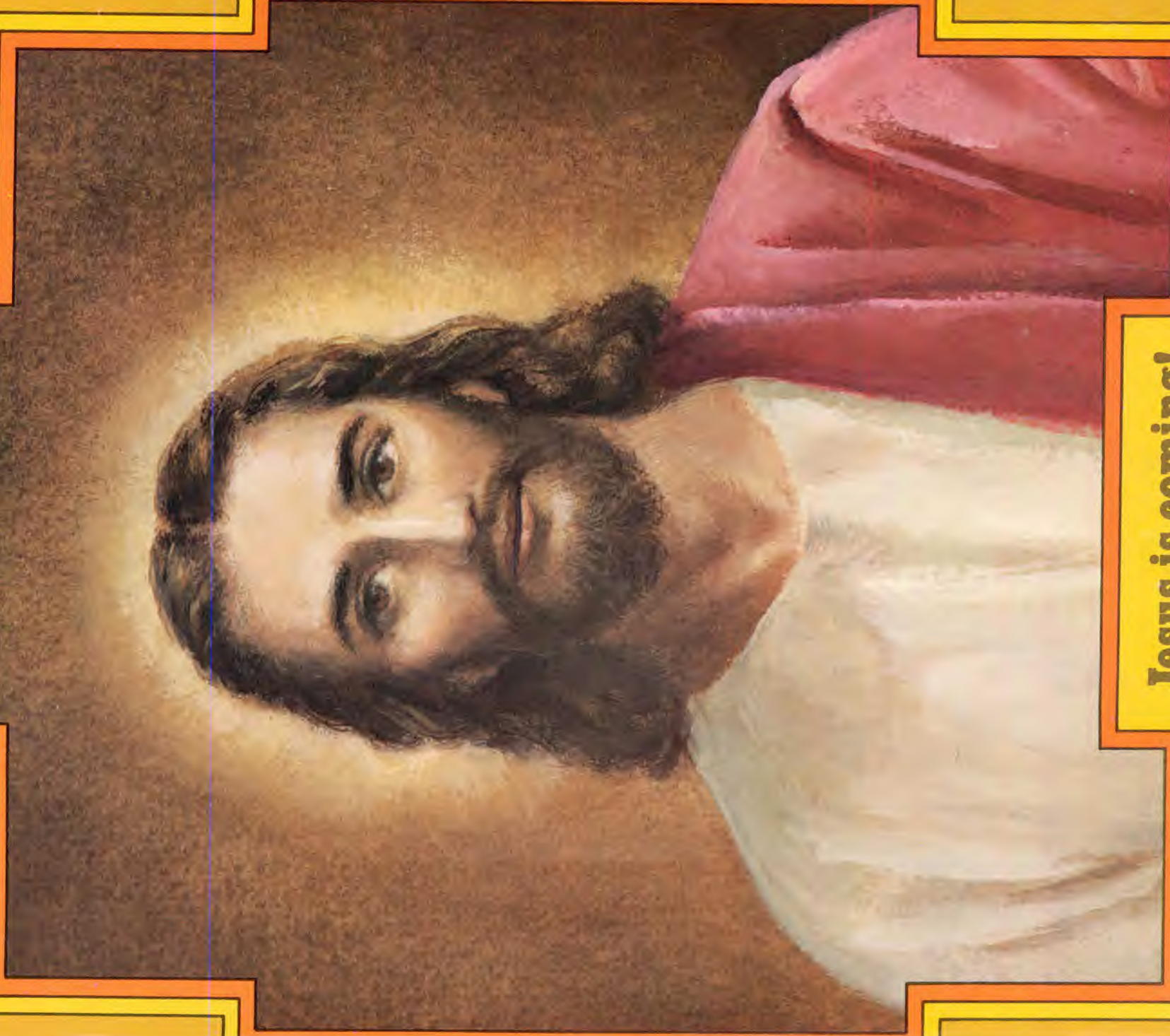


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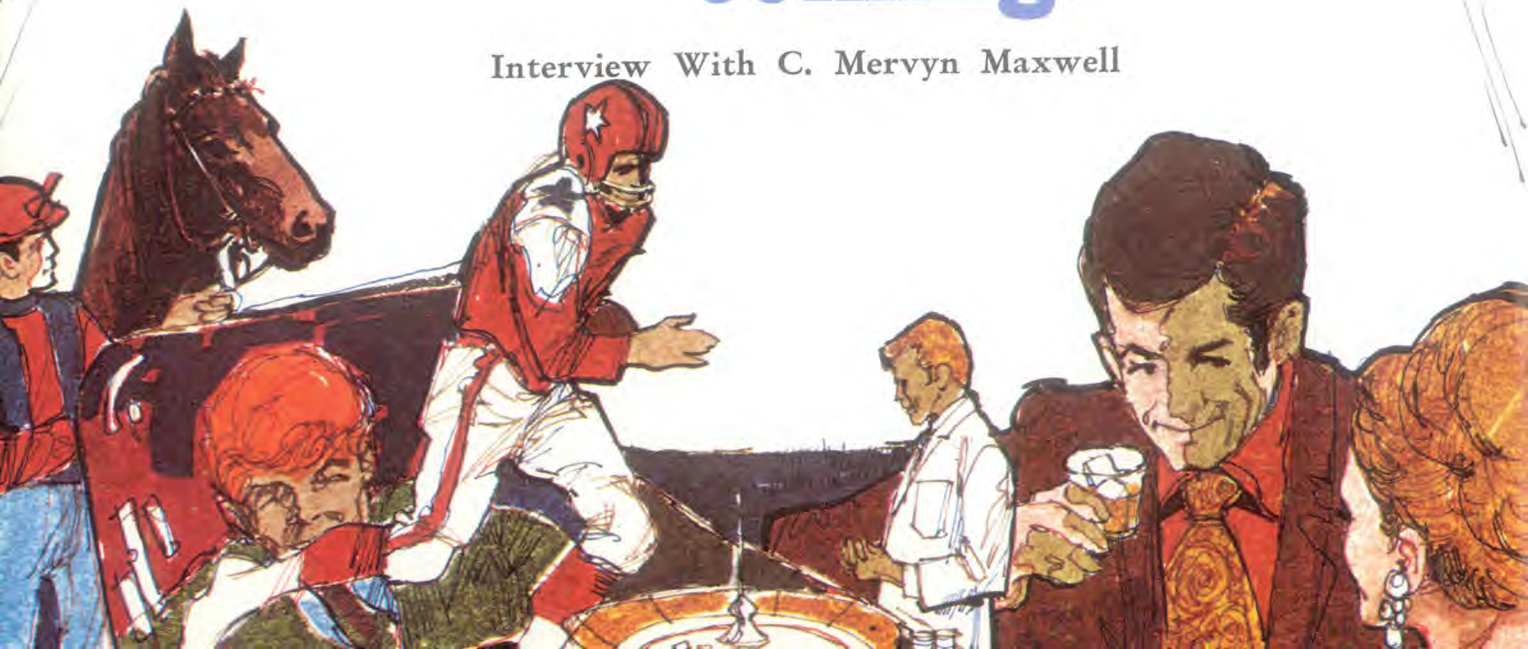
Jesus is coming!



An unbelieving
world asks of the
followers of Jesus

“Where is the promise of His coming?”

Interview With C. Mervyn Maxwell



What is meant by the second coming of Christ?

The Bible says that the same Jesus who lived in Palestine nearly two thousand years ago is someday going to appear on earth a second time.

To most people this is fantastic. Do you really believe it will happen?

Jesus was a fantastic person. Our best records of His life report that after He had been executed by a jealous "establishment," He came back to life and was seen by more than five hundred people.

At a solemn gathering just prior to His execution He promised emphatically, "If I go, . . . I will come again." John 14:1-3. At another time He outlined the events that would precede His return and said that His coming back would be as conspicuous as a bolt of lightning flashing from one horizon to the other. (Matthew 24.)

In view of His resurrection from the dead, it is hard not to believe He will keep His promise to return.

You said something about lightning. Does the Bible say much about how Jesus will reappear on earth?

Jesus came the first time as a dear little baby, born like any other happy child. His second visit to our planet will be more spectacular. The Bible says, "He is coming in the clouds and every eye shall see Him." Revelation 1:7, Phillips.* He will come down through the sky and will have "all the holy angels with him." (Matthew 25:31.) Jesus came the first time in poverty as the God who had become man; next time He will come with a magnificent display of power and glory as the man who is really God.

Does this mean He will really be a different person?

No. The Bible says, "This same Jesus . . . shall so come." Acts 1:11. It's going to be the very same Jesus who healed the sick, and talked so kindly about God, and taught people to turn the other cheek.

I assume from the way you talk that as a minister you often preach about the second coming.

I do.

But why? Aren't there more practical topics, such as social injustice and peace and pollution?

I believe the Christian minister should preach about Christ and what He said and did, because of the kind of person Jesus was and the kind of solutions He proposed. The second coming is one of the greatest things Jesus talked about. His first coming did the world so much good. How badly the world needs Him again today!

Preaching about the second coming provides deeply needed hope. People need to be reminded that God loves them so much that He will not allow wicked men to have the last word. Someday He will replace evil with good. It is really true that things are going to get better. "Behold," God says, "I create new heavens and a new earth." Isaiah 65:17.

But many people today simply don't care whether Jesus comes or not. What do you say to them?

People are always "down on what they're not up on." People who oppose the second coming usually don't know much about it. I try to tell them about it so that they'll get interested.

What will the second coming mean to individual people?

Above all, they'll get to be with Jesus. "So shall we ever be with the Lord," the Bible says. (1 Thessalonians 4:17.) This will bring happiness transcending the delight when dear friends are reunited in this life. Christ's personality is infinitely fascinating, and His interest in people knows no bounds. For those who have prayed to Him and lived for Him, the chance to see Him face to face is the most attractive prospect imaginable.

This is good. Will there be anything else?

Much else. For example, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." Revelation 21:4.

No more pain! No more disease of any kind. People who are ill now will be healed then, and no one will get sick again. "Then shall blind men's eyes be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb shout aloud." Isaiah 35:5, 6, N.E.B.** Crime, oppression, and warfare will also be things of the past. No one will "hurt or destroy" in God's new world. (Isaiah 11:9, N.E.B.)

Yet life will be real enough. The Bible says, for example, that people



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will "build houses, and inhabit them." (Isaiah 65:21.) It will be a new life of unalloyed well-being and happiness. "I create new heavens and a new earth," God says—a new heaven and a new earth so wonderful that "the former shall not be remembered"! In it, God's people will be "glad and rejoice for ever." (Isaiah 65:17, 18.)

I have heard that the founders of some of the largest denominations said more about the second coming than the members of these churches do today. Could you comment on this?

Take Martin Luther for instance. He called the second coming of Christ "that chief article of faith." He devoutly hoped that the end would not "tarry over one hundred years" from his own time, and stoutly affirmed that come what may, "I will not permit anyone to rob me of my opinion that the day of the Lord is not far hence." (See L. E. Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Vol. II, pp. 273-281.)

John Calvin, founder of Presbyterianism and Congregationalism and one

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"Some of the greatest scientists have longed for Christ's return, knowing that Christ, not science, is the Saviour of the world."

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of the founders of the Baptist movement, said that the resurrection of righteous men which will take place at the second coming of Christ is so vital to the Christian hope that no one can "participate in the benefits" of Christ "who does not fasten his mind on it." "He alone has made solid progress in the gospel," he went on to say, "who has acquired the habit of meditating continually on a blessed resurrection." It was Calvin's conviction that it was for the purpose of "stimulating us powerfully" that Paul called "the final advent of Christ *our redemption*." (*Institutes*, iii. 25; Henry Beveridge, trans. Eerdmans reprint, 1951, Vol. 2, pp. 260, 261.)

Charles Wesley, the famous brother and associate of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, wrote in one of his many hymns, "Lo! He comes with clouds descending, Once for favored sinners slain; Countless angels, Him attending, Swell the triumph of His train: Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Je-

sus comes, and comes to reign." In the same hymn he added, "O come quickly, O come quickly, Claim the kingdom for Thine own!"

What is the attitude of leading Christians today toward the second coming?

In the more "liberal" wing of Protestantism there is a general neglect of it. At the 1954 gathering of the World Council of Churches in Evanston, Illinois, European churchmen who had recently passed through the second world war made a valiant attempt to electrify Christendom with the hope of the second coming of Christ. In fact, the theme of the Congress was "Christ the Hope of the World." But their appeals fell on strangely apathetic ears. Since then, the World Council has turned further away from the only hope of our race. The 1968 World Council at Uppsala, Sweden, talked of little else than how to persuade or compel governments to change the social structure. The delegates were sincere enough in their desire to relieve injustice, but it is tragic that they sought solutions that can never bring ultimate success.

Is it perhaps the rise of the scientific age that has thinned the Advent hope for many people?

I presume this is one of the reasons. People forget that God is the author of nature and can use it to His own purposes. Some of the greatest scientists have longed for Christ's return, knowing that Christ, not science, is the Saviour of the world.

Andrews University, where I teach, is the proud possessor of a manuscript in which Isaac Newton in his own handwriting copied out over 135 Bible passages dealing with last-day events and the second coming of Christ. He lets the Bible stand virtually without comment. His selection of passages and his underlinings and cross-references indicate how deeply involved he became in the study. He looked forward to a time when both Jews and Gentiles would inherit God's promises—a time of destruction and judgment, but also of resurrection and restoration and great rejoicing.

If "liberal" theologians have little to say about it, who is preaching the second coming today?

There is a healthy interest among the "evangelicals." Their leading spokesman, Billy Graham, frequently addresses large crowds on the subject.

Churches in Protestantism's so-called "third force," the various Pentecostal groups and the Jehovah's Witnesses, are also heard proclaiming the second coming.

Where do Seventh-day Adventists stand in relation to other churches?

Near the top. Articles on the second coming appear in our periodicals every month. In recent years Adventists have sold hundreds of thousands of books with such titles as *This Is the End*, *Courage for the Crisis*, and *Time Running Out*. Our name "Adventist" refers to the fact that we are dedicated to the proclamation of the second advent of Christ, and we try to live up to our name. There are, today, Adventists preaching the second coming of Christ in almost two hundred different countries—that's about all there are—and doing so in more than eight hundred separate languages.

It is now almost two thousand years since the resurrected Jesus returned to heaven, and Christian people have been looking for Him to come back all this time. So far they have obviously been disappointed. How do we know Christ won't wait another two thousand years?

To set the record straight, except during times of persecution or economic depression or of unusual religious revival, most Christians have not looked for the second coming over the past two thousand years. In the earliest Christian centuries when the church was subject to persecution, many of its writers, such as Justin, Cyprian, and Athanasius, spoke eagerly about the second coming; but from the time the church became respectable in the fourth century very much less has been said about it.

Just the same, it is two thousand years since Christ left. If He plans to come back again, why hasn't He?

To answer that I should first explain what He is going to do when He comes again.

The first time Jesus came, He gave us an example of how to live a good life, how to "live love." He invited us to copy His example. If everyone had done as He requested, the world would soon have become a wonderful place. Unfortunately, people tended then, as now, to admire Jesus without imitating Him. The world remained essentially evil. When Jesus comes the second time, He will change the world regard-

less of opposition. To achieve this He will restore to life everyone who has lived for good in His name.

The Bible says, "We believe that Jesus died and rose again; and so it will be for those who died as Christians; God will bring them to life with Jesus. For this we tell as the Lord's word: . . . At the word of command, at the sound of the archangel's voice and God's trumpet-call, the Lord himself will descend from heaven; first the Christian dead will rise, then we who are left alive shall join them, caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus we shall always be with the Lord." 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18, N.E.B.

Sad to say, however, this happy experience will not be the lot of all who are alive when Jesus comes. In order to put an end to evil Christ will have to "destroy those who destroy the earth." (Revelation 11:18, N.E.B.) This is why He warns us, "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matthew 24:44.

But I thought you said that "the same" Jesus is coming back. This sounds like a different one.

When Jesus came the first time, He showed a compassionate understanding for the poor, but in most cases He left them poor. Someday He means to take His social concern to its logical conclusion. He means to put an end to poverty—and to sickness, crime, and violence as well. To achieve this, He will have to put an end to those who are the incorrigible cause of poverty and crime and violence.

Now I am ready to answer your question about the delay in Christ's return. I must quote two Bible passages. The first is 2 Peter 3:9, N.E.B.: "It is not that the Lord is slow in fulfilling his promise, as some suppose, but that he is very patient with you, because it is not his will for any to be lost, but for all to come to repentance." The other is Matthew 24:14: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

God certainly does not wish to destroy anyone who can possibly be saved, yet at the same time He does not desire to force anyone to do good unwillingly. God wants everyone to hear the gospel and have a chance to accept or reject it, so that it can be each man's choice whether to "be

ready" or not when Jesus comes.

Do you mean then that Jesus is waiting for people to have a chance to make up their minds about Him before He comes again?

Exactly! God would like to destroy evil by taking it out of men's hearts; but if men prefer to keep evil within their hearts, He must destroy them along with their evil ways. Of course, God does not want to destroy anyone. Far from it! "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Ezekiel 33:11. He particularly does not wish to destroy anyone who is still on the fence. He will save those who are totally committed to good, and destroy those who are fully committed to wickedness. He is waiting for a generation in which no one is in between. He wants His gospel taken to all the world so that everyone can have a chance to decide.

Is preaching the second coming designed to scare people into heaven?

Hardly! People cannot be scared into heaven. To go to heaven they must accept Jesus personally and love Him with all their hearts. You cannot love someone you are afraid of.

Happily, fear of the second coming has led many to investigate the topic, and this in turn has led them into such a knowledge of Jesus that they have fallen in love with Him. The second coming provides an opportunity to tell people the wonderful promises in the Bible, and allow them to change their lives in conformity with their new hope.

Since we don't know exactly when Christ is coming, why should we bother to think too much about it?

Jesus said we ought to be ready at all times. In the picturesque language of His times He once put it this way: "Be ready for action, with belts fastened and lamps alight. Be like men who wait for their master's return from a wedding party, ready to let him in the moment he arrives and knocks. Happy are those servants whom the master finds on the alert when he comes." Luke 12:35-37, N.E.B. Another time He cautioned, "Hold yourselves ready, therefore, because the Son of Man will come at the time you least expect him." Matthew 24:44, N.E.B.

Anyone who trusts Jesus tries to be ready at all times because he takes Him at His word; and anyone who loves Christ tries to be ready for His coming because he is eager to see Him.



"People cannot be scared into heaven. To go to heaven they must accept Jesus personally and love Him with all their hearts."

Do you believe the second coming of Christ is near? If so, how near?

We cannot say that the second coming will occur tonight or tomorrow morning. There are certain prophecies that must be fulfilled first, such as the preaching of the gospel in all the world and the battle of Armageddon of Revelation 16. But such things will not necessarily require more than a short period of time. I believe the second coming need not be more than a few years away.

Weren't the Bible writers themselves mistaken about the time when Jesus would come back? Didn't Paul expect—quite wrongly—that Christ would return within his own lifetime? How can we be more correct than they?

No one who loves Jesus, and who knows what His coming will mean, can keep from hoping that He will return within his own lifetime. Paul was no exception to this. Just the same, he knew there would be a delay. In a

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"Getting ready for the second coming of Christ is an experience with Jesus all the way. We believe that Jesus is coming again."

Continued

letter to some of his church members who were looking for the return to take place any minute, he recalled that he had warned them of this delay. "That day will not come," he wrote, until there had first appeared a great rebellion against God. "Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you this?" (2 Thessalonians 2:3, 5, R.S.V.)

Indeed, Jesus Himself warned against premature anticipation. "Many will come, . . . saying, 'I am He!' and 'The time is at hand!' Do not go after them. . . . The end will not be at once." Luke 21:8, 9, R.S.V. Having said this, however, Jesus indicated certain events which would prelude His coming and added, "When *these things* begin to take place, . . . your redemption is drawing near." Luke 21:28, R.S.V.

What were these signs that Jesus referred to, that would make a difference in our expectation of His return?

"There shall be signs in the sun, and

in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; . . . men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." Luke 21:25, 26.

The astronomical phenomena referred to here (and in several other places in the Bible such as Matthew 24:29 and Revelation 6:12, 13) have by now been fulfilled. They took place in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As for anxiety and wars, it is a common observation that our world is today pervaded with a deeper fear than ever before. Wars, too, have taken on entirely new dimensions. In all history there have never been conflicts like the two world wars of the twentieth century.

In your opinion what one sign indicates most clearly the nearness of Christ's return?

In my mind, it is the rapid development of the means for broadcasting the gospel.

It is said that when President Kennedy died, 90 percent of all Americans knew it in twenty minutes, and 90 percent of the rest of the world knew it in forty minutes. That was almost a decade ago! Since then relay satellites have been hoisted into space, and billions of transistor radios have found their way into almost every conceivable place on the surface of the world. Since the one thing above all else that Jesus is waiting for is the proclamation of the good news about Himself to "all the world" (Matthew 24:14) so that everyone can have a chance either to get ready or to choose not to, the fact that today the means are available for proclaiming the gospel to all the world is an impressive sign that His coming cannot be far away.

Are there other signs of His coming evident in the world today?

Almost anything that gets into the headlines these days may, when examined closely, be found to indicate that the end is near. To be sure, there have always been wars and violence, crime and immorality, and these things that so often make the headlines may not in and of themselves individually constitute signs of the end, Jesus, in fact, warned that mere wars and rumors of wars were not signs of the end. In reference to them He said, "See that you are not alarmed. Such things are bound to happen." Matthew 24:6, 7, N.E.B.

Just the same, the Bible says, "The final age of this world is to be a time of troubles. Men will love nothing but money and self; they will be arrogant, boastful, and abusive; with no respect for parents, no gratitude, no piety, no natural affection; they will be implacable in their hatreds, scandalmongers, intemperate and fierce, strangers to all goodness, traitors, adventurers, swollen with self-importance. They will be men who put pleasure in the place of God, men who preserve the outward form of religion, but are a standing denial of its reality." 2 Timothy 3:1-5, N.E.B.

Granted that people have always been more or less like this, has man ever lived in an age so startlingly characterized as ours by spiraling crime rates, universal revolution, disrespect for law and order, and almost total materialism? Surely this madly multiplying mischief makes of our modern sinfulness an indication of the end. "Wicked men and charlatans will make progress from bad to worse, deceiving and deceived." Verse 13, N.E.B. So the intensity of our contemporary secularism, obscenity, violence, and so on may well be regarded as a sign of the second coming.

To change the subject slightly, what about the statements scientists and statesmen and ecologists are making these days about the menace of war-head stockpiling, overpopulation, and increasing pollution? Are they by any chance unwittingly foretelling the end of the world?

Perhaps, but I really don't think so. According to the Bible, this world is not going to be destroyed by the explosion of unlimited megatonnage, nor is it going to choke to death in a soup of gaseous pollutants, nor starve to death as uncouth billions stretch out empty hands to an empty larder. The Bible says that when Jesus comes, the earth will be populated with living people. "Every eye shall see him." Revelation 1:7.

On the other hand, these appalling statements you refer to do direct our attention to the second coming of Christ. They point up the necessity of the intervention soon of a world deliverer. If God is indeed the all-powerful and all-gracious heavenly Father that Jesus told us He was—and of course we have every reason to believe that He is—it is inconceivable that He will permit the world to plummet much deeper into despair and helplessness.

What developments do you foresee in the near future as a prelude to the return of Christ?

For one thing, this great religious awakening. But, at the same time, because evil men will "make progress from bad to worse," we're going to see ever more crime and violence, terrorism, and secularism.

We will also see the arrival of false christs, for Jesus particularly warned us of charismatic leaders who will pretend to have the solution to the world's ills but will prove to be only charlatans. "Imposters will come claiming to be messiahs or prophets, and they will produce great signs and wonders. . . . See, I have forewarned you." Matthew 24:24, 25, N.E.B.

We may also see a war so dreadful that it will make the second world war tame by comparison—though of course we all hope devoutly that God will not permit it.

God's final antidote for trouble

By E. Robert Reynolds

WHAT IS the cause of suffering? The answer many people give is "sin."

But what sin? The sin of the sufferer? or the sin of someone else? Perhaps neither. For while God does punish occasionally (Ananias and Sapphira, and Nadab and Abihu, for example), the experience is rare. Job and Jesus both denied that all suffering represents divine punishment. More often, suffering is caused by the violation of natural law.

But not all sickness, pain, death, loss, or other tragedy is self-induced. Some accidents and other losses are caused by Satan. Job's boils prove that. Jacob's crippled leg illustrates the rare occasions when, for some unknown good, God Himself afflicts one.

Inasmuch as it is seldom possible to obtain a definite, simple answer to the question "Why am I suffering?" perhaps a better question to ask would be "How can I profit from this, or bring blessing to others and glory to God?" It might be well to think of five possibilities:

I have left the most important question to the last. Can I be ready? Can any person know that he is ready?

Yes, indeed; any man can get ready and be ready when Jesus comes.

The Bible says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16:31. God does not want us to die. He wants us to live. This is why He has waited so long. This is why He sent "his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.)

So we must have faith in Jesus. We must have a faith so strong and true that it will lead us into a close and warm fellowship with Him.

Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15. Those who stand waiting for the second coming of Christ are those who have such "faith in Jesus" that they "keep the

commandments of God." (Revelation 14:12.)

Getting ready for the second coming of Christ is "an experience with Jesus" all the way. We believe that Jesus is coming again. We believe that Jesus promises to forgive our sins and help us to get ready. We look to Jesus to discover the kind of life we must be living when He comes. We live so close to Jesus that His beautiful righteousness becomes ours. Finally, we will look into the face of Jesus and say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him and he will save us." Isaiah 25:9. END

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1. My affliction may demonstrate God's sovereignty.

2. My suffering may help me to perfect a Christian character.

3. God wants to show me His way is superior.

4. My trial may introduce me to fellowship in Christ's sufferings.

5. In trouble I may broaden my Christian service and witness to some fellow human beings unreachable in any other way. God loves them, too.

Does God have a final antidote for trouble? He does—the return of Jesus. Until then, some will suffer and be sick, and trouble and trial will continue. Nevertheless, that glorious day is coming in which "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick" (Isaiah 33:24), and when "death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Corinthians 15:54).

Imagine for a moment the splendor of that day. More dramatic than any color telecast of a space capsule's reentry will be Jesus' coming. More brilliant than the brightest noonday sun will be that Advent as myriad millions

of angels attend the divine-human Jesus. More terrible to the unrepentant than the explosive sound of a thousand thermonuclear bombs, and more sweet to the righteous than the loveliest lyrics that any of earth's musicians have ever produced, will be the trumpet tones of the "Lord himself." (1 Thessalonians 4:16.) But that is not all.

He whose hands and feet once felt the hammered thrust of iron spikes gives life again to injured limbs. He who once emptied sealed sepulchers calls to the holy dead. They hear that voice. Amid reeling mountains and vanishing islands, in brand-new bodies they come out of their graves.

The blind will see. The deaf will hear. The aged and the crippled will discard their crutches and wheelchairs. Leaping for joy on new legs, the previously legless amputee will join the mute, as together they unite with men and angels in harmonious anthems.

What a day that will be, a day when all our suffering will seem as nothing! I want to be there. Don't you? END

The Christian in a post-Christian world

His
Witness

By Norval F. Pease

THREE GREEN PEAS, according to an old fable, once lived safely protected in a green pod in a summer garden. As far as these three peas knew, the whole world was cozy, comfortable, and green. On a late summer day the pod broke open and the peas found themselves, not in their comfortable green world, but in a frightening brown world.

One pea crawled back into the pod in an effort to regain its former security. The second pea turned brown just as rapidly as possible in order to be exactly like the new world in which it found itself. The third pea decided that the brown world needed a green pea, and resolved to be the best green pea possible in a brown world.

Many Christians try to solve the problem of living in a post-Christian world by isolating themselves from the realities around them. They move to an isolated mountaintop, cancel their newspaper subscription, turn off the TV, and live in a dream world of unreality. This approach has been the principle of monasticism through the centuries. Some who do not isolate themselves physically or geographically seek psychological isolation by refusing to accept the realities of the world in which they live.

Others try to erase all marks that distinguish them from their world. While carrying the label "Christian," they live, work, talk, play, eat, and drink like the world around them. They justify this attitude in the name of "relevance." Someone has coined the expression "the tyranny of relevance." Surely relevance does have a tyrannical grip on some lives.

Others try to compartmentalize their lives. They have one facade for church and Christian associates, and another for their workaday world. Like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, the secular facade usually crowds out the spiritual.

Still others react belligerently to the secular world. Like the prophet Jonah, they predict the world's destruction with unconcealed joy. They sit in judgment on the bewildered, confused people of their day, never offering a hand to help them find their way. They argue their way through life.

But, thank God, there is yet another class of Christians who maintain their Christian integrity in a post-Christian world, and yet relate in a compassionate spirit to the people of their world. Karl Keefer, a Christian psychologist,

has stated it well:

"The best way the Christian has of coping with the non-Christian world in which he lives is to be involved as Jesus was involved: not isolated, but in contact; not compromising, but concerned; not belligerent, but compassionate; not conquering, but transforming; not compartmentalized, but integrated. This is no easy task. It requires qualities of character and understanding above the ordinary, and may well bring antagonism and persecution from an anti-Christian, revolutionary age."—"Christian Living in a Non-Christian World," in *Christianity Today*, December 6, 1968.

How can we best communicate our faith? It is evident that going to church isn't enough. Our Lord reveals to us our duty in an incident recorded in Mark 5. Jesus and His disciples had crossed the Sea of Galilee when a man possessed of demons confronted them. The man emerged from his interview with Jesus dramatically transformed, a new person. The record says, "As he was stepping into the boat, the man who had been possessed begged to go with him. Jesus would not allow it, but said to him, 'Go home to your own folk and tell them what the Lord in his mercy has done for you.'" Verses 18, 19, N.E.B.*

Can we blame this man for begging to stay with Jesus? Think what a change had taken place in his life. The caves of barren Gadara were no longer his home. Fear, misery, and rejection were in the past. A life of joy and fulfillment stretched out before him. He longed to join Peter and John and the others as disciples of his benefactor. But Jesus had a better plan. "Go—tell," He commanded the man. This new convert knew little theology, but he could tell what his new Lord had done for him. Everyone who has felt the touch of the grace of God can "go" and "tell" as this man did. "This is the witness for which our Lord calls, and for want of which the world is perishing."—Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 99.

The restored demoniac did as Christ commanded. "The man went off and spread the news in the Ten Towns of all that Jesus had done for him; and they were all amazed." Verse 20, N.E.B. To witness in those ten towns was more important *at that time* than going with Jesus. No, going to church isn't enough. It can become a meaning-



less routine. Some cynic has said:

"They're praising God on Sunday,
They'll be all right on Monday,
It's just a little habit they've acquired."

Witnessing includes sharing an experience, introducing those who do not know Christ to the Christ we know. It involves several principles:

First, the Christian witness must show himself worthy of respect. He must not create a "credibility gap." The restored demoniac could not revert back into demon possession and continue to witness for his deliverers. By character and competence the witness must persuade his listener.

Several years ago, my wife and I stopped at a restaurant in a small town in Arizona. On entering, we could see that the managers were Christians. The jukebox played religious music. They had placed several bookracks filled with free religious literature in the restaurant and displayed prayers on the tables. I immediately responded favorably, but with one reservation—"Let's wait and see the quality of the food these people serve." They placed their profession of religion on trial every time they prepared an order for a customer. Their witness necessarily included not only their music and their literature, but their service and their food. They passed the test well!

Several years ago a man brought his wife as a patient to the old Loma Linda Sanitarium. This man, though not a Christian, was interested in evaluating the quality of the religion of this unique Christian community. He placed a half dollar on the sidewalk near the entrance to the community store, and stationed himself where he could observe whether some passerby would pick up the coin and put it in his pocket, or return it to the store to be claimed by its owner. This was one man's method of sampling the Christian witness of a group of professed Christian people. Inadequate? Yes, but significant. Fortunately, Loma Linda passed his test!

I once observed a class in persuasion at a state university as part of an assignment in a graduate program as students in the class presented a series of speeches. One student chose as his subject the evils of smoking. After he had finished his talk, in which he quoted statistics and gave convincing arguments, one of his fellow students asked, "Do you smoke?" He was forced

to admit that he had smoked a cigarette on his way to class! His action had severely damaged, if not destroyed, the effectiveness of his "witness."

In the long run, our Christian witness cannot be more effective than our lives. We convince or repulse people on the basis, not of what we say, but of what we are.

Second, the Christian must be genuinely concerned about people. On one occasion a large crowd of people who had grown hungry and were far from supplies of food, surrounded Jesus. He exclaimed, "I feel sorry for all these people," and He performed a miracle, not to demonstrate His power, but as a result of His compassion.

On the contrary, we hear Jonah walking up and down the streets of Nineveh crying, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." When God spared the Ninevites, Jonah felt disappointed, because he feared they might accuse him of being a false prophet. The little Book of Jonah closes with God trying to persuade Jonah that He was justified in sparing the city that Jonah so anxiously wanted Him to destroy.

Contrast Jonah with another Man who, centuries later, expressed His feelings toward another city: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that murders the prophets and stones the messengers sent to her! How often have I longed to gather your children, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings; but you would not let me." Matthew 23:37, N.E.B.

Goodwill is an essential ingredient of effective Christian witness. To warn the world is not enough. God sends Christians to persuade the world by the genuineness of their concern and compassion. God does not save men by "choking religion down their throats." His love as reflected in His followers draws them.

The third characteristic of Christian witness, often overlooked, is that *all effective witness must be in the context of the Christian gospel*. The gospel tells the story of God's intervention in behalf of men. It includes the Incarnation, the life of Jesus, His death, His resurrection, His ascension, His present ministry, and His second coming. It reveals God's rescue mission for mankind. If I proclaim the Biblical teaching regarding the destruction of those who are lost, but do not place it in the context of the gospel, I am dis-

torting the Bible message and misrepresenting the God of the Bible.

If I place my emphasis on the various apostasies from the true Christian faith, without presenting these historic facts in the context of the gospel, I may be justly accused of being un-Christian and bigoted.

If I stress the duties and responsibilities of the Christian apart from the gospel, I may unwittingly preach a message of salvation by works that will distort the gospel, as did the enemies of Paul in the church at Galatia.

If I preach the second coming of Christ as merely the end of the world without relating it to the saving gospel, I may inspire fear, but not love for the Christ who is to come. How tragic it would be for a person to preach the coming of a Christ whom he neither knows nor loves!

If I preach the prophecies of the Bible without relating them to God's saving acts, I may be merely communicating historical data without spiritual meaning. For example, the great image of Daniel 2 is significant only as we grasp the impact of the great stone that smote the feet of the image—the kingdom of God.

Because I quote the Bible and talk religion does not necessarily mean that I am witnessing. Only as I relate the Bible and personal experience to the saving gospel of Christ is any witness effective. *All Christian witness must be in the context of the gospel.*

A Christian writer, seventy-five years ago, gave an excellent summary of the meaning and method of Christian witness in the following words:

"None should be forward to enter into controversy, but they should tell the simple story of the love of Jesus. All should constantly search the Scriptures for the reason of their faith, so that, if asked, they may give 'a reason of the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear.'"—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, June 25, 1895.

This type of witness places the emphasis on the gospel. This is the type of witness our world needs. It is the sharing of faith, not of prejudices. It is based on love for God and compassion for man. May God enable us to bear this kind of witness. END

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God once lived in a building made of wood, gold, and other created materials, about fifteen feet wide and forty-five feet long. It was His "home," where He interacted with members of His human family.

WHERE IS the something, Where is the someone that tells me why I live and die?" The haunting words from the Broadway musical "Hair" express the frustration, the loneliness, of a decadent society in search of God.

Where is God? Have you seen Him lately?

Around the world millions are searching for God, wondering about the meaning of life. And yet, paradoxically, the Bible says that it is God who is searching for man.

When life upon this earth began, man lived in harmony with God and constantly communed with Him. Adam and Eve, the first human beings, knew God personally. He created them and gave them life with only one request—that they recognize Him as their Creator and follow His will in their daily activities. Yet one day they chose to follow their own desires instead of those of God. As a result they sepa-

rated themselves from Him. And thus began the terrible dilemma mankind faces today—the problem of separation, apartheid, loneliness, frustration. Call it what you will, the Bible refers to man's basic problem as sin.

God chose to solve this problem through a unique plan. And He chose to reveal this plan to mankind through, of all things, a *building* which the Bible refers to as the "temple," and a *man* named Jesus.

THE BUILDING GOD LIVED IN

First, the building.

Examine the Bible closely, and you will find that it says quite a bit about God's Temple, His "house." Bible writers—both those who wrote before the time of Christ and those who wrote after His death—pointed to the Temple as a unique and extraordinary symbol of God's plans for man.

Admittedly, we all desire peace and happiness and all the other blessings God has promised—but what could a *building* have to do with bringing these to the world?

To understand the relationship of the Temple to God's plans for mankind, we must go back to the time of the Exodus, when God led the children of Israel out of Egypt.

God had no intention of limiting His plan of restoration to the Israelites alone. He simply chose them as an example to demonstrate to others His

power to ennoble and restore man to his original state. God wanted the Israelites to serve as a witness of His power to all other nations. (See Genesis 12:1-3; 22:18; Psalm 105:42-45.)

The Israelites had come to Egypt during a time of famine. At first the Egyptians considered them their equals; but as the years passed, they eventually came to oppress the Israelites as foreigners. During the time they lived in Egypt, the Israelites picked up many heathen practices and forms of worship.

Then, through a series of miraculous events, God freed them from their bondage and led them out of Egypt into the Sinai peninsula. There, step by step, He revealed to them His eternal plan for mankind.

He began by miraculously providing food for them, a substance which the Bible refers to as manna. God designed for the Israelites to understand why He so freely offered them this life-giving gift. But the majority took the gift without recognizing its spiritual significance—that it symbolized *man's daily need for God's life-giving presence*, that presence which Adam and Eve had forfeited when they sinned in Eden. (Deuteronomy 8:3; compare Matthew 4:4.)

Then God gave the Israelites His Ten Commandments, a codification of the very principles by which He Himself acts, spelled out in terms that they

The building God lived in

By Robert Haddock



could understand. (See Exodus 19, 20.) When He had created Adam and Eve, He had made them with the principle, or law, of love as part of their very being, and for some time they lived in perfect harmony with God and all the other things He had created.

Before they sinned, they had no need for a code of law. They simply followed their consciences. But after they sinned, their consciences no longer served them as reliable guides, for they had separated themselves from God. Yet at the same time they did retain some knowledge of God's will, and this they passed on to their children. But by the time God led the Israelites out of Egypt, men had become so degenerated by sin, so separated from their Creator, that they needed a more explicit representation of His character.

By directing their attention to the principle, or law, of love which guided His every action, God sought to show the Israelites their need of Him. By themselves they had not the slightest power to live out the principles embodied in the Ten Commandments, for, like Adam, they had all separated themselves from their Creator by their sins. To keep God's law they needed God's help; they needed Him to dwell in their hearts.

In giving the Israelites His law, God not only showed them their need of Him, His presence, and His power, but He also in effect promised to supply that need by coming to dwell in their minds and bodies, thus bringing to them the renewing re-creative power they needed in order to be able to keep His law. God's commands are actually *promises*, and this fact He desired the Israelites to understand.

But, as with the manna, most of the Israelites missed the point. They thought that they had only to keep these Ten Commandments to gain God's favor and receive all the many blessings He promised them. And they thought they could somehow do this in their own power. Needless to say,

they broke their promise to keep God's law within a few weeks of the time they had so positively covenanted to obey it. (Exodus 32:1-6.)

God knew their weaknesses. But what could He do? Was there no way He could help the Israelites see their true condition?

God did have a solution to the problem. In an act of infinite humility and patience He presented yet a third gift to show the Israelites His love for them, His desire to bless them. And this gift was the most explicit of them all. He told His plan to their leader Moses in these words: "Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." Exodus 25:8.

What a strange thing for God to do! The Creator of the universe asking weak mortal creatures to construct a building for Him in which He could dwell. Yet He promised to dwell in that building in order to demonstrate to them His love, and their need of His presence in their personal lives.

The building was to be of wood and gold and other created materials, approximately fifteen feet wide and forty-five feet long—about the size of a modern small two-bedroom apartment. How could such a building house the Creator of all things? What humility it took for God to limit Himself in this manner! Yet God knew that sin had so blinded mankind, so separated the human race from Him, that *He* must take the initiative and demonstrate His humility and love in a most remarkable and graphic way.

Just as a cloud hides the brilliance of the sun and casts a shadow on the ground, so the sanctuary veiled the brilliance of God and gave the Israelites a shadowy impression of His glory.

The sanctuary had a threefold purpose. In the first place, it made manifest the power of sin. Like the Ten Commandment law placed within it, the sanctuary witnessed against the unbelief of the Israelites. Indeed, Moses referred to it as a "tabernacle of wit-

ness." (Numbers 17:7.) Had they been able to discern God's purpose for their lives, the Israelites would never have needed the sanctuary and its services.

In the second place, the sanctuary revealed the character of God, *His* way of thinking and acting. It showed His active interest in the affairs and destiny of mankind. It depicted His avowed desire to restore and ennoble man, a desire that could only originate in a heart of unselfish love. And it graphically portrayed His *method* for breaking down the wall of separation between man and God which the Israelites had erected by their selfishness and sin.

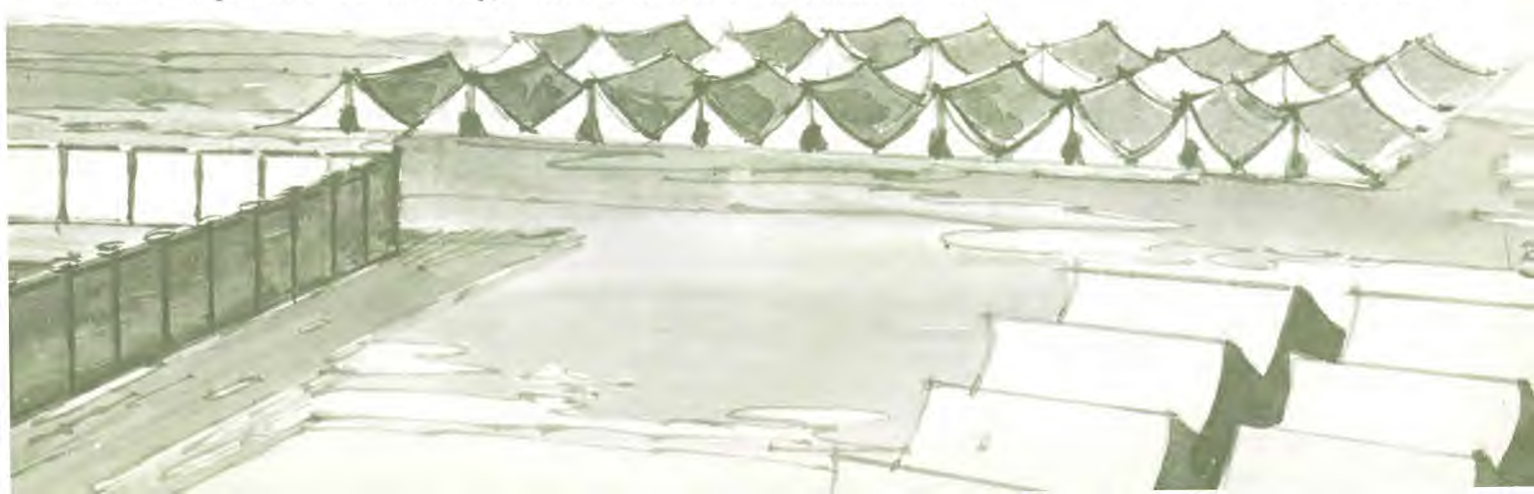
Finally, the sanctuary revealed God's purpose for men, His promise that He would dwell in the hearts of those who would accept His presence and Lordship over their lives. The Hebrew word used in Exodus 25:8, *shakan*, "dwell," means to be a permanent resident in a community. And the Hebrew word translated "among them" might just as well be translated "in them." God desires to reside or live permanently in the hearts of all men. The Christian Apostle Paul recognized the deep spiritual meaning of God's statement in Exodus 25:8, when he remarked, quoting from this statement: "We are the temple of the living God; as God said, 'I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.'" 2 Corinthians 6:16, R.S.V.

ACCORDING TO THE DIVINE PATTERN

At the time when God led the Israelites out of Egypt, other nations had temples for their gods. Some Bible scholars have suggested that the Israelites simply patterned their sanctuary after those built by their heathen neighbors.

But such an approach does grave injustice to the Biblical account of how

Continued



Through the sanctuary and its services God portrayed to ancient Israel His desire to free them from their bondage to sin, and Himself bear the burden of their guilt. The holy place (No. 1 in picture) and the services connected with it portrayed His day-by-day efforts to bless His people with light (symbolized by the lampstand, No. 2), life (the bread on the table, No. 3), and peace (the altar of incense, No. 4). The most holy place (No. 5), where God manifested His presence above the ark (No. 6) containing His law of love, portrayed His plan to dwell fully in the hearts of His people and rule their lives, thus bringing them eternal peace and freedom from sin.



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the Israelites came to build their sanctuary, for the Bible says simply and positively that God Himself, the one God who created the universe, originated the idea of a sanctuary for the Israelites. And, furthermore, the Bible states quite clearly that God commanded the Israelites to build this sanctuary after a *specific pattern*, one of heavenly origin.

God, the divine Architect, conceived, planned, and directed the building of the sanctuary. And God, the gifted Interior Decorator, planned the furniture which went into it, giving explicit details concerning its construction and use. (See Exodus 25-31, 35-40.) In all its majesty and rich beauty, the earthly sanctuary represented an imperfect microcosm or model of God's true dwelling place. (Exodus 25:9.)

The author of the Book of Hebrews in the New Testament, commenting on Exodus 25:9, declared, "There are priests who offer gifts according to the law. They serve a *copy and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary*; for when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, 'See that you make everything according to the pattern which was shown you on the

mountain.' " Hebrews 8:4, 5, R.S.V.

From the time of Moses until the time of Jesus Christ, God represented Himself to man in the sanctuary and the services connected with it. For several hundred years the Israelites continued to worship around the original portable Tabernacle, or tent, which they had constructed shortly after leaving Egypt. Then about a thousand years before Christ, under the leadership of King Solomon, they built a permanent temple modeled upon the original Tabernacle.

In both the Tabernacle and the Temple, the sanctuary proper measured thirty cubits long (approximately forty-five feet) by ten cubits wide (about fifteen feet) and had two separate rooms. The first room inside the doorway of the sanctuary, the "holy place," took up two thirds of the building. This room led to a second, smaller room known as the "most holy" or "holy of holies," which formed a perfect cube about fifteen feet on each side. Between the two rooms, and separating them from each other, hung a veil woven from wool, linen, and gold threads.

The inner room had only one piece of furniture, a chest, or "ark," which

housed the tables of stone upon which God had written His law, that law which all mankind stands guilty of breaking. A lid made of pure gold, known as the "mercy seat," covered the ark and hid this law.

Here in the most holy place God manifested His personal presence in the form of a cloud which hovered above the mercy seat. Around this tiny room all the worship of God's people centered.

The holy place, the other room in the sanctuary, contained three articles of furniture: an altar upon which incense burned, a candlestick, or lampstand, which provided light for the sanctuary and which burned twenty-four hours a day, and a table for holding loaves of bread. (Exodus 30:1-10; 25:23-40.)

Outside, in a courtyard surrounding the sanctuary, stood an altar upon which the priests, those who represented the people in their worship, offered animals for sacrifice. (Exodus 27:1-8; 38:1, 2.) Between it and the opening into the holy place of the sanctuary stood a laver, or washbasin, in which the priests washed their hands before offering the sacrifices. (Exodus 30:17-21.)



GOD AT WORK

The sanctuary was not simply a "house" for God. Rather it was more like a home where He interacted with members of His family, those who accepted Him as their Father and Lord.

Activity in the sanctuary never ceased. The lamps which illuminated it burned day and night. And every day, in the morning and in the evening, the priests offered sacrifices on the altar of burnt offering and burned incense on the altar of incense. These "daily," or continual, sacrifices they offered on behalf of all of God's people corporately. In addition, all through the day individual Israelites came to the sanctuary to make personal sacrifices and worship God.

Blood continually flowed from the altar of burnt offerings as the Israelites sacrificed animal after animal. It was not a pleasant sight—the gore, the stench, the free-flowing blood, must have contrasted sharply with the rich beauty of the sanctuary.

How could a loving God have originated such a worship system?

Think of it. The sanctuary was the means through which God intended to tell mankind the *good news* of His plan to release them from their bond-

age to sin and restore them to harmony and companionship with Him. Why then all this bloody killing of innocent animals? Some Bible scholars today suggest that the Israelites picked up their bloody sacrificial worship system from some of their superstitious heathen neighbors. But the Bible plainly declares that God ordained the Israelite sacrificial system—not Moses, not a group of priests, but God.

The truth God sought to impress upon the minds of the Israelites by having them sacrifice animals in their worship services was this: *Sin brings death.*

He had told Adam and Eve that if they chose to separate themselves from Him, they must inevitably die, for though sin may seem ever so pleasant and exhilarating at first, it represents a choice on the part of the sinner to separate himself from God, the only source of life. And without life from Him death must follow.

Yet the paradox in the sanctuary services was that *the sinner did not die*. Instead, he brought to the altar of burnt offering an innocent animal, usually a lamb, confessed his sins upon this animal, and then killed it. The sinner deserved death—not the lamb. Yet it was the lamb that died.

Thus God taught the sublime truth that the sinner *need not die*. He may instead come to God in repentance and confess his sinfulness, and, as the lesson of the innocent lamb portrayed, God then accepts the sinner's guilt and bears it Himself. By accepting the guilt of sinners to bear Himself, God did not simply excuse or ignore the sin. Instead, in committing Himself to bear the guilt of sinners, *God committed Himself to bear its penalty—death*. Only by revealing His supreme love for fallen mankind in this manner could God awaken a response of love in their hearts and restore the breach caused by sin.

Day after day God portrayed His reconciling love to the Israelites. And day after day they transferred their sins to innocent animals, and through them to the sanctuary.

But once each year on "Yom Kippur," the Day of Atonement, all Israelites participated in a special ceremony which pictured the complete removal of sin from their midst. On this day they all directed their attention to the activities of the priests in the sanctuary as they acted out a special drama.

The Israelites considered the Day of

Atonement a day of judgment. On that day, the high priest went alone into the most holy place of the sanctuary—the only time during the year that he did so—holding in his hands a container of blood from a goat especially sacrificed for the occasion. There he asked God to blot out the records of the sins of His people. After sprinkling the blood upon the altar of incense and before the ark containing the law which the people had broken, thus signifying the fact that the Israelites placed their only hope in the substitute death provided by God, the priest returned to the congregation of people outside the sanctuary to bless them. (Leviticus 16.)

By the Day of Atonement God revealed His plan to bring an end to sin and the separation which it caused. The activities of that day ended with both the sanctuary and the people cleansed of sin. Upon the completion of the day's activities, the Israelites immediately began a new year.

But then, sadly, the cycle began all over again. There had to be another Day of Atonement, and another, and another. Would there never be a full and final end to sin and separation from God?

ISRAEL'S PROBATION

As the years passed, the Israelites came more and more to view their worship in a mechanical sense, as something they simply had to do to appease God. They lost sight of the moral purpose of the sanctuary. God had promised them wonderful blessings *if* they would love Him and turn from their sins, allowing Him to bear the burden of their guilt. (See Deuteronomy 30.) But He always made His promises to the Israelites conditional.

The Israelites considered themselves a privileged people blessed with a special knowledge of God. Yet even as they basked in their own self-sufficiency, they again and again turned away from God. Eventually it came to the point where He could no longer bless them.

The Bible records the sad story. "The Lord, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place; but they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words, and scoffing at his prophets, till the wrath of the Lord rose against his

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people, till there was no remedy."

"Therefore he brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans . . . [and] gave them all into his hand. . . . [And he] burned the house of God, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem." 2 Chronicles 36:15-17, 19, R.S.V.

Had God's plan failed? What had happened to His purpose to use the Israelites to bless all men? What had happened to His plan to restore man and deliver him from his bondage to sin?

One person who felt especially concerned about God's purpose with Israel, a man named Daniel, was among those taken into captivity by the Chaldeans, or Babylonians. Even though he started out as a captive, he became the prime minister of the whole Babylonian Empire because of his great wisdom. One day God showed Daniel a mysterious vision concerning His sanctuary, in which He revealed to him the fact that 2300 days must pass before it would be "cleansed." (Daniel 8:14.) This completely astonished Daniel. What could God have meant?

He turned to God in prayer as he tried to understand His purpose with Israel and His sanctuary. Then one day as Daniel prayed, God responded to his questionings by showing him another vision. In this vision He told Daniel that He had "determined," or cut off, 490 days (or years—see Ezekiel 4:6) of the 2300 days (or years) as a time of probation for the Jews. In addition, He revealed that the 2300 days and the 490 days would begin when someone in a position of authority would command the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem. Historical records show that that event occurred in the year 457 B.C.

At the end of the sixty-ninth week, or 483 days (years), God told Daniel He would send His Messiah, or special representative, to the Israelites. Then in the middle of the seventieth week the Messiah would cause all the sanctuary services to cease. (Daniel 9:21-27.)

Exactly 483 years from the beginning date for Daniel's prophecy, in the year A.D. 27 Jesus began His ministry as God's special representative to man. And three and a half years later, in the "midst of the week" of seven years, He died on Calvary.

THE FINALITY OF CHRIST

Suddenly all the lessons God had portrayed to Israel in the sanctuary

and its services came into focus and took on a fresh, new meaning. Those who saw the resurrected Jesus knew for sure that God was manifesting Himself through Him. Like all other men, Jesus' disciples had been half blind and failed to really see God's purpose for mankind. But now the Creator opened their eyes, and they saw everything in a new perspective.

They realized that He who had led them and taught them and dwelt among them had been God's own Son, part of the divine Godhead. The Apostle John exclaimed, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt [or "tabernacled," as the original Greek reads literally] among us." John 1:14.

Jesus, they realized, personified and actualized the meaning of the Temple. In Him, divinity had dwelt in humanity. In Him, God had supremely humbled Himself and accepted the limitations of a created being. Yet so great was His love and compassion for a world which did not love Him, but desperately needed Him, that He was willing to make the sacrifice.

Just as the earthly Temple contained a copy of God's law in its innermost room, so Jesus Christ had God's law of love written within His inmost being. His whole life, His every action, revealed that divine law. He magnified it and glorified it, filling it full of meaning. (See Isaiah 42:21; Psalm 40:8-10; Matthew 5:17.)

By His death Jesus Christ brought the efficacy of the sacrifices in the earthly Temple to an end. He was the true and ultimate Lamb, the innocent One who chose to bear the guilt of man's sins. And by accepting that guilt, He accepted its consequence—death, separation from His Father. So He bore the iniquity of man. Himself the Priest, Himself the innocent Victim, He offered His life for fallen man.

Jesus rose from death victorious over sin and its separating power. His divine love had conquered sin; His divine life had swallowed up death in victory. He rose, not simply to prove His divinity, but to continue His unceasing ministry on man's behalf in the heavenly sanctuary, of which the earthly was but a model. He ascended to stand before the presence of His Father and act as the divine Mediator of life to fallen, sinful men—eternal life, pure and strong, as it flows from the presence of God.

When Jesus' disciples understood what He had done, it made a tre-

mendous difference in their lives, and they immediately began to tell others the good news of what God had done in Jesus. One of the foremost of the early Christians, a man named Stephen, proclaimed the good news about Jesus so powerfully and eloquently that he influenced many to accept Jesus as Lord.

But most of the Jewish leaders chafed at his preaching because he called them to turn away from their dependence upon the earthly Temple. So they arrested him and placed him on trial, charging him with speaking blasphemous words against the Temple and the sacrificial laws given them by Moses.

In defense Stephen recounted the disappointing history of Israel and then declared, quoting the prophet Isaiah, "The Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands; as the prophet says, 'Heaven is my throne, and earth my footstool. What house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? Did not my hand make all these things?' " Acts 7:48-50, R.S.V. (Compare Acts 6:13, 14 and Isaiah 66:1, 2.)

Stephen died a martyr for his beliefs at the hands of those who refused to recognize that the earthly Temple simply symbolized God's plans for, and activities in behalf of, man through Jesus Christ. The realization that God



The priests who served in the ancient sanctuary represented Jesus, the true Mediator between God and man.

dwells not only in heaven where Jesus had ascended to minister the benefits of His death to fallen men, but also in the hearts of those who are "humble and contrite in spirit" (Isaiah 66:2, R.S.V.), empowered the early Christians. Their eyes pierced beyond the veil which hid the earthly sanctuary, and like Isaiah they beheld their king, Yahweh, the Lord of the universe, sitting upon His throne in heaven itself (Isaiah 6:1-5), and as they saw Jesus ministering His life to them through His Spirit, they became microcosms of that heavenly temple. As they beheld by faith the humility, the self-sacrificing love, of Jesus, they became changed into His image. He came to them through His representative, the Holy Spirit, so that His presence filled their lives. Because they saw Jesus in all His beauty and accepted His presence in their lives, they became living temples manifesting His righteousness, His goodness, His life, to others.

That actualization of the righteousness of Christ was what gave power to the early Christians. They stepped beyond the rigid literalism of those about them who rested their hopes in the earthly Temple and its services, and placed their faith upon Jesus. And thus the prophecy of Zechariah, made many hundreds of years before, began to be fulfilled:

"Behold, the man whose name is the BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." Zechariah 6:12, 13.

With the coming of Jesus, the True One, which the earthly sanctuary and its services had but dimly represented, the earthly symbol gave way to the heavenly reality. No longer would Jerusalem with its Temple serve as the center of worship for God's people. (John 4:19-26.) Shortly after His resurrection the 490 years of probation God gave to the Israelites passed. Since that time God has reached out to bless all who will respond to His love, Jew and non-Jew alike. (Matthew 21:43.)

How sad that recently, increasing numbers of Christians have turned from the faith of Jesus' first disciples and accepted the idea that God will again have the Jews build a sanctuary to worship Him. This approach is an

easy way to deal with the wonderful prophecies found in the Old Testament regarding God's plans to gather Israel and restore the Temple, but *it was not the approach of those who knew Christ best*. Since it represents taking the Old Testament literally, it seems logical, but it constitutes falling into exactly the same trap which ensnared so many of the Jews—placing hope in a *system* rather than in *Jesus*.

God has always called upon men to place their trust in Him. When He gave the Israelites the sanctuary, He did not abridge that requirement. He simply gave them this tool, or aid to their worship, in order to more clearly emphasize their need to trust in Him. The Israelite did not receive peace with God simply because he killed an animal and offered it to Him. He did receive peace when he realized *why* God had asked him to offer sacrifices to Him, and as a result looked beyond the symbol to the reality. But now that God has manifested Himself in Jesus, He asks us to look directly to the reality in our worship.

Yes, God's temple will be restored and cleansed as the prophet Daniel prophesied. But now, because of Christ, we see Daniel's prophecy from a new vantage point. Since Daniel's prophecy regarding the cleansing of God's sanctuary reaches to a time following the death and resurrection of Christ, we must conclude that the sanctuary to be cleansed following the 2300 years is God's true sanctuary. This 2300-year period ended in the year 1844. Figure it out for yourself, using the key of the 490 years in Daniel as a starting point.

Today we live in the time of judgment, the real Day of Atonement which the Israelite ceremony symbolized, the cleansing of the sanctuary.

Jesus is now ministering His righteousness, His life, for us *in the most holy place of the true temple of God in heaven itself*. And just as it made a tremendous difference in the experience of the early Christians when they realized that Jesus had entered heaven itself to minister His life for them, so it should make a tremendous difference in the experience of God's people today when they realize that Jesus *has now begun* the final phase of His mediation for man. The Scriptures abound with descriptions of and allusions to the final day of judgment, symbolized by the cleansing of the sanctuary. See, for example, Leviticus 16; Isaiah 4:2, 3; Jeremiah 31:34; 50:20; Daniel 7:

9-14; 8:14; Joel 2:15-32; Zechariah 3:1-7; Malachi 3:1-4; Acts 3:19, 20; 1 Timothy 5:24; Hebrews 9:24; 1 Peter 4:17; Revelation 14:6.

As He finishes His mediatorial work for mankind, Jesus will demonstrate to the whole universe, forever and beyond doubt, the power of God's self-re-nouncing love to meet the problem of sin. The Bible declares unequivocally that Jesus will return to this earth a second time, and that when He does so, He will have already settled the problem of sin. When He returns, He will come as King of kings and Lord of lords, not as Priest. (Hebrews 9:28.) At that time He will then *execute* the decisions of the judgment by resurrecting all those who have trusted in Him throughout this world's history.

First must come the judgment, then must come the execution of the decisions of the judgment.

Today God is crying out with a loud voice through His messengers that the hour of His judgment is come. (Revelation 14:6, 7.) This message must be proclaimed before Jesus can come. It is God's everlasting good news of His offer to give men life if they will only trust in Him, the Creator. It is His promise to dwell in the hearts of His people and bless them with His presence. It is an invitation to behold Jesus Christ, He who loves us and gives Himself for us, as He mediates His life for us. It is an invitation to direct our attention to God's law of love enshrined in the most holy place of the heavenly temple and allow Christ, the One symbolized by the law, to fully live out His life in us. (Revelation 11:19; Hebrews 8:10; Revelation 14:12.)

We may now accept that invitation. We may now come to the judgment with confidence and peace because we have Christ within our hearts, for He alone constitutes our hope for glory. And we may receive the bounteous blessings His cleansing, purifying presence brings.

The hour of God's judgment is come. God, the humble, self-sacrificing One, is now seeking to dwell fully in the hearts of men. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," says Jesus. "If any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. He who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne." Revelation 3:20, 21, R.S.V.

END

Frank answers

By Frank B. Holbrook

I would like to know what the "secret rapture" is which I see referred to from time to time in my reading.

The term "rapture," in one of its older senses, means "to carry off" and is sometimes used as a designation for the coming of Christ.

In the mid-nineteenth century a new method of interpreting the Bible developed among some Protestants which has come to be known today as Futurism or Dispensationalism. The developers of this new system held that the Bible taught *two* comings of Christ. The first coming, they asserted, would take place at some unexpected moment at the end of the age, at which time the church would be caught up to meet Christ in the air—in other words, "raptured"—while the rest of the world's inhabitants continued living on in their worldly pursuits. It was held that seven years later Christ would return to earth with these saints, would destroy the antichrist (who had appeared during the seven-year period), and would then set up His kingdom on the earth, ruling over the wicked nations while seeking their conversion for a thousand years.

Some who developed this system of interpretation (as do also some Christian groups who have adopted the system) held that the *first* appearance of this double advent would be "secret." That is, it was their belief that at this point Christ would secretly remove those who make up His church, unbeknown to anyone else. Seven years later His advent would be an "open" one.

These are false concepts, according to the Scriptures. The Bible knows of only *one* return of our Lord. That advent will be open, and clearly visible to all. (Revelation 1:7.) At this one return, Christ will raise the righteous who are asleep in the graves, and will give both them and the living righteous immortality. (1 Corinthians 15:51-55.) The second coming will not be a secret or silent affair. This is victory day for Heaven. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

At the time of this one second advent, Christ will take all the redeemed

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.

back with Him to heaven. (Cf. John 14:1-3; 1 Peter 1:4.) John the revelator saw in vision that glorious throng of victorious ones in heaven before the throne of God, rejoicing in His salvation. (Revelation 7:9, 10.) The very glory and majesty of Christ's advent will "slay the wicked" and the impenitent of earth. (Isaiah 11:4; cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:8.) The saints will reign with Christ a thousand years *in heaven*. (Revelation 20:6.)

At the close of the thousand years, or millennium, as it is sometimes termed, the great executive judgment takes place. The nations of all ages stand before the bar of God to receive their final reward. At the close of the judgment, the impenitent are destroyed in the second death, and the earth is created anew and given to the redeemed for their eternal home. (See Revelation 20, 21.) The simple facts are that the New Testament teaches neither a dual advent of Christ nor a "secret" advent nor a millennial reign of Christ over a world of sinful nations and peoples. These concepts are foreign and false to Holy Scripture notwithstanding the fact that many sincere Christians believe them to be true.

Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:5, says that Christ was seen on His resurrection day by Cephas, "then of the twelve." Who were the twelve of whom he speaks?

The Twelve is the common designation in the Gospels for the group of men whom Christ selected and ordained to accompany Him, and later to lead out in witnessing to His life, teachings, death, and resurrection. (See Matthew 26:20; 10:1; Mark 3:14.)

In this passage Paul is simply using the *official title* for this select group, also known as the apostles. Paul is not

concerned with the fact (which he well knew) that Judas, a former member of this group, was dead. Nor was he concerned with the fact that actually only ten of the original twelve disciples saw Jesus on the resurrection day. Judas was dead, and Thomas was absent when the Saviour appeared. (See John 20:19-24.) Nevertheless, the Twelve—members of that special group—saw the Master.

We speak this way ourselves. For example, I know of a group of businessmen who have formed a corporation known as the Committee of One Hundred. Originally its membership was one hundred men. Today, however, I understand the membership is something around eighty. When this group convenes, we say the Committee of One Hundred is meeting—we do not say the eighty plus are meeting. Yet the first statement is not wrong even though only eighty or so are actually meeting. In like manner the Twelve saw Christ, although in fact only ten of those men who composed the original band actually saw Him that day.

If God is three persons, why aren't we three persons? For it is written, "God created man in his own image."

The Scriptures make it plain that there are three Persons in the Godhead. (See Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14.) Yet the Godhead is declared to be one—a unity. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is *one* Lord." Deuteronomy 6:4.

The unity of the Deity is beyond our comprehension, but there is a parallel which may help you in regard to your question. A man and a woman are two persons, but from a Scriptural viewpoint, in marriage they are to blend into a unity, that is, "they shall be *one* flesh." (Genesis 2:24.)

Now, let us substitute your question and read it this way: If my parents are two persons, why am I not two persons? The answer is clear. My parents' existence as two persons in one marriage has nothing to do with the matter of whether I am two or one! A child comes forth from the procreative processes of his parents as one person, and yet in their image. So man was created by the Godhead, and came forth from their hand as one person, yet in the image of God. END

Does it matter on which day I worship?

By R. H. Blodgett

Encounter No. 192

Why is God concerned whether we obey Him?

How important is obedience to God's commandments?

By what standard will we all be judged?

WHAT DIFFERENCE does it make which day of the week I keep as my sabbath? The important thing is that I set apart one day in seven for religious activity."

Undoubtedly, this rationalization is one of the excuses most widely used by Christians of the twentieth century. It is a desperate attempt to somehow sidestep the issue of obedience to God's Ten Commandments by pretending God doesn't really care if Christians keep Saturday as the Sabbath.

But the question remains, "Does God care which day of the week I observe as the sabbath?"

DOES IT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE?

Certainly there can be no doubt regarding which day of the week is set apart by the fourth commandment. "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but *the seventh day* is the sabbath of the Lord thy God." Exodus 20:8-10.

It is the very same day of the week

that was made sacred when God created this world. "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed *the seventh day*, and sanctified it." Genesis 2:2, 3.

No matter which country or nation we live in, a glance at our calendar will quickly reveal that the first day of the week is *always* on the left-hand side of the calendar, and the seventh day is *always* on the right-hand side. In English-speaking countries we call this seventh day "Saturday."

Just in case there be any shade of doubt in the reader's mind, Luke clearly identified the New Testament Sabbath as being the day *between* Christ's crucifixion (called the "preparation" day) and His resurrection. (Luke 23:52-24:3.) Since we know He was crucified on Friday and was resurrected on Sunday, the only possible day Luke could be referring to was Saturday.

Does it make any difference which day of the week I keep for my sabbath?

Let's turn to the Bible and see if there is anything that will give us an answer to this question.

THE DILEMMA OF THE FRUIT TREE

No doubt the most familiar story of the Bible is that of man's first sin. Yet, the issue involved in this story is the same as that in the Sabbath question—namely, *obedience*.

Eve probably used the same style of reasoning that the Sunday observer uses. "Does it really make any difference *which* tree I observe as the forbidden one?"

"I mean, after all! Look at all the trees in this garden. Certainly God won't mind *which* tree I avoid. I'll just set apart one of those orange trees over there as the forbidden tree, and go ahead and eat fruit from the tree He warned us not to touch.

"The main thing God wanted was for us to set apart *one* of the trees in the garden as a forbidden tree. He can't really care *which* one we set

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apart as forbidden."

But did it make any difference to God? Most certainly it did! God wasn't interested in setting apart one tree in seven, or one tree in seventy, or even one in seven hundred. God instructed them to set apart a *specific* tree and not even touch it! No other tree could possibly be substituted for the tree God had set apart.

And the principle is the same regarding the Sabbath. It's not one day in seven that God set apart. He clearly set apart Saturday as the Sabbath. No other day can possibly be substituted and still fulfill the divine requirements.

THE CASE OF THE BACKWARD GLANCE

Another example of obedience (or shall we say disobedience) is that of Lot's wife. They were warned, "Escape for thy life; *look not behind thee*, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." Genesis 19:17.

Obviously, some will say, God had not intended that His warning be taken literally. No one could have been expected to obey the command, "Look not behind thee."

Put yourself in their shoes: They had been warned by God's angels of the impending doom of Sodom. Reluctantly Lot, his wife, and their two daughters were led away from that wicked city and into the nearby mountains. Being left behind were all their friends and neighbors, their luxurious home, the wealth accumulated throughout a lifetime of diligent labor, and all their worldly possessions.

In spite of the warning given, would not any normal human being placed in a similar circumstance want to take just one last look at everything he was leaving behind? Certainly God was asking too much of a woman when He told her to stifle her natural curiosity by not pausing, *even momentarily*, to take a quick look at the city about to be destroyed.

Surely, here is one example where no harm could be done by disobeying just a small part of God's command.

Yet, what does the record tell us about God's attitude toward this seemingly insignificant disobedience to one of His commands? Was it considered "insignificant" by God? Certainly not! The exact moment Lot's wife disobeyed God, she became a salty monument to God's judgments.

"TO THE VICTOR BELONG THE SPOILS"

Almost as old as the origin of man himself is the basic law of war and conquest: "To the victor belong the spoils." This unwritten human law has been employed by virtually every victor in the pages of history, and likely predates recorded history itself.

The Bible, however, sets down one instance when God forbade the personal application of this unwritten law—the destruction of Jericho. Since the city was destroyed solely by a miracle, God instructed that all the silver, gold, and vessels of brass and iron were to be put into the Lord's treasury. Everything else was to be destroyed. (Joshua 6:17-19.)

One man evidently dared to put God to the test—Achan. Although the Biblical record does not specify how Achan uncovered the items he pilfered from the spoils of Jericho's fall, one could imagine that he had not actually premeditated his theft. Perhaps he came across the treasures quite innocently while rummaging through the scattered debris.

Possibly he was working through one of the richer segments of the city, maybe even in the heathen temple treasury area itself, when he stumbled across a beautifully embroidered garment. He immediately comprehended the value of this costly garment, which could have belonged only to one of the most wealthy citizens of the entire city. It may have been owned by the governor himself.

"What a waste it would be to destroy such a magnificent garment!" he might have rationalized to himself. "Certainly God would not want this valuable tapestry annihilated in the general city fires. I'll just take it home and save it to sell to one of the caravan merchants that visit our camp so frequently."

Perhaps he was on the way home when he came across two hundred shekels of silver and a large wedge of gold. Having soothed his conscience over the expensive garment, it wouldn't have been too difficult to compromise his convictions a little further by secretizing the silver and gold in his tent.

After all, "To the victor belong the spoils."

Regardless of how Achan might have rationalized away his actions, one fact remained: Achan had disobeyed a specific command of God.

God's blessings could no longer at-

tend His people. When they followed up their Jericho victory with an attack on the city of Ai, they were miserably defeated and driven back with thirty-six Israelite soldiers slaughtered on the spot.

Again we are brought back to our main problem: Is God concerned whether or not human beings obey Him? How important was Achan's obedience to God's command? It was so important to God that Achan had to pay with his own life, dying under a rain of stones thrown by his kinsmen.

Likewise, will human rationalization keep the disobedient Christian from the inevitable judgments of God? Did it in any way save Achan? Lot's wife? Adam and Eve?

Too many Christians are trying to reach heaven in a one-oared rowboat—all they possess is the oar called "faith." Long ago they cast adrift the oar called "works."

James forthrightly asks the question, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" James 2:14.

After some illustrations he answers his own question: "For as the body without the spirit [breath] is dead, so faith without works is dead also." Verse 26. Apparently, God considers faith and works of equal value. That is to say, it takes faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ *plus* obedience to the law of God for one to even be considered as part of God's adopted family. (See 1 John 2:1-4, 7; Revelation 14:12; 22:14.)

DOES THE END JUSTIFY THE MEANS?

One additional Bible example of God's attitude toward disobedience should be examined. It concerns a man named Uzzah. The occasion was the ark of the covenant's transfer to its new home at Jerusalem. (2 Samuel 6:1-5.) Some 30,000 of the leading men in Israel were selected to participate in the nine-mile journey, which was a joyous and reverent occasion.

Riding upon a new ox-drawn cart, the sacred ark of the covenant moved slowly toward the gates of the city. Suddenly the oxen stumbled, and the ark began to tip. Uzzah instinctively reached out and took hold of the sacred ark with his hand to steady it. A moment later he lay dead upon the ground, struck down for disobeying

Continued



"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God, . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it." Exodus 20:8-11, R.S.V.

Encounter No. 198

Now It's Your Turn

We would like to hear from you. Answer the following questions to check your understanding of this subject.

Circle the "T" before the statement if it is true, the "F" if it is false:

- T F 1. God allows each man to determine which day of the week he will set aside to especially worship Him.
- T F 2. God will judge all men who have ever lived by the standard of His law.

Fill in the blanks in the following statements:

3. God has declared, "If ye _____ me, keep my _____" John 14:15.
4. According to the Apostle James, "Faith without _____ is dead." James 2:26.
5. The _____ day of the week is the day God has especially set apart for men to worship Him. Exodus 20:10.
6. According to the Apostle John, "this is the love of God, that we keep his _____; and his _____ are not _____." 1 John 5:3.

We will be happy to check your answers and to answer any questions this article may have raised in your mind. Our address: Encounter, Box 59, Nashville, Tennessee 37202.

☐ I would like to begin a systematic study of similar Bible topics. Please enroll me in your FREE, easy-to-follow Bible Correspondence Course.

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Continued

another specific command given by God.

Some may reason, "Certainly in this case the end justifies the means. All Uzzah was trying to do was to prevent the ark from the possibility of falling off the cart."

But the fact remained that Uzzah defied a specific command of God: "But they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die." Numbers 4:15.

He, along with every other Israelite, knew well the penalty for touching the sacred objects of the Temple with unconsecrated hands. Yet he rationalized that this time God would make an exception. "Surely, just once He will overlook a strict application of His command and allow me to go unpunished for my disobedience."

Such, however, was not the case. God could not permit this flagrant disregard of a specific command to go unnoticed. Uzzah's instantaneous death served as a dramatic warning to all of his kinsmen that God is not to be trifled with, that in addition to being a God of mercy to the penitent, He is also a God of justice to the disobedient.

The primary reason why there is so much sin, adultery, rioting, perversion, and wickedness upon this planet is that judgment has been postponed seemingly indefinitely. In other words, "Everyone else gets away with it, why can't I?" If every disobedience and secret sin were met with immediate punishment, no doubt we would find ourselves in a changed society overnight.

On the other hand, just because judgment is a future event and does not immediately follow our disobedience, does this by any means imply that God will allow our disobedience to go unnoticed indefinitely? Most certainly not!

OUR DAY IN COURT

Paul declared, "He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts 17:31), and he adds, God "will render to every man according to his deeds" (Romans 2:6).

What will be the standard by which the entire human race will be judged? James answers, "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James 2:12. By quoting two of the commandments contained in this "law of liberty" (see verse 11), James clearly identifies this law as God's Ten Commandments.

Coming back to our initial question, "Does it matter which day of the week I keep as my sabbath?" we find that our answer hinges on the concept of obedience.

Thus, in reality the question should be, "Am I willing to obey God by keeping Saturday as my Sabbath?"

Did it matter to God whether or not Uzzah *thought* he had a good excuse for ignoring a clear command against touching sacred objects? Did it matter to God if Achan obeyed the command regarding the spoils from Jericho? Was it important to God whether Lot's wife obeyed the command not to take even a quick look back at Sodom as they fled? Did it matter to God *which* tree Adam and Eve set apart as the forbidden tree?

In every single instance, the issue was clear-cut to God. It was simply a matter of obedience versus disobedience.

God has declared, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15. Obedience proves our love to God, our thankfulness for all He has done for us. It proves our discipleship before our fellowman, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:2, 3.

Christians find it easy to obey nine of the commandments in God's eternal law, but they try to rationalize away the obligations of the fourth commandment—to "remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." They try to pretend that the commandment refers to the first day of the week, when the Bible plainly says, "The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord." Exodus 20:10.

"Does it matter which day of the week I keep as my sabbath?" Most certainly it does! But the real issue is, "Am I willing to obey God by keeping Saturday as the Sabbath?"

Why not determine today to go all the way with God? Don't make the same mistake that Adam and Eve, Lot's wife, Achan, and Uzzah made. Step out of the crowd and "enter in at the strait gate."

Nearly two million Seventh-day Adventists around the world observe Saturday as the Christian Sabbath every week. Why not visit one of their churches this weekend yourself, and discover the joys of following God all the way? END

We all need praise

By Gottfried R. von Kronenberger

"Let me be a little kinder,
Let me be a little blinder
To the faults of those about me;
Let me praise a little more."

—Author unknown.

MAYBE WHEN I'm deaf and blind and a hundred years old, I'll get used to having everything I do taken for granted," confided a young housewife to her next-door neighbor. "As it is, life becomes pretty dull and hard when you don't hear a word of thanks for all your efforts to keep things nice and bright. If Bill would compliment me even once in a while, he'd make my life much happier. It isn't easy to keep on doing your best when you're never told whether your efforts are appreciated or not."

This is a common complaint of many housewives, but it is not women alone who need praise—all of us need praise, and need it badly.

Few of us realize how much we need encouragement and how much we are



Continued

helped by those who give it. Fame and fortune may outrun us from start to finish, yet we cannot help expecting just a little human recognition for our efforts. We must bask in the warmth of approval now and then—otherwise the health of our self-respect becomes seriously endangered.

It is perhaps in the home that the value of praise is less appreciated than elsewhere. Not everyone realizes that praise is the handiest emotional balm to have around, and that no home "human-relationship first-aid kit" should be without it. Without praise and encouragement, anyone can lose self-confidence and become moody and depressed. Thus we all have a double necessity: *to be praised and to know how to praise.*

"All of us want to be needed, all of us wish to be admired and desired," states Dr. Marcus Kline, psychologist and lecturer on human relations. "Most of us try to do good work. But how can we be sure we are needed, or good workmen, or admirable companions, unless someone tells us so?"

"It is my observation that anyone who wants to make progress improving human relationships needs only show a sympathetic understanding to everyone. The way to express this understanding and to give others the feeling of importance and worthwhileness boils down to this: *look always for something in the other person which you can admire and praise—and tell him about it!*"

Each of us has a mental picture of himself, a self-image which governs much of his conduct and outlook. To find life reasonably satisfying you must have a self-image that you can live with. You must find yourself acceptable to you. You must have a self that you like, and one that you can trust.

When this self-image is one you can be proud of, you feel self-confident. You feel free to be yourself and to express yourself. You function at your best. When the self-image is an object of shame, you attempt to hide it rather than express it. Creative expression is blocked. You become hostile and hard to get along with. Praise is the polish that helps to keep your self-image bright and sparkling.

The need of praise is something we all feel when we have done a good job, and denial of it can do much to stifle the spirit of human kindness and cooperation.

A miracle happens to the person whose self-esteem has been raised. He suddenly likes other people better. He feels free and airy. He is far more cooperative and kind and gentle with those around him.

What has this to do with your praise? A lot. You have the ability to perform that kind of miracle in another person. When you add to his self-esteem, you make him *want* to like you and to cooperate with you. He likes the person who lifts his spirits.

How do you give another a feeling of self-worth? By accepting him as he is. By understanding him. By enjoying his company. By not condemning or constantly criticizing him. By offering genuine praise. In one of his famous letters to his son, Lord Chesterfield wrote, "Make other people like themselves a little better, my son, and I promise you they will like you very well."

Our greatest mistake, as individuals, is that we walk through our life with closed eyes and don't notice our chances to show appreciation and give praise when needed. As soon as we open our eyes and deliberately search, we see many who need our help, not in the big things but in the little things. Wherever a person turns, he can find someone who needs a boost in self-confidence and self-worth.

Who can assay the effect of that small act of appreciation or those pleasing words of praise? We all owe so much to others, and we may well ask ourselves, What will others owe to us? The complete answer must remain hidden from us, although we are often allowed to see some small fraction of it so that we may not lose courage. You may be sure, however, that the effect of your own life on those around you is—or can be—great indeed.

A new minister called to a church which had been referred to jokingly as "the refrigerator" decided against censoring or criticizing his congregation for its indifference and coolness toward strangers. Instead, he began welcoming visitors from the pulpit and telling his flock what fine friendly persons they were to strangers. He told them to their faces what a friendly church it was.

Time after time he held up a picture of the church as he wanted it to be—gave his people a reputation to live up to. The members thawed. "Praise transformed the ice-cube mem-

bers into warmhearted human beings," he reported.

Many a person owes his success or happiness to someone who helped him discover his possibilities—boost his self-esteem and give him a reputation to live up to. And praise will always open doors to opportunity that censure or blame would tightly nail shut.

So it is natural that we should like the people who praise us and let us know that they appreciate the things, even the little things, we do for them.

This regular expression of praise and appreciation for little things done, and for the love that prompted the doing, is one of the most important requirements for a happy family life.

Expressions of appreciation need not be formal to please people. In fact, it may be that little informal words of praise included in everyday conversation are even more effective in friend-making than are the more formal statements, because they can be used so much more frequently and seem less artificial. For instance, tell someone, "I'm proud of you," and explain why—and you'll surely see their self-esteem brighten up. In no other way can you win friendship and admiration more rapidly or securely.

The habit of giving credit regularly in conversation for things other people have done for us or shown us is another one of the little things that people appreciate, and causes them to



David S. Strickler

increase their regard for us. For example, someone comments favorably on something you are doing, and you say something like, "Mary Hansen showed me that trick, and it certainly does save a lot of time and work."

What people want is a little attention as human beings. But, in that attention, sincerity is essential. It is sincerity that gives potency to a compliment or words of praise. The man coming home after a hard day's work, who sees the faces of his children pressed against the windowpane, wanting him and watching for him, may water his soul with their silent but golden opinion.

The simple principles of the art of praise—to realize the human need for it, to compliment sincerely, and to train ourselves to look for the praiseworthy—help rub off the sharp edges of daily contact. Nowhere is this more true than in marriage. Appreciation and understanding in the family depend on personal sacrifices and special attentions just as they do everywhere else. Compliment your marriage partner every day, no matter how small or unimportant the compliment may seem. A compliment takes only a second, and all it costs is a smile supported by a reassuring face. The wife or husband who is alert to say the heartening thing at the right moment has taken out valuable marriage insurance.

Children, especially, are hungry for

praise and reassurance, and the want of kindly appreciation in childhood can endanger the growth of character—it can even be a lifetime calamity. A young mother told her pastor of a heartrending incident:

"My little son often misbehaves, and I have to scold him. But one day he had been an especially good boy, hadn't done a single thing that called for a reprimand. That night, after I tucked him in bed and started downstairs, I heard him sobbing. Turning back, I found his head buried in the pillow. Between sobs he asked, 'Mommy, haven't I been a *pretty good* boy today?'"

"That question," said the mother, "went through me like a knife. I had been quick to correct him when he did wrong, but when he had tried to behave, I had not noticed it. I had put him to bed without one word of praise."

It is an absolute necessity to satisfy the craving for approval which all children possess. To help fulfill this craving try to have your children feel that they are making good in some way. They are sure to *be* and to *do something* which you can commend. Show them that you notice whatever they do well—and encourage them to try to do other things.

There is no one whose ability is so poor, no one whose attitude is so poor, that there is not something that can

honestly be commended. Take the trouble to find that something, and you will discover, as so many others have, that both ability and attitude will improve. There will be more than which can be praised.

An interesting experiment was undertaken recently, demonstrating the effectiveness of praise in getting school-children to do their best work. A large group of children was first divided into three groups, carefully selected so that the groups were as nearly equal as possible in ability, in proportion of boys to girls, and in average age, and these were given a test.

The next day they all assembled in one room for a second test, but before the test was given, the children of Group 1 were asked to come to the front of the room. They were praised for those parts of the test in which they had done excellent work on the preceding day, and were encouraged to do even better.

The children of Group 2 were then called to the front and criticized for all the careless mistakes they had made.

The children of Group 3 heard both praise and criticism, but no comment at all was made to them as to how they had done on the test. They were completely ignored throughout the experiment. A new test was then given and papers collected.

This exact procedure was repeated for four days and the scores for the different groups were compared. The *percentage of improvement* for each group is shown:

Praised group . . .	71%
Criticized group . . .	20%
Ignored group . . .	5%

While, of course, the results of this one experiment are by no means conclusive, they do seem to point definitely to the fact that encouragement by the use of praise is the most effective method of getting people to do their best. It makes them have enough confidence in themselves to give them the courage to go on.

The same principle—using a word of praise—is potent in all human relationships. Whenever you think something nice about a person, tell him. As artists find joy in giving beauty to others, so anyone who masters the art of praising will find it blesses the giver as much as the receiver. There is great truth in the saying, "Flowers leave part of their fragrance in the hand that bestows them."

END

Let the Bible speak



CHRISTIANS have argued long and loud over the relationship of law and grace. The legalists have said, "Be good, and you'll be saved."

The antinomians (those who reject all forms of law and obedience to it) reply, "By faith alone; works don't count."

"But you're misrepresenting the character of God," the legalists insist. "God's law is as changeless as His love."

Opponents on both sides back their arguments with convincing scripture. In fact, both sides may be stressing an important truth, but does either position offer the whole truth? What are the roles of law and grace in God's plan for our salvation?

Only the Bible can answer the question.

Ephesians 2:8-10: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."*

Romans 3:20-26: "For no human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

"But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction; since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, be-

cause in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins; it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies him who has faith in Jesus."

There can be no question about the way God saves sinners. Salvation comes entirely by faith in Jesus Christ. It is God's gift, and we cannot earn it.

Was there ever a time when good works were the basis for salvation? Were Old Testament individuals justified by law?

Romans 4:1-3: "What then shall we say about Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.'"

The way of salvation has always been the same. No man has been good enough to earn it.

Are works excluded, then? Paul asked that question and answered it. Romans 3:31: "Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law."

Jesus said: "He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me; and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." John 14:21.

James 2:8-17: "If you really fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you do well. But if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. For he who said, 'Do not commit adultery,' said also, 'Do not kill.' If you do not commit adultery but do kill, you have become a transgressor

of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. . . . What does it profit, my brethren, if a man says he has faith but has not works? Can his faith save him? If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead."

1 John 2:3-6: "And by this we may be sure that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He who says 'I know him' but disobeys his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps his word, in him truly love for God is perfected. By this we may be sure that we are in him: he who says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked."

The Bible combines faith and works. Faith is the basis for our salvation. Works is our grateful response to God. Scripture emphasizes what *God* has done much more than what *we* can do. Man does not have to live in uncertainty, always wondering if he has been good enough. God's act in Christ means we can be assured our salvation is secure. But if we have accepted Christ's work for us, He will also work in us.

To the legalists the Bible says: "For if a law had been given which could make alive, then righteousness would indeed be by the law." Galatians 3:21.

To the antinomians Jesus says: "Not every one who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." Matthew 7:21.

END

*All the texts quoted in this article are from the Revised Standard Version.

TEACHING ONE'S WIFE to drive has always seemed to me to be the most perilous test to which an immature marriage can be subjected. (Mature marriages are never subjected to such stress: mature people know better.) But little had I considered the perils of having a son who is taking driving lessons.

Until Sam filled me in, that is. Sam (whose name is not as real as the conversation) lives just far enough down the street to be conveniently removed from identity. His son is completing the driving course at a local high school. I stopped to visit Sam and got the following tale of woe.

"You know," he says, a short, pudgy finger poking emphasis at me, "since he started driving lessons it's getting kind of embarrassing just having him along. Like the other day I don't quite stop at a stop sign, and he lets me know such a practice doesn't bring an approving smile to his instructor's face. And he says if a stop sign is set back twenty feet from a corner, you're supposed to stop at the sign, creep forward to the intersection, and then stop again before proceeding. Imagine him telling *me* that"—Sam's finger beat out the "Charge of the Light Brigade" on his chest—"me who was driving before he had juice in his battery!"

"So I'm on the way to the hardware store to get some solder, see, and I change lanes a few times, and he says, 'Dad, you're not supposed to weave in and out of traffic'—says it to *me*, who has never scraped a fender—at least not while changing lanes, you understand." (Sam's perceptive. He has seen my eyes tracing the repaint line on his '68 hardtop.)

"I've always wheeled right along—you know that the cops always concede you five or ten miles over the limit, right? Well, that's not the story he gets from the instructor. To hear him tell it, exceed par a few times, and you'll find yourself pulling a ricksha." (Sam's scrambled metaphors go well with his theology, which, so far as I've been able to discover, is twentieth-century pagan.)

"Thing is," Sam continues, nostalgia

Driving home a lesson

By Roland R. Hegstad



for the good old days etching pathos into his prose, "the kid thought I was the greatest driver around until he started taking lessons.

"Last time we were out he looks at the speedometer and asks me if I really believe speed laws make sense. If I say Yes, I've got to explain why I don't pay much attention to them; if I say No, the kid kills himself some Saturday night.

"How I drove didn't seem to matter much when he was growing up." (Sam's fingers rubbed reassurance into each other.) "Now that he's learning for himself, I'm more nervous every time we go driving.

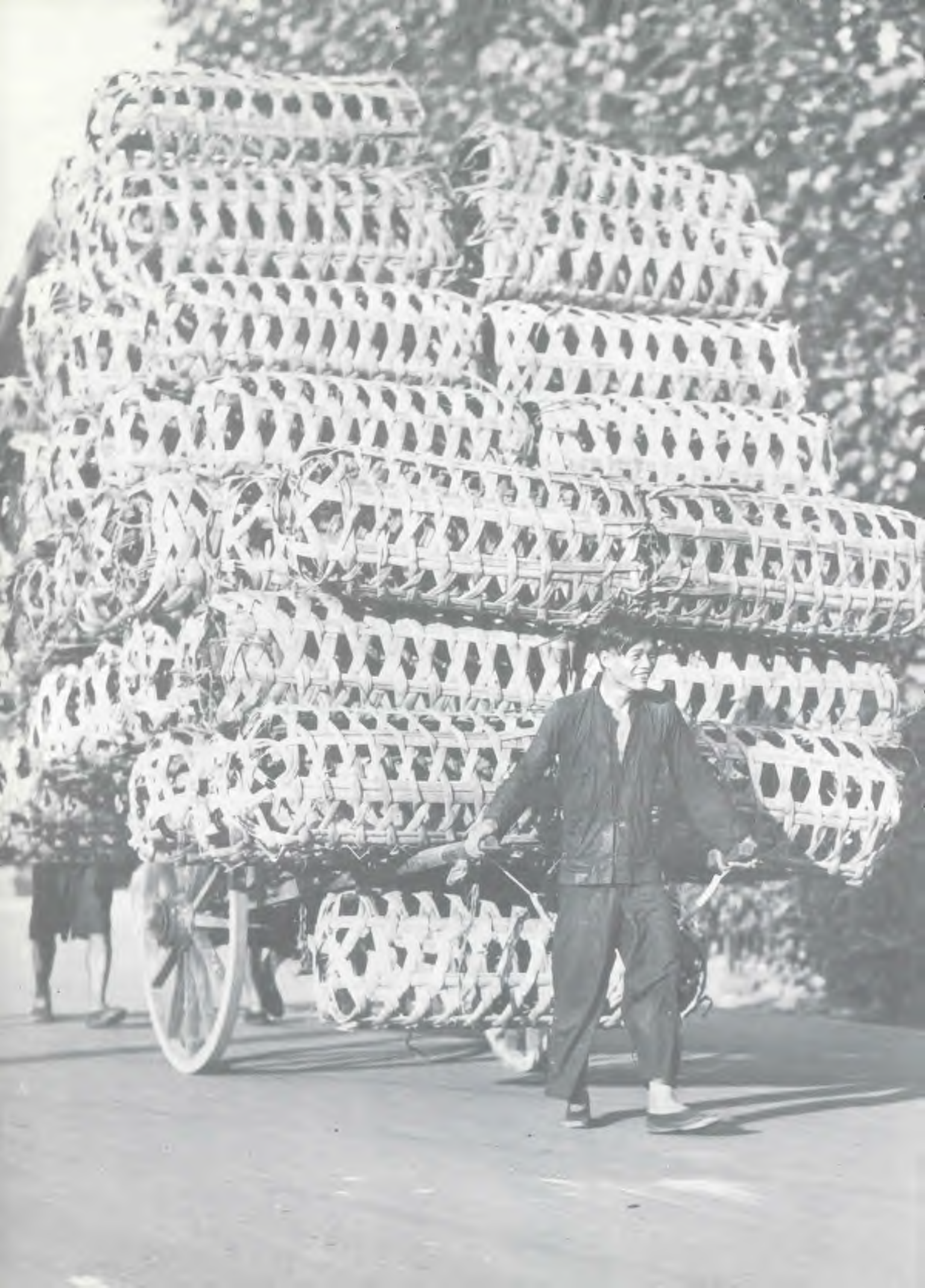
"Now, preacher, what I want to know is, What do I say when he starts to give me that 'Render unto Caesar' bit?"

Well, this is one time I'm not volunteering any advice, not with a son who is "sixteen, going on seventeen," as the song says. I josh Sam about his inconsistency—though my heart isn't in it—and with more solicitude than usual for the tread on my rear tires, take off for home. It takes me longer to get back than going, which is just as well, when your mind isn't on your driving.

What I'm thinking is, professing one thing and practicing another is the sure cure for a kid's religious experience. Exhibits: Putting a "stop" sign on the television set—you know, that "Whatsoever" verse—and then "coasting" through another program or two after the approved one goes off. Talking sacrifice, and practicing extravagance. Preaching that the Sabbath is for good works (off to singing band, kids), and then using it for a good sleep. Upholding the Ten Commandment "speed limit" while living as if the Lord conceded *you* an extra 5 mph. Prattling that the Lord is coming soon, and then living as if today is going on forever.

Just what *do* you tell a kid when he gives you that "Render unto" bit and then asks for an explanation?

Or has he already been told—told so empirically, so repeatedly, that no amount of repentance, no amount of explanation, can ever totally undo the answer the years have given? **END**



Quietly and in
most cases
without violence

Youth rebel in southeast asia

By Rodney E. Finney, Jr.

LAN FUNG is our firstborn," her father explained in tender tones. "She was born in China. Since my wife could not leave China openly with me, she had to escape and was in danger of losing her life. She could have left Lan Fung in China to grow up by herself, but because of her great love for our baby she went through much difficulty and danger to bring Lan Fung with her.

"It was with much joy and happiness that we were reunited after their escape from China. Ever since, Lan Fung has meant so much to us. We have had a special interest and care for her. Now, tell me, how can we bear to lose Lan Fung to your church? How can we bear to see our family being separated because of religion?"

Lan Fung (pronounced lawn-fawn) was the unwilling center of a storm that was raging between her parents and the Seventh-day Adventist Church because she had decided to become a member of that church. Now her parents were actually threatening to sue the mission because it was "making" Lan Fung become a Seventh-day Adventist without their permission. "When she is twenty-four or twenty-five, she will be old enough to make her own decision," her father firmly stated.

The ending of this story is a happy one. Through prayer and the influence of the Holy Spirit, Lan Fung's parents were finally persuaded to allow her to become a church member and attend Southeast Asia Union College, a school operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Today she works for the church, helping in a remarkable endeavor that is winning hundreds of people to Christ.

This brief summary of Lan Fung's story is important because it illustrates a revolution that is taking place in Southeast Asia, particularly in Singapore—a revolution that is nonetheless great in its import because it is going on quietly and, in most cases, without violence.

Possibly the Republic of Singapore is seeing more of this revolution than some other places, because Singapore is a place of freedom and transition. Five years old, to date as an independent nation Singapore is a city, a country, and an island, all rolled into one. A pocket-size country with a population density of more than 10,000 per square mile! A country that is growing so fast that the sound of the pile driver is one of its most typical

sounds. A city that will double its electrical capacity in the next five years at a cost of over \$200,000,000 U.S. money.

"Instant Asia," Singapore likes to call itself. Some call it the "Lion City" from the Malay *singa*, or lion. City planners, however, seek to change its name to the "Garden City," with constantly burgeoning parks and parkways and with flowering trees and shrubs that are being planted along the streets. Parenthetically, Singapore's famous Botanic Garden has three thousand varieties of flowering trees and shrubs.

Adjectives like "fantastic" and "unbelievable" spring to one's mind when he first becomes acquainted with Singapore, and that impression does not change much with more lengthy acquaintance. Here is a melting pot indeed. Over 75 percent of the population is Chinese, speaking at least eight different dialects. The rest of the population is composed of Malays, Indians, Indonesians, Thais, Cambodians, Australians, Arabs, New Zealanders, Americans, and others. Though 24 percent of non-Chinese does not sound like very many, there are fourteen hundred pupils in the Singapore American School alone, and there are other schools in the city catering to American children.

East Asians consider the prime minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, one of the area's most able administrators. He has real ability as an organizer and administrator and has succeeded in preserving peace and stimulating progress in an area where racial violence could easily break out.

But what about the youth rebellion?

In order to understand it, one needs to know something about the cultural climate of the East. Oriental parents rear their children in love and a pretty good degree of permissiveness—with limits. Those limits are definitely dictated by absolute respect to parents that carries with it unquestioning obedience in important matters.

For instance, one of our neighbors left for the United States not long ago, and another family moved into the vacated house. The departing family had had a Chinese housemaid working for them, and the incoming family wished to retain her in their service, so they asked her if she would like to work for them. "I will have to ask my mother," was the reply, which may not sound strange until you learn that she

Continued

Former editor of THESE TIMES Rodney Finney now serves as Professor of Bible and Religion at Southeast Asia Union College in Singapore.

Continued

is twenty-six years old.

I thought the housemaid reaction was quite unusual until I told a friend about it one day, and he stated that he had had an identical experience with an employee in his organization who was *forty-one*, and a man! All in all this is a rather refreshing and wholesome situation. The United States, it might seem, could do with some of this parental respect. But when religion enters in, the picture can become complicated!

In the past few years there has come into the social structure a feeling of dissatisfaction with the religions of the past. As many of the younger generation receive higher education, they no longer accept the Buddhism and Hinduism of their elders. The picture in regard to Muslims is not quite the same, for here is a very hard and resistant religion to combat. But even here some cracks are appearing.

With regard to the Oriental youth who come into contact with Christianity, the change in social climate has meant that in many cases they will go against the wishes, or even commands, of their parents and accept Christ. They do not do this defiantly, or even without severe inner conflict, for they love their parents, and generations of obedience are back of them. But they will step out of the shadows of non-Christian religions into the light of the gospel, and when they do, they can become wonderfully dedicated young people.

Recently a major Seventh-day Adventist evangelistic team conducted a crusade in downtown Singapore. It offered no hippie-type music or preaching, but of the large and consistent audiences attending for twenty-one nights, fully 80 percent were teen-agers. And they were there for business, as I personally witnessed them carefully searching the Bibles that had been provided for them to use.

Unique in one respect aside from the youth attendance, the crusade was conducted in six languages simultaneously—by the use of translators in sound-proof booths and small six-channel transistor radio sets with earphones. The languages used, besides English, were Malay, Tamil, and three Chinese dialects. The method of communicat-

ing proved highly successful; every night several hundred transistor sets were in use. To go with the sets, Bibles in the various languages were also furnished to everyone in attendance.

The response greatly encouraged the team, for to date over one hundred have become Christians. In many of the cases the problem of parental control was a major factor. This I know because I was personally involved with quite a number of the young people in question.

Betty, a girl still in her teens, came to the crusade and listened to God's Word night after night. I had the privilege of studying the Bible with her. One of her questions really startled me as we sat in the sparkling apartment that is her home. "Is it wrong to eat food offered to idols?" she queried. Fortunately, I had a Chinese assistant with me, for my immediate reaction was to say, "No!" But he tactfully pointed out that Paul had dealt with the same problem in New Testament times, and we turned to 1 Corinthians 8:1, 4, 7: "Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. . . . As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. . . . Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled."

Betty no longer believed in idols—or Buddha, for that matter. If she ate nothing that had been offered to an idol, that would mean that she might



H. Armstrong Roberts

Rapid industrialization is bringing about many changes in the life-styles of young people in Southeast Asia.

not have anything to eat at all, for in many devout Buddhist homes every meal is first offered to the idol of Buddha. A week or so later I had the privilege of baptizing Betty, and she is in church, radiantly happy, every week. Her becoming a Christian was not accomplished without a struggle, though, for at first her mother strenuously objected. But one of Betty's girl friends, a Christian, had friendly talks with the mother, and finally she gave Betty permission to attend church.



Shoppers still bargain, as they always have, with vendors at curb markets throughout Southeast Asia.

Betty's story had a happy ending, but not all do. Some young people have had much severer trials. Some came to the crusade services black and blue from beatings given them by their parents. Some came without their parents' knowledge.

In a Bible class I conducted each week there were those who came to class in school uniforms. (All schools in Singapore have distinctive uniforms for secondary students.) In such cases I asked no questions, for it is quite probable that the parents of the uniformed youth thought that he was in school, for schools run six days a week in this city, unless they are under the management of Christian denominations. When a dress or regular clothes are substituted for the uniform, one can take it for granted that parental resistance has been broken down.

In fairness to everyone concerned it should be said that the parents are not to be blamed severely. In a great majority of cases the parents do not speak any English, with the possible exception of a few phrases they may have to use in their daily work. Buddhism, including ancestor worship, has been their ancestral religion and they have never called it into question. It is upon their sons and daughters, especially the sons, that they depend for care in their old age, and after death they expect the children will pray for them as honorable ancestors. These good people, among the most friendly and hospitable anywhere, are bewildered, and sometimes angered, by interference in their family life.

Another plus in the picture is the care that is given to the elders by the younger people. Nursing homes and retirement homes are almost unknown in Singapore and the Orient. It is considered a duty and an honor to care for old people. There is a Chinese proverb that goes something like this: "He who has a grandparent in his home has a jewel in the house." The old one is not only cared for, he is deferred to, and no decision is made without his counsel. It may not be followed, but he knows that he has been taken into consideration and is respected.

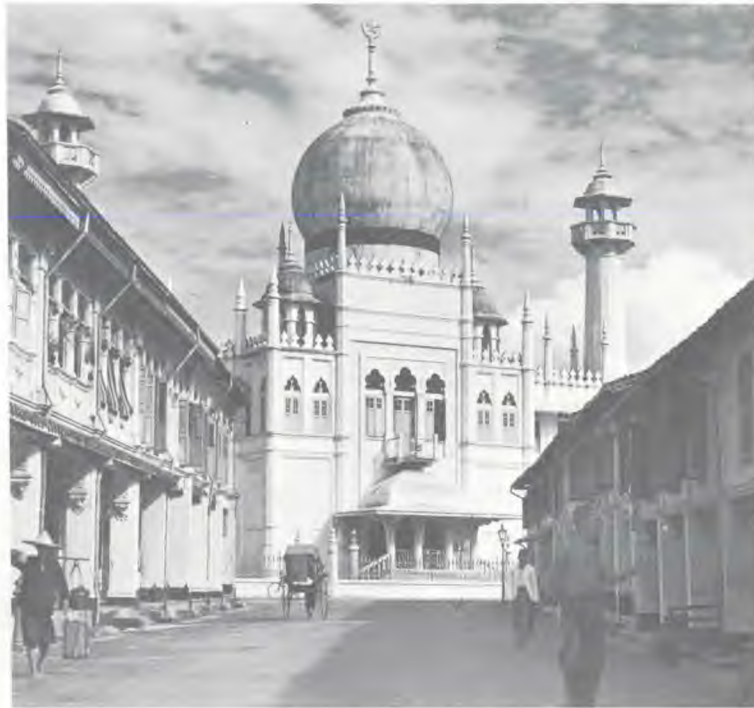
A ministerial student in one of my college classes told me of his experience in becoming a Christian. When the time was right, he asked his parents' consent to join the church, and they instantly and firmly refused. Repeated efforts met with the same response, until he became convinced that

they would never give their permission. So he said to them, "I love you and I respect you, but I feel that I must be a Christian, and I intend to join the church." Because of his firm and tactful approach his parents have not made life difficult for him. He is a lad of great promise.

Christian contacts are made with people in Singapore by a remarkable organization. I refer to a Bible corre-

for it would be immediately overwhelmed with applications, and there is not money available to keep up with this volume. This, in spite of the fact that it costs only \$1.33 U.S. money to put a student through a complete course!

The outreach of this correspondence school extends far beyond the shores of the island of Singapore, for students are enrolled in nearly all of Southeast



While Hinduism and Buddhism are declining in popularity, the Muslim religion continues to grow.

H. Armstrong Roberts

spondence school called the Voice of Prophecy. All Bible lessons are delivered by mail and are mailed back. A sampling of thirty students revealed that the median age was fifteen and that all had finished from one to three courses. The school does not do any radio work; the cost would be prohibitive. Enrollments are largely secured through the work of individual laymen who contact friends and business acquaintances.

At this time there are twenty thousand active students taking lessons in Chinese, Malay, Tamil, and English. Most of the youth choose English, for they are eager to improve their grasp of the language. The school receives, corrects, records, and returns about a third of a million lessons a year. More than one hundred lessons are mailed into the Singapore office every hour of every workday the year around. In two years more than fifteen thousand students have graduated.

A sad fact is that the school does not dare to advertise aggressively in the newspapers and other mass media,

Asia. Some of the letters that students write would melt a heart of stone.

"When the first . . . lessons came to my home address, my mother and sister destroyed them, for they do not want me to become a Christian. My father has warned me not to go to church and has threatened to take away my money for transportation and for my education. He says they will chase me out of my house if I become a Christian.

"In spite of this I have decided to stand for Jesus and obey God first and be baptized. . . . I don't know what they will do with me. . . . I will be in great sorrow if my parents chase me from my home."

Similar letters could be duplicated many times over. Christianity may have lost its sacrificial power in some parts of the world, but not in Southeast Asia!

So, today, in this bustling city of two million diversified souls there is a revolt going on. It is not a revolt motivated by anger, but by love—the love of Christ. This is the sort of revolt the world needs.

END

A good father

Thoughts for Father's Day

By Leslie B. Flynn

A newspaper clipping entitled "My Father" reads like this:

When I was 7, I thought—My father is the smartest person in the world. He knows everything.

At 17—My father doesn't know as much as I thought he did.

At 21—My father doesn't know anything, compared to me.

At 35—My father knew much more than I thought he did.

At 50—My father was always right.

I'm not sure how Father's Day originated. One story has it that some years back a lady in Spokane, Washington, drew up a petition addressed to the ministers of that city and stressing a father's important place in the home and in the training of his children. This idea spread nationally so that the third Sunday of June traditionally has been set aside as Father's Day.

A few months back *The New York Times* carried an article headed, "Delinquent boys from well-to-do homes say fathers set double standards." It gave the findings of a psychiatrist after a four-year study of Long Island delinquents. Here was the conclusion: "The affluent teen-age boy who steals hubcaps, who crashes and breaks up house parties, and drinks too much is very likely to have learned delinquency at his father's knee." Though the fathers tried to impress on their sons the necessity for diligence, perseverance, and respect for the Golden Rule, these same fathers boasted of shady business conquests, or of truancy in boyhood, or of taking the shortcut to success. This conflict between precept and example greatly confused the boys, according to the psychiatrist, who reported his findings to the American Group Psychotherapy Association. He added, "Even if the boys sensed that their father's behavior was reprehensi-

ble, they could hardly reject his example, and so felt hopeless about becoming a person of worth."

One psychologist has suggested that a father can better understand his teen-age boy or girl if he asks himself, "What is there about me which my child is copying?" If a father's sense of values centers around acquiring all the latest, shiniest chrome gadgets, he shouldn't be surprised if his teen-age children have more interest in getting a powerful automobile than in earning good grades in school. The teen-agers are just copying, in perhaps an exaggerated way, the importance father has placed on the ownership of material possessions.

A father is responsible to God for his children. Someday every father will stand before God and give an account of the lessons he has taught his children and the examples he has set before them. Will Durant tells of a little girl who came to her mother with the age-old question, "Mother, what is God like?" Mother hesitated. "You'd better ask daddy." She did. "Daddy, what is God like?" He too hesitated. Later on in her childish possessions was found a slip of paper with this free verse on it:

"I asked my mother what God was like.

She did not know.

Then I asked my father, who knows more than anyone else in the world, what God was like.

He did not know.

I think if I had lived as long as my mother or my father, I would know something about God."

We may not know all the answers, but we should know some of the elementary doctrines of the Christian faith, for we are responsible to God to teach our children spiritual truth.



A father's example in the matter of church attendance is very powerful. One of the reasons so many teen-agers drop out of church is because father doesn't go. When children are young, they can be dropped off at church, but when they get older and wiser, they reason, "If church isn't important for father, then it's not important for me," and they drop out.

It's good when a father is a church member or a church-goer, but there is something needed more than that. It's possible to be both and still not be a Christian.

Father, are you more than just a church member? Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Saviour, and do you live Christ before your family? Children react less to what grown-ups say than to the way they live.

One of the most solemn of Jesus' warnings concerns the danger of leading a child astray. One day the Lord Jesus took a little child and set him down in the midst of His hearers. Then, speaking of how precious a child is in the sight of the Lord, Jesus warned, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Matthew 18:6.

Father, would you be pleased to have your children walking in your footsteps today? Would it be the best thing for them to be "just like dad"?

Give your children the influence of a positive Christian life. Say, as did Joshua of old, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:15. By doing so you will bequeath to your children a faith that will guide them on in life when your voice speaks no more.

END

(Reprints of this article may be obtained from American Tract Society, Oradell, New Jersey 07649.)

JERUSALEM CONFERENCE FOCUSES ON BIBLE PROPHECY

By John M. Fowler

JERUSALEM, the city of the prophets and the city that rejected many a prophet (Matthew 23:37), is hosting this month a worldwide conference on Biblical prophecy. The conference, June 7-18, convened by a committee of leading teachers, pastors, and writers of evangelical churches in North America has a fourfold objective:

"1. To create a public forum for examination of the Biblical view of last things, and better understanding of the prophetic portions of Scripture.

"2. To express belief in the risen Christ's literal return to society which unbelievably asks, 'Where is the promise of His coming?'

"3. To enliven Christian witness through a fresh awareness that our generation lives closer to the return of Christ than any preceding one, and that we must soon give an account of our stewardship.

"4. To focus the serious attention of men everywhere on the Bible's message for the whole human race in our critical times, including our youth in their apocalyptic preoccupation with the occult, the ecological, and the hedonistic."

What is the importance of the conference? Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, founding editor of *Christianity Today* and chairman of the conference program committee, believes that this convocation could perhaps "be the last great opportunity for evangelical witness to the world on prophetic themes."

During the conference, leading Christian thinkers from the New and the Old World will initiate discussions on crucial topics such as "The Bible and the Prophetic Word of God," "Jesus Christ and the Last Days," "The Second Coming of Christ," "Youth and the End of the Age," and "Fulfilled and Unfulfilled Prophecy."

Morning devotionals at the conference are to be led by Dr. I. Ben Wati, executive secretary of the Evangelical Fellowship of India, and Dr. Chandu Ray, director of the Coordinating Office for Asian Evangelism, Singapore. This in itself is a tribute to the growing maturity of the church in Asia.

But the significance of the conference is to be found not in its participants or in its discussions, but in that it meets at all. The conference indicates that the churches have come a long way from the time when many considered those who preached prophecy simplistic, speculative, and theological nonpersons.

The importance of understanding Biblical prophecy cannot be overemphasized. Prophecy occupies approximately one fourth of all the Bible. Most Bible prophecies have had their fulfillment. But the most important prophecy yet to be fulfilled concerns the second coming of Christ. Some 1,800 passages in the Bible speak about this glorious event, toward which history is moving rapidly.

A contemporary Christian thinker has well said: "Christian interpretation of history is possible only on the basis of prophecy, implying consequently a sacramental element—Christ, the center of history, *has come*—and a prophetic element—Christ, the end of history, *is coming*. So the Christian interpretation of history stands between 'already' and 'not yet'; the explanation of this 'intermediate situation' is the main problem of Christian theology today."—Paul Tillich, *The Interpretation of History*, p. 264.

Thus a study of prophecy is not only of theological importance but also of personal significance. Prophecy gives the Christian a historical perspective for his life and faith now, and also offers him a sure hope for the future. This explains why the Apostle Peter was so emphatic: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:19-21.

Whether the Jerusalem conference on prophecy would give the right direction, interpretation, and depth to Biblical prophecy is not the point. But are we as Christians studying the prophecies of the Bible as we should, and

are we preparing ourselves to meet the closing event of history—our Lord's return—so soon to be upon us?

Says the prophet of the Book of Revelation: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." Revelation 1:3.

WE'RE NOT DOING NOTHING

By Paul Harvey

WE'RE *not* doing *nothing* about pollution. And the cure promises to be as dramatic as the disease is dreadful.

Americans, just awakening to the long-time misuse of our planet's air, land, and water, have to do more than just hold their noses and holler. And some are doing more. There is an encouraging and, I hope, exemplary cleanup now under way by industries, officials, and individuals.

We're *not* doing *nothing* about pollution.

Right now, today, for the first time in many years, it is possible in parts of Los Angeles harbor to see the bottom! And there is evidence of fish life throughout that harbor which just a year ago was considered "dead."

Car makers say they are crash-researching ways and means of producing a "pollution-free automobile by 1980." Los Angeles County's board of supervisors says that's not soon enough; the supervisors have asked state health authorities to ban the sale of any 1971 automobile in California unless it is equipped with an adequate smog-prevention device. "That," the supervisors say, "is the way to get the automobile manufacturers to come around."

With the world in general and our nation in particular threatening to bury itself alive under an annual accumulation of 180 million tons of trash, the Reynolds Metals Company is opening sixteen collection centers across the United States to reclaim and reuse aluminum scrap. Paying ten cents a pound for used aluminum, the company will break even, the country will profit.

Similarly, the Glass Container Manufacturers Institute has begun a nationwide program to buy used bottles at

half a cent a bottle. Students and others demanding a cleanup now know how they can help—and get paid for it, about a penny a pound. Glass manufacturers are establishing seventy-five bottle-redemption centers across the country. The Los Angeles center is already taking in 500,000 used bottles a week.

While these efforts are getting going, the city of Bowie, Maryland, has adopted an ordinance prohibiting the sale of soft drinks and beer in disposable containers. And violators can be punished with a \$100 fine and thirty days in jail.

We're not . . . doing nothing.

Maybe the smoke cloud has a silver lining. Researchers at Illinois Tech have developed a new high-temperature incinerator for raw garbage, glass, metal—most any solid waste—which converts pollution to usable construction materials! The Institute for Scrap Iron and Steel sponsored research which has developed a similar incinerator for junked cars; eyesores are being rein-car-nated. Already operating in Salt Lake City is one which digests fifty cars every eight hours.

British engineers, working on the supersonic Concorde, have found a fuel additive which should give our giant jets a smoke-free takeoff, with added engine efficiency.

Have you noticed how often when we set out to do the right thing for the right reason we prosper in the process?

CHURCHES JOIN IN COMMON EFFORT TO DISTRIBUTE BIBLES

DISTRIBUTION of the Bible has, in recent years, become more international and more interdenominational than ever.

The far-reaching first step was taken in 1946 when thirty-five Bible societies formed the United Bible Societies for common counsel and planning with some pooling of resources.

In 1968 for the first time two Roman Catholic observers attended the United Bible Societies' regional conference in Oaxtepec, Mexico, where 100 church leaders and Bible society secretaries from the Americas met to discuss how to give wider distribution to the Bible.

Then in 1969 the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity met with the United Bible Societies to set up ecumenical guidelines as a basis for

all common Bible translation. Protestants agreed to publish the Apocrypha, which most do not recognize as a part of the sacred canon, and Catholics agreed that footnotes to passages should be descriptive rather than doctrinal.

In the United States, the Catholic Biblical Association joined the interfaith Laymen's National Bible Committee and the American Bible Society to promote National Bible Week, November 22-29, this year. A vital part of this thirtieth annual week is Worldwide Bible Reading, a Thanksgiving through Christmas program of daily Scripture reading. Urging churches and national leaders, both Catholic and Protestant, to support the program, the Bible societies publicize the week and provide free program materials to the churches.

Now that both Protestants and Catholics seek a wide distribution of the Bible, ecumenical hopefuls are asking if the Bible may not become an instrument and a symbol for unity among Christians.

But the United Bible Societies deny any intent of ecumenism. "It is no more . . . [the Bible societies'] province to participate in the ecumenical dialogue than to legislate on the method of Christian baptism," an official resolution declares.

Circulators of the Bible "without note or comment," the Bible societies, while encouraging church participation in their program, refuse any part in the basic conflict which divided the church during the Reformation and continues to separate Protestant denominations: Who has the right to interpret the Word of God?

Roman Catholics settled the question to their satisfaction long ago. In cases of dispute they reserve the final interpretation of the Scriptures for an infallible pope.

That each man has the right to read and interpret the Bible for himself was, however, the basis of the Reformation and is the essence of Protestantism. Scripture may therefore supersede the authority of the church.

There is no guarantee that the wider Bible reading National Bible Week encourages will not widen, as it did in the Reformation, the rifts between churches. But because the interfaith Bible societies believe "that God still speaks directly and personally through the Scriptures," it's a risk they are willing to take.

ROCK OR BACH—PLANTS KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

MRS. DOROTHY RETALLACK loves plants and music. But it seems some of her plants don't care for some of the music she's been playing them.

Though she's the first to admit her experiments are not purely scientific, Mrs. Retallack, a grandmother who entered college in 1964, has now conducted almost twenty tests with her plants in controlled environmental chambers. When she plays them a regular diet of acid rock by such artists as the Led Zeppelin, the Vanilla Fudge, or the late Jimi Hendrix, they lean sharply away from the sound and die in a few weeks. Even their roots begin to slant away from the music. But when she plays them music by Bach, and such numbers as "La Paloma," and other classical pieces, they flourish.

Questioned recently about her attitude toward the effects of acid rock on young people, she declared, "Some of those plants look like the people who attend rock festivals." **END**



We quote

Proverbs 22:4: "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life."

Matthew 6:19, R.S.V.: "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal."

Helen Keller: "We can do anything we want to do if we stick to it long enough."

Nazarene Information Service: "Keeping away from the mire is better than washing it off."

Francis A. Soper, "Listen," February, 1971: "Society's problem is, bluntly, selfishness—putting our own interests and desires first. It's a well-known fact that the more a person becomes involved in drugs, most any drug, the more self-centered he becomes. Everything in his world is evaluated only in the light of its benefit to him."

Fred Cox, the Minnesota Vikings' place kicker: "In professional football, I have found that complete faith in Jesus Christ is the only way I can experience total mental, physical, and spiritual satisfaction."

"Sunshine Magazine": "Don't expect a thousand-dollar answer to a ten-cent prayer."

Benjamin Franklin: "I will speak ill of no man, and speak all the good I know of everybody."

Dr. Kenneth Cooper, "Listen," December, 1970: "I have yet to see a man whom I consider really physically fit afflicted with a major psychosomatic problem. Perhaps it is just his change in attitude. If a person disciplines himself to the extent that he regularly participates in an exercise program, he tends to discipline other aspects of his life. And by doing this he begins to take pride in himself."

THESE TIMES

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"THEY MAKE POLLUTION IN FACTORIES"

DIRT. Sewage. Garbage. Noise. Pesticides. Herbicides. Junk. Pollution. Coughing. Wheezing. Tiredness. Tension. Poor health. Paralysis. Disease. Death.

No matter how much we talk about pollution and its effects, we still face the problem: Where does pollution come from? Before we can ever deal adequately with pollution, we're going to have to find the answer to this question.

"That's simple enough," you say; "it comes from factories and cars."

True, but factories and cars are operated by *people*. And therein lies the problem. For when you get right down to it, *we* cause pollution. We cause it by our thoughts. Look at any form of pollution, and you will see a failure of *human thinking*.

We seek pleasure. We seek ease. We seek power. And then we seek more of the same.

So we drive cars instead of riding horses. Cars, unfortunately, spread a kind of manure, just as surely as do horses. We didn't *think* about that implication, though.

We pour tons of pesticides upon the land to kill insects and make it easier to grow things. Many pesticides, unfortunately, destroy more than the pests they are designed to control. We *thought* we could take the easy way and come out ahead.

We crowd together in cities because they seem more efficient. As it turns

out, they *are* more efficient—more efficient in producing crime, in glutting rivers with sewage and trash.

Pollution is simply the payoff for our bad thinking. Thoughts lead to action. Selfish thoughts lead to bad actions. Mind pollution is the father of all pollution. *Our ultimate danger arises from the fact that we have the power to create evil out of good.*

We live because God gives us life day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment. Every beat of our heart, every breath we take, testifies of God's goodness and love for us. He is the source of all life. When we choose to live selfishly, we not only pollute ourselves, undermine our mental potentials and our physical health, but we also *misuse the life God gives us as a sacred trust.*

It took Jesus' death on Calvary to enable us to understand this fact. Jesus Christ did not die simply because a few Jews and Romans ganged up on Him. He died voluntarily to show men the true nature of sin and demonstrate the power of God's love.

According to the Bible, "sin is the transgression of the law" of God, the very antithesis of the law of self-sacrificing, self-renouncing love by which He governs the universe. (1 John 3:4.) Sin uses the love of God and the life He gives us for selfish purposes. And pollution is simply the outworking of the selfish attitude of sin which we all have by nature.

Jesus prayed for those who nailed Him to the cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Those who crucified Him had no real-

ization that they were using life they had received from Christ Himself in their efforts to kill Him.

They wished the "Author of life" to die, as the Apostle Peter so graphically declared, and He voluntarily did so that those who crucified Him might understand both the nature of sin and that of love. (Acts 3:15, R.S.V.) Jesus' death on Calvary shows us the inmost meaning of sin. Upon all rests the guilt of crucifying the Son of God. By every sin *we* misuse His life. All of us share in the guilt of His death. And the pollution, the crime, the evil, so prevalent today simply demonstrate the power of sin upon the human mind.

But God has an answer to our problems with pollution and sin, for He is acting through Jesus Christ to reconcile us to Himself. He does not count us guilty unless we spurn His love. *He thinks the best of us* and accepts our guilt as His own. Paul said, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation." 2 Corinthians 5:19, R.S.V.

The good news is that "God is love." His self-sacrificing, self-renouncing love swallows up sin and death. Only He has power enough to solve our problems with sin and pollution.

Each of us can join in the battle against pollution by allowing Him to become the Lord of our lives, permitting Him to shape our every thought and action, so that we live only to give and help others.

ROBERT HADDOCK