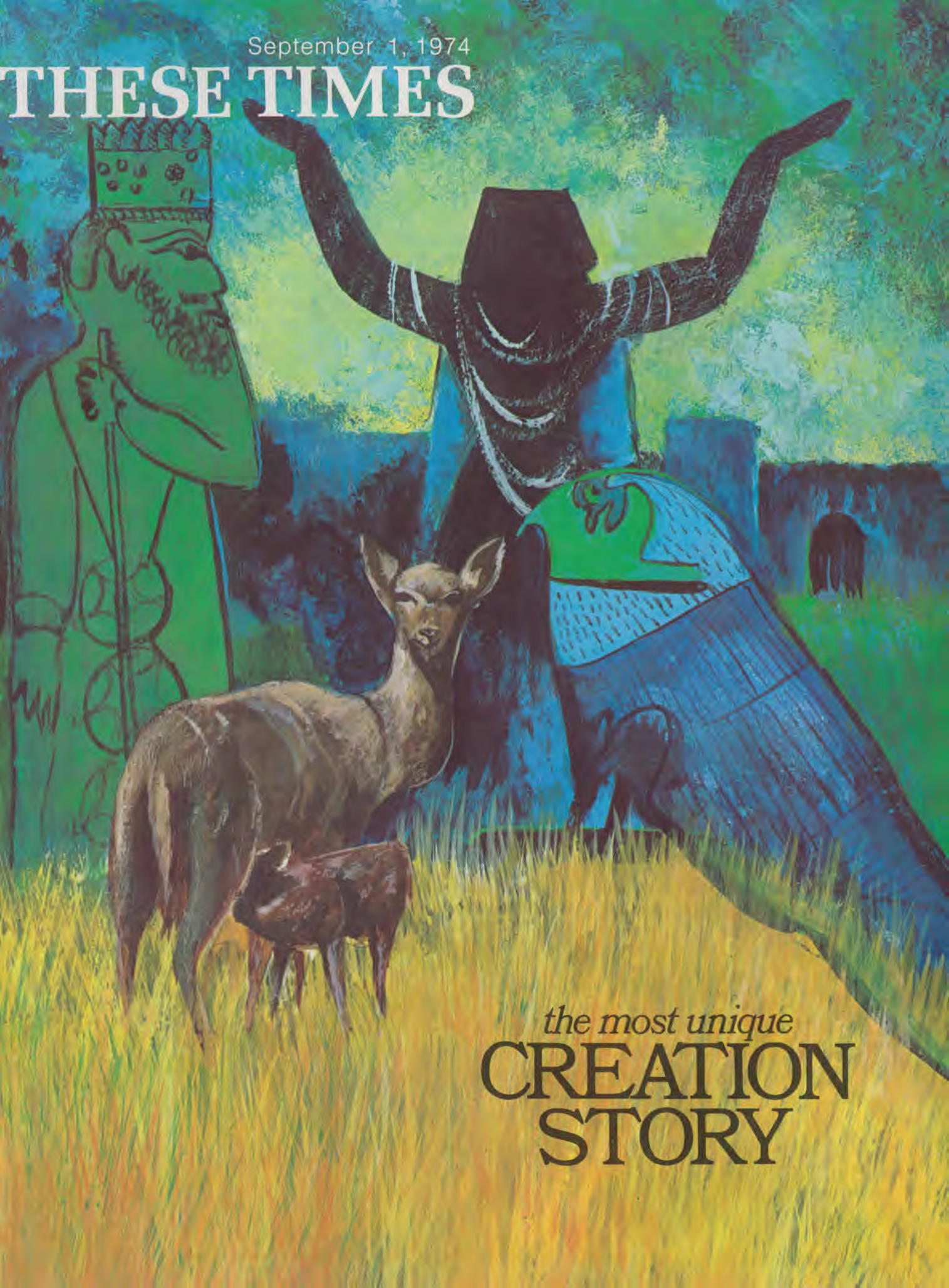


September 1, 1974

THESE TIMES



the most unique
**CREATION
STORY**



the most unique Creation Story of the Ancient World

What makes the
Genesis Creation story
so distinctly different
from all other ancient
accounts of how life
began?

by Gerald Wheeler

DURING the past few years heated discussions have wracked a number of school boards and state legislatures. Emotions have sometimes flared to white heat. The question causing all this furor revolves about whether to teach the subject of special creation in public schools.

Commenting on the debate in the California state board of education, a correspondent for the British magazine *Nature* acidly stated, "Those who favor the most literal interpretation of the myths of Genesis have been able repeatedly to put to rout the feeble forces of reason."

Besides labeling anyone who believes in a literal interpretation of Genesis as unreasonable, this statement classifies

Genesis as a collection of religious myths. Of course, the *Nature* writer was only following a long tradition of those who consider the Biblical creation story to be just another ancient, fanciful explanation devised by ignorant men to account for the origin of the world about them.

Ever since archaeologists discovered such ancient documents as the *Enuma elish*, many Biblical scholars have tended to view the first few chapters of Genesis as nothing more than a restructuring of the creation stories current among the people living at the time of the Bible writers. For example, when archaeologists translated the clay tablets of the *Gilgamesh Epic*, which tells about a devastating flood that almost wiped out all life on earth, they immediately assumed that the Hebrews had borrowed it or a similar myth and

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reshaped it into the Biblical narrative of Noah's Flood.

When Biblical scholars find some resemblance between part of the Bible and an ancient Middle East document or tradition, many assume that the Hebrews employed it as the source of the Biblical narrative. (Nobody ever seems to assume that the ancients borrowed some idea or concept from the Hebrews.)

Preoccupied with finding the *parallels* between the Bible and the writings of the people around the Hebrews, such scholars tried to ignore or overlook the *differences*. More important than the similarities between the beginning chapters of Genesis and the other ancient creation stories are the fundamental variations. Examining them, we will discover how uniquely Genesis portrays the origin of the world.

Most ancient myths of how the world began depict it as the result of a great struggle of some kind. The gods fought each other and then created the earth, the heavens, and living things out of the bodily parts of the vanquished gods. According to the Babylonians, the god Marduk fashioned the heavens by splitting the goddess Tiamat in two like a shellfish. Another god, Ea, made man from the blood pouring out of the severed blood vessels of the primeval monster Kingu. A Sumerian myth tells of the creation of man from the blood of Lamga, god of the carpenters. In all the ancient, non-Biblical accounts, the creation of life occurred after some kind of fight to the death between the gods over who would be supreme, or after a struggle with the forces of chaos. The Godhead of the Bible, however, worked *harmoniously* together. (See Genesis 1:26.) The Genesis creation story has a dignity that the ancient myths lack.

Genesis portrays God effortlessly bringing matter and life into existence. He did not have to overcome rival gods or rampaging elements and forces. Instead of *fighting* sea monsters, as in



According to several ancient legends, human life arose from such struggles as this between a god and a monster.

Babylonian narratives, God *created* them. (See Genesis 1:21.) When God merely spoke a word, the physical earth appeared, and plants and animals began their lives. God's word is not magical, such as the Egyptians mentioned in their creation stories, but a simple command that has creative power only because the Speaker is the Creator God Himself. Nor in Genesis does matter have inherent properties which a magical word set into action such as the Egyptians imagined, but God brought the matter itself into existence. God simply commands and it is so.

The Egyptians often explained the beginning of life through the only sources of life they knew: sexual activity or the fertile waters of the Nile and its annual floods. In some Egyptian accounts creation began with a giant egg. Still other myths described life originating in the mud just as plants and animals seemed to spring spontaneously from the silt deposited by the Nile.

In Genesis God never created through sexual activity. Nor did the waters mentioned on the first day of creation produce life. The water had no inherent supernatural qualities; it was simply one of the elements which God created.

The people of the ancient Middle East viewed the stars and planets as powerful gods. The sun was often the main god in the religious pantheon, and the moon usually a somewhat lesser deity. But instead of describing these heavenly bodies as being self-existent or self-creating, Genesis pictures God as making them for a purely utilitarian purpose: providing light and marking off time. Moses did not even mention the sun and moon by name, for that would be using the names of pagan deities. He referred to them as greater and lesser lights.

The civilizations of Mesopotamia worshiped the stars and believed that the heavenly bodies influenced the lives of those on earth. But the author of Genesis seems only to mention them in passing, almost as if in afterthought, when he declares, "He made the stars also" (Genesis 1:16). Genesis reveals no belief in astrology. On the contrary, its writer seems to bend over backward to avoid giving recognition to pagan astrological worship.

The Egyptians depicted creation as a slowly developing process. Genesis portrays God making the world and its creatures in a series of instantaneous steps.

Two Views of Creation

Although scholars have generally emphasized superficial similarities, the Genesis account of Creation contains fundamental differences which set it apart as unique from all other ancient creation stories.

Enuma elish and other ancient near-eastern creation stories

1. Polytheistic emphasis
2. Presents physical matter as having always existed. The gods fashion life from existing matter.
3. The gods themselves arise from physical matter. Matter is the source of life.
4. Creation results from great cosmic struggles between the gods, or between gods and chaos.
5. Man is created from the remains of slain gods.
6. The universe exists for the benefit of the gods; man is created to be a servant carrying out tasks the gods do not want to do.
7. Permeated with astrology; the planets, moon, and stars are viewed as deities.
8. Creation is related to the cycle of the seasons; the gods die and revive as the seasons change.
9. The creation account is dominated by the realm of the gods; earthly events are merely reflections.

Genesis creation account

1. Monotheistic viewpoint
2. God creates matter itself which did not previously exist.
3. God is independent of matter and controls it. Matter itself is inanimate.
4. Pictures creation as a harmonious process with no conflict between God and other forces.
5. Man is created in God's image from inanimate matter.
6. The earth is created for man's benefit; he is given rulership over it.
7. No astrological references; the heavenly bodies are created by God for the utilitarian purpose of giving light.
8. Contains no cyclical theme; creation begins at a definite point and continues.
9. Creation is earth-centered; what happens on earth is the important aspect.

Ancient myths viewed the creation of man in a fundamentally different way from Genesis. In the Babylonian *Atrahasis Epic* the gods made man because the junior Igigi gods went on strike against the seven Anunnaki senior gods. Feeling overburdened, the Igigi gods rebelled against their taskmaster, Enlil. The senior gods got together to figure out how they could pacify the lesser gods. They came up with the idea of making mankind so that the human beings could do all the work necessary to support the gods in their accustomed manner. The *Enuma elish* document describes a similar situation.

In Genesis we see man not made as an afterthought to do some unpleasant tasks but man fashioned as the pinnacle and crown of creation. God created man in His image and gave him dominion over the entire earth. God is not

concerned about humanity's providing Him food, but in His bestowing bounty on them. (See Genesis 1:27-29.) Man is master of a planet, not the slave of quarreling and quibbling imperfect gods.

The Genesis story is earth centered. What takes place here appears as the important thing. Other creation accounts see the earth and what happens on it only as an inferior reflection of what happens in the domain of the gods.

A number of ancient creation stories depict the major god or gods arising out of the physical matter of the world, but Genesis describes a God who is independent of what He creates. God existed before matter, not the other way around.

The ancients saw the world and history as a cycle, usually tied to the seasons. The gods became active during the rainy season, for example, then died or

fell asleep during the dry period of the year. When the rains returned, they revived. Baal went to sleep during the dry months of the year, a belief Elijah alluded to when he mocked the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel. After they had tried for some time without success to call down fire on their altar, Elijah said, "Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is musing, or he has gone aside, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened" (1 Kings 18:27, RSV).

Ancient peoples believed that just as man had to live by natural cycles, so did the gods and the course of history. The annual flooding of the Nile Valley regulated Egyptian life. Other lands and civilizations viewed life as determined by dry and wet seasons, or summer and winter. History repeated itself



every year or in longer cycles. The people acted out elaborate ceremonies to ensure that the cycles would keep going on. If they did not reenact the annual resurrection of the god, he might not bestow blessings on them.

History as presented in Genesis does *not* follow a cyclic pattern. It begins at a definite point in time—Creation Week—and proceeds from there. God is not trapped in a yearly or regular cycle beyond His control. He is above history. Instead of being governed by the yearly round of the seasons, He made them and used astronomical bodies to mark off their passage. (See Genesis 1:14.)

We still see some of the ancient concepts in existence today. One theory of the origin of the universe conceives of its beginning with a huge explosion of a primeval mass of matter. The universe expanded to a certain size, collapsed on itself, and the whole process started over again. Instead of a yearly cycle as in the Middle East religions, we have one that extends over billions of years. Evolution and uniformitarianism echo the slow development of the world contained in many Egyptian myths which attempted to explain the formation of the world. And, of course, uniformitarianism has its foundation in a series of endless natural cycles. In addition, all modern scientific

theories of how life and the world began emphasize the inherent properties of matter itself rather than the Being who created matter.

Many other examples exist, such as the order of creative acts, to show that the Genesis creation story was unique in the ancient world. The Hebrews did not borrow myths from the cultures around them, give them their own little twist, and then offer the whole as their account of how the world began. The differences between Genesis and the creation myths of the Middle East are too major and too fundamental. Genesis reveals insights that run counter to the culture and thought patterns of the ancients. While God's people have always borrowed symbolism, metaphors, and other ways of expressing divine concepts from the cultures around them, still the ideas themselves are alien to those cultures.

Scientists who equate Genesis with ancient creation myths do not understand what these tales were really like. The fact that Genesis resembled no other creation story supports its claimed supernatural origin. A document so out of keeping with surrounding cultures could hardly have been created by those cultures. Instead of rejecting the Genesis creation narrative, we should see what it has to teach us today. ●

An Egyptian myth depicts the creation of the universe with Shu, god of the air, holding up the body of sky-goddess Nut, while Geb, god of the earth, reclines at his feet.

the bridge

by Martin Buxbaum

STANDING THERE beside the big hissing and pounding pile driver and hustling workmen, I was confused. A truck roared close by, loaded with steel rods.

This was my first few moments on the jobsite of one of the most dangerous of all industries—bridge building.

I was a scrawny young fellow then, with no experience. My hobby was poetry and my training, art. Only dire necessity had forced me to apply for the job of timekeeper, but I was to receive through it an education in human relations I could never have found in books.

The superintendent on the job was one of the toughest-looking men you'd ever want to see. He knew nothing of the King's English, but he did know how to handle men. He took about three minutes to tell me what he wanted done, showed me the timekeeper's shack, and walked away, spitting tobacco juice into the thick dust as he went.

The job was comparatively simple—giving the men brass tags when they reported in, marking their time in, taking up the tags at the end of the day, and marking them out. Twice, during each day, a spot check had to be made. In this, it was my job to take a clipboard and check off each man on the job to make certain he *was* on the job and hadn't taken off somewhere.

I made the first round by some miracle and came back to the shack utterly exhausted. I'd never walked so far, climbed so much, or ducked so many things in my life. Dropping my safety helmet on the table, I swore then that I'd begin looking for another job.

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Suddenly the door opened and a foreman came in. Behind him was a huge black laborer, face and overalls covered with the gray talc of cement.

"Patch him up," said the foreman. "He's got cement burns." Then he shifted his cud of tobacco and walked out.

I had noticed a large first-aid box in the corner, but no one told me I was also supposed to handle first aid. I opened the box and found an instruction booklet. I leafed through until I found a section on concrete burns. Hastily, but thoroughly, I read the instructions, then turned to the man. "Where are the burns?" I asked.

He pointed to his legs.

Filling a basin with water, I told him

to take off his boots. He did, and my stomach churned when I saw what the concrete had done to his skin. There was also a vile smell caused by the infection and the hot rubber boots, and I have an extremely weak stomach. I tried holding my breath as I put the basin down beside his feet.

Those legs! Huge sores had begun to run. The raw alkali in the concrete had already eaten like lye. I dipped a piece of gauze into the solution of warm water and green soap—and stopped. What kind of crazy situation was this! I was born and raised in the South, and here I was about to wash a Negro's feet!

Inwardly all the bigotry and intolerance of several generations welled up



Photograph by Bill Grimes/Image

in me. They could take their stinking job . . . And then I glanced up into the face of the black man for the first time. His expression was one of shame, mixed with pain. It was as if I had spoken all my thoughts out loud. We looked deep into each other's heart—I, who had never encountered unpleasantness, and he, who had been forced to live with it for a lifetime. This time it was I who felt ashamed.

Gently I placed one foot and then the other into the basin and began cleansing the sores. When I was done, the offensive odor was gone, and somehow I had the feeling that I, too, was cleansed.

I bound his feet with clean gauze after applying some salve. The job looked so neat that I had to smile. He, too, was smiling.

"Come back tomorrow," I told him, "and I'll change the dressing."

"Okay, Doc, if you say so. And thank you very much." We shook hands and he left.

"Doc"—no nickname ever gave me more pleasure!

I began to read all I could about first aid, for there were over three hundred men on the job who might need me—me, who had always been dependent upon others, it seemed. In the months that followed, I doctored everything from splinters to broken bones, and in doing so got to know the men so that they became as brothers instead of mere acquaintances.

One payday I had to make my usual rounds to pay the men. The contract called for paying them in cash only; so the bookkeeper and I would fill the small brown envelopes, and then I'd put them into an over-the-shoulder black leather bag and start out. Those men made good money, and it was not unusual to go out of the office with over \$25,000 in cash in my bag.

My first stop was always down in the big cofferdam. A cofferdam is an immense box made of interlocking steel plates sunk into the riverbed. The water is then pumped out of it, exposing the bottom of the river.

Carrying my paymaster's pouch, I rode the big clamshell bucket down into the cofferdam. Working there were about one hundred men, shoveling mud, drilling into the rock with pneumatic drills—the noise was always deafening. Some sixty feet above our heads was the surface of the river, and there was always the danger of the cofferdam "blowing" when some of the steel plates would give way from the

tremendous pressure of the water and the water would rush into the cofferdam and blow everything in it hundreds of feet into the air.

Back in a hollowed-out cave of the rock I found the last man on my list of those in the cofferdam. Joe was chipping away loose stone with a chisel and small, heavy hammer. He saw me and stopped.

"Hiya, Doc! Eagle spits today, huh?" He reached into his pocket and pulled out his brass ID badge.

"Sure does, Joe," I answered, getting out his pay envelope.

Joe was a pleasant sort of guy, though he had a brawl scar from his left cheekbone down to the corner of his lip. He signed for his money, and I turned to leave.

"Hey, Doc!"

I stopped.

"I know how much you got in that poke, Doc."

I tensed but said nothing. There were just two of us in this rock cave that was just one of many in the cofferdam.

Joe laughed. "Shucks, Doc; don't worry none. Ain't nobody gonna bother you while old Joe's around! I ain't forgot the day you patched up my head. Remember?"

I remembered. Joe wasn't wearing his hard hat that day, and someone had dropped a wrench on his head from about fifteen feet up.

"Yeah, Doc, anybody bothers you on this job and I crease their skull with this—" He hit a corner of the rock with the hammer, and a large piece spattered off.

"Thanks, Joe," I muttered, and walked out into the blessed sunlight.

It was on a payday a few months later, and the superintendent handed me two envelopes.

"Why *two*?" I asked.

"You just got yourself a raise. I put your raise in a separate envelope so your old lady won't know you got it. Don't pay to let her know *everything* you make." Before I could thank him, he surprised me again.

"I'm takin' you off this job. Tomorrow you report to the siding. I want you to supervise the laying of that railroad spur beside the bridge approach."

"But I don't know anything about laying a railroad track," I protested.

"Tain't nothin' to it—grade's already in, material's there, and you got a good crew." With that he walked out.

The next morning after a sleepless

night, I stood in a ring of brawny black laborers, each stripped to the waist.

"Fellows," I began, "I'm going to level with you. I don't know beans about putting in a rail spur. I want all of you who've ever laid track to stand here, and the rest, over there." Over half the men stepped forward. "Has any one of you ever been a foreman?" I continued.

One hand, belonging to a man named Ethan, went up.

"I used to be a singer, Doc."

"What's a singer?"

Two or three laughed. Ethan explained to me that a singer sang in rhythm when track was being laid or spikes being driven so that all would work together.

"Good, Ethan. You take charge, teaming an experienced man with an inexperienced one. Me—I'll carry water to you."

They poured their hearts into the work. Ethan was superb, and I can still hear his deep and sincere voice singing as his ancestors must have sung when they laid the steel rails across America:

"My Lawd is so high . . . uh!"

At that "uh" twenty backs would cord with muscles, and the heavy steel rails would be lifted and slid forward a couple of feet. The rail tongs would be moved for a fresh hold just as Ethan got to the second line of the song:

"You can't get over Him . . . uh!"

"So wide, you can't get around Him . . . uh!"

"So low, you can't get under Him . . . uh!"


"You must come in by the door!"

Each day I brought them water, and they gave me sweat—between us the spur was finished ahead of time, for which all got a bonus.

Never again would any job be too difficult for me, for I had learned the truth of the saying that "no man walks alone."

The day finally came when the bridge was finished. I stood on a hill and watched the crew cleaning up. I couldn't help feeling sad, for somehow you realize that many of the friends you've worked with for so many months are those you may never see again.

"Beauty, ain't it?" It was the superintendent who had come up behind me. Together we looked at the mass of concrete and steel arching gracefully over the river.

"Sure is," I replied. "And it's not the only bridge that was built in these past twenty-four months either." 

Government encourages gambling

"PEOPLE GAMBLE. They always will. We only want to tap that market as an income source for government while giving the people what they want."

So goes the reasoning behind the renewed push for state lotteries, off-track betting, and legalized gambling in states like New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. But the sorry reality is that the novelty of lotteries wears off (every state with a lottery system has reported lessened interest after the first year), and, if the gambling itch is to continue to feed the government's coffers, new markets must be developed. People who never gambled before must be sold on the idea.

Psychology Today's March issue chronicled the disastrous life confronting some six to ten million Americans who have become addicted to gambling, a predicament as pathetic as alcoholism. "Whatever the correct figure, a great many Americans can be classified as compulsive gamblers, or gambling addicts. They regularly gamble more often and lose more money than they intend to, to the point of serious financial and personal consequences. Most of them borrow heavily to finance their habit, and some commit crimes to get money to cover their losses. No matter how much they lose, however, and no matter how many times they vow to stop, compulsive gamblers, like drug addicts or alcoholics, just cannot seem to quit."

Is this a satisfactory by-product in our search for a profitable way to finance government?

Britain's "Post-Christian Atmosphere" Makes It World's Toughest Mission Area

Britain presents the toughest area of mission because of "its atmosphere of post-Christian society," Dr. Colin Morris, general secretary of the Methodist Missionary Society, told a rally of fifteen hundred in Liverpool's Philharmonic Hall. But Dr. Morris, former minister of Wesley's Chapel in London, did not let the West as a whole escape. "The West is the most intractable mission area in the world, compared with all other continents," he said. "It is infinitely more difficult to confront a post-Christian society than a pre-Christian one."

Dr. Morris was addressing the Merseyside Annual Methodist Missionary Rally. He said the age of the Western missionary's self-confidence is over. It had been replaced by a new age of

worldwide Christian proclamation by many different traditions, characterized by clergy coming from the Third World to serve in British inner cities, some thirty-five hundred missionaries being sent between Third World countries without any obligation to Western churches and the widespread recognition that no church could renew itself—"renewal always comes from the outside."

Exiled Seminarians Lose Right to LCMS Pulpits

A split seems inevitable in Lutheran Church Missouri Synod now that LCMS Commission on Constitutional Matters (their Supreme Court) has ruled that students who graduate from Concordia's seminary in exile—Seminex—will not be eligible for ordination in LCMS unless they complete their theological training at a "recognized" synodical institution.

If churches call unauthorized pastors, they face forfeiture of their LCMS membership. Compromise is physically possible—through some sort of consortium program—but is hardly likely. Most graduating Seminex students are expected to become pastors.

The Amnesty Question: To Forget or Not to Forget?

Amnesty is the subject of a church-wide study paper prepared by Presbyterian Church, U.S. The first half, appearing in *The Presbyterian Outlook* (April 1), presents four very pertinent considerations:

"1. Amnesty means forgetting, not remembering, erasing from the record. . . . To grant amnesty is neither to say, 'You did wrong, but we forgive you,' nor, 'You did right, and we commend you.' . . ."

"2. . . . Both the President and the Congress have the constitutional right to proclaim or enact amnesty, but neither has the constitutional obligation to do so. Amnesty is an act of grace. No recipient of amnesty has a legal claim to it.

"3. There is ample historical precedent for a government to grant amnesty to various classes of its citizens following a war.

"4. . . . The question of amnesty ought to be considered in terms of two prior questions: First, would a generous act of forgetting and erasing from the record, war-related offenses be in the public interest? Second, would it be just?"



Signs of Confusion

BRADFORD, PA.—One could give spiritual meaning to these signs. Some of the arrows point up and some point down. But the driver of this car remains unfazed as he drives across a bridge in Bradford, Pa., to his destination on the other side. The choices presented may prove rather confusing to other motorists, however.

Secular Journal Finds Moral Education Lacking in America

While many religious periodicals struggle to say as little as possible about Watergate and its moral implications, secular journals are doing what evangelicals should be doing. The spring issues of *The American Scholar* and *The Yale Quarterly Review* are prime examples. Witness Yale's comments: "There is an important link between Watergate and the nation's moral and cultural condition.



"We do have a problem about civic virtue in this country—broader than Watergate, symbolized by Watergate. A democracy requires democrats—citizens who understand and fulfill its rather difficult moral requirements and restraints. *Where is the education for such democrats, such citizens?*"

"The comic circular effort to avoid responsibility that we saw in the Ervin Hearing—every man pointing to somebody else, each man saying, 'I didn't do it, somebody else did,' the decisions apparently made by the janitors or by nobody—may be taken as a symbol of the problem of moral leadership in the nation. Each Watergate person said it wasn't I, I just did my part, I was a conduit, I was a messenger; I took the money but I didn't know why; I raised the money but didn't ask how it was spent; I made the call but I didn't know what it meant; I typed a memo but I didn't read it. . . ."

"We may take that as a metaphor for the United States at present. Where is the moral clarity that democracy requires? Where are the leaders who shape the values the citizenry must have?"

And, with the breakdown of the home (divorce rate climbing past 40 percent of all marriages), declining influence of the church, and alleged neutrality in public schools, a more crucial question arises: Where are our future leaders going to be taught any moral values at all?

Temperance Leader Says Russia Leading Out in Temperance

Ernest H. J. Steed, executive secretary of the International Commission for the Prevention of Alcoholism, reports that Russia is set on a course aimed at high morality. Steed, who is also secretary of the Temperance Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, says the country is engaged in a campaign to promote clean living without alcohol, tobacco, or harmful drugs. Through science it plans to develop man to the point where he will not fall prey to disease and old age. The commission, which is nonpolitical and nonsectarian, is proposing a convention on the prevention of alcoholism to be held in Bulgaria in August of 1975.

Adventists Up Missionaries Sent Out

Once again more missionaries than in the previous year headed overseas for Seventh-day Adventist assignments. Secretary of the 2.3-million-member de-

nomination Clyde O. Franz reported to the spring business council of the church that 704 missionaries went to overseas mission posts. Over half of them were from North America. In addition to the salaried missionaries, there were 435 volunteer missionaries and nationals returning to their homelands after completing study programs in the States. The Adventist Church employs more than sixty thousand workers in 193 countries.

Gallup Rates Religious Interest High Among Nation's Youth

Seldom in history have the American people craved moral and spiritual leadership more than today, George Gallup, Jr., believes. Speaking for his American Institute of Public Opinion, the pollster said the typical citizen is searching for new heroes—heroes with character, not just charisma.

He said moral and spiritual leadership by the church in America will depend upon two key groups among the populace: (1) those with a college background, and (2) young adults in America who will set the tone for religion in the decade ahead and provide the nation's leadership. The declining influence of the church has often been blamed on these two groups, he noted, "yet survey evidence strongly suggests that these groups could well be in the vanguard of religious renewal in this country."

The famous Gallup Poll indicates that all signs point to the fact that religion is gaining a new intellectual respectability in the United States. The assumption that the educated person "needs" religion less and is more ready to discard religion as a product of ignorance and superstition, Gallup said, is not borne out by survey findings.

Vietnam's First Heart-Lung Machine

SAIGON—Technician Raymond Savage operates the first heart-lung machine ever put into use in Vietnam during open-heart surgery at the Saigon Adventist Hospital. Mr. Savage is a member of a team of American cardiac specialists who came to Saigon in April from the School of Medicine at Loma Linda University, a Seventh-day Adventist medical educational center 60 miles east of Los Angeles, Calif. By the time the group leaves Saigon they are expected to perform about 40 open-heart and 20 closed-heart surgeries.

The team arrived in Saigon with approximately \$50,000 worth of equipment and supplies for use in the care and treatment of heart patients. Most of the equipment and all of the supplies were donated by American pharmaceutical and surgical supply houses. One piece of equipment, the \$18,000 heart-lung machine, will be left at Saigon Adventist Hospital for use later in open-heart operations.





Angels are for real

by Ellen G. White

Angels exist outside of children's classrooms at church. They come in two varieties—good and evil—and they affect your life.

THE CONNECTION of the visible with the invisible world, the ministration of angels of God, and the agency of evil spirits, are plainly revealed in the Scriptures, and inseparably interwoven with human history. There is a growing tendency to disbelief in the existence of evil spirits, while the holy angels that "minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Hebrews 1:14), are regarded by many as the spirits of the dead. But the Scriptures not only teach the existence of angels, both good and evil, but present unquestionable proof that these are not the disembodied spirits of dead men.

Before the creation of man, angels were in existence; for when the foundations of the earth were laid, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." (Job 38:7.) After the fall of man, angels were sent to guard the tree of life, and this before a human being had died. Angels are in nature superior to men; for the psalmist says that man was made "a little lower than the angels." (Psalm 8:5.)

We are informed in Scripture as to the number, and the power and glory, of the heavenly beings, of their connection with the government of God, and also of their relation to the work of redemption. "The Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all." And, says the prophet, "I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne." In the presence-chamber of the King of kings they wait—"angels, that excel in strength," "ministers of His, that do His pleasure," "hearkening unto the voice of His word." Psalm 103:19-21; Revelation 5:11. Ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, were

the heavenly messengers beheld by the prophet Daniel. The apostle Paul declared them "an innumerable company." Daniel 7:10; Hebrews 12:22. As God's messengers they go forth, like "the appearance of a flash of lightning" (Ezekiel 1:14), so dazzling their glory, and so swift their flight.

The angel that appeared at the Saviour's tomb, his countenance "like lightning, and his raiment white as snow," caused the keepers for fear of him to quake, and they "became as dead men." Matthew 28:3, 4. When Sennacherib, the haughty Assyrian, reproached and blasphemed God, and threatened Israel with destruction, "it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand." There were "cut off all the mighty men of valor, and the leaders and captains," from the army of Sennacherib. "So he returned with shame of face to his own land." 2 Kings 19:35; 2 Chronicles 32:21.

Angels are sent on missions of mercy to the children of God. To Abraham, with promises of blessing; to the gates of Sodom, to rescue righteous Lot from its fiery doom; to Elijah, as he was about to perish from weariness and hunger in the desert; to Elisha, with chariots and horses of fire surrounding the little town where he was shut in by his foes; to Daniel, while seeking divine wisdom in the court of a heathen king, or abandoned to become the lions' prey; to Peter, doomed to death in Herod's dungeon; to the prisoners at Philippi; to Paul and his companions in the night of tempest on the sea; to open the mind of Cornelius to receive the gospel; to dispatch Peter with the message of salvation to the Gentile stranger—thus holy angels have, in all ages, ministered to God's people.

A guardian angel is appointed to every follower of Christ. These heavenly watchers shield the righteous from the power of the wicked one. This Satan himself recognized when he said, "Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast not Thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?" Job 1:9, 10. The agency by which God protects His people is presented in the words of the psalmist, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Psalm 34:7. Said the Saviour, speaking of those that believe in Him, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father." Matthew 18:10. The angels appointed to minister to the children of God have at all times access to His presence.

Thus God's people, exposed to the deceptive power and unsleeping malice of the prince of darkness, and in conflict with all the forces of evil, are assured of the unceasing guardianship of heavenly angels. Nor is such assurance given without need. If God has granted to His children promise of grace and protection, it is because there are mighty agencies of evil to be met—agencies numerous, determined, and untiring, of whose malignity and power none can safely be ignorant or unheeding.

Evil spirits, in the beginning created sinless, were equal in nature, power, and glory with the holy beings that are now God's messengers. But fallen through sin, they are leagued together for the dishonor of God and the destruction of men. United with Satan in his rebellion, and with him cast out from heaven, they have, through all succeeding ages, co-operated with him in his warfare against the divine authority. We are told in

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is the most prolific woman writer of all time.



Scripture of their confederacy and government, of their various orders, of their intelligence and subtlety, and of their malicious designs against the peace and happiness of men.

Old Testament history presents occasional mentions of their existence and agency; but it was during the time when Christ was upon the earth that evil spirits manifested their power in the most striking manner. Christ had come to enter upon the plan devised for man's redemption, and Satan determined to assert his right to control the world. He had succeeded in establishing idolatry in every part of the earth except the land of Palestine. To the only land that had not fully yielded to the tempter's sway, Christ came to shed upon the people the light of Heaven. Here two rival powers claimed supremacy. Jesus was stretching out His arms of love, inviting all who would to find pardon and peace in Him. The hosts of darkness saw that they did not possess unlimited control, and they understood that if Christ's mission should be successful, their rule was soon to end. Satan raged like a chained lion, and defiantly exhibited his power over the bodies as well as the souls of men.

The fact that men have been possessed with demons is clearly stated in the New Testament. The persons thus afflicted were not merely suffering with disease from natural causes. Christ had perfect understanding of that with which He was dealing, and He recognized the direct presence and agency of evil spirits.

A striking example of their number, power, and malignity, and also of the power and mercy of Christ, is given in the Scripture account of the healing of the demoniacs at Gadara. Those wretched maniacs, spurning all restraint, writhing, foaming, raging, were filling the air with their cries, doing violence to themselves, and endangering all who should approach them. Their bleeding and disfigured bodies and distracted minds presented a spectacle well-pleasing to the prince of darkness. One of the demons controlling the sufferers declared, "My name is Legion: for we are many." Mark 5:9. In the Roman army a legion consisted of from three to five thousand men. Satan's hosts also are marshaled in companies, and the single company to which these demons belonged numbered no less than a legion.

At the command of Jesus, the evil spirits departed from their victims, leaving them calmly sitting at the Saviour's feet, subdued, intelligent, and gentle. But the demons were permitted to sweep a herd of swine into the sea; and to the dwellers of Gadara the loss of these outweighed the blessings which Christ had bestowed, and the divine Healer was entreated to depart. This was the result which Satan designed to secure. By casting the blame of their loss upon Jesus, he aroused the selfish fears of the people, and prevented them from listening to His words. Satan is constantly accusing Christians as the cause of loss, misfortune, and suffering, instead of allowing the reproach to fall where it belongs—upon himself and his agents.

But the purposes of Christ were not thwarted. He allowed the evil spirits to destroy the herd of swine as a rebuke to those Jews who were raising these unclean beasts for the sake of gain. Had not Christ restrained the demons, they would have plunged into the sea, not only the swine, but also their keepers and owners. The preservation of both the keepers and the owners was due alone to His power, mercifully exercised

for their deliverance. Furthermore, this event was permitted to take place that the disciples might witness the cruel power of Satan upon both man and beast. The Saviour desired His followers to have a knowledge of the foe whom they were to meet, that they might not be deceived and overcome by his devices. It was also His will that the people of that region should behold His power to break the bondage of Satan and release his captives. And though Jesus Himself departed, the men so marvelously delivered, remained to declare the mercy of their Benefactor.

Other instances of a similar nature are recorded in the Scriptures. The daughter of the Syro-Phenician woman was grievously vexed with a devil, whom Jesus cast out by His word. Mark 7:26-30. One "possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb" (Matthew 12:22); a youth who had a dumb spirit, that oftentimes "cast him into the fire, and into the waters to destroy him" (Mark 9:17-27); the maniac who, tormented by "a spirit of an unclean devil" (Luke 4:33-36), disturbed the Sabbath quiet of the synagogue at Capernaum—all were healed by the compassionate Saviour. In nearly every instance, Christ addressed the demon as an intelligent entity, commanding him to come out of his victim and to torment him no more. The worshipers at Capernaum, beholding His mighty power, "were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power He commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out." Luke 4:36.

Those possessed with devils are usually represented as being in a condition of great suffering; yet there were exceptions to this rule. For the sake of obtaining supernatural power, some welcomed the satanic influence. These of course had no conflict with the demons. Of this class were those who possessed the spirit of divination—Simon Magus, Elymas the sorcerer, and the damsel who followed Paul and Silas at Philippi.

None are in greater danger from the influence of evil spirits than those who, notwithstanding the direct and ample testimony of the Scriptures, deny the existence and agency of the devil and

his angels. So long as we are ignorant of their wiles, they have almost inconceivable advantage; many give heed to their suggestions while they suppose themselves to be following the dictates of their own wisdom. This is why, as we approach the close of time, when Satan is to work with greatest power to deceive and destroy, he spreads everywhere the belief that he does not exist. It is his policy to conceal himself and his manner of working.

There is nothing that the great deceiver fears so much as that we shall become acquainted with his devices. The

"Angels that excel in strength are sent from heaven to protect those who follow Christ."

better to disguise his real character and purposes, he has caused himself to be so represented as to excite no stronger emotion than ridicule or contempt. He is well pleased to be painted as a ludicrous or loathsome object, misshapen, half animal and half human. He is pleased to hear his name used in sport and mockery by those who think themselves intelligent and well informed.

It is because he has masked himself with consummate skill that the question is so widely asked, "Does such a being really exist?" It is an evidence of his success that theories giving the lie to the plainest testimony of the Scriptures are so generally received in the religious world. And it is because Satan can most readily control the minds of those who are unconscious of his influence, that the Word of God gives us so many examples of his malignant work, unveiling before us his secret forces, and thus placing us on our guard against his assaults.

The power and malice of Satan and his host might justly alarm us were it not that we may find shelter and deliverance in the superior power of our Re-

deemer. We carefully secure our houses with bolts and locks to protect our property and our lives from evil men; but we seldom think of the evil angels who are constantly seeking access to us, and against whose attacks we have, in our own strength, no method of defense. If permitted, they can distract our minds, disorder and torment our bodies, destroy our possessions and our lives. Their only delight is in misery and destruction. Fearful is the condition of those who resist the divine claims, and yield to Satan's temptations, until God gives them up to the control of evil spirits. But those who follow Christ are ever safe under His watchcare. Angels that excel in strength are sent from heaven to protect them. The wicked one cannot break through the guard which God has stationed about His people.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is a chapter from the beautifully illustrated book *The Triumph of God's Love*. For information write to Book Department, Box 59, Nashville, Tennessee 37202. The book opens with the sad closing scenes of Jerusalem's history, the city of God's chosen, after her rejection of the Man of Calvary, who came to save. Thence onward along the great highway of the nations, it points us to the persecutions of God's children in the first centuries; the great apostasy which followed in His church; the world-awakening of the Reformation, in which some of the great principles of the controversy are clearly manifest; the awful lesson of the rejection of right principles by France; the revival and exaltation of the Scriptures and their beneficent, lifesaving influence; the religious awakening of the last days; the unsealing of the radiant fountain of God's Word, with its wonderful revelations of light.

This book, then, answers the questions that come to every man concerning the great controversy between darkness and light. Surely the God who created in us the longing for the better, the desire for the truth, will not withhold from us the answer to all needed knowledge; for "the Lord Jehovah will do nothing, except he reveal his secret unto his servants the prophets."]



LIKE MOST PEOPLE who have stumbled after God and religion for any length of time, I've heard many prayers. I've heard the beautifully bashful bedtime whispers of small children, the flowery and fumbling but sincere prayers of the beginning minister just out of seminary, the painful mumblings of an alcoholic or dope addict "trying anything once"; I've heard the great worshipful thunder of the large congregation and the pleasantly warm drone of the small one; I have been gladdened by countless prayers of praise and thanksgiving and saddened by no few anguished bedside and graveside mournings to God.

All these and many other such prayers have come my way at one time or another during my Christian years. And, too, I've made a few prayerful attempts myself along the way, some that obviously got off the ground and some that went clunk against the ceiling and fell back into my lap. But of all the prayers I've ever listened to or been a part of, one sticks out in my memory above all others. And as is often the case with the really important things in our lives, this prayer is the simplest and least dramatic of all the prayers I've heard. But even

The name meant nothing to me as I read it on the job ticket the next morning while picking up the materials at the warehouse. But later that day, after having worked around his beautiful and quietly luxurious home for several hours, dragging in and out various tools and paraphernalia, continually running into him and making conversation in the process, I learned that he had been quite a famous entertainment personality and orchestra leader some years back.

The walls of his den (his refuge, as he called it) were covered with mementos from many famous friends and noted occasions: photos of himself posed with show business personalities, letters from important political figures commending him for one thing or another, and small relics from his obviously broad global travels.

Mr. Mandell was a man in his mid-sixties, the picture of good health, and obviously possessing a keen sense of humor. He had a certain rich-spirited air about him, the same aura that seems to surround any thoroughbred or large-souled creature. He enjoyed talking about anything under the sun, from his

day and had to return on the following morning.

Arriving early by usual work standards, I unloaded my tools under a sun porch and knocked on the side entrance door. "Come right in," I heard Mr. Mandell shout from an alcove in the dining area. He was still talking on the phone with the same person as I started about my work, and because of the unavoidable closeness, I could not help but overhear his part of the conversation. In short, he was giving some business associate a genuine tongue-lashing. Finally, I heard him return the receiver to its cradle with a slam and walk heavily out through the back door.

An hour or so later I was sitting quietly under a large hedge near a water faucet, waiting for a blow torch to cool. I saw Mr. Mandell come from the far end of his lot with two buckets of grapefruit. He had a definitely worried look on his face as he stopped a short way from me and took a seat on a sculptured lawn bench. It was clear that he had not seen me and thought himself to be entirely alone.

For some time he sat there with his head lowered, apparently in deep thought. His eyes were slightly glistening when finally, in a soft but determined move, he raised his head and looked up into the clouds, as though at some specific little spot in the heavens, and said, "Lord, I apologize."

Those three little words—"Lord, I apologize"—so simple, so plain; yet they've completely altered my entire prayer experience, needless to say, with a marked shortening effect. But the whole prayer was longer—three more words and some listening time. After having said the first three, Mr. Mandell bowed his head again, raising it occasionally and gazing up at the little spot in the clouds, until finally it was as though some invisible hand were tugging at his chin, nudging his attention in the direction of the telephone. His cloud gazings became shorter and shorter as he yielded to this tug at his chin. After a few moments he abruptly stood up with his hands at his sides, flicked his curled fingers in a straight and emphatic gesture, and half grumbled, "Oh, all right!"

Shortly thereafter he headed for the back door of the house, the two buckets of fruit in his hands. As I was coming back into the house to go about my work, I heard him go to the phone and dial a number.

Mr. Mandell had let God have His turn in the prayer too.

The greatest prayer I ever heard

by Robert L. Clay

more humbling, and maybe a bit ironic, it was quite by accident that I heard it at all.

I lived in Sarasota, Florida, at the time, running my small business in floor coverings. I often subcontracted part of my work from a large furniture business in town, and this was how I happened to hear this unusual prayer. The manager of the store asked me to install a custom kitchen floor for a Mr. Allen Mandell who lived on Saint Arman's Key.

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working days to his pleasantly different ideas on various moral issues and current events.

Being somewhat of a talker myself, I made it a point to see that he didn't lack for conversation while I was on the premises. I marveled, too, at just how well you can get to know a person in a single day, when aided by visual contact with many of his personal interests and belongings. In a sense, you see him as he actually lives. Possibly because of my near enchantment with Mr. Mandell I was unable to finish the job on the first



Helping others in very practical, everyday ways has always been a major part of Christianity. Here is a group doing just that. They call themselves . . .

Flying

THE CESSNA broke out of the clouds at about fifteen hundred feet, and there was the village below, basking in the sun. As the pilot banked to check the wind sock at the end of the dirt strip, a fairly sizable group had already gathered. The plane landed, bounced to a stop, and four people climbed out, dressed in jeans and sturdy boots—practical attire for this rugged country.

The waiting group surged forward, waving and smiling, as the new arrivals reached back into the plane for their bags and headed for the adobe building about a hundred yards away. There the dentist set up his equipment outside in the sunlight; the two doctors began seeing their patients, listening carefully to the halting description of symptoms; and the nurse prepared the pharmacy. The Flying Samaritans' free clinic at El Arco was now open for business.

The flight to El Arco, a tiny village in the central area of Baja California, had originated about three hours earlier in San Diego. The people on board were members of Flying Samaritans, Inc., a group of volunteers who have dedicated themselves to providing medical help to the people of Baja California, Mexico, a nine-hundred-mile-long peninsula of rugged mountains, treacherous deserts, and incomparable beauty.

One of the people waiting for the team that day was Senora Castro with her eight-month-old son, Ricardo, who was very ill. A friend told her to bring the baby to the clinic; so the day before she had left her village high in the mountains and walked to El Arco.

Ricardo was indeed gravely ill. Eight months old and weighing only ten pounds, he was obviously suffering from malnutrition and severe dehydration.

The two doctors exchanged worried glances and, while the Spanish-speaking nurse reassured the frightened Senora Castro, quickly administered intravenous solutions. Because of the baby's extremely critical condition, plans were

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Samaritans

by Thelma White

hurriedly made to have one of the doctors and the nurse fly the child to a hospital in southern California as soon as possible.

Within the hour Ricardo was on his way to an intensive-care facility where skilled medical teams went into action to save this tiny one's life.

Ricardo is nearly two now, a laughing and healthy child, scrambling around the hills near his home, with no memory of his brush with death.

The story of the Flying Samaritans really begins back in 1961 when Aileen Saunders, a famous pilot and winner of many air races, was flying back to San Diego from a vacation in La Paz, the southernmost town of the Baja peninsula. Head winds forced her down at Rosario, a village about 250 miles south of San Diego. While she waited for the weather to clear, she was treated to the somewhat-awesome hospitality of the people of Rosario. No effort was too great to help the stranded pilot. One man traveled miles to locate gas for her plane. Meanwhile a feast of sorts was prepared, and everyone for miles around gathered to enjoy an evening of singing and dancing with their unexpected guest. As Aileen Saunders observed the poverty of these cheerful people, she promised herself to return again to this village with gifts of food, clothing, and help.

Back in San Diego, she spoke with several members of her flying club, as well as the Civil Air Patrol and friends who had spent time in Baja and loved the people and the country. Among those she contacted was Dr. Dale Hoyt, at that time senior medical officer for the Civil Air Patrol. He agreed to go along on the return to Rosario, and a couple of weeks later nine planes landed at the tiny airstrip, loaded with clothes, toys, and gifts of food. Dr. Hoyt announced he would give medical aid to anyone who requested it, not realizing what he promised. It was dark when he finally put away his stethoscope and closed his medical bag. He had examined over one hundred people, including one woman who after hearing a doctor had come walked several miles to Rosario



carrying an infant and leading a four-year-old by the hand. Dr. Hoyt diagnosed her case as pneumonia and gave her the necessary medication, checking the children at the same time.

But many of the people Dr. Hoyt saw that day required medical attention that he was completely unprepared to give. He saw the urgency of the problem and decided something must be done. Back in San Diego he sent out a plea for doctors, dentists, nurses, pilots, X-ray and lab technicians—anyone who could help. The response encouraged him, and a small group quickly organized. At the first meeting they assessed their needs. A portable generator headed the essential list since no electricity existed in Rosario. X-ray machines, dental equipment, drugs, and pharmaceuticals would have to be located; in short, everything required to set up the clinic must be gathered and transported to the village.

The people of Baja are generally patient and genteel, aware of their distress, but with no means available to help themselves. Dietary deficiency, water pollution, and lack of basic medical knowledge increases their problems and often causes a desperate situation of un-

treated disease. Although the transpeninsular highway is now complete, no paved roads link the isolated villages. Despite ever-expanding programs by the Mexican government, medical facilities simply do not exist outside the major cities. Clearly Dr. Hoyt and his group needed a health-care center, fully staffed and equipped, and operating on a regular basis. The newly formed Flying Samaritans determined to provide this.

The members located a 5 kw generator; the widow of a physician donated her late husband's office equipment; doctors all over San Diego County donated their medical samples. These items were loaded onto a truck and the difficult overland trip to Rosario began.

Those first few weekends after the clinic at Rosario began operating, the doctors treated as many as a thousand people each Saturday and Sunday. The dentist pulled over three hundred badly decayed teeth in a few hectic hours, and the pharmacy dispensed huge quantities of medicines.

One old man collapsed suddenly while having dental work done. The alarmed dentist, thinking his patient had had a heart attack, quickly called to the doc-



tors. The team went into immediate action, but just as they began an electrocardiogram, the generator quit. After frantic efforts to get it working again, the old man revived. He proved to have a strong heart, and with careful questioning, the doctors discovered he had simply fainted from hunger.

The clinic always kept a good food supply on hand, but because of the work the dentist had just done, the old man was unable to eat anything solid. The nurse got some hot soup into him, and after a couple of hours he began to feel fine. Thanking everyone in sight, he left for home, gap-toothed but happy, carrying a supply of food from the clinic's stores.

One Sunday the team had a curious visitor—a man named Andy Bradley drove up in an ancient and much-repaired Jeep. He requested that the Flying Samaritans stop at his clinic in Colonet, about eighty miles up the coast. No one even knew there was a clinic there, but they would be glad to stop by, and agreed to fly there the next weekend.

Bradley, a retired engineer, had lived at Colonet for many years. He was a Mexican-American who loved Baja California and its people and had built the tiny hospital himself, giving what medical aid he could to the people of the area. Being untrained and un-

licensed, however, he was extremely limited in what he could do. If the Flying Samaritans could set up a regular schedule for the Colonet clinic, it would help the people of that area tremendously.

The first two links in the growing chain of medical-aid stations began that day. Today, twelve years later, the Flying Samaritans have established seven clinics which they visit on a regular basis and four clinics which receive occasional visits.

One of the towns that has benefited from the help of the Flying Samaritans is the tiny and remote village of San Francisco. For years Baja buffs have speculated about the existence of this village. Stories of a town high on a plateau in the rugged and largely unexplored Sierra Columbia Mountains have circulated among the pilots and hunters spending time in the peninsula. One of the Flying Samaritan pilots determined to locate this elusive village and, after hours of searching, finally found it. He made a couple of low passes over the town and spotted an area that could make a landing strip.

The villagers understood the pilot's meaning and immediately started clearing a landing area. Later, when the field was completed, the first doctors into San Francisco could hardly believe what they found. Families lived in stone-

wall, thatched-roof huts, the dirt-floor dwellings clustered together like ancient Indian villages. Laboriously constructed stone corrals confined herds of goats.

It seemed incredible that such a primitive existence could be found so near such a major-population area as California, which is only three hours' flying time away from the almost complete isolation of these people. A few of the men made the dangerous three-day trip down the mountain to the nearest village only a couple of times each year. Meanwhile the people tended their goats and raised what food they could. With no underground water supply, they had to depend upon rainwater, which they ingeniously diverted into a series of pools. But, when there was no rain, there was no water.

In spite of the difficult mile-long hike from the landing strip into the village, San Francisco is one of the favorite stops for the Flying Samaritans. They are digging a well for the town and hope to have fresh water soon.

For the first few years the Flying Samaritans kept extremely busy caring for a population that needed urgent medical care.

To make their contribution to the people of Baja more helpful, the Flying Samaritans decided good health must begin with good education. Plans for a program of preventative medicine



blossomed, and with the cooperation of the Mexican government, a massive program of inoculation began. Up and down the Baja peninsula, children and their parents lined up for polio, smallpox, diphtheria, tetanus, and typhoid inoculations. It proved to be a staggering undertaking. Tubercular tests revealed a very high incidence of lung disease. These people were dying of diseases that had all but disappeared in many areas of the world.

In 1970 the group dedicated their agricultural and industrial secondary school at San Vincente. The members of the Flying Samaritans built the school brick by adobe brick and paid the staff of Mexican teachers. The director of curriculum for the Monrovia, California, school district set up the course of study. Priorities of the school included learning how to drill for fresh water, establishing some sort of sewage-disposal system, learning to grow the kind of foods that provide a nutritious diet. The medical group has a real sense of accomplishment in their success at San Vincente.

The school now has 75 in attendance, but plans call for a future enrollment of 350 resident students.

Considering the relatively small number of people who initiated this entire medical program, the results are nothing short of miraculous. The volunteers pay their own expenses, including planes and

gas, and outfit the clinics with gifts of equipment. During their twelve years of existence the Flying Samaritans have treated approximately seventy-five thousand patients, which translated into current medical costs amounts to nearly ten million dollars!

In spite of the necessary investment of time and money required of each member, the number of Flying Samaritans continues to expand. The original membership of thirty has grown to over a thousand dedicated volunteers today. A chapter has opened in Los Angeles; another in Bakersfield. These new chapters also send teams into Baja to staff the growing number of clinics and to extend the range of aid.

One factor that has enabled the Flying Samaritans to enlarge the scope of their program is the fact that the Mexican officials and medical personnel are cooperating in the operation of a number of the clinics. Mexican doctors and nurses now staff the clinics at Rosario and El Almo on a full-time basis. The flying medical teams still visit these clinics for consultation, but the day-to-day operation is controlled by the Mexican Social Service doctors. The Civil Association of San Vincente is assuming more responsibility in the conduct of the school and is trying to obtain assistance from the national government.

The Flying Samaritans send out a monthly newsletter, written by the mem-

bers themselves and dealing generally with reports of clinics visited and patient load. One story was a bit different. A team on its way to one of the clinics in Baja with a truckload of supplies spent the night en route at the small village of Mission Santo Domingo. They were greeted excitedly by a Pastor Garcia who told them that his new chapel, scheduled for dedication the next day, had been named The Church of the Good Samaritan, in honor of the Flying Samaritans. He, Pastor Garcia, had written a song for the occasion, and they must come to the ceremony.

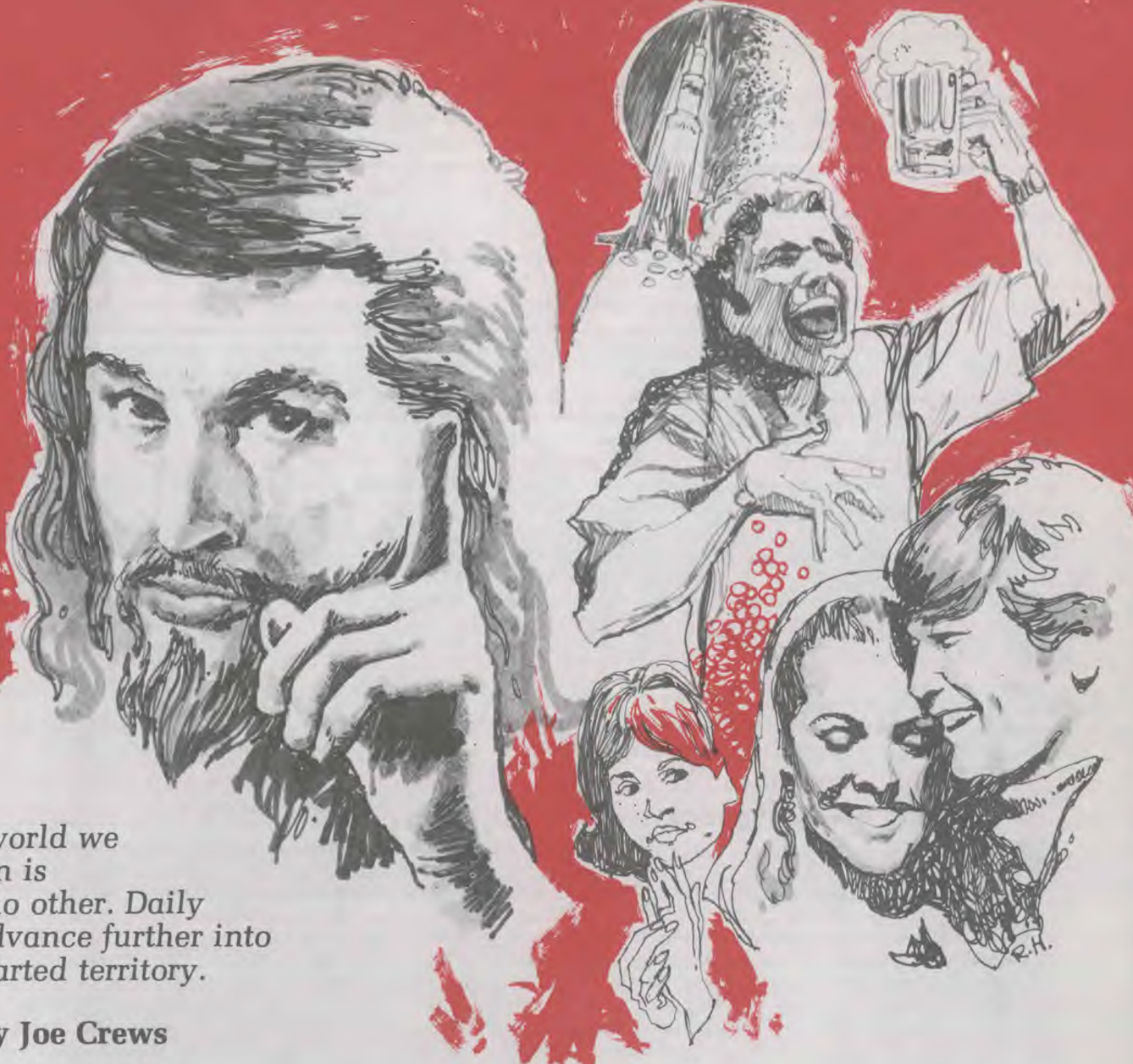
The next morning, when the team arrived at the church, the pastor sat at the keyboard of an ancient piano, beaming at his guests and the crowd of people who had gathered for this important event.

As one team member wrote:

"After warm handshakes and embraces all around, we were on our way again, unmindful of the long miles and hours of waiting that were to fill the next twelve hours. The only thing that came to mind the rest of that day was how good it feels to be a Flying Samaritan."

The words of the group's motto express the same feeling: "There is a destiny that makes us brothers; none goes his way alone. All that we send into the lives of others, comes back into our own."





The world we live in is like no other. Daily we advance further into uncharted territory.

by Joe Crews

Marching off the map

WHEN Alexander the Great led his victorious armies through Asia Minor, he came at last to the foothills of the mighty Himalayas and the Khyber Pass. Beyond lay India and the nations of the Orient. For Alexander this was a very new and exciting experience. As far as he was concerned, he was actually standing at the end of the world. Up until that time no maps had been charted of those vast regions beyond the Khyber Pass, so when he led his troops forward, Alexander was quite literally marching off the map of the world.

For a good while now this generation in which we live has also been marching off the map. Talk about treading on uncharted territory and facing new experiences—we've seen

nothing like it before! Events of our day have been so strange and startling that they stagger the imagination. The rapid-fire newsbreaks involving scandal, misplaced trust, and decaying moral standards dazzle our minds.

On the same newscast we hear about Watergate with its unprecedented political morass, Skylab with its unequaled space probe, and energy shortages unknown in earth's history before. No wonder the average American is hard put to grasp it all and to believe what he hears.

Our day is surely the one point in time when history is *not* repeating itself. We are marching off the map, wrestling with problems which have never appeared before, and almost every authority agrees that it will get much worse before it gets better. Even the Bible writers anticipated the time when "evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Timothy 3:13). Jesus also

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spoke of spiritual apostasy, physical convulsions, and social upheavals. We've seen them all in their most exaggerated form. If men have eyes to see and ears to hear, they have to believe that these Biblical descriptions of the last days are filling the headlines of the newspapers of today.

In Luke 17 Jesus made a dramatic comparison of social conditions in Noah's day and our own day. "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all" (Luke 17:26-28).

At first glance these activities do not seem to be so terrible. People have always gotten married, and everyone eats and drinks. But Jesus was not talking about the normal pursuit of these things; He was speaking of the *gross perversions* that would mark the end of time. He pinpointed divorce, gluttony, and drunkenness as the fundamental sins of Earth's last society. We do not have to look long or far to discover that these are, indeed, our own present paralyzing problems. While other countries suffer from malnutrition and starvation, one of the great physical afflictions of affluent Americans is obesity. And the drinking problem almost defies belief.

"Isn't it a strange and contradictory fact that the most enlightened age should be the one with the grossest problems?"

According to the latest estimates we have at least nine million alcoholics in this country alone, and fifteen hundred new ones are being made every day—most of them women, by the way. Almost every newspaper and magazine editorializes on the evil consequences of this mass "disease" of drunkenness, but no one has come up with a solution for it. Writers quote vast reams of statistics on industrial losses, divorces, and highway fatalities—incredible, astronomical devastation in both money and human life—then they end up as one editor did with these words: "Now I don't want to suggest that no one drink, but what is the answer to this problem?"

Authorities are afraid to suggest the real solution. They brush aside the fact that no one has ever become an alcoholic who did not take that first drink. Even the President's Co-operative Commission on the Study of Alcohol did not come back with the recommendation that people stop drinking. The best they could do was to suggest that parents begin giving alcohol to their children at an early age so that they could learn to "handle" their drink. What a solution to the problem! That approach is almost as ludicrous as the one the Lawyers' Club in Washington, D.C., came up with when they wanted to raise money to help rehabilitate alcoholics: by sponsoring a big cocktail party!

In the meantime the cancerous evil festers and metastasizes. You can't possibly comprehend all the figures involved, but look at the stupendous amount spent last year on alcoholic beverages in the United States—19.1 billion dollars. That represents thirty-five gallons for every man, woman, and youth eighteen years of age or over. Believe it or not, that is over five pints a week for each person, on the average. And obviously a lot of people are drinking more than the average because they get mine and I hope they get yours also. No wonder Jesus said drunkenness would be one of the giant evils of the last days.

Isn't it a strange and contradictory fact that the most enlightened age should be the one with the grossest problems? Here we are living in the scientific comfort of nuclear technology. Never have we had better education, more progress, more luxury, or more leisure time on our hands. These are the "things" which are supposed to bring us security and happiness. We hear: "If only I had *time* to do the things I want to do," or "If I just had money to get what I want, I could be satisfied." But with materialistic priorities fast being realized for multiplied millions of Americans, the expected happiness has never resulted. In fact, the opposite has been true. The more progress we make, the more luxury, education, and time we have, the more insecure and unfulfilled we seem to be.

Emotional disorders have proliferated, even as the educational standards have been elevated. Suicides and mental breakdowns seem to grow in proportion to the rise in materialism.

Even little children have not escaped the frustrations and tensions of modern living. Some time ago the mayor of New York City appointed a special education committee to study the needs of the one million public school children in that great city. Their report was shocking in the extreme. Over half of those children were found to be in need of specialized psychological help. *Christianity Today* reported that in one year over four thousand students at the University of Colorado were receiving professional counseling for emotional ills. That means roughly one third of the student body. Here is another example of marching off the map. Such confusion of the youth has never been known on such a grand scale before.

And what can we say about the perversion of marriage which Jesus related to the final moments of history? Divorce has become, along with alcoholism, one of the most disruptive factors in the social fabric of our country. The 1973 Statistical Abstract, prepared by the U.S. Department of Commerce, reveals that there is currently one divorce for every 2.7 marriages. While 2,269,000 radiant couples were taking the solemn vows never to forsake each other, 839,000 other miserably divided couples were formally absolving themselves of those earlier promises. The average duration of those 2.5 million marriages performed annually is just under seven years. What a commentary on the instability of the home and family!

Try to envision the results of all that marital disharmony on the innocent children. For every three divorces there are four children involved in the trauma. But add to this tragedy the findings of the latest census that 2.5 million more American homes have separated spouses. Think of the millions of children affected by these additional broken and divided homes.

Jesus also described some of the terrible physical problems at the end of the world. "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; 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. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (Luke 21:25-27).

Most people have the strong impression that storms, floods, and earthquakes are on an alarming increase. The scientific data of recent years confirm that these fears are justified. Demographers continue to warn of inevitable earthquakes of growing intensity. Pressures are building up beneath the crust of our earth, and the great fault areas are expected to be the focus of unprecedented convulsions in the near future.



The tornado reports are a powerful commentary on these words of Jesus: "The powers of the heavens shall be shaken." With the roar of a thousand freight trains, rampaging twisters have desolated large areas of the countryside. From 106 destructive tornadoes in 1946, 272 in 1951, and 604 in 1969, we closed 1973 with a grand total of 1,091, which left losses beyond estimate.

I'm afraid. Don't misunderstand me now. I'm not afraid of the earthquakes, storms, and "waves roaring," but I'm afraid that millions are going to sleep right through these tremendous days of destiny and will be unprepared to meet the Lord Jesus at His coming. I'm afraid the soft, materialistic life has lulled many into a fatal slumber from which they will not awaken. The comfortable homes, the luxurious cars, and the hypnotizing eye of television have sapped the spiritual awareness of countless church members. By worldly conformity and by preempting the time for prayer, Bible study, and self-examination these compromised souls have strangled their only source of spiritual strength.

Addressing the ones who will be eyewitnesses of His return, Jesus said, "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Luke 21:34). These words from anyone less than the Son of God might only evoke ridicule or indifference, but when Jesus says, "Be careful," it pays us to listen. "Take heed to yourselves," He said. There is absolutely nothing mysterious or hidden about the dangers He spelled out for those looking for His return.

Notice again the three things Jesus mentioned in Luke 21:34. He mentions "surfeiting," "drunkenness," and "cares."

Notice how they parallel the eating, drinking, and marrying warning which He gave in Luke 17:27. Surfeiting is nothing more than an inordinate fleshly indulgence of the appetite, numbing the spiritual nature. Drunkenness is condemned by the Saviour as an act which would cause us to be unaware of that "day." But notice the expression "cares of this life." This phrase includes any or all of the common materialistic concerns which might hinder the required preparation to meet Christ. In Mark 4:19 Jesus connected the "cares of this world" with the "deceitfulness of riches," indicating that those cares had much to do with the possession of things. The obsession with possessions has created an alarming indifference toward the return of our Lord.

These, then, are the deadly perils warring against our preparation to meet the returning Christ. How do you fit into the picture? Do you find yourself weighted with some of those "cares"? Perhaps you have escaped the drunkenness, gluttony, riches, and divorce snares, but how about the "cares of this life," the accumulation of petty irritations, the nagging anxieties of home and family? Have you allowed them to cumber your walk with Christ? Paul wrote, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus" (Hebrews 12:1, 2).

Besides the sins, there are weights—weights of care, of incompatibility, of alienated families. Paul says we cannot win the race with those weights upon us. We must give them to Jesus. Our only hope is to keep looking to Him who will carry every burden for us. Lay them upon Him now in full surrender and know the exhilarating joy of eternal life this very moment.



Marriage by trial and error

What do you think about "trial marriages"? They seem sensible to some.

Your question recalls the sad commentary of Solomon: "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions" (Ecclesiastes 7:29). Why does sinful man think his moral "inventions" and experiments will be an improvement upon the divine arrangement? Rationalizing man is often the victim of self-deception.

In the first marriage the Creator set forth His ideal for the human family. God did not create one man and three women, or three men and one woman. God did not make several of each sex and say, "Now, go and experiment; try out a partner, and if it works, we will cement the bond." On the contrary, God created one man and one woman. And in His presence He joined them together and celebrated the first marriage (Genesis 2:21-24). Commenting on the divine ideal, Jesus asked, "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more

twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:4-6).

Since that first wedding, the people of God have followed the custom God's action implied: a celebration of the union of the two—a husband and wife—in the presence of others. In Judaism, of course, the state and the religion were bound together in a theocracy, and so a marriage in that society was legal as well as religious. It is true that a mere legal act does not render a marriage all that it ought to be. From the Bible viewpoint, however, the marriage was designed to be a permanent union, a blending of two lives in a bond of responsible love. On this principle the Bible would forbid "trial marriages." Marriage is "for keeps"; any union beyond the first, unless the first was dissolved for the cause of infidelity (Matthew 19:9), would constitute immoral and adulterous conduct (compare 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; Galatians 5:19-21; Revelation 22:14, 15).

Since marriage was ordained by God, He has given His people this instruction: "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from immorality; that each one of you know how to take a wife for himself in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like heathen who do not know God; . . . for God has not called us for uncleanness, but in holiness" (1 Thessalonians 4:3-7, RSV).

God did not design that we should live like animals who, beyond the moment of the sex act, do not for the most part know the unity of a home with responsible love. Trial marriages may seem to open up a wide vista of happiness, suggesting the concept that if a given union doesn't work, another, and another can be readily tried until one is found that clicks. In reality the concept promotes loose living and is simply a variant form of immorality with its scarring effects on the personality.

A trial marriage has at the start several strikes against it. Although the mores of a culture may be changing somewhat, yet the community in which such a couple lives will still regard their union as something less than a marriage. To the state it will be a "common-law" situation, but not legally valid. The couple cheat themselves since they enter into the relationship with reservations. It is a fact that it takes years to blend two lives together; no couple automati-

cally lives in harmonious union. Being self-centered by nature, partners in marriage must make serious efforts to pull together. But in a situation where the couple are not fully committed to each other, minor trials can make the "home" a shambles. To be pitied are the children born to such alliances. Irresponsible passion does not and cannot produce the fruit of genuine happiness and loyal companionship.

The Christian home in which Christ is respected—where responsible, unselfish love of two committed persons is the guideline; upon which rest the blessing of God and the recognition of the community—can be a bit of heaven on earth. But outside this Christian perspective lies a trail of exploitation, heartbreak, and frustration.

I owe a bill of many years' standing. Recently my conscience has been convicted that I should make this right. The store is no longer operating, however, and its owner has moved away. What can I do to obtain God's forgiveness?

A neglected, unpaid bill is one form of stealing and as such is a sin against God as well as man. Be assured that it is the Holy Spirit who is bringing the matter to your mind. Sincere repentance includes restitution wherein we have defrauded others. God declares, "If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezekiel 33:15). Anciently God instructed the penitent Israelite to restore what he had taken from his neighbor plus 20 percent of its value. He was also to confess his sin and bring a trespass offering to God. (See Leviticus 6:2-6.) However, if the man who had been wronged was no longer alive, nor any of his kinsmen, then he was to give the same amount he had taken with the added 20 percent to the Lord, that is, to the priest who represented the Lord. (See Numbers 5:7, 8.)

This is safe counsel to follow today. Since you have sought without success to find this businessman and have confessed your mistake to God, I would suggest that you give the amount you owed plus 20 percent to the Lord by means of the church. God will accept your will for the deed and will graciously forgive you.



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.



Time is not your enemy

Too often we try to make time stand still instead of entering into eternal life by faith in Jesus Christ.

by C. Raymond Holmes

GEOFFREY NATHANIEL PYKE, born in 1894, was a genius, an eccentric genius. Despite being a man of unkempt appearance, he was at various times an advertiser, a financier, an educator, a propagandist, a journalist, a statistician, a military tactician, an inventor, an economist, and a philosopher. He is best known for his concept of the special forces unit during World War II and the winter military vehicle called the "weasel." After the war Pyke was deeply involved in trying to solve problems dealing with basic laws of the universe. He tried to establish a set of radical rules that would govern certain aspects of

time and space. He tried to understand time itself, in spite of the fact that not even Albert Einstein was able to reduce time to an equation. Pyke died by his own hand because of his frustration and his impatience with the infinite.

Although the average person today may not be wrestling philosophically with the concept of time, yet most of us sense a growing fear of what we feel is the swift passing of time. We cannot control it. We live in an age of technology in which we make things happen; we build, move, tear down, produce changes, all in the name of progress, yet we can do nothing about the passing of time. In fact, the harder we work, the faster time passes, it seems. The accelerated pace of life only increases our dis-

appointment and hopelessness.

Man has always longed to find the fountain of youth, but it perpetually eludes him. Like Pyke we all experience an exasperated impatience with the infinite. We build buildings in our search for permanence, yet frantically we tear them down in our drive for progress, or ferociously blast them to bits in the extreme expression of our frustration in war. Twenty years ago I labored as a bricklayer in Lake County, Illinois. Today at least two of the modern buildings I helped construct have been torn down. It pains me to observe the space in which I worked and sweated one hot summer now occupied by a totally new and strange structure. It seems as though something has been wrenched out of my

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life before my life is even over, a sort of death before dying. I'm certain it is because I feel the relentless march of time.

The Bible says, God "has put eternity into man's mind" (Ecclesiastes 3:11, RSV*). Man longs for eternity, but he seeks it by trying to make time stand still rather than entering into eternal life by faith in Jesus Christ! Thank God that He has put eternity into our minds! In spite of the fact that in our misguided search for eternity we have brought untold misery upon ourselves, no one would ever find salvation were it not for the grace and mercy of God in causing us to want it.

In reality, eternal life is our greatest desire, and in our unsatisfactory search we see time as our unrelenting enemy. Time is running out, and we have not yet found what we are looking for; our wrinkles tell the tale. We live in a paradox, for while we are so passionately in love with life, we have a desperate hatred of time. The Bible says, "He has appointed a time for every matter, and for every work" (Ecclesiastes 3:17). Understood rightly, the passing of time is actually a part of God's provision for our salvation and the eternal happiness of each one of us.

There are moments in time when God reveals Himself to us. He is not so much a God of places as He is a God of moments. He does not come to us in a particular place, but in a particular moment of time. That moment may be any moment. God is not confined to a church building, to an altar, to your favorite place of prayer. To be sure, He is there, but He is there because you turn to Him at a moment of time.

God's Sabbath is not a place, but a moment of time. God has hallowed this period of time each week in order that you and I might use it for our physical and spiritual benefit, that we might come to Him in a special way in worship and praise.

One of our greatest problems today is that we know what to do with things, but we don't know what to do with time. Things we use. Time we kill. We emphasize *doing* rather than *being*. In terms of human relations, we use one another instead of appreciating each other for his intrinsic worth. We compete instead of cooperate. We view humanity primarily in terms of utilitarian value, and we discard people when their usefulness is at an end in much the same way that we discard a paper plate. One tragic by-product of this throw-away

mentality is that wives, husbands, and children are being discarded in increasing numbers in our society. Divorces and broken homes have skyrocketed in recent years.

We use much of our energy in the acquisition of things which do not last. We would much rather contribute a large sum of money toward the building of a church structure, a place where we can go to worship, than to kneel alone in prayer in a moment of time. When will we learn that we cannot conquer time? When will we learn that we cannot make it stand still, that in our battle with it, we actually lose?

God knew that we would be like this. He is an all-knowing God of grace who supplies all our needs, even the need for sacred time. Immediately after creating man, God established the Sabbath hours, because He knew His creatures needed sacred and quiet moments with Him. He created the Sabbath day to help us see that time is not our enemy, that it is in reality our friend. He knew how important this sacred fellowship would be in the life of His creatures, and so He created certain hours in time for this to take place in a special way. To be sure, we can come to Him at any time, but the Sabbath hours are special. They are holy hours because God has made them so. We may not be able to explain this phenomenon satisfactorily, but it doesn't take too much mental effort to realize the need for sacred moments with the Lord.

It is not *where* we meet in worship, but *Whom* we meet, that has a lasting effect on our lives. Time has a meaning for us completely unrelated to things. Time has a meaning all its own. That is why the Sabbath hours are so important.

Man's life on earth actually began with God's holy day, since the first full day of human life was the seventh-day Sabbath. Each week, every seven days, we are reminded of our creation. The Sabbath reminds us that the events God has ordained will occur according to His timetable just as surely in the future as they have in the past. The Sabbath reminds us that time is completely controlled by God for His use.

As a memorial of creation, the Sabbath also shows us that each human being has intrinsic value and should not be considered merely on the selfish basis of his usefulness to ourselves. It tells us that we are to cooperate with each other rather than seeking to exploit others.

When we observe the seventh-day

Sabbath we participate in the holiness of time, and acknowledge God's creative acts in the past. In the Sabbath we also take our place with Him as He acts today, and look forward in anticipation toward the time when Jesus will intervene in human affairs and return to earth in all His glory and splendor as King of kings and Lord of lords.

We can change the arrangement of things; we can move the landscape, our home, our furniture, but we cannot change time. We can try to change it, but we cannot. The prophet Daniel spoke of one who would appear and "think to change the times and the law" (Daniel 7:25). Incidentally, no book of the Bible has more to say about time than does Daniel. Notice that this change of time is related to a change in the law of God, obviously the commandment dealing with God's seventh-day Sabbath. God, not man, controls time. In trying to change the sacred hours of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, man has usurped authority that belongs to God alone. God's seventh-day Sabbath, Saturday, will still be His sacred time whether or not we choose to keep it as such. Yet if we know God's will and continue refusing to obey Him, we sin against God.

At creation God did not establish a holy place, a shrine. Instead He created a holy day. We don't build church buildings so that we can worship God, but *because* we worship Him. Worship happens primarily in time, only secondarily in place. God does not sanctify things, but He does sanctify time. He has made the Sabbath so that we can have a time in which to turn away from our everyday cares and tensions. He knows we need to take our mind off the world of things and place our thoughts on time. He intends to use a holy day to make us into holy people.

No, time is not your enemy—it is your friend. The passing of time only brings you closer to that day when Jesus shall come again, closer to glory and eternal life. We will not find eternity by an effort to escape from time but by accepting time as a gift from God who made us. To enter into the Sabbath rest, then, is a faith response to God's love in Christ who is Lord of the Sabbath. It is to experience that which is eternal. The Sabbath of God proclaims to you that time is not your enemy, but your friend.

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



A sense of wonder

ON THE WHITE SANDS of Calangute beach, Goa, I came upon a young American boy. Clad only in a pair of shorts, he sat cross-legged, absolutely motionless. His eyes were fixed on the blazing red disk as it sank into the Arabian Ocean.

There are hundreds of young people on Goa's beaches. Americans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans, Italians—they have made this part of India a little Europe. Most of these youth have turned their backs on Western culture and religion. Consciously, deliberately, they have "dropped out."

Even in December the sun rules the Goa beach. The ocean is always warm; afternoons call for finding a shady bush or coconut palm and settling down for a siesta. But after four o'clock the tide ebbs and the beach returns to life. By six o'clock the air is pleasantly cool, and the huge red ball, despot of the day, retreats in silent defeat.

That defeat, however, is glorious. Once again life stops on the beach. Conversation dies away; all eyes turn to the West.

Whatever criticisms we may level at the followers of the counterculture, we must applaud their recovery of the sense of wonder. They have taught us to look around and behold the beauty of the world. They have reminded us that the best things in life are really free—the dew glinting on the new grass, the blackbird's song, the freshness of the morning, a snail's track gleaming in the light.

In the early 1800's Wordsworth wrote:

"The world is too much with us, late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers."

I wonder what he would write today! We have been caught up in a fevered race against time, victims of our insatiable appetite for things, slaves of what our slaves create.

The modern era has brought many gains. Science and technology have rolled back the frontiers of infant mortality, crippling disease, ignorance, and superstition. We are better fed, better clothed, better housed, better transported, better diagnosed, and better medicated than any other generation.

But, with all our getting—all our probing, analyzing, inventing, making, and acquiring—we have suffered loss. Some things do not yield to syllogistic logic, laboratory control, computerization. Some things are never seen from the window of a speeding Chevrolet (Hail to the return of the bicycle and the use of our feet!). Some things cannot be commanded, do not yield to committees, conferences, programs, and deadlines.

Perhaps that is why the psalmist wrote, in chapter 46, verse 10, "Be still, and know that I am God"; why Jesus said to His disciples, "Come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest a while" (Mark 6:31, RSV). Maybe it is back of another famous saying of His: "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3).

A sense of wonder! It sets us apart from the beast creation (no dog or monkey admires the sunrise). It enriches our living. And it lies at the heart of religion.

William Blake wrote, "What, it will be question'd, 'when the sun rises, do you not see a round disc of fire somewhat like a guinea?' 'O no, no, I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host crying, 'Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty!'"

WILLIAM G. JOHNSON



Praising God in Christian maturity

JUST BEFORE his retirement, Harry Christman, a flamboyant church leader, a man with a great gift for picturesque speech, used to say that he was not about to retire but that he was "edging toward maturity." Now that he has passed the sixty-five-year mark and is no longer in the organized work, he tells everyone who will listen that he is hastening on toward "superannuated oblivion."

Some of us have not yet reached the sunset years; we have not yet acquired a shuffleboard mentality; neither are we ready for oblivion. Each of us, however, must ask himself the question, Have we in our Christian experience matured or just aged? Have we let the fruits of the Spirit ripen to perfection or have we seen them shrivel up, wither, or become pulpy, even bitter? What about the quality of our lives as we all edge toward maturity?

Christian maturity, it seems to me, can be reckoned in terms of our intimacy with our great God—how often we find ourselves in our secret moments or openly praising Him for what He is. Maturity can be equated with praising God. It was William Law, English clergyman of the eighteenth century, who commented, "If anyone could tell you the shortest, surest way to all happiness and perfection, he must tell you to make it a rule to yourself to thank and praise God for everything that happens to you. For it is certain that whatever seeming calamity happens to you, if you thank and praise God for it, you turn it into a blessing."

Modern man tends to be arrogant with regard to his Creator; he is like the cock who thought the sun had risen to hear him crow. It is the genuinely mature individual who speaks well of God, who walks humbly with Him, who respects Him. Such respect is rare these days. It is usually reserved for those, young or old, who have taken the buffeting of life and found that there is no life apart from God. A great Christian layman put it pretty well when he said, "When I have my eyes on self, I feel large but insecure; when I have them on God, I feel small but adequate."

The Psalms contain the heart of the Old Testament. In them men expressed the inmost feelings of their being. Many of the psalms begin with doubt and distress and fear, but they end with praise to God. Here we find a glimpse of life itself—begun in perplexity and self-centeredness but ending in triumph un-

der God. In fact, those who edited the Book of Psalms ended their collection with six psalms of the highest paean to God, the last verse stating, "Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord."

Scripture poses no simple stimulus for instant praise but rather paints a walk with God. So Christianity was called "the way" in Acts. Perhaps we today need to repent and trust God again. God may lead us to new heights of thanksgiving by sending us to the depths. Or He may take us up and hug us for no discernible reason. One thing we can do is look at the psalms of praise to learn the key, scales, and harmonies of the world of praise. Take Psalm 100. The writer tells us how to praise—with a joyful voice, with gladness, singing, thanksgiving.

In the last days, just before Jesus returns, God's true people will not be so much concerned with whether they will be saved or not but that they in some way might let God down. Imagine the spiritual power among the readers of *THESE TIMES* alone if each of us would so order his life that in all we do our foremost thought would be, "I must not let God down." Imagine beginning each day with a prayer like this: "God, help me—just for today—not to let You down." Imagine sending sentence prayers to God all day long as the challenges present themselves.

This singular attitude reminds me of a comment attributed to Vince Lombardi, a man with so much talent he could have been a millionaire in any line of work he tried. This grisled tree trunk of a man once remarked, "Winning isn't everything—it's the only thing." Perhaps our stance could be: "Praising God by our life-style isn't everything; it's the only thing." Incidentally, it was this same Vince Lombardi who reminded his Green Bay Packer team, "If you don't put God in that locker room—let alone in your lives—you are wasting your time."

One could range far and wide to provide examples of individuals who championed an exalted kind of maturity—Enoch, Abraham, Paul. All these praised God for His acts in Creation, in the Exodus, in His long-suffering, patient dealings with His people, in the gift of His Son Jesus.

However, I would pay brief tribute to an obscure Scottish woman who in her own way typifies what praising God really means. Her name—Mrs. Morag

Duncan. In her early married life she was badly injured in an accident, with the result that she could never speak again. Seldom are mortals forced to bear a heavier cross. To those of us who accept the power of speech as something that is our right, Mrs. Duncan's loss is almost beyond human comprehension, but that was her lot for thirty years.

Yet in all that time there wasn't a happier home anywhere. Mrs. Duncan and her husband and children learned the sign language of the dumb, and in this way they talked freely together. She bustled about, performing her housewifely duties just as if nothing had happened. The neighbors came to love her more than ever, for she was never without her bright smile.

On Sunday evenings they would often drop in when the Duncans had their "family sing" around their piano. All would join in with the old hymns, and there in the center of the group would be Mrs. Duncan, "singing" the words in deaf-and-dumb language with her fingers.

This went on for a long time.

Then not long ago Mrs. Duncan died in her humble Scotch home. The most wonderful thing was that almost at the very end this gallant woman was singing in her heart, even though her voice was silent. Her son and her daughter were at her bedside, and they felt their eyes grow moist as they watched her raise her hands and motion out, for the last time, the words of her favorite hymn:

"O for a thousand tongues, to sing
My great Redeemer's praise!
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace."

Psalm 150:6 reads: "Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord."—KENNETH J. HOLLAND.

Japan Does Not Tolerate Crime

Crime is increasing worldwide. Not in Japan, however.

Tokyo has the least crime of any major city.

Crimes of violence, which keep terrified Americans off the streets and hiding behind shuttered windows, are not "tolerated" in Japan.

During the past ten years, the crime rate in New York City increased 300 percent; in West Berlin 200 percent; in London 160 percent. During those same years, crime in Tokyo declined 10 percent!



The *Wall Street Journal* saw those figures and designated Ed McDowell to go to Japan and seek their secret. It's no secret. Japan simply doesn't tolerate crime.

Despite overcrowding, inadequate housing and sanitation, dimly lighted streets and alleys—all the factors we blame for big-city crime—Tokyo is the safest big city in the world.

Last year there were some two thousand murders in New York; there were two hundred in Tokyo.

New York had almost 100,000 robberies; Tokyo 435.

New York suffered 3,000 rapes; Tokyo 465.

And Tokyo is bigger! Tokyo is a third larger than New York City!

Whereas many crimes go unreported in the United States and so don't count in the statistics, every crime is reported in Japan and most are punished.

Researching the reasons for Japan's conspicuously good behavior, reporter McDowell kept coming back to the tradition of "family closeness."

Japanese children are most always home for dinner, acutely anxious about how their behavior may reflect on their "family." Despite Western influences, there remains much filial devotion in modern Japan.

Japan's schools set aside two hours every week for moral and ethical education, stressing respect for others.

There are other factors: an island nation leaves no place to run to and hide; Japanese are workers, too busy for mischief; but, mostly, law is enforced in Japan. Tokyo police comprise the most modern, best-equipped "army" in the world.

What Scotland Yard used to do through the uncanny insights of fictional Sherlock Holmes, Tokyo's real-life police actually do with a bewildering gamut of electronics wizardry.

And Tokyo's police, in twelve hundred neighborhood stations, are closely identified with their respective neighborhoods. They patrol on bicycles or afoot, and they are instantly alert to the presence of any stranger.

Every Tokyo policeman is expected to visit every home in his neighborhood at least twice a year. Public opinion polls reflect immense respect for police.

Japan does not tolerate crime.

In Chicago, only 7 percent of criminals are indicted and only 3 percent of those are punished.

More than 50 percent of all reported

crimes in Japan are solved by police, and last year 99.18 percent of all defendants were found "guilty as charged."

—PAUL HARVEY.

Letters

June Strong Is Her Favorite

I just received the May issue of *THESE TIMES* and turned to my very favorite section—June Strong's. Her "Medley of Mothers" hit close to home, as I lost my mother when I was eight, and more than once there have been times when not even the dearest, most-loving second mother would fill the bill.

I've enjoyed your magazine for a long time, and each article has much meaning, but I've just got to say I think June Strong is the greatest! Every article she has written has had a personal, warm feeling for me.—Mrs. Billie Millis, Weedsport, New York.

Reads the Whole Year at Once

I have been receiving your magazine for almost a year. I had been putting them aside in the beginning until I found time to read them. I have finished reading them all recently and have enjoyed them beyond measure. I am continually blessing the person or persons responsible for sending me a subscription to this wonderful magazine, for it has spiritually enriched my life.—Leonard T. Buchanan, Hollis, New York.

Pentecostals Reply

I am writing this letter in response to an article in the April issue of *THESE TIMES*. The article is "What Got Into Sylvia?" by Roland Hegstad. It would appear to me that Mr. Hegstad's summation of tongues is that it is not a language at all but just a lot of babbling and of no meaning. Just because a lot of intellectuals and professors and doctors and linguists and what-have-you can find no basis or equation or thesis for it, then it has no value as a language. I can only say this, if someone doesn't fully understand a certain subject, then it is best he keep quiet. I attend an Assembly of God church and I have experienced the gift of speaking in tongues. As a result of this article I must insist that you do not send your magazine to my home

anymore.—Harry and Betty Arentz, Mifflin, Pennsylvania.

May I greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! I am one of those "Pentecostals" whose experiences and doctrinal observations have lately become quite an object of scrutiny and criticism in your magazine. May I courteously and in the spirit of love make a few personal observations?

It is certain that many of the mushroom appearances of neo-pentecostalism which have become apparent within the last decade are not at all what they should be, scripturally or otherwise. I am aware that in every religious group extremes exist. Permit me to say that Mr. Hegstad rather puts somewhat of a blight upon the leaves of your otherwise gentle pages by his Saul-of-Tarsus attitude toward Pentecostals. His portrayal of us and his general categorization of Pentecostals into one bewildered company grossly disappoint and detract from his journalistic abilities.

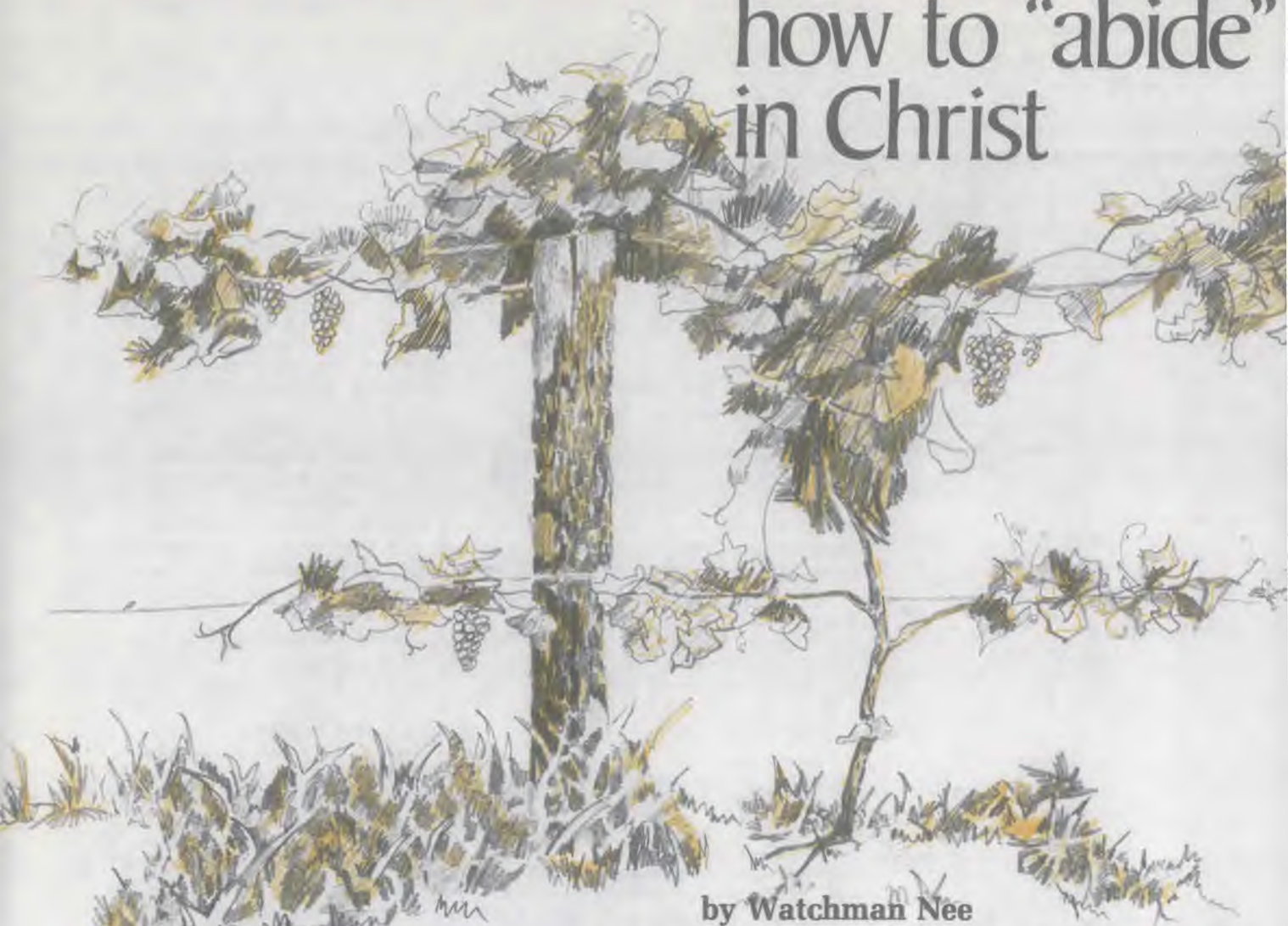
I would kindly conclude that for those who have no thirst for the water it seems rather careless of them to shuffle around and muddy it for others who come to slake their thirst. I am not hesitant of criticism, for it shapes a man if he will be shaped. But please ease up on the garlic! It comes from Egypt and leaves rather a distaste!—W. H. Hamilton, pastor, Valley View Pentecostal Holiness Church, Sharpsville, Pennsylvania.

Request Bible Study Guides

I have been a reader of *THESE TIMES* for several years. Your magazine has brought much inspiration into our home. In the May issue I noticed a coupon for Focus on Living. I am sincerely interested in learning and studying these soul-searching questions. Please send a set of these guides to me.—Mrs. A. W. Bickford, Tewksbury, Massachusetts.

I would like very much for you to send me the study course Focus on Living. I have attached a Xeroxed copy of the coupon in the May issue of *THESE TIMES*. We enjoy this magazine very much and always read it from cover to cover each month. I have taken several other courses and learned so much from them. Thank you for making this offer as my husband and I never tire of reading God's Word.—Mr. and Mrs. Bobby Bacon, Dayton, Ohio.

how to "abide" in Christ



by Watchman Nee

"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit."—Jesus Christ.

WE ARE FAMILIAR with the words of the Lord Jesus, "Abide in me, and I in you" (John 15:4). Let us consider them for a moment. First they remind us once again that we have never to struggle to get into Christ. We are not told to get there, for we are there; but we are told to *stay* where we have been placed. It was God's own act that put us in Christ, and we are to *abide* in Him.

But further, this verse lays down for us a divine principle, which is that God has done the work in Christ and not in us as individuals. The all-inclusive death and the all-inclusive resurrection of God's Son were accomplished fully and finally apart from us in the first place. It is the history of *Christ* which is to become the experience of the Christian, and we have no spiritual

experience apart from Him. The Scriptures tell us that we were crucified "with Him," that we were quickened, raised, and set by God in the heavenlies "in Him," and that we are complete "in Him" (Romans 6:6; Ephesians 2:5, 6; Colossians 2:10). It is not just something that is still to be effected in us (though it *is* that, of course). It is something that has already been effected, *in association with Him*.

In the Scriptures we find that no Christian experience exists *as such*. What God has done in His gracious purpose is to include us in Christ. In dealing with Christ God has dealt with the Christian; in dealing with the Head He has dealt with all the members. It is altogether wrong for us to think that we can experience anything of the spiritual life in ourselves merely, and apart from Him. God does not intend that we should acquire something exclusively personal in our experience, and

He is not willing to effect anything like that for you and me. All the spiritual experience of the Christian is *already true in Christ*. It has already been experienced by Christ. What we call "our" experience is only our entering into *His* history and *His* experience.

It would be odd if one branch of a vine tried to bear grapes with a reddish skin, and another branch tried to bear grapes with a green skin, and yet another branch grapes with a dark purple skin, each branch trying to produce something of its own without reference to the vine. It is impossible, unthinkable. The character of the branches is determined by the vine. Yet certain Christians are seeking experiences *as experiences*. They think of crucifixion as something, of resurrection as something, of ascension as something, and they never stop to think that the whole is related to a Person. No, only as the Lord opens our eyes to see the Person

The late Watchman Nee was appreciated around the world for his many devotional books and magazine articles.



do we have any true experience. Every true spiritual experience means that we have discovered a certain fact in Christ, and have entered into that; anything that is not from Him in this way is an experience that is going to evaporate very soon. "I have discovered *that* in Christ; then, Praise the Lord, it is mine! I possess it, Lord, because it is in Thee." Oh, it is a great thing to know the facts of Christ as the foundation for our experience!

So God's basic principle in leading us on experimentally is not to give us something. It is not to bring us through something, and as a result to put something into us which we can call "our experience." . . . The point is that God does not give individuals individual experiences. All that they have is only an entering into what God has already done. It is the "realizing" in time of *eternal* things. The history of Christ becomes our experience and our spiritual history; we do not have a separate history from His. The entire work with respect to us is not done in us here but in Christ. He does no separate work in individuals apart from what He has done there. Even eternal life is not given to us as individuals: the life is in the Son, and "he that hath the Son hath life." God has done all in His Son, and He has included us in Him; we are incorporated into Christ.

Now the point of all this is that there is a very real practical value in the stand of faith that says, "God has put me in Christ, and therefore all that is true of Him is true of me. I will abide in Him." Satan is always trying to get us out, to keep us out, to convince us that we are out, and by temptations, failures, suffering, trial, to make us feel acutely that we are outside of Christ. Our first thought is that, if we were in Christ, we should not be in this state,


and therefore, judging by the feelings we now have, we must be out of Him; and so we begin to pray, "Lord, put me into Christ." No! God's injunction is to "abide" in Christ, and that is the way of deliverance. But how is it so? Because it opens the way for God to take a hand in our lives and to work the thing out in us. It makes room for the operation of His superior power—the power of resurrection (Romans 6:4, 9, 10)—so that the facts of Christ do progressively become the facts of our daily experience, and where before "sin reigned" (Romans 5:21) we make now the joyful discovery that we are truly "no longer . . . in bondage to sin" (Romans 6:6).

As we stand steadfastly on the ground of what Christ is, we find all that is true of Him becoming experimentally true in us. If instead we come on to the ground of what we are in ourselves, we will find all that is true of the old nature remaining true of us. If we get *there* in faith we have everything; if we return back *here* we find nothing. So often we go to the wrong place to find the death of self. It is in Christ. We have only to look within to find we are very much alive to sin; but when we look over there to the Lord, God sees to it that death works here but that "newness of life" is ours also. We are "alive unto God" (Romans 6:4, 11).

"Abide in me, and I in you." This is a double sentence: a command coupled with a promise. That is to say, there is an objective and a subjective side to God's working, and the subjective side depends upon the objective; the "I in you" is the outcome of our abiding in Him. We need to guard against being over-anxious about the subjective side of things, and so becoming turned in upon ourselves. We need to dwell upon the objective—"abide in me"—and to let God take care of the subjective. And this He has undertaken to do.

I have illustrated this from the electric light. You are in a room and it is growing dark. You would like to have the light on in order to read. There is a reading-lamp on the table beside you. What do you do? Do you watch it intently to see if the light will come on? Do you take a cloth and polish the bulb? No, you get up and cross over to the other side of the room where the switch is on the wall, and you turn the current on. You turn your attention to the source of power, and when you have taken the necessary action there the light comes on here.

So in our walk with the Lord our attention must be fixed on Christ. "Abide in me, and I in you" is the divine order. Faith in the objective facts makes those facts true subjectively. As the Apostle Paul puts it, "We all . . . beholding . . . the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image" (2 Corinthians 3:18, margin). The same principle holds good in the matter of fruitfulness of life: "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit" (John 15:5). We do not try to produce fruit or concentrate upon the fruit produced. Our business is to look away to Him. As we do so He undertakes to fulfill His Word in us.

How do we abide? "Of God are ye in Christ Jesus." It was the work of God to put you there and He has done it. Now *stay* there! Do not be moved back onto your own ground. Never look at yourself as though you were not in Christ. Look at Christ, and see yourself in Him. *Abide in Him*. Rest in the fact that God has put you in His Son, and live in the expectation that He will complete His work in you. It is for Him to make good the glorious promise that "sin shall not have dominion over you" (Romans 6:14). 



The Visit

by Marie Butler

What can you say to a mother whose son is dead?

THE GLOOMY day matched my mood as I sat listlessly in my son's room. It had been three months since his death. Yet his presence was there, with his rock collection, boat and airplane models—all the remarkable things a boy can collect in seventeen years. I picked up his photograph and cried, "Oh, Ron, why?"

After the tears stopped, there came memories of mud-tracked floors, skinned knees, and dreams of a future that didn't happen.

A soft knock at the door brought me back to the present. Company was the last thing I wanted, but the knocking continued until I finally answered. Jimmie, twisted and bent from a childhood disease, grasped the railing to steady his jerking body.

"Hi, I'll bet you didn't know I was able to be up again and selling for

camp," he said, holding his basket out to me.

As I looked through the tiny assortment, I remembered he hadn't been by in over a year. We always bought from him although we didn't need what he was selling.

One year I was gone and Ron bought some pencils. "I didn't need them," he said, "but Jimmie works so hard to go to camp."

After Ron started high school, Jimmie would be waiting on his corner to talk. He had attended a school for crippled children, eventually quitting because he was getting worse. Then, a year ago . . .

"Is Ron going to college next year?" Jimmie asked, looking past me. "Is he home?"

"Ron died in February," I told him. He tried to steady his jerking body.

"How? I mean, was it an accident?"

"No, he died of cancer."

Jimmie looked at his twisted arms.

"It doesn't seem right—a healthy guy like him. Why would God take him and leave . . . Ron was always nice to me—making me a part of his world . . . I did wonder why he didn't come by while I was ill. Mom said he was probably busy. But he was my friend; I knew he would be there if he could."

We stood silent for a moment. I recalled something Ron had told me a few weeks before he died. "I have a lot to be thankful for. Some kids never run and play, and many are blind or don't have a good home. I've had all of these."

Jimmie broke into my thoughts. "Going to camp doesn't seem so important now."

"Yes, it does! Ron wouldn't want you to feel that way." We talked for a while, then I paid him for the things I had picked out. Watching him go down the drive in his jerking, stumbling walk, I knew my *why* had been a futile question. My heart didn't need doubts but faith—not questions but assurance. I thought of Jesus' words "I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you" (John 14:18, RSV).

And He had! Through Jimmie, He reminded me that someone else had heavier burdens—but faith lightens the load.

Marie Butler is a free-lance writer living in Kansas City, Missouri.

Photograph by Marcia Hunt



The West through Eastern eyes—Part II

YOSEMITE flaunted her necklace of waterfalls all about us. We had found our motel, unpacked, showered, and now wandered about looking for Melody and David, who were driving from San Francisco to meet us here. Having grown weary of scanning the crowds, we stopped in the lobby of the main building to watch a display of slides thrown onto a small screen. I heard at my shoulder a very familiar "Mom?"

We turned, and there they were. Fresh, young, and beautiful. David sported a moustache. It became him. It hit me once again that the young woman at his side was no longer the eager child of yesterday, parading around in my dresses and heels, but a woman in her own right, interesting, capable, confident—one of my best friends. There is an awkward moment as we all fumble for our roles, but Christopher (our grandson) breaks it by peeking with one mischievous eye from his shy hiding place on David's shoulder. We all long to touch the little-boy sweetness of which we've been robbed so long but know it is too soon.

We spent the weekend hiking, talking, attending an out-of-door church service, and eating the best food of our entire trip. The park cafeteria served such an array of colorful, well-prepared dishes that our varied and vegetarian tastes never failed to be satisfied.

Reluctantly, Sunday afternoon we

said farewell to our motel with its private waterfall thundering at the back patio and headed for San Francisco, Melody and David following in their VW.

San Francisco has about it a whimsical charm not found in New York or Chicago. Street musicians play the classics in Chirardelli Square, flowers blaze in tiny doorstep gardens, and the streets are breathtakingly up or down. The tempo is brisk; the bay ever beckoning. I understood why they loved it.

Trying not to remember we'd soon be connected once more only by that long, long phone cord, we spent the last morning attending the opening of the Andrew Wyeth exhibit at the De Young Memorial Museum. A monstrous stroke of luck for us, for we were all moved by the extravaganza of earth hues, wind-blown curtains, and offbeat people. Around noon, still staggering under the impact of three generations of Wyeth talent, we said good-bye, very casually, not meddling with heartache.

At sunset, driving north along the California coast, we saw the Pacific rolling in with a sort of "Pomp and Circumstance" dignity over the sands. I believe I could tell the Atlantic from the Pacific, even were I blindfolded and whirled round and round. There's a spunky aggressiveness about the Atlantic which lingers.

Great redwood forests, lumber mills,

Crater Lake, then east once more through the vast, arid stretches of Idaho. At last the bubbling pots of Yellowstone. I was bored with Old Faithful even before I saw it, but took myself off to sit with Don and the children along the tourist benches to await the appointed time. The moments ticked away, the time came and went, the suspense built. Finally, a curious little snort of spray shot out of the ground, then one a bit higher, and at last a great lacy column of water roared heavenward. A gasp of awe silenced us jabbering Americans, and the column glittered and rose still higher through my tears. Nothing prepares one. It is something from another world. It cannot be destroyed nor cheapened by tourism. I went back again and again.

Laramie, Wyoming, rising stark and surprising from the plains, ghosts of the Old West riding its boundaries. On to Denver. An afternoon with special friends. The Hertz car returned. A plane for Chicago; another for Rochester, New York. Home. The East, scruffy, lush, and welcoming.

America had shown us everything from her unbelievable valley overlook on the western ascent from Wolf Creek Pass to small patches of flowering cactus festooning her desert. What a vast and beautiful land sprawls beneath the Stars and Stripes! How dare we soil it with vice and crime and pollution?



GERALD WHEELER, who wrote "The Most Unique Creation Story of the Ancient World," page 2, works just a few doors down the hallway from me. He's an interesting chap who likes to delve into knotty Biblical and theological problems. I asked him to answer three questions in regard to his article, and his answers were so interesting that I wanted to share them with our readers.

1. *Why did you choose the topic?* "I've been interested in creationism for a long time, but the recent evolution-special creation controversies in such states as California and Tennessee have increased public awareness of the issue. Too many scientists and even religious leaders dismiss the Genesis account of Creation Week as nothing but religious myth. They contend that the Hebrews borrowed the primitive attempts of the people around them to explain how life and the world began, and then they began to regard their version of the various creation myths as a divine revelation from God. One cannot seriously consider Biblical special creationism if he equates it with all the other ancient creation stories. And if he discards Genesis, he will naturally question the rest of the Bible. I wanted the reader to examine a conclusion that too many people have accepted on mere hearsay."

2. *What was the most significant fact you learned in your research?* "The most unique thing that stands out to me has been the habit of religious scholars concentrating on the similarities between Genesis and the ancient creation stories and their ignoring of the more fundamental differences. This is an unfortunate trait of the human mind. We see what we are looking for and blind ourselves to anything else. True, Genesis sometimes uses the idiom and phraseology of pagan myth, but what it is saying is quite different. And the fact that the author of Genesis has an outlook, a viewpoint, so basically antagonistic to that of his contemporaries in the ancient Middle East hints that what he said had its origin outside of that culture—or as the Christian would say—it was divinely revealed. The scholar cannot brush Genesis aside as just another ancient groping for truth."

3. *What does the future hold for the evolution-special creation controversy?* "A growing number of scholars now recognize that the thrust of Genesis was unique in the ancient world. But such an admission will not necessarily persuade them that it was true. That can come only as such individuals let themselves respond to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. But I think we can safely say that special creationism is making more of an impact on people today. Theologians and religion scholars are once again discovering the Biblical doctrine of creation and seeking its relevance for our troubled world. This does not mean that many of them will discard evolution. The evolution-special creation controversy will continue unabated into the foreseeable future."

Thanks, Gerald.

Kenneth J. Holland

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in all His fullness to all the world.

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and the coming Christ to be our only hope
as the world nears its cataclysmic end.

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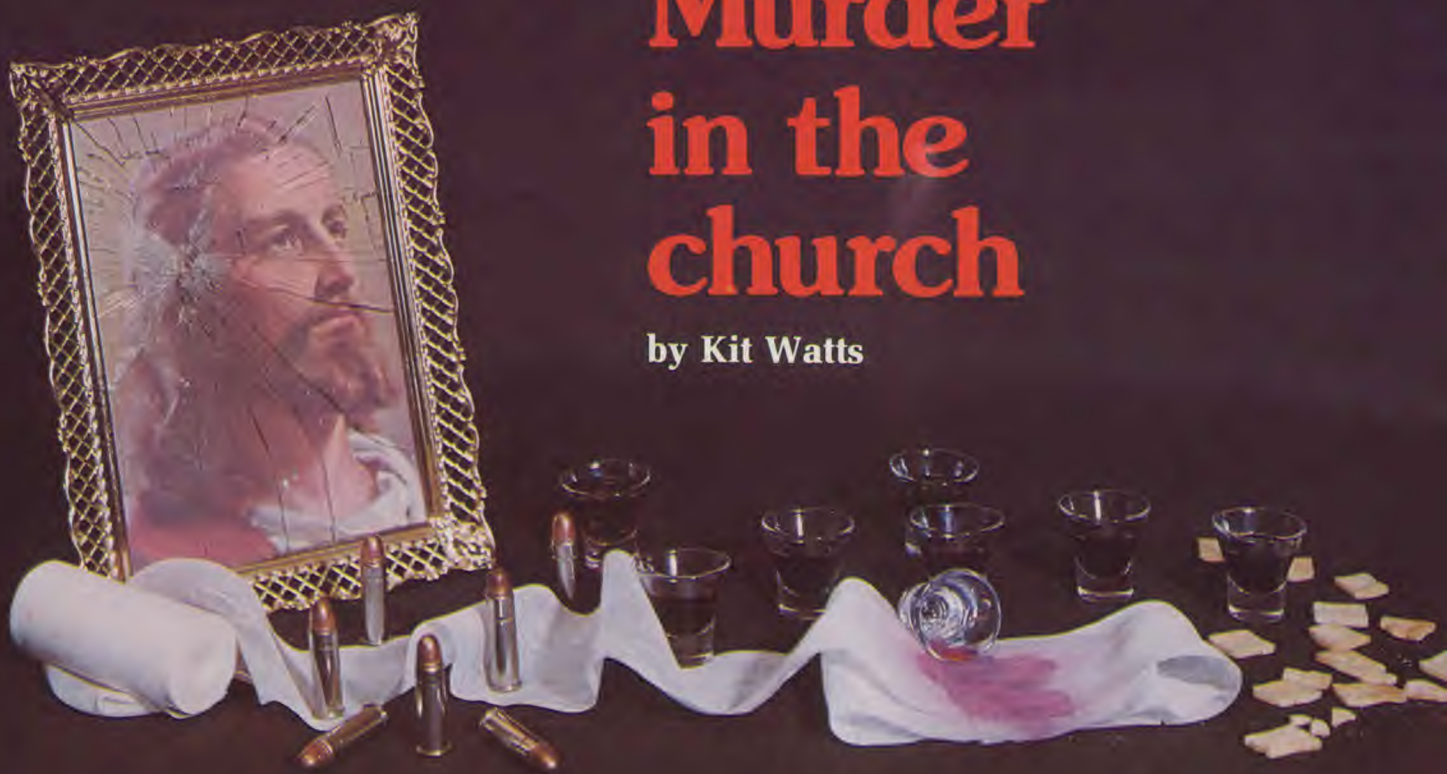
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Murder in the church

by Kit Watts



JUST BEHIND the seven elders, thirty-six deacons and a score of deaconesses processed down the red carpet toward linen-covered tables laden with the symbols of the Communion. Three-tiered trays bore hundreds of tiny glasses with their portions of unfermented wine. Silver platters lay beside them filled with squares of unleavened bread.

The service progressed with a precise orderliness which I've grown to treasure at my church. Passing through the great congregation the deacons move in intricate patterns up and down the aisles, but the effect is sheer grace. In quiet dignity fifteen hundred people would be waited upon with the emblems of the Last Supper.

The choir sang. The organ played. My feet were washed. The bread was broken, blessed, and served. The service, as usual, was beautiful. Everything was as usual. Including me. Attentive. Respectful. Untouched.

A wave of deacons flowed down the aisles. One came down my row. From his tray and its grid of rubber-buffered

slots, I selected a glass. He moved on to other rows.

Suddenly the tiny glass slipped from my fingers. In horror I saw the contents spill across my purse and into my lap.

As the grape stain spread over my skirt, I was immobilized. I no longer saw silver Communion sets and white linen tablecloths. I heard gunshots in Dallas—news bulletins staccatoing over teletype machines—voices of radio announcers edged with shock.

In a flash I was as stunned as I had been that Friday afternoon I bent against the November wind at a prairie college in Nebraska and first heard that President Kennedy was wounded. In fact, he was dead.

A weekend of agony unfolded. During college vespers that night the audience rose for a long and troubled moment of silence. It was the beginning of grief.

In the days that followed a television set took an unprecedented position on the podium of the women's residence-hall chapel. In the atmosphere of stained glass, mosaic tile, and long wooden pews I took up my vigil, often a solitary one, when the TV coverage

winked on at 6 AM and off again past midnight.

LBJ took the oath of office. Air Force One bore home the flag-draped coffin of a President cut down in a savage murder.

I remembered the announcer whose voice faltered as the President's wife and daughter knelt beside the honor-guarded casket lying beneath the Capitol Rotunda. I remembered drums and horses and funeral marches. I remembered the bugler whose form trembled as he played taps across Arlington Cemetery to a nation of mourners.

But mostly I remembered a widow who returned to the nation's capital in the night wearing a pink suit still stained with her husband's blood.

On my left a woman scrambled in her purse for a tissue, and I quickly blotted the wine. On my right a friend took my empty cup and poured a share from hers to mine.

As we drank together, the death at Calvary could no longer be contained in the dignity of symbols. The murder had spilled down the centuries into my church. The grape juice on my dress was the blood of a Man who died for me.

Kit Watts is a free-lance writer living in Takoma Park, Maryland.

Yes, There is an Answer to Alcoholism

Alcohol: the No. 1 drug problem in America today. Not everyone who takes his first drink will become an alcoholic, but one out of ten will.

One out of ten—the odds are too high to ignore. Today some nine million Americans are alcoholics.

But what about the 95 million Americans who just drink “socially”? Recent medical study has indicated that drinking one can of beer permanently damages the drinker’s brain. You can learn about this research in a special new magazine supplement called *Enlist in the War Against Alcohol*.

This helpful guide to understanding an age-old problem answers such questions as—

- Why do people drink?
- What does alcohol do to the brain?
- What are the symptoms of alcoholism?
- Where can a person get help?

Of course, there are numerous leaflets and pamphlets and books on this subject. But *Alcohol* magazine represents a new approach to the problem. In clear and simple terms it presents a complete overview of alcohol and its impact on our society today. Vividly illustrated in four-color, it includes numerous charts, illustrations, and photos to help you understand the many aspects of the problem.

If you drink, or if you know someone who does, you’ll want to read this magazine. Parents, teachers, and counselors will find in it a wealth of information to help them know how to cope with the problem of alcoholism. *Alcohol* contains the latest research on such subjects as “Why People Drink” and “How Diet Affects Drinking Habits.” Did you know, for instance, that rats, when fed a “diet” including coffee and spices, drank ten times as much alcohol in one experiment as did rats which received a balanced, nutritious allowance of food?

But the most encouraging aspect of the problem is that there is hope for the alcoholic. *Alcohol* magazine presents a four-part program based on the latest study and best thinking available today to help the chronic drinker.

You can read about this program and much more simply by filling out the coupon below and sending it, along with one dollar, to the address listed. If you don’t care about alcoholism—who will?



ALCOHOL, PO Box 59, Nashville, TN 37202

Yes, I would like to know more about the problems of alcoholism, its dangers and where to find help. Please send me _____ copies of ENLIST IN THE WAR AGAINST ALCOHOL, at \$1.00 each.

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