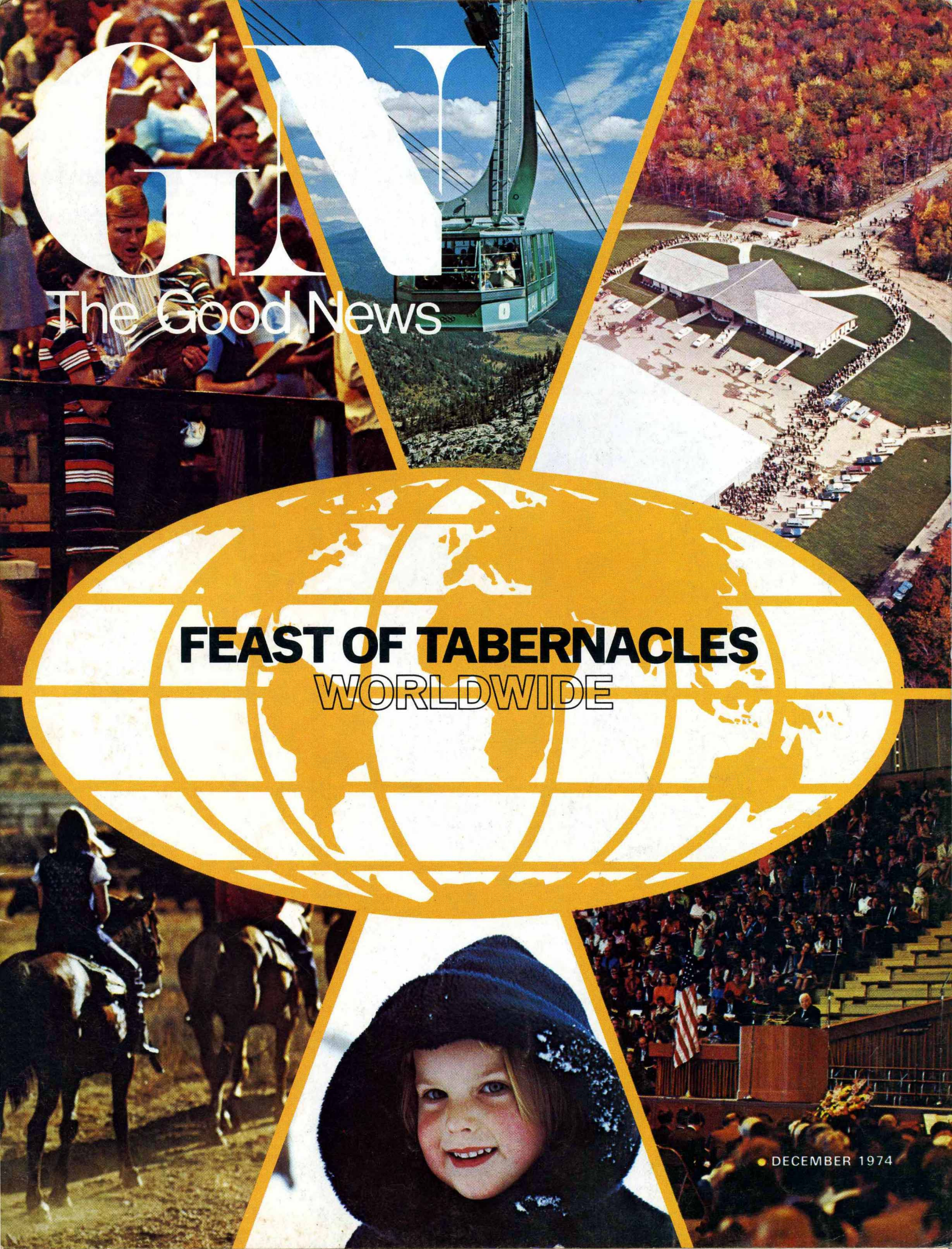




GN

The Good News

FEAST OF TABERNACLES WORLDWIDE

• DECEMBER 1974



ABOUT OUR COVER

Scenes from the Feast of Tabernacles held every fall by the Worldwide Church of God. The understanding and observance of God's weekly Sabbath and annual Holy Days is one of the proofs of God's true Church as explained in the lead article.

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The Good News

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IN THE first article in this series, we saw the fact that God rules this Church — the only church willing to unconditionally surrender to Him, humbly accepting His absolute authority in everything. That God is our Ruler is proof number one.

This second major proof of God's true Church is composed of three important parts.

Part one concerns the true name of the true Church; part two is the understanding and observance of God's seventh-day Sabbath; part three is the understanding and observance of the annual Holy Days which picture God's master plan.

Part I — the True Name of God's Church

A minister, preaching to God's true people, may begin to describe the true Church of God. He may say, in his sermon, "This is the very Church which Jesus built — that living Church which is the very body of Christ, the Church in which God rules — the true Church of God."

But is he saying this whole phrase is to be taken as the "name" of the Church? Is this the official title that God Himself places upon His own true Church?

Wouldn't it look a little silly if you were to receive a letter from Mr. Armstrong with "The true Church of the Living Christ — the Church in which God rules — the true Church of God" as the letterhead?

In other words, though there are many descriptive passages about the true Church of God in the Bible, it would look a little silly to paint a sign with these as the name to be put over the door.

Wherever Almighty God speaks of *His true Church*, identifying it by name — that name is almost always the same.

Jesus prayed, "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world [but not *of* the world],

PROOF

2

THREE DEFINITE SIGNS

by Garner Ted Armstrong

Where is God's true Church today? Is it the Worldwide Church of God? How can you know? What are the signs? Here is a second major proof which will help you identify the true Church of God.

and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou has given me, that they may be one, as we are" (John 17:11). Jesus prayed the Father to keep His own true people in and through a *particular name*! Jesus prayed that name would be the name of the Father.

Did the Father honor this prayer? Notice Acts 20 and verse 28. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves," spoke the Apostle to the Ephesian elders, "and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed *the church of God*, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

God did honor the prayer of Jesus Christ. He did give His

own name to the true Church.

Wherever the actual name of the Church as an organized Body is given in the New Testament — it is called the Church of God.

Oftentimes, the geographical location was added to the legal name of the Church, "The Church of God."

There were then, just as there are today, many local congregations of that one true Church, which is a spiritual *organism* composed of those members who have been granted the gift of God's Holy Spirit as a begettal.

Addressing the congregation at Corinth about internal contentions

concerning hair length, the Apostle Paul said: "We have no such custom, neither *the*

churches of God" (I Cor. 11:16) — showing that there were many local congregations. When the Apostle Paul addressed any one of these local congregations, he often included its *geographical location* — just as you, when receiving a personal letter, read not only your name on the address, but also your street or box number or rural route.

Paul had addressed this letter to "*the church of God* [which is the true name of the Church] which is at Corinth" (I Cor. 1:2).

Notice a few more examples:

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto *the Church of God* which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia" (II Cor. 1:1). "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted *the church of God*, and wasted it" (Gal. 1:13).

"For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted *the Church of God*" (I Cor. 15:9). "For ye, brethren, became followers of *the churches of God* which in Judaea are in Christ

Jesus . . ." (I Thes. 2:14). "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of *the church of God?*" (I Tim. 3:5.)

"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is *the church of the living God*, the pillar and ground of the truth . . ." (I Tim. 3:15). In this example, the Apostle Paul adds the descriptive word "living," just as he went on to describe the Church as the "pillar and ground of the truth."

The Apostle Paul also addressed the "church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ . . ." (II Thes. 1:1), and "the churches of Galatia . . ." (Gal. 1:2). But he did not intend these to be designated as the one name of the true Church of God to continue down through the ages.

Why "Worldwide" Church of God?

Some few of the worldly churches have discovered this doctrinal point of truth about the true name for the Church. They have adopted this name, and call themselves "The Church of God."

But a name is to *convey meaning*. And if these various "Churches of God" of this world are not recognizing God as their Ruler, are not completely subject to Him, are not obeying Him, do not keep His weekly Sabbath, the annual Sabbaths, and do not have any of these other seven major proofs — then, even though possessing the name authorized in scripture, they are *not* the true Church of God.

Because of a substantial number of organizations of men laying claim to the name of the true Church — just as millions of "professing" Christians have laid claim to the name of Jesus Christ — my father, when wanting to incorporate the fledgling beginning of this phase of the true Church of God, for the purpose of conducting the business of God on this earth, was

unable to incorporate it as, simply, "The Church of God."

Realizing the doctrinal truth of God's Word that the various churches were also identified as to their geographical locations, Mr. Armstrong was led to incorporate in the name, "The Radio Church of God," using a descriptive adjective.

God says of His Church: "Behold, I have set before thee *an open door*" (Rev. 3:8). The Apostle Paul said: "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me . . ." (I Cor. 16:9). This is speaking of *the door* God opened before him for the preaching of the Gospel. And in another place he said: "Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord . . ." (II Cor. 2:12).

One of the main doors that God has opened before His true Church today is the door of radio. For years there was only the one small local congregation up in Eugene, Oregon — but a radio door had been opened, which was growing by leaps and bounds — fast becoming national and soon to become *worldwide*.

In recent years congregations of God's Church have been raised up *all over the world* — so the name is now *legally* "The Worldwide Church of God." "Worldwide" is an apt descriptive adjective which accurately describes the global proportions of God's Church today.

But the actual biblical name of the true Church has always been, and always will be — *the Church of God!*

What the Church Really Is

God names things, or people, what they are. There is real meaning in a name.

When God writes of His Church, He calls it *His*. It is the Church — and the only Church — that truly belongs to Him. His true Church is directly owned by Him, it is His instrument, His own prop-

erty, to perform His Work on this earth.

The English word "church" merely means "congregation." Wherever you find the word "church" in the New Testament, it is translated from the Greek word *ekklesia*, from which such English words as "ecclesiastical" or "ecclesiastics" are derived. The word simply means "group" or "collection" of people. There is nothing holy, nothing sacred, about the word *Church*, by itself. It is only when you further identify which group of people, with the name of God, that there is anything holy about the name!

"I will build my Church," said Jesus Christ. And it is His. Jesus Christ is the direct Head of the Church (Col. 1:18) — which is described as *His own body* (Eph. 1:23). The only ones who are truly members of that one body are those who have been put into it, by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Notice: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized *into one body*, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (I Cor. 12:13).

The baptism with the Holy Spirit is the receiving of God's Spirit at the time of the laying on of hands — after repentance and water baptism.

Notice, then, it is only those who have received God's Spirit that are in the true Church. The Church is not a physical building, or a rented hall or even an organization. (Technically, organization is what the Church *has* — not what it *is*.) The building is *NOT* the Church — but simply a building. It is that group of converted people in whom is the very Spirit of God, which makes up the Church.

Jesus said we must repent (Luke 13:3, 5). Peter said repentance *must precede* baptism (Acts 2:38; 3:19). God inspired Paul to say: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14).

"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ," God inspired Paul to write, "he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9). Yet it is only through obedience to God, through total repentance and complete surrender to God — symbolized by figuratively laying down your life and your whole being in water baptism — that you may receive the Spirit of God.

It is only those who have really been conquered of God, who have unconditionally repented, been baptized, and have really received of His Spirit who are members of His Church.

They are then joined to Him. They do not join themselves together, becoming a "group" of human beings known by a certain name. Rather, they become directly joined to Christ!

Notice it: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman," said Jesus. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away...."

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:1-5).

The newly begotten child of God becomes *directly joined to Christ*. He is the Vine supplying the life-giving sap from the roots which produces the fruit on the branches.

The branches, or the individual members of the Church, are joined *only through the vine*. If any member is not truly in Christ, and Christ living in Him, then he is *not* a member of the true Church.

"That which we have seen and

heard declare we unto you," wrote John, "that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1:3).

The true fellowship of one member of the Church to another is in and through the Father and the Son. Any worldly organization of men, banding themselves together in their own fellowship, is just like a group of branches lying in a pile. Not joined to a productive, life-

served by Christians as "the Lord's day." You have never heard a sermon going "right down the line" from one scripture to another, from one book of the Bible to another — proving, demonstrating, clarifying, showing the history of, the development of, the approval by Christ and the apostles for the various "holidays" sanctioned by the churches of this world!

You never have — and you never will!

Why?

Because these days are not questioned by anyone in this world's churches. They are "par for the course" — they are carelessly taken for granted. "Doesn't everyone observe these days?" ask deceived people in the world's churches.

No — not everyone — only those who have never proved it, never looked into it, never researched it, never sincerely tried to find the real truth about which days are to be observed.

Hundreds of "Excuses"

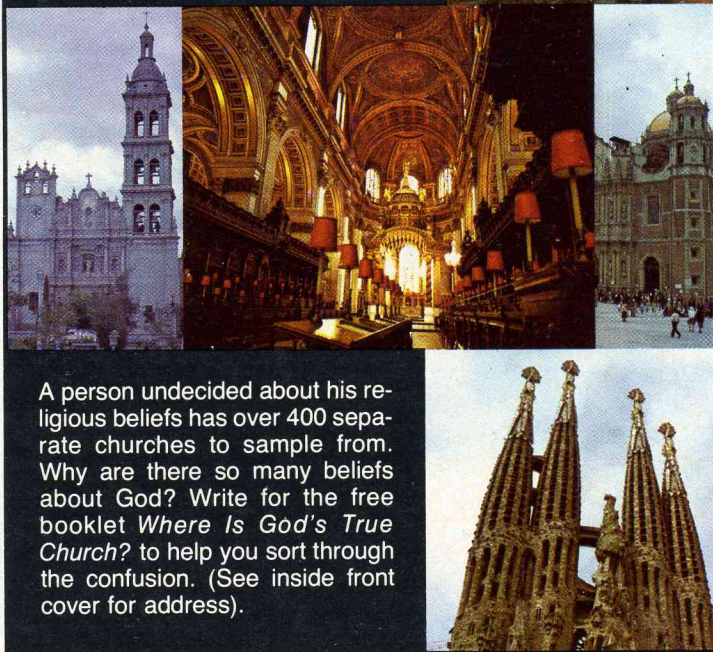
These churches appear to feel guilty about their pagan holidays, and their "Lord's Day." They know certain churches have made a fair amount of noise concerning the weekly Sabbath, and seem to write

prodigious literature claiming to prove and absolutely substantiate their beliefs in observing this day.

This leads to feeble attempts by many denominations to point to their vast numbers, the universal custom of all "Christians," or vague references to the time of Christ's resurrection.

Every angle and method of attack against God's true Sabbath Day and His annual Holy Days is used. One method is to freely admit the days were never changed by the au-

How do you recognize the true church?



A person undecided about his religious beliefs has over 400 separate churches to sample from. Why are there so many beliefs about God? Write for the free booklet *Where Is God's True Church?* to help you sort through the confusion. (See inside front cover for address).

giving vine, they are unproductive; they are lifeless.

Do you see? The name of the true Church of God is a vitally important proof of the Church. It is not to be taken lightly; it has real meaning.

God names things for what they are.

Parts II and III — The Sabbath and the Holy Days

You have *never* heard a sermon really proving Sunday is to be ob-

thority of Christ or anyone else — and that they are a part of the "Law." Then, however, those who are not familiar with the Bible are unsuspectingly led through a labyrinth of twisted scriptures which supposedly "prove" that all of God's law is done away. This includes the Sabbath, claim such deceivers.

Failing this method — numerous other excuses are given. People reason the Sabbath can't be kept except in Jerusalem, or that it must be kept on Jerusalem time. People reason that you cannot keep a Sabbath if you live in a cave, or deep in a canyon, since your "sunset to sunset" would last only a very few moments.

People reason in their own carnal minds about Eskimos at the North Pole (there are no Eskimos at the North Pole), or about the International Date Line, or that perhaps time could have become lost. Some claim that the whole world could have been off the weekly cycle ever since God revealed His Sabbath Day.

These are only a few of the many arguments against obedience to God in the observance of His weekly Sabbath Day and His annual Sabbaths as well.

You need to really know the answer to all these "arguments." You need to know (and know that you know) that God's weekly Sabbath must be observed faithfully, and that His annual Holy Days must be observed as well.

The Many Proofs

First you need to recognize that the Sabbath was firmly established and *sanctified* at creation (Genesis 2:1-3). Then you should prove carefully that the Ten Commandments were in full force and effect even prior to the time of Moses — that they are not now, never were, and never shall be "the law of Moses."

They are the laws of Almighty God, the one Lawgiver and Judge. An article on the subject is avail-

able for any of you who have not yet read it. It's entitled "Were the Ten Commandments in Force Before Moses?"

Next you need to thoroughly prove that God's law is firmly and positively established — today. You need to prove that grace does not mean license, or permissiveness, or having your own way — being free to disobey the law of God (cf. Rom. 6:1-2). If any of you feel the slightest amount of insecurity on this point of "law or grace," then write for our free reprint article — "The New Testament Teaching on Law and Grace."

You also need to prove the weekly time cycle has never been broken — and can do so by writing for our free booklet *Has Time Been Lost?* You need to absolutely, infallibly, irrevocably, and once and for all prove that the resurrection was not on Sunday — and that even if it remotely, faintly, possibly could have been (which is a foolish assumption in the first place) there is still *no command*, nor any example to perpetuate its observance. For a more detailed explanation, write for another free booklet titled *The Resurrection Was Not on Sunday*.

Appearing in the October 1974 issue of *The Good News* were major articles on God's seventh-day Sabbath and His annual Holy Days. Numerous proofs as to the absolute validity of observing these God-ordained days were offered. Be sure to write for a copy of that special issue if you are a new subscriber.

Additionally, the Worldwide Church of God publishes two major booklets on these subjects. One — *Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?* — goes thoroughly into many of the arguments religionists have concocted against observing the Sabbath over these many centuries since the time of Christ. The other one — *Pagan Holidays or God's Holy Days — Which?* — not only shows why these biblical festivals

should be observed today, but also their vital meanings in explaining God's overall plan of salvation. Write for your free copies of both of these fine booklets.

You should study thoroughly — not only from the booklets and magazine articles made available to you through God's Church, but also in your own public library and from your own individual research — the true origin of Sunday observance and the observance of the pagan holidays of this world.

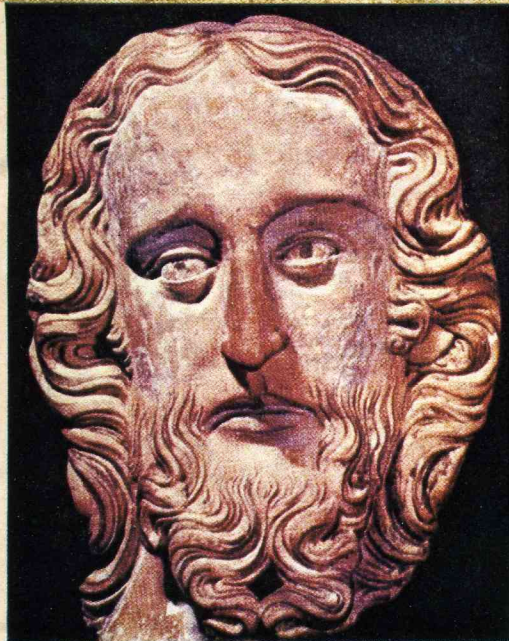
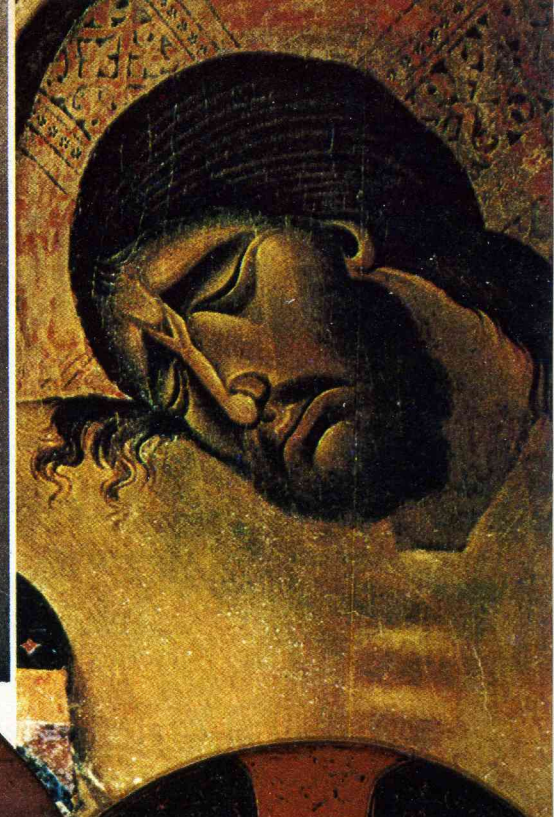
In this way — when you thoroughly and totally saturate yourself with the many thorough proofs about God's weekly Sabbath and His annual Holy Days, and when you thoroughly disprove the pagan observances of this world — it is unlikely that you will ever have any doubts on this subject again.

So remember — and never forget — that in one or two remote cases, some pagan churches of this world may have appropriated to themselves one part of one proof (which, used in this respect is not proof at all), but that there is *no church* on the face of the entirety of this earth that could lay claim to one complete proof out of the entire seven major proofs of the identity of God's true Church.

This second major proof of God's true Church is composed of three parts: The name the "Church of God"; the weekly Sabbath day, which is God's identifying sign of His true people; and the annual Holy Days, which God gave to His true Church — and which are still observed by His true Church today.

An in-depth explanation of the third major proof of God's true Church will come along in the January 1975 issue of *The Good News*. Be sure to watch for it.

And in the meantime, if you haven't received our booklet entitled *Where Is God's True Church Today?*, please write for it immediately. This free publication will give you a good basic background for this series of articles. □



Who is the Real Jesus Christ?

For centuries, men have revered, cursed, studied, argued about and fought over the name of Jesus Christ.

No name in history is more universally recognized. Yet, paradoxically, Jesus Christ and His message are almost universally misunderstood.

Consider the following example of myth versus reality:

The Myth: Jesus was an effeminate, long-haired weakling with a mournful, forlorn expression.

The Truth: Jesus was a strong,

rugged man who worked for years as a stone mason; who spoke with startling power and authority; who in appearance could pass for an average Jew of His day.

This is only one example of the great gap between traditional beliefs and the truth about Jesus.

Discover more of the surprising truth. Write for your free copy of the booklet, *The Real Jesus*. It is a valuable guide to the Biblical revelation about "the Man nobody knows."

The
Real
Jesus

Send your request to:
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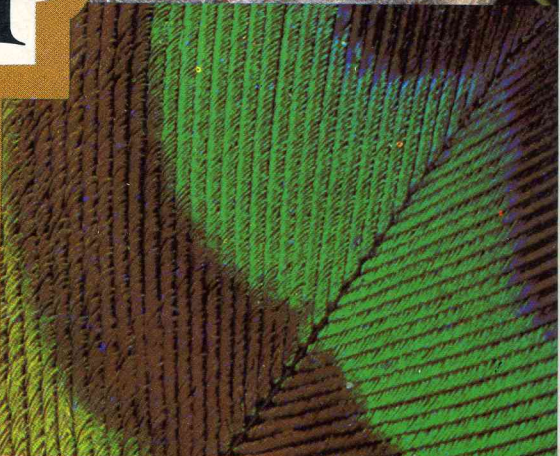
Much has been written and said about the life and times of Jesus — the man. But how much is known about the activities and accomplishments of Jesus Christ before His human birth?

by George Ritter

Christ the Creator

JESUS CHRIST Superstar, do you think you're what they say you are?" So go the words of the song in the rock opera *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

But who — or what — does Jesus Christ really claim to be? We know that the Bible ascribes a number of titles or positions to him — king, judge, prophet, redeemer and high priest. What is not generally understood is that from the beginning to the end of the Scriptures he is also described as *Creator*! And while it may seem startling to many, Jesus Christ of Nazareth — who walked the highways and byways of Palestine almost 2000 years ago — is the same individual who said "let there be light" and "let the earth bring forth" in the first chapter of Genesis!



Christ, God of the Old Testament

The Apostle John makes this point very clear in the first chapter of his Gospel account: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:1, 3).

Who was "the Word"? Verse 14 explains: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." The Word (*Logos* in the Greek) was none other than Jesus Christ.

Referring to Christ as Creator, the Apostle Paul wrote: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible . . ." (Col. 1:16).

Christ was the *Spokesman* or *Executor* of the creation process. He was the One who "commanded, and they [heaven and earth] were created" (Ps. 148:5). He, in close collaboration with the One who was later to become His Father, developed the detailed plans for the universe, the earth, animals, plants, and finally man.

Genesis 1:26 clearly demonstrates that more than one Being was involved in this process: "And God [Hebrew *Elohim* — a plural noun signifying more than one individual] said, Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness."

The Bible plainly reveals that Christ was the God of the Old Testament. Again notice what the Apostle Paul says in referring to the ancient Israelites in I Corinthians 10:4: "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ."

Known by His Handiwork

Once we understand that Christ is the Creator of what we see around us, then we can more readily appreciate some of the fascinating at-

tributes of His mind, character and personality. The Apostle Paul explains this process in the first chapter of Romans: "... Since the beginning of the world the invisible attributes of God, e.g. his eternal power and divinity, have been plainly discernible through things which he has made and which are commonly seen and known . . ." (Rom. 1:20, Phillips translation).

God's nature, character and personality are indelibly inscribed across the length and breadth of His creation. They can be found in natural objects and systems, big or small, simple or complex.

For instance, consider what it takes for an ordinary creature like a bird to fly. First of all, a bird has to conform to certain aerodynamic principles or it will never get off the ground! This means it must have the proper lift-to-drag ratio, an extremely lightweight structure and a powerful system of propulsion.

As it turns out, the anatomy of a bird is superbly designed to meet all of these conditions. The body shape is generally streamlined; the wings are propelled by powerful chest muscles which are anchored to a large sternum or breastbone; and it has a rapid heartbeat and metabolic rate which ensures it will get all the energy it needs during normal flight.

Bird bones themselves look like something that came off an aircraft designer's drawing board. They are not only hollow, but interlaced with a system of internal struts and girders — all very similar to some of the designs used in modern aircraft construction!

All of this stands as quite a tribute to their Designer and Architect — Jesus Christ.

A Natural-Born Aviator

But having the proper structural design for flight is one thing. Actually flying is quite another. How does a bird "learn" the actual technique of flying? How does it manage to coordinate wing and tail movements and vary the angle of feathers

to attain the correct configuration for flight?

Ever wonder why a bird doesn't "stall out" in midair? Its wings come equipped with a device known as an "alula" which works on the same principle as an antistall device in modern aircraft. Whenever the bird reaches a certain angle of attack in its flight, the alula comes into play in order to reduce wing turbulence.

Like aircraft, birds have varying aerodynamic designs in order to meet specific flight requirements. The albatross and the vulture have long, narrow wings which enable them to stay aloft for hours with minimum effort. Their basic design is quite similar to that of modern-day gliders or the famous U-2 plane which baffled the Russians for a number of years.

Eagles and hawks have broader, more rounded wings, making them ideally suited for their roles as "dive bombers." Hummingbirds come equipped with swivel wings that allow them to hover like helicopters. And the design of swifts (which devour insects on the wing) is reminiscent of a highly maneuverable pursuit plane.

Whoever drew up the plans for these fascinating winged creatures obviously had to be quite an expert in the field of aerodynamics. Perhaps you never thought of Jesus Christ in terms of an aeronautical engineer. But He was and still is — or else ostriches, kiwis and penguins would have a lot of company on the ground.

"Brainy" Bats

Birds are only one of many creatures that demonstrate the scientific know-how and expertise of Jesus Christ, their Creator. Another excellent example is the lowly bat. These creatures have traditionally been the object of revulsion, dread and superstition.

But there is nothing superstitious about the way an ordinary bat locates its next meal. It utilizes the principle of sonar, which has only recently been discovered by man.

The bat's echo-ranging device is far more sophisticated than man's. It can detect an echo from a target as tiny as a mosquito. Recognition of prey occurs in a split second and the bat can then launch an instantaneous attack in order to capture it. How a bat can distinguish its prey from solid objects or other bats still remains a mystery.

Bats on the prowl can vary the frequency of their echo detection from as high as 30,000 cycles per second down to 30 or 40. The hungry bat, using the same principle as a sophisticated shipboard sonar system, can determine distance or range to target based on the time delay of a returning echo.

The bat's sonar detection device is so sensitive that bats can alter course or deflect a wing after receiving echoes from objects only a few inches ahead. This explains why, for instance, *half a million* bats can wheel around in a pitch-black cave for several hours without suffering a single midair collision!

And all this comes packed into the body of a creature that is in many cases no larger than a small mouse! Not only did Christ have a firm grasp of the principles of sonar, but He also turns out to be quite an expert at the art of miniaturization as well.

An Awesome Array of Creatures

What human can fathom the depth and understanding of a mind that can construct a creature such as a bat? Or for that matter, a tiny insect like the midge, which is less than 1/10 of an inch long — yet it can beat its wings at the furious rate of over 1000 times a second! And at the opposite end of the spectrum there's the mighty sperm whale which can descend over 3000 feet into the abysmal depths of the ocean in order to do battle with the legend-enshrined giant squid.

How about the African eagle that decelerates from 100 mph to a standing stop in less than twenty feet? And who would have thought

to construct a built-in lathe mechanism inside the beak of the grackle so it could cut through the outer shell of the tough nuts it ingests?

As Elihu told the Patriarch Job thousands of years ago: "... Stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God" (Job 37:14). Consider for a moment the ability of a Being who could lay the foundations of the majestic orb we call the earth (Job 38:4) — who understands how the clouds hang in the sky (Job 37:16) and can spread that sky out like a molten mirror (verse 18).

Yes, consider the warmth and humor of a Creator God as reflected in the face of a monkey, the pug nose of a lovable bulldog, or the cuddly look of a koala bear. Think about the imagination of a God who designed a bird like the hornbill of Africa, which seals its mate inside their nest until the young are hatched. Or who created a comical looking penguin with the uncommon tenacity to sit on its nest for two solid months without eating one morsel of food — while being buffeted by subzero Antarctic winds with velocities of 100 mph.

And don't forget the artistic talent of a personality who can design the impressive tailfeathers of a peacock, the iridescent hues of the hummingbird, and the magnificent panorama of a sunset.

A Coordinated Masterpiece

What is perhaps most remarkable about Christ's creation is the way it all comes together to form a well-coordinated, integrated unit. There is (or was until man upset it in some cases) complete balance and harmony between the myriads of creatures God placed on this earth. Imagine the multitudinous number of permutations and combinations that had to be sorted out in order to come up with such a multifaceted operation.

Think about the fine-tuned feedback and counterbalancing mechanisms required to ensure that any number of species would not experience a runaway population ex-

plosion at the expense of others.

And all of the activities of this vast array of creatures takes place on a planet that is ideally suited as a life-support body. Its size, distance from the sun, axial tilt, and rotation rate all combine to produce optimum temperatures and climatic conditions for the existence of life.

Man, even with his technical expertise, knowledge and genius, cannot even begin to come close to duplicating such a feat.

The Real Mark of Greatness

The final and supreme benchmark of Christ's ability as a Creator is man himself. Man, unlike any other creature, is made in the physical image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26). If we admire the talent, ability and personality of various human beings, where does that put God in our estimation? If God designed a human family that could produce the likes of Einstein, Edison, Churchill and Lincoln, then how much greater is that God?

And how much greater a destiny awaits those humans who are now becoming a part of Christ's *spiritual* creation (Mal. 2:10) — who are now training and qualifying to become actual Gods in His family? These are Christ's workmanship, "*created in Christ Jesus unto good works*" (Eph. 2:10). They are the "*new creatures*" spoken of by the Apostle Paul in II Corinthians 5:17. Also James 1:18: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."

This, then, is the real heart and core of Christ's work of creation. The physical was only for starters. Right now Jesus Christ, in concert with His Father, is training and developing a people who will someday be a part of the God family, ruling and administering the affairs of this planet and later the entire universe (Rev. 20:4; 3:21; Heb. 2:8).

Christ's job as Creator is far from over. In fact, as the song says, it's "only just begun." □

WHAT ARE YOU DOING ABOUT WHAT YOU KNOW?

Paul said to "study to show yourself approved unto God." He said the man of God must be "thoroughly furnished unto all good works." What did he mean? And, more important, what are you doing about it?

by Peter M. Butler

IN WRITING his New Testament epistles, the Apostle Paul lost no opportunity to stress with vigor the urgent need for Christians to grow up in Christ. He urged that no true convert to Christianity remain a babe in Christ — merely a superficial believer.

Forcefully, he emphasized the need for Christians to go beyond the simple principles of the doctrine of Christ, and to strive toward *perfection* (Heb. 5:13-14; 6:1).

Paul was anxious that we should all "come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a *perfect man*, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13).

Knowledge Alone Cannot Save

But *how* should we aim toward this goal of perfection? *How* can we set about *growing* in Christ?

Jesus gave the answer when He said: "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4).

Here is a clear instruction from our very Creator and Savior to turn to God's Word, the Bible, to learn how to direct our lives in accordance with His requirements. But it is one thing simply to read the Bible, another to study it, and yet something else again to *apply* what we study.

Paul indicated it is not enough just to grasp "the principles of the doctrine of Christ." It is not enough simply to understand something of what Christ taught. Knowledge alone cannot save us. Rather it can *destroy* us. It can cause us to exude *vanity* — to become sycophantic know-it-alls of the Christian faith.

"Knowledge," said Paul, "puffeth up" (I Cor. 8:1).

The Eternal God frowns upon the accumulation of knowledge merely to boost intellectual prowess. "To him that *knoweth* to do good [who has knowledge of God's way of life], and doeth it not, to him it is *sin*" (James 4:17).

With this all-important truth in mind, it behooves every one of us to seriously ask ourselves, what are we *doing* about what we know? What are we doing with the *knowledge* that God reveals to us in His Word? Or, putting it another way, *why* do we study the Bible in the first place? Is it so that we can use what we learn to help us grow more and more like its Author, Christ, day by day? Are we prepared to go beyond the basic tenets of the Christian faith and use God's Word in our lives to help us *strive toward perfection*?

Living by the Law

The Word of God is not just another novel to be read and put to one side. It is not a college textbook to be studied and absorbed, and yet denied any part in molding our lives and character.

In the Old Testament, God stressed to the Israelites: "For this commandment which I command thee this day, *it is not hidden from thee*, neither is it far off . . . But the word is *very nigh unto thee*, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, *that thou mayest do it*" (Deut. 30:11, 14). King David wrote in Psalm 111:10: ". . . A good understanding have all they that do his commandments."

Yes, God expects us to *act* on what we learn in His Word, and as we act on it, we will come to *understand* it all the more.

In the New Testament, James stresses: "Be ye *doers of the word*, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:22-25).

What is the good, then, of studying the Bible if we are not going to apply what we learn in our lives?

In Hebrews 5:12-14 Paul uses the term "strong meat" to depict an in-depth knowledge of the Bible. Physical meat needs to be digested. We cannot take too much at once. Our bodies have to *use* the food we eat before we can take more. Physical meat gives us the strength we need to live day by day, and as we use up the energy it provides, we take more. If we just ate, and did not work and exercise, we would become obese and sluggish.

So it is with spiritual meat. If we simply study the Bible — digging deep into the meaning and intent of God's laws — and yet never apply them in our lives, we become spiritually obese and sluggish. In fact, in time we could *choke* on the strong meat of the Scriptures (John 12:47-48). And we could miss out on that eventual marriage feast between Christ and His Church (Rev. 19:9).

"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only For as the body without the spirit is dead, so *faith without works is dead also*" (James 2:24, 26).

Satan and his demons understand God's Word, said James (verse 19). They believe. And they tremble. Yet what good is mere *knowledge* going to do them?

Be Fruitful in Christ

Clearly, then, we should be more than mere "armchair" Christians. We should be applying all that we

learn in our lives, correcting errors in our behavior as they are revealed to us through study. The Apostle Peter wrote: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye *do these things*, ye shall never fall" (II Pet. 1:10).

But do *what* things? *How* should we give diligence?

Go back to verse five in the same chapter. Peter says: "... Giving *all diligence*, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue *knowledge*; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity" (verses 5-7).

What is Peter stressing here? Obviously he is emphasizing the need not just to grow in the knowledge of God's Word, but also in the application of that knowledge to our lives. We must grow in virtue (goodness), in temperance (moderation in all things), in patience, in kindness and in *love*. And *love* — the love of God — is "that we keep his commandments" (I John 5:3).

Peter is stressing purely and simply that we have to live "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). Then, "If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren *nor unfruitful* in the *knowledge* of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 1:8).

But if these things are not in us, then what does any amount of knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ do for us? Peter added: "... He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath *forgot-ten* that he was purged from his old sins" (verse 9). And that is one of the most dangerous traps a Christian can fall into.

On to Perfection

Significantly, in the verses immediately following the passage in which he uses the term "strong meat" (to depict a good understanding of God's Word), Paul explains what happens to a man who forgets

that he was purged from his old sins.

Paul urges all of us to get beyond the stage of a simple understanding of the "principles of the doctrine of Christ," and to "*go on unto perfection*" (Heb. 6:1). He is anxious that we should not get bogged down in the rudiments of the Christian faith, and fail to get on with living a Christian life. He wants us to *use* what we learn.

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and *have tasted the good word of God*, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Heb. 6:4-6).

And that is the very real danger if we *fail to apply* God's Word and God's law in our lives. Through lack of *use*, we will even forget what we have learned — forget we were ever forgiven our old sins. Then comes the danger of falling away. And all because we failed to be *doers* as well as hearers of the word!

Why was the unprofitable servant in the parable of the talents consigned to outer darkness? Because he was afraid, and went and hid his talent in the earth (Matt. 25:25). He didn't *do* anything with what he was given. He hid it! He failed to use it to advantage. And so he had it taken from him and given to someone who would make good use of it. So God will take away from you or me the knowledge he has given us of the only true way of life — unless we *use* that knowledge and *live* that way.

"But, beloved," Paul continued, "we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation For God is not unrighteous to forget your *work and labour of love*. . . . And we desire that every one of you do show the same *diligence* to the full assurance of hope *unto the end*" (Heb. 6:9-11).

Study Is Essential

There is no question that God requires all of us to attain a deeper knowledge of the Scriptures. But the primary motive for this, which we should always keep foremost in our minds, is to come to a better understanding of God's commandments in order to apply them more effectively in our lives.

Paul said: "*Study to show yourself approved* unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15).

But he went on to warn against giving any heed at all to "profane and vain babblings" which "increase unto more ungodliness" (verses 16-17). A clear warning to us to shun the kind of vain and futile study that simply increases *dubious* personal knowledge but contributes nothing to our spiritual growth.

One of the clearest scriptures on the purpose of study is II Timothy 3:15-17. It tells us very plainly *why* we should study. Paul is writing to Timothy, but what he has to say is directly applicable to us.

"... From a child thou [Timothy] hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for *reproof*, for *correction*, for *instruction* in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, *thoroughly furnished unto all good works*."

Living the Commandments

King David of Israel was a man who fully understood the need to apply the teachings of the Scriptures to his own life — to *live* the commandments of God. He was a man after God's heart, and he loved his Creator's laws.

We can better understand how to love the commandments and live by them if we study David's approach to life by reading the Psalms. Let's turn to Psalm 119 in particular.

How can we go about correcting our faults? "Wherewithal shall a

young man [anyone] cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto *according to thy word*" (Ps. 119:9).

David continued: "With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee*" (verses 10-11).

Notice David's motive for studying the Scriptures — for hiding them in his heart. It was not just to increase his personal knowledge. It was not vain study. It was to build up his defenses — "that I might not sin against thee." He was determined to learn to live God's way.

In verses 97-104, David writes: "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day." He declares that the commandments of God have made him wiser than his enemies and have given him more understanding than his teachers — more understanding than even the wise men of old. Why? "... *Because I keep thy precepts*. I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word. I have not departed from thy judgments: for *thou hast taught me*.... Through your precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way."

David used the Scriptures as a training manual on God's way of life, and he was striving to apply all that he learned. Read verse 105. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." He used God's Word to guide his every step, to govern his whole life.

In verse 113 David expresses his hatred for vain thoughts; but his love for God's law. Why did he hate vain thoughts? Christ said that "from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man" (Mark 7:21-23). How fully King David understood this. And he realized that his only line of defense was to stay close to God — to *study* and *apply* his Cre-

ator's precepts. That's why he loved God's law.

No wonder King David wrote: "*The entrance of thy words giveth light*; it giveth understanding unto the simple. I opened my mouth, and panted: for *I longed for thy commandments*.... Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me" (Ps. 119:130-131, 133).

Discern and Choose

Yes, the entrance of God's words gives light. The Bible teaches us how we should live — it is our guide in all of life's affairs. And we should constantly study it and use it to ensure that we always conduct our lives correctly in the sight of our Creator. We should *not* study it simply to accumulate knowledge to be stored but never put to use — except to display our intellectual prowess in a spirit of *vanity*!

So let's remember the vital purpose of our daily Bible study. Let's remember the admonition of the Apostle Paul that we should grow up in Christ, that we should strive for perfection. And let's always bear in mind what he had to say about the real reason for acquiring the "strong meat" of God's Word — the reason for real in-depth Bible study: "But strong meat [attained through constant devoted study of God's Word] belongeth to them that are of full age [the spiritually mature], even to those who *by reason of use* have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:14).

The spiritually mature — those who regularly study the Bible with the aim of directing their lives by it — are *practiced* in recognizing evil when they are confronted with it. And they are experienced in using the law of God (God's Word) to counter evil — even to the extent of ousting wrong thoughts and substituting right thoughts (Phil. 4:8). They can discern both good and evil — and they are trained in choosing the good. Through living by what they study, they are practiced in the habit of obedience. □

THE PUMPS and pipes of our human anatomy all send the same life-giving substance coursing through our fleshly bodies.

In the English language, we call this precious fluid "blood" — the most critical ingredient of all of our human life-support systems. "...The *life* of the flesh is in the blood..." (Lev. 17:11). Flesh and bone cannot live without that *one blood* that winds and meanders its way from head to toe in every living human being.

The Apostle Paul was lecturing an august gathering of egotistical philosophers about some of their mistaken ideas and illogical beliefs concerning the Godhead. In the course of this small "plenary session," Paul uttered one of the most profound truths that God has ever revealed to man: "And [God] hath made of *one blood all nations of men* for to dwell on all the face of the earth..." (Acts 17:26).

Regardless of race or nationality, we are all *blood brothers*. The prophet Malachi reminds us of our common blood line: "Have we not all *one father* [Adam]? hath not one God created us?" (Mal. 2:10.)

All humanity has sprung forth from the first man Adam (I Cor. 15:45) and his wife Eve — the mother of all living (Gen. 3:20). And, in that physical sense, we are all the offspring of God (Acts 17:28).

But our common blood bond is not our only shared similarity. All men everywhere — regardless of race or region — are afflicted by a terminal spiritual disease, commonly termed "sin."

Sin has been our common lot since the Garden of Eden. For nearly 6,000 years we have suffered spiritually from an ongoing crisis of the blood.

Sin *reigned* from Adam to Moses. And up to his time, Solomon knew not a single person had been an ex-

ception to the rule. "For there is *not* a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Eccl. 7:20). That's Old Testament theology!

Unhappily, centuries later conditions had not changed. Paul of Tarsus wrote in his epistle to the Christians residing at Rome: "For *all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). That's New Testament theology!

This wisdom-filled apostle also forecast the spiritual poverty that would characterize our age. He wrote to the young evangelist Timothy: "This know also, that *in the last days* perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents,

ONE MAN'S BLOOD

by John R. Schroeder

unthankful, unholy, without natural affection [*unnatural* affection abounds], trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof..." (II Tim. 3:1-5).

This is an uncannily accurate description of our chaotic, sin-filled age. Rampant sin is once again filling the earth just as it did before Noah's Flood. The so-called good in human nature has failed once again — in spite of unprecedented materialistic knowledge — to triumph over sin. Instead, evil men and seducers have, as Paul wrote, grown *worse and worse*, deceiving and being deceived (verse 13).

Individually, some of us have, for one reason or another, fared better

than others. But *not* a single person has been able to avoid sin *en toto*.

We all have been stained with *blood-guiltiness*: "guilt resulting from the shedding of blood..." (*Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, primary definition).

True, most have not committed murder in the literal, physical sense, but we have all harbored the *spirit* of murder (Matt. 5:21-22; I John 3:15).

In Psalm 51 David cried out for God to deliver him from *blood-guiltiness* (verse 14). He had indirectly slain Uriah with the sword of the Ammonites in order to cover up his adultery with Bathsheba.

In a similar manner, we are *all*, each of us, indirectly guilty of shedding the blood of Christ. In his powerful sermon on the day of Pentecost, the Apostle Peter said:

"Therefore let *all* the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, *whom ye have crucified* [Roman soldiers did the dirty work], both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).

A little later in yet another powerful sermon, Peter continued with the same theme: "But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life [Jesus Christ], whom God hath raised from the dead..." (Acts 3:14-15).

If you have sinned (and you have), you have earned yourself a horrible death in a lake of fire from which there is never any resurrection (Rom. 6:23). Your sins — and your sins alone — made Christ's death *an absolute necessity*! And since He died in your place — in your stead — you (indirectly) murdered Him!

Jesus Christ of Nazareth allowed His life's blood to be poured out in order to "bare the sin of many," and to make "intercession for the transgressors" (Isa. 53:12). By His death, He paid the

highest price in all of history. The member of the Godhead who created Adam (John 1:1-3) willingly and voluntarily gave up the very life worth more than the sum total of *all the creation*, including every human being who has ever or will ever live on this good earth.

Christ died a horrible death for each of us *individually*, as well as collectively for all mankind. If you have really repented of your sins, been baptized and God has begotten you with His Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38), you are bought and paid for. Paul reminded the Corinthian Christians: "... Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price" (I Cor. 6:19-20).

Peter eloquently stated the very same thing with a different choice of words: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold [some even today still seem to think that money is going to save them from a coming calamity], from your *vain conversation* [conduct riddled with sin] received by tradition from your fathers; but with *the precious blood of Christ*, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Pet. 1:18-19).

All humanity has been estranged from God the Father by sin. We would be editorially derelict not to mention Isaiah's classic description of this spiritual divorce from God.

"Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but *your iniquities* have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. For your hands are defiled *with blood* [don't forget that hate is the spirit of murder — I John 3:15], and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness" (Isa. 59:1-3).

Sin had erected an impenetrable stone wall between God and His human children by creation. God cried out through Isaiah: "... I have

nourished and brought up children, and they have *rebelled* against me" (Isa. 1:2).

Only the price of blood could pay for this human rebellion.

"... Almost all things are by the law *purged with blood*; and without shedding of blood is no remission [of sins]," wrote the Apostle Paul (Heb. 9:22).

But all the king's cattle and all the king's goats could not remove the ultimate death penalty for spiritual sin (Rom. 6:23). "For it is *not* possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins," continues Paul (Heb. 10:4). The blood of animals — *not* made in God's very own image — could not make the smallest dent in the iron curtain separating God and man.

But Jesus Christ did the impossible! His last breath broke the barrier forever! "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost [breath]. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom..." (Matt. 27:50-51).

Notice Hebrews 9:12: "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, *but by his own blood* he [Christ] entered in once into the holy place, having obtained *eternal redemption* for us."

And Romans 5:8-10: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, *Christ died for us*. Much more then, being now *justified* [from past sins] *by his blood*, we shall be saved from wrath [death — Rom. 6:23] through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were *reconciled to God* by the death of his Son, much more, being [already] reconciled, we shall be saved by his life [as our merciful and compassionate High Priest — book of Hebrews]."

Continue in verse 17: "For if by *one man's* [Adam's] offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life *by one, Jesus Christ*."

So by *one man's blood* — Jesus

Christ (actually God in the flesh) — many have been, are being, and will be *reconciled* to God the Father.

Christ Himself said: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, *will draw all men* [mankind] unto me." John wrote that Jesus said this "signifying what death he should die" (John 12:32, 33).

Paul wrote (after the fact) that Jesus "had *by himself* purged our sins..." (Heb. 1:3).

Jesus came to reconcile us to God, to save us from utter destruction: "For God so loved the [whole] world, that he gave his *only begotten Son*, that whosoever believeth *in him* should *not* perish, but have everlasting [eternal] life" (John 3:16).

Do you want to avert perishing? Do you want your sins forgiven?

Now those are silly questions.

Of course you do!

But it's not that simple — and yet it is.

There are requirements! The overall basic precondition is that you will have to enter into a covenant, a binding agreement, with God. It's described in Hebrews 10:16-18: "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them [through the Holy Spirit]; and [as a result of entering this new covenant with God] their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these [sins] is, there is no more offering for sin."

Other scriptures (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:32, etc.) show that repentance, obedience, faith and water baptism are part of the terms of the agreement you must perform. Then God guarantees His Holy Spirit as a free gift, which is absolutely essential for the covenant to be operative.

But never forget that the covenant is only made possible by one man's blood. Paul called it: "... the blood of the covenant" (Heb. 10:29; 13:20).

So in order to even start the salvation process, you must have faith in Christ's blood — His atoning sacrifice to blot out your past sins.

Paul put it this way: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation *through faith in his blood*, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Rom. 3:24-25).

And so we must believe in Christ's sacrifice as an historical event that applies to the repentant sinner, now, at this present time — in order to make a permanent compact with God.

God earnestly desires for us to enter into this covenant with Him.

In Hebrews 10:19-22, Paul emphasizes the confidence we should have toward God: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest *by the blood of Jesus*... let us draw near [to God] with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled [by Christ's blood] from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

However, it's pretty hard to have the boldness and confidence we should all possess toward God *if* we are saddled with guilt-ridden consciences. (Usually a conscience problem is caused by a sin problem.)

"Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope," lamented the Prophet Isaiah (Isa. 5:18).

Many of you are walking around weighted down and heavy laden with sin. You can't seem to get rid of that nagging *guilty conscience*!

Before his spectacular conversion, Paul (then Saul of Tarsus) had just such a conscience problem. The very first words Christ spoke to Paul were: "... I am Jesus whom thou

persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks [go against your conscience]" (Acts 9:5).

With a great deal of help from God (which you will also need), Paul did something about his guilty conscience. He repented of his many sins! He came under the cleansing effect of Christ's blood. "How much more shall *the blood* of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, *purge your conscience* from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:14.)

But notice that God used a *human* instrument on earth named Ananias to help Paul: "And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest [toward Damascus], hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost [Spirit]. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized [in water]" (Acts 9:17-18).

God is no different today! He still uses human instruments in His spiritual service to man. They are His servants — ministers sent by Jesus

Christ to preach the gospel and to feed God's flock.

God's true ministers are warm, friendly and balanced. Like the Head of God's Church, Jesus Christ, they are literally filled with forgiveness, compassion and mercy. They do not condone sin; but they won't condemn the sinner either. A true minister of God will show you how to turn from your sins. He will show you the way out of sin.

The Worldwide Church of God has many such ministers around the world. All are carefully trained under the sponsorship of the Ambassador College Department of Theology.

These ministers can visit you, *if invited*, directly in your own home. So feel free to write us and request a private appointment. Or, if you would prefer faster service, please dial this toll-free number in the *continental* United States: 800-423-4444. (Readers in California, Alaska and Hawaii may call 213-577-5225 collect.)

Although God does use these human ministers to serve and to help those whom He is calling, it is to Him you are coming through *the blood of one man* — Jesus Christ of Nazareth. □

Personal Counsel

Many hundreds have written asking if we have representatives in their areas to counsel with them personally and to answer their questions.

The answer is yes, we do.

The Worldwide Church of God stations personal representatives (ordained ministers) in most communities in the United States and British Commonwealth, and in many other areas of the world. These men of God can visit you, *if invited*, directly in your own home.

So if you do have questions

about conversion, salvation, or other biblical topics, please feel free to write us and request a private appointment. Worldwide mailing addresses are on the inside front cover.

Or if you would prefer faster service, please dial this toll-free number in the *continental* United States: 800-423-4444. (Readers in California, Alaska and Hawaii may call 213-577-5225 collect.)

Remember, this service is absolutely *free* and without personal obligation.

UPDATE UPDATE UPDATE UPDATE

THE COMMISSION to preach the gospel of Christ to the world gained new momentum in 1974. That year saw the first overseas personal appearance by Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong in Manila. In addition, contacts were made with many world leaders, laying the groundwork for future appearances in other nations.

So hectic — and productive — has been his schedule, that midway through the year Mr. Armstrong was led to exclaim: "Each country that opens its doors seems to lead to one or more others — and the invitations are coming faster than I can get to them!"

Two of the most important meetings were with prominent leaders of the Arab world — President Anwar Sadat of Egypt and King Hussein of Jordan.

The first meeting was with King Hussein, a man who has lived an extraordinary life.

At the age of sixteen, Hussein witnessed the assassination of his grandfather, King Abdullah, as they entered the El Aksa Mosque in Jerusalem to pray. Young Hussein pursued the murderer who turned and fired again — the bullet struck a medal on Hussein's uniform, saving his life.

A dozen times since, Hussein has faced assassination, as he has endeavored to walk a middle course in a region often given to passionate and extreme politics. (Appropriately, he entitled his autobiography *Uneasy Lies the Head*.) He has always steered a perilous path between East and West, between Arab militants and Arab conservatives.

He emphasizes that "without a just solution to the Palestine tragedy, there can be no stable peace in the Middle East." In 20 years of pursuing that peace, he has amazed his friends and foes alike at his ability to hold on to his throne — and his life.

The first meeting was with King Hussein on June 23. "Back in 1967, meetings were set up between King Hussein and me twice," Mr. Armstrong pointed out afterwards, "but it was shortly after the Six Day War, and each time some war event prevented our meeting."

However, contact with the Hashemite Kingdom was maintained. As a result, the King sent the Jordanian Ambassador, Abdullah Salah, to the United States to attend the opening concert of the Ambassador Auditorium on April 7. When Mr. Armstrong stepped down from his plane in Amman on June 20, the ambassador was there to greet him.

The Jordanians were generous with their hospitality during the six-day stay, and the meetings with

many government officials were well-covered by the press. The King placed his personal cars and driver at the disposal of Mr. Armstrong, and several banquets were held in

his honor. Mr. Armstrong reciprocated by extending to King Hussein an invitation to visit Ambassador College. And, at Hussein's personal request, Mr. Armstrong later sent a specially bound, personally autographed copy of his own autobiography.

Two months later Mr. Armstrong was presented with an unusual honor from the government of Jordan. In a special ceremony in Washington, D.C., Ambassador Salah, on behalf of King Hussein, decorated Mr. Armstrong with the highest order of the royal Hashemite Kingdom.

A month later, Mr. Armstrong returned to the Middle East,

this time to meet President Anwar Sadat of

Egypt. They were introduced at Alexandria, where Sadat had come to

speak in commemoration of the twenty-second anniversary of the revolution that overthrew King Farouk. Sadat was one of the nucleus of officers who led the revolution.

Anwar Sadat became president in 1970 because he was a loyal friend and follower of Gamal Abdul Nasser. The two had gone to the Egyptian Military Academy together in 1938 and later served in the same army post.

After being introduced to the Egyptian president, Mr. Armstrong told Sadat that Prince Mikasa of Japan, brother of the Emperor, was quite interested in visiting Egypt. An official invitation was promptly sent by the Sadat government and the visit is now scheduled for January.

The following day, Dr. Mohammed Hattem, former Deputy Prime Minister and now assistant to the President, hosted Mr. Armstrong and his party at his seaside summer home. Dr. Hattem offered to arrange meetings with other heads of state in the Arab world, as well as to sponsor a testimonial dinner and later a personal appearance in his country.

These contacts in Egypt should prove to be very valuable. Although lacking the oil riches of other Arab countries and saddled with economic problems exacerbated by one of the world's highest birth rates, Egypt continues to figure prominently in the Middle East because of the leadership of men like Sadat and the fact that Egypt is the cultural and educational center of the Arab world. In many respects, Egypt is the gateway to the rest of the Arab world. It may also prove to be a gateway to bringing the gospel of peace to that troubled region. □

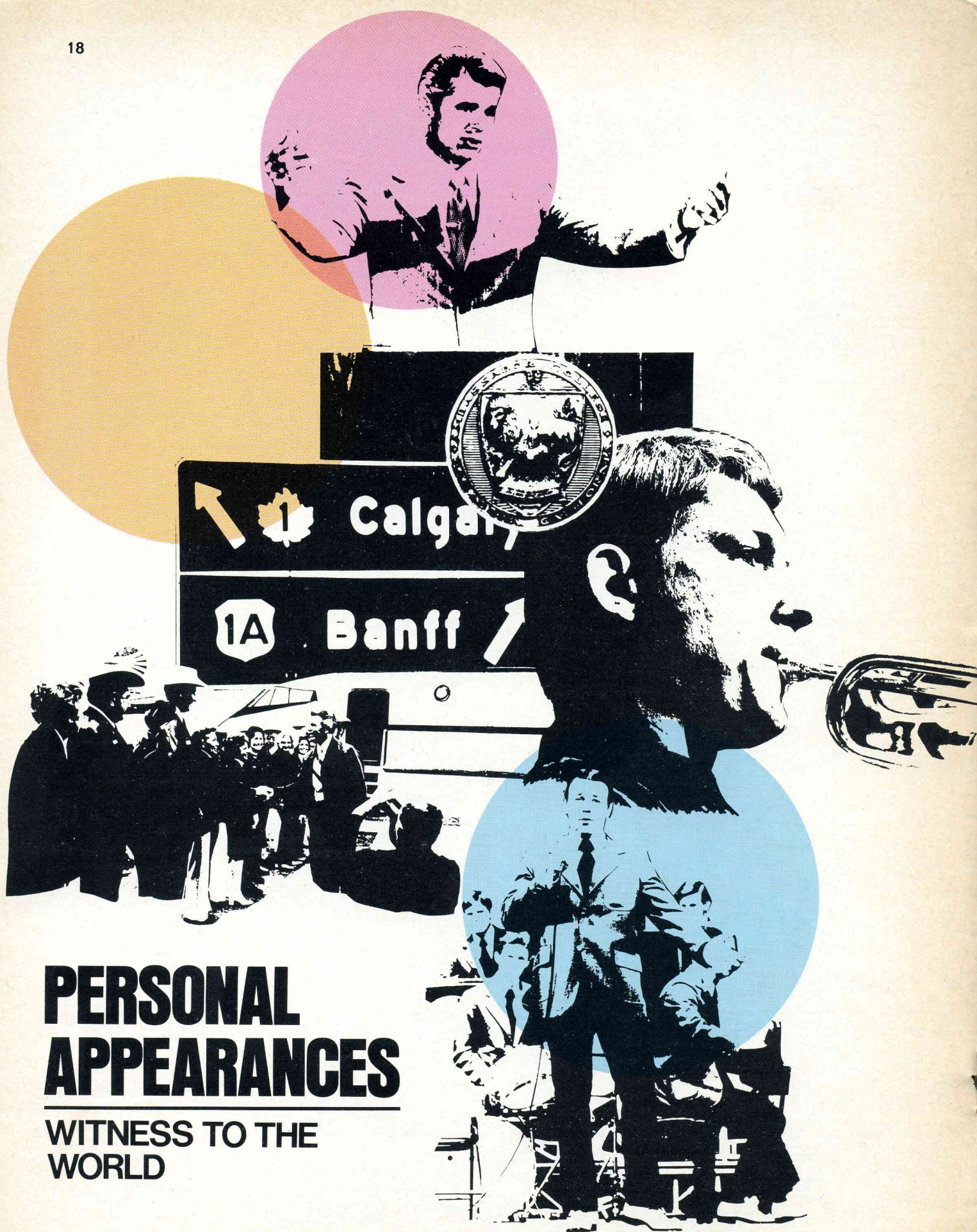
MIDDLE EAST VISITS OPENING DOORS FOR THE GOSPEL





KING HUSSEIN of Jordan greets Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong at their meeting on June 23 in Amman, Jordan.

Hagop Toranian



PERSONAL APPEARANCES

WITNESS TO THE
WORLD

It has been a busy and fruitful year for the men on the personal appearance team. Here is a report compiled by the coordinator of this worldwide effort, Sherwin McMichael.

* * *

The campaign schedule for 1974 is virtually complete. This year Mr. Ted Armstrong opened and closed our schedule, beginning with St. Louis last January 25 and ending with Portland, December 13, 14. To date we have conducted 47 campaigns — Portland yet remaining as this is written — and have spoken to over 120,000 people. In Portland, Mr. Armstrong will reach an additional 8,000 people.

The final months of this year produced a big jump in attendance. The reason for this increase in attendance at the campaigns during the last quarter of 1974 is that Mr. Ted Armstrong conducted three of these programs. Of course, his two and three night series bring attendances of many multiple thousands.

The most exciting news came from Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong's appearances in Manila, Philippines, in May (highlighted in the August issue and updated in this issue on page 22). Here are two other reports about successful campaigns on the international scene. The first is from Mr. Leslie McCullough, Director of the International Division.

I've just returned from a recent trip to the New Zealand, Australian and Philippine offices. All areas have shown good, steady growth. While I was in Brisbane I was able to hold a personal appearance campaign which all felt was very productive. We were able to reach 800 nonmembers on these two nights. Dennis Luker reported that 17 new people attended the first follow-up Bible study and 31 attended the second study.

"While in Manila I was able to conduct one of the follow-up Bible studies in the series of eight Colin Adair is holding following Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong's campaign.

We have a good solid core of prospective members who come week after week despite adverse weather conditions. On the day I was there, the rain was so heavy most of the streets in downtown Manila were flooded. One woman attended the Bible study even though the dress she was wearing was wet from the knees down. She explained to Mrs. Adair that her house was flooded, but she didn't want to miss these important meetings.

"From this group we expect to add many new members to the Manila Church. In the wake of Mr. Armstrong's campaign, 100 to 200 prospective members continue to attend these follow-up studies week after week."

Meanwhile, the personal appearance team in Britain has been quite busy, according to this report by Charles Hunting.

I have just returned from Glasgow where we had the third in the present series of British lectures. We had 312 new people the first night. On the following evening, 273 new people attended. All together, we reached a total of 482 new people.

"On the same weekend, Mr. Richard Plache took the first Edinburgh follow-up, with 81 new people present. Of these, 61 had attended the campaign in Edinburgh the week before (also conducted by Mr. Plache), and the other 20 came as a result of a letter sent out inviting people to come to the follow-up lectures even though they may have missed one of the first two evenings.

"Attendance at the campaign in Edinburgh was 340, including members. The second night's total was 375. The percentage of people attending the first follow-up Bible study was 26 percent, the highest we have had so far.

"Dr. David Wainwright conducted the final follow-up lecture in Birmingham and invited 73 people who attended to come to the regular Church Bible studies. Actually, we have invited 75 people in all, since

two people desired to attend but were not able to be present on the last evening in which the invitation was made. They all have learned where the true Church is, which day is the Sabbath, what the purpose of life is, and many other vital points about God's way of life.

"As most of these people continue on into the Church, there is going to be a massive boost for the Birmingham church. Everyone here is excited at the way God has caused fully ten percent of the new people reached in Birmingham's campaign to continue this far."

For the first time in this era of the Work an in-person evangelistic effort was conducted in the German language. Mr. Frank Schnee spoke to a German audience in Dusseldorf, September 7 and 8.

Following the Feast of Tabernacles Mr. Apartian spoke in Paris, France, October 12 and 13. Then, on his return trip to Pasadena, he stopped in Martinique to conduct a campaign there (in French) October 18 and 19. Hopefully, we will be able to schedule campaigns for Geneva, Switzerland, and Brussels, Belgium, for 1975.

Mr. Ted Armstrong's campaign schedule for 1975 is now virtually complete. He may add one or two more appearances depending on his other responsibilities, but six contracts are now confirmed.

Mr. Armstrong's schedule for 1975 is as follows:

San Francisco, California — March 21, 22.

Minneapolis, Minnesota — April 18, 19.

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania — May 2, 3.

London, England — June 22, 23, 24.

Houston, Texas — October 17, 18.

Kansas City, Missouri — November 8, 9.

To date we have a total of 35 personal appearances (Mr. Armstrong and other speakers) scheduled for 1975, so it would appear to be another fruitful year ahead. □

Indian Diary

LONG TOUR OF INDIA AND SRI LANKA

This summer Richard Frankel, director of the Indian Work, and I took a month-long tour of India and Sri Lanka, also known as Ceylon. Despite a disruptive national train strike in India which promised severe disruption of our tour, we were able to cover a total of 14,000 miles and complete 95 of the 135 visit requests.

The first weekend in India was spent in Bombay, a city of six million people, many living in incredible squalor and poverty. We first met with S. Kulasingham, a deacon in Bombay. Then Sabbath services were held in a hotel where 14 people assembled to receive the latest news of the Work. We heard many cases of members holding up under the severest of trials and being tremendously blessed for it. To hear of a Sabbath problem involving loss of a job was not uncommon. To hear of a quadrupling of income also was not uncommon! And in every case God had worked tremendous blessings to make not only better jobs and better wages possible but also incredible favor in the eyes of employers.

After a week in Bombay, we packed our bags and left for Panjim Goa, 300 miles south. For over 450 years Goa had been ruled by Portugal. But in 1961 India ended foreign control there and in two other Portuguese enclaves, Damao and Din, by military action.

That Sabbath we held a meeting for members and prospective members at 10 a.m., and were still answering questions at 10 p.m. We counseled with six people and baptized two, bringing the number of members there to three — all of them young bachelors. Such was the zeal and interest of those young men that they accompanied us to the airport the next day, reading us their questions from extensive lists they had with them.

We next flew southeast to Hyderabad, where in two days we met with nine people, baptizing one into God's Church and adding

three more prospective members. Our next stop, for three days, was Madras, India's third largest city. On the Sabbath we held services with seven present — two members, three prospectives and ourselves. That day was quite different for one man who was formerly a Hindu and a vegetarian. He had never eaten

meat in his life. Yet at lunch he was quick to make the change and gingerly launched into oxtail soup with a somewhat curious expression on his face.

Another person had never eaten anything with a knife and fork before. "How do you use these?" he asked, brandishing his instruments, and he showed us how to use Eastern instruments — namely the hands.

Then we went on to Bangalore where we met six people. Then we flew on to Coimbatore to meet ten more. Some of them had made a great sacrifice in terms of time and travel to meet us, and our group counseling lasted far into the evening.



In Sri Lanka (Ceylon) we were also busy. In three days, 32 people were counseled. On the Sabbath 49 were present for services at 10 a.m. and we counseled in our hotel room until 11 p.m.

The following day, counseling started at 9 a.m. and went straight through until 11 that night without even a break for food.

Overall, it was inspiring to see the growth God is granting in the area. Despite the fact the *Plain Truth* magazine was only sent bi-monthly in 1973 and only sent three times in the first half of 1974, growth continues. In the first six months of this year, student enrollment on the Correspondence Course increased by 30 percent. That means many more people will be requesting baptism in the months ahead.

— John Meakin

Singapore Report

NEW OFFICES AND CHURCHES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

The *Plain Truth* regional office was established in Singapore early this year on the fortieth anniversary of the *Plain Truth* magazine. Regular Sabbath services began here on the first weekend of January 1974 with an attendance of 28 adults and three children.

Our mailing list for the *Plain Truth* in Southeast Asia currently stands at 40,000. Most of the subscribers live in Malaysia and Singapore.

Our first office employee, Mr. Kurup, was baptized by Mr.

Wayne Cole on the first tour to Southeast Asia 12 years ago. He and his wife live across the causeway in Malaysia. At present he is working four days a week and keeps the mail going out as fast as it is received.

At the moment we have no broadcast and no advertising here. The *Plain Truth* mailing list continues to grow daily through "word of mouth" from interested subscribers. It costs us *nothing* in media to add new subscribers. Most of our subscribers are young businessmen, teachers, and students of university and high school level.

We have two churches — one in Singapore and one in Kuala Lumpur, the federal capital of Malaysia. The "K.L." church meets every third Sabbath and the Singapore group meets every Sabbath when I am in town.

The Singapore church meets in my home for sermons and Bible studies and "family" singing around the piano, followed by biscuits and tea.

At the beginning of July of this year, I toured all the major cities in East Malaysia and Brunei. This was the first tour to East Malaysia in three years. After spending the Sabbath in Kuala Lumpur, I flew to Kota Kinabalu, the capital of Sabah (formerly Jesselton, North Borneo). Sabah is called "the land below the wind." Sabah is just below this typhoon zone and enjoys lovely "Hawaiian" weather.

From Sabah I flew to Brunei, the small British protectorate, which claims to have the largest water village in the world. If you ever get a chance to see Brunei, be sure to take a guided boat tour of the water village. There are around 7,000 homes built on stilts over the Brunei River. This village has a population of some 20,000 people and about as many cats. Every home has a boat under the house and there are even some "two-boat families."

My next stop was Miri in the northern part of Sarawak where I met a young man who will no doubt be baptized on the next tour. In Kuching, the capital of Sarawak, I met with eight young people interested in the Church. Even though none were baptized on this trip, we should have some members there by my next visit. Two young men came in to the city from 17 miles away. They had to get home before the curfew and roadblock — there are still some areas that are not safe for travel.

For the past three years the Feast of Tabernacles has been held in Kuala Lumpur in the Federal Hotel. This year we transferred our feast site to Penang, a small island in the Straits of Malacca.

Soon I hope to make the long-awaited tour to Burma where we have 40 requests for baptism in the Chin Hills northwest of Mandalay and another area southwest of Rangoon. I plan to make stops in Rangoon and Mandalay since it is difficult to get permission to travel all the way up into the Chin Hills. The people of the hilly areas are not blessed with regular plane landings due to frequent engine trouble and bad weather.

Earlier this year when I was planning a trip to the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma, all universities, colleges and schools in Burma were ordered closed in the aftermath of food rioting and demonstrations which erupted in bloody violence near Rangoon University.

Organizing a tour to some of these areas takes careful planning. And, of course, we always need God's protection and a lot of wisdom and discretion.

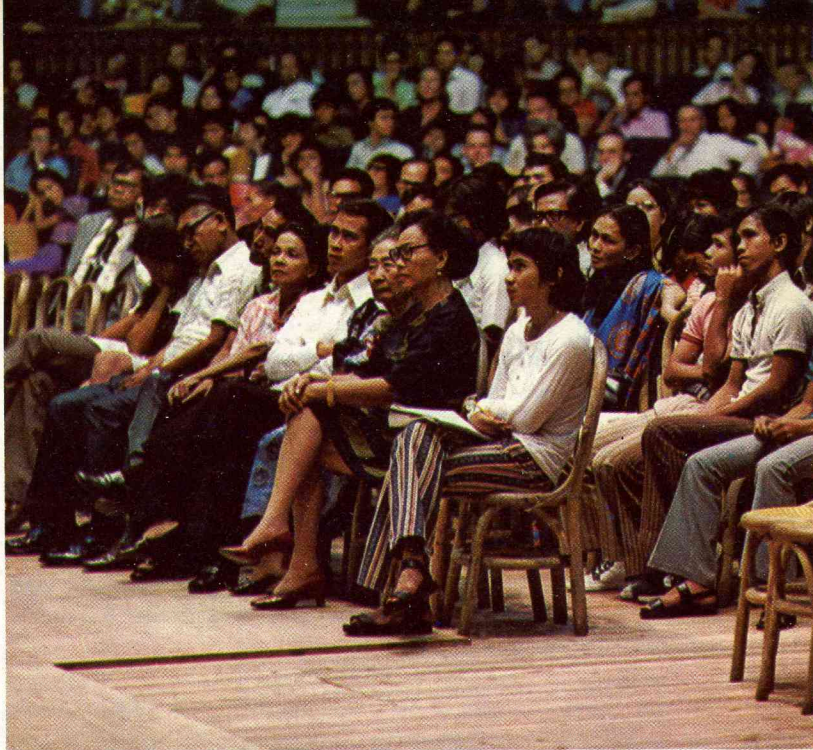
And just as soon as I can fit it into my schedule, I need to make a tour of all the capital cities of West Malaysia where I have 42 more visit and baptism requests.

— Guy L. Ames



MANILA-

Six Months Later



Mike Hendrickson — GN

Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong's first overseas personal appearance campaign (held in Manila in May) is now history. However, the interest generated is still high. For the first four follow-up Bible lectures the attendance was very good.

It is interesting to note that on three out of four lecture days, it rained heavily just about the time people would be traveling to the study. But attendance figures were encouraging.

The first week we had 201 in attendance (of which 157 were new prospectives). The second week saw a total of 315 — 127 brethren and 188 prospectives. The third lecture was the largest so far, with 507 (of which 308 were prospective members). The fourth lecture saw 394 in attendance (204 prospectives).

The interest of those attending was very high. The audience was very attentive and many questions were asked. At the start of the fourth lecture I still held 160 unanswered questions!

We have also been conducting the university lectures on dating and marriage. I also had the unusual opportunity to speak before a seminar of supervisors and principal teachers of Rizal prov-

ince on the subject of the teaching of moral values in schools. Each of the more than 300 people who attended is in turn responsible for 100 or more teachers in their areas. It was an unusual opportunity to reach a new group with the gospel.

The Philippine Work is continuing steady growth. *Plain Truth* subscribers as of June numbered almost 80,000, an increase of 8.43% over 1973. Correspondence Course students totaled 7,217, an increase over last year of 67%. This is most encouraging, as future members will no doubt come from these students.

As of June we had a membership of 1,156 baptized people, an increase of 10.8% over last year. The fruits of the Manila campaign should substantially boost this figure in the coming months. There are now seven churches throughout the Philippines, although three are able to meet only bimonthly.

Our greatest need is ministerial manpower. Hopefully, by early next year we can have someone stationed in the central islands to take care of our people there.

Right now we are reorganizing our radio coverage to reach the country with more stations than

our present number (seven). Although programs will be less frequent, we feel that twice per week instead of daily will do a better job of witnessing to the nation. We plan to put the program on about 18 stations to blanket the entire country.

Meanwhile, bimonthly booklet advertising continues in the *Manila Daily Express*, bringing us a fine return of approximately 20 U. S. cents per response.

At present there are 20 staff members in the office plus two elders and myself. With the arrival of Mr. George Hood, this will make a total of 24 workers in the office. In Central Luzon, Mr. Pedro Ortiguero pastors the Urdaneta and Baguio churches, while in Mindanao Mr. Encardio Benitez, local elder, takes care of the Don Carlos/Kiara churches and makes baptizing tours of the rest of the island. There are also five leaders affiliated with us looking after small groups of brethren.

This brings us up to date with God's Work in the Philippines. We would all appreciate your continual prayers for the brethren here and for the future success of the gospel in this area.

— Colin Adair

QUESTION: "On page 6 of the July 1974 Good News, Gary L. Alexander, in his scholarly article about five doctrines which identify God's Church, states that I John 5:7 was inserted by early copyists. I would like to know if there are references which verify this assertion. Where can these references be found?"

G.W.D., Jr.

Salt Lake City, Utah

ANSWER: You can consult Bible commentaries such as *Peake's Commentary on the Bible*, *The New Bible Commentary* and Jamieson, Fausset and Brown's commentary. These, and others, will point out the very dubious origin of I John 5:7. This passage is not found in the Revised Standard Version, or in the translations by Moffatt, Phillips, or Williams.

Many Bible dictionaries do not even mention the subject of the Trinity. The ones that comment do so historically, not biblically. This is because there are no really clear scriptural references to either substantiate Trinitarianism in general or I John 5:7 in particular. (Your local public library probably has most of these commentaries, translations and dictionaries.)

For a complete exposition of the textual origin of I John 5:7, write for our free booklet *Is God a Trinity?*

Q: "In The Good News (March 1974), a reader wrote concerning Jesus' blood, and took you to task for your false teaching on this subject (that the blood of Jesus does not save). You quoted Romans 5:10 in reply. I, too, believe you have put a misinterpretation on Scripture."

Mrs. Cecil M.,

Los Banos, California

A: The editors of *The Good News* do definitely believe in the blood of Jesus Christ. Perhaps our answer in the "What Our Readers Say" section should have been explained in more detail.

First of all, how does the sinner gain access to Almighty God?

Isaiah says, "Let the wicked for-

Q & A

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

sake his way" (Isa. 55:6-8) — the way of sin.

Further: "God so loved the world [of sinners], that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

But how?

The answer is found in Romans 5:8-10: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his [Christ's] blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

Now how are we justified?

By Christ's death — by His shed blood! He paid the death penalty demanded by sin (Rom. 6:23).

So we are justified of any past guilt by Christ's blood.

But now suppose Christ remained dead after shedding His life's blood for us. Then what?

Well, we simply would *not* be resurrected after we die either.

Notice I Corinthians 15:17: "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." (Also see verse 14.)

Death *cannot* impart life! There is no more basic and firmly established law known to science than the Law of Biogenesis — life can come only from life.

But Christ is *now* resurrected from the dead (see Matt. 28; Luke 24; Mark 16; John 20, book of Hebrews). He is a *living Savior* — no longer dead.

He is *now* our *living* High Priest (book of Hebrews). If we sin (even after conversion) and then *really* repent afterwards, He is on His throne

to plead with God the Father as High Priest for us — to apply His sacrifice on our behalf.

Jesus Christ intercedes with God for us: "... We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in *all points tempted* like as we are,

yet without sin.... Who in the days of *his flesh*, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared" (Heb. 4:15; 5:7).

Further: "Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.... For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, *he is able to succour them that are tempted*" (Heb. 5:2; 2:18).

Jesus Christ lived His life in the human flesh for you and for me. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham [human flesh and blood]. Wherefore [as a result] in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren [you and me], that he might be a *merciful* and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:16, 17).

So "*we shall be saved* [how?] by his [Christ's] *life*" (Rom. 5:10) — by His resurrection from the dead! We repeat: if Christ were *not* resurrected we would not be either (see I Cor. 15:12-22). Even as Christ was raised to life by the power of the Father, we too shall be resurrected to eternal life by the Son who "quicketh whom he will" (John 5:21).

Jesus is declared to be "the Son of God with power... by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4). Jesus said: "I am the *resurrection, and the life*..." (John 11:25). "We are saved by his life," for even as the Father glorified the Son, so Christ "should give eternal life to as many as thou [the Father] hast given him" (John 17:1, 2). □

Did Christ Have BROTHERS & SISTERS?

What is meant in the Holy Scripture by "his brethren" and "his sisters"? Was Mary the mother of other sons and also daughters?

by K. J. Stavrinides

NOT long ago we received a letter from a sincere inquirer requesting biblical proof on whether Christ really had brothers and sisters. "Please do not send me the views of this or that theologian; I would like definite and conclusive proof from God's Word — the Bible," he said.

Let us, then, go through this matter in a detailed exegetical study, noticing exactly what the Bible does say about this common theological question.

The Word "Till" or "Until"

In Matthew 1:25 we read that although Joseph was living with Mary, he "knew her not [that is, he did not have intercourse] till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus."

Some commentators have felt that the word "till" does not necessarily indicate that Joseph began to have intercourse afterwards. But the fact is, whenever Matthew uses the word "till," he uses it literally to indicate the end of what was being talked about.

For example, Joseph and Mary were in Egypt "until the death of Herod" (Matt. 2:15). The word "un-

til" shows that they were not there after the death of Herod — they were commanded to leave Egypt "when Herod was dead" (verses 19-20).

A similar example is found in Matthew 5:26: "...Thou shalt by no means come out thence, *till* thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." This means that when the uttermost farthing has been paid, it will be possible for one to come out. Thus the word "till" has a specific meaning to Matthew.

Matthew, in saying that Joseph did not know Mary "till she had brought forth," indicates that after that great event she was his wife and they began to have normal intercourse.

After all, one would correctly gather that *that* was the reason why the angel appeared to Joseph saying: "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife" (Matt. 1:20).

Therefore, even from the first chapter of the New Testament, the concept of Mary's perpetual virginity is on shaky ground.

The "Figurative" Theory

The same Gospel of Matthew gives us also one very important description of Christ by compatriots who knew Him and His whole family. "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and *his brethren* James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? and *his sisters*, are they not all with us?" (Matt. 13:55-56.)

This is the scripture that is often interpreted by some churches as referring to "brethren" and "sisters" in a figurative sense.

But are these words used figuratively? Examine the passage again.

Is there any reason to suppose that in mentioning His father, mother, brothers and sisters, these people meant His *real* father (not realizing or believing Christ was conceived of God) and *real* mother but not His real brothers and sisters? Is there any reason why the disbelieving Jews would recognize and refer to these individuals as Christ's "brothers" in a figurative sense?

The argument against a literal interpretation is not valid. The "brothers" and "sisters" must have been as real as "carpenter's son" and "mother"!

We must remember that Christ in this instance was preaching *in His home town* (Matt. 13:54). People knew His mother and all His relatives.

These fellow citizens listed four brothers and "all" His sisters — implying that Christ had at least three sisters, otherwise they would probably have said "both."

Christ's family, therefore, consisted of four brothers and at least three sisters, who with Mary, Joseph and Christ made a total of at least ten, a good-sized family — not unusual in those days.

The "Cousin" Theory

One of the theories believed by a large number of people is the "cousin" theory. According to this theory, Mary was a perpetual virgin and the "brothers" and "sisters" mentioned in the New Testament must have been nothing other than "cousins"!

This view rests on the hypothesis that in Greek "brother" (*adelphos*) can also mean "cousin." But one can imagine what confusion would result if such a common and frequent word did really have two meanings. "Cousin" in Greek is *ex-adelphos*, and the word means "from brothers"; thus the people involved are cousins if they come from parents who are brothers. The Greek language, therefore, has a common and usable word for "cousin." But let us ask what Matthew himself meant by "brothers."

In Matthew 1:2 we read that "Jacob begat Judas and his brethren." Does this mean that Jacob begat Judas and his cousins? Of course not!

In Matthew 4:21 we are told of "two brethren . . . in a ship with Zebedee their father." Matthew makes it clear that these "brothers" are from the same father and/or mother!

But suppose that "brother" could mean "cousin" — a far-out supposition — then what would "father" mean? Was Zebedee the "father" of two "cousins"? Was he the "grandfather"? And, if "brother" means "cousin" and "father" means possibly "grandfather," what does "mother" mean?

It is clear from this that if the logic of this theory were correct, Christ had "brothers" who were *not* brothers, "sisters" who were not real sisters, a "mother" who was not a real mother, and so on — throwing the whole of the New Testament into meaningless confusion.

The answer is that Christ had "brothers" and "sisters" — and the words mean exactly what they say.

The "Only Child" Theory

We have already mentioned that many commentators believe that the word "till" in Matthew 1:25 does not necessarily mean the end of something talked about. Many commentators also believe that the word "firstborn" in the same verse does not necessarily mean that others followed afterwards.

We shall see from Scripture that the second supposition is just as wrong as the first.

First, there is a great difference between a "firstborn" and an "only begotten" child. The distinction is *always* clear in the New Testament. Matthew uses the word "firstborn" (*prototokon*). So does Luke: "And she brought forth her firstborn [*prototokon*] son . . ." (Luke 2:7). But soon afterwards Luke uses a different word (*monogenes*) for an *only* child: ". . . Behold, there was a dead man carried out, the *only* (*monogenes*) son of his mother . . ." (Luke 7:12; 8:42; 9:38; etc.).

We see, therefore, that the New Testament authors knew the difference between a "firstborn" and an "only begotten" child!

more scriptures, we can see that the Apostle John was familiar enough with the situation to know that His brethren were not His disciples — otherwise He would not have said "his brethren, *and* his disciples."

If one could insist that, in this sentence, "brethren" and "disciples" are the same people, one could also conclude, by the same logic, that "he and his mother" were the same person. The idea is completely nonsensical.

Look further into the "disciple" theory. In Matthew 12:46-49 we are told that the disciples were *inside* the house while His brethren were *outside*. His brethren came with His mother, and *one of the multitude* spoke to Christ telling Him that His *mother* and His *brethren* had come to speak with Him. An outsider would not have used such terminology had he not seen His *real* mother and *real* brethren.

That the "brethren" were different from the "disciples" is also evident from John 7:3-10: "His *brethren* therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, *that thy disciples also* may see the works that thou doest."

"Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? and his sisters, are they not all with us?"

Matt. 13:55-56

Christ was the firstborn of Mary but the only begotten (*monogenes*) son of God (John 3:16).

The Disciple Theory

What about the "brethren" being Christ's disciples?

The answer is easy and straightforward. The Apostle John wrote: "After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his *mother*, and his *brethren*, and his *disciples*" (John 2:12).

Thus, without the help of any

One could also read Acts 1:13-14, where the *disciples* were praying with *Christ's brethren*.

Thus one more human theory tumbles in the face of scriptural evidence.

But let us ask once more: Did Christ have brothers and sisters? The answer from God's inspired Word has to be an emphatic and resounding "yes"! They were brothers and sisters from the same *mother* — Mary. □

WHAT IS THE DESTINY OF THE CHRIST CHILD?

NOWHERE does the Bible instruct Christians to observe the birthdate of Christ. Yet, strangely, among the multiple millions who do believe they are commemorating the Savior's birth (not knowing the real origin of "Christmas"), very few have heard the *reason* why Jesus Christ was born.

During the Christmas season, almost the total emphasis is on a tiny babe who "lay down his sweet head," or a "little Lord" in a manger. Millions pay lip service to the "Christ child"; school children reenact the story of the Savior's birth in pageants and plays. Yet, in all this, it seems virtually none understand what the ultimate *destiny* of the infant Jesus will be — the *office* and *work* that this "child" was prophesied to grow up to perform.

To find what this destiny is, let's examine some clear, plain, basic scriptures that speak about the "Christ child."

King of the Jews

First, Matthew 2. The office that Christ will fulfill is found in the oft-repeated, but little-understood, story of the wise men. The wise men came from the east to Jerusalem, asking: "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him" (verse 2).

The wise men were looking for a young child who was born to be a KING.

When Herod, the king of Judea, heard of these things, he was greatly alarmed. In fact, all Jerusalem was stirred by the news.

Herod called the chief priests and scribes together, demanding that they tell him where Christ (the Messiah) would be born.

They answered, "In Bethlehem of Judea" (verse 5).

How did they know exactly where Christ would be born? They quoted to Herod the prophecy in the Old Testament found in the book of Micah: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be RULER in Israel..." (Micah 5:2). Or, as it is quoted in Matthew 2:6: "... Out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."

The Christ child, then, was destined to grow up to become a governor, a ruler, and to exercise kingly powers.

Christ's Office Involves Government

Granted, during the Christmas season, Jesus is frequently referred to as a "king." But in most people's minds this means a "king over men's hearts" or some other empty, nebulous, ethereal, spiritualized phraseology or title that *men* assign to Jesus Christ — not meaning a literal monarch exercising kingly prerogatives and authority over a literal Kingdom with real subjects, actual territory and laws.

Notice what the Prophet Isaiah

predicted nearly 700 years in advance concerning the birth of Jesus: "For unto us *a child* is born, unto us *a son* is given: and the *government* shall be upon his shoulder.... Of the increase of his *government* and *peace* there shall be no end, *upon the throne of David*, and upon his *kingdom*, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever" (Isaiah 9:6, 7).

This child would eventually grow up to be the One who will bring that which this earth needs more than anything else: righteous government and peace. His government — based on God's laws, the only righteous standard of government — will establish judgment and true justice. His Kingdom will be established forever — as will the throne of David.

Jesus' Birth Announcement

In announcing to Mary that she would bring forth a son, the angel Gabriel said: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the *throne* of his father David: And *he shall reign over the house of Jacob* for ever; and of his *kingdom* there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32, 33).

As a literal king, Jesus Christ will receive a literal throne — the throne of David — and will rule over a literal nation, the house of Jacob (Israel). Other prophecies show that this Kingdom will eventually include all the nations of the earth. The throne of this King will be located in Jerusalem (Jer. 3:17) from where His government will be administered. All nations will learn of God's laws and ways, which when obeyed will produce a fantastic utopia of peace and prosperity unimaginable in mankind's wildest dreams (Isa. 2:1-4; Ps. 22:27, 28; Zech. 14:16-19; Ps. 72:1-8).

The fact is, Christ has already qualified to replace Satan as ruler of this world (Matt. 4:1-11). After Jesus successfully overcame the devil's temptations in the wilder-

ness, He immediately proclaimed the Kingdom of God (Matt. 4:23). But Christ has not yet taken over the reigns of government. After His resurrection He ascended to the throne of God the Father in heaven, where He will remain until "the times of restitution of all things" (Acts 3:21).

Soon now, Christ will receive His Kingdom and His *own* throne — the throne of David — from the Father. The crowning and the coronation ceremony of this coming great King, who will be given dominion over *all* nations and peoples, is described in Daniel 7:13, 14. The Apostle John also wrote of this event in the book of Revelation: "... And there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever" (Rev. 11:15).

Rule With a Rod of Iron

Prophetically speaking of the future office of the Christ child, in Revelation 12:5 we read: "She gave birth to a son, *a male child*, who is to shepherd all nations with an iron flail ..." (Moffatt translation).

When Christ returns to this earth, it will not be as a tiny, helpless babe or a little Lord in a manger. His next appearance will be with *power* and *glory* as King of kings and Lord of lords to rule over all nations with a rod of iron (Matt. 24:30; Rev. 2:27; 19:15, 16).

God's Word reveals that the kingdoms of this world will not welcome this returning King (Rev. 17:14). Nor will they willingly accept His rule. Christ and His heavenly armies will *wage war* in righteousness (Rev. 19:11), *destroying* those who would destroy the earth (Rev. 11:18). You can read of this climactic battle and find its outcome described in Revelation 19 and Zechariah 14.

With all the talk about the "child" Jesus and the "little Lord Jesus," you probably have not heard about the Jesus Christ who will shatter and destroy human govern-

ments, the KING who will "sit upon the throne of his glory" and who will gather all *nations* before Him, separating them "as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Matt. 25:31, 32, 34).

The Lord's Anointed

Notice also the time of Christ's intervention spoken of in the book of Psalms. In the second chapter, we read: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and *against his anointed* ..." (verses 1, 2).

Who is the Lord's "anointed?" The appellation "Christ" is from the Greek *Christos*, which means "the Anointed One." The apostles referred to this passage in the New Testament: "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against *his Christ*" (Acts 4:26). They used "Christ" instead of "anointed," because both words have the same meaning.

Did the apostles understand the destiny of the Christ child? The next verse speaks of "thy holy *child* Jesus, whom thou hast *anointed*" (verse 27). Anointing involves consecration to a holy office, as David, for example, was anointed with oil to be king of Israel (II Sam. 2:4; Ps. 89:20).

Though this earth's rulers will rise up against the Lord's "anointed" — Jesus Christ — "Yet have I set my *king* upon my holy hill of Zion Thou shalt break them [the nations that will fight against Christ] with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Ps. 2:6, 9).

The same ruler that we read about in Micah 5:2, the One who was prophesied to come from Bethlehem, is, continuing in the same chapter, destined to "stand and feed [*rule*, see margin] in the strength of the Lord ... for now shall he be *great* unto the *ends of the earth*. And this man shall be the *peace* ..." (Micah 5:4, 5).

Truly He will be great in the earth, for in that day He will "be king over all the earth" (Zech. 14:9). And the effect of His righteous government and reign will be to restore peace to this earth, forcibly putting down warring nations forever (Isa. 32:1, 17, 18; Psalm 72; Isa. 2:4).

The infant Jesus was the promised descendant (called in the Bible "seed," "root," and "Branch") of David whose ultimate destiny will be to fulfill this prophecy: "Behold, the days come ... that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a KING shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely ..." (Jer. 23:5).

Why Was Jesus Born?

Jesus Christ plainly stated the reason that He was born. When brought before Pilate just before His crucifixion, Pilate asked Him a direct question: "Art thou a king?" Christ answered, "Thou sayest that I am a king. TO THIS END WAS I BORN, AND FOR THIS CAUSE CAME I INTO THE WORLD ..." (John 18:37).

Jesus was born to be a king. He is "the *King eternal*, immortal, invisible, the only wise God," to whom is "honour and glory for ever and ever" (I Tim. 1:17).

Not only was Christ born to be a king, but He promises to His true followers the same reward of rulership — to be kings and priests with Him, sitting with Him in His throne, sharing the administration of government over all nations (Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:21; 5:10; Dan. 7:18, 27).

Jesus Christ emptied Himself of equality with God, humbly "taking the nature of a servant; BORN in human guise [incarnated as a mere human infant] and appearing in human form ..." (Phil. 2:6-8, Moffatt). His life in the flesh was an example "that ye should follow his steps" (I Pet. 2:21).

Will *you* QUALIFY to join Him in His destiny — to bring peace and justice to the earth?

— Ronald Beideck

An aerial photograph of a riot, showing a large crowd of people, some holding sticks or weapons, amidst a grid of black lines. A thick red jagged line, resembling a downward-trending stock market graph, starts from the top left and ends at the bottom right, passing through the text.

**THE REAL CAUSE
OF
WORLD
FINANCIAL
CRISIS**

The nations of the world are facing economic turmoil. Why do prices keep going up? Why do we have inflation, recessions and continual financial crises? There are answers. God's Word sheds light on the mysteries of today's confused economics.

by Robert C. Boraker

INFLATION is the number one present danger the Western world now faces. When prices are soaring and the value of money is tumbling, everyone is affected — housewives, wage earners, pensioners, large corporations, international banks and national governments.

Newspapers and magazines are filled with articles about the inflation problem — a problem that is showing signs of becoming a raging fire storm.

But even if it were allowed to continue at its present rate, economists and government experts tell us inflation could easily destroy the fragile fabric of every democratic society and pave the way for a dictatorship — either to the right or left.

A Threat to Democracy

Denis Healey, Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer, recently warned: "Unless we can somehow halt the present inflationary trend in our economy, the political and social strains may be too violent for the fabric of our democratic institutions to withstand."

Many European bankers and economists are warning that unless America and Europe work together to bring inflation under control, the world will be pushed into a recession comparable in length and distress only to the big depression of the 1930s.

Arthur F. Burns, Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, recently

said "inflation has emerged as the most dangerous economic ailment of our time."

A Worldwide Problem

Inflation is worldwide in scale. It has swept across national borders to infect almost every country at the same time. As a result the financial plight of some nations is extreme. The yearly inflation rate in many Western countries is running close to 20%.

Britain is on the threshold of its worst-ever economic crisis. Both the United States and Japan are doggedly attempting to beat back the fires of inflation before they create a state of emergency.

Inflation is a matter of deep concern to the whole world. It is reducing the buying power of wages and pensions, devouring family savings and spreading insecurity. As prices continue to soar, families struggle to recoup lost purchasing power.

When wages fail to keep up with prices, workers demand bigger and bigger wage increases. This leads to more strikes, demonstrations — and adds yet more impetus to the inflationary spiral.

Where will it all end?

A growing economy needs a growing stock of money to cover increases in the output of goods and services. If money is created faster than a nation's productivity, there will be greater demand for goods and prices will rise. All seems to go well as long as the inflation rate is kept low. But too much inflation will eventually cause the economic balloon to burst. Keeping the balloon inflated at the right pressure has seldom been achieved by governments in the Western world for any length of time.

Governments have tried to control inflation by manipulating taxes and interest rates, by instituting wage and price freezes, credit controls, and by many other means. But controls are seldom applied with sufficient vigor or duration to accomplish their desired ends.

After a freeze, there is usually a

rapid thaw that makes the problem even worse. The higher cost of oil and shortages of basic raw materials are other factors that have recently added fuel to the fires of inflation. And these fires now appear to be heating up. More and more we get the uncomfortable feeling that no one quite knows what to do about it.

What is the Solution?

As Irving Friedman, economic advisor to the President of the World Bank, said: "The persistence of inflation makes it necessary to look deeper for causes and effects. Unless these are understood, we will not understand why persistent inflation is a destroyer of modern societies and we cannot know how to begin to deal with this problem effectively" (*Inflation — A World-wide Disaster*, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1973, page 7).

When there are soaring prices the economy is suffering from *price inflation*. Economists recognize that this is usually the effect — the result — of *excessive monetary inflation*. Money has lost its purchasing power and no longer buys very much. Such a situation is described in the Bible. The Prophet Haggai vividly portrays what could be described as the effects of inflation in our day when he said:

"Consider your way of life. You have sown much [worked hard] but reaped little; you eat but never as much as you wish, you drink but never more than you need, you are clothed but never warm, and the labourer puts his wages into a purse with a hole in it" (Haggai 1:5-6, N.E.B.). Our money doesn't buy very much and soon vanishes, as if our purse or billfold had a hole in it.

But there is a cause for every effect. There is something drastically wrong with this world's economy. All the suffering, poverty and economic problems we see in the world around us are the result — the penalty — of living in violation of laws and principles God set in motion at creation. Surprisingly, God's Word — the Holy Bible — reveals the root cause of economic troubles.

God is the Lawgiver

The Bible is a book of law. It lays down fundamental principles and rules for the conduct of men and women in their daily lives. It also gives civil laws, including economic laws, for perfect government — the only laws that can bring peace, happiness and prosperity to the individual and the nation.

God is the one source and origin of all basic laws. This is true whether they govern the material universe, the physical creation or the spiritual, moral and economic life of man. Our very health and prosperity, our conduct individually, socially and governmentally are all regulated by laws.

If we, individually or as a nation, keep and observe these laws, we will be blessed with peaceful, prosperous and abundant living (Lev. 26:1-13).

God revealed all of His laws to ancient Israel. The Ten Commandments (Ex. 20) formed the basis of God's Law, but in addition to these Commandments, many *statutes* were also given for the general well-being of the people — together with judgments for the protection of everyone's legal rights. These statutes and judgments are all perfectly just and designed by God for the perfect working of a nation (Ps. 19:7-9).

God's Laws embrace all the needs, activities and requirements of men and nations. At least *in principle*, they cover every type of situation and give the solution to moral, social and economic problems.

There are statutes in God's law for regulating sickness, disease, legislation, farming, international affairs, sex and marriage, warfare, state and religious ceremonies, politics and government. And there are economic statutes for regulating land tenure, taxation, commerce, labour relations, debtors, welfare, weights and measures and finance.

Perfect Economic System

Ancient Israel was to demonstrate to the world the perfection of God's

Law in operation (Deut. 4:1-8). God gave Israel an economic system designed to produce prosperity and full employment for all. This system of law made Israel great as long as the leaders administered and obeyed the statutes and judgments God gave.

But Israel *departed* from obeying God's Law and as a result suffered from the curses described in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28. Those same curses are upon our nations today because of violating every economic law and principle that God gave to ancient Israel. Whether we have poverty, a period of inflation, recession or a depression — it's because economic laws have been broken and *we are paying the penalty*. (This is not to say there are not *other factors* involved in world economic problems: war, famine, drought, political problems which affect the stock market, etc. — all play their part.)

We need to understand what those laws are.

Many of God's laws were designed to protect the family unit. Families in Israel were economic units that formed the foundation of a tribal community. They had to be safeguarded from poverty and given fair access to land that would provide the means to sustain a living. God's economic system made that possible.

A Free Land Grant

When ancient Israel entered Palestine forty years after the Exodus, the land was distributed to each family according to its size (Numbers 33:54). It was a land reform program that has never been equalled since. Each family received a free land grant sufficient to maintain a livelihood. This land would *always* belong to the family as an inheritance.

The purchase of large estates was not profitable because of another statute. If the land were ever sold, it automatically returned to the original family in the year of Jubilee.

This meant the land was actually sold under lease and for no longer than 49 years (Lev. 25:10-13). The sale price was according to what the land would produce during the lease period (verses 14-17). Land speculation — one of the factors that increases inflation — was impossible under such a system.

Property tax (or rates) and inheritance taxes (or death duties) *did not exist!*

Instead of taxation at rates from 20 to 90 percent, God gave Israel the tithing system. One tithe or tenth (10%) of the increase in crops and herds produced from the land was given to the Levites for an inheritance (Numbers 18:21).

As the "civil servants" of that day, the Levites served in the tabernacle under Aaron and his sons who were the priests (I Chron. 23:28-32). Israel's was a theocratic government headed by God and consequently certain of the temple officials were among the highest in the land.

It wasn't just a matter of maintaining the building and its furnishings, or of acting as porters or gatekeepers. Many assisted the priests in the administration of justice (I Chron. 23:4); others were in charge of the treasury (I Chron. 26:1-24). Levites were teachers (Deut. 24:8), singers (I Chron. 9:33), overseers and musicians (II Chron. 34:12-13). All of these governmental services were paid for out of the tithe.

For those few who were poor and in need of help, additional provision was made every third year out of the seven-year cycle (Deut. 14:28-29). Israel also had a free food program for the poor (Lev. 19:9-10; Deut. 23:24-25), but different from the kind we have in America today. The people had to work to get the food they wanted (II Thes. 3:10).

Interest-Free Loans

Interest was not to be charged on loans given to the poor (Ex. 22:25). The term "usury" in the Bible meant any amount of interest, not just exorbitant interest as usury is

considered today. Any form of gain made at the harmful *expense* of another person was forbidden. This law applied to all Israelites, not only the poor, but excluded foreigners (Deut. 23:19-20).

The enormous sums involved in interest charges alone have enslaved individuals and entire nations in financial bondage. Usury is the most destructive principle in the economy of any society. (See one example in Nehemiah 5:1-12.)

High interest rates increase the cost of production (if a corporation has to borrow money for capital investment); rob the nation of its wealth and encourage financial parasites. Yet our entire economic and social systems are built on this false principle which God's Word calls an "abomination" (Ezek. 18:8-13).

God's way is the way of giving and helping. Loans between Israelites were to be made out of love and desire to help — not for personal gain. Christ taught the very same principle (Luke 6:30-35). A Christian can receive interest from savings and investments — but should not exact it from a "brother" in the family or church.

No Long-term Debts

God's law forbidding usury made it possible to create credit without multiplying debt — a masterpiece of legislation. The economic laws given to Israel (if obeyed) were designed to abolish poverty, injustice and indebtedness.

Debt has become the 20th century American and British way of life. The entire financial system is elaborately geared to keep money moving in vast quantities from lenders to borrowers. At a time when the cost of borrowing (usury) is at record highs, people and businesses are going deeper and deeper into debt. It's all part of the inflation psychology.

God gave a law to Israel that made it possible for His people to get out of debt. According to Deuteronomy 15:1-6, no debt could be

paid or collected after the end of the sixth year of the established financial seven-year cycle. The seventh year was the time of "release" or clearing of all debts. (However, if this were *suddenly* done in today's society, economic chaos would result. Creditors would be wiped out!)

This law protected the people from long-term loans and released them from bondage to creditors. Living in debt only lasted the maximum of six years after which a new start could be made. Our bankruptcy laws today are somewhat similar to this law of ancient Israel but are not so comprehensive.

Think of a world where people will be able to buy what they need when they can afford it and when they have the cash to pay for it. A world where there is no interest charged on loans, where no loans last longer than six years and a world without twenty-year mortgages. That's what God wanted for the nation of Israel.

A perfect economic system also needs to include a perfect and stable medium of exchange. Our money system is one of the root causes of our economic problems today. Ancient Israel could have avoided the same problems if they had obeyed God's Law which said: "You shall have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure" (Deut. 25:13-16).

A Perfect Standard of Value

The ancient "shekel" used by Israel was both a weight of gold or silver and the unit of value in transactions. Abraham, for example, gave four hundred shekels in weight of silver for the cave of Machpelah (Gen. 23:16).

Similarly, the "pound sterling" in Britain was originally a pound weight of sterling silver which also represented a denomination of money. Today it's merely a paper note.

God intended that Israel should adopt an invariable standard of

value. The words "shekel of the sanctuary" (Lev. 27:25) may refer to a standard weight kept in the tabernacle. This was to be the stabilizing factor in the economy.

But both ancient Israel and Judah eventually departed from using a perfect and just measure of value. According to Amos 8:4-7, they made the ephah (measure of capacity) small and enlarged the shekel (weight of money). In other words, more money was required for less goods. Because they falsified all weights, balances and measures by deceit, money lost its value and purchasing power.

Other ancient nations did the same. The weights of Babylon and Assyria conformed to no general standard through the ages. Weights varied greatly. Both "heavy" and "light" standards were used and undoubtedly to the advantage of the merchants.

Our laws today have set the standard for weights and measures. But there is no standard of value. "Divers weights and measures" are in the bag of high finance. We have a standard of weights and measures that remains constant. The yardstick, pound (weight) and gallon do not change. But we don't have a stable standard of *value* that will enable *currency* to be a perfect and just measure of that value.

A foot is always twelve inches, but how long does a dollar have the same value — the same purchasing power? Money that remains stable in value is as necessary as a yard that always remains at 36 inches. Changing values and prices tend to enrich the seller at the expense of the buyer. A stable, inviolate standard of value is needed to stabilize prices.

Of course this is only part of the problem. Money can maintain the same value, say in relation to gold, but that won't keep prices from going up or down.

A Stable Money Supply

A perfect economy must include a system in which money maintains

its value in terms of purchasing power. This would mean regulating the supply of money at the same ratio as the amount of productivity, according to economists like Milton Friedman and Henry Hazlitt.

Inflation, they say, is primarily caused by government and the banking system when they increase the supply of money and credit beyond and in excess of the increase in goods and services.

Henry Hazlitt explains what happens: "When the supply of money is increased, people have more money to offer for goods. If the supply of goods does not increase — or does not increase as much as the supply of money — then the prices of goods will go up. Each individual dollar becomes less valuable because there are more dollars. In the old days, governments inflated by clipping and debasing the coinage [and so produced a larger circulation of coins for the same amount of gold and silver]. Then they found they could inflate cheaper and faster simply by grinding out paper money on a printing press" (*What You Should Know About Inflation* by Henry Hazlitt, D. van Nostrand Co., Toronto, London, New York, 1966, page 2).

The depreciation of currency is a major world problem. Most major nations are running the printing presses too much or creating excessive credit in their banking systems. That's why a growing number of jittery investors have lost confidence in the value of paper money. They are buying land, art, antiques, farm commodities, gold, silver and other metals. But at some future date, even gold and silver may become totally valueless (see Ezek. 7:12-19).

Human Nature Causes Inflation

Our money system today depends on human nature and its craving for more material goods. Selfishness, pride and greed are the prime motivating factors in today's economy. Too many people are taking more from society than they are prepared

to give. They are trying to get more than their share of the world's resources. This greed in human nature is a prime cause of inflation.

Businessmen and other promoters of the super-abundant life encourage the public to borrow more and spend more. Governments all over the world have been too permissive in spending money to satisfy their voters. Companies and individuals continue to spend more than their income.

Few can live within a budget. Too many are taking short cuts to riches and the "good life" — buying everything in sight with no regard for where the money comes from or how it should be spent.

We don't like living with inflation, but who will be the first to restrain his spending — to set an example of self-discipline and self-control? Which government will be the first to live within its budget even at the risk of recession? Which company? Which person?

To control inflation requires the control of human nature. But that requires a supernatural power with a strong world government which can build an entirely new economic system possibly similar to the one God gave the ancient theocracy of Israel.

Historically, Adam Smith's "invisible hand" failed to provide a perfect economy. John Keynes' "visible hand" of government manipulation is failing now. What the whole world needs is "a strong hand from someplace" to change human nature and establish a perfect economy that's in harmony with God's law.

Inflation will be abolished in the world of the future. Thankfully, that world will soon be here and you can have a part in it.

In the meantime, if you need help with your private monetary problems, write for our free booklet entitled *Managing Your Personal Finances*. Worldwide mailing addresses are in the communications box on the inside front cover. □

How your Good News subscription has been paid

Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached [and published — Mark 13:10] in all the world for a witness unto all nations" (Matt. 24:14) at this time, just before the end of this age. A price must be paid for this magazine, the Correspondence Course, booklets and other literature.

But how? Christ forbids us to sell it to those who receive it: "Freely ye have received, freely give," said Jesus to His disciples whom He was sending to proclaim His gospel. "It is more blessed to give," He said, "than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

God's way is the way of love — and that is the way of giving. God expects every child of His to give freewill offerings and to tithe, as His means of paying the costs of carrying the gospel to others.

We, therefore, simply trust the Living Christ to stir the minds and hearts of His followers to give generously, thus paying the cost of putting this precious gospel truth in the hands of others.

The faithful, tithe-paying members of the Worldwide Church of God and our ever-growing family of co-workers gladly give of their incomes that we may give this precious gospel to an ever-widening number of readers.

The living, dynamic Christ Himself enables us to send you this *Good News* magazine without charging a price. God's way is right — the way of giving to others.

WHAT OUR READERS SAY

"Where Your Treasure Is . . ."

The article you had on tithes ("Where Your Treasure Is") was very true to life. I have been tithing for as long as I can remember (starting with the allowance my parents gave me) and I must admit that God has been very good to me. He has doubled and tripled my income both materially and especially spiritually. He has given me the inner peace which I can hold on to when things have been bleakest.

Delores W.,
Detroit, Michigan

Please accept this special offering. This is not my usual tithe but a special gift. I just finished the article "Where Your Treasure Is" by Mr. Ted Armstrong. It made me realize just how blessed I am of God. I hope this will help to defray some of the high costs of spreading the good news of God's Kingdom to others.

Clay M.,
Los Alamos, New Mexico

GN Centerspread

Love your August GN centerfold! I couldn't help but be overcome with a burst of pleasant thoughts when I saw it. It's just another example of the quality and wholesomeness of the Work you are doing. I wish more (many more) national magazines would follow your example in choosing pictures for their centerfolds. The GN is always overwhelmingly inspiring in all that it prints.

Mrs. P. W.,
Dallas, Texas

Broadcast from the Falcon

Being a Federal Aviation employee working at the Salt Lake City Air Route Traffic Control Center, and a private pilot, I thoroughly enjoyed your program from the cockpit of the Falcon jet. It's a good observation how flying laws relate to lives and God's laws. If you're ever in Salt Lake City, I'd be proud to take you on a tour of the ARTCC, which is near the airport. I'd love to have a ride in your plane if possible. I usually listen to your broadcast late at night on KOB, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Robert H.,
West Jordan, Utah

Frightening World Conditions

Your current broadcast on America's involvement in Europe and the tenuous NATO alliance has aroused my deep concern. For some time I have been an avid listener to *The World Tomorrow* program. I must confess, however, that up until now I have tended to merely listen and agree without taking any definitive steps to acquire any of the materials. I suspect that most of us are so inundated with a world situation so incomprehensible, surrealistic and frightening that we try to escape an intolerable reality by retreating into our lives in the desperate hope that the world would just leave us alone.

Robert E.,
Brooklyn, New York

Views of Bible Changed

I have listened to your broadcast for a few years and can say that no other broadcast has ever been so instrumental in changing my outlook toward the Bible. My family has been of the Baptist faith for several generations and it never occurred to me to question the teachings of that faith. Then I began to think of the teachings of a merciful God and the word "hell." Your one broadcast helped me make the truth clearer to myself, and punch a hole in the fiery hell domain teaching. This was confirmed by my own Bible study.

Frank M.,
Cochran, Georgia

Bible Is a Myth?

Anybody as well-educated as you seem to be knows that the Bible is nothing more or less than a collection of myths, fables and writings of self-seeking men. It has been translated, retranslated, rewritten, edited, reedited, revamped and sponged and cleaned so many times that even Jesus Christ (if there ever was such a person) couldn't find an original quote.

Tom W.,
Stockton, New Jersey

- "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Tim. 3:16; cf., John 10:35).

The transmission of the biblical text has been, for the most part, done by responsible persons. There have not been near the number of changes that you imply (cf., Believing Bible Study: A Key to the Space Age. Edward F. Hills, Th.D., Des Moines: The Christian Research Press, 1956).

Also, there is ample evidence — even apart from the Bible itself — that Jesus lived in the land of Judea in the early first century A.D. (cf., Justin Martyr, First Apology, chapter 34; Tacitus: The Annals of Imperial Rome, XV., 44; Cyril Contr. Julian, vi., pp. 191, 213).

"Strong Meat"

It has been quite some time since I have been so emotionally moved by an article . . . and I confess that I shed a few tears too; I couldn't restrain the deep feelings of elation, thankfulness and gratitude I felt when I read the article by Mr. Hunting and David Ord ("Winning the Battle for Your Mind") in the July issue of the GN. I have been praying for such basic guidelines for ages, and somehow it seems that the authors were tuned in to my prayers. I really felt that the article was intended for myself. It is so simple and practical it made my eyes water. You are calling the GN "strong meat," and after only seven issues received to date, the signs of the "vitamins" derived are already showing. Please accept this "meagre" thank you for your service and the big work you are accomplishing through this media.

T. B.,
Malta

Manila Campaign

I was very pleased to hear and read about the great success of the Manila campaign

and also how you were warmly welcomed in Jordan. I am praying that the Work will also have the same kind of success in other areas of the world. I am also praying for you and Garner Ted and all the rest of the ministers in the Worldwide Church of God. I know that this is a tremendous task God has placed upon your shoulders, and you will need all the help from tithes, offerings and prayers that you can get. Meanwhile I know that God is continuing to bless His Work and to open doors continually so that the gospel (Good News) will reach all peoples of the world.

George S.,
Sparks, Nevada

Animal Migrations

I have watched with interest and enjoyment your TV program in which you present a pretty good case against evolution. I would be one of the first to admit that evolution is only a theory and far from a proven fact, but there are some things which you haven't mentioned that make a strong case in its favor.

One of the things that convinced Darwin is the fact that on isolated land masses such as the Galapagos Islands and Australia there are creatures that are found nowhere else on earth. You seem an unusually intelligent man. Can you really believe that pairs of koala bears, kangaroos and duck-billed platypuses actually traveled from Mt. Ararat halfway around the world across thousands of miles of ocean, without leaving any progeny, to Australia and nowhere else? None of these creatures can even swim.

William A.,
Los Angeles, California

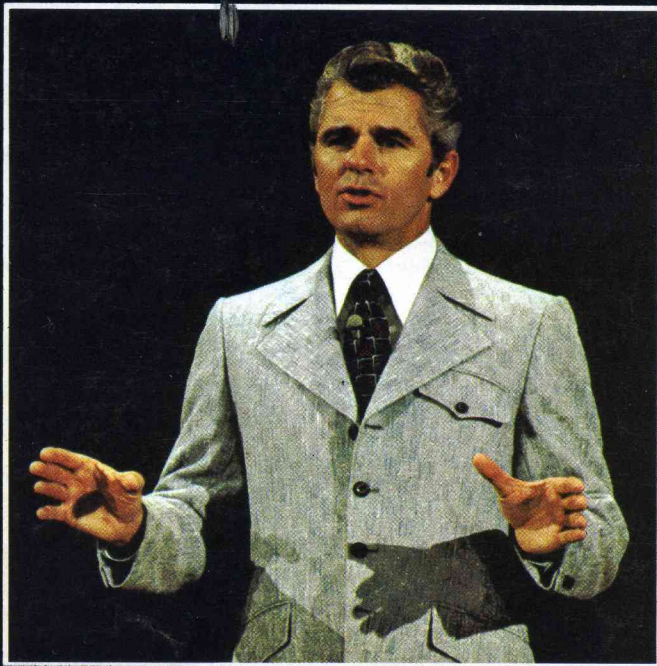
- The major land masses of the earth are not as isolated as one might suppose. They have been even less isolated in the past. Witness the existing land bridge between Asia and Africa — the Sinai Peninsula — and Central America between the North and South American continents. Land bridges have also existed in the geologically recent past between Asia and Australia as well as Asia and North America. To this day, the ocean is relatively shallow between much of Asia and Australia. Should the oceans lower a few hundred feet, this land bridge would again be exposed.

As men travel and migrate, they traditionally take with them familiar plants and animals. Some go with them accidentally. Many animals have spread to new areas in this manner — the rabbit to Australia, the English sparrow and European corn borer to the Americas, etc.

Recent discoveries are showing scientists that much sea traffic existed in the ancient world. And the biblical record implies worldwide exploration and shipping in the time of Solomon!

Animals were transported to the Middle East from far-off lands. It is logical to conclude that animals were shipped between other areas as well. Individuals have had pet lions, tigers, snakes, bears, etc. — even in our present society. Are we to believe that man was any different in ancient times? Surely not.

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invites you to attend**



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