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SEPTEMBER 1, 1967

# These Times

THE UNARMED  
SOLDIERS  
OF VIETNAM







# PEACE

BY ELLEN G. WHITE

As your conscience has been quickened by the Holy Spirit, you have seen something of the evil of sin, of its power, its guilt, its woe; and you look upon it with abhorrence. You feel that sin has separated you from God, that you are in bondage to the power of evil. The more you struggle to escape, the more you realize your helplessness. Your motives are impure; your heart is unclean. You see that your life has been filled with selfishness and sin. You long to be forgiven, to be cleansed, to be set free. Harmony with God, likeness to Him—what can you do to obtain it?

It is peace that you need—Heaven's forgiveness and peace and love in the soul. Money cannot buy it, intellect cannot procure it, wisdom cannot attain to it; you can never hope, by your own efforts, to secure it.

*(Continued on page 10)*



# These Times

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## This time ....

PAUL INSISTED on it: "But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead" (1 Corinthians 15:20, R.S.V.), meaning an actual flesh-and-blood reanimation of a real corpse. For him it was a true miracle which held in it an unheard-of "mystery"—that all the dead who had "fallen asleep" in Christ "will be raised imperishable."

Despite Paul's reasoned convictions, many Christians now, as well as in his own time, don't believe it. Included are renowned churchmen and theologians. For them it is unscientific and unmodern to believe such a tremendous claim. Certainly there must be some "real" or "historical" Jesus, they argue, who existed apart from the legend and myth which later surrounded His name.

It was reasoning like this which in the nineteenth century led to what has been called the quest for the historical Jesus. As though working with an onion, research scholars attempted to peel away and discard all miraculous statements about Jesus of Nazareth. What was left? An "authentic" historical figure around which "modern" faith could be structured.

It is a source of unceasing amazement that the scholars failed to find Him. Jesus of Nazareth, who has probably exerted more influence on history than any other man, cannot be found apart from those very miracles which the scholars originally rejected. Apart from them He becomes just one more obscure Jew in a third-rate nation two thousand years ago, a pious fraud who claimed to be the Son of God and whose followers insisted He was raised from the dead. Needless to say, this could never explain the Jesus Christ who has held together the Christian church throughout the centuries.

Nevertheless the quest goes on. In his well-thought-out article, "The Jesus the Scholars Can't Find" (page 4), Royal Sage points out why historical research has been unable to find the Jesus of history apart from the Jesus of faith and why these two are really one, the Jesus Christ who was Himself raised from the dead and who yet will raise from the dead all who have "fallen asleep" in Him.

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Cover: A wounded marine is evacuated  
by helicopter in Vietnam during Operation Rio Blanco.  
U.S. Department of Defense Photo







# The Jesus the Scholars Can't Find

BY ROYAL SAGE

*He is that which He presents  
Himself to be in the Gospels, and  
is not to be reduced to something other  
simply because our age does not  
easily accept one who does not  
readily fit into its accustomed  
patterns of thought.*

WHAT if someone in Galilee in the late A.D. 20's had possessed a sound and motion picture camera? What might we really have seen and heard of Jesus' life, teachings, and miracles—presuming we could understand the language and customs of that distant time and place?

Suppose, on the Sunday morning of that week after the crucifixion, a TV camera could have been trained constantly on the entrance of Jesus' tomb; what would we have actually seen of the resurrection?

Are the Four Gospels, with other New Testament statements about Jesus' words and deeds, to be viewed as literal historical accounts? Is Jesus really to be found in history? Did such a person as Jesus of Nazareth ever really exist?

And does it make a difference? Some would ask, "As long as the spirit of divine Love has entered the world through the New Testament, who cares what may or may not have really happened in the past?"

There is perhaps some value in this question, especially if Christianity is viewed as mainly a way of life—the attaining of peace, joy, and success in the present. It is that. But it claims to be much more.

The claim is made in the New Testament that it makes a difference whether these things happened. Especially is this true of what seems the most incredible event of all, the resurrection. The Apostle Paul yearned "that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead." (Philippians 3:10, 11, R.S.V.)

He even went so far as to assert:

**"If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. . . . If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have**

**hoped in Christ, we are of all men most to be pitied."** 1 Corinthians 15: 14, 17-19, R.S.V.

Men of uncomplicated faith read the Gospel stories and accept them. Father and grandfather believed them, so why not I? But many scholars of more recent times have had no such ready acceptance.

## WHY THE DOUBT?

Several chief factors have contributed doubts as to the reliability of the Gospel stories:

1. Secular records during Jesus' times are virtually silent about His existence.

2. The Gospels are full of stories of miracles and supernatural events, above all the resurrection, ideas regarded by modern man as basically untrustworthy and unhistorical by their very nature.

3. The Four Gospels appear to disagree among themselves in details; therefore how can any of them be believed?

During the nineteenth century in particular, many "liberal" scholars were engaged in an attempt to find the Jesus of history by culling from the Synoptic Gospels (the Book of John had early been ruled out entirely) everything which the "modern" mind could not accept. The task was impossible. All that was left was either a fraud or a gentle, pious figure who might fit into our times—or into no time at all. Certainly, the Christ of the Gospels did not remain.

## SCHWEITZER AND THE "QUEST"

This process reached a climax in 1906 in the famous book whose English title is *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* by the renowned theologian-philosopher-missionary-musician, the late Dr. Albert Schweitzer. The stunning literary beauty of its conclusion has been often quoted and even set to music:

**"He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lake-**

*Continued*



*Continued*

side, He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same word: 'Follow thou me!' and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience Who He is."<sup>1</sup>

What is not as generally known is that Schweitzer, in surveying the many scholarly attempts at writing historical biographies of Jesus, from the skeptical Reimarus (1694-1768) to his contemporary Wilhelm Wrede (1859-1907), concluded that only two possibilities lay open: either complete skepticism as to the possibility of recovering a historical Jesus, or accepting Him as a mistaken Jewish preacher of the swiftly approaching violent end of the age and the establishment of God's kingdom. According to Schweitzer, He threw Himself upon the wheel of the world to set it turning on its last revolution, and was crushed on it. "That is His victory and His reign."<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, Martin Kähler, an older contemporary of Schweitzer's, had come out with a book which the latter strangely ignored.<sup>3</sup> Kähler made a strong case for the idea that the whole search for the historical Jesus was, after all, futile; that the only Christ we can know is the Christ presented in the Gospels; that they were not written as cold history, but as portraits of Jesus and His meaning; and that to attempt to remove from them the miraculous, supernatural, and inexplicable is to leave us with something which is not Jesus at all, nor anyone else.

It is precisely in the Gospels that the Christian finds the Christ who forces him to decision in meeting the issues and crises of life. Christ is not what unbelieving men will make of Him; He is that which He presents Himself to be in the Gospels, and is not to be reduced to something else simply because our age does not easily accept one not readily fitting into its accustomed thought patterns.

## THE "NEW QUEST"

The quest, however, was not to end where Schweitzer left it. In our own day a new understanding of the significance of history has led to *A New Quest of the Historical Jesus*, the title of

a work by James M. Robinson, of Claremont, in which he outlines the searching since 1953 by (primarily) disciples of Rudolf Bultmann, who have somewhat rebelled against the extremes of their teacher, and who are sure that such new sources as various Jewish sectarian documents (including the Dead Sea Scrolls) and a new understanding of primitive Christian teaching (the kerygma) make possible a more accurate comprehension of



*"Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."*  
John 20:29.

what Jesus was really like than was previously thought possible.

And today's new attitude toward history has become a little less artificial than that of the superrationalistic nineteenth century. The new quest finds a larger kernel of ideas about Jesus which it deems historically recoverable, and the Gospel of John has been

slightly rehabilitated in its sight. At least more is left than at the most radical phase of "form criticism" thirty or forty years ago. But miracles, resurrection—everything supernatural must go!

## THE CHRISTIAN AND THE PROBLEMS

All this leaves the average Christian rather cold.

He really needs no secular records. He knows that Jesus during His earthly lifetime did not stir the Roman Empire. There are only a few fleeting, second-hand references by a few unconcerned historians, the later Josephus, Tacitus, and Suetonius. As for Jesus' execution, who knows what records may have perished in the Jewish wars of A.D. 66-70, or even in Nero's fire in Rome in A.D. 64!

The Christian believes that the Biblical records have come to him by the will of God. To him such facts as the supernatural fulfillment of Bible predictions, its matchless meeting of men's needs, the inescapable resurrection of Jesus, and above all his personal encounter with the living Jesus Christ of the Bible, give him all the confidence he needs from day to day.

As far as prosaic so-called history is concerned, it seems the providence of God has indeed left a few difficulties, that Christian faith might be a true faith, and not a forced affair resting on irresistible, antiseptic "proofs," for God refuses to force man on this planet to accept Him. Yet, be it noted, even such a skeptic as H. G. Wells, in his popular *Outline of History*, found it impossible to treat of the history of the world without accepting the fact that Jesus really lived.<sup>4</sup>

Do the Gospels record miracles? Well, what else? If the Saviour is truly God, as well as truly man, special interventions in the ordinary course of nature must be expected. In fact, it would be strange *not* to have them. (For a worthwhile and most readable treatment of this subject, see *Miracles*, by the late C. S. Lewis, now available as a Macmillan paperback.)

And do the Gospels appear not always to agree with one another?

From one standpoint, this, too, is a valuable evidence in their favor. They purport to be witnesses to Jesus. And is it not true that one is immediately suspicious of witnesses in court who tell precisely the same story? Something has been planned, one conjectures.



But there is more to it than that.

Christians need to realize that the Gospels were not written as "historical" biographies of Jesus, to satisfy mere curiosity. If this had been the case, why four Gospels? Rather, each one is a *portrait* of Jesus, of His *meaning*. Each one is a *theology* of the many-splendored Christ. Each is a *vi-gnette*, a slice of life.

Not all the events of His ministry are presented in the same order. This was never the purpose. In any case, we know of comparatively few days of His life: a little about His birth, a Passover visit to Jerusalem at His *bar mitzvah*, a few scattered days between the ages of thirty and thirty-three, and some details of His death and resurrection.

### BIOGRAPHIES OF CHRIST?

It is possible, of course, to make harmonies of the Four Gospels in an attempt to produce some sort of chronological order. Tatian, in the second century, attempted in his *Diatessaron* to merge the Gospels. But this process is never really satisfactory—the individual meaning of the Gospels is lost, and still a biography does not actually result. He who wishes to do this today is doomed to frustration.

In more recent times one of the most truly satisfying treatments of Jesus, by a pious Christian, is the book *The Desire of Ages*. Yet even this is not really a biography, and a comment from the publishers' preface is so fitting to the entire situation that it seems worthwhile to quote it:

**"It is not . . . the purpose of this work to set forth a harmony of the Gospels, or even to give in strictly chronological order the important events and wonderful lessons of the life of Christ; its purpose is to present the love of God as revealed in His Son, the divine beauty of the life of Christ, of which all may partake, and not to satisfy the desires of the merely curious nor the questionings of critics. . . . How impossible it is to reveal His life! It is like attempting to put upon canvas the living rainbow; into characters of black and white the sweetest music."<sup>5</sup>**

### THE RESURRECTION AND THE CHURCH

Certainly the Christian church cannot be explained without the historical Jesus. Present-day manuscript evidence makes it certain that the Gospels were no invention of a later century, but were written when witnesses were still living who could check the inspired validity

of the precious traditions of what He did and said. These people must have been convinced of His life, and especially of His resurrection; otherwise why die for their beliefs, as so many of them did?

As is often observed, their belief in His resurrection has never been successfully explained away. What happened to the body? If friends stole it (Impossible! It was guarded!), why would they die when they could save

### You Can't Get Rid of Him

"Millions of men have assailed Him, millions are indifferent to Him, still He will not down. Shut the door in His face, yet He stands there and gently knocks. No power on earth can set Him aside as a factor in life. He cannot be eliminated. The aegis of His name has been used to shield countless crimes, countless hypocries, countless ambitions, still He does not fall. Cruel wars have prospered in His name, the horrors of religious persecution, the intolerance of sectarianism, the absurdities of the creed builders, still He will not down. Ecclesiasticism grows weaker, He grows stronger. Dogmas pass away, He abides. Churches grow corrupt, but the effulgence of His glory is not dimmed. At this very day, here in the twentieth century since His birth, more men and women gather about Him to touch the hem of His garment than in any age since He walked the shores of Galilee, more men and women love Him, love Him with an absorbing and passionate devotion, and in the single hour that has passed since the reader began these pages, a host of souls all over the world have faced death with a gentle smile and gone cheerfully into the Unknown, soothed by His strange power."—George R. Wendling, *The Man of Galilee*, pp. 107-109.

their lives by giving up their account? People do not, in such unanimous numbers, stake their lives on something they *know* to be untrue. If enemies stole it or knew of its whereabouts, why did they not produce it? The only explanation is, He really rose!

Thus the real church demands a real Jesus of real history.

### JESUS AND SOCRATES

The situation is strangely similar to that of Socrates (470?-399 B.C.). Though Xenophon and Aristophanes give a little information about him, practically all we actually know of his life and teachings comes to us through his disciple Plato. Yet his philosophy has affected the world, and his historicity is not seriously questioned.

But with Jesus the stakes are higher.

After all, there is no claim for Socrates that he is the Saviour of the world, that he is Deity, that he was raised from the dead, or that his followers inherit resurrection and immortality—or that he will come again.

### THE BASIS OF TRUE FAITH

No doubt a person observing from the outside is not to be blamed for wanting to be sure of his ground before becoming a follower of Jesus.

Yet seldom can people be argued into becoming Christians. It has been well said that Christianity is more caught than taught.

There is a will to believe and a will to disbelieve. For those whose sense of a need for the love of God as seen in Jesus impels them to want the real Christ, there is a great weight of evidence to support acceptance of the historicity of the Jesus of the Gospels.

For those who do not wish Him, there are enough hooks on which to hang doubts. Christianity can be forced on no man. It is not just agreement to a set of ideas; it is loyalty to a living Person, who is *both* the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith. What if God has so ordered things that no one can be compelled *even by historical and intellectual arguments* to be a Christian when it is not Christianity he wants?

It is perfectly possible to squat in doubt. But those who make the leap of faith discover not merely a man who is indeed part of a historical record, but more—their personal, contemporary Saviour and Friend. END

<sup>1</sup> Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1910), p. 403.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 370, 371.

<sup>3</sup> Martin Kähler, *The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic, Biblical Christ* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964, translated from the German of 1896).

<sup>4</sup> H. G. Wells, *The Outline of History* (Garden City, New York: Garden City Books, 1940), p. 528.

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1898), pp. 9, 10.



# HURRY! WORRY! BURY!

BY RAY O. JONES

Back in pioneer days, if a man missed a stagecoach, he would shrug his shoulders and say, "So what, there'll be another one along in a couple of weeks." But today the average man is ready to explode if he misses even one section of a revolving door!

FOR SEVERAL YEARS I have jokingly commented to people, after a discussion on modern-day problems and perplexities, that I was going to speak on the subject "Hurry, Worry, Bury." At the time the sermon was little more than a mere musing. But after more serious thought, I said to myself, "Well, why not?" Such a subject is certainly relevant to our particular age.

**HURRY!** We have an excellent prescription for this malady from the pen of the psalmist, David, "Be still, and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10. Most of us are extremely busy, and it seems that we have more to do than we can actually accomplish.

However, have we adopted an intelligent attitude toward this? Have you ever stopped in the midst of life's stampede to ask, "Why the big rush, anyhow?" One fellow when asked why he was in such a great commotion said, "I want to hurry and get there, so that I can hurry and get back." Back in pioneer days, if a man missed a stagecoach, he would shrug his shoulders and say, "So what, there'll be another one along in a couple of weeks." But today the average man is ready to explode if he misses even one section of a revolving door.

The day and time in which we live contributes to our hurried pace. We live in a period when we can get things quickly. We have instant coffee, instant tea, instant dinners. We want what we desire *now*. And if we don't get it immediately, we work ourselves into a frenzy.

I am convinced that this is one reason why so many are having nervous breakdowns and heart attacks. In recent years the medical profession has become concerned about the relationship between anxiety, frustration, stress, emotional collapse—and hurry.

Recently I stood at the counter of a large drugstore and noticed several bottles of medicine—prescriptions waiting to be picked up. Seven out of ten bottles sitting on the counter were labeled: "For nerves." Did you know that six million people in our country have to take sleeping





pills and nerve medicine every night to find sleep? God never intended that we go through life with shattered nerves.

The trouble with many of these people is simply that they need to slow down and learn to relax. We form a habit of hurrying, and like any other bad habit, it is difficult to break. These bad habits enslave us. We rationalize our hurried pace by saying, "We save time." But notice the person who is always hurrying to "save time." He has never learned how to adequately spend the time he saved.

Behind the lives of many neurotics will be found this habit of needless hurrying. As a pastor, I have seen many people with shattered nerves. Life to them has become

bitter. In most instances, these individuals rarely stop long enough to worship God. A woman one day called upon her doctor and said, "Doctor, I'm just run down," to which the physician replied, "No, lady, you're not run down; you're wound up."

We need to stop and let our souls catch up with our bodies. We are not giving God a chance to speak to us because we won't be quiet long enough. We need this spiritual prescription, "Be still, and know that I am God." Many of us have never had this filled. Have you really tried it? It works. Pause for a while. Learn to get along with yourself and relax.

But therein lies our difficulty. We can't stand to be alone. Put the average man in a room by himself, with nothing to do but relax and think, and he panics from boredom. God would have us be still and know that He is God.

People have often said to me, "God doesn't seem real to me." I always remind these individuals that we must at times stop, look about us, and listen, if God is to become factual to us.

**WORRY!** The Apostle Paul in Philippians 4:6 wrote, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God."

Did you ever stop to consider seriously the fact that worry affects us not only spiritually, but physically? Worry takes its toll in human misery and suffering. There's an old proverb which says, "If we don't worry, we'll go to the poorhouse; if we do worry, we'll go to the insane asylum."

Let it be understood, of course, that there is a great difference between worry and concern. Wholesome concern prevents us from becoming indifferent to what is happening to us. We ought to have a healthy concern for the future. The writer of our maxim means, "Do not be anxious about the things that do not matter much after all, but seek the true meaning of life." Worry seldom has an objective, and the things we fret about are usually insignificant.

The Bible teaches that we are to respect and care for our bodies. Therefore, if worry hurts us physically—and there is little doubt about that—then worry is a sin against both God and ourselves.

Someone has described worry as a "mental tornado revolving around a center of fear." My friend Dr. R. G. Leehas described worry as "an illegitimate child of ambition, a spiritual bandit, who steals our peace of mind." Worry robs us of joy, peace, and happiness. Life becomes meaningless to the man who is constantly addicted to worry. He drifts through life without a real goal.

Actually, the things we worry about most never really come to pass. It was Emerson who wrote, "Some of your hurts you have cured, And the sharpest you still have survived, But what torments of grief you endured From evils that never arrived!"

Isn't it true that many of our worries are borrowed from a previous day? We worry about mountains we will never have to climb. We worry about rivers we will never have to swim. We worry about "bridges that were never built over chasms that never existed."

Someone has said, "Worry often begins in an honest solicitude and, fattening on trouble, becomes a relentless

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*Continued*

monster." Why worry about yesterday? It is forever gone. Why dread tomorrow? It isn't here yet. Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday. In short, why worry at all? Worrying about yesterday and tomorrow takes all the zest and joy out of living now. We should make today the best day we have ever lived; tomorrow will take care of itself. I said to a woman once, "My, isn't this a lovely day?" "Yes," she replied, "but it might rain tomorrow."

When we worry and fret, we lose our enthusiasm for living. I shall never forget a story I heard Dr. Park Tucker, chaplain of the Federal Penitentiary, Atlanta, Georgia, tell a group of ministers and laymen. He was walking one day down the street in a certain city, feeling rather discouraged and depressed. All enthusiasm for life seemed to have vanished. As he went along the street in this mood, he glanced at the window of a funeral home across the street.

He blinked his eyes, wondering if they were deceiving him. But there in the window of the funeral home, in large bold letters, were these words: "Why walk around half dead? We can bury you for \$69.50. P.S. We also give green stamps."

Dr. Tucker said the humor of it was good medicine for his soul. Many people are stumbling around half dead

because worrying has built a mountain of problems through which there is no pass, and they have surrendered to fate.

**BURY!** This does come quite naturally last. Those who go through life hurrying and worrying will usually go to a premature death. Christ has given us a wonderful spiritual prescription in Matthew 11:28: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." But we haven't really taken Christ at His word, have we? This prescription often remains unfilled.

We sing, "My sins have been cast in the depths of the sea, Down deep in the sea." But we don't leave them there. Too often we go on skin diving expeditions to bring these things up from the past. We nourish them, we cherish them, and we just can't seem to forget these failures.

It is difficult for us to live in the present. We must hurry, we must worry; but unless we make up our minds to starve our worries to death and then bury both hurry and worry, then they might as well bury *us*.

Many lives have been shattered by unhappiness because stubborn people were not willing to surrender their animosities. Then again, we are always digging up contentions which only remind us of all the heartaches of the past and rekindle old passions of anger, lust, or greed. Why not learn to entomb these burdens? END

## PEACE

*(Continued from page 2)*

But God offers it to you as a gift, "without money and without price." (Isaiah 55:1.) It is yours if you will but reach out your hand and grasp it. The Lord says, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isaiah 1:18. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." Ezekiel 36:26.

You have confessed your sins, and in heart put them away. You have resolved to give yourself to God. Now go to Him, and ask that He will wash away your sins and give you a new heart. Then believe that He does this *because He has promised*. This is the lesson which Jesus taught while He was on earth, that the gift which God promises us, we must believe we do receive, and it is ours. Jesus healed the people of their diseases when they had faith in His power; He helped them in the things which they could see, thus inspiring them with confidence in Him concerning things which they could not see—leading them to believe in His power to forgive sins. This He plainly stated in the healing of the man sick with palsy: "*That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins,* (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up

thy bed, and go unto thine house." Matthew 9:6. So also John the evangelist says, speaking of the miracles of Christ, "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." John 20:31.

From the simple Bible account of how Jesus healed the sick, we may learn something about how to believe in Him for the forgiveness of sins. Let us turn to the story of the paralytic at Bethesda. The poor sufferer was helpless; he had not used his limbs for thirty-eight years. Yet Jesus bade him, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." The sick man might have said, "Lord, if thou wilt make me whole, I will obey thy word." But, no, he believed Christ's word, believed that he was made whole, and he made the effort at once; he *willed* to walk, and he did walk. He acted on the word of Christ, and God gave the power. He was made whole.

In like manner you are a sinner. You cannot atone for your past sins; you cannot change your heart and make yourself holy. But God promises to do all this for you through Christ. You *believe* that promise. You confess your sins and give yourself to God. You *will* to serve Him. Just as surely as you do this, God will fulfill His

word to you. If you believe the promise—believe that you are forgiven and cleansed—God supplies the fact; you are made whole, just as Christ gave the paralytic power to walk when the man believed that he was healed. It is so if you believe it.

**Do not wait to feel that you are made whole, but say, "I believe it; it is so, not because I feel it, but because God has promised."**

Jesus says, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:24. There is a condition to this promise—that we pray according to the will of God. But it is the will of God to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life. So we may ask for these blessings, and believe that we receive them, and thank God that we *have* received them. It is our privilege to go to Jesus and be cleansed, and to stand before the law without shame or remorse. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:1.

Henceforth you are not your own; you are bought with a price. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold; . . . but with the

*(Continued on page 16)*



**P**ERHAPS only the ignorant could regard ignorance as a virtue. As a rule there is universal sympathy for the individual who has never had the opportunity to replace ignorance with knowledge. And this sympathy has often been translated into the provision of schooling for the underprivileged.

There is a type of ignorance, however, for which the opportunity for schooling provides no solution. Such is willing ignorance—the ignorance of the man who does not know, knows that he does not know, and does not even care to know.

Perhaps the willingly ignorant should stir the deepest sympathy because something basic to human nature seems to be lacking in them. If such are ever to be lifted from the pit of ignorance, someone or something must obtain the key to their attention, their interests, their motives, so that they may come to want knowledge, to seek the opportunity to learn.

Yet there is one shade of willing ignorance that goes beyond general

and secular knowledge and is the manifestation of a negative attitude toward revealed evidence, divine knowledge, and faith in the supernatural. And this particular shade of willing ignorance may be found as readily among the educated upper classes as among the unschooled, underprivileged—perhaps even more readily. And it may prove the most devastating ignorance of all.

Interestingly, the Apostle Peter detected this type of willing ignorance in his day, and he wrote about it in his Second Epistle to the church. He found a class of men who refused to believe that God had intervened or could intervene in human affairs, who insisted that the forces of nature had run with uninterrupted uniformity since the day of their beginning. Peter accused them of being “willingly . . . ignorant” of the fact that God had created the heavens and the earth, and that the generation of men in Noah’s day had “perished” when the world that then was “overflowed with water.”

Peter then made a prediction that in “the coming of the day of God”—in

By **GORDON M. HYDE**

the time just before Christ’s second coming—there would be a revival of this willing ignorance of God and of His ways among men. This ignorance would show itself in a refusal to believe that God is about to intervene again and finally in human affairs, with judgment and with destruction, this time by fire.

This willing ignorance, said Peter, is strengthened by the fact that judgment seems so long delayed. Do not misinterpret the delay, he pleads. It is not that God cannot or will not intervene; He is simply so long-suffering and so unwilling that any should perish that He keeps extending the invitation of mercy, the offer of forgiveness and reconciliation, to the penitent.

In this day when evolutionary theories and modernism are reading God out of the universe, how accurately Peter’s prediction is meeting fulfillment. Time is short. Beware of willing ignorance!

END

## willingly ignorant





# I SAW BIBLE HISTORY COME TO LIFE

*As Illustrated by the  
Excavations of Shechem*

BY SIEGFRIED H. HORN

Part III, The Judges Period

**D**URING the Judges period chaotic conditions existed in Israel. This is well described by repeated Biblical statements such as the following: "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes." (Judges 21:25; see also 17:6; 18:1; 19:1.) It was a long period in which religious apostasies were followed by foreign invasions and oppressions, after which, invariably a national hero, called "judge," was raised up by God to deliver the Israelites from their miseries. During each oppression the people repented of their apostasies and returned to their God, but usually changed their way of life again, turning back to the religious cults of the pagan Canaanites as soon as the pressure was gone. The cycle of apostasy, oppression, and liberation by a judge was thus repeated again and again in an almost monotonous fashion. However, a few episodes of a different nature, recorded in the Book of Judges, occasionally broke the historical cycle. One of these episodes was Abimelech's short-lived kingdom at Shechem.

Abimelech was a son of Gideon, the great judge who had liberated his nation from the Midianites. His mother, a concubine, was from Shechem. (Judges 8:31.) After his father's death, the young man, with the help of his Shechemite friends and outlaws paid with money obtained from Shechem's temple of the covenant-god, killed all of his brothers except one, who was able to escape. After the massacre Abimelech had himself crowned as king "at the oak of the pillar in She-

chem." (Judges 9:6, R.S.V.) The description of the coronation place is similar to that of the site where Joshua renewed the covenant with God in his days (Joshua 24:26), for there is mentioned as being by the sanctuary of the Lord an oak, under which Joshua set up a great stone.

It is not certain whether this ceremony took place outside of the city or in front of the temple of Baal-berith, which is specifically mentioned in Judges 9:4. It is quite possible that Abimelech was crowned at the huge standing stone which Sellin discovered in front of the temple, and which the American expedition recently re-erected at its original site. Furthermore, the Scriptural record states that the coronation of Abimelech was performed by the citizens of Shechem and the people of "the house [*beth*] of Millo." (Verse 6.) *Millo* in Hebrew means a "fill" and may appropriately refer to the great platform which covered the earlier sanctuary, forming the basis of the great temple of Baal-berith. The Hebrew *beth*, "house," often refers to a temple and may refer to it here. The text could, therefore, mean that Abimelech was crowned by the citizens of Shechem and by the priests who lived around the temple on the great platform.

Abimelech's reign was of such a tyrannical nature that the people soon tired of their ruler and revolted against him. The king thereupon attacked the city with his followers and subdued it. A general slaughter of the Shechemite population followed. Those who escaped from the massacre fled to the temple of El-berith. (Verse 46.) This temple with its seventeen-foot-thick walls seemed to provide protection against Abimelech and his forces. Because of its massive strength, this temple is repeatedly called *migdal* in Hebrew, a word which means "tower" or "citadel." Their hope that the strong temple would save them was in vain. The king and his soldiers went to the slopes of the adjacent mountains and returned with wood with which they made a great bonfire at the temple gate, burning the temple down. A thousand men and women who had fled to this fortresslike structure perished in the conflagration. (Verses 45-49.)





During our excavations for the years 1960 and 1962, the date for the destruction of this temple of El-berith, or Baal-berith, was established by means of the excavators' most reliable time clock, the broken pieces of pottery left in the structure's ruins. On the basis of this evidence it was established that the temple and the city were destroyed by a great fire in the middle of the twelfth century B.C. This date agrees exactly with that derived from the Biblical data, according to which Abimelech's reign must have been around 1170 B.C. The confirmation of this Biblical date was another example of how archaeological evidence corroborates the Scriptural records and provides important data to verify Biblical history.

### **Shechem Under the Kings of Israel**

The destruction of the temple and its subsidiary buildings by Abimelech marked the end of this sacred area, which had existed for several centuries. After this destruction the ruins of Shechem remained unoccupied for some time, but slowly the city rose to a new life. However, it was not until the tenth century that building activities were resumed on a large scale. During that time, probably under the reign of King Solomon, a large granary was built on the site of the former temple, its foundation being used as a substructure. The builders poured a heavy layer of cement over the old temple foundations and placed huge boulders in the wet cement, securing the walls of the new grain storehouse against the intrusion of rodents. Also the city was rebuilt and received walls built in casemate style, typical for its time. This means that they consisted of a double wall strengthened by cross walls. The excavations have revealed that the architectural methods employed in this building program were equivalent to those used in other cities in Solomon's time.

That Shechem had not lost its importance as a rallying site of the nation was demonstrated by the fact that representatives of all the tribes of the nation of Israel gathered at Shechem after Solomon's death to crown the new king. (1 Kings 12:1.) During this

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gathering the people demanded from Rehoboam, Solomon's son, a lightening of the heavy national economic burden. When this legitimate request was refused, ten of the twelve tribes under the leadership of Jeroboam, a rebel Israelite of Solomon's time, broke away from the house of Judah and established their own kingdom of Israel. For the next two hundred years, the nation was divided into two kingdoms. The smaller part of the nation lived in the south and retained Jerusalem as its capital and David's descendants as rulers. The northern kingdom was stronger and larger than the southern one, but much more unstable, and changed its capital as well as its dynasties rather frequently. Since Shechem, the birthplace of the northern kingdom, lay within its territory, it must have come as no surprise that it became its first capital. (1 Kings 12:25.)

Shechem did not enjoy this honor for long, however, because King Shishak of Egypt invaded Palestine five years later and forced Jeroboam, the first king of northern Israel, to move to Transjordan and establish his temporary residence at Penuel. That Shechem was destroyed by Shishak is not stated in the Bible, but it is proved by the ruins which show a strong destruction layer in this stratum. Although the city was soon rebuilt, the program was carried out on a small scale and showed extremely poor workmanship, indicating that the city must have suffered a great loss of wealth and skilled labor in the war with the Egyptians.

During the ninth and eighth centuries before Christ, Shechem was repeatedly plundered, as the excavations have revealed. One of the destructions was probably caused by an earthquake, but the others by military actions. Since the Bible records continual wars between Israel and Damascus as well as between Israel and Judah, its brother nation, during those centuries, it is no surprise to find in Shechem's ruins the evidence of such repeated catastrophes. Although the Bible does not specifically mention Shechem in connection with any of these wars, there can be no doubt that the city and her population were frequently involved.

In 722 B.C., Samaria, the capital of

the nation, was destroyed by the Assyrians after a siege of three years. During that time, Shechem also shared Samaria's fate. During the excavations, a well-built private home came to light which had been consumed by fire during the Assyrian attack. Its thick, flat roof had collapsed, and parts of it were still leaning against the wall stumps when the remains were unearthed. Under the fallen roof were buried the utensils and furniture which had been in the house, such as pottery, looms, tools, kitchen utensils, etc.

During the next four centuries, Shechem remained almost deserted. However, a few squatters seem to have inhabited the ruins. The excavations revealed that floors were repaired in some houses, and that some simple shelters were built into others after the Assyrian devastation. This observation agrees with the statement found in Jeremiah 41:5 that some men from Shechem were on their way to Jerusalem shortly after its destruction in 586 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar. It shows that at that time the city was not completely deserted.

### **In the Hellenistic and Roman Periods**

It was not until the time of Alexander the Great that Shechem again began to play an important role in the history of Palestine. When Alexander took over the country, he left a governor in the city of Samaria. This governor was soon killed by the Samaritans, whereupon Alexander returned and took cruel revenge. He slew the leading citizens and expelled the remainder of the population from the city, after which he handed it over to his own veterans. From that time on Samaria was a Greek city.

The expelled Samaritans moved to Shechem, making it the capital of their nation and the center of their religion. It was at that time they built a temple on one of the summits of Mount Gerizim overlooking Shechem. It was the purpose of the Samaritans that this temple should rival in importance the Temple of the Jews in Jerusalem. After religious services were conducted in it for two centuries, it was destroyed toward the end of the second century

*Continued*





*Top: Archaeologists unearth the east gate of Shechem.*

Photo by James T. Steward

*Right: A pickman, two hoemen, and basket boys participate in the excavation. Notice labeled stratifications in the earth walls.*

Photo by Siegfried H. Horn

*Bottom: Pottery is drying on mats (at right) after having been washed by boys in the pottery shed. Men sitting in the left side of the shed are identifying pottery from the boxes and baskets.*

Photo by Siegfried H. Horn



### *Continued*

B.C. by John Hyrcanus, a Maccabean king of the Jews who invaded Samaria and also captured and destroyed Shechem.

After this desolation neither the city nor the temple was ever rebuilt. A small village grew up around the copious spring of Shechem. It was probably this village which had the name Sychar (John 4:5) in the first century when Jesus passed through this area and had that remarkable conversation with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. Ref-

erence has already been made to the incident in the first article of this series.

During the reign of the Emperor Vespasian, permission was granted to build a new city as a successor to Shechem. The new city was founded two miles west of the old city. The new location was given the appropriate name "Neapolis," "New City," which in the course of time has been corrupted to "Nablus," the present name. The site of ancient Shechem never regained its former fame and importance, and even today one finds there only the small village of Balatah, which covers part of the ancient mound. In fact, Nablus is so rapidly growing that Balatah is now almost one of its eastern suburbs.



In the course of time the exact location of the temple on Mount Gerizim seems to have been forgotten by the Samaritans. After the Christians in the fifth century had built an octagonal church on one of the summits of that mountain, they were repeatedly attacked by hostile Samaritans who claimed that the Christians had erected the church on their holy site, although this was not true, as we now know. In order to protect the church against any further attacks, the Emperor Justinian surrounded it by a strong wall. In later centuries the Christian church and surrounding protective wall were destroyed, and the Samaritans resumed their sacrificial services at Easter time at their traditional site.

Some forty years ago, the ruins of this church were excavated, and to the surprise of the excavators, no remains of the Samaritan temple were discovered. The location of the temple site remained a puzzle, but no one thought of looking for it at Tell er-Ras, a somewhat lower summit directly overlooking Shechem. It had been known for a long time that a Roman temple had stood on that summit during the second century A.D. Coins minted at Nablus bear pictures of it, and the stories of early pilgrims contain descriptions of this temple. It remained in existence until Christianity became the state religion in the Roman Empire. At that time pagan temples were closed, demolished, or converted into churches. The Roman temple on Mount Gerizim shared this fate. It was used as a stone quarry by the people of Nablus, and in the course of time completely disappeared.

During the excavations of the 1964 campaign at Shechem, it was decided to carry out some soundings on Tell er-Ras to ascertain the size of the former Roman temple. As its foundations came to light, a surprise awaited us excavators, because we found them resting on a substructure built during the Hellenistic period. The pottery associated with this earlier structure clearly shows that the building which preceded the Roman temple had been erected in the time of Alexander the Great. It seems, therefore, reasonable to conclude that the long-lost site of the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim has finally been located. During the summer of 1966 further parts of the Roman temple foundations were uncovered, and also more of the remains of the underlying Hellenistic structure. One more

season of excavations is planned on this hill to clarify the problems connected with these most interesting ruins.

It was to this temple site that the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well pointed when she told Jesus with an inquiring voice, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." (John 4:20.) Although the temple had been destroyed more than a century before Jesus' visit, the Samaritans still looked up to their holy mountain as the place where, according to their belief, God wanted to be wor-

shipped. It was in reply to the inquiry of the Samaritan woman that the Lord Jesus made the remarkable statement that the hour would come "when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." (Verse 23.)

It has indeed been a fascinating experience to witness the resurrection of the history of a Biblical city under the excavators' tools and to see how the evidence of the ruins of such a city supplement, illuminate, and corroborate the Scriptural records. END



## Mockingbird

Jane Merchant

**"A common bird," the dictionary states,  
"Remarkable," it adds, "for imitation  
Of the songs of other birds." How it elates  
The heart to have authentic confirmation  
That "common" and "remarkable" can be  
Joined in a bird—perhaps in such as we!**



## PEACE

(Continued from page 10)

precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Peter 1:18, 19. Through this simple act of believing God, the Holy Spirit has begotten a new life in your heart. You are as a child born into the family of God, and He loves you as He loves His Son.

Now that you have given yourself to Jesus, do not draw back, do not take yourself away from Him, but day by day say, "I am Christ's; I have given myself to Him"; and ask Him to give you His Spirit and keep you by His grace. As it is by giving yourself to God, and believing Him, that you become His child, so you are to live in Him. The apostle says, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Colossians 2:6.

Some seem to feel that they must be on probation, and must prove to the Lord that they are reformed, before they can claim His blessing. But they may claim the blessing of God even now. They must have His grace, the Spirit of Christ, to help their infirmities, or they cannot resist evil. Jesus loves to have us come to Him just as we are, sinful, helpless, dependent. We may come with all our weakness, our folly, our sinfulness, and fall at His feet in penitence. It is His glory to encircle us in the arms of His love and to bind up our wounds, to cleanse us from all impurity.

**Here is where thousands fail; they do not believe that Jesus pardons them personally, individually.** They do not take God at His word. It is the privilege of all who comply with the conditions to know for themselves that pardon is freely extended for every sin. Put away the suspicion that God's promises are not meant for you. They are for every repentant transgressor. Strength and grace have been provided through Christ to be brought by ministering angels to every believing soul. None are so sinful that they cannot find strength, purity, and righteousness in Jesus, who died for them. He is waiting to strip them of their garments stained and polluted with sin, and to put upon them the white robes of righteousness; He bids them live and not die.

God does not deal with us as finite men deal with one another. His

thoughts are thoughts of mercy, love, and tenderest compassion. He says, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins." Isaiah 55:7; 44:22.

"I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." Ezekiel 18:32. Satan is ready to steal away the blessed assurances of God. He desires to take every glimmer of hope and every ray of light from the

### PRAYER CIRCLE

"Pray for one another," wrote the Apostle James, "that you may be healed." (James 5:16, R.S.V.) The privilege of prayer is one of God's best gifts, not that He isn't already willing to give us much more than we deserve, but He is waiting and longing for us to just ask Him.

We need your prayers, and you need ours. Pray for us, and we will pray for you. Send your prayer requests to THESE TIMES Prayer Circle, Box 59, Nashville, Tennessee 37202.

soul; but you must not permit him to do this. Do not give ear to the tempter, but say, "Jesus has died that I might live. He loves me, and wills not that I should perish. I have a compassionate heavenly Father; and although I have abused His love, though the blessings He has given me have been squandered, I will arise, and go to my Father, and say, 'I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.'" The parable tells you how the wanderer will be received: "When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." Luke 15:18-20.

But even this parable, tender and touching as it is, comes short of expressing the infinite compassion of the heavenly Father. The Lord declares by His prophet, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: *therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.*" Jeremiah 31:3. While the sinner is yet far from the Father's house, wasting his substance in a strange country, the Father's heart is yearning over him; and every longing awakened in the soul to return to God is but the tender pleading of His Spirit, wooing, entreating, drawing the wanderer to his Father's heart of love.

**With the rich promises of the Bible before you, can you give place to doubt?** Can you believe that when the poor sinner longs to return, longs to forsake his sins, the Lord sternly withholds him from coming to His feet in repentance? Away with such thoughts! Nothing can hurt your own soul more than to entertain such a conception of our heavenly Father. He hates sin, but He loves the sinner, and He gave Himself in the person of Christ, that all who would might be saved and have eternal blessedness in the kingdom of glory. What stronger or more tender language could have been employed than He has chosen in which to express His love toward us? He declares, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." Isaiah 49:15.

Look up, you that are doubting and trembling; for Jesus lives to make intercession for us. Thank God for the gift of His dear Son, and pray that He may not have died for you in vain. The Spirit invites you today. Come with your whole heart to Jesus, and you may claim His blessing.

As you read the promises, remember they are the expression of unutterable love and pity. The great heart of Infinite Love is drawn toward the sinner with boundless compassion. "We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." Ephesians 1:7. Yes, only believe that God is your helper. He wants to restore His moral image in man. As you draw near to Him with confession and repentance, He will draw near to you with mercy and forgiveness. **END**





## WHAT PRAYER CAN DO FOR YOU

BY LEONARD C. LEE

I STOOD on the old battlefield at Chalmette, Louisiana, where Andrew Jackson and his hastily gathered army defeated the British in the Battle of New Orleans, January 8, 1815. I gazed around the battlefield and saw a beautiful monument to the heroic Americans who fought and died for their city and country. I saw the Packenham Oaks, named for the British general who lost his life there. But I remembered my

history: This battle was fought two weeks after the war was over. A peace treaty had been signed in Europe at Christmastime, and a messenger with the news was hastening to America to stop the hostilities. This battle with its heroism, its suffering and death, was all wasted for lack of communication between the Old World and the New.

Lack of communication has plagued this old earth ever since the fall of

Adam. Man had been in perfect harmony with his Creator until our first parents joined in rebellion with fallen angels. It was a loving Creator who came looking for man, calling, "Adam, where art thou?" But man was hiding from God.

Since we can no longer walk and talk with our Maker as Adam did and since sin has made us unfit to appear in His

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presence, our loving heavenly Father has offered us a way by which we may approach the throne of grace. That way is prayer.

In order to know more about prayer we must ask some questions and try to find some answers. How can we know there is an Intelligence out there beyond ourselves? How do we know God cares and can hear and answer prayer? The oldest and most reliable Book in the world gives us most of the answers to these questions.

In the first chapter of Genesis we are told that a being called God created the heaven and the earth. (Genesis 1:1.) We are told that man was made in the image and likeness of God. (Verse 27.) When I think of the marvel of the human mind and the heights and depths to which it has achieved in science, art, philosophy, and engineering, I can easily believe that it was conceived and designed by an Intelligence infinitely greater. The prophet Isaiah put it in beautiful language when he wrote by inspiration, "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth." Isaiah 40:25, 26.

I have often looked up at the starry sky and thought of these verses. I have stood under the mighty Hale telescope on Mount Palomar and seen it gather light rays that had traveled a billion light years from some distant universe. I have looked through mighty telescopes at suns and stars and systems so distant and so vast as to be beyond the comprehension of the human mind. Then the thought would come, How can this great God who can hold the universe in the hollow of His hand even know I exist, much less listen to my prayers?

Then I have turned to look at the infinitely small—creatures that have to be seen through a microscope magnifying hundreds of diameters to make them visible to the human eye. These, too, were made by the same divine hand that made the universe and us. Man is about halfway between the infinitely great and the infinitely small. Since man is in the middle and is the only creature made in the image and likeness of God, surely the loving Creator is watching over him.

Our heavenly Father in His Holy Word has made it very plain that we are loved and watched over tenderly. God came looking for Adam and Eve after their sin and fall. He did not wait for our first parents to come begging for forgiveness. He warned Noah of the coming flood and told him how to save himself and his family. But most of all, One who shared with God His deity and His power stepped down from His high estate and came to live among us and show us the way back to oneness with the mind and character of Heaven. Through the prophet Jeremiah we have this loving message from above: "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Jeremiah 31:3.

The next question that naturally comes to our minds is, If God is so great and we are so small, if He upholds the universe and we are but specks on one tiny world, how can He hear us or know our needs? With millions clamoring for His attention, how can God tell which voice is ours?

In ancient times this must have been a mystery, but it need not be so today. Let us think a minute of what man can do with his limited knowledge and skill. Yet our best is crude and clumsy com-

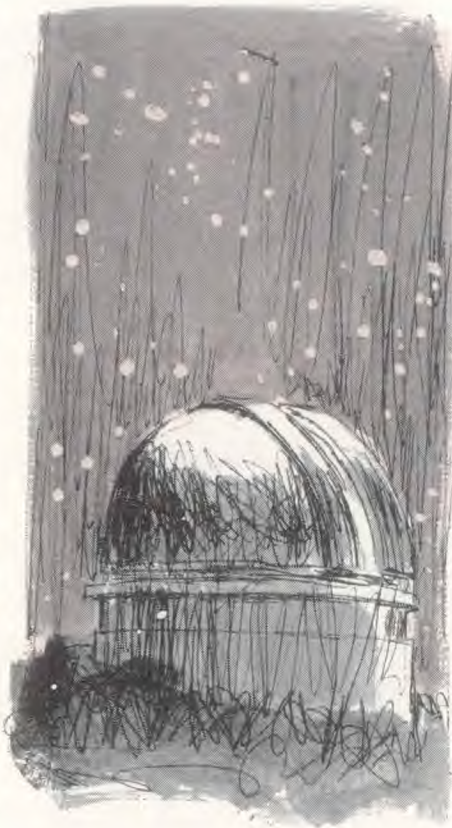
pared with the infinite perfection of the Creator.

It has been only 123 years since the first telegraph line was built between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. The first message sent was a quotation from the Bible: "What hath God wrought!" Numbers 23:23. Later came the telephone. It was ridiculed as a worthless toy that would never be of practical use. Then came the wireless and radio. But we must remember that man is using with his clumsy instruments the electromagnetism that God built into His creation.

On September 23, 1963, Glenda Jarell on Kwajalein atoll far out in the central Pacific received a message that her father had died in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. How had her mother been able to reach her? Her mother, Mrs. Vera Moses, lived in De Ridder, Louisiana. She knew that V. L. Hicks, a merchant in the city, was a ham radio operator. She called him and asked if he would try to get in touch with her daughter. Mr. Hicks turned on his transmitter and began sending out signals asking for someone to answer. He was talking to one party telling him the problem. But someone else was listening. The third party asked to break into the conversation. He had heard the need. He was on the Hawaiian Islands and had an appointment to talk to a ham on Kwajalein in eight minutes. He sent the message to his friend on the atoll, who gave it to Mrs. Jarell. Shortly afterward she sent a message back. This time by telephone and ham radio the message went by Hawaii to a ham in the United States, who answered and made a long distance call to Mrs. Moses in De Ridder, Louisiana. Thus for over seven thousand miles mother and daughter talked to each other as though they were across the street.

If a man in his armchair in Louisiana can in twenty minutes get a message to a certain person on a lonely atoll in the South Pacific that he could hardly find on a map, why should we doubt that God can get a message to us? And if a few perfect strangers scattered halfway around the world could make it possible for Mrs. Moses and her daughter to talk to each other by telephone, how can we doubt that God in His infinite wisdom can hear our prayers?

The next question we might ask is, Does God really work in nature, including human nature, or are there just







coincidences? I do not believe that things just happen. It did not just happen that the lions did not eat Daniel or that the three Hebrews survived the fiery furnace. It did not just happen that the sea became calm when Jesus looked on the stormy waves on the Sea of Galilee and said, "Peace, be still."

I shall never forget the stories I have heard of the life of George Müller of Bristol, England. He started an orphan home and never asked anyone but God to help financially. When there was no food and no money, he took it to God in prayer, and help always came. When he was crossing the Atlantic by steamship to meet a special appointment in Quebec, the ship was delayed by fog. For hours the captain kept the ship at half speed for fear of icebergs and other ships.

Finally Mr. Müller went to the captain. "Captain," he said, "I have an appointment in Quebec Saturday morning, and I must be there."

"I am sorry," said the captain, "but I cannot get you there unless the fog lifts, and I do not see any chance of its lifting."

"In that case we'll have to ask God to lift the fog. I am sure He wants me to meet that appointment."

The captain was a Christian, but he had never seen God work a miracle. Nevertheless he accompanied Müller into the chart room, where they knelt.

Müller offered a simple prayer of faith, asking God to lift the fog. It seemed such a childish prayer to the captain, who never dreamed it could make any difference. He was about to demonstrate what he thought would be a better one when Mr. Müller stopped him. "There's no need for you to pray, Captain," he said; "the fog is already lifted. What we need now is full speed ahead." The captain was incredulous and opened the door to see. The fog was gone, and Müller made his appointment.

There is power in prayer because prayer is the connecting link between our weakness and God's infinite power, between our need and His abundant supply. Real prayer is not just repeating words. Some people have printed prayer words on prayer wheels and let the wind spin them, thinking that each turn of the wheel was a prayer offered. Prayer must make contact between the individual and God.

When I was a child, I ran my little wagon into the telephone ground wire and broke it. The first telephones used a ground for the return circuit. I mended it neatly with a piece of string. As a result it took my daddy several hours to find out why the phone would not work. Many times we mend our relationships to God with things of earth that will not conduct heavenly messages.

We can learn a great deal about

prayer from modern electronics. We can send and receive messages over vast distances if we are in tune. Mariner IV could send and we could receive pictures of Mars over the hundreds of millions of miles of space because our instruments were perfectly in tune.

We can always reach God if we pray on His wavelength. God is love, truth, and holiness. When we pray selfish prayers, we are not in tune with Heaven. Prayer is not bending God to do things our way, but letting Him bend us to His perfect way. If we would have our prayers answered, we should pray for the things God has already promised us. We have a perfect right to claim His promises in faith when we have fulfilled the conditions. God will always forgive our sins if we are really sorry and ready to quit the sin. He has promised us righteousness in Christ Jesus. We cannot have true righteousness unless Christ is abiding in the heart. Neither can we have true wisdom and knowledge without Him. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Colossians, "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, . . . to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Colossians 2:2, 3.

Our heavenly Father wants us to be healthy, happy, and prosperous. These

*Continued*



things are promised to the righteous. Here are some promises:

"For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Psalm 84:11.

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." 3 John 2.

"Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" Matthew 6:30.

"God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:19.

"And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." James 5:15.

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." 1 Peter 5:7.

"Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." Psalm 37:4.

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." Psalm 32:8.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9.

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver

the godly out of temptations." 2 Peter 2:9.

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." Psalm 34:7.

"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." 2 Corinthians 12:9.

"And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life." 1 John 2:25.

We have a perfect right to pray for the good things of life, but it is God, and not we, who makes the final choice as to what is good for us. If we are willing to accept His choice, we will find our prayers answered.

Many wonderful prayers are in the Bible. There is the prayer of Jesus for His disciples in the seventeenth chapter of John. The Lord's Prayer is in Matthew 6. Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple is one of the loveliest of prayers. (2 Chronicles 6.) Daniel's prayer in the ninth chapter of the Book of Daniel was answered by an angel from heaven before he finished praying. But the one I love the best is found in a long list of names. God must have loved it too, for He saw to it that it got into the Bible as an encouragement to us. "And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou would-

est keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested." 1 Chronicles 4:10.

The last and most vital question about prayer is, Why do we not use it more? We are poor, but Heaven is rich in the things really worthwhile. Our heavenly Father longs to pour rich blessings upon us if we will only ask and take. S. D. Gordon once said, "No hand has ever yet reached up to take as much as the hand above is reaching down to give."

Prayer is not just asking and taking, though God offers much and asks little in return. Prayer is also the means by which we praise God for His goodness in saving us from sin and ruin. Prayer should be thanksgiving for the wondrous love that sent Jesus to the cross as our substitute that we might have eternal life. Prayer is learning the language of heaven, the language of love and faith, that we may one day walk its streets as citizens of the redeemed world and feel at home. END

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# Your Questions, Please!

BY FRANK B. HOLBROOK

## Is God a spirit or a person? How can we know, since no one has seen Him?

The Scriptures declare that God is both a Spirit and a Person—incomprehensible as this statement may appear to human understanding. Jesus said, "God is spirit." John 4:24, R.S.V. Yet He is proved to be a personal Being by the fact that man was created in His image. (Genesis 1:26, 27.) As a spiritual Being, God is not subject to or bounded by such limitations as restrict finite human creatures. It is true that no sinner has looked upon the disclosed face of Deity. (1 Timothy 6:16.) For this reason the Son of God became incarnate. He veiled the glory of Deity as it were in the robes of humanity that He might come close to mankind in order to reveal the character and personality of the heavenly Father. "No man hath seen God at any time," He declared, but "the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1:18.) All that we can know about God, or that we need to know for salvation, has been made intelligible for us in the life and person of Jesus Christ.

**Revelation 22:14 in the King James Version reads: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life," etc. Other versions, such as the Douay, read, "Blessed are they that wash their robes," etc. Do Adventists when discussing the fourth commandment quote the former because this fits better to the legalist views of your denomination?**

Not at all! We quote the King James Version because it is the version most persons have in their homes; occasionally we quote more modern translations for the sake of greater clarity.

There is no salvation in legalism—the attempt to *earn* one's salvation by

*In this column Pastor Frank B. Holbrook answers questions regarding spiritual truth, ethical behavior, and Biblical understanding. Write to him c/o THESE TIMES, Box 59, Nashville, Tennessee 37202. Names are confidential. If a personal answer is desired, please send an addressed envelope. Only questions of general interest are published.*

keeping the law. The Scriptures reject the proposition that justification and acceptance with God can be merited. (Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16.) Salvation is a gift of God's grace, received by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 2:8.) This is sound Scriptural teaching. It is Seventh-day Adventist teaching, too!

The problem you mention is not related to Seventh-day Adventist theology but to the divided witness in the Greek New Testament manuscripts and early versions. Codices Sinaiticus (4th century), Alexandrinus, Ephraemi (5th century), the Vulgate, Armenian, and Ethiopic versions support "robes." Codex 046 (8th-9th century), the late Byzantine text type which includes most of the extant Greek manuscripts; the Syriac, Coptic, and Arabic versions; and the church fathers, Tertullian (d. 230) and Cyprian (d. 258), support the "commandments" reading.

Scholars feel that the weight of extant evidence favors the reading "wash their robes," but it is clear that both readings have early attestation. Actually both concepts are expressed in Revelation and are not mutually exclusive. (See Revelation 1:5; 7:14; 12:17; 14:12.) Those whose lives (robes) have been washed from sin, through the indwelling Christ, will be obedient to God. John characterizes the "saints" as persons who "keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." (Revelation 14:12.)

On the other hand, those who keep the commandments of God do so because their "robes" have been washed by the precious blood of Christ. That is, obedience is the *fruit*—the natural fruit of their salvation, not a means to gain salvation. Loving obedience is not legalism to our Lord, for it is He who said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15.

Regardless of which reading is the original, one thing is certainly clear by the context. Outside the Holy City will be dogs, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and liars—in other words, *lawbreakers*. (Revelation 22:14, 15.) What kind of persons then will be inside the City?

## I agree the seventh day is the Sabbath, but won't God honor my sincerity in keeping Sunday?

Heaven does not condemn an individual because he ignorantly but sincerely believes and practices error. "If ye were blind," Jesus says, "ye should have no sin." John 9:41. God regards such persons with pity and compassion, and "the times of this ignorance" He winks at. (Acts 17:30.) But when the Holy Spirit guides that sincere and honest person to truth (John 16:13), and the will of God is clearly understood and acknowledged, then to refuse obedience is to sin. Our Lord solemnly declares, "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin." John 15:22, R.S.V.

In the final judgment men will not be condemned because they sincerely believed error, but because they would not believe truth, or because they have by-passed providentially provided opportunities to learn what is truth. If the Biblical records say anything on this point, it is this: Deliberate disobedience to divine decrees is always disastrous!

END



*Mark Waters, long a reporter for the Honolulu "Star-Bulletin," started his last story January 27, 1966. "Run it as my obituary," he said on that day. "Maybe it will help someone." Four days later he made the final corrections in his copy. On the next day, February 1, in Queens Hospital, Honolulu, he died of lung cancer. Here is that last story.*

**C**IGARETTES were the death of me. I became acquainted with my killer when I was about 14 and began stealing several a day from my father's pack.

Inhaling caused some nausea at first, but persistence conquered.

I was born in a miniature Hell's Kitchen in Davenport, Iowa, on June 2, 1909.

At 16, I moved with my family, including two sisters, to Baltimore, a city that I loved and adopted as my hometown.

It was still no problem getting cigarettes.

I got odd jobs after school to buy them, and tried all sorts of queer brands, such as Melachrinos, Omars and English Ovals. I felt quite sophisticated, but I can't recall now that I enjoyed smoking them.

In 1928, the coming depression cast its shadow. With money scarce, my father began counting his Camels, so a chum and I took to picking butts off

the street. We toasted the soggy tobacco in an oven, and rolled it into rice-paper cigarettes. They were horrible.

Jobs for youth were nil, so I decided to join the Navy—a mouth removed from the table, and I could send money home.

Now cigarettes were no problem. If you were at sea, they were 40 cents a carton. I smoked two packs a day, inhaling most of the smoke.

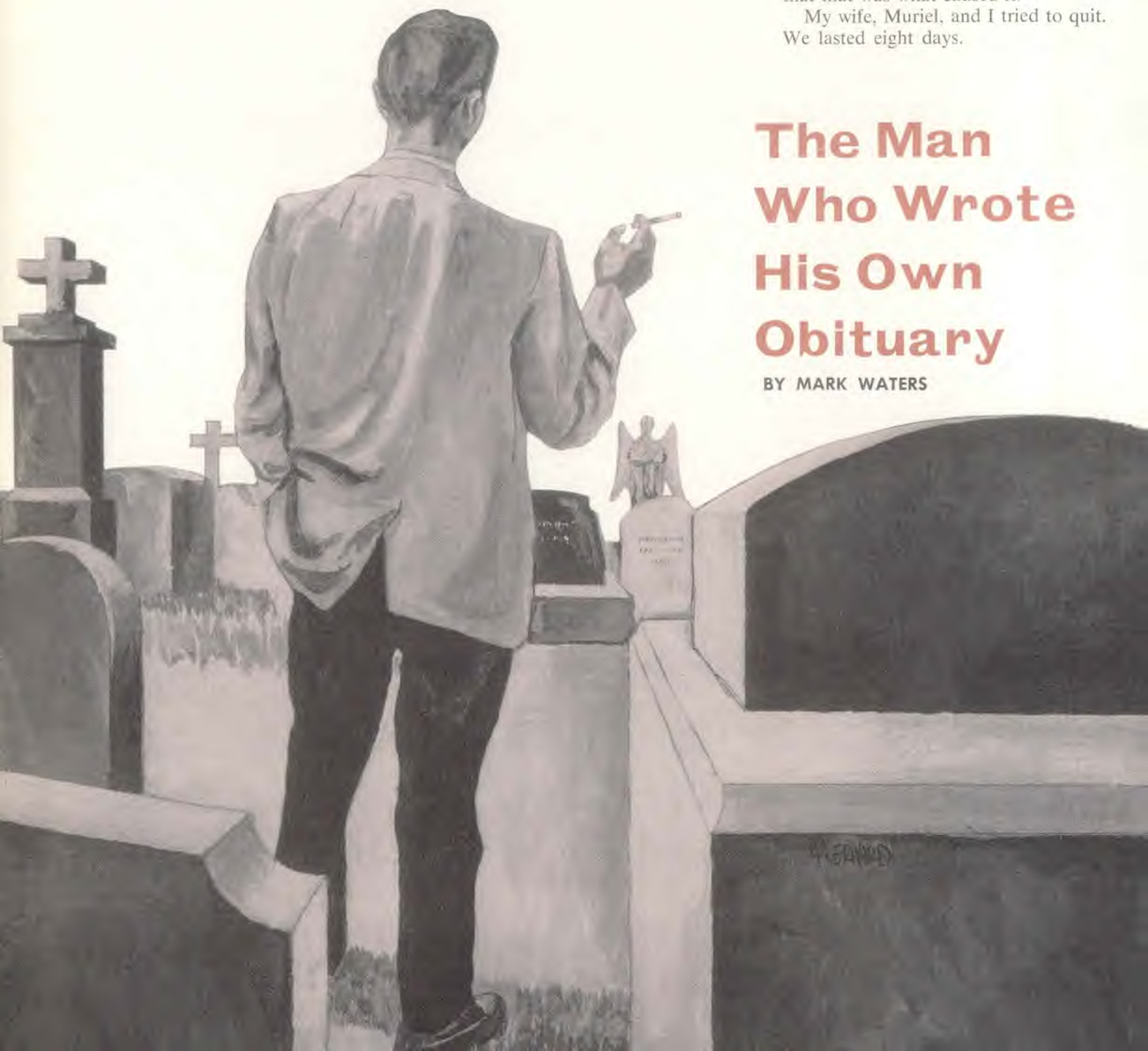
When my 20-year Navy career ended, I went to the University of North Carolina. After I graduated I got a job with the San Diego *Union*.

One night, while walking to my car, I had a slight stroke and staggered to the left. I had been smoking one cigarette after another that night, and I felt that that was what caused it.

My wife, Muriel, and I tried to quit. We lasted eight days.

## The Man Who Wrote His Own Obituary

BY MARK WATERS





It wasn't that I got any real pleasure out of smoking. Except for the first cigarette in the morning with my coffee, I never enjoyed it.

My mouth always tasted like a birdcage. Smoking took away my appetite. It brought on emphysema that made it hard to breathe. My chest colds were real dillies.

In 1956, smoking more than ever, I came to Honolulu to work for the *Star-Bulletin*.

In June 1965 my stomach began hurting, and I would get up every hour or half hour during the night to drink milk and smoke a cigarette.

In September 1965 I came down with a horrible cough. I was hoarse, and there was a nasty soreness in my left lung.

I went to my doctor. He listened to my chest and ordered an X ray.

"You have a lung tumor," he said.

Four days later, the lung surgeon took out a left lobe.

A month later, I was back at work. I hadn't smoked since the day before my operation. It wasn't hard to quit—for one simple reason. Motivation.

I came along fine, gained ten pounds and really felt good. Then, on January 3, I thought I had caught a cold.

I went to my surgeon, who tapped a quart of burgundy fluid from my left chest cavity.

I went back several times, and my surgeon said, "The time is drawing closer."

Later, my wife told me he had told her after the operation that I had less than a year to live. But she wouldn't believe it, and she didn't tell me. I find no fault with that.

There are four cell types of lung cancer. The type seems to have a lot to do with its rate of growth. My doctor told me this; he also said that out of every 20 lung-cancer cases only one survives. The other 19 die.

That's the survival rate for lung cancer, taking into consideration all available forms of treatment. There is no 50-50 chance—the figure for other cancers—for this type of cancer.

My doctor has understandable missionary zeal about getting people to quit cigarettes. He says that there's no question of the relationship between cigarette smoking and lung cancer. The statistics are overwhelming. It is estimated that one in every eight males who have been smoking heavily (20 cigarettes or more a day) for 20 years gets lung cancer.

The bad effect of cigarettes doesn't end with lung cancer. Smoking doubles the chances of death from coronary-artery disease, and the chances of dying from emphysema are 12 times greater. Then there's cancer of the mouth, larynx, esophagus and all the rest, too.

I think doctors get to feeling pretty helpless at times. They warn people like me, but their warnings go unheeded.

And there's all that cigarette advertising. As my doctor says, "Millions of dollars are spent in all forms of advertising to give the public the impression that cigarettes can make up for a number of shortcomings."

In Italy and Great Britain, they have passed a ban against all cigarette advertisements on TV. I think that's a step in the right direction because, as the doctor says, the big effort should be to stop kids from getting started.

Whether this story will stop anyone from smoking, I don't know. I doubt it. Not a soul I've preached to has quit smoking—not a single, solitary soul.

You always think: "It will happen

to the other guy; never to me."

But when you get your lung cancer—God help you.

All you need to see is that shadow on your chest X ray. It's a real shocker. You can't do a thing.

At this point, I'm comfortable. The nurses give me something whenever there's pain.

I'm very short of breath. I can't take five steps without having to sit. The cancer has gone into my liver and I don't know where else.

I don't have a ghost of a chance.

It's too late for me.

It may not be for you.

END

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*Reader's Choice: This tragic, dramatic story was suggested to us by Marian Sweeney of Wildwood, Georgia. Send in your favorite article, tract, or book chapter. If you are first to suggest it and we print it, you will receive \$15. —Ed.*

## Focusing



BY WALTER  
RAYMOND  
BEACH

### SUFFICIENT UNTO THE DAY

**J**ESUS CHRIST our Lord taught His followers to practice living a day at a time. This is what the Master had in mind when He said, "So do not be anxious about tomorrow; tomorrow will look after itself. Each day has troubles enough of its own." Matthew 6:34, N.E.B.\*

Sir William Osler years ago wrote a little book called *The Student Life*. The famous British physician gave much good counsel to young people at the starting line of life. In one chapter he urged students to "undress their souls" as they undress their bodies each night before retiring to rest. What he had in mind was that mistakes and follies of the day were to be confessed and set aside—in the past and done with. Certainly, wrongs were to be made right and the lessons of the past were to be learned thoroughly; but there was to be no brooding over a past which was completely out of reach and irredeemable. Sir William went on to advocate the shutting out of the future as tightly as the past. Thus the

modern physician again joins Jesus Christ in the thought that we have strength only for the burdens of each day as it comes. To add future, somber possibilities to present burdens is the height of folly.

The Master taught three main lessons (and experience confirms them): (1) Most events about which people worry never happen. (2) The anticipation of events that are inevitable is more distressing than the actual experience itself. (3) Even if the event is serious, even more so than the anticipation of it, strength can be discovered to meet it. (Matthew 6:25-34.)

In harmony with His teaching on the Palestinian hillside, Jesus promised Saul of Tarsus, "My grace is all you need; power comes to its full strength in weakness." 2 Corinthians 12:9, N.E.B.

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# Soldiers Without Guns in Vietnam

By HERBERT FORD

*Private First-class Curt Reed crouched low and ran for the first wounded man. He found a sergeant gasping from a 30-caliber machine-gun gash in his shoulder.*

THE HELICOPTERS carrying the one hundred thirty-five men chopped their way across the hot, clear sky of Vietnam. They were "A" Company—riflemen, machine gunners, mortarmen, five medics—the whole show. Suddenly they slipped down out of the blue, down toward the rice paddies quilting the countryside below. As the sun-glinting liquid raced up to meet them, Pfc. Curtis Reed thought how cool the water of the paddies looked—"cool, but deadly."

Young Reed was a tired medic with "A" Company. His outfit had just returned from a forty-five-day mission to their Phu Loi base. The camp buzzed about the sixteen stolen personnel carriers. Disguised in government uniforms, the Viet Cong had captured the vehicles from a Vietnamese army compound. Someone had decided that this arrogance couldn't go unchallenged. So "A" Company, exhausted though they were, had another job to do.

As they sloshed into the paddies from the helicopters, Reed caught the full blast of the stifling Vietnamese heat. It was a cloudless day, the sun blazing like a flame thrower. In a few moments his entire body was soaked with sweat. The company formed up, moving off toward a distant grove of





thick underbrush where the enemy were reported hiding.

By 1:30 that afternoon, after a hasty, trailside meal, the company began trekking deeper into the brush. Suddenly gunfire erupted from several sides. "Medic," yelled a downed soldier. "Medic! Medic! Medic!" The cries burst from all around.

Curt Reed moved automatically toward the pleas. Crouching, he ran for the nearest wounded man, finding a sergeant gasping from a 30-caliber machine-gun gash in his shoulder. Reed dressed the wound, then crept forward to help three other men.

One was dead. The second, a Negro sergeant, died in Reed's arms. The rattle of gunfire began again, intensified, bullets kicking dust over Reed. He was not tempted to reply in kind—he carried no gun.

A second medic arrived. While working, he received three hits in the chest, two in the leg. Reed tended his wounds, then crawled behind the company's command group, where more men were begging for help. A line of enemy fire sent bullets thudding into the brush and ground around him. He found a man with a chest wound which had already been treated.

"Hang on, fellow," he murmured

quietly, his voice seemingly full of confidence. "You're going to make it all right. I know you are going to make it!"

Beside him Reed found two sergeants, both dead. Then he saw another wounded man and moved quickly toward him.

For more than four hours, "A" Company lay pinned to the earth in the underbrush as Viet Cong fire whined above them. The VC were so well dug in, that the company couldn't tell where the fire was coming from. At one time, remembers Reed, "I was so close to a VC position I could smell the smoke from the machine gun firing at us, but I couldn't see where it was coming from."

Finally, as daylight faded, the Fourth Cavalry, a Vietnamese outfit, arrived to join "A" Company. As the VC were driven back, the wounded and dead were loaded aboard personnel carriers and taken out to the rice paddies, where evacuation helicopters could land.

That day eleven men of "A" Company died in the field, three more in the hospital. Twenty-four were wounded.

Reed's courage on the field of battle won him a promotion in rank, and an award of the Bronze Star Medal with a "V" (for valor) insignia. The citation read in part: "Pfc. Reed's outstanding

display of devotion to duty and personal bravery is in keeping with the finest traditions of the military service, and reflects great credit upon himself, the First Infantry Division, and the U.S. Army."

Although he had been in Vietnam several months before the bravery of March 24, 1966, for which he was cited, Curt Reed had already been thoroughly trained. That experience came in a unique organization called

*Continued*

CURTIS REED







*Private Reed is pictured above before entering the army. He was a member of the Medical Cadet Corps, an organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for the purpose of preparing young men for their tour of duty.*

#### *Continued*

the Medical Cadet Corps (MCC), a preinduction military course of instruction given to draft-age young men by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

An Adventist, Reed entered the army as a "1-A-O"—a conscientious objector. But the name "cooperator" is a more accurate title, since, as many army commanders point out, Adventists will serve in any noncombatant duty assigned. They refuse only to bear arms.

"The Seventh-day Adventist is not, has never been, and probably never intended to be, a pacifist," says Clark

Smith, of Washington, D.C., world director of the Adventists' National Service Organization, in explaining his church's position regarding military service. "We believe that we should serve our nation as Christians of all nations should. We believe that this is imposed upon us through God's setting up the nations, as is clearly recorded in Romans 13:1-6. However, in serving our country, we, of course, reserve the right, as all Christians do, to serve God first. In serving God, we do not believe that we should take human life and therefore request to serve as noncombatants, that is, not bearing arms, a

position fundamentally different from that of the pacifist.

"We leave in the hands of government the decisions as to whether there shall be war or peace. We request at the same time," he adds, "that we should be enabled as a church to determine how we should serve God."

To aid its young men in being placed in noncombatant positions more quickly once they enter military service, the Seventh-day Adventist Church keeps its MCC training program in operation year around. The course is given at selected high schools and colleges of the denomination. Summer sessions are provided for those who missed the regular school-year classes. These are compressed into two weeks of rugged, dawn-to-dusk "basic" training.

Before being drafted, Curtis Reed trained in the Adventists' Medical Cadet Corps while attending his church's Platte Valley Academy, Shelton, Nebraska. There he learned first aid, military courtesy and discipline, and spent long hours mastering the army's age-old method of making men work together—military drill.

A typical Medical Cadet Corps summer camp was held a year ago in the foothills of California's picturesque Monterey Bay area, some seventy miles south of San Francisco. The camp was under the command of MCC Major Harry Garlick, of La Crescenta, California, a former paratrooper, Silver Star Medalwinner, and veteran of six World War II battles, including the D-Day landing in Normandy and the Battle of the Bulge. Garlick's cadre of about twenty MCC officers is commissioned to train the 150 young "medical cadets," as their church terms them.

Cadets paid twenty-five dollars each for the privilege of being shaken out of bunks before dawn, of being "gigged" to hours of extra camp clean-up duties for minor discipline lapses, as failing to shine their boots, and for the opportu-





nity of being drilled, lectured, and "chewed out" during each sixteen-hour camp day!

"Man, this gets mighty close to the real thing," commented a national magazine correspondent as he watched an officer ask a knee-knocking young cadet to repeat the basic military "general orders" during inspection.

"We've got to make it rough," explained Major Garlick. "We have these fellows only a few days really, and we've got to telescope weeks of classes, demonstrations, and drill into these few days. We must give them a thorough enough training so that when they show up at an army basic training center, their officers will know that here are men who have a preknowledge of soldiering. And this edge just might make it easier for these boys to find their way quickly into the area where they can be of best service to the army."

"It is all so familiar, very GI and very basic," reported San Francisco *Examiner* staff writer Jerry Belcher. "Clean-cut kids in olive drab fatigues, looking ill at ease as they are ordered to attention. Noncoms with holler-hoarse voices drilling the youngsters and shouting, 'No, no—the *other* left, the *other* left.' The old routine of hurry-up-and-wait. And, of course, KP—kitchen police."

"These kids are conscientious objectors—CO's. But not bearded peaceniks—they are conscientious objectors on strictly religious grounds. They are new recruits in the Seventh-day Adventist Medical Cadet Corps. The purpose is to prepare them for future service to their country—almost all of them can expect to be drafted sooner or later."

The days of the camp were crammed with instruction in army procedures, drill, military-type medical corps training, and army terminology. Classes in character guidance stressed spiritual values. The cadets were coached on how to appeal to their commanders for "Sabbath privileges"—freedom from nonessential duties on Saturday, their Sabbath rest day. Cadets rolled out of bed at 5:30 A.M. and fell exhausted to sleep to taps at 10:30 P.M.

Upward of 50,000 young Seventh-day Adventists have been trained in the Medical Cadet Corps in the past decade, according to National Service Organization Director Clark Smith. The MCC training goes on in a number of countries around the world where the Seventh-day Adventist Church and gov-

ernment officials have secured agreements for their young men to serve as noncombatants.

The record of these young "conscientious cooperators" becomes more distinguished as the current Vietnam conflict continues. More than five hundred Seventh-day Adventists currently serve in that war-torn country, many of them as frontline combat medics like Curtis Reed. The list of these soldiers without guns decorated for heroic action in Vietnam continues to lengthen.

Every Seventh-day Adventist in military service knows that the fact that he does not carry a gun does not excuse him from serving his country, no matter what the price. Several have already died in Vietnam, and with a growing military buildup there, more Adventists are certain to find themselves in the midst of the action.

Among the many Seventh-day Adventists who have served their country with distinction, none surpasses in sheer courage and faithfulness to principle the example of Corporal Desmond T. Doss, an Adventist medic nearly discharged from the military in World War II because his commanding officer felt his refusal to carry a rifle automatically made him a coward and an undesirable soldier. Doss got the discharge dropped, declaring he was ready to serve conscientiously, but without a gun. He was shipped to the Pacific theater, landed with first-wave troops on several islands, was hurt, recovered, and finally sent to Okinawa with the 77th Infantry Division.

One day in incredibly heavy mortar, machine-gun, and rifle barrage, Doss calmly rigged a rope sling and moved seventy-five wounded men down a fire-

swept escarpment. Downed by the storm of bullets at last, the medic crawled off a litter when he saw a fellow soldier more badly wounded than himself. He commanded the litter bearers to carry the man to safety first. As he lay waiting the return of the litter, Doss was struck again, and when the litter bearers did not return, he pulled himself over the battlefield to the aid station.

For his outstanding courage Doss was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, the only instance in which this nation's highest decoration has been awarded a conscientious objector.

"It is better to heal than to kill. Most people would agree with that," editorialized the Long Beach, California, *Press-Telegram* shortly after last summer's Medical Cadet Corps camp near San Francisco ended. "With the Seventh-day Adventists, it is an essential part of their faith. Many become doctors and nurses."

"But where are the healing arts most needed? On the battlefield and in forward hospitals. So the Adventists train their young men for war. They conduct rigorous military camps at their own expense, so the boys will have a head start when they are called up."

"The youths get the works. Training begins at 5:30 A.M. and ends at 10:30 P.M. The experienced soldiers who train them declare they are the best of recruits. They are there through an act of faith, so they give their all. They are soldiers without weapons."

"The record of these men in America's wars has been magnificent. Under heavy enemy fire, they have carried out acts of heroism beyond the call of duty. Many a tall soldier owes his life to a man who refused to fight." END

### God's Interest in Us

When Commander Scott Carpenter returned from his orbits of the earth, an engaging parable was unconsciously acted out. Amid the homage of a whole nation heaped upon him with great emotion, his five-year-old daughter, Candace, rushed up to show her father a sore she had acquired on her right elbow during his absence. This was the matter of supreme interest to her. She knew her father would be interested, too; and amid all the excitement and busyness of that moment her father did take time to show interest in his daughter's elbow!

So it is with God, our heavenly Father. His infinite care and concern for His own children extend to the most minute particle and the tiniest detail of our existence. Nothing is permitted to escape His infinite knowledge and control.





# LOVE

## THE LOVE THAT SURPRISES

**ONE** of the concepts most difficult for some of my students to understand is that God *is* love, that His love is not conditioned by the person being loved. In other words, the fact that Hitler murdered millions of Jews did not make God love him any less; and the fact that Paul gave his life, witnessed to millions who will be in the kingdom because of his faithfulness, did not make God love him any more. God may experience joy or disappointment at what I do, or the way I am, but He never lessens or increases His love.

This is not an easy idea to believe. In fact, one day in class after this Biblical truth was presented, one freshman exclaimed, "That's great!" and went on to verbalize his utter surprise at the thought.

I must confess that I had forgotten how astonishing it is to hear this for the first time. It has no counterpart in any other world religion and is the one concept most Jewish scholars confess was unique to the teaching of Jesus.

People have always been amazed to learn that the Christian's God is like that. They were startled during the New Testament period when Jesus loved the woman taken in sin, loved the publican Matthew, loved Zacchaeus, and even loved his executioners. Luther was surprised, as was Wesley, Moody, and even the skeptic C. S. Lewis. Lewis's spiritual autobiography was entitled *Surprised by Joy*.

In Jesus' teaching, this quality of love was the essence of perfection, and represented the highest

possible fulfillment a man could have, either in this life or in eternity.

**"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? . . . And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Matthew 5:43-48, R.S.V.**

For a man to refuse to allow God to share this love in his life, is to fight the most powerful appeal in the universe. Nothing has the persuasive power that this love has, and only a man who insists on fighting and battling God every step of the way will ultimately be lost.

We often construe the Christian life as a battle for heaven. It would be more appropriate, I think, to conceive of the self-centered, rebellious life as a battle for hell. For the fundamental need of the person is to be loved by God and relate to that love in creative fellowship. To constantly squelch what one knows is the truth about God's love, to quiet the voice of an insistent conscience, and to reject the infinite love of God, is to wage a tremendous conflict. It is audacious! I am personally convinced that people who will ultimately be lost are those who insisted on being so no matter what God did for them.





BY JAMES LONDIS

Equally surprising and remarkable is the notion that because God is this kind of loving Being, He gladly extends forgiveness to all men, without any consideration of their crimes.

Again, like His love, His forgiveness is not conditioned by the object, namely, unmerciful and rebellious people. All men receive mercy; all are forgiven. Only the man who insists on spurning God's forgiveness and insulting His mercy will be lost. Forgiveness is not an action or thing of some kind that God offers and retrieves as people ask for it or refuse it. It is an attitude God has toward us sinners, and nothing we can do will change it.

George Herbert describes his relationship with this love and forgiveness in a poem where the surprise, in all its beauty, woos and finally reconciles. It heals ever so gently the wounds of rebellion.

**"Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,  
Guilty of dust and sin,  
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack  
From my first entrance in,  
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,  
If I lack'd anything.  
'A guest,' I answer'd, 'worthy to be here.'  
Love said, 'You shall be he.'  
'I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,  
I cannot look on Thee.'  
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,  
'Who made the eyes but I?'  
'Truth, Lord, but I have marr'd them; let my  
shame  
Go where it doth deserve.'  
'And know you not,' says Love, 'who bore the  
blame?'**

**'My dear, then I will serve.'**

**'You must sit down,' says Love, 'and taste My  
meat.'**

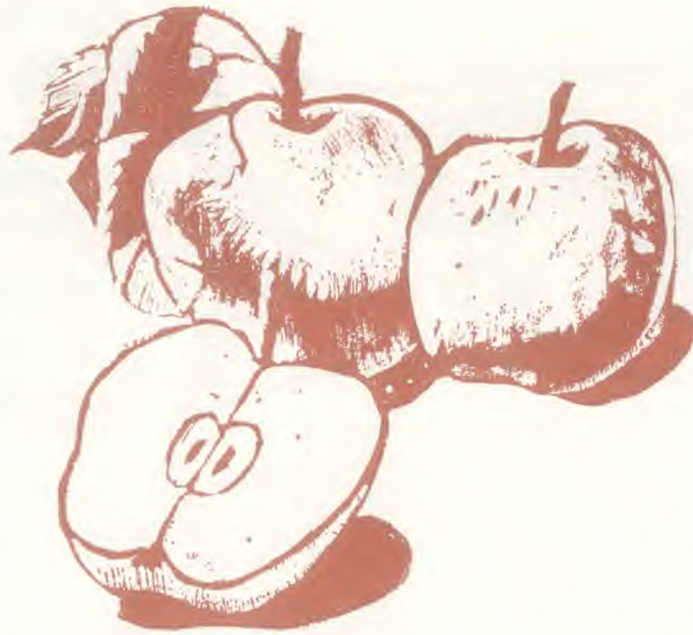
**So I did sit and eat."**

The guest stands condemned and shamed by his sins, and the loving host reminds him that his sins are forgiven. Conscious of such infinite redemption, the guest asks to stay as a servant, but Love insists he share in all that He has: "You must sit down and taste My meat." Finally the guest accepts the Love, the graciousness and mercy: "So I did sit and eat."

We're not invited to relate to God's love as a servant relates to a master. No, indeed! We're invited to be sons in the Father's house, to sit at *His* table, to reign on His throne, and to inherit everything His Son, Jesus Christ, has been promised. The only thing we are asked to do is accept this offer and in humility extend it to others. Aren't you astounded that God is like that? It certainly isn't the kind of thing one gets used to, is it? Someone close to me recently said that "when you realize, *fully* realize, that God loves you even while you sin and hate Him, even more than you can possibly love your own son, it makes a tremendous difference."

Have you ever been surprised by love? Could one predict what love will do, love would cease to be exciting and creative. Love would cease to be love. The Apostle John put it as well as anyone: "We love him, because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19. That is, we have fellowship with God because His love took us by surprise! END





# Apples of Gold

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Proverbs 25:11.

## CREATION

The impulse of all love is to create.  
 God was so full of love, in His embrace  
 He clasped the empty nothingness of space,  
 And lo! the solar system! High in state  
 The mighty sun sat, so supreme and great  
 With this same essence, one smile of its face  
 Brought myriad forms of life forth; race on race  
 From insects up to men.

Through love, not hate,  
 All that is grand in nature or in art  
 Sprang into being. He who would build sublime  
 And lasting works, to stand the test of time,  
 Must inspiration draw from his full heart.  
 And he who loveth widely, well and much,  
 The secret holds of the true master touch.

—*Ella Wheeler Wilcox.*  
 From John Smalshaf.

You should remember that though another may have more money, beauty, and brains than you, yet when it comes to the rarer spiritual values such as charity, self-sacrifice, honor, nobility of heart, you have an equal chance with everyone to be the most beloved and honored of all people.

—*Archibald Rutledge.*

Shed no tears over your lack of early advantages. No really great man ever had advantages that he himself did not create.

—*Elbert Hubbard.*

There's One who hears you when you pray,  
 So put yourself in His hands today.  
 Trust in His goodness, lean on His love,  
 And know that His blessings will come from above.

—*J. H. Gwynne.*  
 From Kae Jaworski.

The kind thing is always the right thing.

## PRAY

(James 5:16)

I cannot tell why there should come to me  
 A thought of someone miles and miles away,  
 In swift insistence on the memory,  
 Unless a need there be that I should pray.

Too hurried oft are we to spare the thought  
 For days together, of some friends away;  
 Perhaps God does it for us, and we ought  
 To read His signal as a call to pray.

Perhaps, just then, my friend has fiercer fight,  
 And more appalling weakness, and decay  
 Of courage, darkness, some lost sense of right—  
 And so, in case he needs my prayer, I pray.

Friend, do the same for me. If I intrude  
 Unasked upon you, on some crowded day,  
 Give me a moment's prayer as interlude;  
 Be very sure I need it, therefore pray.

—*Marianne Farningham.*  
 From Edna L. Tucker.





## Events OF THESE TIMES

### "THE PRESENCE AMONG US OF THE FISHERMAN"

Dressed in immaculate white robes, Pope Paul VI stood under the "keys of the kingdom of heaven" among representatives of the World Council of Churches (WCC), including its general secretary Eugene Carson Blake. The special audience in Vatican City last May 19 was hardly more than a social meeting, yet it was heavy with symbolism.

The men around the pope were theologians, members of the Joint Working Group representing both the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church, meeting at Aviccia (near Rome) to develop and recommend new means toward a "more dynamic collaboration" between the WCC and the Roman Church, which does not hold membership in that organization.

The audience, held at the conclusion of the Joint Working Group's fifth session, was symbolic of the spirit of ecumenism, the laying down of ancient hostilities—yet there were much deeper implications. Here were representatives of different Christian persuasions, Protestant and Orthodox, who had split with Rome at different times over different issues. And here was the pope, claiming to be the infallible successor of Peter, the deputy of God on earth, ready to welcome them back with love and fellowship, but absolutely unwilling to compromise any dogma or claim of his church.

What the pope calls for ultimately is the complete surrender of all Christians everywhere to his absolute authority. This is what he has always called for, but it seems that only now, for the first time in modern history, has that call had such an impelling effect on Christendom.

In America, for example, the noted Protestant historian and theologian John E. McCaw, of Drake University, told the opening session of the general board of the National Council of Churches in Boston, June 1, that a

distinctive "American Church" may be coming into being. "The very center of that church," said Dr. McCaw, "could well be the Roman Catholic Church."

On the other side of the continent the Episcopal Bishop of California, C. Kilmer Meyers, on June 4 urged all Christians to recognize the pope as the head of the "universal church." Meyers, who succeeded the controversial Bishop James A. Pike as pastor of San Francisco's Grace Cathedral, told his congregation, "We need a Holy Father. We need a father who can speak and witness to the whole human race, quite simply, as the presence among us of the Fisherman," an allusion to Christ. "I personally recognize him as such," he said.

Although there was considerable reaction against these statements, the

trend which these men typify is becoming more and more apparent among Protestants. In a nation where the Roman Church, according to the current Catholic Directory, has averaged in excess of one million new members each year over the past ten years (bringing the total to 46,864,910 U.S. Catholics, or 23.6 percent of the entire U.S. population), the tremendous appeal of this vast church can hardly be ignored, least of all by the leaders of other denominations. The vast masses thronging to the altars of a church which says, "We cannot err or go astray," give evidence that Protestantism has been failing to provide the authority people crave, the authority of an infallible Word of God.

We think it hardly surprising, then, that men like Bishop Meyers would say, "We need a Holy Father." It is hard to keep from hearing overtones like this: "We need authority, and since we can no longer accept the absolute authority of the Bible, we need a Holy Father."

Other Protestants have recognized this trend and have begun to think again. One such is Anglican Bishop John Moorman, of Ripon in Yorkshire, England, who allowed Catholic priests to preach in his churches, only to discover that the Catholics were not re-

### POPE WITH DIALOGUE PARTICIPANTS



Religious News Service Photo

Pope Paul VI and Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, are shown with members of the joint working party made up of WCC and Catholic theologians. Together they called for "more dynamic collaboration" between the World Council of Churches and the Catholic Church. The audience was symbolic of the spirit of ecumenism, the laying down of ancient hostilities. Photo taken at the Vatican.



turning the favor. Noting this, the bishop warned his diocesan conference on June 6 that the Anglicans might have to bring this "hopeful experiment" to an end, observing that the WCC would define the ecumenical movement as a "coming together," but that Rome would call it a "coming in" of Protestants and Orthodox into the "true Church" of Rome.

In Johannesburg, South Africa, J. A. Swanepoel announced on May 17 that he was resigning from his ministry in the Dutch Reformed denomination because it was showing "a tendency to move toward Rome" in its teaching.

But nobody understands these trends more clearly than do the Catholics themselves. Vatican II, full of open-armed overtures to non-Catholics, nonetheless reaffirmed and reasserted "all this teaching about the institution, the perpetuity, the force and reason for the sacred primacy of the Roman Pontiff and of his infallible teaching authority." (See *Documents of Vatican II*, "Constitution on the Church" III, 18.) Nor did the council reconsider or promise to reconsider the basis for these claims.

And since that time the pope has persistently hung onto this strict Vatican II pronouncement. In an audience in Rome last January 11, for example, Pope Paul VI characterized himself as sitting in "the most authoritative chair" of the church and interpreting the Word of God, "if necessary, in an infallible way." And on April 28 he admitted to members of the Vatican's Secretariat for Christian Unity, "The Pope—we know it well—is without doubt the most grave obstacle on the road of ecumenism," yet insisted that papal infallibility is "the indispensable principle of truth, of charity, of unity."

Through all of this one thing has become extremely clear: Socially Rome has gone more than halfway to meet non-Catholics, but doctrinally she has not taken so much as one step in their direction. This cast-iron Roman stance leaves ecumenical Protestants with exactly the same alternatives they have had all along: Accept the Roman claims and become Catholic, or reject them and stay Protestant.

No one knows where the ecumenical movement will yet lead; but if events up to now can be taken as any indication, it will not lead to any Catholic compromise with non-Catholic Christians. Why should a church, gaining so tremendously in membership, power,

and influence, such as the Roman Church is doing, sacrifice or compromise the very principles which have given her such gain?

At the risk of sounding antiecumenical and anti-Catholic we must voice our concern and ask where all of this is leading. Is the future Christian world—whether or not it becomes organically united to the Roman Church—to bow down to the authority of a mere man, the pope? Will there be a place for honest religious dissent in such a world? Will there be tolerance for the witness of those who believe the Bible still holds ultimate authority over all men, including popes and councils?

### LEGALIZED GAMBLING FAILS TO DISTURB UNDERWORLD

New York State has two problems: a public school money shortage and illegal gambling, the so-called numbers racket. So why not kill two birds, as the cliché goes, with one stone?

The Empire State decided to do just that. In an attempt to siphon customers away from black-market gambling and net \$198 million annually for the schools, a statewide lottery was legalized with the expectation of selling one

million one-dollar tickets a day in banks and hotels.

By June 20, however, nine days after ticket selling began, New York's stone had failed to knock down either bird.

An official State Tax Department survey showed ticket sales running only about half the anticipated amount during early days when public interest was supposed to run high. Bernard G. Flanagan, assistant vice-president of one of the participating banks, put it this way: "The state has given us 1,-200,000 tickets to sell this month. At the rate we're going, we'll hit somewhere around 200,000."

Nor was the numbers racket any less noisy. *New York Times* reporter Jack Roth quoted an anonymous gambling operator as saying, "We welcome the lottery. Numbers players haven't quit us because they now realize that our odds are better. We pay off immediately and there's no waiting. And furthermore, no winner has to worry about paying income taxes [i.e., because the operation is illegal]."

"Several other persons close to the numbers racket," reported Roth, "said the state lottery had had no effect on policy gambling."

### GIFT, NOT A "BET"



Religious News Service Photo

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Anderson of New York present \$1.00 each to Col. Milton Agnew and Brigadier Andrew S. Miller of the Salvation Army. Their contributions launched an internal Army campaign among 5,000 Salvationists to aid the state's public education. The Salvation Army opposes state lottery for public schools and calls on its members for "positive" donations to the school system, with the hope that others will follow suit.



## We Quote...

Although it is too early to write the obituary of the New York State lottery, it is not too early to congratulate the populace of this great state for not responding heartily to another gambling device, a device which rewards a microscopic minority "something for nothing" at the expense of the rest, who generally can least afford it.

On the negative side, however, enough people did respond so that total gambling increased throughout the state without destroying, or even denting, the illegal gambling market. It seems to us that the New York lottery is only one more instance in a new trend in the United States toward legalizing anything morally wrong in order to wrench control away from the underworld. If this type of thinking is carried to its logical extreme, gambling, prostitution, pornography, narcotics, and all forms of vice and immorality can ultimately be legalized, brought under "clean" government supervision, and taxed.

The taxes thus gained, it is argued, can be used to build and operate schools to teach young people to be moral and upstanding citizens. But how can a society which presumably would legalize, supervise, and tax all forms of vice and immorality hope to finance and operate schools which would educate young people away from these evils? How can elders who condone, if not indulge in, such evils teach their young people to avoid them?

The Salvation Army in New York has demonstrated for a higher type of solution by initiating an internal drive to aid public schools by voluntary donations, but in view of the immense size of the problem, this move can amount to hardly more than a hopeful gesture.

The only basic solution, as Evangelist Billy Graham tirelessly points out, is spiritual rebirth on a national scale, a return to the fundamental principles of Christianity. From that point it will be relatively easy to work out the legislative and administrative details. END

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**Donald Nicholl** in the "Clergy Review" (London): "Many observers are startled at the sudden swing in American Catholicism from being extremely conservative and timorous to being equally avant-garde and brash. But is this really surprising? Is it not characteristic of advanced urban society that it is constantly being brain-washed and so readily swings from one position to another? Surely one of the most revealing facts about modern America was how easily her sons captured in Korea were brain-washed, as compared with those of other nations. What this reveals is not so much a characteristic of Americans, of course, as a type of society which depends for its existence on being able to sway people's minds by means of the mass media. And society throughout the whole world is approximating more and more closely to that of America."

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"Boswell's London Journal": "Thursday, 21 July. I remember nothing that happened worth relating this day. How many such days does mortal man pass!"

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**John Kord Lagemann**, "Will You Take a Chance?" "Christian Herald": "Hope is a great solace. But merely to hope for something without doing anything about it is simply another form of avoiding risks. Most of us clutter our lives with hopes that aren't really hopes at all but merely postponed decisions. Once in a while it is a good idea to clean house and take inventory of your hopes. Ask how many of them you can turn into plans. Take the risk of making up your mind."

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**John Wesley** wrote in his "Journal": "I came to town and offered them Christ."

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"Arkansas Baptist": "The test of a good church bulletin, like a restaurant's menu, is whether or not the establishment can deliver what is listed in the contents."

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**Ellen G. White**, "Selected Messages," Book One, p. 15: "Spiritual darkness has covered the earth and gross darkness the people. There are in many churches skepticism and infidelity in the interpretation of the Scriptures. Many, very many, are questioning the verity and truth of the Scriptures. Human reasoning and the imaginings of the human heart are undermining the inspiration of the Word of God, and that which should be received as granted, is surrounded with a cloud of mysticism. Nothing stands out in clear and distinct lines, upon rock bottom. This is one of the marked signs of the last days."

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"The man who is so 'advanced' that he is not content with what Christ taught has in fact no God." 2 John 9. From The New Testament in Modern English. Copyright, J. B. Phillips, 1958. Used by permission of The Macmillan Company.

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**G. K. Chesterton**: "Christianity has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult and never sufficiently tried."

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# Editorials



## WHY DON'T WE URGE WASHINGTON TO STOP BOMBING NORTH VIETNAM?

A SUBSTANTIAL number of religious periodicals (e.g., *motive*) and organizations (e.g., the National Council of Churches) for some time now have been urging President Johnson to stop U.S. bombing raids in North Vietnam as a prelude to peace. Why doesn't THESE TIMES join the chorus? Are we guilty of what has been called "the crime of silence"?

Contrary to impressions some may have received, our silence on this issue does not stem from any secret "hawk," as opposed to "dove," attitude. We do not believe in war, although we do recognize the necessary right of governments to defend their people from the "wrongdoer" and, by extension, to aid other nations engaged in such defense. We believe Paul recognizes this right in Romans 13:1-7.

We could, and legitimately, plead ignorance of the facts as a reason for maintaining silence. Because of the enormously complex political situation in South Vietnam, it is impossible for us to independently determine the "morality" of U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Does the vast majority of South Vietnamese people actually want U.S. forces fighting on the side of the ruling Saigon government? Are they informed enough to choose between communism Hanoi-style or democracy Saigon-style? Do they even care? We don't know. We may have private opinions, but the issue is far from clear-cut, and we believe we must exercise some measure of faith in the integrity of our government.

But this is, in fact, not our basic reason. Leaving ourselves wide open to the charge of primitivism and fundamentalism, we must nevertheless assert that we do not believe in taking political positions. We believe that our commission, our trust, and our task lie in another sphere.

Antiquated as it may seem, we still believe in a literal interpretation of the Bible (except where the context indicates symbolism). We believe that the miracles recorded there actually happened. We believe that Jesus Christ actually rose in living flesh and blood from the dead, that He went up into an actual place called "heaven," and that He will return "in like manner" to earth, where He will bring back to life those who have died "in Him." (This is the way we interpret Acts 1 and 1 Corinthians 15.)

Since this is our belief, we must ourselves accept the commission, trust, and task accepted by the early Christians as described in Acts of the Apostles, for they believed the same things we believe today.

The fundamental concern of the apostles was not to chide the Jews for discriminating against the Gentiles, nor to censure Caesar for killing people, nor to point out the gap between the more and the less developed nations. Although they were certainly against callous indifference, aggression, and selfishness, they realized that these traits were imbedded in the "heart" of man—and they knew the futility of trying to change him by mere "education" and "pressure."

Man, they believed, needed to be changed at his center, the very core of his being. He could not change himself. He needed divine action from the outside to transform him. He needed to be "in" Jesus Christ and to have Jesus Christ "in" him. (See John 17:20-26.) This is why Paul wrote to the Christians at Corinth, "I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified." 1 Corinthians 2:2, R.S.V.

We believe that man today is basically the same as he was back then. From that time to this there have been wars, starvation, disease, and death. Man has not succeeded in solving his own problems.

Consequently, we believe that we cannot reform the entire world situation today by education and admonition any more than the apostles could reform it back then by the same means. What changes man and makes him truly "humanitarian" is the grace of God through Jesus Christ for all who believe in Him. The first task, then, is to proclaim Christ so that people will believe in Him. We take as our own the last command Jesus gave to His disciples before "he was lifted up" on the cloud: "You shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8, R.S.V.

Jesus Himself said the world situation would not improve before He returned. "And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars," He said; "see that you are not alarmed; for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places: all this is but the beginning of the sufferings." Matthew 24:6-8, R.S.V.

But we are not pessimistic. We believe that there is a forward movement in history, and that the world situation will be improved. But this is going to occur only on Jesus Christ's terms. He said, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come." Matthew 24:14, R.S.V.

If what Jesus said is true, and we believe it is, then our commission, trust, and task are to preach "this gospel of the kingdom" as the most effective and efficient way of improving world conditions. And this is what we are trying to do.

Consequently our time is spent, not in the futile task of trying to make the world better by telling it to be better, but in the rewarding task of making men better by connecting them with Jesus Christ. The Vietnam war, and indeed all wars, will someday be ended. Our task is not to become involved in them, but to point to the Way out of them—Jesus Christ. M. G. P.





# LET THE BIBLE SPEAK

## DID JESUS BELIEVE HE WAS GOD?

If Jesus of Nazareth wasn't really God, yet knowingly led His followers to believe that He was, then either He was a paranoid or the most fantastic impostor the world has ever known.

The Bible does not record any instance where Jesus actually called Himself God, yet He often referred to Himself in ways which could only lead His hearers to conclude that He believed He was God.

He claimed to be "one" with God:

**John 10:30\***: "I and the Father are one."

He claimed to have lived before creation:

**John 17:5**: "Father, glorify thou me in thy own presence with the glory which I had with thee before the world was made."

He referred to Himself in language the Old Testament reserves for God alone:

**Isaiah 44:6**: "Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.'"

**Revelation 22:12, 13**: "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense, to repay every one for what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

He claimed to be the judge between the "righteous" and the "evildoers":

**Matthew 13:41-43**: "The Son of man [a name Jesus used to refer to Himself] will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will weep and gnash their teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

He claimed authority to forgive sins:

**Mark 2:5-7**: "And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, 'My son, your sins are forgiven.'"

Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, 'Why does this man speak thus? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?' And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, 'Why do you question thus in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, "Your sins are forgiven," or to say, "Rise, take up your pallet and walk"? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins'—he said to the paralytic—"I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." And he rose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, 'We never saw anything like this!'"

He led men to believe He considered Himself "equal" with God:

**John 5:16-18**: "And this was why the Jews persecuted Jesus, because he did this [healed a man] on the sabbath. But Jesus answered them, 'My Father is working still, and I am working.' This was why the Jews sought all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the sabbath but also called God his Father, making himself equal with God."

So we see that the Bible is very clear about this issue. Jesus allowed the people around Him to believe that He considered Himself God. And indeed, as we saw last month, the writers of the New Testament themselves firmly believed that Jesus was God. This is why we worship Him.

Before they crucified Him, the elders asked Him, "'Are you the Son of God, then?' And he said to them, 'You say that I am.'" **Luke 22:70**. Ask yourself: Was Jesus of Nazareth simply a pious fraud who convinced a few followers He was the Son of God? Was He self-deluded, a paranoid, thinking Himself to be God? Or was He what He claimed to be?

\*All Bible quotations are taken from the Revised Standard Version.

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