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Gardening for survival





by Lois Hoadley Dick

Gardening for survival

The author began her garden in order to survive, but she finished by being thankful she had survived! Her love for growing things shows through, however, as she demonstrates how you can do what she did.

"YOU HAVE no decent topsoil!"

"Your garden is two months late!"

"Even if you fence it in, the deer will jump over and the groundhogs will burrow under!"

Kind acquaintances dashed off cheery remarks between their trips to the grocery store, paying food prices that climbed higher and higher. Truck strikes threatened, and newspapers wrote of famine, depression, and more energy crises.

I began to think that survival some day might actually depend upon a vegetable garden.

My husband, teen-age son, and I were city people who had moved to the country in northern New Jersey. We didn't know one end of a carrot from the other. We didn't know a blossom had to appear before the fruit. We thought peppers grew on vines, and we couldn't figure out how a potato made seeds.

Yes, we were crazy, absolutely crazy, to think we could plant a garden in solid shale in the middle of June. Our kind neighbors proved right. Chasing around in my own mind was the puzzling thought: "Why on earth do they call New Jersey 'the garden state'?"

We were so ignorant that we had our hilly land bulldozed, letting them cart off the precious topsoil. Then we had to turn around and pay forty-five dollars a load for more topsoil. (Garden state, indeed!) On our hands and knees we picked out millions of stones, fertilized the soil, planted grass seed, rolled, watered, and coaxed up some scrawny grass. We roped off a 15-by-20-foot area and tried to figure out how to kill the grass.

We had everything against us, we did everything wrong, but we ended up with a garden that partially fed us. And what we did, you can do.

Most important of all, I discovered that the Old Testament and much of the Gospels



were written for farmers! As I worked the garden, experimenting and learning, verses I had known all my life rose up before me. Only now I saw them acted out in living color on the most fascinating stage of all—a vegetable garden.

Since we share our land with rabbits (millions of them), groundhogs (thousands), deer (hundreds), porcupines (a few), bears (one), and assorted prowlers, we fenced in our plot with four-foot-high chicken wire

and steel posts. A watchdog staked at each end completed the fortifications.

With pointed spade and pitchfork we turned the sod over, a few inches at a time. The ground was so hard that I had to stand up on the pitchfork, exert all my 135 pounds to rock it back and forth, and then jump on the handle to make a chunk of dirt fly up. I turned each clod upside down so the grass would die. I dug out rocks as big as my two fists and some I couldn't even lift. We used

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them for a stone wall.

No one told me to stagger the planting so I wouldn't have wall-to-wall tomatoes some hot week in August. I figured on two hours to plant the garden, but it took four hours. No one told me the garden should first have been planted on paper. I bought three times as many seeds as I needed and lavishly threw them around.

“Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns,” said the prophet (Jeremiah 4:3). We would meet the thorns, or weeds, later.

My husband relaxed in a beach chair under a maple tree as I doggedly planted myself into a corner with no way out. He began watering me with the garden hose, and soon I was burying onion sets in mud. He just couldn't believe I seriously intended to have a garden.

I had just finished reading three books on the life of George Washington Carver, who pioneered in organic gardening. I also read “Silent Spring” by Rachel Carson. Feeling inspired, I determined to grow food without poisonous sprays by keeping the balance of nature. After all, what if survival *did* depend upon a garden?

At a fishing shack on the highway I purchased three dozen worms and planted them two by two so they could marry and propagate. (If any city friend had ever suggested I would move to the country and

plant worms, I would have doubted his sanity!) I began to wish for frogs, and one morning—behold—a frog. In a few weeks we had dozens of them. I didn't have to wish for birds; they soon discovered the insects.

Bible seed was sown on stony ground—thorny ground—by the wayside—on good ground. “Good ground”—that has such a satisfying sound. One corner of the garden we filled in with rich, black dirt from along the Delaware River. The seeds there sprouted first and grew strong. Our truckload of topsoil turned out to be clay loam. How important it is to prepare the ground before you sow the seed!

I didn't know one leaf from another. When little green shoots appeared in crooked rows, I thought I must have done something right. One book said to plant cucumber vines between the corn rows to save space. The cukes were supposed to climb up the cornstalks. No one told me to give the corn a head start. Soon the cucumber vines had grown a foot long and strangled the two-inch-high corn.

“Let the earth bring forth grass . . . whose seed is in itself” (Genesis 1:11), said God, planting Eden. Where was the seed in lettuce? I had often eaten my way through a head of lettuce from dark outer leaves to crunchy core without finding seeds. The puzzlement wasn't cleared up until fall,

when from out of the tallest romaine lettuce leaves suddenly burst seed stalks.

I had so much to learn! I mulched with old newspapers and wood ashes. One corner of the garden stayed shaded, and I never did find the spinach, watermelon, cantaloupe, and leeks. There can be no life without the sun.

The cabbage unfolded leaf after tough, pale-green leaf, but not in heads. Finally, one memorable day in August, I was able to pick one marble-sized head, and my son had a tablespoonful of coleslaw for supper, from our very own cabbage!

“First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear” (Mark 4:28). I saw it happen right in our corn patch.

“Aren't you supposed to be weeding?” the interested (jealous) acquaintances inquired.

“There aren't any,” I proudly replied. “The cucumber vines are cute, though. They can't climb the cornstalks; so they've spread across the whole garden, in between rows. Intelligent things, vines.”

The next week I took a longer look and decided the vines, pink and shallowly rooted, were going too far and too fast. I checked with the book. Help! A dreaded weed, purslane, had invaded the entire garden! It took two days to pull up the cute, intelligent purslane. “A time to plant, and a time to pluck up” (Ecclesiastes 3:2), I muttered as the sun burned my face and browned my arms.

Since the plants weren't mature before the heat of July, the hot sun stunted everything—everything except the thirty-six tomato plants. They needed no care, and they multiplied until we were sick of them. I filled the freezer with quarts and quarts of tomato sauce, then turned to canning. Every day I ate fried green tomatoes to get my vitamin C.

I discovered the tiny mustard seed for the first time when I made green-tomato relish, and I realized afresh the power a grain of faith has with God.

One morning to my surprise I found a full-grown zucchini squash lying on the ground. Who could have thrown it into the garden? As I picked it up, it snapped off at the base of the plant. Of course! What I had thought was some strange spreading umbrella

Vegetables for early-spring planting		Vegetables for late-spring or early-summer planting		Vegetables for late-summer or fall planting
Should be planted 4 to 6 weeks before last frost.	Should be planted 2 to 4 weeks before last frost.	Should be planted on the frost-free date.	Should be planted 1 week or more after the frost-free date.	Should be planted 6 to 8 weeks before the first fall freeze.
Broccoli	Beets	Snap beans	Lima beans	Beets
Cabbage	Carrots	Okra	Eggplant	Collards
Lettuce	Chard	Soybeans	Peppers	Kale
Onions	Mustard	Squash	Sweet potatoes	Lettuce
Peas	Parsnip	Sweet corn	Cucumbers	Spinach
Potatoes	Radishes	Tomatoes	Melons	Turnips
Spinach				Mustard
Turnips				

plant, too pretty to uproot, was zucchini.

Early each morning I knelt in the garden dew to see what had happened overnight. Prayer came as naturally as taking in a breath. The first little "pickle" on the vine with needles all over it, the way the zucchini matched its leaves, the long taproot of the carrot, the way the peavines reached out baby fingers to clutch for support—all became a source of astonishment to me. And I used to think food grew in the supermarket!

Yummy, pencil-thin green beans dangled on bushes. On the pepper plant a delicate lavender flower appeared, then a little green bell burst right out of its center—a pepper growing straight up in the air. At the proper time the stem turned and the pepper hung downward, heavy and juicy.

All these miracles came from seeds the size of a pinhead! Each thing bore after its own kind; there wasn't one single mistake.

I watched the garden for danger signs: wilting, curling leaves; purple edges; cutworms; aphids; plant disease. We had none. We never sprayed, and we weeded only once. Apparently nature was balanced, the way God planned it.

Our garden came too late to benefit from the hot July days; yet it went through the drought of August. An early frost in September ruined the last of the tomatoes. Financially, we lost out. Anyone with a pinch of sense would have called it quits.

But we didn't. We still believe survival might depend upon a vegetable garden. We will enlarge ours three times next year, and here is what we have planned. You can do it too.

Begin now to fence in a garden space, even if you have to dig up lawn, petunias, and shrubbery. Dump organic garbage into it, then spade it under. Plan your garden on paper, letting one half inch equal one foot. This way you will be able to order the exact amount of seeds. Omit all the watery-type vegetables with low food value, such as zucchini and yellow summer squash. Plant vegetables that every member of the family likes.

Plan for large areas of root vegetables which do not have to be canned or frozen,



such as beets, carrots, turnips, and parsnips. These can be stored all winter in a root cellar made from a galvanized or wooden tub. Arrange a layer of sand, a layer of vegetables, another layer of sand, and so on. Store in a cool part of the house or garage. The turnips and parsnips may even be left in the ground to harvest as you need them.

Plant plenty of Idaho potatoes, which have good keeping quality, and also onion sets which you can store in a cool place.

Following the skyscraper principle to conserve space, plant green string beans, peas, and cucumbers so they can go up poles. Omit plants which shade others.

Plant early and stagger the planting to ensure two crops. Rotate crops each year, especially roots and vines. If you really must have squash, watermelon, and cantaloupe, they may be planted in odd spots outside the garden, since animals do not seem to bother them. For us, we decided to forgo corn—all that stalk for only two ears!

Protect your garden on the north side, if possible, by a wall or hedge. Sloping garden

land should face the south. By all means add dwarf fruit trees and a grape arbor, if space permits, as we plan to do. English or Carpathian walnut trees will provide nourishment equivalent to beefsteak.

Read books. Check with your county agriculturist and the U.S. Government Printing Office in Washington, D.C., for inexpensive pamphlets. Subscribe to a good gardening magazine.

If you live in the city, learn how to plant tomatoes, lettuce, radishes, and other small vegetables in odd containers. A peach basket, a small waste can, a tub, a laundry basket, may be lined with plastic for a midget garden. Window boxes are another idea for "gardenets."

Actually, the only thing I enjoyed about gardening was the novelty of it the first time. Now that I am back to working in an office, it will be a chore to plant, cultivate, weed, mulch, freeze, and can after an eight-hour workday. And my garden will be three times larger. I'm glad I made a start, and the important thing is—I survived!

Church hospitals offer unique phone service



MINNEAPOLIS—Medical staffs of three church-sponsored hospitals in Minneapolis are providing a free telephone health information service called Tel-Med. By dialing 721-7575, residents of the Minneapolis-St. Paul area are able to hear any of more than 190 tape-recorded health messages. A brochure providing an index of Tel-Med messages has been published in local newspapers and is available on request. A caller scans the index—categorized under various subheadings such as cancer, chemical dependency, child care—dials the Tel-Med number, and asks the librarian to let him hear a certain tape.

Here, a volunteer serving at Lutheran Deaconess Hospital, location of the tape library, handles a message request at her special tape console. Storage racks flanking the console hold more than 190 tape cartridges, each one representing a three-to-five-minute health-related message. The volunteer selects a tape from a storage rack, inserts it in the special communication console, and the message automatically begins. Up to ten messages can be handled simultaneously. The service is sponsored by the staffs of Fairview, Fairview-Southdale, and Lutheran Deaconess hospitals, all affiliated with the American Lutheran Church.

Nonreligious Funerals Is Trend

There is a growing tendency to omit the name of God and other religious terminology

at funerals in this nation, according to authorities in the funeral business. The growing percentage of Americans with no religious preference has brought challenge to many traditional funeral rites.

The executive director of the 14,000-member National Funeral Directors' Association, Howard C. Rather, confirmed that a number of families have no religious orientation. In the West, he said, there is more evidence that "people like the funeral but not the religions."

In 1971 the Catholic Church authorized a new funeral rite of greater flexibility. A New York funeral home director who serves a large Catholic clientele said he finds many young people who see no need for a funeral at all.

Protestants in the last several decades have tended to remove funeral services from the church to the mortuary. Another current Protestant trend is to permit only a few close friends or family at funerals. On the other hand, the manager of a Jewish funeral home sees a return to old customs at the time of death. A rabbi and author of several books dealing with death sees within the Reform Movement a trend to use the synagogue for funerals, a reversal of recent practices.

But, as larger segments of the population have fewer strong ties with religion, funeral directors face increased dilemmas with families who favor secular rather than religious terminology at bereavement.

Is "Famine of the Word" Stunting Christian Growth?

Have evangelicals thrown out the baby with the washwater in their search for deeper Christian relationships and experiences? Congregational pastor Donald Roberts fears that the new priorities have plunged many churches into a "famine of the Word."

Writing in *The Presbyterian Journal*, September 18, 1974, Roberts took issue with "a growing orientation toward subjectivity" that has led evangelicals to limit their searching of the Scriptures "to a minimal number of passages in a quest for experiences," thus minimizing an understanding of the total sweep of Scripture.

"Sharing has become a big word in the religious vocabulary today. But what is being shared? In many instances, ignorance. Bible classes and study groups have been turned into Christian sensitivity sessions where people simply talk about themselves and learn very little about the Word."

The problem extends into the pulpit, where Roberts sees "a famine of solid Biblical exposition and exhortation, with application built on sound doctrine." The saints, as Vance Havner observed, "want to be amused, not amazed."

Gothard's "Youth Conflicts" Seen Rigid, But Relevant

What's behind the tremendous success of Evangelist Bill Gothard's "Basic Youth Conflicts"? The man's ability to put "handles on Christianity," decided Wilfred Bockelman, American Lutheran Church communications director, after a week-long seminar.

"Gothard has evidently tuned in on the questions that are bothering people the most," Bockelman wrote in *The Christian Century* (September 25, 1974). "He makes [Christianity] understandable. . . . He draws very simple illustrations to show how things fit together. . . . and he has a Bible passage to prove it."

"You can sense the listeners' excitement. They have always been convinced that the Bible is a good book and have perhaps felt slightly guilty for not understanding it better. Now, lo and behold, here is a man who puts it all together for them. . . . Gothard assures us that there are still some absolutes. People urgently want that assurance."

Yet despite the benefits of Gothard's



ministry, Bockelman is wary. "Gothard's fundamental orientation is toward law rather than gospel—emphasis on law is always more attractive than emphasis on the gospel. Law is much more tangible, and adherence to it more easily measured."

"The biggest weakness of Gothard's approach is that it leaves no room for ambiguity. There is a simple yes-or-no, black-or-white answer to every problem, readily obvious to anyone who reads scripture."

My fear is that, without intending to do so, Gothard will make people so rigid and assured of their own rightness that they will be unable to understand, much less to sympathize with, those of their fellow human beings who hold other views."

Protestants Increase Giving 7.7 Percent

Giving to Protestant churches rose 7.7 percent in 1973, but the increase was not enough to offset the 9.6 drop in the U.S. dollar's buying power. Data from forty-one denominations having 46 million members reveal total contributions of almost five billion dollars. The per capita rate of giving was an all-time high of \$107.78. As in the past, members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church led all others in per capita giving—\$453.19 per member.

Briton Believes "Morals, Not Economy," Worst Enemy

The problems of the world are not economic, they're moral, an attorney from London, England, told the Christian Business Men's Club of Chattanooga, Tennessee. Addressing a full house at the bimonthly meeting of the Tennessee businessmen, Ted Hubbard added, "My years as a Christian have proved the Bible to be true."

"England is in a terrible state," the speaker admitted. Some of the "heaviest taxes in the world" and the "unstable government" he saw as the result of throwing out the Bible, God, and Christ from the lives of the people.

Dallas Baptist Association Opposes Charismatic Movement

Southern Baptist congregations belonging to the Dallas Baptist Association have been given a choice—either leave the charismatic movement or withdraw from the association. Although the 234-congregation association

did not name any churches in its resolution, there is only one member that "openly" engages in charismatic practices—Beverly Hills Baptist Church.

The action was prompted by a recent article in the *Dallas Times Herald* that described the charismatic movement in local churches. One of the clergymen featured in the article was Howard Conatser, pastor of the Beverly Hills church.

In its resolution the association declared: "We deplore the practice of those who express or imply an attitude of spiritual superiority by this misrepresentation of certain so-called charismatic gifts such as faith healing, glossolalia (speaking in tongues), and exorcism, thus disrupting the fellowship of our churches."

It added that if such congregations "cannot work in harmony with our historic views, we strongly urge they voluntarily withdraw from our association and seek fellowship with churches of more common practice."

Religious Book, Bible Market Flourishing

Forty-two percent of American families bought Bibles or other religious books in the past year, according to National Family Opinion, Inc., a research agency which has sampled 15,958 families. The U.S. census data puts the total number of families at about 52 million, Associated Press Religion Writer George Cornell notes; therefore 21 million of them in the past twelve months bought at least one religious book.

The opinion survey found that 18 percent of the families have purchased new Bibles in the past year, and a larger proportion, 25 percent, have purchased other religious books—a total of about 9 million Bibles and 12 million other religious books. Eighty percent of the families own at least one Bible, Cornell writes in his analysis, while 20 percent of them have none in the home. However, 95 percent of the families were aware of one or more of the ten major current versions of the Bible.

The largest proportion of families, 68 percent, own copies of the 350-year-old King James Version, while the next most widely owned version, the 30-year-old Revised Standard Version, was in 32 percent of the homes. The third-placed version, now in 23 percent of the family homes, was the three-year-old Living Bible—a volume

which has been the biggest seller of all in the past three years—a total of 15 million copies of that paraphrase.

Dr. Henry: America Has Passed Her Spiritual and Moral Peak

America has passed her spiritual and moral peak—"whether irrecoverably remains to be seen," according to Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, evangelical theologian and writer.

Dr. Henry, founding editor of *Christianity Today* and now lecturer-at-large for World Vision International, said the nation's pluralistic culture "now increasingly lacks a 'conscience' that provides the moral foundation indispensable to democratic government."

"Many Americans now have a shadow conscience no longer illuminated by scripture, and hence they are subject to all sorts of inconsistencies and inadequacies on moral judgment and behavior," he said.

Dr. Henry presided over a panel of directors of the Institute of Advanced Christian Studies who discussed "American Conscience in the Post-Watergate Era" at a meeting in Minneapolis.

No Threat to Tax Deductions Seen

Fears that Congress will cut off income tax deductions for gifts to churches, missions, and Bible colleges persist, even though the rumors are groundless.

"This is a strange phenomenon that is a little difficult to understand," W. Barry Garrett, information services director for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, told Evangelical Press News Service. "Just who is behind this sustained effort to scare the churches, in spite of all the efforts of Congressmen, our office, and others to convey the facts in this situation, has been impossible to trace. Why this 'scare' continues is beyond me."

No, Congress is not about to remove the tax deductibility of contributions to churches, schools, and other public charities, the Baptist Committee reported. And no, Congress is not about to discontinue the provision for the tax-free housing allowance for ministers.

In the words of a highly placed member of the staff of the House Committee on Ways and Means, such proposals in this Congress "are dead, cold, and buried."

the executioner

by Bob Brown

In 1972 the United States Supreme Court ruled against the death penalty. Foster would have been pleased—if he had been alive.

SEVERAL YEARS have passed since Foster came to our church. He seemed to be a shy, self-conscious man down on his luck and wearing secondhand clothes. He had an alcoholic look. The first two weeks he slipped out a side door during the benediction.

The third week he came out my door and asked for a few minutes to talk. We went to my office.

The conversation started on a hesitant note. I still thought that he must be an alcoholic who wanted money or perhaps a job. This kind of man often turns to the church in his desperate need for help.

He was a drunk—at least he said he was. He had no money and needed a job. He said that he had worked recently as a plumber's helper.

I probed his background: divorced, his wife remarried, two daughters he hadn't seen for seven years and didn't intend ever to see. He said that for eight years he had tried to forget his past and burn his bridges behind him.

We finally got him a job helping a plumber, the kind of job he wanted. He worked regularly and didn't drink. The plumber said that Foster did a good job; he knew the trade. The other men didn't like him though. He never talked to them—always ate lunch by himself and resisted their attempts to be friendly. Foster was a loner. The plumber suggested that I talk to him again and try to draw him out of his shell.

Not long after my conversation with the

plumber, Foster didn't show up for work. A week passed. The plumber went to the old rooming house where Foster lived, and he found him very ill. The plumber called me.

The room I found was cluttered and dirty, and it smelled of stale tobacco and vomit. The dreary, oppressive scene consisted of a dresser with a broken mirror, pictures of two little girls on the dresser, a bed, two straight chairs, a radio (no TV), and clothes hung over one chair.

I persuaded him to go to the hospital and took him myself. I admitted him, then called a doctor friend.

After tests, X-rays, and examinations the word came back. Foster was critically ill with an advanced cancer. The doctors and I told Foster that the prognosis was grim and asked if we could call his ex-wife and daughters, thinking they would want to know. Surely this lonely man deserved some company and consolation from his only relatives. He protested vigorously, refusing to tell me who or where his family was. With his past, he said, it was best that he die and that they never know. They wouldn't care anyway, he argued.

I asked him if he had been a criminal.

He laughed bitterly. "A criminal?" He lay quietly for a few minutes.

"Yes, I'm a criminal," he admitted. "But every crime I committed was legal. In fact, the law told me to do it. It was all legal."

At last I learned his story: Foster had been an executioner in a neighboring state. Six times he had electrocuted a human being. That was his job; he was paid to do it; he was taught to do it. His vocation was being an American executioner, and it was legal. Every man had been legally sentenced to die by the court. The public supported the law; the jury decided the verdict; the judge

passed the sentence; the governor upheld the sentence; the taxpayers paid the bill; someone else built the electric chair.

But Foster threw the current into the man.

Five of the six had been dragged to the chair. They didn't die singing hymns. They didn't die cursing God and defying the law. They didn't walk in quietly to the chair. They were screaming, fighting, terrified humans. They weren't brave. They didn't accept death. They fought death, and they wanted to live, but Foster had electrocuted them.

It got to Foster. He heard them screaming at night. He couldn't sleep the night before an execution. He couldn't sleep after an execution. He began drinking. He started cracking up. Some of the prison people told him to read about the terrible crimes the executed people had committed. They said he would feel better if he learned about the crimes. They told him to think about the victims of those crimes.

His wife told him that he would never get a better job, that he was too dumb to get another job. He had two children to raise. If he quit, what would they do?

One night he just disappeared. No one knew where he went. Foster wasn't his real name, but he said that I could probably find out who he was if I really wanted to know.

I never tried to find out who he was; it doesn't make any difference. He died alone after lying in a coma for two days, and we buried him in a public plot for paupers. There were four mourners. Once he had told me cynically that he wanted "The Executioner" written on his tombstone, but the burial record has simply "Foster."

In 1972 the United States Supreme Court ruled against the death penalty. That decision would have pleased Foster.

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Who will plead my case?

by Edward Heppenstall

A theologian looks closely at what God's judgment means to you, and he comes to some very reassuring conclusions.

SOME YEARS AGO a great scholar in Biblical theology became, for the very first time, acutely conscious of the coming day of God's judgment. His entire life had been devoted to learning and teaching in the field of religion, but when the Holy Spirit convicted him that he was a sinner and that he must appear one day before the judgment seat of Christ, he cried out in overwhelming emotion, "Who will plead my case before the God of heaven?" Preparation for that day became his urgent concern.

Paul writes, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10).

The day of judgment comes to mind easily as a Biblical phrase. The Scriptures speak of the assembling of the high court of heaven at a definite time and place, a setting of the judgment throne, the opening of the books of record, the calling of men to account, and the pronouncement of a sentence—some to be acquitted and some to be condemned.

No other question concerning the hereafter so grips our attention as the judgment. When we have toiled and sinned here, what destiny awaits us? Beyond life's horizon where the eternal law of righteousness rules, what will happen to us?

Edward Heppenstall is a well-known theologian, writer, and teacher, now living in active retirement in Riverside, California.

The Certainty of the Judgment

"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

"For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:11, 12).

We live in this world on probation. The earth has become the scene of conflict between Christ and Satan—between good and evil—and we must each choose sides. But this controversy will not go on forever. The judgment of God will conclude the struggle. There *will* come a day when injustice, unrighteousness, and evil will be swept away. In this judgment all that is true will triumph; all that is false will be destroyed. God's righteousness will sweep away the unnaturalness of sin.

So many appalling injustices prevail in the world that if the day of judgment from God did not exist, we would expect Him to create it in order to solve the problem of sin and death. The judgment truth keeps before the world the eternal destiny which awaits all men. The apostle John prophesied of the time when this heavenly court would come:

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come" (Revelation 14:6, 7).

God does not intend to frighten people

"For the children of God, judgment is a time of rejoicing, because Christ's verdict in their favor will bring everlasting vindication before all God's universe."

with His message that calls them to His judgment seat. He wants, instead, to give them the opportunity of preparing to meet Him. As John points out, this work of judgment no longer lies in the remote future. *It has come!* In the history of our world there never will be another spiritual challenge to exceed this. Its urgency ought to cause us to seriously consider every aspect of our lives.

"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:10). No one is excused. No one can avoid the final examination of his life. Actually the inescapable nature of God's judgment reveals the importance with which He regards each human life. Man is no mere irresponsible child of the animals but a son of God, with all the privileges and obligations of that position. The supreme God of the universe will judge him personally. Every one, small and great, will stand before Him. To God, man has greater dignity and worth than everything else on earth. No grander worth can be placed on man than to recognize his eternal value by a judgment which makes him responsible to the God of heaven.

Naturally we feel awe and concern when we realize that we will be judged by God before the heavenly court. But we realize, too, that the God who directs the investigation of our lives loves us and will do everything possible to give us life.

Our life here tests whether we have decided for Christ or against Him. Christ came to take away our sins, and in the judgment He will stand up, calling names, and reveal those who have allowed Him to cover them with His righteousness. For the children of God, judgment is a time of rejoicing, because Christ's verdict in their favor will bring everlasting vindication before all God's universe.

A Revelation and a Separation

The Bible stresses two aspects of the judgment—a revelation and a separation. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened"

(Daniel 7:9, 10).

Daniel speaks of the time when the books will be opened and the records unveiled. Here on earth things do not always appear as they are.

The opening of the record books in the judgment means that God now makes known the truth about every man. His judgment harmonizes strictly with the facts. With God all the evidence lies open to inspection, waiting for Him to reveal it. The divine judgment will disclose men's lives and characters in a way which cannot be possible here on earth.

As Christ opens the record books of heaven, it will become immediately obvious whether men have built their lives on gold and silver, or on wood, stubble, and straw (see 1 Corinthians 3:13-15). The judgment promises an unveiling, a revelation of Christ's knowledge about us all.

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his" (2 Timothy 2:19). We each need to ask the one crucial question, "Lord, how do I stand with You? Am I saved, or am I lost?" "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:10, 11). The universe cannot do without the judgment and the opening of the record books. Should Christ the Judge lose the capacity to make a distinction between good and evil, then He would no longer be able to rule. He judges according to the facts as recorded in the books of heaven. By their choice men either live eternally or die eternally. The judgment provides the whole universe with the perfect knowledge of the truth about every man.

A Separation

God's judgment also involves a sifting process which separates those who have stood with Christ from those who have not. The good and the bad grow together until the harvest. Then the Divine Reaper comes to distinguish between them. Men will take their places according to their lives and deeds. This separates them into the wheat and the tares.

At that time God will "gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matthew 3:12).

What else would we do with wheat and with chaff? When the fishing net is brought to shore, the fisherman gathers the good fish and stores them for food, but he throws aside the bad fish. No one would leave the bad to contaminate the good. The judgment makes a sharp separation between the wheat and the tares, the good and the evil.

Both the gospel and the judgment reveal that we have the possibility of living eternally or perishing eternally. A life controlled by sin and the purely temporal belongs to this life only—it has no future. A life that belongs to eternity demonstrates eternal values. Jesus, our Saviour, shows us what does and does not belong to eternity—what is temporal and what is eternal.

Even as erring human beings, we cannot conceive of God's allowing the injustice and evil in the world to continue without redress. Our own sense of right and wrong refuses to believe that it does not matter whether a man has lived like the apostle Paul or like the Emperor Nero. There must be one judgment and destiny for the apostle John, Jesus' friend, and another for Judas Iscariot, His betrayer. This very separation simply reflects the choices men have made. Men will reap what they have sown. God will agree in the judgment with the value that men have placed upon themselves. Our Lord cannot place good and evil together: He cannot call hate, love; dishonesty, honesty; immorality, purity; disobedience, obedience.

Christ's love for all men does not blind Him to the clear line between truth and error. His compassion does not propose an equality for believers and unbelievers. He did not come to reduce the moral order of the universe to an anarchy of love in which, regardless of how men live, God will overlook it all.

Jesus in His life here on earth combined the most comprehensive compassion for the sinner with an unflinching condemnation of sin. Jesus declared that the unfruitful branches of the vine will be gathered and burned in the fire prepared for the devil and his angels (see John 15:6; Matthew 25:41).

Only by such a revelation and a separation as the judgment brings can righteousness prevail and evil be destroyed. By the revelation of the judgment God will have the right to destroy sin and sinners. The judgment day carries eternal consequences not only for men but for all who live throughout the universe. It will establish

"In Christ alone we can rest serene and safe, for the judgment seat will appear luminous with the beauty of His love and the glory of His presence."

God as wholly righteous in His dealings with the rebellion of Satan and his followers. It will show that God has not blurred the distinction between truth and error. It will demonstrate that God is in no way responsible for sin.

The judgment of God is as natural as the ripening of the harvest and the reaping of it. We need to accept personal responsibility for our lives and recognize the inevitability and justice of God's ratification of our choices.

Each day we make decisions which affect God's judgment of our case. The examination goes forward constantly in heaven. Every hour bears witness to what we are and to what we are becoming. We enter new evidence every day. The court of heaven already has assembled in session. The hour of God's judgment *has come!* The Judge of all the earth already sits! Are we now prepared to stand before the judgment seat and receive from our Lord His eternal vindication of us?

Christ the Judge

"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22). "The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:30, 31).

The picture we have of God and His relation to men is very important. Some religious leaders and teachers swing the pendulum too far when interpreting the day of judgment. They believe that God's judgment must consist of harshness and a destructive attitude from God. They feel that in exercising judgment God invests Himself with the aspect of severity and wrath and divests Himself of love and mercy. Unfortunately, they have led many to believe that an angry God will eventually place people in an ever-burning hell where the pain never ceases and where life is one continual, indescribable agony that lasts forever.

God has never resorted to frightening people into obedience. Granted, the awesome thought of standing before God to account for our sins should make us think seriously. Sinners must not go about, indifferent to their standing with God. But those who have misrepresented God's character into one that demands His pound of flesh—that by the continual exercise of His divine power makes it possible for the lost sinner to continue living forever in a

living hell—have filled many minds with resentment and rebellion against such a God. In this view, the judgment hinges on the arbitrary will of the Almighty who can never be satisfied with enough punishment of those who oppose Him. Such a judgment would be an outrage. It would be the expression of a despot whose monstrous injustice would leave the universe with an ever-burning hell in its midst as an eternal threat that to oppose God would be to risk horrible torture. Such a God would demand obedience, not from love but from fear.

Such misconceptions of the day of judgment derive from a misunderstanding of God's character and of His purpose for those who live on the earth. God has no pleasure in either the suffering or the death of the wicked. He wants all men to be saved. God does not act arbitrarily. The verdict and sentence Christ imposes agree perfectly with the judgment that men pass upon themselves. God's decree that individuals must reap the results of their sins is not an arbitrary punishment from an angry God.

Jesus is perfect and absolute in His love and righteousness. Not by sheer power does He become the Judge of men. Not force, as we think of it, decides the issue. Christ's power lies in the moral and spiritual power of His righteous love and in the immaculate purity of His character. He became a man like us. He belongs to us.

The Eternal Judge is also our Redeemer, Friend, and Advocate. We can have complete confidence that in judging His children He lays bare the righteous character and loving attitude of the Godhead toward us.

"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment" (1 John 4:17).

In Christ alone we can rest serene and safe, for the judgment seat will appear luminous with the beauty of His love and the glory of His presence.

Who will rescue us at last from the wages of sin and eternal death? The Christian has the assurance that Christ will. This changes life at the very center. We see in Christ the embodiment of grace and truth, the supreme revelation of divine goodness.

Who at last will establish righteousness and justice in the earth for all the universe to see and understand? Jesus Christ will. Throughout the universe the cry goes up for

justice, righteousness, and the end of sin and death. Who will answer that cry? The One who carried a cross, who prayed for His enemies, who will create a new earth wherein dwells righteousness, will answer. Who alone can make the universe forever free from sin and death but Jesus Christ?

Statesmen and economists, psychologists and scholars, cannot do the thing that most needs to be done in our world, that which only Jesus, the Judge of all the earth, can do—stand up for His people and proclaim them eternally secure.

"He hath prepared his throne for judgment. And he shall judge the world in righteousness. He shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness. The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble" (Psalm 9:7-9).

Christ came not to condemn but to save. As Christians, we must praise God continually for His everlasting love, mercy, and truth. Jesus will not pronounce a wrong verdict in the judgment. He judges in righteousness and according to the truth.

"We are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth" "who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath" (Romans 2:2, 6-8).

Nothing in the work of Christ has more significance than His position both as Redeemer and as Judge. The supreme demand is for a righteous judgment. Without the vindication of right and the condemnation of wrong, the universe cannot be sure that God will keep faith with all those who have been loyal to Him.

In this time of the world's history, we still confront the choice of accepting or rejecting Jesus Christ. Christ is either the Rock on which wise men build or the stone which grinds wicked men to powder (see Matthew 7:24; 21:44). The signs of the final decay of our civilization multiply every day. All that remains is the coming of Christ.

The Christian who believes in the glorious gospel of our Lord will not interpret the judgment in terms of fear, but trusting the love and power of the Saviour, he will live his life in Him and rest secure in His judgment.



Does God bore you?

What can I do to serve God and still not feel bored? Sometimes I feel down, and I don't know how to make myself feel high on Jesus.

It may be that you are looking for something that doesn't really exist. A life in Christ is not like a bottle of carbonated pop! There may be moments of great spiritual exaltation, but genuine Christian living is not characterized by a frothy, bubbly, effervescent experience. The Christian lives by faith, not by his feelings. One's emotions often seem as changeable as the weather. They may be affected by atmospheric conditions, the body's chemistry, the surroundings, and many other factors. Some days we may feel discouraged, sensitive, irritable, or cheerful. Consequently, the Christian lives by a calm, quiet trust in God. He believes with all his heart the gracious promises his Father has made to him in the Scriptures, and he trusts in the saving merits of Christ.

Entering into the Christian life is similar to entering into a marriage union with someone you deeply love. A Christian has formed a bond of union with Christ. The believer accepts Christ as his Lord and Saviour, and in turn, Christ accepts the believer as His beloved one. In this blessed

union the penitent sinner finds not only the sweet forgiveness of sins but also transforming grace and a purpose for living.

If you wish this friendship to grow, you must read and study Christ's love letter, the Bible, which He has written to you. As you study the life of the Saviour, you will also learn His secret for a useful and happy life. Jesus lived to bless others. He found His pleasure in helping humanity. Loving service to others, an outflowing, unselfish ministry to the spiritual and physical needs of those around you, will bring meaning and worth into your life. God has a plan for every human being. Your Saviour will direct you to that sphere of usefulness as you daily seek to copy His life-style.

On what kind of cross did Jesus die? Is this cross a pagan symbol that would be out of place for a Christian to use? What is a Saint Andrew's cross? the Maltese cross?

The Greek word used by the Gospel writers to describe the instrument upon which the Saviour died is *stauros*. Like words in other languages, *stauros* has picked up more than one meaning through the passage of time. In the first place, *stauros* referred to an upright pale or stake. A victim might have been fastened to such a stake, or he might have been impaled upon it.

Stauros, however, also came to mean a "cross," and its verb, *stauroo*, "to crucify." Since Jesus died by Roman crucifixion, we must ask how the Romans crucified their victims. Scholarly study concludes that the Romans commonly used two kinds of crosses: (1) an upright post with a crossbeam at the top like the letter T; or (2) an upright post with a crossbeam fastened a little lower down from the top of the upright—the usual form pictured in Christian art. (However, a Roman cross probably did not measure more than two and a half to three yards in height).

No New Testament information definitively specifies upon which kind of Roman cross the Saviour died. Mid-second-century church fathers indicate that it was the second type as noted above. The fact that an inscription was placed above Christ's head (Matthew 27:37) implies that the crossbeam intersected the upright at some distance from the top.

The cross form known as Saint Andrew's cross—in the form of an X—came as a development of the Middle Ages, as did also the papal cross with three crossbars and the patriarchal cross of two crossbars. Other variations also appeared, such as the Maltese cross, the cross fleury, the cross patté. These latter improvisations upon the basic lines of the cross belong to the realm of medieval heraldry and art.

A great deal of superstition has grown up around the symbol of the cross—superstition that reaches back to the middle of the second century A.D. The practice of making the sign of the cross to exorcise demons, to cure the sick, or to protect oneself in a time of peril developed about this time. The cross came to be marked on walls, doors, household objects, clothing, sarcophagi, church buildings, banners, and arms of war. It was used as an amulet, and church buildings were built in its form.

The sixteenth-century Reformation in general, and reformed groups in particular, reacted against this superstitious use of the symbol in a desire to return to a plain, simple, and spiritual worship of God. There is no merit, of course, in either the original instrument or its stylized symbol forms. Virtue lies only in the Christ of the cross.

If God considers the seventh-day Sabbath so important, why don't we find the fourth commandment repeated in the New Testament?

The same could be asked about the second and the third precepts, for neither do they reappear verbatim in the New Testament. Apparently no occasion arose which necessitated their restatement.

The Ten Commandments are not debatable. Christ and the apostles recognized the Decalogue as obligatory on all mankind. They recognized that it rested upon the principle of love—love to God and love to one's neighbor—and that it defined man's duty to both God and man (see Matthew 22:36-40; Romans 13:8-10). "The law is holy," Paul declared, "and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12). The validity of the entire moral law continued to be recognized in the New Testament as in the Old. How could it be otherwise if God is the unchangeable moral governor of the universe?



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.



Plastic sex

A YOUNG MAN who came to me for counseling the other day was walking with a noticeable limp which he will always have. In an emotional frenzy he pointed a loaded shotgun at his knee and pulled the trigger. He honestly thought he deserved to be disciplined. Most of us are not emotionally competent to make objective decisions about self-inflicted punishment, and likewise we become too emotionally involved to make objective decisions about self-inflicted pleasures! We may honestly think we deserve pleasure as that young man thought he deserved punishment.

As a teen-ager you may confer upon yourself an award of pleasure because mother yelled at you about the way you keep your room—or you flunked the algebra test—or your best girl caught a cold . . . from some other guy! The award of pleasure may come in a pill—or a joint—or a glass. In some cases it takes the shape of nothing more sinister than a fork and some extra fat. In the case of this young man the problem was masturbation—it's OK to say the word out loud.

I ask you, "Why do we have to improve on God's way of doing things?" God made fragrant flowers to bloom only occasionally so man could have sufficient time for rising expectations. You see, man's pleasure potential is threefold—anticipation, realization, and memory. So what does man do? He

makes plastic flowers to dull sensitivity by saturation. Plastic flowers may be beautiful imitations, but you don't have to cultivate them with anticipatory pleasure while waiting for them to grow and bloom.

God invented sex as an occasional extravaganza of human communication between a husband and wife, the plan being to allow time for rising expectation in anticipation, as well as realization, and the afterglow of pleasant memory. So man has to try to improve on God's way. He invented superficial "semisex," "homosex," and masturbation to nullify as much as possible of God's good intentions to give His human friends a more "abundant life."

Of course these synthetic substitutes are sins, even as plastic flowers are "sins" against real flowers. Just because real flowers don't have feelings, it doesn't follow that real people don't! Suppose you were a fragile, fragrant flower about to be replaced by a plastic replica of yourself. How would you feel? Masturbation is plastic sex—a plastic replica.

Self-awards can never approach the magnitude of the real thing. Let me pose an illustration: Suppose I go out to my workbench and spend three days fashioning for myself a medal of honor. Would I prefer my own to one presented to me by the President of the United States? Or would I be willing

to abandon mine as immature foolishness in favor of the real thing?

Some students of psychology view masturbation as a relatively harmless exercise of sexual gratification. This is an echo from the so-called "new" morality. "If it doesn't hurt anyone else, it must be all right." That is similar to the old argument that it is all right to consume alcohol as long as you don't drink and drive.

David Wilkerson in his little booklet "A New Look at Homosexuality, Lesbianism, and Masturbation" (Fleming Revell, Old Tappan, New Jersey) has this to say about masturbation: "The unsuccessful struggle against masturbation leaves many with the overwhelming fear that they can never stop. Not every boy and girl has this problem. I believe it should be regarded as an unwanted, unnecessary, and unhealthy habit that should be overcome. For those who do want to quit, there is a way to stop. You must maintain a high regard for the good conscience God gave you. You begin by forgetting everything in the past—quit making promises to yourself, to God, or to your parents. You are not a sex maniac; you are not dirty; you are not a potential prostitute; you are not a freak—just because you have masturbated.

"Get rid of all phony stimulants. Throw away your pornographic pictures and erotic books. Be careful to avoid motion pictures that are pornographic. Avoid friends with whom you have engaged in the past in mutual acts of masturbation. Boredom leads to trouble. Spend more time reading the Bible and other good books and make proper use of your free time. When you are tempted, repeat to yourself these two words: 'Grow up.'

"If you fail, confess it to God and yourself; forget it and move on. God doesn't want you to make promises about quitting, and He doesn't intend you to fight this battle all alone. A sincere, urgent heart cry to God has helped thousands to be made strong in their hour of weakness. Rather than feeling guilty and ashamed, hold your head high and say to yourself, 'All right, I failed, but I'm going on. I'll make it. I am not hooked. I'll keep working at it until I am completely free.' Through prayer and a little effort, masturbation can lose its hold on you. God understands the problem and why you do it. Don't condemn yourself any more. Look up and have faith in God."



How scientific is creationism?



Must a scientist accept the evolutionary theory, or does creation also offer a valid explanation for the life around us? **by Harold W. Clark**

WHEN THE California State Board of Education ruled in November, 1969, that Creation as well as evolution should be taught in the elementary schools of the state, many educational and scientific organizations the world over voiced great concern. Evolutionists and even some creationists felt that the creation theory represented only a religious dogma, whereas evolution was "scientific." Evolution, they felt, could properly be taught in the public schools, while the Creation story should be barred.

Such misunderstandings only show that even scientists fail to recognize the true basis for both theories, since neither can be proved scientifically; they represent different interpretations based on different philosophies.

The evolution theory derives from the philosophical concept that the earth is very old and has operated under uniform natural laws throughout its existence. The creationists start from the philosophical concept that the earth is young and that a Supreme Intelligence created it in

essentially the same form it has at present.

Both theories represent attempts to interpret scientific data in the light of a particular philosophical background. For example, geologists find that the lower rocks of the earth contain almost nothing but remains of marine forms of life. Higher levels of rock contain swamp or bog life—certain species of plants and animals fitted for such an environment. Above these come remnants of upland life. The evolutionist studies and interprets this evidence in light of the evolution concept. To him the rocks tell a story of millions of years of evolutionary progress.

On the other hand a creationist takes the same evidence and points out that the succession of life found in these strata indicates the arrangement of the ancient life zones as created by God. He sees the evidence as supporting an ecological grouping rather than the theory of long geological ages.

Many fail to recognize the difference between scientific evidence and philosophical presuppositions. The scientific material is exactly the same for both evolutionists and creationists—a succession of different types of fossil remains distributed through thousands of feet of sediments. But the interpretation differs tremendously. One sees long ages of

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time for the burial of the fossils, while the other sees evidence of a worldwide catastrophe known as the Genesis Flood.

Which view is more "scientific," or are both equally so? Or is neither scientific? These questions must be clarified.

Actually both positions are scientific in that they deal with natural phenomena. Both the evolutionist and the creationist can find interest and value from a study of paleontology, the study of the fossils. The arrangement of the rocks and the nature of the life that was once buried in them are fields for investigation by anyone.

As soon as one begins to explain when and how the burial of the fossils took place, he gets into a field where he must use speculation and conjecture to a great degree. The fossils cannot tell us when and how they were deposited, although their appearance and the manner of their burial may give us clues to the kind of forces involved. The person studying the evidence of paleontological research will always interpret the information on the basis of his own philosophical concepts of evolution or of Creation.

For one group to charge that the other is "unscientific" simply because their philosophies differ is unfair, and it also shows a complete misunderstanding of the issues. The evolutionist cannot prove his theory to be correct because it involves operations that require millions of years, which, obviously, no man can follow through. Neither can the creationist prove his theory to be true because Creation took place through a series of acts on the part of the Creator which cannot be observed.

What, then, shall we do about the situation? Shall we drop the whole matter, admitting that we cannot reach any satisfactory solution?

Current thinking sees much value in the setting up of *models*. A model is a definition, or a pattern of thought, around which one can arrange data and evaluate it.

The evolution model assumes millions of years of change, with an upward progression of life forms from simple to complex. In the physical world it assumes that natural forces have always acted uniformly.

The creation model takes an entirely opposite position. It assumes a short history of the earth, a direct creation of the major types of life, and destruction of the original earth by a catastrophic flood. The evolution concept comes from logical reasoning; the creation concept comes from the Biblical record of Creation and the Flood.

Now that we have established the principle of models, how shall we apply it to the problem of origins? Consider a few of the major problems and how they relate to the question.

The most critical problem of all is that of the origin of

species. The evolution model assumes that species have originated by chance variations which in turn gave rise to more and more complex forms. These gradually separated one from the other, becoming more complex and diversified, until in the course of millions of years an astonishing array of life forms has developed.

The creation model assumes that the major species came into existence originally at one time, each "after his kind" (Genesis 1:24). All variation since has remained within the original kinds, without intermingling from one to the other.

Which model does the scientific evidence support the most strongly? This article cannot go into details because the issue would require more pages of discussion than we have room to present. However, at the present time the science of genetics shows no way in which evolution could have brought about the major types, whereas the creation model finds support in current evidence.

A similar situation exists in anthropology, the study of man. Evolution assumes that man has evolved from apelike ancestors, but the growing mass of evidence shows no positive indications that man ascended from lower forms of life. In fact, the most recent work on fossil man shows that the specimens are distinctly hominoid, that is, resembling humans rather than apes.

In taxonomy, the science of classifying plants and animals into groups, we find that the evidence strongly supports the creation model, for none of the major phyla of either plants or animals shows any evidence of having been derived from any other. Fitting this evidence into the evolution concept requires that we make many assumptions which the facts simply do not justify.

The creation model assumes a flood, just as the evolution model assumes long geological ages. But an increasing wealth of geological information gives continued strength to the idea of catastrophism instead of uniformitarianism.

Then, is creationism scientific? From whatever angle we look, we find the creation-flood model strongly supported by the evidence from the living world and the fossils, as well as by the physical aspects of geology. We can positively assert that the creation theory is as scientific as is the evolution theory in every way.

It is high time that the scientific world recognize these facts and give to the creation theory its rightful place along with the evolution theory as an explanation for the origin of the earth and life. The Genesis record of Creation and the Flood has come to us by divine revelation, but that makes it no less suitable for scientific study. It does make us want to exclaim with the scientist Kepler, when he discovered the laws of planetary motion: "O God, I do think thy thoughts after thee!"





muddy miracles

by Patricia Maxwell

What connection can there possibly be between you and a blind man who lived nearly two thousand years ago?

SUPPOSE the Healer had kept a patient file. Wouldn't your eyes linger over this case twice or even three times?

Patient: Male. Age: 28. Height: 5'8".
Weight: 147.

Diagnosis: Congenital blindness.

Rx: 1. Mudpack to eyes

2. Eye bath in Pool of Siloam

Patient's condition following treatment:
Sight restored.

What? Mud on his eyes? Siloam eyewash? Why? If the Healer could heal others with a touch or a word, why did He prescribe such unsanitary treatment for this man? You must hear the rest of the story.

Imagine a street corner somewhere in Jerusalem and yourself as the man leaning on a white cane, a tin cup drooping from your hand. You've been here so long you no longer smile when a coin drops into the cup or wince when you overhear the whisperings of people who believe you're blind because you sinned before you were born, or your parents sinned, or your grandparents—who knows how far back God keeps score? So you hear without listening, when a group of sandals shuffles past and disembodied voices ask the same old question, "Whose sin caused this man's blindness, his own or his parents?"

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"Neither," a voice answers. The sandals stop moving; the voices are silent. They wait. You wait. You're listening now.

"Neither he nor his parents sinned," the voice continues. "He was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him."

It doesn't make sense. It sounds like the same doctrine, in different words. Your blindness is your fate. *God* made you this way. Yet that part about "the works of God" brings a hope that pulls your shoulders away from the stone wall.

Against the backdrop of children's voices calling somewhere in an alley and a vendor's song "two sparrows for a farthing," you hear saliva explode from a man's mouth and plunk in the dust. You step back as the rustle of his garment tells you the man is bending, squatting close in front of you. You hear his finger whisper in the dirt, then another swish of raiment, and you feel his breath in your face. Strong but gentle fingers rub sticky mud over your eyes. "Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam," he says, and moving your cane ahead of you, you start the journey that changes your life.

The mud clings to your eyes and the odor of saliva and dust fills your nostrils. You don't like it. It tells you you're blind, different, handicapped—and that's a knowledge you've never let yourself accept. As a small boy you clenched your fists and kicked the neighbor boys who shouted, "He

can't play with us. He's blind." As a young man, you gritted your teeth and pretended you were normal. Now this slimy clay presses the fact into your brain: you *are* blind! And blindness is an affliction.

But is it a curse? No. No. No. You jab your answer into the ground with your cane and wrestle with the problem of sin. The mud which forced you to see yourself as a blind man seems to awaken your spiritual vision. You sense that you *are* a sinner, that your parents are sinners, and your grandparents are—in fact, "all have sinned."

Even as you were born blind, so all are born in sin. Did God make you blind? Did He make you a sinner? You can't accept that as you ponder God's creating man in the first place, combining dust and His breath to make a perfect, sinless man. Your cane pauses its rhythmic click against the stone street.

Dust, the dust used in Creation, was it like the dust the man used to make this clay? Could that man have some divine power to combine his breath and the dust to restore a man physically even as God joined His divine force with dust to make man in the beginning? Your cane moves faster, your legs stretching to keep up with it.

There's some formula at work in your body and soul. Dust plus divine power, could it be healing? The Pool of Siloam can't be more than another block. Siloam means "sent." Your mind is working in symbols now. Who "sent" that man to diagnose your blindness and your sinfulness, to prescribe mud and water in a pool which means "sent"? You've always believed that someday there would be a "Sent One" from God, but *sent* to do what?

You tap your way to the Pool of Siloam and scoop up water with your hands, splashing and scrubbing your eyes, making the mud run down your cheeks. Then, through the water dripping from your eyelashes, light pierces your eyeballs and you see! With water, tears, and mud streaking your face, you fling your cane to the curb and run toward home.

Much later you meet the man who healed you in such an unusual manner, and you learn that he *is* the Sent One from God.

The story ends with the patient worshipping the Healer, Jesus.

But is that all? Is it only a narrative with spiritual insights that end when you shut the Book? Or can the story be applied to your life today?

Suppose the Healer has a patient card on you. How would it read?

"You don't want to admit you're a sinner. You've been avoiding that knowledge for years, but now it rests on you like a heavy, sticky mudpack."

Wait a minute! What does this mudpack-and-Pool-of-Siloam prescription have to do with sinfulness?

Everything. Jesus compares Himself to a doctor who came to the world to save sinners (Luke 5:31, 32). A doctor must first diagnose the symptoms to discover what's wrong with the patient. You wouldn't go to a doctor who prescribed medicines before knowing the disease.

When Jesus passes by you, He diagnoses you as a sinner. He has to tell you, though, because you're blind to your own sinfulness. You can't see yourself as you really are. Robert Burns understood this human foible when he wrote his famous poem about the woman in church with the louse on her bonnet which she couldn't see but others

could. He summarizes by saying, "Oh wad some power the giftie gie us/To see oursels as ithers see us."

God analyzes the blindness of sinners in similar language: "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Revelation 3:17).

Christ's first function with you, a born sinner, blind to your condition, then, is to tell you what's wrong with you. With His Word, He x-rays your life, "piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit" and discerning "the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).

With His Spirit, He probes your thoughts, convicting you of sin (John 16:7-11); with His law He measures your conduct and lets you see how far you miss His perfect standard. "Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law" (Romans 7:7).

There you are, a congenital sinner, with Jesus pressing clay on your eyes to awaken your conscience. The experience is painful. You don't want to admit you're a sinner. You've been avoiding that knowledge for years, but now it rests on you like a heavy, sticky mudpack. You long to shake it loose, but you can't, until you go and wash in the Pool of Siloam. But where is the Pool of Siloam?

You'll find it at the foot of a cross. God's Sent One, the Diagnostician of your sin, also becomes your remedy. His blood is the water of life for you. He "loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Revelation 1:5).

Tap your way there. Hurry to be clean. Don't wait. Apply His blood to your life. Rub it into your sin-blinded eyes. Splash it onto your guilt-burdened heart. Wash. Wash, and be clean. The light of His forgiveness and acceptance pierces your soul, and you can see! You're healed of your sin. You stand before God, whole and clean, washed in the blood of His Son.

Run to Him and kneel at His feet. Worship Him and thank Him the rest of your life.



"Call her blessed"

by Mike LeFan

Ever since Eve, mothers have enjoyed a special place in the hearts of their children. God, too, recognizes the important responsibilities of mothers.

"WHO CAN FIND a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies." "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed" (Proverbs 31:10, 26-28).

Mothers have been held in special esteem since prehistoric times. The American observance of a special Mother's Day, a custom just over fifty years old, came about through the efforts of Anna M. Jarvis (1864-1948). Miss Jarvis was a devoted daughter who for years cared for her invalid mother. She became deeply concerned about the neglecting of mothers by their grown children, and after her own mother's death, Anna talked with friends about the idea of setting aside a day for calling attention to older mothers.

The first Mother's Day observance was a special church service held at the request of Anna Jarvis at Grafton, West Virginia, May 10, 1908. A similar service also occurred the same day at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. However, these were not strictly Mother's Day services to honor motherhood, but rather they were memorials to Mrs. Jarvis, Anna's late mother.

Through a letter-writing campaign aimed at ministers, legislators, and businessmen, Anna Jarvis tried to arouse support for her dream of a national Mother's Day. Finally, by 1911, every state in the Union, as well as many foreign countries, observed a day in honor of mothers. On May 9, 1914, President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation for the first nationwide observance of Mother's Day: "Now, Therefore, I, . . . by virtue of the authority

vested in me . . . do hereby direct the government officials to display the United States flag on all government buildings and do invite the people of the United States to display the flag at their homes or other suitable places on the second Sunday in May as a public expression of our love and reverence for the mothers of our country."

Since that time, the second Sunday in May has become a special day on which to honor mothers.

Mothers are worthy of honor.

Kate Douglas Wiggin (1856-1923), an American author of children's stories, said, "Most all the other beautiful things in life come by twos and threes, by dozens and hundreds. Plenty of roses, stars, sunsets, rainbows, brothers and sisters, aunts and cousins, but only one mother in the whole world."

Washington Irving (1783-1859) wrote the following about a mother's feeling toward her sons—possibly with his own mother in mind: "There is an enduring tenderness in the love of a mother to a son that transcends all other affections of the heart! It is neither to be chilled by selfishness, nor daunted by danger, nor weakened by worthlessness, nor stifled by ingratitude. She will sacrifice every comfort to his convenience; . . . she will glory in his fame, and exult in his prosperity; . . . and if disgrace settle upon his name, she will still love and cherish him; and if all the world beside cast him off, she will be all the world to him."

John Quincy Adams (1767-1848), sixth President of the United States, must have felt much the same, because he stated, "All that I am my mother made me." Likewise, Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865), sixteenth President of the United States, said, "All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother."


Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887), an American Congregational minister and great

orator, believed that "the mother's heart is the child's schoolroom."

A theological perspective on motherhood comes from Martin Luther (1483-1546), the German leader of the Protestant Reformation. Luther, who shaped much of the thought of the modern Christian religion, pointed out that "when Eve was brought unto Adam, he became filled with the Holy Spirit, and gave her the most sanctified, the most glorious of appellations. He called her *Eva*, that is to say, the Mother of All. He did not style her wife, but simply mother,—mother of all living creatures. In this consists the glory and the most precious ornament of woman."

This sublime attribute of motherly affection deeply impressed the American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882). He said, "Even He that died for us upon the cross, in the last hour, in the unutterable agony of death, was mindful of his mother, as if to teach us that this holy love should be our last worldly thought,—the last point of earth from which the soul should take its flight for heaven."

In a very real way, mothers direct the destinies of human spirits, and how fortunate are those children whose mothers have guided aright. The apostle Paul, writing to Timothy, his son in the faith, emphasizes the godly influence that a mother can have in the spiritual lives of her children. He compliments Timothy, saying, "I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also" (2 Timothy 1:5).

The children of a virtuous woman will truly "arise up, and call her blessed." Such a mother equips her children for life's every situation. A bit of Jewish folk wisdom puts it well by saying that God could not be everywhere, therefore He made mothers. 

Mike LeFan is a free-lance writer living in Temple, Texas.

How to avoid heart disease

by J. Wayne McFarland

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, claiming 675,000 lives each year. Learn how you can lessen the risks for you and your family.

THERE IS a law that affects all of us. Simply stated, the old adage says, "As you sow, so shall you reap." Nothing can be more certain of fulfillment than this fact. If you sow good health habits, you reap good health; sow poor health habits, and you reap poor health. It is as simple as that.

Our health habits, or lack of good health habits, are behind our *No. 1 killer* of all Americans—heart attacks! Coronary heart disease will kill one out of every five American men before they reach sixty years of age. Each year it heads the list of causes of all deaths. More than one million persons each year have a heart attack, and of this number 675,000 die. We are experiencing an epidemic of heart and blood-vessel diseases.

The medical name of the killer, atherosclerosis, means a clogging and narrowing of the blood vessels. Fats called cholesterol and triglycerides seem to be the main culprits in this process of filling up blood vessels. When the blood flow

stops in an artery, the cells beyond that point die. If this stoppage occurs in an organ such as the brain, we have a stroke. If the coronary arteries of the heart become plugged, we have a heart attack.

The three greatest major risk factors which cause atherosclerosis are cholesterol, high blood pressure, and cigarette smoking.

Men with a cholesterol of 250 milligrams or above run three to six times the risk of heart attack as compared to those men whose cholesterol is 200 mgs or below. High blood pressure means an eight-times-greater risk.

A smoker develops coronary heart disease at the rate of three to six times greater than nonsmokers.

Chances for a heart attack are increased 10 to 13 percent for those 10 percent overweight; 20 to 25 percent for those 20 percent overweight; and at 30 to 40 percent overweight chances of a fatal heart attack increase from 30 to over 40 percent.

Lack of physical exercise causes your chances for a coronary to be twice as great as if you were active.

Dr. McFarland, well-known writer of books and magazine articles on health, lives in Washington, D.C.



There is no single cause of atherosclerosis. Cardiac researchers list nine factors:

Nine Factors Which Aid Hardening
of the Arteries

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. High levels of cholesterol | 6. Too little exercise |
| 2. High blood pressure | 7. Diabetes |
| 3. Cigarette smoking | 8. Tensions and stresses |
| 4. Overweight | 9. Heredity |
| 5. Excessive eating of saturated fats, refined carbohydrates, and drinking of coffee | |

Notice that of these nine factors, five are closely related to diet: high levels of cholesterol, overweight, saturated fats, refined carbohydrates and sugar, and diabetes.

Hardening of the arteries cannot be traced to a germ or some virus that attacks and kills us. This disease is not germ related—it stems from faulty habits of living. We can do something about this No. 1 killer, but it means taking a good

look at our eating habits.

Approximately 20 percent of our diet should be fats, but most of us eat double this percentage or more. And to make matters worse, we are eating the wrong kind of fats—foods containing excessive amounts of cholesterol. Cholesterol is a special kind of fat also called a hard or saturated fat because the oil or fat is hard at room temperature. This excess of cholesterol plugs up blood vessels. Where does all this saturated fat come from?

The American Heart Association tells us: "The typical American diet is rich in eggs, which are high in cholesterol; and meats, butter, cream, and whole milk, which are high in animal (saturated) fats. These foods tend to raise the level of cholesterol in the blood, and a high blood cholesterol level contributes to the development of atherosclerosis, a form of hardening of the arteries. Atherosclerosis is the condition that underlies most heart attacks." —*The Way to a Man's Heart*, American Heart Association, 1968.

This food chart will help you see where the high cholesterol, hard fats, or saturated fats are coming from.

“Your heart is at the mercy of your kitchen stove, your knife, fork, and spoon. . . . Many of us dig our graves deeper each day with knife and fork.”

SATURATED FATS—HIGH CHOLESTEROL

eggs	cream
meats	chocolate
whole milk	coconut
butter	hardened fats
cheese	—Crisco, margarines

UNSATURATED FATS—LOW CHOLESTEROL

<i>Seeds and Oils</i>	sunflower seed
safflower	walnuts
soybean	wheat germ
corn oil	soft margarines
peanut oil	fish

LITTLE OR NO CHOLESTEROL

fruits
vegetables
grains

As the chart shows, the hard or saturated fats are loaded with cholesterol and come largely from animal sources. The unsaturated and low cholesterol foods are from plant origin—fruits, grains, vegetables, and seeds.

But we must mention another culprit in this story of damaged hearts. Some scientists, notably Dr. J. Yudkin, author of *Sweet and Dangerous*, remind us that a person eating 110 grams (approximately one-quarter pound) of sugar a day is five times as likely to develop a heart attack as one taking less than 60 grams (approximately one-seventh pound).

It could well be that we are dealing with a double-edged sword—one edge of the blade covered with cake, pie, ice cream, candy; the other edge dripping with animal fats. The answer is apparent: we must reduce our fat intake, lower our cholesterol, cut down on our sugar. Your heart is at the mercy of your kitchen stove, your knife, fork, and spoon.

Some simple suggestions will help reverse this trend:

1. Change the type of fat you are using in your diet. Animal fats should be reduced and replaced by unsaturated or liquid fats. In your cooking avoid butter, meat fats, hydrogenated or hardened vegetable fats, and coconut oil. In their place use corn, cottonseed, safflower, soybean oils, or margarines which are soft or high in liquid vegetable oils. Use skim milk in place of whole milk. Avoid cream, butter, and cheese. Use eggs sparingly.

2. Omit the highly refined calories in sugary desserts, cake, pie, soft drinks, ice cream, candies, and especially chocolate.

3. Learn how to prepare vegetarian entrées.

4. Start a consistent exercise program to help reduce your cholesterol and help your heart.


5. Be faithful in following your doctor's directions if you have high blood pressure or diabetes.

6. Stop smoking.

Last, let us consider tension and calmness of nerves. There is no question that tension, worry, frustration, guilt, and fear can hasten a heart attack.

Interestingly enough the Holy Scriptures described this centuries ago. “Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth” (Luke 21:26). Hearts *can fail* because of fear. And what happens when your heart fails? *That is the end* of this world as far as you are concerned!

With all these facts before us, is it not time for us to change our pattern of living so we can be alert and alive? You need not be a victim of an early death. Give your heart and yourself a chance to stay around. Don't forget, you're only a heartbeat away from eternity. When it stops, you're dead.

Many of us dig our graves deeper each day with knife and fork. God wants us to live, not die. And even more, God wants us to have abundant, rich, full lives. That is why the Bible has so much to say about health and even our diet. God knows that health and spirituality are closely related. “Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1). 



Nobody's child



THIS IS Joe's story and probably the story of thousands of us who got off to a rough start. It occurred to me as I started to put it down on paper that I always write a sad Mother's Day column. I'm not going to apologize. For some of us it's a sad day. If it's a happy one for you, I'm glad. Count your blessings.

Joe was born during the Depression, and his parents' marriage fell apart along with the economy. At seventeen months he went to live in the home of his paternal grandparents. His mother, though struggling with problems of survival, tried to visit him frequently, bringing him clothes and little gifts.

Into his grandparents' home came a steady stream of uncles, aunts, and cousins. He felt the warmth of that close-knit Southern family, but he could never find his place in its glow. He saw the fathers and sons go fishing and the maternal pride in childish accomplishments. Though he was treated kindly, even loved, he stood outside the circle—nobody's child.

His grandmother, though illiterate—unable to read even the Bible—knew and loved Jesus Christ. She'd raised, besides her own ten children, two or three other needy youngsters. While his heart hungered for his mother, he saw in this godly woman a generosity of spirit, a concern for mankind,

which shaped and altered his life.

There were times when one of the passing cars which nosed down into his dusty lane *did* bring his mother. These high days stood out in the lad's lonely life. He clutched at the moments, cherishing her voice, memorizing her smile, blossoming beneath her touch. When she left, he pleaded to go with her, clinging to her and stabbing her reasonings with his tears. What did he care that meals were sure at his grandfather's table, that care was more constant? All he wanted was her presence. But always the visit ended; the car moved relentlessly down the lane until his mother's face became a blur and her waving hand became a symbol of his ever-present sorrow. He raced behind the car, small tanned legs churning the Oklahoma dust, until at last the distance between them widened into hopelessness, his frantic cries of "Mother, Mother, take me with you!" ended.

Small wonder that at eighteen he joined the army and opened his arms wide to most of the enticements this world offers.

Joe's a preacher today, and he uses this story in one of his best sermons. He tells it absolutely dry eyed while drawing the following conclusions:

1. It was his grandmother's early training which led him, some rough-and-tumble years

later, back to Christ. Let this be encouragement to those grandmothers, foster mothers, even adoptive mothers, who can never quite find their way into the hearts of the wistful children under their care.

2. Out of Joe's childhood came a special compassion. Today he looks at the children in his congregation with empathy. He watches their homelife, their heartbreaks, their needs, and their joys with tender concern, for he's been there.

3. In looking back he sees that God was always there, caring, watching, waiting for him. "Since I have committed myself to Him," he affirms, "He's led me, with my wife and children, in a marvelous way."

It's a joyous footnote that his mother, long a stranger to Christ, now walks with him in the faith he loves.

I drew two conclusions from the story myself. Perhaps you'll have a couple of your own.

1. A child's need of his mother is so deep and consuming that he should never be denied it, except under the most extreme conditions. Perhaps even a working mother is better than a full-time foster mother. Not all will agree with me on that point, and I am aware there are exceptions, but I have experienced and watched enough private heartache to draw this rather unpopular conclusion.

2. Joe today is a gentle, calm, compassionate man. He carries no outward evidence of inner scars. His smile flashes quick and warm, and his eyes often dance merrily. There's a song which says:

"Pick up the broken pieces
Bring them to the Lord.
Pick up the broken pieces
Trust in His holy Word.
He will put them back together
And make your life complete.
Just place the broken pieces
At the Saviour's feet."

That's what He did for Joe. So if your life has some broken pieces, don't use it for a crutch. Just ask God to start patching way back at the beginning, to help you let go of the hurts and bitterness which may yet twist and writhe within you. He'll turn what you endured into something lovely and useful and give you His peace. Let me say He's done that for me also, and Joe and I can't both be wrong.





Why I am a Seventh-day Adventist

A personal confession of faith by a longtime Christian.

by H. M. S. Richards

"WHY AM I a Seventh-day Adventist?" Well, first of all because I am a Christian. A Christian, I understand, is a person who accepts the teaching and the example of Jesus Christ, as recorded in the New Testament, to be the standard of his life and study. Now there are many earnest, godly, and sincere Christians following the light of Scripture as they understand it. Most of them belong to denominational organizations named after men such as Martin Luther or for some doctrine or practice which they believed should be emphasized. We think of the Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, and others. The name *Seventh-day Adventist* points out two doctrines which these Christians stress, the seventh-day Sabbath and the second coming of Christ.

Now first of all, Seventh-day Adventists are Christians. Because of the observance of the original Bible Sabbath, the seventh day of the week instead of the first day, some have jumped to the conclusion that Seventh-day Adventists do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and therefore may not be Christians. This is the very opposite of the truth.

When I began to preach, my father gave me some good advice and urged me to hold up Jesus in every sermon as the only hope of a lost and ruined world. He told me that Christ's atoning sacrifice upon the cross should be preached everywhere so that sinners would know that there was hope for them. Jesus had died for their sins, and when they accept Christ as their only Saviour, knowing what He did for them there, they would receive forgiveness and cleansing from their sins and the Holy Spirit would come into their lives and change their hearts.

From then on they would be Christians as they followed the Lord. In fact, he read this paragraph to me: "Lift up Jesus, you that teach the people, lift Him up in sermon, in song, in prayer. Let all your powers be directed to pointing souls, confused, bewildered, lost, to 'the Lamb of God.' Lift Him up, the risen Saviour, and say to all who hear, Come to Him who 'hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us' " (*Gospel Workers*, p. 160).

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Seventh-day Adventists share with other Christians many great and wonderful Bible doctrines. This is made clear in Adventist books and periodicals. We know that Christians in general separate into various schools of thought and subscribe to many doctrines. Seventh-day Adventists agree with some of these groups and not with others. With some groups Adventists hold many doctrines in common. With others they find little common ground.

Besides the great doctrines generally accepted by most Protestants and with which Seventh-day Adventists agree,

"The name Seventh-day Adventist points out two doctrines which these Christians stress, the seventh-day Sabbath and the second coming of Christ."

there are other doctrines on which all conservative Christians do not agree. In these cases Seventh-day Adventists hold with one or two or more of the alternative views. Two or three distinctive last-day doctrines held by Seventh-day Adventists are predicted in Holy Writ for end-of-the-world proclamation. They were neither due nor applicable in past generations, but since they *are* now, these messages are being heralded today. The Seventh-day Adventist Church believes it has a definite part to play in giving these truths the emphasis they require in these last days.

I was converted at the age of thirteen. I had heard my father preach as far back as I could remember, and we always had family worship. Father or, in his absence, Mother read the Bible to us every day, morning and night. There I learned to pray. Our home was a house of faith. While we were exceedingly poor, my brother and I did not realize it, because we always had such a happy time and mother stayed so full of joy. Father made the Bible real to us, and my brother and I knew he believed every word he preached.

In a meeting conducted by a Seventh-day Adventist minister, I found Christ as my personal Saviour and knew by

the witness of His Spirit that His sacrifice on Calvary's cross applied to me. It was complete and full; it was sufficient to cover all my sins.

But why am I a Seventh-day Adventist Christian? First of all, why am I an adventist? An adventist is one who believes in the imminent second coming of Christ. Theoretically, practically all Christians are adventists. That is, they believe in the second advent of Christ and officially teach it in their standard works. For instance, strong statements of belief in the coming of Jesus in power and glory appear in the *Baptist Church Manual*, the *Presbyterian Larger Catechism*, the *Articles of Religion of the Church of England*, the *Articles of Religion of the Methodist Church*, and the *Catechism to the Council of Trent*.

It seems in this sense nearly all Christians are adventists. Seventh-day Adventists go a little beyond this, emphasizing the imminence of Christ's coming. That is, Adventists believe it is the next great event in the history of salvation.

I do not believe that the world will go on and on, gradually slowing down and getting colder until not a living soul is left on earth while it whirls in solitude through endless ages. Neither do I think it will become so polluted that all men will die. As an Adventist I believe that the second coming of Christ will be *soon*. This age will end in "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).

Why do I believe Christ is coming back? First of all because He promised to. He said, "I go to prepare a place for you. . . . I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3). That's enough for me. I believe every word of that scripture. He came here once; He told us He is coming back. That's why I am an adventist. He said He was coming. He believed it; His disciples believed it; the apostles believed it.

Holy angels believed it, too, for when He went up into heaven at His ascension, you remember their word was: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). If angels believed that Jesus would return, certainly I ought to believe it. No man knows the day or the hour of His return, but it is certain because He promised it. Anyone who sets a date for the coming of Christ makes a great mistake. He is proclaiming something that no man knows. Jesus Himself warned, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matthew 24:36).

Now for a few reasons why I personally believe that Christ's coming cannot long be delayed. First of all, I think of the great prophecy of Daniel 2, the great metal-and-mud image of prophecy. Its head represented the mighty

Babylonian kingdom, its breast and arms of silver symbolized the Medo-Persians, its thighs of brass stood for Grecia under Alexander the Great and his successors, the legs of iron represented Rome, the feet and toes part of iron and part of clay prefigured the divided Roman empire, namely, the great nations of Western Europe today: France, Britain, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, and the others.

Then we read in the same chapter: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all

"Practically all Christians are adventists. That is, they believe in the second advent of Christ and officially teach it in their standard works."

these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (verse 44). That's where we live today. Fragment nations exist on earth today. While France, Britain, Germany, Spain, and all the others are still here, the kingdom of Christ will be set up. That is, He will come as King of kings and Lord of lords.

We have prophetic reasons for our belief in the second coming of Christ, and the event cannot be far away. In Daniel 7 we have the same great line of prophecy coming to the same event. Chapters 8 and 9 of Daniel rehearse the same historic facts through the prophetic telescope.

Now we come to the Book of Revelation, and we can mention these prophecies only briefly. In the first chapters we find that the seven churches give the prediction of the history of the Christian church from the time our Saviour lived on earth until He returns in glory. Seven seems to be the perfect number in the Bible, and the Book of Revelation is full of sevens.

The same period comes to view under the seven seals outlining the religio-political history of the church from the time of Christ to His second coming.

The gospel is going rapidly to all the world today as it has never gone before by thousands and thousands of preachers. In the unique setting of the last days, we believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been raised up for the special duty of declaring this gospel, announcing the coming of Christ, and calling men back to some of the great truths so long neglected.

Jesus said, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14). What a

grand and wonderful message! The gospel will go, in spite of everything, to all the world—by the word of the preacher, by personal witness, by Christian literature, by the printing press, by radio, by television, and by satellite broadcast—to every nation and in every language.

These are some of the reasons I am so thrilled with the wonderful teaching of the second coming of Christ and also with the great responsibility to appeal to people everywhere to prepare to meet God. The destiny of millions is at stake. Something tremendous is about to break upon the world as an overwhelming surprise, and by God's grace we need to be ready for it.

These are some of the reasons why I believe in the imminent return of Christ. But why am I a *Seventh-day* Adventist? Well, in the beginning God appointed the Sabbath as a memorial of His created work. Here is the way it reads: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made" (Genesis 2:1-3). There we have the record of the making of the Sabbath by God Himself. He rested; He blessed the day—that is, He blessed the seventh day then and for the rest of recorded time; then He sanctified the day. God took three steps—rest, blessing, and sanctification.

Adam and Eve were the only people living at that time. Jesus said the Sabbath was made for man (Mark 2:27, 28). I am a man; so why should I not observe it? Some Christian friends seem to feel it was made only for the Jewish people. Of course we notice here it was made at least two thousand years before there were any such people as Jews on earth, and Jesus made it clear it was for mankind—all humanity as represented in Adam, the father of the human race.

A friend of mine, E. W. Farnsworth—a wonderful preacher and servant of the Lord—once boarded a train in Chicago. As it began to move, he noticed someone sitting on the seat across from him who looked familiar. The man looked at him, and in a few moments they realized they were old classmates who had been separated since boyhood. They had a wonderful reunion, talking of old days. Pastor Farnsworth found that his friend had become a judge.

The judge turned to him: "I have a question for you, Eugene. It is something I have wanted to ask for a long time. I heard that you have become a Seventh-day Adventist minister. At times through the years I would hear rumors of your work. I know that Seventh-day Adventists keep Saturday, the seventh day, as the Sabbath. Now why do you keep the seventh day and not the first? Why are you not like other Christians in this?"

Brother Farnsworth opened his Bible to Exodus 20:8-11, and what do you suppose he read? Well, of course, he read the fourth of the Ten Commandments: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Exodus 20:8-11).

He began to turn to another passage of Scripture, but the judge laid a finger on his arm and said, "Hold on, Eugene, hold on. What was that you just read to me?"

"That was one of the Ten Commandments, the fourth commandment."

"Is that the law on the subject? Is that the law of God?"

"Yes, that's the law of God on the subject."

"Well," the judge continued, "don't read any more. I am a lawyer. I am a judge, and if that's the law on the subject, you need not read any more to me. That settles it. That's the law of God, the Ruler of the universe. His law is supreme unless He changes it with as much publicity as He announced it. Until some power greater than God overthrows Him and His kingdom, His law still stands. When the law speaks, I listen to it. That's enough for me."

When I think about it, I agree with the judge. It's enough for me too. God spoke His commandments from Mount Sinai and wrote them on tables of stone. He has never given a word from heaven declaring the commandments of His law abolished, nor has any power arisen greater than God who could overthrow His kingdom and nullify His commands.

Briefly then, the compelling reason why I am a Seventh-day Adventist is because I believe that Jesus was one also. He believed He was coming back again to this world. He promised to come. In that sense He is an adventist. He always honored the Sabbath. He said it was made for man. He said that He was the Lord of the Sabbath. He recognized it as the day for preaching and for the worship of God (see Luke 4:16). I am a Seventh-day Adventist because I want to follow the example of my Lord.

These are some of the reasons why I am a Seventh-day Adventist. The real explanation, of course, behind all others is that I wish to please the Lord Jesus Christ and to follow Him as far as His light and truth are revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

Let us all obey Him according to the light we have until at last we behold Him "whom having not seen, . . . [we] love" (1 Peter 1:8).



Waiting for something to happen

THE UNREST in Cyprus during the summer of 1974 left me stranded for several days in Jerusalem, unable to catch a return flight to the United States. The wait was not unpleasant, for I enjoyed the hospitality and company of a good friend, and I had things to do. Consequently I didn't feel anxious about the delay (though I had some questions about the people I had left behind); rather, I felt a waiting of restlessness.

The waiting of restlessness is expecting something to happen but not knowing precisely what it will be, a mood which seems to describe the nation of Israel very well. The casual observer probably will not notice it at all, for life appears to go on as usual in this eternal land. The streets and markets teem with people milling about, the heavy trucks haul rock and cement to reconstruct a torn country, and the tourists crowd into the holy places as though their salvation depends on it. Thoughtful people whom I met have told me that this land, populated by Jews and Arabs, is waiting in restlessness for something to happen.

A main cause of its restless waiting lies in the fact that this is a nation of two peoples. The important question, "Can two peoples successfully form one nation?" has not yet received a satisfactory answer. During the Cyprus disturbances the seriousness of this question became uncomfortably clear. In fact, immediately upon its outbreak, the Knesset (Israel's parliament) discussed the implications of the Cyprian unrest on Israel's future, as if the trouble on that little island off the coast of Turkey had opened an old wound in the bloody history of Israel's recent past.

However, in addition to such well-published events as Knesset debates, the "waiting for something to happen" in Israel has shown itself in smaller, personal (and perhaps purely subjective) encounters with the people of this land. I recall the father, two sons, and grandfather walking along the trails of a peaceful nature preserve in Dan, looking for birds, trees, and flowers just as they might in any other place—except for the *uzi* (a small but fast-shooting automatic gun) slung casually over the father's shoulder. I wondered to myself what he expected behind the flowers and trees.

Then I recall the elderly, poorly dressed gentleman sitting atop his donkey, slowly making his way down the steps and through

the crowds of a narrow bazaar in Jerusalem. For some reason his eyes met mine for a short moment as we passed. I sensed in his soul a personal pride and a stoic composure quite out of proportion to his humble surroundings, and I wondered what he was waiting for.

I also remember the young police guard who stopped me at the entrance to the holy grounds and asked in utter arrogance (such as can only be borrowed from future glories) if I could prove that my standard camera case contained a camera. "See for yourself," I replied, handing him the case—and he did! What expectations lurked behind his detached arrogance?

When the ancestors of the Israelis first populated this small land more than three millennia ago, it became the scene of much expectation and endless waiting. Today its people are still waiting for something to happen, but what that will be, no one seems sure.

Now we readily admit that waiting is not a fault; it is rather a virtue. In fact, it constitutes an essential aspect of Biblical religion—of both Judaism and of Christianity. It is a sister virtue of patience, endurance, tolerance, and hope. But waiting can also prove harmful, especially if it is done in anxiety or in restlessness. Therefore, the important question is, What are we waiting for? or more precisely, What *can* we wait for?

The people Israel of Biblical times waited for the Messiah, and Christians have long waited for the return of their Lord. This waiting for a full revelation of God in the future stands at the heart of Biblical faith (see Micah 7:7; 1 Corinthians 1:7). That explains why Seventh-day Adventists and some other Christian bodies have expressed the importance of waiting for God by using the word *advent* in their very name. The advent (from a Latin word meaning "to come") refers to the coming of our Lord Christ Jesus. However, the significance of the name *Adventist* does not lie in the fact that we only *believe* in the coming of our Lord, but more precisely that we *wait* for His coming (see 1 Corinthians 1:7; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:28). We hold that one of the basic characteristics of Christianity, of our religious beliefs, and of our personal sanctity is that we wait for the coming of our Lord.

The land of Israel today is waiting for

settlement of her future. It is not at all certain what that future will hold; neither is it clear if this present expectation includes a waiting for God. Meanwhile, some Christians in Europe and America have taken a great interest in the nation of Israel. They have argued that the hopes of Christianity are finding fulfillment in the establishment of a Jewish nation among the holy places in the land of Israel.

This is a serious miscalculation as any visitor to Israel may soon discover, for the holy places certainly do not sanctify the Jewish nation (or anyone else for that matter). The waiting of the Christian church as revealed in the Scriptures clearly does not coincide with the waiting of the land of Israel. It is much better to believe, as also the Scriptures underscore, that Israel becomes a holy nation, waiting for a fulfillment of its future, not because its boundaries contain holy places, but only when its waiting becomes a waiting for God. This of course means that any nation, any people, or any person that waits may be holy and may experience the fulfillment of all future expectations if their waiting is for God. Let us therefore all join in waiting for something to happen, but let the waiting be for the Lord.—NIELS-ERIK ANDREASEN.

What Is Easter All About?

When I was a lad in my teens, Easter meant only one thing to me—eggs. That day we had all the eggs we could eat. One time Dad and I had a competition as to who could eat the most. He ate a dozen, and I ate eleven. Sometimes we even had hot cross buns, and, of course, rabbits were all around on the farm.

As I grew older, I used to wonder what they had to do with the resurrection of Jesus. Then I learned of sunrise services on Easter morning, and if you didn't participate in all these activities or symbols, you were practically considered an unbeliever in Jesus. And I wondered, "How can these things be a proof of my belief in the Resurrection?"

But, tell me, what *do* rabbits, eggs, hot cross buns, or even a sunrise service have to do with Christ's rising from the grave? There were no rabbits, eggs, or buns at the tomb that morning. Furthermore, Christ was not raised at sunrise. John 20:1 tells us that it was yet dark when Mary Magdalene



came to the sepulcher, and Jesus had already risen. The other Gospel writers tell us the same. So how can we celebrate the Resurrection by a sunrise service, when Jesus rose while it was still dark?

Even though He arose on Sunday, it was not until the fourth century AD that Sunday was officially designated as the day to remember His resurrection. Before that time the celebration, like other festival days, was on the Passover dates, Nisan 14 and 16, whichever day of the week those days happened to be. By virtue of a Catholic decree from Rome, in the fourth century it was changed to always come on Sunday.

Didn't Christ want us to think about the day He arose? Yes, but was it by observing a day, or some other way that God wanted us to remember the resurrection of Jesus?

In Romans 6:3-6 the apostle Paul tells us what Jesus gave as a memorial of His dying and rising, namely, baptism and the new birth. But the world has chosen a more pleasing way—a way of mirth, of eating and drinking, with a little of Jesus thrown in—joyful in sensuous indulgence rather than joy in Christ and the new birth. Jesus wants our new life to commemorate His resurrected life. He is now ministering in our behalf to help us live it. Through the Holy Spirit, whom He sent to represent Him, He wants to live in our hearts.

Satan has mixed up the sacred with ancient pagan sun worship in such a way that even sincere people think they are honoring Jesus' resurrection when they unwittingly are practicing the rites of ancient sun worship by worshipping at sunrise and honoring the spring goddess. They celebrate His resurrection by a day and forget to celebrate His way. One secular writer calls Easter "the greatest show on earth."

Let us not forget what the resurrection of Jesus means to the believer—"if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (1 Corinthians 15:17)—and truly honor Him and commemorate His resurrection by allowing the Sun of righteousness to arise in our hearts and bring forth a new life within us.—OTTO H. CHRISTENSEN.

Should I?

He stooped gently, carefully picking up the brown dust in His hands as He thought of the future.

"Just common earth! I can—but should I?

Should I make man? Should I mold Him from this ordinary dirt? Will I regret it?" He sifted the fine rich soil through His fingers and then began pressing it together in His palms. "Should I create a new race and then humble Myself to become one of them? Should I provide friendship and all else to those who will almost all forsake Me? Should I give life to man who will in turn give Me death?"

Jesus Christ had fully prepared for the advent of man. Around His stooping form that Friday He could see the most glorious garden filled with lush vegetation, happy animals of all descriptions, good food bountifully present, and everything to please and welcome man. He thoughtfully looked out beyond Eden to that other advent—His own. There would be no prefall. His own people would be too busy with personal matters to think of Him. There would be no room in the inn. He would not have even the necessities, much less a welcome. There would be no room for the Creator in His own creation because there would be no room for Jesus Christ in the proud hearts that lived only for themselves. Then Jesus looked past the stable manger to that other garden. What a stark contrast with the one He was now in! Because this dust in His hands would do his own thing in Eden, He would go to the Garden of Gethsemane.

Here in Eden He had provided a beautiful garden designed to bring only joy and happiness. In return He would experience the Garden of Gethsemane with its agony and horror. Here in Eden He would create man. There in Gethsemane man would betray Him. Here in Eden man would be untrue to Him. But there in Gethsemane He would be true to man. Should He actually make man?

As He bent over that dust in His hands, He gazed further into the future to still another advent. In His second coming He saw again the world just as unprepared as at His first coming. How very few would be ready! For most there still would be no room for Him in their lives. Here He had totally prepared everything for man, but most men would be completely unprepared for His second coming. With this in mind, He reasoned, "Should I make man?"

He looked again at this dust in His hands. "It's only dust," He pondered. "Should I throw it back to the ground? Animals can tread on it, and it can provide food for them. Beautiful red roses, lush green grass, and

stately cedars could grow in it. Should I let it remain mere earth?" The Creator planted His feet firmly on the cool soil and stood tall. He straightened His shoulders and gazed heavenward. "No! This dust shall become man—man whom I love in spite of his unloveliness and with whom I long to fellowship—even though"—His brow fell—"one day the Creator will become a Creature. Yes! I will become man—of the dust." —Guest editorial by Norman R. Gulley, dean, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary (Far East), Manila, Philippines.

Letters

THESE TIMES receives letters of appreciation . . .

From Ohio

In behalf of my family and myself I want to write a few lines of appreciation which are long overdue. I don't know when your magazine has ever been more timely, more geared to the times in which we are living, than it is right now. The articles are clearly presented and the attractive appearance serves to make it an instrument in God's hand.—Mrs. Robert Vanderhoff, Bucyrus, Ohio.

From New York

Let me briefly tell you what a joy your magazine is. Nothing I've read other than the Bible is better than *THESE TIMES*. It speaks to me as a person in a language I comprehend. I hope you will go on until the end of time.—Mrs. John Ferguson, Walworth, New York.

From prisoner

I would like to thank you for coming out with such a brilliant magazine. I enjoy it so much. I have been in institutions for the past two years, but your magazine has helped me a lot, and I want to say thank you.—Clarence Sawyer, Capron, Virginia.

From a Methodist

We are members of the United Methodist Church and have used material from *THESE TIMES* on several occasions in preparing worship programs or Sunday School lessons. Thank you very much.—Mrs. Paul Davis, Palmetto, Florida.

Why be a virgin?

by Mary Jane Meyer

What do you tell a sixteen-year-old who isn't sure the old standards make sense anymore? One thing is certain—the usual clichés aren't enough.

"ALL RIGHT"—she flung the words at me as she draped herself over the nearest chair—"tell me, What's so great about being a virgin?"

The urgency in her sixteen-year-old voice told me I should stop being housewife and mother for the moment and don the role of good friend and confidante.

The clock pointed to just a little after eleven. I had been finishing a few last-minute things in the kitchen while I waited for her to come in from a date with Chick whom she had been dating for several months. While I felt they were both a little young to become so involved with a "steady," I had tried to neither discourage nor encourage their relationship.

I played for time to regain my composure after the shock of her unexpected demand. I eased carefully into a chair.

"What's so great about being a virgin?" she repeated.

I might counter her question with another question, "What's so great about being a nonvirgin?" But I knew she had already heard all of those arguments from her friends—both male and female. These days there seems to be an abundance of antivirgin propaganda but very little on the provirgin side.

I could remind her (for the multimillionth time) of the sometimes very serious consequences resulting from intercourse without the security of a husband and marriage. Of course, since the introduction of the pill to our society, the fear of an unwanted pregnancy has greatly lessened. Even so, to a young girl—or to an older girl, for that matter—not emotionally ready to accept

the responsibility of a child, that fear must lurk somewhere in the background of her mind.

If not pregnancy, I might recount for her the many other consequences of premarital sex—the possibility of venereal disease and the resulting embarrassment of revealing the names of her partners in sex so that authorities could curb the spread of the disease. Perhaps, if I reminded her of the inconvenience of regular trips to a clinic or doctor's office for the necessary treatment, she would realize that being a virgin is worth the effort—or that being nonvirgin isn't worth the price!

Then I told myself that she had known all of these things long before I had gotten around to telling her. A part of it consisted of mistaken knowledge, perhaps, through well-meaning but misinformed friends; however, health and sex classes set this all straight a little later on.

What about being used? That's it! I can impress upon her the terrible hurt that comes with the discovery that you have been used. There would be no wasting of her precious time dating someone who didn't *really* like her. Some of the other consequences of sex before marriage may prove more difficult to hide from the eyes of the world, but there is nothing much more painful than the knowledge that you are loved for any reason other than the plain and simple reason that you're you.

How could I even faintly suggest the remotest possibility that he did not love her simply because she is the person she is, when I didn't know?

I might turn once again to the Scriptures: "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies" (Proverbs 31:10). In Leviticus 21:13 we find this: "And he shall take a wife in her virginity." She knows, however, that the

mid-Victorian era ended long ago, and the old idea that a man won't marry a girl unless she is a virgin no longer holds water.

I could remind her of the guilt. There's always the guilt—the sneaking and slipping around so that Mom and Dad won't find out and, later on, maybe secretly hoping they will. I read an article just recently in which the experts agreed that the majority of young girls in their teens have not yet thrown aside the teachings of their childhood. If this is true (and I believe it is), then guilt surely plays a prominent part in the life of the young girl who strays from the virgin's path. Yes, I could remind her of the guilt I hoped she would never have to bear.

Or I could resort to fright tactics. I could paint for her the life of the proverbial "scarlet woman" and let her feel the lashings of society. That is, I could have if it had been a quarter of a century ago. The sexual revolution has changed all of that. She is aware of little social pressure to remain a virgin. She knows, and so do I, of several couples who live openly together with no permanent commitments.

I might picture for her the beauty of being able to give her husband the very special gift of her body, pure and undefiled, within the sanctity of marriage. Would she think that was something I had lifted from Grace Livingston Hill's latest romantic novel?

Yes, I could tell her all of these things, but I *had* told her all of them, over and over.

She waited for my answer.

I took a deep breath. "I could tell you all over again the many time-tested arguments for being a 'nice girl,' like the price you might have to pay if you aren't, or the guilt you might have to overcome. I might even be able to persuade you with the

Mary Jane Meyer is a free-lance writer living in Enid, Oklahoma.

fact that if he really loves you, he will not want to risk bringing you pain and unhappiness. Or I could remind you that what you're considering is against all of the principles your dad and I have tried to teach you. You have heard these things so many times, though, you know them by heart."

She waited, her eyes never leaving mine.

I paused a moment before continuing. "I'll try not to bore you. Your dad and I have tried to pass on to you a set of values by which to measure your life. This is the only lasting thing we can give you, and we have carefully selected these values because you are very precious to us. I pray we taught you well.

"We have known the day would come when you would have to test their worth. You see, there comes a time in life when we must make our own decisions and carry the responsibility for the outcome. I think, for you, that time has come.

"If the emotional and moral issues we have discussed so many times over the years and the fact that we love you so very much and would not for the world have you go through any unnecessary heartbreaking experiences aren't enough to help you make up your mind, I don't know what else I can say—except, there's one thing for sure, honey. If you ever discover that you are truly unhappy, and that being a virgin has caused your unhappiness, then you can always change it. And you sure can't say that for being a nonvirgin!"

She sat quietly for a moment, then slowly lifted her sprawling figure to an upright position. "Thanks," she whispered. "And, good night." As she went to her room, she looked at me with the shy, little-girl smile we had learned to love so well.





HAVE YOU ever wondered how a magazine article comes into being? Recently I asked Patricia Maxwell for the story behind the story of "Muddy Miracles." You can read her response below, but first, Patricia is the wife of a Seventh-day Adventist minister in Walla Walla, Washington. She has always been interested in writing, and she has contributed to the college newspaper and written poems while a student.

She took a writing class while husband Burton attended seminary, and later finished the three-year correspondence course from the Famous Writers School. Her hobbies include backpacking expeditions (with Burton and their two children), canoeing, bicycling, skiing, and studying music.

The idea for "Muddy Miracles" ran around in her heart for a long time, waiting to be captured by words, but let's listen to Patricia:

"It's been ten years since the story of the blind man healed by mud and water first caught my attention. The narrative stuck in my mind, and I made attempts at putting it into my own words. About five years ago it grew enough to be written up as a brief devotional. I knew, though, there were many more undiscovered truths in the story.

"Last spring, while reading the Book of John, the story popped out at me again, and I saw more spiritual applications than I'd seen before. Again I jotted down my ideas and resurrected from the file cabinet my previous jottings. I felt it was time to get the thoughts into an article, but I was in the midst of another writing project—preparing fifteen Bible study guides. So 'Muddy Miracles' got shelved. We moved from Salem, Oregon, to Walla Walla, Washington, during the summer, and when I finally felt settled enough this fall to begin work on the article, I couldn't find any of my previous notes. That was frightening, but I prayed about it, read and reread the story in several versions of the Bible, began researching words, phrases, and ideas that came to me. With the usual hard work the piece developed.

"But I think the article primarily represents the development of myself. The last three years I've experienced fresh insights into the gift of salvation until I see the whole Bible as the story of God reaching out to save man. 'Muddy Miracles' is just another little glimpse of some of the processes God uses to save us and the fantastic results when we respond to Him."

Kenneth J. Holland

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in all His fullness to all the world.

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Satan to be our great adversary,
Jesus to be our all-sufficient Saviour,
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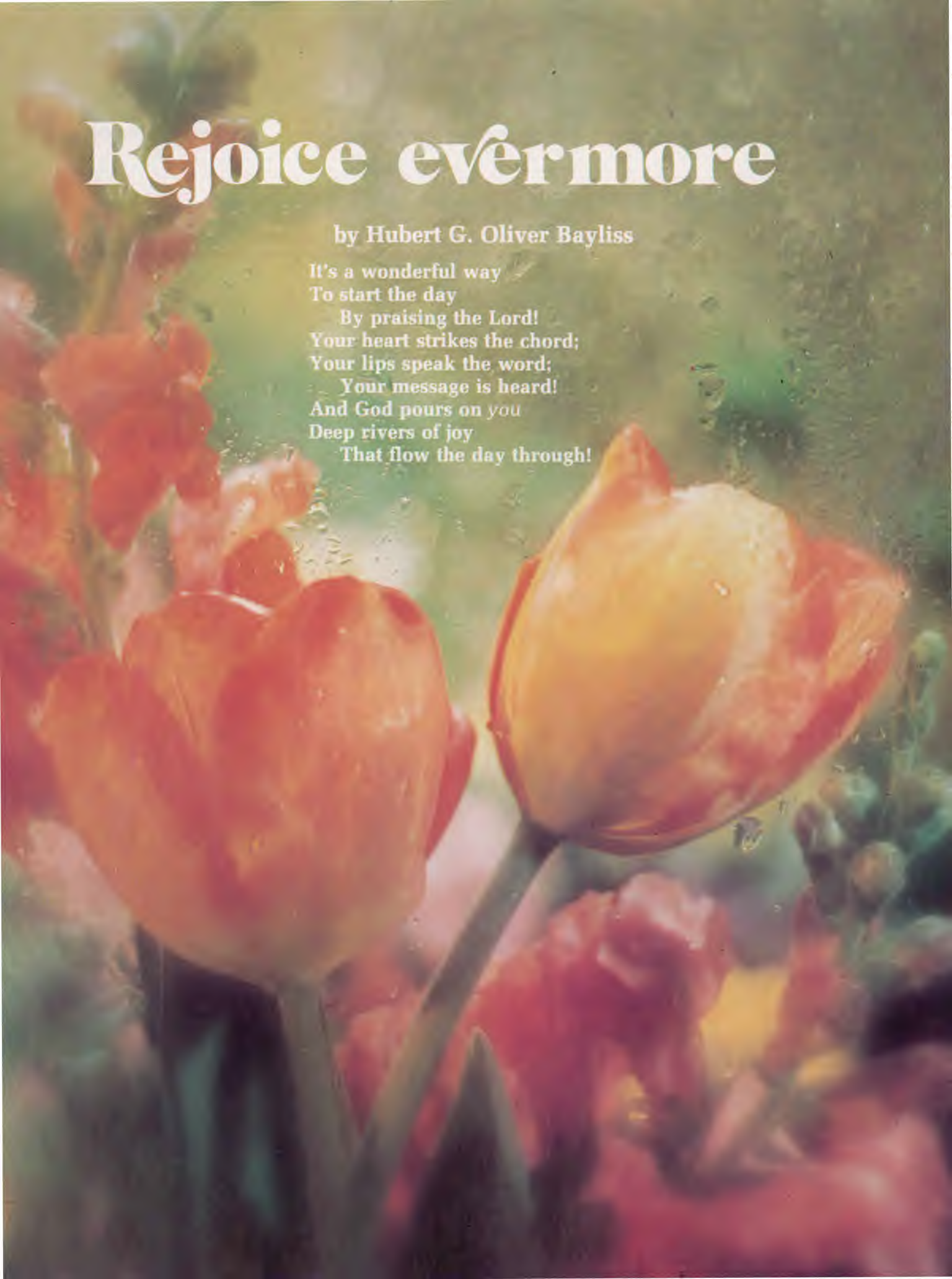
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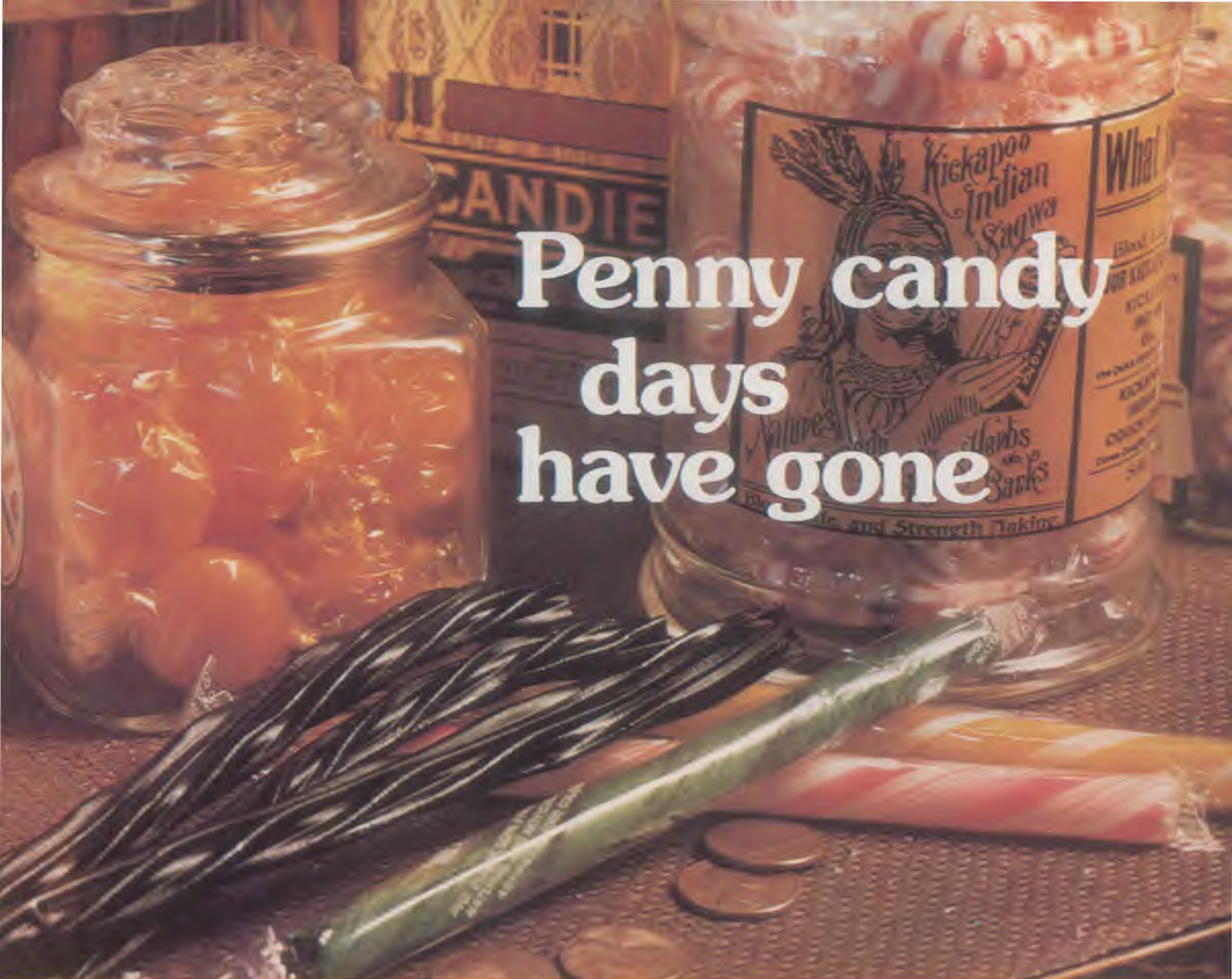
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Rejoice evermore

by Hubert G. Oliver Bayliss

It's a wonderful way
To start the day
By praising the Lord!
Your heart strikes the chord;
Your lips speak the word;
Your message is heard!
And God pours on you
Deep rivers of joy
That flow the day through!





Penny candy days have gone

Have your security and happiness vanished along with them?

Remember the delicious agony of standing in front of the candy counter? Deciding what to buy was as much fun as eating whatever you ended up with.

Those long-ago days almost seem like another world now. In many ways life flowed along so much more smoothly and satisfactorily than it does today. At least that's how we remember it.

Nowadays there isn't much solid permanence anywhere, and constant change appears to be about the only thing we can really count on. No wonder so many people are looking back wistfully to a more simple time.

But security and happiness don't have to disappear along with penny candy. God's Word—the Bible—can help you find solid meaning for your life even in such unpredictable days as the present. That's because the Bible deals with questions and needs that never change.

Like most people, you occasionally:

- * Get discouraged.
- * Have a problem you don't know how to solve.
- * Want to find lasting peace.
- * Wonder if God really loves you.
- * Feel you need some help in day-to-day living.
- * Have questions about the future.

At THESE TIMES we believe the real answers to these needs can only come from Jesus Christ through a study of God's Word. Maybe you're a church member; maybe you're not. Either way we're confident you will discover that the Bible offers a very practical solution for every need you have. That's why we have designed a special series of Bible study guides which are easy to follow, and they are absolutely free!

The days of penny candy may be gone, but you can recapture the security and wonder you remember as a child. You will find it in your Bible.

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