things. Can you give me a clearer explanation of this?

Consult a good concordance (Young's or Strong's) and read all the texts you can find on angels and the Holy Spirit. Your suspicion will be confirmed, since both are intensely interested in the same task: the salvation of people lost in sin. Perhaps you will also find that angels serve more of a protective role, while the Holy Spirit convicts and teaches. While both are

spirits, we usually regard the work of angels as involving our physical needs, and the work of the Holy Spirit as meeting our spiritual needs. But the distinctions are difficult to make. It isn't very difficult, however, to recognize and appreciate the great gifts God has given us through angels and the Spirit!

## WINNING YOUR FAMILY

I want to know how to witness to a loved one in my family. Every time I try to talk about my faith, he gets furious. How can I get through?

You probably can't. At least you probably won't “get through” by “telling” the good news. Preaching is an ineffective method for witnessing to a member of the family; and when it works, it is no small miracle! It may sound strange, but keep quiet. Compromise on matters that are not moral issues, and use nonverbal techniques to get through. Even then, someone else may be the one to reach your loved one, not you. Jesus Himself had trouble winning those who knew Him best.

But you can live your faith, and you can pray for the ones you care about so much. Living your faith does not mean that you should flaunt your piety and rebuke your family's sins. Many people become very aggressive in trying to share the “gospel” with their families, but outrage against sin is not the most effective approach to witnessing. Loving concern works best!

## SHE HAS MORE EDUCATION

I'm 22, and have a girl friend who has a higher education than I do. Would there be any reason why I should not marry her?

A large educational difference could be a problem, since personal interests and associations might tend to divide you. However, if you share the same values, and if you are spiritually and intellectually compatible, a slight difference in education will not be an obstacle. It's folly to think that a person who has spent more time in school is somehow “smarter” than one who has not had formal educational opportunities or interests. It is also absurd to maintain that the man should be better educated than the woman. This type of antique thinking is justifiably resented by women.



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# Your Bible Questions Answered

Ivan Crawford

## ACTIVE BEFORE PENTECOST?

It is often said that the Day of Pentecost ushered in the age of the Spirit. Does this mean that the Spirit was not active before? I believe that the Holy Spirit is active at all times and in all places, seeking to impress people everywhere and to gain access to hearts. E. H.

Of one thing we can be sure—that we should not limit or confine the Holy Spirit. In the beginning, “The Spirit of God moved [brooded] upon the face of the waters.” Genesis 1:2. The Holy Spirit is active in all God’s plans for this world. We could have no repentance were it not for the Holy Spirit that leads us to “godly sorrow.” Read Romans 8:14-16; 2 Corinthians 7:10. And Acts 17:30 makes it clear that God “commandeth all men every where to repent.” The fact that some do not respond to the voice of the Spirit does not invalidate these texts.

When the Holy Spirit indwells a person, that person is completely dominated by the Spirit of God. All true Christians have this experience. “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” Romans 8:9. The person who rejects the pleadings of the Spirit never comes to the place where the Spirit reigns. But to those who testify by baptism that they are wholly the Lord’s, the indwelling of the Holy Ghost is sure. See Acts 2:38. The Holy Spirit as a Person cannot be divided. But by our choice we may limit the indwelling of the Spirit. We are either on the way to full submission to the Spirit, or we are en route to ruin.

Some people have difficulty with John 20:22 which says, “He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” Even though the disciples were not at that time fully submitted to the Spirit, they were on their way to that unity which made a full reception of the Spirit possible. We should note Acts 5:32, which tells

us that those who obey God’s commandments receive the Holy Spirit.

## WHICH COMMANDMENTS?

If, as you say, the Ten Commandments are the only document written for us by God’s hand, why do we worry about other exhortations such as “Don’t drink liquor,” “Don’t smoke tobacco,” “Eat properly,” and “Pay tithe”? Recently I read that the commandments of Revelation 12:17 are the Ten Commandments. You could keep the Ten Commandments to the letter, but still gossip. Right? But if we keep the two commandments of love (see Matthew 22:37-40), we will be keeping all the commandments. I believe that Revelation 12:17 refers to the two commandments of love. L.E.

When you say that the two great commandments of love comprehend all, you are showing great discernment. If you love God, you will make Him first in your life, you will not take His name in vain, and you will exclude all idol worship. You will “do those things that are pleasing in His sight.” 1 John 3:22. This means that you will keep the day that God calls “my holy day.” Isaiah 58:13 (see also Mark 2:28). And if, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 3:16, “ye are the temple of God,” you will not defile that temple by smoking tobacco, drinking liquor, or eating abominable foods.

Coming now to the second table of the Ten Commandments and the second great commandment of love, if you really love your neighbor, you will not murder him, steal from him, lie about him (gossip), commit adultery

with his spouse or anyone else, or covet his possessions. Have I missed anything? Tithing, of course, would be in recognition of God’s first claim on our lives and possessions.

Ecclesiastes 12:13 says, “Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” How happy we are that in His Ten Commandments God has given us instruction concerning the expression of our love for Him.

## GENUINE BAPTISM OR NOT?

Some of the so-called Christians in our area brand me as a non-Christian because I was baptized “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Matthew 28:19. They tell me that I should be baptized in the name of Jesus only. Am I really a non-Christian? G. C.

We look in vain in Scripture for a text that tells us that we should be baptized in the name of “Jesus only” and that the names of the Father and of the Holy Spirit should be excluded. It is true that Acts 8:16 describes a group of Christians as “baptized [only] in the name of the Lord Jesus.” But this does not tell us to be baptized in the name of *Jesus only*. Doubtless these people had been baptized according to John’s baptism; but then on their acceptance of fuller truth, they were baptized with a new emphasis, this time according to directions as enunciated in the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19 and 20.

The fact of the matter is that when we are thus baptized into the family of God, we are baptized “in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Does the fact that the Father and the Holy Ghost are included in the baptismal formula make it less emphatic of Jesus Christ? Forbid such a thought, for “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.” 2 Corinthians 5:19.

Please do not permit a religion based on feeling and emotion to dominate your life. We are not children of feeling, but we are children of faith, a faith primarily God-centered. And God is never at odds with Himself.

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**BIBLE ANSWERS.** If you have a Bible question you’d like help with, send your question to Ivan Crawford, *Signs of the Times*, 1350 Villa Street, Mountain View, California 94042. Please be sure to include your name and address as not all questions can be answered in the limited space of these columns. We are unable to respond to requests for pen pals, sponsorship, or other forms of financial assistance.



(Continued from page 21)

of Scripture now fall in time sequence and with the proper time intervals between them. Joseph's famine belongs in the era of the early XIIth dynasty. The Israelites were enslaved and served under slavery in the reigns of subsequent kings of this dynasty who had the name Rameses as a family name. Dynasty XII came to its end with the rule passing to a prominent official of dynasty XIII, also of the Ramesside line. Shortly thereafter, the Exodus occurred. The conquest under Joshua occurred 40 years later. The background is after the end of dynasty VI. But dynasty VI was parallel with XII and ended in obscurity sometime after the end of XII, probably surviving the Exodus. These later kings of dynasties VI and XIII then ruled only locally by permission of the Hyksos, just as is now recognized for the kings of dynasty XIV at Xoïs. Even the critics recognize occupation of Palestine by a new people at this time.

In my published volumes,<sup>15</sup> I have shown that the period between the famine and the Exodus agrees exactly with the period expected from the biblical data. Scholars had no basis for recognizing such an interpretation of their own observations because of the gross errors in setting the unique incidents of Bible history in erroneous backgrounds of Egyptian history.

As we conclude this series, let all Bible students take heart. An enormous amount of work has been done by students of ancient history. Some of their conclusions are right. Most of them are wrong, particularly those dealing with correlations between Egypt and Scripture for the early historic period. But when their discoveries are correctly analyzed, they demonstrate that the Bible has been right all along. There was a Joseph, and there was a Joseph's famine. There was a Moses, and there was an Exodus from Egypt. There was a Joshua, and the walls of Jericho did fall down. And there was a God behind all these events who worked through these men, and He lives and abides with us still, and He will yet reign triumphantly forevermore. Amen.

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# IN THE NEWS

## BREAKAWAY SCHOOL RENAMED

Seminex, the seminary that was established in St. Louis in February 1974 by former students and faculty of Concordia Seminary, is getting a new name.

Its board of directors voted to change the name to Christ Seminary—Seminex, and to stop using the designation "Concordia Seminary in Exile" to refer to the school.

The search for a new name began more than a year ago following threats of legal action by the board of control of Concordia Seminary, a Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod institution, which charged that the new institution did not have the right to use the name "Concordia."

Christ Seminary—Seminex has become affiliated with the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches since that denomination was founded last year.

## PSYCHOLOGIST QUILTS DEPROGRAMMERS

Dr. Kevin Gilmartin, a psychologist who has worked with deprogrammers at the Freedom of Thought Foundation in Tucson, Arizona, has announced that he no longer supports that approach to reconciling families and is joining forces with the Alliance for the Preservation of Religious Liberty (APRL).

The Alliance, which was primarily organized by members of the Church of Scientology but which lists clergy from several major religious bodies among its supporters, has begun a program of what it calls "conciliatory dialogue" as a means of promoting good relations between parents and their children who have joined controversial religious groups.

At a press conference Dr. Gilmartin said, "I would like to give my support to an approach which utilizes family counseling techniques in this area where they have not to date been used. In my experience, there needs to be an open format set forth where the emo-

tional needs of all parties concerned can be dealt with in an atmosphere of mutual respect."

The psychologist commented that "deprogramming is a negative approach to resolving familial conflicts where quite often parents and their children are financially and emotionally exploited."

He suggested that an approach to dialogue "such as the one proposed by APRL is a more positive and humane approach to reestablishing communication and family harmony."

## CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES IN GOVERNMENT STRESSED

Charles Colson, former special counsel to President Nixon and Watergate figure, addressed a gathering in connection with the 27th Pilgrimage and National Leadership Conference of Religious Heritage of America.

Mr. Colson, who received the organization's Life Inspiration Award, told a luncheon gathering that former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger frequently began meetings with other top government leaders by remarking that what was to be decided that day would change the course of history.

"As I look back on it now," Mr. Colson said, "we weren't changing the course of human history—at least not the way we thought we were. I stood at the side of the man who holds the highest office in this country and, believe me, I know the total futility of man to change the course of human history."

Reflecting that problems like drugs and pornography are getting worse while surveys indicate that more persons are becoming Christians, Mr. Colson said, "People who are coming to Christ aren't changing the world. What an indictment of the body of believers."

Mr. Hughes, former U.S. Senator and governor of Iowa, told the state leadership prayer breakfast held during the Religious Heritage gathering that the nation needs fewer "moral

people" and more "committed Christians" if it is to realize its potential as a "nation under God."

The United Methodist layman stressed that "we must never distort or warp the Word of God. If this nation is to be 'under God,' then its people must live under the commandments of God."

## NEW ZEALAND TO WELCOME ULSTER VICTIMS

New Zealand is planning to relax its immigration laws to admit people who have been direct victims of the violence in Northern Ireland.

Details of the plan are being kept secret at the government's insistence, but it is reported that victims of the sectarian struggle will be admitted, including family groups.

## BAPTIST SCHOOLS ENDORSE "PADDLING"

A Baptist school administrator says students should be disciplined by "paddling" because "sin must be punished."

Paddling is always done in love and with the understanding that once the guilt is erased "we can start with a clean slate," according to C. Donald Long, principal of the Emmanuel Baptist Church-sponsored elementary and high schools, which have enrollments totaling 800 students.

Members of the Christian Educators Fellowship who visited the two school buildings were told by Mr. Long that Emmanuel students understand and accept that paddling is part of the discipline.

Students are paddled by a teacher, in the presence of another teacher or the principal, Mr. Long said. He cited instances in which students had either thanked the teacher later for the paddling, or requested the punishment.

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*All news items not otherwise credited are from Religious News Service.*

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# A Devil Priest and His Dream

**Aaron Lopa**  
as told to Bevan Geslani

My name used to be Mou. I live on a quaint little New Guinea island where the Pacific's rippling waves break into myriads of bubbles along our white seashore.

Wuvulu Island, dwarfed by coconut palms, is a Christian island. All of us inhabitants are Seventh-day Adventist Christians. It is a nook in this part of our world where the songs of praise



rise heavenward every Friday evening as we meet God's Sabbath. But it wasn't so several years ago. The clasp of paganism and devil worship was very strong then.

I was born into a pagan family. Unfortunately neither I nor my parents knew my birthday. Dates were unknown in Wuvulu then. All we had was the sun and the moon for our time.

My father was a devout devil priest, and he felt it was his responsibility to see that his family was a model to all the other families in our village. Surrounded by superstition, we worshiped trees and rocks and gave sacrifices to the spirits that we thought lived in them.

I was the eldest boy. My father told me that someday I must take his vocation and be a devil priest when my time came.

I still remember the times I would go with Papa for our daily worship. Every night we would trudge the tiny winding path beneath the coconut palms to a sacred grove. Sloshing through the mud, the only sound we would hear was the muffled cries of the crickets mingled with the ruffling of the palms.

We didn't bring light; it was prohibited by the spirits. Blanketed by darkness, I would strain my eyes to see the blurred figure of my father ahead.

Under one of the designated trees, my father would worship. He would bow his head in reverence. Folding his arms, he would mumble his prayer. It gave me an eerie feeling. Many times I heard Papa's language change. I knew our dialect well. But the conversation coming from the tree was entirely different. The sound was weird. The noise seemed to be a jumble of insensible words.

Patiently I would wait. My father's command was that I must not move or make a single sound. Even though mosquitoes attacked me like a squadron of airplanes, I would not move. It was a strict rule for me to obey, and I obeyed it.

After an hour or so we would stumble back to our house in silence. Only when we came in sight of our house would I ask any questions.

"Papa, whom were you talking to?" I'd glance up to his stern face etched with years of devil worship.

"Mou." He would look straight

**He spoke in  
tongues and he  
did miracles, but  
none so great  
as to change an  
entire island.**

ahead. "The devil was talking to me. It was he who was in the tree."

"Did you see the devil, Papa?"

"Yes, Mou. The devil is always present there."

"But I couldn't understand what you were saying."

Papa would nod his head. "Yes, it is the language of the devil. But someday you will understand all of this."

I didn't know whether the devil was bad or good. I knew only that we had to worship the spirits so that we wouldn't be cursed. Our sacrifices were not offered because of love, but out of fear.

One day my father was called to offer a sacrifice for a sick man. He laid food, a pile of betel nuts, sacred stones, and other ornaments in front of him. Then he asked the spirits to heal this sick man.

Slowly my father muttered his prayer. Incense twirled in the air. Behind him a group of villagers ranted a chant. After a moment of meditation a spray of words burst from Papa's lips. Then right in front of our eyes a miracle seemed to happen. The sick man moved, struggled up, and limped back home believing he was well.

Whatever ceremonies Papa performed, I tagged along. In feasts, healing people, or in our daily visit to the grove, Papa tried to show me my future. Meticulously he instructed me in our beliefs, handed down to him by his forefathers.

Then something happened. It was the beginning of a series of providential circumstances that would change my life. When everything seemed to be going well, Papa died. It was a terrible blow to us. Suddenly we had no one to

support us except Mamma. The future was uncertain, except that I would take Papa's place someday.

The very next day after Papa's death almost everyone in the village came to console us. The chief and the other devil priests gave their last respects. For days mourning clouded our home.

During this difficult period I thought seriously of something my father had told my mother.

Months before Papa died, he had seen a strange dream. "I saw in my vision a group of people coming to our village," he told Mamma. "They are good people. They will help us in our village. You, Mamma, and the children may join this group. But never should Mou. He will be a devil priest like me."

The words stuck in my mother's mind. And true to my father's prediction, a group of Christians came to our village a few months after Papa's death. They were called Seventh-day Adventists.

We didn't know whether they were good or plain intruders. There was one white man, Pastor Boehm, who tried to communicate with us, but we ignored him. When the group landed, we even scorned them. We didn't give them the water they asked for. They tried to talk to us, but we did not listen to them.

On their second visit, however, we opened up a bit. When they asked us for food and water, we gave them some. But we still had reservations about them.

These people built a mission station in our village. Slowly they mingled with the villagers, teaching us about cleanliness and healthful living. Within a few months the villagers' prejudice evaporated. It was then that these Christians told us about Jesus.

Jesus' name was strange to our ears. We knew there were powers greater than ourselves, but they were the spirits in the trees and rocks. Jesus in heaven was completely foreign to us.

A few months later these Adventists started a mission school. But before they started that school our chief in Wuvulu, Lulu-ai, called the village together for a decision.

It was a custom in our place that we villagers should decide important questions. And what more important question than what side we would be on—whether to remain heathen or to



accept the faith of these Christians.

So one day we gathered around our chief. He asked us to tell publicly which side we were on. Lulu-ai scratched a long line on the ground. In his sonorous voice, he commanded us to choose. On one side would be the Christian group and on the other, the pagans.

One by one the villagers decided where they wanted to be. To my surprise, I saw Mamma step forward to the Christian side of the line. She was alone. I couldn't believe that she had really decided to forsake Papa's beliefs. But then I remembered what Papa had told her. "When this good group comes, you can join them. But not Mou. He will be a devil priest like me."

Mixed feelings bubbled inside of me. I was adamant in remaining a pagan. If Mamma chose her way, I would choose mine. My thoughts were on what Papa had planned for me.

Our house changed when Mother became a Christian. We had a cleaner place, for one thing. And our food was different. Crabs and lobsters were not found on our table any more.

I don't know why, but for the first time I felt uneasy living with Mamma. The superstitions we had believed before were not believed by my Christian mother now. I rebelled.

I left home. For six years I roamed the little island of Wuvulu as a wanderer. Up and down, together with

my friends, I tramped the island. Papa's beliefs, engraved in my mind during my young years, were still with me. Yet once in a while I would visit home. It was on these visits that something mysterious worked inside me.

After the Adventists made a breakthrough with the people of our village, they held evening and morning meetings. It was during these occasions that new believers were nurtured in the faith. It was here too where stories about the Bible were told with the help of large pictures.

Mamma wanted to tell these stories to my brothers and sisters. Just as the preacher told her about Jesus, she too wanted to tell about that Somebody that is greater than Papa's spirits.

I guess it was a mingling of Mamma's example and these stories that made me start doubting my early training. Still, I resisted the influence. Whenever it seemed that Mamma's religion would get hold of me, I would run away from home again.

Yet Mamma was patient. The more I tried to evade her influence, the more my mind troubled me. Mamma knew my strong desire to learn to read and write. One day she invited me to attend her Christian school.

"Mou, why not attend the Christian school? You will be taught how to read and write there."

"I know, Mamma," I retorted. "But I have other plans. When the govern-

ment teacher comes, he will be better than your Christian teacher."

"But, Mou, you have waited for six years now. And still the teacher the government has promised hasn't come."

Mamma was right. Years had passed since they told us about a government teacher. Years of waiting. Would I wait further for somebody not sure to come? Or would I follow Mamma's advice and attend her school?

It was not an easy decision. But looking back I don't regret it a bit. It was there in the atmosphere of Christian education that I began to realize God's marvelous light. This was the final scene of my conversion. As I came to know more about Christianity, my outlook in life changed. Papa's plan for me to become a devil priest vanished forever.

Pastor Mauve taught me not only writing, reading, and arithmetic, but the science of salvation. Using the Bible as our textbook, he opened my heart and mind to Jesus' love.

In 1959, after months in this church school, I became a Seventh-day Adventist Christian. As I looked back through the years, I could see God's providences leading me to this wonderful truth. After ten years of lay witnessing, I am now studying for the ministry at Philippine Union College in the Philippines. With God's help I hope to go back to Wuvulu to help finish His work there. ◇





# "Tell us, what shall be the sign of thy coming?"

Matthew 24:3.



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