

# These Times

APRIL, 1964

45¢

Issue Theme:  
*God's Love for Man*



"He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed."



IF YOU SEEK LIFE . . .

## Give Ear to Jesus

AS AN introduction to this issue, which is dedicated to the theme of God's love for man, I have chosen the following tribute to Jesus Christ, the Man of Nazareth, the Son of God. I first read it on the back of a church bulletin published by Church World Press, Inc., of Cleveland, Ohio. With their permission, I present it here:

"He wandered from place to place in a small land. He organized no party. He had no pulpit nor platform. He wrote no books.

"Yet the voice of Jesus has been heard more persistently these nineteen hundred years than any other. Plato and Shakespeare and Kant have always had the ear of the few. But it is Jesus of Nazareth who has won hearts and shaped civilizations. A third of the human race are numbered among His followers.

"God, speaking from the cloud, said, 'This is my Son; . . . listen to Him.' Hundreds of millions have listened, and in listening have heard the voice of God.

"Today a third of the world's population live under the Communist flag, and are told by their governments no longer to listen to this Jesus. Even so, the voice is not stilled. Thousands of years ago the Psalmist predicted that rulers would attempt to dethrone Jesus. He declared that God would ' . . . laugh and have them in derision.' (Psalm 2.)

"Rather try to keep the winds from blowing or the sun from rising, because the voice of Jesus is the voice of God.

"The world has had many notable men of wisdom. They die and retire to the shelves of libraries. Only Jesus keeps wandering the earth and knocking on the doors of men's hearts. His voice alone we cannot still.

"If you look for ideas that are clever and complex, the sayings of Jesus will be dull. If you look for truth to live by, Jesus will satisfy the heart's desire. For Jesus is Himself the truth. His words are words of authority; they are the address of God to men. They bring forgiveness; they bring judgment.

"Above all, they bring God Himself into the lives of men.

"If you seek entertainment or worldly wisdom, hear others. But if you seek life in all its dimensions of height and depth, give ear to Jesus, the Son of God."

Kenneth J. Holland, *Editor*



# These Times

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A RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE dedicated to the strengthening of the mental, physical, and spiritual life of the individual reader. Basing its recommendations on the living truths of the entire Bible, THESE TIMES promotes evangelical Christianity, the care of the needy at home and abroad, religious liberty, the systematic study of God's Word, the exaltation of Jesus Christ, and the news of His literal soon coming.

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THESE TIMES, APRIL, 1964

## This Time . . . . .

THE GRANDEST theme ever contemplated by man is that of God's love for us as demonstrated in His plan of salvation. Our lead article ("God's Love for Man," page 4) contains some of the choicest insights into that love ever expressed by human beings. Read again and again the author's delineation of the character of Christ, and as you meditate upon her words, you will catch new glimpses of Him who is the One altogether lovely.

A year ago Miss Carol Hetzell wrote of her plans for a round-the-world trip. Little did I realize that she would return with a story such as she relates on page 7 ("The Headhunter"). Apparently the love of God has reached even into the jungles of Taiwan to produce touchingly dramatic transformations of character in the lives of two compulsive killers. Miss Hetzell is associate director of public relations for the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

It is our hope that Gaylord Briley's article ("A Night Out With Gamblers Anonymous," page 9) will guide at least a few people into what seems to be a most useful organization. The fellowship is not well known, but functions in a manner similar to Alcoholics Anonymous and is attempting to offer consolation and help to a segment of society rarely touched by the churches.

Mr. Briley, who acquired facts and impressions at the GA club that meets in the First Congregational Church in Washington, D.C., is a contributing editor of *Church and State*, official journal of Protestants and Other Americans United.

Euel Atchley, who writes about a significant moment in his life, page 22, is professor of religion at Columbia Union College in Washington, D.C.

## QUOTES FROM THIS ISSUE

"Jesus . . . was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul. He did not censure human weakness. He spoke the truth, but always in love." (Page 5.)

"He must confess to be a compulsive gambler or the group will not hear him out. They say a man must admit he needs help before he is able to receive it." (Page 10.)

"The price paid for our redemption, the infinite sacrifice of our heavenly Father in giving His Son to die for us, should give us exalted conceptions of what we may become through Christ." (Page 28.)





*God manifests His love for us  
in His Word, in nature, in the life of  
Christ, and in the tenderest  
earthly ties human hearts can know.*

# God's Love for Man

By ELLEN G. WHITE

**N**ATURE and revelation alike testify of God's love. Our Father in heaven is the source of life, of wisdom, and of joy. Look at the wonderful and beautiful things of nature. Think of their marvelous adaptation to the needs and happiness, not only of man, but of all living creatures. The sunshine and the rain, that gladden and refresh the earth, the hills and seas and plains, all speak to us of the Creator's love. It is God who supplies the daily needs of all His creatures. In the beautiful words of the psalmist—

"The eyes of all wait upon thee;  
And thou givest them their meat in due season.  
Thou openest thine hand,  
And satisfiest the desire of every living thing."

Psalm 145:15, 16.

God made man perfectly holy and happy; and the fair earth, as it came from the Creator's hand, bore no blight of decay or shadow of the curse. It is transgression of God's law—the law of love—that has brought woe and death. Yet even amid the suffering that results from sin, God's love is revealed. It is written that God cursed the ground for man's sake. (Genesis 3:17.) The thorn and the thistle—the difficulties and trials that make his life one of toil and care—were appointed for his good, as a part of the training needful in God's plan for his uplifting from the ruin and degradation that sin has wrought. The world, though fallen, is not all sorrow and misery. In nature itself are messages of hope and comfort. There are flowers upon the thistles, and the thorns are covered with roses.

"God is love" is written upon every opening bud, upon ev-



ery spire of springing grass. The lovely birds making the air vocal with their happy songs, the delicately tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air, the lofty trees of the forest with their rich foliage of living green—all testify to the tender, fatherly care of our God. . . .

The Word of God reveals His character. He Himself has declared His infinite love and pity. When Moses prayed, "Show me thy glory," the Lord answered, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee." Exodus 33:18, 19. This is His glory. The Lord passed before Moses and proclaimed, "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Exodus 34:6, 7. He is "slow to anger, and of great kindness" (Jonah 4:2), "because he delighteth in mercy" (Micah 7:18).

God has bound our hearts to Him by unnumbered tokens in heaven and in earth. Through the things of nature, and the deepest and tenderest earthly ties that human hearts can know, He has sought to reveal Himself to us. Yet these but imperfectly represent His love. Though all these evidences have been given, the enemy of good blinded the minds of men, so that they looked upon God with fear; they thought of Him as severe and unforgiving. Satan led men to conceive of God as a being whose chief attribute is stern justice—one who is a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. He pictured the Creator as a being who is watching with jealous eye to discern the errors and mistakes of men, that He may visit judgments upon them. It was to remove this dark shadow, by revealing to the world the infinite love of God, that Jesus came to live among men.

The Son of God came from heaven to make manifest the Father. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." John 1:18. "Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Matthew 11:27. When one of the disciples made the request, "Show us the Father," Jesus answered, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" John 14:8, 9.

In describing His earthly mission, Jesus said, The Lord "hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." (Luke 4:18.) This was His work. He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by Satan. There were whole villages where there was not a moan of sickness in any house; for He had passed through them, and healed all their sick. His work gave evidence of His divine anointing. Love, mercy, and compassion were revealed in every act of His life; His heart went out in tender sympathy to the children of men. He took man's nature, that He might reach man's wants. The poorest and humblest were not afraid to approach Him. Even little children were attracted to Him. They loved to climb upon His knees and gaze into the pensive face, benignant with love.

Jesus did not suppress one word of truth, but He uttered it always in love. He exercised the greatest tact and thoughtful, kind attention in His intercourse with the people. He was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul. He did not censure human weakness. He spoke the truth, but always in love. He denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity; but tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes. He wept over Jerusalem, the city He loved, which refused to receive Him, the way, the truth, and the life. They had rejected Him, the Saviour, but He regarded them with pitying tenderness. His life was one of self-denial and thoughtful care for others. Every soul was precious in His eyes. While He ever bore Himself with divine dignity, He bowed with the tenderest regard to every member of the family of God. In all men He saw fallen souls whom it was His mission to save.

Such is the character of Christ as revealed in His life. This is the character of God. It is from the Father's heart that the streams of divine compassion, manifest in Christ, flow out to the children of men. Jesus, the tender, pitying Saviour, was God "manifest in the flesh." (1 Timothy 3:16.)

It was to redeem us that Jesus lived and suffered and died. He became a "Man of sorrows," that we might be

made partakers of everlasting joy. God permitted His beloved Son, full of grace and truth, to come from a world of indescribable glory, to a world marred and blighted with sin, darkened with the shadow of death and the curse. He permitted Him to leave the bosom of His love, the adoration of the angels, to suffer shame, insult, humiliation, hatred, and death. "The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:5. Behold Him in the wilderness, in Gethsemane, upon the cross! The spotless Son of God took upon Himself the burden of sin. He who had been one with God, felt in His soul the awful separation that sin makes between God and man. This wrung from His lips the anguished cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matthew 27:46. It was the burden of sin, the sense of its terrible enormity, of its separation of the soul from God—it was this that broke the heart of the Son of God.

But this great sacrifice was not made in order to create in the Father's heart a love for man, not to make Him willing to save. No, no! "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." John 3:16. The Father loves us, not because of the great propitiation, but He provided the propitiation because He loves us. Christ was the medium through which He could pour out His infinite love upon a fallen world. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. God suffered with His Son. In the agony of Gethsemane, the death of Calvary, the heart of Infinite Love paid the price of our redemption.

Jesus said, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again." John 10:17. That is, "My Father has so loved you that He even loves Me more for giving My life to redeem you. In becoming your Substitute and Surety, by surrendering My life, by taking your liabilities, your transgressions, I am endeared to My Father; for by My sacrifice, God can be just, and yet the Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

None but the Son of God could accomplish our redemption; for only He who was in the bosom of the Father could declare Him. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it manifest. Nothing less than the infinite sacrifice made by

*(Continued on page 28)*



In a moment it was over—  
the uncoiling of practiced muscles,  
the flash of steel.





*From the almost inaccessible,  
forested mountains of faraway Taiwan comes  
an incredible  
drama in real life.*

# The Headhunter

By M. CAROL HETZELL

**H**IGH in the mountains of Taiwan the trees and luxuriant undergrowth stand close together, forming a thick curtain that presses hard against the stubborn little roads occasionally weaving their way upward from the valleys below. Seen from the air, the mountains appear to be deserted, covered with jungle save for the tiny streaks that betray byways to somewhere. It is almost impossible for the eye to discern other signs of habitation.

But the homes are there—little clusters of them, knit together in what the valley folk call aboriginal villages. The mountain people have little to do with the valley people, or any other “strangers” for that matter. In fact, a stranger can easily find himself headless if he is not a man of extreme caution. At least so it was in the village of Wei-dji and

Ling-kwang on a day not so many years ago.

Wei-dji and Ling-kwang were good friends. And why should it not be so? Had they not since early boyhood explored the great forests together, bathed in the cool torrents of the monsoon streams, shared the fruits of their foraging, and borne together the swift cuffs of retribution administered by long-tolerant and much-tried parents?

Had they not groaned and sweat for each other when disaster came in the form of a badly cut foot or the “inner agony” that sometimes hit the village, when the stomach would hold no food and fever raged? Together they had learned the secrets of the forest, the code of manhood as the aborigines taught it. Together they had mastered the skill of the swift knife and listened to the wisdom of the village sage.

But there was a difference.

Yes, there was a difference, and it tore like a savage lion at the heart of Wei-dji.

The difference had come one day when the village lay in the grip of the “inner agony” and the monsoons beat with a relentless flood that gnawed at the edges of the rough mountain roads winding down to the valley. Seen through the heavy curtains of rain, the crude homes of the village appeared deserted until one drew near and caught the soft sound of moaning or the sharp cry brought on by fever.

Wei-dji tossed uneasily upon his straw pallet. His teeth chattered violently as the damp wind pierced the rough walls of his home and brushed across him. Suddenly his feverish eyes caught a movement at the door. In the dim light he could not recognize the



man who stood there dripping, his shoes and legs besmeared with mud. Weakly Wei-dji tried to reach for his knife. But the stranger spoke softly, and Wei-dji knew somehow that he did not need the knife. He closed his eyes wearily.

When the stranger left the village, the fever was gone. Many of the villagers still lay weakly on the straw pallets, among them Ling-kwang, but the danger was past. Wei-dji walked a short distance with this man from the valley—this man who had brought healing to the village at so great risk. And while they walked, the man talked. He talked of things almost incomprehensible to Wei-dji. He talked of a God of love. He talked of the evil of killing, of headhunting, and told Wei-dji that this was not how God had meant it.

When Wei-dji asked why this valley man had risked his life to save the mountain people, the reply came, "God sent me. He does not like to see people ill. He does not like to see people die." And he talked of other things—things that set Wei-dji to thinking great long thoughts.

And the great long thoughts changed Wei-dji's life, so that he no longer thrilled at the sight of the sharp knife, at the thought of the hunt when man was the prey. He tried to share some of these thoughts with Ling-kwang.

But Ling-kwang laughed with a great roar and smashed a hearty hand against Wei-dji's shoulder. "Have you gone soft, my friend?" Ling-kwang teased. "Come with me, and we will quickly cure that."

But Wei-dji would have none of it.

So Ling-kwang went his way, and when he returned, another head had fallen, another life was stilled.

Again and again Wei-dji tried to reason with Ling-kwang. He would point out that this killing did no one good. But Ling-kwang's reply was always, "He was a stranger, wasn't he? How do we know what evil he intended?"

The rift between the two friends widened, and each in his own heart was pained; but the heart of Wei-dji knew a double pain for his friend, because he remembered the words of the man of God. Then one day he hit upon a plan. For a moment Wei-dji's breath came sharp and hard, but he steadied himself with determination. Perhaps in this way he could wipe forever the blood from Ling-kwang's hands.

Ling-kwang was seated before his

fire when Wei-dji found him. A dour expression cast hard shadows across his face. Wei-dji studied it for a moment, his thoughts running back to early days when there had been no hint of shadows.

"Well, what brings you here?" Ling-kwang growled. "Am I to have another lecture?"

"No, my friend," Wei-dji answered slowly. "I have not come to lecture. I am done with that."

"Ha! Good! Sit down, and we shall talk as in the old days." The shadows on Ling-kwang's face seemed to lighten at the thought. He moved to one side to make room for Wei-dji.

And the two men talked, forgetting, it seemed, the difference that had come between them, remembering only the good things they had shared together.

At last it was time for Wei-dji to go. But he moved uncertainly, hesitating.

"What is it?" Ling-kwang inquired. "Is something troubling you? Have you something to say? Out with it! Let there be nothing between us now." He threw his arm across Wei-dji's shoulders and peered into the face of his friend.

Wei-dji drew a long breath. Then, seeming to grow furtive, he almost whispered, "You know that grove of camphor trees down by the big rock?"

"Yes, yes," Ling-kwang encouraged.

"Well, tomorrow when the sun stands high in the heavens, there will be a man there looking at the trees. I have seen him before."

"Looking at the camphor trees, eh?" Ling-kwang grunted suspiciously. "A stranger getting the lay of the land, I'll wager."

Wei-dji continued. "He is rather strange—wears a red hood over his head so that you can't see who he is."

"Aha!" hissed Ling-kwang. "Why haven't you told me of this sooner?"

"Well," replied Wei-dji, and Ling-kwang failed to notice the faraway look that came into his eyes, "you know how I have felt about killing, ever since the stranger from the valley came and helped our village. You never know when the one you kill may be a friend. But this man—"

"This man could be no friend!" Ling-kwang declared. "Not if he covers his face and lurks among our trees. No—no friend this! I shall take care of him on the spot—even *you* must agree—else you would not have told me. Ha! I'll have his head tomorrow!"

Wei-dji's eyes came back to meet

those of his friend. "Then so be it—my friend, my brother." And without another word he slipped away into the darkness of the tropical night.

As the sun neared its zenith the next day, Ling-kwang left the village. Moving almost without a sound, he came to the grove of camphor trees beside the big rock where he and Wei-dji had spent so many hours when they were boys. Quietly he settled himself behind a thicket to await the stranger's arrival. There was hardly a twinge of nervousness as he fingered his big knife.

Then a twig snapped. Ling-kwang's eyes shot across the clearing in front of him. Ha! There he was—the stranger with the red hood.

The sunlight filtered through the great trees, making bright flecks of crimson as the stranger moved softly toward the nearest giant camphor tree and lifted his hand to lean against it.

In a moment it was over—the uncoiling of practiced muscles, the flash of steel. The flecks of crimson picked up by the sun now were flecks of lifeblood—the lifeblood of the stranger in the red hood.

Ling-kwang reached down to jerk away the hood.

With an awful cry the headhunter fell back. His knife dropped from suddenly nerveless hands that tried to hide his eyes forever from the sight. Over and over his lips moaned in an agony that would not end, "Wei-dji! Wei-dji! Oh, no, Wei-dji; not you! Never would I have killed you! My friend, my brother! I did not know. . . . Wei-dji!"

From somewhere the words echoed back at him—the words Wei-dji had spoken just before they had parted: "You never know when the one you kill may be a friend."

High in the mountains of Taiwan the trees and luxuriant undergrowth stand close together forming a thick curtain that presses hard against the stubborn little roads occasionally weaving their way upward from the valleys below. The homes are there—little clusters of them, knit together in what the valley folk call aboriginal villages. Strangers do not often go there; but when they do, they need have no fear of the swift knife of Ling-kwang, for Ling-kwang has even sought out the stranger—sought him out to learn what it was that made his friend give up his life to stop him from killing. And Ling-kwang has found that love, God's love, is stronger even than death. ★★★





Jim Padgett, Artist

## A NIGHT OUT WITH

# Gamblers Anonymous

By GAYLORD BRILEY

*Gamblers Anonymous is  
a rebuke to rich and powerful  
elements in our  
society and to millions who  
think gambling is harmless.*

AROUND a long table sit eleven men whose ordinary appearance and neat dress belie the raging lust by which each admits himself possessed. An outsider might easily think himself at a church board meeting—until one man speaks.

"My name is Sam. I'm a compulsive gambler. I've gone sixteen months without gambling. Why does it hold less power over me than it did before? Because I've taken this hidden evil from under the counter and stuck it on a shelf where I can keep an eye on it.

"I would rather be dead than relive my old life. I found out that when your mind gets empty, it becomes dangerous. You must fill it up with thoughts of the new life, or you will start living the old one all over again—and believe me, that ain't living. I have seen the color of the devil's eyes, and I'm not giving myself back to him if I can help it. He plays a crooked game.

"For the first time since I can remember, I enjoy my little kid's laughter. I enjoy trees, the sky. I even got pleasure out of taking the family over to Hershey, Pennsylvania, to look at the chocolate factory. Can you imagine me doing that in the old days? It's everyday living to millions of Americans, but to me it's a miracle."

We are looking in on a regular Friday night meeting of Gamblers Anonymous

in a downtown church of an Eastern city. Down the hall the wives of these men are conducting a meeting of Gam-Anon, an auxiliary for those with a problem gambler in the family. There a well-dressed woman in her fifties is speaking:

"We have been married for twenty-eight years. Not once in all that time have we been out of debt—deep debt—caused by his gambling. We have no children. He's had a very good job all this time. Still we own nothing. Every cent we get goes to pay gambling bills. Since he's been coming to GA, things have gotten better. If they stay this way, we should be out of debt by next spring."

The compulsive gambler is a creature unknown to the average person. Since his compulsive behavior does not mark his body as it would if it took the form of alcoholism or drug addiction, there is no visible signal to call attention to him. He often succeeds in hiding his behavior from his family for a while, and they are not eager to noise it abroad when they find out. Gam-Anon members seem agreed that their gamblers are usually "loners," with a limited circle of friends, and these usually gambling addicts.

Problem gamblers can be of any religious background, from any racial or national stock, and from any social



# What They Say About Gambling

"At one point—which got little attention in press comments—Attorney General Robert Kennedy placed himself squarely on record against legalized lotteries, such as New Hampshire's, and off-track betting parlors, such as are proposed for New York State. He said that gambling constitutes a major source of income for the criminal subgovernment. Narcotics, usurious loans, extortion and illegitimate practices in relation to businesses and labor unions are also exploited by them. Churchmen who lend support to any form of organized gambling are supporting government by criminals. They should instead rally behind the attorney general in opposition to such practices and associations."—Editorial in *Christian Century*.

"Gambling discourages thrift and encourages greed. It exploits philanthropy and debases charity. It tends to replace trust in providence by dependence upon chance. It dulls social responsibility and destroys domestic peace. It hinders a man from being a faithful steward of Jesus Christ.

"When a statement from the board of evangelism and social action elaborating on these points was presented in 1954, the general assembly ordered it sent to the presbyteries with the following addition:

"This general assembly is unalterably opposed to gambling, whether it is carried on under governmental or religious or other auspices, and would therefore warn all congregations of our church against indulging in gambling under any form."—Editorial in *Presbyterian Record*.

"Satan has invented many ways in which to squander the means which God has given. Card playing, betting, gambling, horse racing, and theatrical performances are all of his own inventing, and he has led men to carry forward these amusements as zealously as though they were winning for themselves the precious boon of eternal life. Men lay out immense sums in following these forbidden pleasures; and the result is, their God-given power, which has been purchased by the blood of the Son of God, is degraded and corrupted. The physical, moral, and mental powers which are given to men of God, and which belong to Christ, are zealously used in serving Satan, and in turning men from righteousness and holiness."—Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 134, 135.

"What advocates of open gambling forget—or purposely obscure—is the fact that gambling is not only demoralizing but unproductive. Even if it were a sealed-tight honest system it would cost society, and thousands of individuals, more than it produced in income.

"Localities or states that appear to make a good thing of legalized gambling do so because most of the suckers come from outside—are a drain on society and taxpayers elsewhere. The net figure is always a loss. The indigents, suicides, tax losses, welfare cases, and family strain don't land in Las Vegas but in other localities.

"The old statement that gambling is an attempt to 'get something for nothing' may be a cliché but it cuts right to the heart of the matter. For that is what gambling is. And that essentially is what is wrong with encouraging the public to embrace it openly. The individual's sense of morality and personal responsibility is badly warped by expecting to get something for nothing. And, of course, for each gambling 'winner' there are thousands—society as a whole—who get only nothing for something. Throughout human history this has led only to a broader decline of moral values and the decay of civilizations."—Editorial in *Christian Science Monitor*.

stratum. Their one common trait, if the consensus of their testimonies is true, is emotional immaturity. Frequently it takes on more forms than gambling—marital problems being one of them, alcoholism another. Several men in the GA club we are visiting are also members of Alcoholics Anonymous, but by no means all.

Attainment of greater emotional maturity is a theme heard repeatedly at GA gatherings. Tonight it is the essence of a confession by an athletic-looking business executive who had "stayed clean" up to twenty-two months but recently went on a wild gambling spree that may cost him everything he owns.

"My name is Chuck, and I am a compulsive gambler," he says. (Last names are not used. He must confess to be a compulsive gambler or the group will not hear him out. They say a man must admit he needs help before he is able to receive it.)

"Last Friday I was not here because I was gambling. I began to gamble again, physically, a month ago. But I have been gambling in my mind since joining GA three years ago. False pride kept me from trying to change my mental patterns. I kept telling myself that I could cool it for a while, then go back. My subconscious drives, though, were stronger than my good intentions.

"I had some extra money coming to me, and I knew the check would come to my office. I kidded myself that I would put the money in the bank, but I knew better. I slipped into my former mental habits. I daydreamed about the races. When the check arrived, I kept it around the office a few days. Then I finished the cycle. I walked around the city aimlessly and sat in a park. After that I went to the movies. Then I went off to gamble.

"Whenever I had a problem in the past, I would escape by going to the races. This is what I fell into again. I lost X-dollars. So I borrowed money to recoup my loss. I lost the borrowed money too. So I borrowed some more. Now I may lose everything I have—including my house and my job.

"Even so it has been an inexpensive lesson. I would gladly give one hundred times the price to any doctor who could cure me. My first concern, now that I am being honest with myself and you men, is to reconstruct my life. Except for the grace of God, some friends, and Gamblers Anonymous, I don't



know what I might have done by now."

As Chuck finishes his statement, the men show sympathy and approval by rapping knuckles on the table.

This chapter of Gamblers Anonymous is one of dozens scattered across the United States, usually in the large cities. All stem from the original group in Los Angeles which began in January, 1957, when two obsessive gamblers began to meet together regularly and found, as the months went by, that neither had returned to gambling. Then, as GA's eight-page pamphlet history relates it:

"They concluded from their discussions that in order to prevent a relapse it was necessary to bring about certain personality changes within themselves. In order to accomplish this they used for a guide certain spiritual principles which had been utilized by thousands of people who had recovered from other compulsive addictions. Also, in order to maintain their own abstinence they felt it was vitally important that they carry the message of hope to other compulsive gamblers."

GA's do not force themselves on the unwilling. A gambler must admit he is licked, they say, before he will look for help. They try to be there when he is ready. One way they do this is to circulate GA pamphlets giving the Los Angeles address (P.O. Box 17173). Another is to maintain a telephone with a twenty-four-hour answering service. It is always listed under "Gamblers Anonymous" in the white-page telephone directory of any city with a chapter. The answering service is instructed to treat every call as an emergency. Regardless of the hour, an inquirer is always called back by a GA member within five minutes.

Once involved in GA, a compulsive gambler can keep himself busy enough to reduce temptation. There are weekly meetings. At any time he may be phoned by a fellow GA who is under unusual stress and needs an understanding someone to help talk away a siege of temptation. Or he may be asked to join a team which is making a visit to carry the message to another compulsive gambler.

Hyperactivity helps, yet is not a cure. Nothing is, as a GA would be the first to tell you. Only through rigorous adherence to the program of recovery is there any hope of a GA leading an approximately normal life. They compare it to an incurable physical handicap—

such as an amputated leg—the effects of which can be somewhat overcome, but the handicap itself cannot be cured.

The recovery program has a distinctly religious cast to it. It carries the sufferer through an admission of his guilt and inability to cope with his gambling, through confession to another and the making of amends, where possible, for past wrongs, to an appeal to God for help, and a carrying of the message to others in need.

Many who come to GA relapse into old patterns at one time or another. Discarding the habits of ten to thirty years is not easy. The GA table of fellowship is always open, however. No one is scorned or rejected because he slips. The only membership penalty attached to backsliding is one that applies to a chapter's officers. One who gambles again must relinquish his post.

There are no membership fees or dues. Outside donations are not sought or accepted. Each group is self-supporting through its own contributions. The money pays for the telephone-answering service and meeting expenses. Money is not lent or given to members, except that one who is genuinely without funds may get carfare home if he needs it. More than likely he will be driven home in a member's car.

That GA has a large reservoir of potential members is evident from its estimate of the total number of compulsive gamblers in the United States: six million or more. A single city like Washington, D.C., with its suburbs, may have up to 40,000 problem gamblers, they believe. How to reach them with the GA message is a problem. Usually it is a woman who provides the answer. Perhaps three out of every four members got started because a woman (almost always the wife) coaxed, begged, or threatened them into attending a GA meeting.

These men desperately crave to be like other men. Many have children. All have jobs—unless recently lost through a gambling escapade. Yet when the gambling fever is upon them, their womenfolk say they lose sight of everything but the hope of fortune's smile. Families are turned into excuses for gambling instead of reasons for avoiding it. One man expressed it like this:

"My thinking really was twisted. If my neighbor got down to his last \$100, he would get out and look for a job. Not me. When I got down to my last money, I would go down to the track

and use it to try to pick up some more. Even when I lost it all, I would tell myself, 'At least I try to do more than my neighbor does.'"

To every compulsive gambler the primary goal is to get through the present day without gambling. Beyond this is another goal, a position of strength each hopes someday to reach. That is to be able to trust himself.

To pay their debts and keep food on the table some of them have their paychecks made over to their wives, who conduct all family business. It's hard on a man's ego to let his wife handle everything except his lunch money, but it is safer. They look to the day they can handle their earnings again without fear of yielding to an onslaught of temptation.

The test of a GA's growth, according to the way members tell it, is what he would do with a sum of money unexpectedly acquired and for which he had to account to no one. As a nine-month member put it:

"To me the test is what I would do if, walking down the street, I found a \$50 bill just lying there. Nobody knows I found it. I can do anything I want with it. Will I take it home to buy the wife a coat to help make up for all the years of misery I've given her, or will I find me a poker game? If I left here right now and found \$50 fluttering down the sidewalk, I really don't know what I would do. I know what I *should* do. But I'm not sure I'm strong enough to do it."

Soon tonight's meeting of Gamblers Anonymous will break up. Although it is late, some of the twenty-two people here will be staying up several more hours. They will go to one another's homes or an all-night restaurant to continue the discussions until they find an answer or until they are too tired to succumb to any temptation but sleep.

The odds would seem to be against such a group as Gamblers Anonymous. It is an organization for those who try to help each other when they cannot help themselves. It is a rebuke to rich and powerful elements in our society and to millions who think gambling is harmless. The churches and others who might encourage its mission and direct new prospects to it are largely unaware of its existence. It offers no cures and will accept only those who admit they are defeated before they start.

But thousands of compulsive gamblers will tell you it works. ★★★





ONCE upon a time a young man asked a wise man for the definition of love.

"My son," questioned the wise man kindly, "what will you do with the definition?"

"Do?" answered the young man. "Why, I shall then understand love."

The wise man shook his head in silence, then gazed into the young man's eyes and spoke: "I cannot give you a definition. You must discover love for yourself. Watch for it in the eyes of a mother nursing her child. See it in the heart of a father searching for his lost son. You must find it as it is loved, and you must weave it into your own experience; for, my son, only as you love and are loved can you begin to understand love."

This, in a way, is the problem we face when we speak of atonement. Like *love*, *atonement* is a word whose meaning we can never fully exhaust with

definitions. We can understand it only as we observe it in a dynamic relationship—indeed, as we experience it in our own life. Meanwhile, in theological circles the term has assumed a variety of technical meanings. Generally, it is used to describe the redeeming effect of Christ's incarnation, suffering, and death. A survey of the theories which have proliferated across the centuries will show that the Biblical data have been hammered into many conflicting shapes, often in forgetfulness of what the Word of God itself teaches. What is regarded as man's fundamental need? Is it deliverance from ignorance? or misery? or sin? The answer conditions the theological view of atonement.

From a more general viewpoint, three dominant interpretations are set forth. The first is the "dramatic," or classic, theory, which sees in atonement man's liberation from the tyranny of sin, law, death, wrath, and the devil.

This view was advocated by the early church fathers, and can be called the Greek, or "patristic," view. The second holds that Christ's death was a sacrifice by which God's honor was satisfied and His holy judgment vindicated. This was the so-called Latin view. There is the third, a "subjective moral concept," which considers the cross to be primarily a moving demonstration of forgiving love, eliciting in return man's love for God's self-sacrifice.

The result of these century-old debates has been ponderous theories and lengthy manuscripts. In our view, these theories are partial and incomplete. First, they restrict and limit God's work of salvation. Then, they tend to consider the atonement in at least partial isolation from the person, life, ministry, resurrection, and eschatological teaching of Christ. Such views are centered exclusively in the cross, where the once-for-all, the all-sufficient, atoning

*The atonement cannot be restricted to what Christ accomplished on the cross. A Biblical view must include the application of the benefits of the sacrifice on the cross to the individual sinner and the actualization of these benefits in his life.*

*It also encompasses God's complete work of salvation and the restoration of His creation to its original state.*



H. A. Roberts



sacrifice of Christ was offered for man's salvation. Certainly we must agree that "we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Hebrews 10:10.)

But atonement cannot be restricted to what Christ accomplished on the cross. A Biblical view must include the application of the benefits of the sacrifice on the cross to the individual sinner and the actualization of these benefits in his life. Moreover, we believe Biblical atonement has a yet wider connotation, encompassing God's complete work of salvation and the restoration of His creation to its original state. In this larger total sense, atonement involves in broad outline the issues and events in the great controversy between Christ and Satan.

Now let us look at the Biblical terms of reference. The New Testament uses a Greek word which in various forms means "to reconcile," "reconciling,"

"reconciliation." The King James Version in Romans 5:11 translates the word into English as *atonement*, though the Revised Standard Version more precisely renders this passage with the word *reconciliation*. Thus in the New Testament the word *atonement* appears only once, and there should be rendered as it is in most other languages, "reconciliation." The word *atonement* is much more frequent in the Old Testament. There the Hebrew word means "to cover," and often it is translated, "to atone or make atonement." In its various forms and contexts "atone-ment" connotes "making amends," "making matters right," "to take the place of the people," "to make adequate compensation for wrong," or to serve as "mediator." A study of certain Old Testament experiences illustrates these various meanings. (See Exodus 32; 2 Samuel 21; Numbers 16, 25.)

Now, looking at atonement in broad outline, let us consider the great controversy between Christ and Satan. It was in the course of this agonizing struggle that Christ died on the cross. Whatever meaning the word *atonement* conveys, it certainly must be understood in this context. But first, why was atonement necessary? What problem was there that required atonement?

This question leads us back through the corridors of time to before the creation of the world—indeed, to before the creation of people. The great truth of atonement comes into clear focus only as it stands out against the truth of creation, and the basic truth of creation was love. In fact, love is the foundation of divine government. God created because He loved; and when He created individuals, His love led Him to grant the sacred gift of freedom—freedom to fulfill the purpose in creation. God desires a spontaneous love from His creatures, a love built upon the appreciation of divine character. Love cannot be coerced. It cannot be required. It can flow only from a heart free to fellowship or to refrain from fellowship. Free choice thus entails two minimum essentials, without which personhood does not exist: understanding and alternatives. Persons must not only be able to say, "Yes," but also they must be able to say, "No." God wanted freedom and love in the universe. Thus He ran the risk of losing creation, so that individuals could say "No" as well as "Yes" to God.

Lucifer, the son of the morning, said, "No." With this answer something new and mysterious entered the universe. We call it evil. Why did Lucifer say "No" to God and presume to rebel against his Creator? To find the cause for evil, or an excuse for its being, could be to lay the blame at the feet of God. Thus the advent of sin and rebellion in the universe raised some speculative issues. Had God withheld freedom from man? Was it really possible to act in harmony with His law? Was it right to let the innocent suffer in a great experiment? Was not God as author of creation at once the author of evil?

Such perplexities were the risk God took in creating free people. He foresaw the tragic course of rebellion with its endless train of suffering and mayhem. But He knew also that if freedom was ever to mean anything at all—and it is an essential to love—Lucifer's freedom to demonstrate his point of view had to be guaranteed. God's love sought to protect Lucifer and his followers from the headlong plunge into darkness, loneliness, and the overwhelming horror of existence separated from the source of life. His heart longed after Lucifer, upon whom, as a loving Creator, He had bestowed honor and glory. But the mighty prince would not turn aside from his evil course. Then, lest all heaven become diseased with this strange infatuation, God in sorrow drove Lucifer from the courts of heaven. Bonds of love and friendship were strained and broken on that tragic day when Lucifer, with one third of the angels, left the home of their communion with God.

Many times we picture Satan only as the antagonist of God, forgetting the love which once crowned the governing cherub in the days when he worshiped in adoration and filled heaven with praise to his Creator. Yet Lucifer chose his own destiny. In *Paradise Lost* Milton portrays thus his departure from heaven:

"Farewell happy fields  
Where Joy for ever dwells; Hail horrors, hail  
Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell  
Receive thy new Possessor."

Eventually the earth became a hell for men and evil angels. Adam and Eve, created in the image of God, endowed with intelligence and every good

# *A New Look* *at the* **Atonement**

By

WALTER RAYMOND

BEACH



thing, soon were seduced by the fallen angel. They joined the rebellion with Satan and were estranged from their Maker. But God, who had yearned to redeem Lucifer in heaven, sought to redeem the fallen race on earth. By then questions were raised in the minds of all created intelligences. Could it be possible that Lucifer had a point? Perhaps God was unjust in driving man from his home of innocence. Maybe some modification in the divine government would be good after all. Why should death be the consequence of rebellion? If God really gave freedom to people, why should they die as a consequence of using this gift? These we call "questions of estrangement." Not that by the mere raising of the questions a person would be in a state of rebellion; but unless the questions were answered, they might well be the seeds of corruption which would alienate the whole creation from its Creator.

At this point the marvelous plan to overcome the estrangement of God's beloved creation unfolded. God would win back the love of His creation. More than risking His creation, He would risk *Himself* to save sinners. Perhaps it would have been safer to blot out creation and to begin again with an untainted universe. In a moment creation could have vanished and God could have created a fresh universe. But this is not the nature of our Creator. He loved His creation. He loved the persons He had created. He would risk all to reveal His heart of love. Satan must be unmasked, and his charges must be proved false. To make this universe safe against rebellion, sin, and death, God chose to enter the stream of creaturely existence and there to reveal Himself. He would overcome the estrangement of rebellion, but He would do it in such a way as to overcome also the estrangement of the questions.

As man multiplied and covered the earth, few looked for deliverance from sin. Corruption was added to corruption. Murder and bloodshed were extolled as evidence of strength. Values were perverted, and the race was degraded. Freedom to serve the living God became precarious. It looked as though Satan was winning the battle for the human race. Then came the universal Flood. The earth's surface was destroyed, and man and beast perished in the raging storm. No doubt more questions were raised by the sons of God. Lucifer could point to this de-

struction, accusing God of destroying freedom and people. He could charge God with making freedom an empty word.

Time marched on. From the ark of safety man once again multiplied over the face of the earth. Once again the race chose rebellion rather than fellowship. The ugliness of sin was seen by heavenly intelligences. The stench from earth filled the universe with nausea. Still Satan persisted in his claim that God is responsible for it all. And curiously enough, he masked his intentions and work so artfully that he had sympathizers among the heavenly hosts.

Though the knowledge of God was dim in the minds of men, God continued to restore their freedom by offering them the option of fellowship with their Creator. In the type and symbol of the sanctuary service He taught them the hideousness of sin and its consequences—death. The sanctuary service also foretold the final triumph over this death by God Himself.

Thus into the need of human history God became the Son of man. He came to reveal divine love and to ensure man's freedom. As man was experiencing the anxiety of estranged existence, Jesus came to offer the opportunity for fellowship with God. In Christ the image of God was restored. God and man became one. God bridged the estrangement in the person of Jesus. With amazement heavenly beings and the forces of evil witnessed the Creator-God walking among men, sharing their lot, and depending upon God for sustaining power. Now the questions began to be answered. God had completely identified Himself with His creation. His life was a rebuke to Satan.

Then came the final crisis—the cross. In the Garden of Gethsemane the future of creation hung precariously tipped in the balance. The Son of God became one with the guilty race to the degree that He assumed the results of their sins. To His suffering soul came the shattering realization that communion with His Father was broken, and He no longer could feel the warmth and strength of His Father's love. This separation began to crush out His life—as it will eventually for all who reject fellowship with the Source of life. In those awful moments, the nature of God was revealed as supreme love. The third time He prayed, the decision was made. He would continue to identify Himself with His creation at any cost.

What greater love could there be? It stands out in marked contrast to the selfish, self-seeking Satan. Then Jesus was condemned to death, and as His executioners did their fearful work, the universe stood in horror. Questions of estrangement were answered. Satan was completely unmasked. No link of sympathy remained between him and the angelic hosts. He stood at the judgment bar and was condemned as a murderer. He had claimed that he would procure greater freedom. He had stated that God's law diminished freedom. He had blamed God for evil. He had pointed to God as unjust.

Now none of the heavenly angels listen. They see only too clearly that, given the opportunity, Satan would destroy God and attempt to take by force God's creation. And this would be a disaster. It would be death. The freedom he promised was slavery to abject tyranny, injustice, and murder. Jesus died crying out, "It is finished." John 19:30. The work He came to do, He had done. He demonstrated that man connected with God was free to fulfill his purpose and to rise above the determinism of sin. Then He rose triumphant over the tomb. In all this—in incarnation, life and ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension—God revealed Himself, the Creator-Redeemer. Satan revealed himself, the author of rebellion and death.

Now the universe was secure against Satan. The work was not finished, however. The heavenly beings understood the nature of evil, but man was still in the estrangement of rebellion. God's purpose is to bring man into a complete at-one-ment with Him. This means to restore men to the image of their Maker, to make of them men who have reached a stage of character that reflects the divine. Through the gospel message God seeks to bring men into this relationship, a relationship which will find consummation when "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2.)

John the revelator speaks of the last days of this gospel work. (Revelation 14:1-12.) At that time a group of men and women (144,000) will reach a special degree of Christian maturity. As Christ was a rebuke to Satan, so are they. Here, at the end of human history, God must be able to point to human beings who have chosen the way of righteousness and developed Christ-like characters. This group answers





Robert Ayres, Artist

other questions. God points to these as evidence of the power of redemption for all men who accept it. What a privilege, what a responsibility, to witness thus before the universe!

Just before Christ comes the second time, says the prophet Daniel, each person who has a claim to salvation will be given attention. Angels and those who were taken to heaven with Christ at His ascension witness each claim. All are satisfied that each person chose freely the course of his destiny. It is seen that God offered salvation to each person. At the close of this investigation, the universe is ready for Christ's glorious appearing, when "every eye shall see him." (Revelation 1:7.) Describing this event, Jesus calls it the time when at the sound of the trumpet "his elect" are gathered from all the earth. (See Matthew 24:31; Mark 13:26, 27.) These are accounts of a glorious, visible, audible coming, accompanied by the raising of the dead in Christ and the changing from mortality to immortality. (1 Corinthians 15:51-56.) This, very obviously, is the first resurrection described by the Apostle John. (Revelation 20.)

With these events the apostle introduces a chronological sequence which brings the conclusion of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. In this eschatological sequence the last questionings of estrangement are answered, and the universe is brought into complete and eternal harmony with God.

This final sequence begins, then, with John's description of the second advent of our Lord. (Revelation 19.) To the rebellious sinners of earth Christ comes in overpowering glory as a judge and avenger, with fire and sword, to give final battle against the hosts of evil men. Overwhelming destruction could hardly be more graphically described than with John's pen. Not only does nature cooperate with an upheaval that changes the geography of the earth, shaking down the work of men's hands, but also all organized opposition to God comes to a sudden end, as men individually tremble before their Creator-Redeemer. John's description of the "brightness of his coming" ends with these words: "And the remnant [the remaining sinners] were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth." Verse 21. The unrighteous who do not meet their end in these last-

The cross of Jesus Christ is but a momentary revelation to our dull senses of the infinite price the Son of God paid for our redemption.



day upheavals are destroyed by the brightness of Christ's visible presence as He appears "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God." (2 Thessalonians 1:8.)

The scene changes, and John sees thrones of judgment on which sit the "blessed and holy" ones who have part in the first resurrection. (Revelation 20:4-6.) "They came to life, and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Verse 4, R.S.V. Specifically, John sees the martyrs and those who have gotten the victory in these last struggles of the conflict join the "blessed and holy" ones, who have part in the first resurrection, in a thousand-year reign with Christ in heaven. True, John's view of the righteous during the thousand years does not specify just where the reigning with Christ takes place; he says simply, "I saw thrones, and they that sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Verse 4. But other texts do make this clear. Paul wrote the Thessalonians that the righteous are "to meet the Lord in the air," to "be caught up . . . in the clouds." (1 Thessalonians 4:17.) From this we conclude that Christ at His second advent does not touch the sin-polluted earth, but "he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matthew 24:31.) And the place to which the saved are taken at this time is indicated by the Saviour's own words of comfort to His disciples on the evening before His crucifixion. Said He, "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 14:2, 3. The place to which Christ will take His saints is described as "my Father's house," where there are "many mansions" (more properly, "dwelling places"). The unavoidable implication is that the destination of the righteous at the second advent is heaven—not the earth, from which they are removed.

Thus we have an explanation of what will happen to the two classes on earth when the Lord comes. While one will be left on the earth, dead, the other will be taken, alive, to be forever with the Lord. Both the prophet Daniel and

John the revelator describe the activities of the saved in heaven. They state that judgment was given to the saints, including the resurrected ones. (Daniel 7:22; Revelation 20:4.) In the Revelation the word *judgment* is from the Greek, meaning generally "sentence," "verdict," or a "decision rendered." Here the word seems to mean the authority to pass sentence.

This work of judgment is alluded to by the Apostle Paul when he wrote, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? . . . Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" 1 Corinthians 6:2, 3. This work of judgment may well involve a careful investigation of the records of evil men and a decision regarding the amount of punishment due each sinner for his part in the rebellion against God. Thus, before the universe, more questions of estrangement will be answered.

The Apostle John spoke of two resurrections a thousand years apart. The first resurrection—of the righteous—will take place at the second coming of Christ. The resurrection of evildoers, the second resurrection, will follow the end of the thousand years of judgment by the saints in heaven. The first resurrection (of the righteous) is obviously in contrast to the second (of the wicked). The Apostle Paul referred to the coming forth of "every man in his own order." (1 Corinthians 15:23.) First came the resurrection of Christ, the firstfruits; the resurrection of the saints is to come at the second advent. Then, at the close of the thousand years, the wicked will come forth. There is definitely a resurrection of the just and of the unjust. (Acts 24:15.) These resurrections are a thousand years apart—the first unto life and the second unto damnation. (John 5:29.)

Thus at the end of the thousand-year period the last scenes of the great controversy come to a gloomy world. The once-inhabited cities are in ruins. The wrecked pomp and splendor of earth are only grim reminders of the

teeming world that Satan had led in futile rebellion against God. Now Christ, accompanied by all the saints, descends to earth in awesome power, glory, and majesty to execute judgment upon the wicked. He bids the wicked dead to rise; and in answer to the summons the mighty host, numberless as the sands of the sea, responds. (Revelation 20:8.) Not only the "sea" but "death" and "hell"—grim receptacles of death's prey—deliver up their quota of the wicked dead. Raised with the same rebellious spirit that possessed them in life, they now make ready for the presence of the Eternal One.

They see the vast City of God, the New Jerusalem, which descends from God out of heaven. (Revelation 21:2, 3.) Christ returns to the same Mount of Olives outside old Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:4) from which He ascended after His resurrection, when the angelic messengers gave assurance of His return from heaven. (Acts 1:9-12.) Through the resurrection of the wicked, Satan is "loosed" for "a little season." (Revelation 20:3, 5, 7-9.) His enforced idleness is past, after his thousand-year period of captivity. Desperate hope springs once again in his evil heart as he sees the innumerable hosts of the wicked of all ages. Then comes the last mighty struggle for supremacy. Deceiving the sinful hosts into thinking that they can take the City of God, he marshals the wicked hordes into frenzied battle array in a final, futile assault upon the "camp of the saints," the beloved City, in an endeavor to overthrow the kingdom of God. The wicked, who stubbornly refused an entrance into the City of God through the merits of Christ's sacrifice, now determine to gain admission and control by siege and battle.

The last act in the great conflict of the ages takes place as the entire human race meets face to face for the first and last time. Satan's supreme attempt proves that he is still in rebellion. And evil men show themselves to be only evil. The final separation of the righteous from the wicked is now irrevocably fixed. Then from the great white throne the sentence of doom is pronounced upon the wicked. The sentence is followed by immediate execution. Fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours sin and sinners. (2 Peter 3:7, 10, 11; Revelation 20:9, 10.) The very surface of the earth ap-

(Continued on page 28)

Do you have problems, burdens, and perplexities that seem overwhelming? If you drop us a line, we shall be glad to join you in praying to our heavenly Father. Address all correspondence: Prayer Circle, Box 59, Nashville 2, Tennessee.



**"Hope for These Times" - 10**

# What Happens at Death?

By W. A. FAGAL

**R**ECENTLY my work took me for a week's stay on a warm island in the heart of the Caribbean. Unfortunately, depressing poverty is almost universal there, but despite it, the people seem to maintain a happy and cheerful outlook.

While I was there, one of the dedicated missionaries with whom I was riding one day stopped the car before the gate of a large cemetery, explaining that he would like to take me inside for a moment. It took him a few minutes to find the grave which he sought, crowded in between many other ones marked by much more imposing stones. Finally, however, he found it—the last resting place of a fellow missionary who, four or five years before, had become ill while serving God so far from home and had quickly passed away. He translated for me the words on the little gravestone, which included a precious text of Scripture referring to the Christian's hope of resurrection. Somehow that tiny, little-noticed spot became almost sacred to me as I gazed down upon it, thinking of the sacrifice which it represented. Without doubt angels also know where that grave is, and I have the feeling that they guard the spot.

Within the space of half an hour, I saw ten groups of people enter that cemetery on foot, following either a horse-drawn or a motor-driven hearse bearing the body of a loved one. I was startled and tremendously sobered to note that eight out of the ten coffins were little white fragile boxes measuring only two to three feet in length. Infant and child mortality in this area is fearfully high.

One scene seemed particularly pathetic. A little mother, with her brood of six children around her, stopped behind the hearse carrying one of those little boxes. A small grave had been dug right in the roadway to receive the body of the little child—a custom, I was told, followed by those who lack means to buy a grave. An old gravedigger stepped up quickly and literally



hurled the little white coffin off the wagon-hearse and down upon the ground; then he dropped it with a sickening thud into the shallow, irregularly dug hole in the road.

No flowers were there to represent anyone's sympathy, and no friends or relatives were present to give strength to that little mother in this difficult hour. There was no priest, minister, or rabbi to conduct a religious service of any kind. The little mother sobbed quietly—dry, tired sobs—as she saw and heard the rocks and dirt piled quickly on top of the body of one so precious to her. In less than two minutes it was all over, and the old gravedigger with his shovel, after stamping roughly on the grave to pack in the earth, had in an utterly detached manner wandered away. The mother, as if finally realizing the futility of staying any longer by the small mound of fresh earth, took the hands of her youngest children and, beckoning to the oldest to follow, made her way slowly and sadly toward the gate and home.

It had all been so terribly and completely final, so devoid of any hope whatsoever. I reasoned that probably the precise location of the unmarked grave in the road would quickly be forgotten. To me it seemed that the whole thing had been little better than the burial of an animal. I, too, am a parent, and everything within me reacted in sympathy to that poor mother, but the fact that we spoke different languages prevented me from even saying a word of sympathy to her. The whole thing left me indescribably depressed. My heart felt like a big ball of lead which threatened to rise up into my throat at any time as I, too, left the scene.

But I did not have long to brood over what I had just witnessed, for I saw, walking through the same cemetery gate, yet another group following a hearse which carried this time the body of an adult. My attention was immediately caught by this group because three men carrying Bibles led the sober procession. Turning to the folk who accompanied me, I exclaimed, "These people must be Protestants." As the group came closer to us and then passed us, my friends whispered, "We know some of those people. They are Seventh-day Adventists. One of the three men carrying Bibles is the local elder of one of the Adventist churches here in town." Not quite sure if it was the thing to do, and not wishing to intrude, I yet seemed

drawn to follow this group of sorrowing Christians to their open grave.

As the body of their dear one was tenderly placed in the ground, I was suddenly astonished to hear everyone in the group join in singing. I could not understand the words, but I recognized the melody instantly: "God Be With You Till We Meet Again." My friends translated each line for me as it was sung. What a note of hope sounded as they sang the chorus:

"Till we meet, till we meet,  
Till we meet at Jesus' feet,  
Till we meet, till we meet,  
God be with you till we meet again."

I could hardly control my feelings as I heard this old hymn of hope and faith and courage being sung spontaneously under such unusual circumstances. There was nothing hopeless here. They *knew* that they were going to meet again.

Then a short burial service was conducted. The one leading out read words from the Bible, and again my friends whispered translations so that I, too, could understand. He read, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17.

He read also these words: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52.

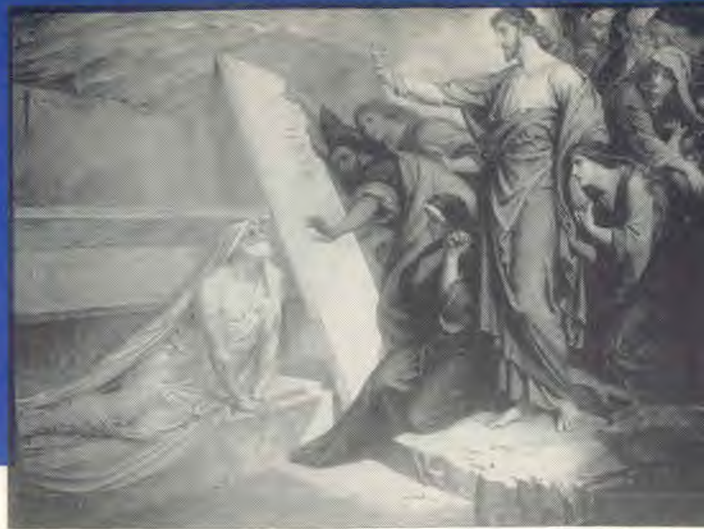
Then, looking out earnestly upon the assembled group gathered around that

grave, the speaker said, "We know that our loved one will come forth from this grave someday. She will see again her mother, her father, her uncle, her children"—and he pointed to each one as he mentioned the person by name. As I looked into the faces of that group, I recognized that they were sad, of course, at losing a loved one; but theirs was not the dull, hopeless sorrow which had so affected me minutes before. And, as if to prove it, before the group left the grave they sang again. The hymn was unfamiliar to me, but the words spoke of their dear one resting in peace until the Lord Jesus comes to awaken the sleeping dead.

In a very short space of time, I had had a unique opportunity to witness the difference which the Christian hope makes. Those with a faith left the same cemetery that day with the same sadness that death and separation always bring, but with a firmer resolve than ever to live faithful Christian lives so that they can be reunited with their loved ones when Jesus comes again. I was so glad that day for my hope in Christ and so glad for the difference that the Christian faith makes in an hour like that. I consecrated my life anew in that hour to my God, who through Jesus Christ has given us our wonderful hope.

What do we Christians believe happens to man when he dies? What is this hope which makes so much difference in the hour of grief? It is based, of course, upon what the Bible teaches.

Perhaps the simplest explanation of what happens at death is found in Psalm 146:4: "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." And what is a man's condition in death? "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Psalm 17:15. The condition of man in death is compared to a man in



F. Shields, Artist



sleep from which, on the resurrection morning, he will awaken with God's likeness.

Jesus also referred to death as a sleep when speaking to His disciples about the recent death of a dear friend. Here are His words: "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disci-



Robert Ayres, Artist

ples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death." John 11:11-13. Again and again the Scriptures liken death to a sleep. Surely this is significant and a fact well worth noting.

Let us now briefly consider exactly what takes place when a man draws his last breath. The words found in Psalm 146:4 cite three things:

1. His breath leaves him, and he stops breathing.
2. His body begins the process of disintegration which will finally reduce it to the earth from which original man came.
3. Immediately his thoughts cease—he is unconscious as in sleep.

According to the Bible it is just as simple as that.

But someone may think, "That is oversimplifying the matter. Does not the Bible say that something goes back to God?" Yes, it does. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who

gave it." Ecclesiastes 12:7. But here is where many people read something into the Scriptures that simply is not there. Great care must be exercised that we do not give to this word *spirit* a meaning which the Scriptures do not give to it.

The Hebrew word here translated "spirit" is *ruach*. This word appears 379 times in the Old Testament and is translated in a number of ways, such as "breath," "wind," "courage," and "anger." It is also used to denote the life principle, the seat of the emotions, the mind, the heart, and even the moral character. The almost amazing thing, in view of the popular misconception of our day, is that this word *ruach* in all of its 379 times of use is *never* used to denote an intelligent entity capable of existence apart from a physical body so far as man is concerned. Such a concept is entirely without foundation in the Bible.

Notice how this word *ruach* is used elsewhere in this same book of the Bible: "For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath [*ruach*]; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast." "Who knoweth the spirit [*ruach*] of man that goeth upward, and the spirit [*ruach*] of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?" Ecclesiastes 3:19, 21.

According to this verse of Scripture, both men and animals each have a *ruach*, with no difference seen between them. If then the *ruach*, or "spirit," of man were to become a disembodied, conscious entity at death, the *ruach* of beasts must do the same thing. But the Bible nowhere claims such a thing for man, and no Christian, to my knowledge, claims this for animals.

The *ruach* which goes back to the God who gave it is nothing more or less than the life principle, the spark of life, which God breathes into man's nostrils at his creation. This life from God, which no man, incidentally, has been able to duplicate, at death goes back to the God who gave it. He keeps it safe with Him until the resurrection morning, when He will return it to man.

Not long ago I spent the last three hours of a man's life with him in the death house of a great state penitentiary. The prison chaplain was with him when I first arrived, but left soon afterward. As he was bidding good-bye to the condemned man, he said cheerfully, "Remember, you don't have to fear this

thing called death which will come to you tonight. In just another three hours you are going to be in heaven. Imagine it! This very night you will be in heaven! You will see my relatives there—tonight! Give them my greetings, will you?" The prisoner nodded affirmatively, and the chaplain left.

But that young man had studied the Bible for several hours each day for more than a year while on death row. And, as the result, he now had a remarkable knowledge of what the Scriptures teach. Turning to me, he said, "I know better than that. I just didn't want to argue with him tonight." A little later he continued, "Tonight, as I look at it, I'm going to go to sleep just as I have every other night of my life. This night will probably be longer than the rest, but I realize that the next voice I hear waking me up will be the voice of Jesus." That was a wonderfully encouraging thought to him as he faced death, and his beliefs were perfectly in harmony with what the Bible teaches.

Everyone knows that a person is not conscious of his surroundings when he is asleep. And just so, when one is sleeping the dreamless sleep of death, he knows nothing of what is taking place about him. The Scriptures go out of their way to make this plain to us. There is no possibility of misunderstanding words like these: "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun." Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6.

The Scriptures make clear the fact that in the unconscious state of death the dead know not anything. All their emotions, such as love, hatred, and envy, are now completely suspended; they have no interest whatsoever in what goes on in this earth, for they know nothing about it. How clear are these words: "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." Psalm 115:17. If the dead were in heaven, they would certainly be praising God, but this text unequivocally states that they have gone down into *silence*.

The same truth is taught in these words: "For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" Psalm 6:5. The



dead who are in their graves are not remembering God and are not giving Him thanks for any of His blessings. They are simply asleep. The Bible even states that one who is dead knows nothing of what happens to his own children, in whom he would normally have the keenest of interest: "His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them." Job 14:21. These verses do not speak in generalities. They do not allow for private interpretation. They make the subject plain so that even the most simple can understand exactly what is being stated.

Some may wonder if the soul does not go back to God at death. Nowhere does the Bible state this. Instead it says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezekiel 18:4. The word *soul* is often used in the Bible to denote the entire person, as in Genesis 2:7: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Nowhere is the soul called immortal, and nowhere does the Bible teach that a soul carries on existence by itself.

According to the Bible, when a man dies he stops breathing, and all of his ordinary life functions cease. His "spirit," which is nothing more than the spark of life with which God made him a living being, returns to the God who gave it, to be retained until the

resurrection morning. The man himself is unconscious, asleep, unaware of his surroundings or of the passage of time. His love, envy, hatred, and all emotions are perished. He knows nothing of what is going on in this world. No conscious entity exists apart from him, carrying on a separate existence of its own. His body disintegrates back into the elements from which the original man was made—the earth itself

—and in this state he awaits the call of the Life-giver through whom only we can have eternal life.

We who believe in Jesus Christ and who have accepted Him as our Lord and Saviour can look forward to eternal life when He calls on the resurrection morning. The Bible tells us, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John 5:12. We who have Christ Jesus in our hearts have hope in the face of the finality of death. We are able to look through our tears beyond present darkness and see future brightness in Christ's second coming and the reunion which will be a part of the resurrection day.

Do you have this hope? You can have it only if Christ is your Saviour, for only if you "have the Son" can you "have life." Having Him and the hope which He brings makes all the difference in the world in how we look at death and beyond. Accept Him today and look forward to an eternity with Him and all the redeemed. ★★★

## What Happens at Death?

### S U M M A R Y

1. When will the dead in Christ live again? 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17.
2. What will be their nature after they are resurrected? 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52.
3. What happens to the thoughts of the dead? Psalm 146:4.
4. To what did Jesus liken death? John 11:11-13.
5. How much do the dead know? Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6.
6. Can they sing praises to God? Psalm 115:17.
7. How much do they remember? Psalm 6:5.
8. What is the reward of the sinful soul? Ezekiel 18:4.
9. What is a soul? Genesis 2:7.
10. What is the secret of having eternal life? 1 John 5:12.

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By ARCH A O. DART

#### PARENTS UNREASONABLE?

**QUESTION:** *I want to join the armed services, either the air force or the navy. I am seventeen years of age and feel that I am old enough to decide things for myself, but my parents are bitterly opposed to the idea. I feel their attitude is unreasonable. I am looking forward to being an architect, and I feel that training I will get in the army will be good background experience and that there might even be a possibility of getting training along the architectural line in the army. I have almost come to the point where I am going to go ahead and join anyway as soon as I am old enough to do so. What is your view of this?*

**ANSWER:** At your age you should be old enough to make most of your own decisions. Inasmuch as there is a difference of opinion between you and your parents on this question of joining the armed forces, your first decision must be whether your parents are interested in you and your success or whether they dislike you and are trying to hinder you.

If you feel they hate you and are determined to ruin you, you could seek counsel from some reliable source, such as your high school counselor or your minister, as to the best course to take. If you believe they love you and are anxious to help you, you can go to them with all confidence and present your desires. They will be glad to talk the whole plan over with you.

But let me warn you, usually parents can tell somehow when a son or a

daughter is more interested in "winning the battle" against his parents than he is in asking for their counsel. Most parents are delighted to have their children come to them for counsel and will give them the very best they can. But if they get the idea their children are trying to rebel, they are more than likely to be against everything those young people suggest.

After reading your letter, I am wondering whether you are not more interested in "winning the battle" against your parents than in joining the armed services. You are not certain whether to join the air force or the navy or maybe the army. There is a vague possibility that the army might give you architectural training. But you are not sure. You are positive, however, that your parents are *unreasonable*. Now if you feel that your parents are unreasonable because their opinions differ from yours at times, what will you think of your commanding officer when his opinions differ from yours? You may be amazed to find how seldom army officers ask the soldiers for their counsel or advice. You may be shocked to learn that your officer obeys his superior officer, and he obeys his superior officer.

Strange as it may sound, the man who obeys is the one who is in line for promotion, and the one who disobeys is subject to demotion or worse. After all, the only way to succeed in anything is to obey the rules. The only way to succeed in life is to obey the laws of life. More power to you as you learn how to make your own decisions.

#### HANDLING A CRUSH

**QUESTION:** *My sister has gone wacky over her English teacher. She is only fourteen, and he has been teaching for some time. She thinks she is in love, but he doesn't know she is alive. How long will this crush last?*

**ANSWER:** Not too long, we hope, if the matter is handled properly. Some girls "need" a stepping-stone from childhood to adulthood. When she was a child, her father was the chief man in her life; and when she becomes an adult, her husband will be. Right now she is beginning to desire a husband-companion and is searching for him among the "fathers."

Your best approach to this situation is to call her attention to some of this man's good qualities and then express the hope that someday she will find a husband that will have these same desirable traits. You might hint that it would be wise to keep her admiration for him a family secret, for some might make sport of it, and unscrupulous men might try to take advantage of her.

★★★

#### Your Questions Invited

Archa Dart is an experienced counselor of youth. His advice has helped many young people; perhaps he can help you. Write to him c/o THESE TIMES, Box 59, Nashville 2, Tennessee. Your name and address will not be used.





*The student determined that he would  
walk to the pulpit, receive and give God's message,  
or unceremoniously dismiss chapel.*

I WANT you to speak during the Student Week of Spiritual Emphasis."\* These words were spoken by the much-loved chairman of the Bible Department to a much-frightened theology student. To stand and speak for God at any time is a moment of truth, but to stand before one's own

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\*The Student Week of Spiritual Emphasis is sometimes called a Student Week of Prayer. Students speak to their associates, emphasizing spiritual challenge and responsibility.

THESE TIMES, APRIL, 1964



By

EUEL ATCHLEY

# A SIGNIFICANT MOMENT IN MY LIFE

of twenty-four years. Right now I am discouraged and confused, even doubting God's call and forgiveness." Carefully the student studied the teacher's face for expression of surprise or frustration, impatience or anger, but no such expression was there.

This man of God replied with a question, "Euel, are you repudiating the happiness and peace you have experienced since your conversion?"

A challenging question it was, one that must be answered. The student was discouraged, weak, and fearful; but to repudiate the brightest moment of his life? "No!"

The teacher continued, "I believe that this is a moment of destiny, a moment to be shared with God. What better time to have your doubts and fears answered? I'm placing you as speaker on Wednesday morning, the critical moment of balance, of turning, in a Week of Prayer."

The following week was the Student Week of Prayer. Each day was measured in conflict. Fear and doubt struggled with faith and hope. Concentration in class, in homework, seemed impossible. Monday arrived with unnumbered sermons started but having ended in the wastebasket. It was the lunch hour, but he sat in his room in silent anguish, without appetite. There was a knock at the door, and a friend with a problem to discuss interrupted his soliloquy.

They went into the dormitory prayer room, and the friend introduced his problem, a decision to be made concerning another friend. Possible answers were discussed, and the friend chose one which seemed appropriate. With this accomplished, they slipped to their knees. As they started to pray, they were suddenly aware of the unique—the sense of the closeness of God. For about an hour they were together praying—and listening. There was no audible voice, but there were impressions, mutually received. The student was to speak in chapel without formal preparation. God would give him words to speak! Such a holy joy had never before been experienced by either. It was a moment of transfiguration. Christ was glorified in their hearts.

Both Monday and Tuesday evenings, the "secret" was shared with his

dormitory prayer band. Each member was caught up in the challenge. They were united in faith and prayer—young men seeing visions.

It was now Wednesday, the chapel hour. The student discovered himself at the platform entrance, then at the speaker's chair. The program proceeded—announcements, singing, prayer, special music—and he had no sermon! Pressure reached the absolute. It was now his appointment, a moment of mingled fear and faith, of mixed hope and doubt. There could be no further delay; he must do something! He had already determined that he would walk to the pulpit, receive and give God's message, or unceremoniously dismiss chapel.

He stepped to the pulpit, paused, and saw—there in the balcony, the right rear, the right front—the bowed heads of his friends, his partners in faith. All was well! The one who is the Word of God was present to give direction. The student spoke in subdued tone for about forty minutes. There was utter silence, complete attention. One greater than Moses was revealing His presence and power.

Fifteen years have passed since the glorious moment. The student has become pastor, then college Bible teacher. He has experienced incomparable joy, fellowship, and witness. He has also known hours of discouragement, failure, and defeat. But the remembrance of that radiant moment has been an anchor; it has transcended the world of time and space.

It was given to him to know and experience that God whose name is Eternity. It was also given him to know by Scripture and experience that fearful prodigals may be touched by the Spirit of the living, victorious Christ. He has preached, after preparation, over a thousand sermons, but remains to this hour a debtor to the godly teacher and to his and our Eternal Lord! ★★★

student family is a supreme moment of war.

No answer was given by the student. They sat sharing the mystery of silence. Suddenly the student was surprised to hear himself say, "Ridiculous! I can't speak during the Week of Prayer. I have never spoken in public. Even the thought is terrifying." The words once started, continued, thoughts seldom expressed in words: "Besides, I have problems, weaknesses. It isn't easy to change directions, to break the habits



Many modern Christian writers have nothing to

say about the second coming of Christ. Here is a brief but colorful

history of this important doctrine.

WITH these words, "Judgment, Resurrection, Heaven," George A. Buttrick sums up Christ's place, as he sees it, as Lord of man's future.

In his latest book, *Christ and History*, this well-known Harvard professor and Madison Avenue pastor (recently retired) explains what he means. Human affairs, he says, are not entirely Christless. By faith we believe that Christ is in history. In the past, He appeared on earth long ago and "split the calendar of history into before and after." In the present, His providence is at work in the world. In the future, He will call every man to account, for at death every man will confront Christ in the *judgment* for punishments or rewards; through Christ he will experience *resurrection*; with Christ, *heaven*.

Buttrick is right to recognize Christ's future role as man's referee and reward beyond the blue. But is this all?

After explaining his three words, Buttrick asks on page 154, "What shall I say more?"

We reply, "Say one thing more. Say that 'in the future' Christ will keep His promise to come again 'in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.'" (Matthew 24:30.)

Tell us that race riots and cold wars and rocket rattling will not go on forever; that Christ will come to give this earth "to the people of the saints of the most High." (Daniel 7:27.)

Tell us that cancer and heart disease and Bolivian hemorrhagic fever will someday cease to slaughter; that Jesus will return and "make all things new." (Revelation 21:5.)

Tell us that Christ will not always wait until men die to blow His umpire's whistle; that He will call "time out" very soon for all the fouls committed in the game of life.

Tell us that there are *four* events at which Jesus is to be "Lord of the future": judgment, *second coming*, resurrection, heaven.

In making this request we echo the faith of the early Christians.

The early Christians took seriously Christ's command to "let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning;

and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, . . . that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately." (Luke 12:35, 36.) They kept on the alert, looking for His return as though it might happen any day.

About A.D. 95 Clement, the pastor in Rome, wrote to the church in Corinth, "Of a truth, soon and suddenly shall His [Christ's] will be accomplished, as the Scripture also bears witness, saying, 'Speedily will He come, and will not tarry.'" <sup>1</sup>

Irenaeus, who accepted a call to replace a French bishop who was martyred in A.D. 177, looked forward to the time when Christ "will come on the clouds" "to do away with all evil," "to reconcile all things," and to make "an end of all impurities." <sup>2</sup>

In Asia Minor (modern Turkey) Polycrates spoke of the great leaders of the church who had already died or, as he put it, "fallen asleep." But they will "rise again," he said courageously, "on the last day, at the coming of the Lord, when he shall come with glory from heaven and shall seek out all the saints." <sup>3</sup>

Victorinus, bishop of Petau near modern Vienna in the year 300, wrote, "For He who at first came hidden in the manhood that He had undertaken, shall after a little while come to judgment manifest in majesty and glory." <sup>4</sup>

In fact, the belief that Christ would come again was so general in the early church that Justin Martyr, who died for his faith in Rome around A.D. 165, could say that in "all the nations" those people who are "pious and righteous through the faith of Christ, look for His future appearance." <sup>5</sup>

The early Christians did not believe that Christ, as Lord of the future, would be content merely to meet men after death. They claimed His own promise that He would return to this earth in person on the clouds of heaven and put an end to the world's troubles.

Then how is it that many modern Christians, like Professor Buttrick, have nothing to say about the second coming of Christ?

There is a historical answer. Origen, a bright Christian teacher in Egypt in the early third century, was fascinated with a peculiar method of interpretation known as "allegorizing" or "spiritualizing," a technique that discovers supposed hidden meanings behind the literal words of Scripture. Thus, while it is possible that he may have believed in a literal second coming, he much preferred to talk about "the second advent of the Word" that comes "daily to the soul of every believer" on "the prophetic clouds, that is, on the writings of the prophets and apostles." <sup>6</sup>

Origen's farfetched interpretations were so foreign to most early Christians that they were officially repudiated by the church after his death. Strange to say, within a century or two they were widely accepted!

It was natural for the church to hope for a literal return of Christ when it was oppressed by the Roman Empire, but when Constantine put an end to persecution around 313, things became so pleasant that Christians lost interest in it as a future, literal event. The church had believed that only Christ's coming could make the world good. The world was now good; therefore Christ must have come already!

Around A.D. 400 Augustine began to compose those volumes of his which were to affect the thinking of millions of Christians down to the present day. It is almost impossible to overestimate their influence. In his *City of God* he was content to believe that the second coming of Christ "continually occur in His Church, that is, in His members in which He comes little by little, and piece by piece." <sup>7</sup>

It is a far cry from the glorious return anticipated by the early church to this "piece by piece" business of St. Augustine, yet Augustine's mutilated view dominated Europe until the Reformation. Not that the real second coming was entirely forgotten, for Augustine himself at least referred to it. In the ninth century, Claudius of Turin looked forward to the day when Christ will come again and God will "cheerfully" grant us immortality, <sup>8</sup> and i





# JESUS CHRIST Lord of the Second Coming

By

D. MERVYN

MAXWELL

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the eleventh century Ivo of Chartres spoke of the "resurrection of the flesh" at the "coming of the Lord."<sup>9</sup> But until the Reformation it lost its significance and vitality.

Martin Luther, on the other hand, was a keen student of the prophecies. When, after translating the New Testament, he turned to the Old, he did the Book of Daniel first because he considered it the most valuable and wanted "all earnest Christians" to "read the book of Daniel." Luther declared that "all the dreams and visions" of Daniel "end always in joy and gladness with the coming of Christ." To Luther the coming of Christ was a "chief article of faith."<sup>10</sup>

Many other Christians in the centuries after the Reformation longed for the return of Christ; but with that eighteenth-century development in philosophy which in Germany is known as the *Aufklärung* (Enlightenment) and which in France led to the horrors of the French Revolution, interest in the second coming waned in favor of fascination with the prowess of man's mind.

In America a new wave of interest in the second coming struck in the first half of the nineteenth century. Lyman Beecher, for instance, the leading Congregational preacher for many years, believed so strongly in Christ's return that W. W. Sweet, the dean of American church historians, says that this doctrine "gave to his life and work a singleness of purpose and an urgency which explains to a large degree the effectiveness of his preaching."<sup>11</sup>

William Miller, a Baptist layman, was only the most vivid evangelist who heralded the return of Christ during this era. Other evangelists and influential leaders like Jacob Knapp, Phoebe Palmer, the Oberlin graduates, many Methodist preachers, and a host of others were doing the same thing.<sup>12</sup>

After the Civil War the second coming torch was held high by such Congregational, Methodist, Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed, and Baptist ministers, for example, as those who met in Farwell Hall in Chicago for the great Prophetic Conference of 1886 under the blessings of Dwight L. Moody.<sup>13</sup>

Unfortunately, the rise of the Social Gospel smothered the second advent hope beneath a phantasy of human optimism; all that Christ ever hoped to do for this world, it was asserted, would be accomplished by good men who would thus render the literal re-

turn of Christ unnecessary. European Christians were shocked out of such false hopes when the two world wars proved again that, left to his own devices, man makes a hell on earth, not a heaven. Two wide oceans spared Americans from the "bomber's deadly dew," so that many American Christians continued after the wars to cling to the Social Gospel's denial of the return. The two points of view clashed vigorously at the World Council of Churches in Evanston, Illinois, in 1954, around the stirring theme, "Christ, the Hope of the World."

Many American Christians, like Professor Buttrick, continue to deny Jesus' promise to come again. Millions of others, however, both in the New World and in the Old—like the Christians of the early centuries—fasten their hopes today on the literal fulfillment of the actual words of our Saviour.

Thank God, these believers will not be disappointed. Jesus is indeed the Lord of the judgment, of the resurrection, and of heaven. But He is also the Son of man, who will soon appear "on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:64) as the Lord of the second coming. ★★★

1. *Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians*, chap. 23; *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. I, p. 11.

2. *Against Heresies*, Book IV, chap. 33; *ANF*, Vol. I, p. 575.

3. Cited in Eusebius, *Church History*, Book III, chap. 31; *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Vol. I, p. 162.

4. *Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John*, on Revelation 1:7; *ANF*, Vol. VII, p. 344.

5. *Dialogue with Trypho*, chap. 52; *ANF*, Vol. I, p. 221.

6. Translated from *In Mattheum*, chap. 50, in Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. 13, col. 1678. Cited in Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1946-1954), Vol. I, p. 318.

7. *City of God*, Book XX, chap. 5; *NPNF*, First Series, Vol. II, p. 424.

8. *Commentary on Galatians*, chap. 3; *Library of Christian Classics* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1957), Vol. IX, p. 231.

9. *Sermon on the Apostles' Creed*; *LCC*, Vol. IX, p. 327.

10. L. E. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Vol. II, p. 273.

11. W. W. Sweet, *Makers of Christianity from John Cotton to Layman Abbott* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935), p. 250.

12. See works cited by Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 228; and Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Vol. IV.

13. L. E. Froom, *Ibid.*, pp. 1186 ff.





R. Lunweber, Artist

Paul is confronted by Christ.

## How God Reveals Himself

By WILBER ALEXANDER

Chairman

Department of Religion, Andrews University

*In this time of the dispensation of His Holy Spirit God may reveal Himself more through direct contact with the human spirit without the intervention of any earthly symbols. His train may sweep over the soul temple in the presence of the Holy Spirit.*

A SEMINARY PROFESSOR recently told a group of preachers that "the Bible no longer has a radical and controlling influence on life. And if the Bible does not speak to life, then whether one's orientation is Biblical or non-Biblical is of no real consequence. The issue is whether the Bible makes a difference! And if it is to make a difference, we must remain in the presence of two worlds: the Biblical world and ours. We cannot use the Bible in the 20th century in the same way as we would use it if we were living in the first century."

The last sentence of this statement challenges anyone, ministry or laity, in any serious study and use of Scripture: "We cannot use the Bible in the 20th century in the same way as we would use it if we were living in the first century."

As Christians we sincerely believe that the basic truths of the Bible are timeless in their

value and are therefore capable of being related to our times. Our problem lies in discovering the truth which is timeless and relating ourselves to it in the setting of any cultural conditioning, any tradition, any contemporary circumstance.

One of the timeless truths in the Bible is that God reveals Himself to man. We are familiar with the general and constant revelation of God through His creative work in nature, which in spite of sin's tooth and claw suggests to our minds His presence, His power, and His great love.

Familiar, too, is the historical revelation of God in Jesus. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." John 14:9. Those who looked on Him in the days of His flesh when divinity was clothed with humanity, those who heard His voice and believed, could say with some meaning, "I have seen the Lord." Those who have accepted by faith the incarnation, life, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ are



fixion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ sense something of reality in the revelation.

When we read that men in Bible times had experiences in which they were personally confronted with God in unique and extraordinary ways, we have difficulty understanding what took place and discovering how a similar experience might become possible in our day.

We read of Moses' experience at the burning bush and in the cleft of the rock.

We see through Ezekiel's eyes a moving throne in a great cloud. "And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire." Ezekiel 1:4.

In imagination we stand at the Jordan and see the descending dove. We hear the voice of God as He makes Himself known to those around His incarnate Son.

We hear Paul cry out at the Damascus gate. "Who are you, Lord?" Acts 9:5, R.S.V.

John the revelator looks into the middle of the sanctuary and sees "One who resembled a human being, with a long robe, and a belt of gold round his breast; his head and hair were white as wool, white as snow; his eyes flashed like fire, his feet glowed like burnished bronze, his voice sounded like many waves, in his right hand he held seven stars, a sharp sword with a double edge issued from his mouth, and his face shone like the sun in full strength." (Revelation 1:13-16. From *The Bible: A New Translation* by James Moffatt. Copyright, 1935. Used by permission of Harper and Brothers.) John falls at his feet like a dead man.

The worship experience best known, much studied, and often quoted is the experience of Isaiah. In Isaiah 6:1-8 we have the most vivid and detailed account in the Bible of a man's soul-shaking experience of the reality of God. It is a portion of Isaiah's autobiography. It is the record of an indelible experience, meaningful in every detail.

The account begins simply, "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple."

The prophet, the man Isaiah, evi-

dently stands in the Temple entrance between the porch and the altar of burnt offering, for from this vantage point he could gaze into the Temple. At almost any time there would be movement, music, pageantry, and ritual ceremony, all rich in symbolism to the worshiper. All would be exciting drama—that and no more—but not to Isaiah. He is sensitive to spiritual values which transcend form.

In a supreme moment Isaiah is alone—yet not alone. The Temple is filled with swirling smoke, the ground moves in violent concussion, the inner veil of the Temple is drawn aside—and *there is God!*

As Isaiah writes, he is able to describe the shining ones, to note their reverence, to recall the song passed from one group to another; but he is mostly silent about the One on the throne high and lifted up. All he can say about the overwhelming glory and holiness of God is, "His train filled the temple."

Isaiah stands alone before God. Deep waters of awareness flow over his human soul. In that moment a cry of self-discovery breaks from his trembling lips. "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Isaiah 6:5.

No sooner do the words pass his lips than a flat, glowing stone from the altar of incense touches his stained lips in white-hot cleansing, and he knows in depth the meaning of mercy and forgiveness. He leaves the Temple court to plead with his covetous, idolatrous, and iniquitous people, to plead with the authority of one who had *seen* God, one who had been touched by God and commissioned to do a work for God.

Through the rest of his writing his words of doom break from a heart that has been in the presence of holiness and has sensed the ultimate end of rebellion. His appeals are the outreach of a heart that has sensed the agony of a God who longs to forgive and make of sinful hearts a temple for His presence. His messages of peace are bathed by memories of the peace he found in forgiveness.

What about you and me in 1964? Is this experience available?

One wonders how much worship has been absorbed by the aesthetic arrange-

ment of a worship service—an arrangement intended to serve only as an avenue to awareness. Is it entered into in letter, but not in spirit? One wonders how much of private devotion is void of intensity in the outreach of the whole being after God.

We have easily answered the question of the availability of this experience. No! No, this experience is not available now! We rest content with occasional illumination. Too seldom are we awed, or agitated, or even aware of God's presence near us.

It appears certain that God deals with His creature man in different ways in different ages. He does not limit Himself to one set way of revealing Himself. He used a burning bush, a ladder, an audible voice, stones, a partial vision, in Bible times. In this time of the dispensation of His Holy Spirit He may reveal Himself more through direct contact with the human spirit without the intervention of any earthly symbols. His train may sweep over the soul temple in the presence of the Holy Spirit.

How He will reveal Himself to us and to what extent is not to be our prime concern. Our part is to put our lives in the position for experiencing as much of His presence as we possibly can.

No genuine Christian experience begins until somehow, somewhere, there comes to the seeking soul a vision of God. No Christian ever becomes truly enthusiastic or self-denying in the Lord's work until his soul vision of God is a growing one which impels him to say, "Here am I; send me."

The appeal of Isaiah's experience is for each person to live and worship in an attitude of great expectancy. Notice this in the prophet's profound experience.

His presence at the Temple implies his confidence in God's presence to reveal Himself. The awareness he had of the reverence and adoration the angels displayed in God's presence indicates the attitude he had toward the unseen but eternal One. The openness, the deep seriousness, the confession of need in Isaiah's cry of woe, is evidence of his consciousness of his condition, his expectancy of help.

We have no deep sense of sin because we have no clear vision of God. We tend to be quite well satisfied with self. We do not scrutinize our lives much. We are not often troubled in



conscience. If we are disturbed, we compare self with others about us and are persuaded we are as good or better.

If you have never known a time when you were reduced to your true size in God's presence, when all you could boast of goodness and holiness must be hushed into silence or a cry of "Woe is me," then you have lived "high and lifted up" so that you cannot see the Lord without looking down on Him.

The prophet's readiness for obedience and service as a result of seeking God makes Isaiah's experience valid and complete. There was no outward compulsion that he must go, no voice came describing him as the sort of man needed for the work ahead. He only heard God asking, "Who will go?" and expectantly he went. ★★★

## God's Love

(Continued from page 5)

Christ in behalf of fallen man could express the Father's love to lost humanity.

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." He gave Him not only to live among men, to bear their sins, and die their sacrifice, He gave Him to the fallen race. Christ was to identify Himself with the interests and needs of humanity. He who was one with God has linked Himself with the children of men by ties that are never to be broken. Jesus is "not ashamed to call them brethren" (Hebrews 2:11); He is our Sacrifice, our Advocate, our Brother, bearing our human form before the Father's throne, and through eternal ages one with the race He has redeemed—the Son of man. And all this that man might be uplifted from the ruin and degradation of sin, that he might reflect the love of God and share the joy of holiness.

The price paid for our redemption, the infinite sacrifice of our heavenly Father in giving His Son to die for us, should give us exalted conceptions of what we may become through Christ. As the inspired apostle John beheld the height, the depth, the breadth of the Father's love toward the perishing race, he was filled with adoration and reverence; and, failing to find suitable language in which to express the greatness and tenderness of this love, he called upon the world to behold it. "Behold, what manner of love the Fa-

ther hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 3:1. What a value this places upon man! Through transgression the sons of man become subjects of Satan. Through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, the sons of Adam may become the sons of God. By assuming human nature, Christ elevates humanity. Fallen men are placed where, through connection with Christ, they may indeed become worthy of the name "sons of God."

Such love is without a parallel. Children of the heavenly King! Precious promise! Theme for the most profound meditation! The matchless love of God for a world that did not love Him! The thought has a subduing power upon the soul and brings the mind into captivity to the will of God. The more we study the divine character in the light of the cross, the more we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice, and the more clearly we discern innumerable evidences of a love that is infinite and a tender pity surpassing a mother's yearning sympathy for her wayward child.

"Every human tie may perish,  
Friend to friend unfaithful prove,  
Mothers cease their own to cherish,  
Heaven and earth at last remove;  
But no change  
Can attend Jehovah's love." ★★★

## The Atonement

(Continued from page 16)

pears to melt and becomes a vast, seething "lake of fire" for the "judgment and perdition of ungodly men." But there, in the presence of God, the last questions of estrangement are answered. Righteous and wicked acknowledge the justice of God. With all the facts of the great controversy in view, the whole universe, both loyal and rebellious, with one accord declares, "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Revelation 15:3. And out of the smoldering ruins of this old earth spring forth "a new heaven and a new earth" wherein the redeemed find their everlasting inheritance and dwelling place.

Now "the great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love."—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 678.

The work of salvation is completed, and the universe is again at one with God. ★★★

## He's Big Enough

Astronomy shouts that God is still alive and active; He is a God of overwhelming majesty, and judging from His heavenly bodies He is beautiful to behold. Astronaut John Glenn said that up there the stars looked like jewels on black velvet. The size and number of them shame the grains of sand on all our seashores. We only know that distance means nothing to Him, and our orbiting in space is like racing around a marble in His bag. The heavens preach God's ability eloquently; the stars are salesmen of His government. They say, without fear of contradiction, that He is big enough, intelligent enough, to trust.

—David A. Redding, *Psalms of David*.  
(Fleming H. Revell Company.)





The Costas

## I LOVE YOU FOR WHAT YOU ARE

I love you, not only for what you are, but for what I am when I am with you.

I love you, not only for what you have made of yourself, but what you are making of me.

I love you for ignoring the possibilities of the fool in me and for laying firm hold of the possibilities of the good in me.

I love you for closing your eyes to the discords in me, and for adding to the music in me by worshipful listening.

I love you because you are helping me to make of the lumber of my life, not a tavern, but a temple, and of the words of my every day, not a reproach, but a song.

I love you because you have done more than any creed to make me happy.

You have done it without a word, without a touch, without a sign.

You have done it by just being yourself.

Perhaps, after all, that is what love means.

From Donald F. Haynes.

There is no surprise more magical than the surprise of being loved. It is God's finger on man's shoulder.

—Charles Morgan.

God hath given to man a short time here upon earth, and yet upon this short time eternity depends.

—Jeremy Taylor.

From B. A. Stokes.

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

Proverbs 25:11.

Literature is the art of writing something that will be read twice.

—Cyril Connolly, *Chicago Tribune Magazine of Books*.

Sometimes a nation abolishes God—but fortunately God is more tolerant.

—Herbert V. Prochnow.

From R. R. Goodyear.

One woman takes her extra time  
And knits it into lace.

Another takes her extra time  
Embroideries to trace.

The lace may wear a year or two,  
Perhaps go out of style.

The colors of embroideries fade  
In just a little while.

But she who twines her extra time  
In lives of lad or lass,

Produces that which shall endure  
When time and tide shall pass.

—Author Unknown.

From Ruby Shotwell.

Gossip is something negative that is developed and then enlarged.

—Survey Bulletin.

From R. S. Stiles.

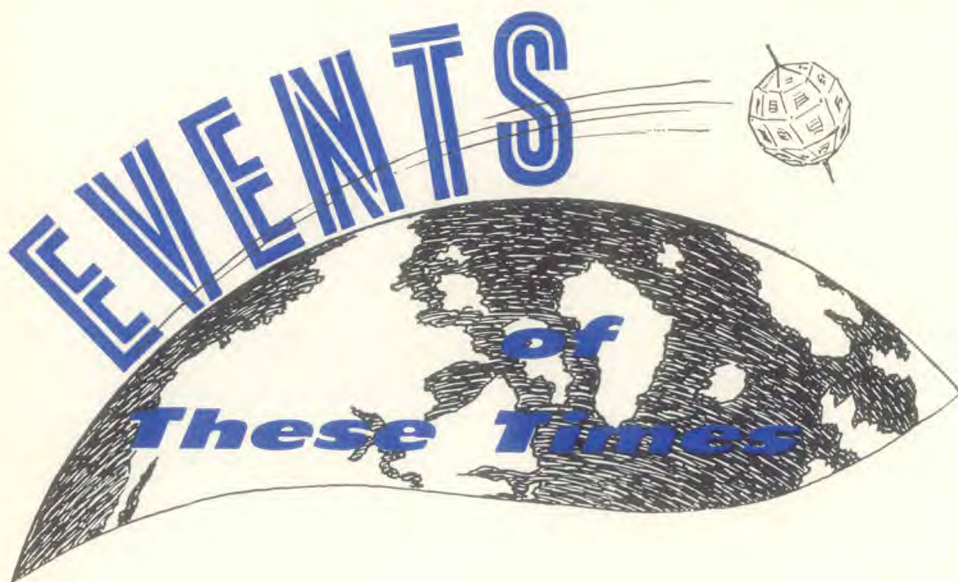
The final joy is not how fascinating God is, but how fascinating we are to Him. He is worried about us, touched by our problems, tender to our every need. This is something that is too good to be true, and it stops the Book of Psalms. No man is lost in the huge shuffle of heavenly bodies. Each of us is somehow wrapped around God's little finger: "The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down. . . . Praise the Lord!"

—David A. Redding, in *Psalms of David*.

(Fleming H. Revell Company.)

What is your favorite quotation or bit of verse? Include source, author, and your name. No original material used.





## FANTASY HOMES

Our present-day homes with all their labor-saving devices and comforts may be made obsolete by the miracles of the space age. This is the report of Frank Macomber in the *Riverside* (California) *Enterprise*, who envisions the home of tomorrow constructed with filament-wound glass which would glow at night when lighted. "The house would be fashioned from endless threads, wound round and round much like a cocoon. The threads will be of glass held together by a plastic binder."

This solid one-piece unit would have the color in the material. The house would never need repainting, and the walls could be hosed down—inside and out—to eradicate grime. The house would be impervious to rot, rain, termites; and its double-wall construction would insulate against heat and cold. The filament winding, which would make such a house possible, is one of the "priceless techniques in the fabrication of rocket casings." Thus, the knowledge gained for space rockets may be transferred to the homes of tomorrow.

Let us look within the home of milady with all the advances for her convenience. One of these is termed "programmed cooking," according to Joseph R. Slevin, writing in the *New York Herald Tribune*. Ovens with automatic timers are now being built with low temperature "hold" periods. If the husband phones that he will be delayed in reaching home, the wife who has started the cooking "count-down" can plug in a "hold," and the roast will be properly cooked when the man of the house finally reaches the dinner table.

We are told that more and more of the food we eat will be "prepared by dehydro-freezing, foam-mat and vacuum puff drying and freeze drying." Perhaps these high-sounding terms lend enchantment, but we have yet to find the rich flavor and goodness in any but fresh-picked corn that has been shucked and plunged into the pot five minutes after it left the cornstalks. We still enjoy carrots from the garden and tomatoes direct from the vine. With all the technocracy in the kitchen we are losing some of the flavor and

taste of vegetables that come out of the garden into the kitchen.

## THE HEALING WOUND

Recent meetings of the Ecumenical Patriarch of the Eastern Orthodox Church and the pope of the Roman Catholic Church may well forecast a "permanent collaboration" between the Eastern churches and the Vatican.

Prior to the conferences, the Vatican radio explicitly set forth the interest of Rome in ties with the Orthodox Church. Pope Paul had likened the pope and the patriarch to the Apostles Peter and Andrew. The envoy from Patriarch Athenagoras was quoted as replying, "St. Peter and St. Andrew were brothers, but for centuries they have not been on speaking terms."

In the eleventh century the Eastern Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches split. Four hundred years later an attempt was made to heal the schism, but all efforts failed. The visit of the Orthodox envoy to the Vatican and the conferences between the pope and the patriarch are the first official contacts of the two separated branches in centuries.

While these collaborating efforts are being made in the East, there are attempts to bring reconciliation between the Church of England and the Vatican. Observers from the Anglican Church who attended the Council at Rome speak favorably of future collaboration with the Vatican. The leader of the delegation from England is reported to have said that the Bishop of Rome—the pope—would have to be the acknowledged head of the church if the Church of England united with Romanism.

With rapid strides the Roman Catholic Church moves ahead to conquer her foes. Nineteen hundred years ago divine prophecy foretold the rise of the mighty ecclesiastical system. John the revelator saw the time when it seemed "wounded to death," but the prophecy adds, "And his deadly wound was healed." The political wounding of the Papacy, which took place dramatically in the nineteenth century when the pope was taken political prisoner, has been healing since before World War II. Today the world is witnessing the healing of religious wounds as attempts are made to unite dissident segments of the church with the Papacy. The papal leaders are also endeavoring to woo Protestantism to Rome.



What will be the outcome? The Bible plainly states that when the "wound" is healed, then "all the world wondered after the beast." (Revelation 13:3.) Momentous transitions are coming in the religious world. Let every sincere student of God's Word study the divine truths and be ready for the crisis ahead.

## YOUTHFUL AMERICA

Within two years half the population of these United States will be under twenty-five years of age, says Bruce Bliven in *The New York Times Magazine*. "Already we have 41 million children under ten years of age—more than the entire population a hundred years ago. There are about 27 million between ten and eighteen; and 17 million between eighteen and twenty-five."

The increase in college students will be felt in the next decade. There are some four million collegiate students today. By 1970 this will double, and we may expect 12 million by 1980. "To triple the available facilities," says Bliven, "and especially the faculties—

# CURRENT AND QUOTABLE

**Samuel Grafton**, "The Tense Generation," "Look," August 27, 1963: "In a world as complicated as ours, and as filled with stresses, what children need most of all, obviously, is the closest possible kind of continuous communication with their parents. It is here that we are scoring our greatest failures."

**John White**, "Nehemiah: A Leader's Heart," "Sunday School Times," December 7, 1963: "Being a leader is like being a parent. It costs all you are and have. You work like a slave and nobody notices. You are taken for granted when you sacrifice, but are resented when you discipline. You give and give until you have nothing left to give. And then you give some more."

**Joseph Wood Krutch**, "If You Don't Mind My Saying So," "American Scholar," Winter, 1963-1964: "I am convinced that jazz . . . not only expresses contemporary man's jitters but helps to make him jittery."

**R. F. Cottrell**, "Review and Herald," January 2, 1964: "There is no difference in principle between a church participating in a show of force designed to influence civil legislation it considers desirable, and a similar attempt to secure the enactment of laws pertaining to religion. Are we consistent if we condone the churches in one instance and condemn them in the other? The issue is **not** whether the object of a public demonstration such as the March on Washington is intrinsically right or wrong, or even whether the thing sought for is civil or religious in nature. The issue is simply this: Is it right for a church to participate in a public attempt to influence legislation? With the single exception of anti-liquor legislation Seventh-day Adventists have always answered with a resounding 'No!'"

**Richard C. Bates, M.D.**, on how to better your chances for a heart attack: "Pick your ancestors, be a man, live in a city in the United States, make a lot of money sitting behind a desk, eat a lot of meat and dairy products, be fat, smoke two packages of cigarettes a day, and never exercise. This is probably the nicest advice you ever got from a physician. Most of you won't have to make any changes; just keep on doing what you've been doing."

**Admiral Ben Moreell**, CEC, USN (Retired) Chairman, Americans for Constitutional Action: "For every God-given right there is a collateral responsibility to use that right in strict conformity with the moral law, as revealed in such statements as the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and the Golden Rule. When man's appetites are disciplined by such inner restraints, he can establish a society which will require a minimum of external police power to maintain public order, and this, in turn, leads to a maximum of individual freedom."

**Branch McCracken**, celebrating twenty-fifth year as Indiana University basketball coach: "The boys are a lot harder to handle now than they were twenty-five years ago. When I started coaching, it was an honor to be on the squad. Now if a boy isn't a regular, he's upset. We make over these kids, and that's beginning to bother me more than anything else."



RNS

**COOPER HONORED:** Major L. Gordon Cooper, Jr. (right), astronaut, whose twenty-two-orbit flight last May is the longest made by an American, was honored at Louisville, Kentucky, for his Christian witness. He received a World Methodist Council medallion from Dr. Kermit Long of Phoenix, Arizona. Cooper, who named his space capsule "Faith 7," told a crowd of 400 that religion "has always been a significant part of my life."



## EVENTS OF THESE TIMES . . . . .

in 16 years will be a staggering task."

Advertising is catering to youth; and book, movie, television, and phonograph record producers think first of the youth market.

Unless the trend changes, one third of the 25 million or more young people who will come onto the labor market in the next ten years will not have a high school diploma. This will bring monumental problems. For example, Blivens states that there are 50 percent more school dropouts than new jobs for unskilled workers. This will become more acute as automation increases.

A few years ago we would have scoffed if anyone said America had an illiteracy problem, yet *The New York Times Magazine* says, "Of the young men called up for draft in California recently, 25 percent have been rejected because they could not read and write up to the army's fairly modest standard." The inability to read is naturally correlated with school dropouts and juvenile delinquency.

Youth faces unemployment because of lack of education and experience. Many young men under twenty-five years of age have applied for retraining under the Federal Manpower Act, but a third of them have been turned down because of illiteracy.

"For the first time in our history, we have substantial numbers of people permanently on relief, whose children are growing up, marrying and having children of their own, also permanently on relief," says the journalist.

With the complexities of our nuclear age facing the youth of America, they are handicapped because they cannot communicate with the other half of the population. "They feel the advice of the elderly has little relevance, and increasingly ignore it. With few mooring posts, they may also be increasingly moved by the tide of propaganda and advertising, which steadily grows stronger."

Added to all these perplexities facing the youth half of America's population is the spiritual vacuum in which most young people exist. They fail to see religion work in the home, in business, in government. They are indoctrinated in high schools and universities with a godless philosophy of existence. The heartbreaking situation produces

bitterness, cynicism, rebellion, and defiance.

### TOO MUCH FREEDOM?

"Have we too much freedom?" asks Dr. Will Durant, American philosopher-historian, in a recent article which appeared in the Miami (Florida) *Herald*. After reviewing the struggle of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in which the individual sought to liberate himself from ancient traditions, despotic states, and the tyranny of unjust laws, Dr. Durant is dubious of modern man's achievements.

"Have we so long ridiculed authority in the family, discipline in education, rules in art, decency in conduct, and law in the state that our liberation has brought us close to chaos in the family, and the school, in morals, arts, ideas, and government?" questions the scholar. "We forgot to make ourselves intelligent when we made ourselves free."

A number of questions are propounded by Dr. Durant: "Should we be free to commit murder and escape punishment on the ground of 'tempo-

rary insanity'? Have our parole boards been too gentle, humane and approachable? . . . Should divorce be so easy that marriage loses its function of promoting sexual order and family discipline?"

As a historian, Dr. Durant has based his views upon an evolutionary philosophy of life. In his sunset years, however, he is not certain that man and civilization are moving upward. He sees flaws in society, with moral corruption tearing down vital standards.

"We tolerate, and allow our children to be formed by, pictures that habituate them to crime and violence, to the cheap heroism of flaunting a gun, and to taking the law in their own hands. We patronize products sold by appeals to the lowest common denominator of the public mind," says Dr. Durant.

Calling for action, the distinguished writer says, "Let us speak out. . . . We shall be charged with hypocrisy, because we, too, are sinners; the sins of our past will be exhumed and flung into our faces; we shall be called timid and senile reactionaries. Yes, we are guilty with the rest; we have been silent too long; and part of our tardy righteousness may well be due to the lessened sap in our flesh. No matter; let us speak out. Let us say humbly, but publicly, that we resent corruption in politics, dishonesty in business, faithlessness in marriage, pornography in literature, coarseness in language, chaos in music, meaninglessness in art."

We are free to protest against these decadent times, but how few will stand up to be counted for integrity, right doing, and standards of decency? We are reminded of the prophet Isaiah's denunciation of wickedness. He described the calloused age when sin had lost its hideousness. "None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; . . . their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood; their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths." Isaiah 59:4-7. How well this describes our nation in 1964!

### "WE ARE DUST"

When the President of the United States, John F. Kennedy, was assassinated, many persons could scarcely be-



WALT WELLER

"No, I'm afraid we don't have a book on Christianity made easy."



lieve that it had happened. The stability of the greatest nation on earth seemed to center in its chief executive, and it was almost unthinkable that the youthful leader could be shot down in a grim, tragic moment.

Norman Cousins, editor of the *Saturday Review*, saw in the nation's loss a symbol of what could happen to civilization in the nuclear age. He wrote, "When people say, therefore, that they still find it difficult to believe that the President was murdered, what they are really saying is that it is virtually impossible to conceive that one sullen, warped mind could have produced such havoc all by itself."

The deadly power of nuclear weapons controlled by only a few individuals is a constant menace to the world. Russia operates a fleet of submarines off our coasts. The commanders of these undersea craft have deadly nuclear missiles at their control, and these missiles are aimed at our great cities. The United States has not only its Polaris fleet, but it maintains hundreds of planes on a round-the-clock basis, planes loaded with hydrogen explosives. What about the men who fly the bombers and hold the control of the bombs?

"A man doesn't have to be deranged or go berserk," warns Mr. Cousins, "in order to commit an act of catastrophic irresponsibility. He can be impelled by the noblest motives of duty or righteousness. . . . It takes only one man in our time to trigger the assassination of human society."

These are solemn words, indeed. We have reached a point in history where science can destroy mankind. "Man must also ponder the fragility of his civilization," summarizes the *Saturday Review* editor.

Our peace and security, from a human viewpoint, are extremely fragile. The psalmist described the Almighty One as seeing man's weakness and short span of years. "He remembereth that we are dust." Psalm 103:14. Although God knows man's feeble state, yet man in his egocentric existence fails to remember how quickly his business, his home, his nation, his life itself, can be snuffed out. Intoxicated with power, men feel that they can conquer disaster and that a nation's wealth and military prowess will make it invulnera-

THESE TIMES, APRIL, 1964



**POLICIES EXAMINED.** A \$3,000,000 fund campaign to support accelerated Christian literature programs in Asia, Africa, and Latin America was approved in Mexico City by the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches. Dr. Johannes Blauw of Hilversum, Holland (left), headed an exploratory committee for the new literature plan. Dr. Kathleen Bliss (right), head of the WCC's Division of Ecumenical Action and the Board of Education of the Church of England, discusses the approach to intellectuals.

ble. Take heed, therefore, to the Bible's prophetic interpretation of the Babylonian king's dream, as recorded in Daniel 2. The king saw a huge stone, cut out without hands, that crushed the nations and ground them to powder, or dust. It was the divine message of final doom for human nations.

How symbolic of the transience of life! Kings and presidents die; strong nations decay; life passes as a shadow. The recent events in American history should teach us that all things are but dust—they crumble and disappear. Only those persons who see beyond this little world and by faith see God's eternal realm will know the meaning of eternal life and eternal security. Psalm 90:12 reads, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

**CHURCH STATISTICS**

The religious revival is tapering off in America, according to the most recent church membership figures. Between 1940 and 1960 there was a growth of membership 14 percent higher than the increase of population. The 1964 *Yearbook of American*

*Churches* reveals that the churches are now barely keeping pace with the population increase.

Total church membership in American churches at the end of 1962 was 117,946,002, which is 63.4 percent of the total population. Protestantism made a gain of only 0.77 percent in 1962. Roman Catholicism increased its membership by 2.3 percent. (This figure, however, is never accurate as compared with other churches since Catholicism never drops members for apostasy.)

The number of church buildings in the United States declined from 319,670 in 1961 to 319,240 in 1962. Part of this drop is believed to be the result of the dissolution of small rural churches and the consolidation of groups with larger church congregations.

There is a sharp drop in ordained clergy from 381,252 in 1961 to 364,475 in 1962. This decline reflects the decrease in enrollment in theological seminaries. As older ministers dropped out because of ill health and death, the ranks were not replenished by young graduates.

★★★



## OBEDIENT—OR WAS HE?

EVERY once in a while a story comes along that is out of the ordinary. It touches upon so basic a truth that we cannot erase it from our minds, and it serves to reshape our thinking and mold our lives. Such is the case, I believe, with the account of a youth, son of a very wealthy man, who was once thus propositioned by his father:

"Son, I am planning to go abroad for a year or so, and there is something very special I want you to do for me while I am gone. You remember that fine piece of real estate I purchased out on the bay shore. I want it developed into a complete and luxurious dwelling place. I've had my architects and builders draw up the blueprints of the whole project—house, other buildings, landscaping, plantings, furnishings, everything. I am putting those blueprints into your hands, and I want you to supervise their carrying out in every detail. When I return, I intend to inspect the whole estate with minute care; and if you have been obedient in everything, I have a great surprise for you. Be careful, son; be obedient."

THE YOUNG man entered on his assignment with enthusiasm, and in due time all was finished, awaiting his father's inspection. When the father returned, true to his word, he looked with exactness at every detail, comparing it with the blueprints. He made no comments until he reached the barn, when he asked, "Where is the well that was called for here?"

"Oh, that well!" said the son. "I noticed there had been an obvious mistake in the location of that well. Evidently the architect overlooked the much better location up near the house. So I had the workmen dig the well up there."

His father made no further comment, continuing his inspection. At last, seated on the pleasant veranda, the son asked eagerly, "Now, father, do I qualify?"

A look of intense sadness came over his father's face as he shook his head. "No, son. You have not obeyed me in a single detail."

"But, father!" cried the son. "I *did* obey you. I made everything exactly by the blueprints except the well. And I knew you would not want the well there. I put it in a much better place, for I was sure that other place was a mistake."

"No, son. It was not a mistake. It was a test. You have obeyed *yourself* in every detail, not me. When what I planned suited you, you carried it out. When it

did not, you followed your own wishes, not mine. Thus you have revealed that you were obeying your own will, not mine, all the time. Now this fine estate, which I had intended to give you, is lost to you forever."

Let us be honest with ourselves—and God. How about our relation to His law, the Ten Commandments? Do we "obey" Him as long as we are not inconvenienced? Do we say, "Oh, yes; I am perfectly willing to obey God; but I must understand what He wants and why, and it must satisfy my reason. . . . Sure! Sure! I *am* obeying God. But He must not ask me to do that—anything but that!"

TAKE the Sabbath commandment, for example. The Bible plainly indicates that Saturday, the seventh day of the week, is the Sabbath. Keep it holy, we are told. Actually there never has been a Biblical change to first-day worship. The new *Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, copyright, 1962, written by forty-eight Bible teachers for Moody Press, states, "The keeping of the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath is not abrogated in the New Testament."—Page 69. *Abrogate* simply means "to put an end to." To put it even plainer: The seventh-day Sabbath has never been annulled by an authoritative act. It has not been abolished by the authority of the maker—in this case Jesus Christ Himself. (Colossians 1:16.)

It is true that the *Commentary* writer who interpreted Exodus 20 goes on to say, "But the Sabbath of the New Creation is most naturally to be celebrated on that day when Christ, having ceased from his finished work, rose from the dead." It seems obvious that this man is on rather shaky ground. Who says, "It's natural to change to Sunday"? Not God.

SO WE must ask ourselves, Are we really obedient to God or aren't we? The point is that more and more men are coming to realize that the Sabbath is the real test of a man's love for God. How can we say that we obey Him when we ignore this section of His great moral law? Let us not fall into the category of those who only pretend obedience to God. The Apostle James has some rather severe words for such: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James 2:10-12.

Where do you stand? As for me and my house, we choose to obey God.



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