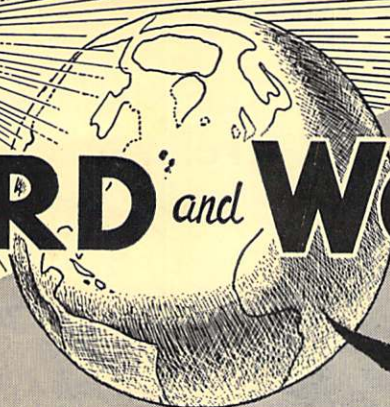


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AUGUST, 1974

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## Talking Things Over

G. R. L.

### WHEN GOD SHUTS THE WATER OFF

According to news reports, near dust-bowl conditions are developing in some midwestern states. Crop damage already runs into the billions of dollars. Apparently none of us will go hungry as a result of the drouth, but food prices are bound to go higher. And people are blaming the government. The rains didn't come at the right time.

In Africa things are far worse. Just south of the Sahara the drouth has hit an area as big as the whole USA—a strip that reaches 3,600 miles, almost from the east coast to the west. Hundreds of thousands of people have already died, and millions more are on the verge of starvation. Relief—too little and too late—from many nations has been sent, but it has been poorly administered. For this, everybody is blaming everybody else. The six-year drouth is attributed to “changing weather patterns;” the annual rains have dried up.

The experts can easily explain the spreading drouth in Africa: Those poor unenlightened inhabitants of the Sahel just don't know how to preserve the topsoil, etc., etc. What they need is better land management. All this is probably true—in measure. But what about our college graduates who farm the plains of South Dakota? What did they do wrong?

At some point the ingenuity of man breaks down. He can't even seed the clouds with silver iodide crystals unless Somebody puts the clouds up there. On the occasion of a severe drouth in Israel about 600 B.C., Jeremiah (ch. 14) raised the question, “Can the skies make rain?” Can we rely on “nature” or “the weather” for the rain the U.S. needs? That is not much better than relying on technology.

Stop and think for a minute. Don't most of us—believers—just take it for granted that “tomorrow we shall buy and sell and get gain”? We expect the stock market to keep the wheels of industry in motion. We expect the structure of our government to endure, with or without impeachment. We expect food to be



in abundance and goods of all sorts to be available in the stores, however unreasonable the prices. But who is going to supply the water?

"Are there any among the idols of the nations who give rain? Or can the heavens grant showers? Is it not Thou, O Lord our God?" "He causes His wind to blow and the waters to flow." "Fire and hail, snow and clouds; stormy wind, fulfilling His word." "Even the winds and the sea obey Him." (Jer. 14:22; Ps. 147:18; 148:8; Matt. 8:27.) The supply of our daily bread depends on how our Lord regulates the weather. It is His prerogative to send rain, and it is His prerogative to cut it off. It He deigns to send rain, it is not a debt He owes to mankind. Rather, it is an act of mercy. "Because of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed." "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His loving-kindness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" (Lam. 3:22; Ps. 107:8.) And when He decides to turn the water off for a time, who is going to stay His hand or say, "What doest Thou?" (Dan. 4:35) Even while we ask Him "Why?", let's acknowledge that He does all things well.

Ahab and Elijah viewed the drouth of their day from very different viewpoints (1 Kings 17). The public stood by and looked on with more than passing interest. When drouth strikes today—or some other crisis arises—I believe that it offers a real challenge to Christians. 1) Instead of being drawn into arguments about the culpability of Washington for the fix we're in, let's acknowledge God as the one who gives or witholds rain (and other benefits)—and rightly so. The business of each individual is not to question God, but to humble himself before Him. 2) We need to obey 1 Tim. 2:1 and pray for our nation's leaders and the multitudes who have no thought of God. Having the water cut off may cause some to stop and listen.

If we react to inflation, drouth, corruption in government, etc., in the same way the world does, then we are salt that has lost its savor. It's time for Christians to be awake and alert. Let's stand apart from the world system and view events from God's perspective. Let us, with Job, bear witness that God is God, come what may. He is able to sustain and to satisfy His own, regardless of circumstances. He still stands with hands outstretched, inviting men to His great supper—"and yet there is room." ". . .not willing that any should perish!"

In the midst of earth's troubles, God has placed His people to act as His spokesmen—interpreters of the meaning of events and witnesses to His righteousness and His mercy. Let's take our calling seriously.

# PROPHECY

As far as we can determine, the following article has never been published before. We don't know when it was written, but on the back Bro. Boll had pencilled this note: "Sent to Toronto, not published." Evidently the manuscript was rejected by another publication.

## The Interpretation of Revelation 20

R. H. Boll, 19—

When a man writing on some part of scripture, for example on the Revelation, begins his treatise by telling us how very figurative it all is, we may surmise that he has something to "prove," or some kind of "axe to grind." And whatever his aim and purpose may be, it necessitates the clearing away of the obvious face value and meaning of the scriptures in order to make room for some other interpretation. It is frequently noted that those who are opposed to the plain teaching of Rev. 20:1-6 (which speaks of two resurrections, separated by a period of a thousand years) insist strenuously on the "highly figurative" and symbolical character of the Revelation. Indeed they are compelled to do that, if their contention is not to fall to the ground. For if that passage means anything like what it plainly says, then there are two resurrections, separated from each other by the space of a thousand years.

No man of sane mind contends that all the words of the Revelation are to be taken literally. Nobody takes such a position, either with regard to the Revelation or any other book of the Bible, or, for that matter, with regard to any other piece of literature. Figurative speech is common to all language, inspired and uninspired. In some forms of literature, and in some parts of the Bible (as for example in the Revelation) figure and symbol is more abundant than in others. This fact, however, does not throw the door open to arbitrary interpretations. Law and order controls the proper interpretation of language. One is not at liberty, for instance, to label at will any term or statement he may wish to dispose of as "figurative," and then proceed to make of it whatever he may please. Moreover even figurative speech has its definitive values, and is not open to arbitrary and lawless handling. The twentieth chapter of Revelation, for example even, were it figurative, is not such a piece of phantasmagoria, so vague and nebulous, that it may mean anything everything, or nothing, as the "interpreter" may prefer. The name of the book in which this chapter is found is "Apocalypse" which does not signify a mist, or a fog, or something shrouded and concealed, but an Unveiling, a Revelation. It carries a definite message. It is disregarding of this fact that has made the book of Revelation the happy hunting ground of religious theorists who think they are licensed to impute whatever meaning they like to its language.

The 20th chapter of Revelation speaks of a "first resurrection." That certainly means a resurrection that takes place *first*, with reference to another resurrection which comes after. That much is clear and indisputable. Now it may be argued that the term "resurrection" is here a "figurative" term, or that it is of "spiritual" significance. Since we learn elsewhere that Christians have been "raised together with Christ," *that* (it may be argued) must therefore be the first resurrection. Such "interpretation," however, is not allowable. The mere fact that "resurrection" is in one place used in a spiritual or figurative sense, raises no necessary presumption (much less *certainty*) that it is so used in another place. The significance of the term "resurrection" in Revelation 20 must be determined in the light of its context. The attempt to settle it by arbitrary dictum, is wholly out of order. Let the reader of this passage look carefully into the scope and teaching of this scripture as a whole and ascertain for himself what sort of "resurrection" is spoken of, in which some "lived" and reigned with Christ a thousand years, and "the rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years are finished."

Note further that if our being "raised together with Christ" out of our spiritual death, when we were dead in trespasses and sins was "the first resurrection," then by the same principle would the spiritual death out of which we were raised, be the first death. And it would follow that the second death would in that case be any man's natural decease. Such reasoning is palpably wrong. The Word of God tells us that "the second death is the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15). Neither our spiritual death nor our spiritual resurrection is in view in Revelation 20. He is there speaking of something different. When he uses the terms "the first resurrection" and "second death," he speaks of an actual resurrection, and of another death which comes after the natural death.

Let us look more closely. Among those who are raised in the first resurrection special mention is given to a class who had been "beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God" (Rev. 20:4). But if (as some think) the first resurrection is that in which a man is raised up out of spiritual death—is it not strange that the "spiritual death" out of which these parties were raised is said to be due to their being beheaded for Jesus' sake? Spiritual death, we thought, was due to trespasses and sins. But here our spiritualizing friends show us that the spiritual death out of which men are spiritually raised by the first resurrection may have been caused by their being beheaded for the testimony of Jesus!

It is further common among those who by "figurative interpretation" would wipe out the meaning of the 20th chapter of Revelation, to make the "thousand years" designate any period of time, short or long, as it may suit their notion and theory. Now it is not denied that the term "a thousand years" may have a figurative or adaptive sense, in the Revelation or anywhere else where it may oc-

cur. But it is denied that we have a right to say that the term "thousand years" is figurative and means something other than a thousand years, unless we can show "good reason" is something better than merely that it would fit better into our scheme of things. Now whether the 1000 years is exactly 1000 years matters little in itself. But the principle involved is important. We cannot consent to any highhanded changing of the word of God.

Another thing the "figurizers" must explain away by the exegetical methods is the "binding of Satan" (Rev. 20:1-3). Some of them claim that Satan is already bound. Which raises the question in all minds just what he would do if he were loose! Also how it is that (as Peter tells us, 1 Pet. 5:8) Satan is going about "seeking whom he may devour." We are told that he is bound so that he *may not* devour any who are *Christ's*. Strange sort of binding! He can and does then devour the countless millions of the earth, the few souls who are true to Jesus only excepted. Yes, these Christians are the ones who are especially warned against the devouring power of Satan; and these are the ones too, who are most sadly harassed, distressed, oppressed, and often (also, too often) overcome by him. Yet he is bound! That surely is a strange and unsatisfactory sort of binding. But if it were granted that Satan is even now relatively bound, is he also *imprisoned*? For in Revelation 20, he is entirely removed and imprisoned. And is his prison "the pit of the abyss," *sealed* over him so that he cannot deceive the nations any more? Surely the Revelation must be very figurative indeed to allow for such assertions!

Another thing that must be very figuratively interpreted by those who cannot take Revelation 20 as it stands, is the Reign of the Saints with Christ. We are informed to our amazement that we (Christians) are reigning with Christ *now*. It is surely a peculiar sort of reign; for how those who are said to be sharing Christ's reproach, His sufferings, His rejection, and His cross are *now reigning* with Him, it takes a skillful and astute "interpreter" (not to say a juggler with words) to show. We common folk find difficulty in taking that in. Most of us are under the impression that that promise is yet before us. After the cross (so we thought) comes the crown (2 Tim. 4:8). To the church in Thyatira (Rev. 2:27, 28) and to the church in Laodicea (Rev. 3:21) the Lord made such promise on condition that they "overcome," and "Keep my words to the end." Paul, in his affliction, rebukes the careless Christians who imagined that they were reigning already. "Already are ye filled, already ye are become rich, ye have come to reign without us: yea, and I would that ye did reign, that we also might reign with you" (1 Cor. 4:8).

In contrast with the tangle of such far-fetched spiritualizings, we would commend to the reader the simple and reasonable language of Revelation 20. I think we can afford to lay down our theological prepossessions and predilections, and humbly give God credit for



meaning what He said and saying what He meant. May I conclude with a quotation from the learned and able Dean Alford, which carries its own endorsement in its good sense and faithfulness to the Word of God.

“As regards the text itself (Rev. 20:1-6) no legitimate treatment of it will excuse what is known as the spiritual interpretation now in fashion. If, in a passage where two resurrections are mentioned, where certain souls lived at the first, and the rest of the dead lived only at the end of a specified period after the first—if in such a passage the first resurrection may be understood to mean spiritual rising with Christ, while the second means literal rising from the grave—then there is an end of all significance in language, and Scripture is wiped out as a definite testimony to anything. If the first resurrection is spiritual then so is the second, which I suppose none will be hardy enough to maintain; but if the second is literal, then so is the first, which in common with the whole primitive Church and many of the best modern expositors, I do maintain and receive as an article of faith and hope.”

---

## We Await a Savior

It is not for a sign we are watching,  
For wonders above and below,  
The pouring of vials of judgment,  
The sounding of trumpets of woe.

It is not for a day we are looking,  
Nor even a time yet to be  
When the earth shall be filled with God's glory  
As the waters cover the sea.

We wait for the Lord, our Beloved,  
Our Comforter, Master, and Friend,  
The substance of all that we hope for,  
Beginning of faith and its end.

We watch for our Savior, our Bridegroom,  
Who loved us and made us His own;  
For Him we are looking and longing—  
For Jesus and Jesus alone.

—Annie Johnson Flint

Did Ezekiel see a UFO? Don't let a current best seller take you in, warns Edwin M. Yamauchi.

## 'Chariots' Is Just So Much Humbug

Would you believe that thousands of years ago astronauts from Mars visited the earth—and while they were with us constructed the Great Pyramid of Cheops in Egypt? Or that the chariot Ezekiel saw in his vision was a prehistoric spaceship?

These and other incredible theories and even more incredible substantiating "evidences") are set forth in two recent best sellers by a young Swiss writer, Erich von Daniken. His *Chariots of the Gods?* (Bantam) has been issued in 21 printings in two years, with 7 printings in January, 1973, alone! His sequel, *Gods from Outer Space* (Bantam) has been issued in 9 printings in less than a year. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* listed Daniken's two books in the list of the top ten sold in university bookstores in the spring of 1973.

Interest in the space program and in Unidentified Flying Objects has created this large, international audience for Daniken's attempts to interpret ancient myths from a modern, space-oriented view. An NBC special, "In Search of Ancient Astronauts," narrated by Rod Serling, acquainted millions of Americans with his ideas. This past August Skylab II astronauts Bean, Garriot and Lousma took photos of the Nazca plains in Peru which Daniken explains as a landing field marked out for ancient astronauts. Many credible scholars are seriously considering the real possibility of life on other planets.

However, "Erich von Daniken is not a scholar." So states a prefatory introduction to the author in *Gods from Outer Space*. It goes on to say that he is "an autodidact, which the dictionary defines as a man who is self-taught." The author is further described as "completely free from all prejudices."

As a matter of fact, though the author is free from even an elementary orientation to ancient history, he is quite prejudiced against archaeological scholars. He debunks their work as a matter of sticking "a couple of potsherds together" and says, "Obviously we shall not find proofs of my assertion(s) on the earth if we stick to existing methods of archaeological investigation."

He has therefore invented new, unfettered methods dependent solely upon his fertile imagination. Arguing from the fulfillment of the science fiction of Jules Verne, he feels justified in retrojecting science fiction in the place of mythology and history.

What has been the fruit of Daniken's imagination?

The author assumes as beyond doubt the existence of extraterrestrial life. He estimates that at the very least there must be at least

Dr. Yamauchi is professor of history at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. He is a specialist in ancient history and has written several books including *The Stones and the Scriptures* (Lippincott) and *Pre-Christian Gnosticism* (Eerdmans).

180 inhabited planets. In his own words:

. . . astronauts from distant planets visited the earth thousands of years ago. We know that our ingenuous and primitive forefathers did not know what to make of the astronauts' superior technology. They worshipped the astronauts as "gods" who came from other stars, and the astronauts had no choice but to accept their adoration as divinities. . .

Seizing upon the speculations of Immanuel Velikovsky, Daniken suggests that the "star" from which the giant astronauts came may perhaps have been Mars.

As proofs for his thesis Daniken cites two kinds of evidences: 1) gigantic monuments and markings, 2) ancient representations and myths (including the Scriptures).

Daniken argues that such gigantic structures as the Great Pyramid of Cheops in Egypt and the mysterious statues of Easter Island could not have been erected by human hands but must have been created by visitors from outer space. Various representations of mythological creatures from both the Old World and the New World are interpreted as ancient renditions of astronauts.

Such diverse religious and mythological texts as the Sanskrit Mahabharata, the Tibetan Book of Dzian, the Jewish Cabbalistic Zohar, and the Scriptures are mined for statements which, by stretching one's imagination, are to be viewed as references to planetary visitors (rather than to gods or supernatural beings). For instance, the vision of the chariot in Ezek. 10:1-19 is viewed as a prehistoric spaceship; the angels who saved Lot must have been robots. Jacob's vision of the heavenly ladder or staircase (Gen. 28:12) may have been an eye-witness account of the servants of God loading goods into a spaceship. Psa. 104:3-4 (cf. Mic. 1:3-4), is viewed as "an enthusiastic account of the landing of a spaceship."

Daniken stresses that:

The Pentateuch, which has . . . supplied me with such a wealth of illustrative material about the means of locomotion of the galactic supermen of primitive times, is a mine of information for my theory, so long as the texts are read imaginatively, with the eyes of a man living in the age of space travel.

Particularly novel is Daniken's attempt to reinterpret both the biblical and scientific accounts of man's origins. The creation of Adam and the "sudden" appearance of *Homo sapiens* between 40,000 and 20,000 B.C. are ascribed to an artificial mutation induced by planetary "gods." The creation of Eve may have been achieved by using a rib as a retort and Adam's marrow as a cell culture.

The fall of man and original sin are considered to be man's lapse into mating with animals. The second invasion of the "gods" between 7,000 and 3,500 B.C. destroyed the hybrid animal men, and resulted in the creation of new men by a second mutation.

What shall we say of Daniken's daring and ingenious theories? No matter how appealing they may be to the uninformed reader, his



suggestions are incredibly wild speculations without any factual basis. (For further reading, a popular paperback refutation of Daniken's first work has been written by Clifford Wilson, *Crash Go the Chariots*, Lancer Books.)

His remarks about Egypt and the Egyptians betray ignorance about even the most elementary facts. For example, in *Chariots* he asks; "Did the Egyptians learn the possibility of mummification from nature?" implying that they must have learned it from superhuman sources. We have clear evidence that their extraordinarily dry climate led the Egyptians even in prehistoric times to preserve the bodies of the dead. (Cf. M. Murray, "Burial Customs and Beliefs in the Hereafter in Predynastic Egypt," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 42, 1956, pp. 86-95.)

In order to prove that the Great Pyramid of Cheops was not the work of humans but the creation of planetary giants, Daniken raises the following objections:

1. *The location of the pyramid on the west bank of the Nile.* "In the first case it would certainly have been more practical to locate the building site nearer the eastern quarries in order to shorten transport distances . . ."

2. *The technology of the pyramid's construction.* The precise fitting of the stones, the number and weight of the stones, etc. are attributed to superhuman efforts.

3. *The lack of wood for rollers on which to drag the stones.* "Did the Egyptians import wood? In order to import wood there must have been a sizable fleet, . . ."

4. *The time required for the construction.* "If the industrious workers had achieved the extraordinary daily piece rate of ten blocks piled on top of each other, they would have assembled the 2,600,000 stone blocks into the magnificent stone pyramid in about 250,000 days—664 years."

Daniken's arguments are entirely misinformed and fallacious:

1. Not only Cheop's Great Pyramid, but all of the 80 some pyramids and almost all burials were located on the west bank of the Nile because the Egyptians viewed the setting of the sun in the west as the land of the dead.

2. Though the technology of the Great Pyramid is admirable and marvelous to behold, it is hardly suprahuman. The art of working very hard stone was already known to the Egyptians in the Predynastic period. As early as the 1st Dynasty (3100 B.C.) the Egyptians had copper saws which could cut any kind of limestone. The great mass of stones in the Giza pyramids consists of limestone which is easily quarried. (A. Lucas, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries*, Edward Arnold, 4th ed., 1962, pp. 54-57, 61, 236.)

3. Sneferu, the father of Cheops, did, as a matter of fact, send a fleet of 40 ships to import coniferous timber from Phoenicia (J.

Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, Princeton University Press, 1955, p. 227).

4. Daniken's estimate of the time necessary to construct the Great Pyramid is ridiculously high. The granite roof slab weighed 50 tons, but most of the stones averaged two and a half tons each. We have a relief of a crew of 172 workmen dragging a heavy colossus weighing about 60 tons on a sledge. A block of over two tons could have been handled by a gang of eight men. Therefore a work force of 100,000 men could have moved 115,000 blocks by working only three months out of each year. At that rate Herodotus' estimate of 20 years for the erection of the more than two million blocks is quite conceivable, and would fall in the range of Cheop's reign of 23 years. (I. Edwards, *The Pyramids of Egypt*, Penguin, 1961, p. 282.)

In spite of these authoritative estimates, it is probable that Daniken will not be persuaded. For, even in view of Thor Heyerdahl's demonstration that a huge Easter Island statue weighing about 25 tons could be erected by present-day inhabitants, he has not changed his views.

Daniken's misuse of evidence from Mesopotamia borders on madness. Cylinder seals (a principal source of historical records from Mesopotamia) often associate the ancient gods with the stars. To Daniken, this is evidence that the Mesopotamians thought their gods were from outer space.

But for the Mesopotamians, as for many others, it was the most natural thing to associate the gods with the stars. Their cuneiform sign for "god" originally meant star, but it certainly did not mean that the gods were astral visitors.

The poisonous breath which slew Enkidu in the Gilgamesh Epic (containing the famous Sumerian account of creation) is interpreted by Daniken as nuclear radiation. The monster Chuwawa is interpreted as a robot. Even a cursory reading of the Gilgamesh Epic would dispel such absurd notions. (Cf. A. Heidel, *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels*, University of Chicago Press.)

Blind to the transparent message of the Bible, Daniken is able to perceive science fiction images scattered throughout the Scriptures. We may agree that there are evidences of the supernatural in the Scriptures and that man has received suprahuman revelations. But we need not resort to far-fetched theories of extraterrestrial astronauts.

Instead, as Christians we have a transcendent God who revealed His ways to man and sent His Son from beyond outer space to visit the earth. It is in this sense that we are, in the great phrase of J. B. Phillips, the "invaded planet."

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## Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

Most Christians that I know just seem to accept insurance as a part of modern life and do not seem to question whether it is right or wrong. Doesn't insurance represent a lack of faith?—Will not God take care of His own?

It is right for us to examine every facet of our life to be sure we have not accepted uncritically some of the ways of the devil. It should be evident that the old enemy of our souls will slip up on our back side if he can. As to insurance, I do not believe it *necessarily* represents a lack of faith, but there are some aspects of its use that deserve examination.

Insurance is wrong for the man who believes it to be wrong. The principle that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23) covers this as well as many other matters in the Christian's life. The man for whom insurance represents a violation of conscience had better leave it alone or else examine the word of God to see if he has needlessly bound his conscience. A number of years ago I worked with a young man who was to receive without cost to him some insurance as a fringe benefit of his job. He turned it down as a matter of conscience. I could respect him highly for his integrity, though I still believe he was guilty of shallow thinking.

It is very possible for people to trust too fully in insurance. A part of the charge to Timothy was the admonition to charge men not to have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches (1 Tim. 6:9-10, 17-19). Insurance represents a potential form of riches. Men can easily do as the rich farmer that Jesus spoke of (Luke 12:15-21). They can build an insurance program so complete that they are inclined to view life in a very godless way. Few events can befall them for which they are not prepared financially. They don't need God (so they feel), for come what may they are protected. To be sure, insurance is wrong when it makes us feel independent of God or when it does indeed occupy the place in our faith that belongs to God.

Likely most Christians regard insurance as nothing more than a prudent use of one's temporal goods. Most of us cannot insure against every possible loss, but we may try to act wisely to provide for our own (1 Tim. 5:8), according to the opportunities afforded to us today. We realize that the will of God may not



be so specific in our lives as to exempt us from some of the common experiences of man. While God overrules all things for our good (Rom. 8:28), He does not make us robots and does not always deliver us from the results of our folly. We must not surmise that somehow faith in God removes proper human responsibility.

I remember my mother telling of a woman who came to her door begging, who was given some food my mother had canned. Having received the food, the woman proceeded to declare she did not believe in canning because the Bible taught us "we are to let every day take care of itself." My mother had "insured" against a possible need during the winter, while the other had not, but the latter had no scruples about enjoying the benefit of my mother's efforts. I suspect that blind, unconditional opposition to insurance partakes of some of the same sort of fuzzy thinking.

The American Standard rendering of Matthew 6:25 and 6:31 with "Be not anxious" is a much better translation than the King James, "Take no thought." Of course we are to take thought for the morrow, else we would quit our jobs, refuse to educate our children, even make no plans in the Lord's work. There is a considerable difference between being anxious and taking no thought whatsoever. Anxiety is an undue concern, generally gloomy and pessimistic, full of fear. The difference in these two expressions probably represents a difference of great importance concerning insurance. Insurance which represents wise taking thought of the morrow is not God-dishonoring; in fact, it can be good stewardship. Insurance which represents mere human effort to curb anxiety and which betrays a fearfulness that God's promises cannot be counted on is God-dishonoring.

Will not God take care of His own? Of course He will. This does not mean, however, that He has taken from us the responsibility for the judicious use of the opportunities and blessings which have been bestowed on us.

In practice, the decision as to how much or what kind of insurance to have is not always an easy one. Certainly we can destroy good we ought to be doing now by a pouring of too many funds into insurance. Nor is it always evident at what point one ceases trusting the Lord and begins trusting insurance. But let us be aware of the danger that is there and of its nature. As with a number of modern "conveniences" the good or the bad is largely determined by how we use the item.

But is not insurance a form of gambling, someone asks. Not really. Some types of policies may offer more in return than others, but all involve an obligation on the part of the company and there is a certain value given for funds received even when there is no loss. All which involves an element of chance is not to be regarded as gambling (see last month's question on this topic).

## How can my life count for more for the Lord?

Surely this question is the cry of the heart of every one who truly loves the Lord and His work. We look at what we are able to accomplish, and we fall so far short of what we would like to do. Sometimes there is not only the cry of the spiritual man but also the cry of the flesh. Many of us are still enough dominated by the flesh that we would like to be one of the Lord's great ones; we'd like to show off just a little to the world how important we are to the Lord. It may be that this latter concern sometimes blinds us to what our life is accomplishing for the Lord. Now, be sure that at best we are unprofitable servants. There is no room for false pride. But many a life is likely accomplishing more for the Lord than is readily recognized. We sometimes see the Christian's failures and do not see his successes. The Christian who quietly bears a heavy burden with courage and faith may be counting for more than he realizes. The one who stands for moral values and spiritual truth against the current of an ungodly world may be far more important than he seems to be. The quiet testimony of an honorable life may be having a greater impact on the world than other more spectacular things. Most of us serve the Lord in the commonplace things of life, and we must not suppose this to be insignificant. Sometimes we Christians are like the faithful wife and mother who dismisses her vital achievements with the declaration that "I am *just a housewife*." They also serve who get little recognition from their fellows and who seldom make the headlines.

Still, the question is a valid one, and the desire can be prompted by high and holy reasons.

You will recall that, in John 15, the Lord makes fruit bearing a matter of abiding in Him. Nothing worthwhile can be accomplished for the Lord without our abiding in Him. It follows that whatever in my life arises from rebellion to Him or marks a refusal to abide in Him will hinder my usefulness and fruit bearing. To change the figure, the clay submitted to the Potter's will is that which can be molded into the most useful vessel. *Submission* is a key word in fruit bearing. We are to be vessels in and through which He can act in the world. Prayerful dependence on Him, not on our own human strengths and abilities, is surely a part of this submission. The fruit of the Spirit is most fully borne in the life submitted to the Spirit.

*Faithfulness* is another key-word. Jesus pointed out that the servant who is faithful in small matters is the one who is given opportunity in greater things (Luke 16:10-12). We sometimes wait for the big things and scorn the so-called little things or else half-perform them. Some will attend the Bible classes if they can be teachers, but not if they only hold up the hands of the teacher. Some want to be leaders who are not faithful to the simple matter of assembling with the saints. Men may often abuse the prin-

ciple, but God gives greater tasks to those who have shown themselves faithful in the lesser things. Whatever our hands find to do for Him should be done with all our might, never half-heartedly.

Of course *preparation* is another important matter for the Christian's greater usefulness. Our Lord often prepares men when He needs them by special conditions and experiences. There are the Moseses, the Peters, and the Pauls. In a sense He does this work in every life. But there is a preparation we should seek through the more normal channels. His word is given to make us complete men of God furnished completely unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Greater understanding and study of the word will tend to make me a more useful servant. We live in a day when opportunities for related preparation abound—good books and religious literature, the teaching program of the local church, seminars, Bible schools and colleges, etc. Our abilities are from the Lord, but we can sharpen and develop them. And we will find the time to do so when we sufficiently value the preparation.

7110 Bruton Road, Dallas, Texas 75217



## *Missions: Sunset or Sunrise?*

Alex V. Wilson

(Second of Two Articles)

"All missions to date are simply an *introduction* to the great missions about to be carried on. The prologue is over; the play is about to begin. *Far from the missionary era drawing to a close, it is about to surge forward* in new forms which fit the new world." That statement is not the wild forecast of some palmreading crackpot, nor the unfounded hope of a gullible post-millennialist, who expects world conditions to get better and better. It is instead the considered opinion of Donald McGavran, who is conservative in his theology and probably the most knowledgeable man anywhere regarding world missions today.

But how can he be so optimistic about missions, when *one-third* of the world's people have never even *heard* the Christian message in *any* form—as we saw last month? The answer is twofold. First, McGavran and some other missionary leaders stress that when the Son of God commands His followers to do a job, He thereby pledges to provide enabling power to those who step out in faith. Divine resources are at our disposal, as we trust



and obey. Christ *ordered* His disciples to make known to all nations; He also predicted that the job will be accomplished (Matt. 24:14). "Christ never gave the slightest hint that he thought the job could not be done . . . It all comes down to this: *Either Christ was deceived in believing that the job can be done, or we have been deceived in believing that it cannot*" (Horace Fenton).

The second reason for optimism is this: in the past 30 years great strides have been made in world-evangelism and church-planting. In spite of difficulties and disappointments, the gospel has been proclaimed in ever-widening areas. Note the following facts.

### "25 Unbelievable Years"

1) There is a hymn in our songbooks entitled "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing my Great Redeemer's Praise." Charles Wesley wrote that hymn in 1738. At that time the Bible had been translated into fewer than sixty-eight languages. Today the entire New Testament has been translated into at least 568 different languages, of which at least 244 have the entire Old Testament as well. At least one book of the Bible "is available in more than 1,450 languages, which represent the languages spoken by 97% of the world's people. This is without question the greatest achievement in language communication that the world has ever known" (Warren Webster).

We saw last month that illiteracy is still a huge barrier to Bible reading, 80% of the people in Pakistan and India, for instance, could not read the Scriptures even if they had them in their own languages. Nevertheless, some mission groups plus national governments and the U.N. are making real headway in the battle against illiteracy. I have read from several sources that about a million people become literate every week! And Wilbur Smith informs us that "in Japan in 1890 only one person out of one hundred could read, but now 99% of the population is literate."

2) We must by no means think that people everywhere are waiting with open arms for the gospel, eager to become disciples of Jesus. No, no. But there are a number of wide-open doors, where large numbers of people are turning to Christ. McGavran writes, "In Taiwan the number of Christians has grown from about 30,000 in 1946 to about 700,000 in 1973. Christians now constitute over 5% of the whole." (Notice that even with the amazing number of conversions, Christians still are a small minority.) He also mentions tremendous growth in many parts of Latin America, some parts of Africa, and in South Korea and Indonesia.

3) "But what about Communist lands?" you ask. "At least a third of the world's people are under Communist domination, and awful persecutions have taken place." True enough. But Christ continues to build His church even when it is underground. For example, "In East Germany alone there are possibly several thousand

cells or small groups of believers who meet regularly. I visited seven or eight such groups. I did not preach to them, but asked them to talk to me. I sensed the extraordinary intensity and power of their Christian faith" (Sidney Correll). Various books are available telling of the dangerous, lonely road which our brothers and sisters in Communist lands must walk. But the Lord is still alive and working, sometimes in fantastic ways. (See the article in this *Word and Work* entitled "Bamboo Curtains Can't Keep Out God").

4) Radio and Television: A few examples will suffice to show the obvious potential of these media. On the "Words of Life" program, Brother Robert Boyd speaks from Louisville and is heard in thirty different states and in Canada. The Far East Broadcasting Company in the Philippines broadcasts in over forty languages to all Asia, including Red China and Russia. For some years Brother Victor Broaddus had a broadcast in the Cantonese language which F.E.B.C. beamed into China. Between 1875 and 1900 it is estimated that the evangelist Dwight L. Moody spoke to more people than any president, premier, king, actor or lecturer. And yet Wilbur Smith asserts that "Billy Graham, in a single televised broadcast of one evening of his crusades, reaches more people in North America in one hour than the entire number of people to whom Mr. Moody spoke throughout his entire remarkable life."

5) A professor of missions, Ralph Winters, has written a book entitled "The 25 Unbelievable Years, 1945-1969." He points out the enormous changes in world conditions between the time that the atom bombs were dropped on Japan and the time that man first walked on the moon. According to him, in 1945 when World War II ended, 99% of the non-Western world was under the political or economic domination of the West. But by 1969, 99% of the non-Western world was independent.

In twenty-five years, four hundred years of Western colonial expansion were rolled back like a rug. Many observers prophesied that as the West retreated politically the Christian faith would decline in influence and impact on the Third World. Yet exactly the opposite has occurred. In most lands from which Western powers retreated, the Church of Jesus Christ has made significant advances in these "twenty-five unbelievable years." Today in many parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America, congregations are multiplying as never before. The Church of Jesus Christ has never been as widely planted or deeply rooted among so many peoples as it is today.

—Warren Webster, summarizing Winters' book.

Thus we conclude, Away with pessimism! Down with defeatism! The fight is on—let's go! As in any war, there are and will be hardships and casualties. Some battles may even be lost. But we know we will stand as victors when the war ends, for we follow the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Our orders are, "Evangelize the world." We know the world will never be converted, but we also know it can and shall be evangelized. Sometimes many may turn to Christ; sometimes hardly

any. But whether many or few, let us be faithful in doing our part, whatever it is. If our churches lose a vision and burden for the world, we shall dry up and wither away. How pathetic, and doubly so in this day of great opportunity. To our knees!—and to the work!

Sources: *The Christian Reader Magazine*, Feb.-March 1973 and Feb.-March 1974.  
*His Magazine*, December, 1973.  
*Prophecy In The Making* (Published by Creation House).

## Bamboo Curtains Can't Keep God Out

by Dr. Bob Finley

When Communist pressure caused American missionaries to depart from China in 1949, I joined the exodus with great reluctance. Having planned to spend the rest of my life in China, I was one frustrated missionary. Why should God allow the elaborate framework of mission apparatus to be dismantled? Why should the millions of dollars we had spent on mission institutions go down the drain? That day of departure was a time for discouragement. Gloom. Pessimism. Despair.

Today I feel just the opposite. God has taken us by surprise. He is doing a new thing in the earth, and China is included in the sweep of His Spirit.

### Putting the Puzzle Together

I began to receive regular reports from inside China soon after I left. I have been in continuous communication with many of the thousands of Chinese who come as students and visitors to Europe and North America. I have also learned much from non-Chinese who have been in and out of China during the last 20 years. When all the bits and pieces of these reports are put together, it becomes evident that our Lord has been doing a work in China that may be without parallel since the 1st century.

### Indigenous Movements Develop

At the time of the take-over, Mao Tse-tung gave the order, "There shall be no Christian martyrs." Rather than launch a frontal attack on the institutional churches, Communist functionaries pretended to be Christians, joined the churches, and took over from within. Ministers were exposed as "parasites," confined in labor camps, and taught to work for the State. Church buildings were diverted from exclusive use by members to practical purposes for the "people," in keeping with "love thy neighbor." Houses of worship were converted into granaries, warehouses, indoctrination centers or small factories.

Deprived of buildings and ministers, average Christians struggled to keep their faith alive. But some were above average. Since 1900 a large number of indigenous Christian movements had been developing in China. Leaders of these groups generally taught that Western style "social institutional churches" were un-Biblical. Watchman Nee was the most widely known to the outside world, but

hundreds of others wielded comparable influence among indigenous groups in China. All Christians in a given neighborhood should meet together, they said, but no special buildings were needed. They could meet anywhere. In a home. Barn. Boxcar. Garage. A church should be like a home, and a Christian meeting like a family gathering. Everyone should take part, exercising such gifts of grace as God may have given in accordance with Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4:7-13. Thus there was no place for ordained ministers. Communist activities had little effect on these neighborhood groups.

When the institutional churches were dismantled by Communist pressure, the followers of missionaries began to flow into house-church meetings. These noninstitutional churches have continued to spread ever since the Communist take-over. It is true that they fed on the residue of believers left over from the break-up of organized Christianity, but it is also evident that the Western form of Christianity was actually a deterrent which God graciously allowed to be moved aside.

The influx of members from the various denominational churches into the neighborhood groups brought a new spirit of life and breath to indigenous Chinese churches. Many groups that had been narrow, sectarian and exclusive were suddenly revitalized with a fresh baptism of love and power. Since the Communists eliminated denominations all true Christians have been welded together in a bond of love which they never knew before. And it is this love which makes neighborhood meetings so meaningful. They continually pray for one another. And God responds, particularly in the healing of the sick. Unimpeachable sources have reported that even some of the Communist administrators have gone to the Christians to request prayer in cases of serious illness.

But it would be foolish to surmise that the mighty moving of God's Spirit during the last 20 years has had any evident effect on the rulers or Red China. Most are unaware that it has been happening. If 3 million souls were converted through 100,000 community groups it would still affect less than half of 1 per cent of the total population.

—Excerpted from *Conquest for Christ*

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## PRIORITIES

We must use the means by which God's strength is appropriated—solitary prayer for the individual, united prayer for the Church. (Who of us has not felt the weakness, the unreality, the cowardice that spring from the lack of solitude with God? . . . *In this restless and busy age most of us live too much in public. We spend our spiritual strength and forget to renew it. We multiply activities and curtail our prayers.*) By an error of judgment, or perhaps by the subtle force of inclination, which we mistake for necessity, we work when we ought to pray—because to an active mind work is far easier than prayer. *And then God cannot bless. We lose in calmness, in depth, in strength. We grow feeble*

*and shallow; the work is done, but superficially, and will not stand.* The servant whom the Holy Spirit can use must resist the tyranny of overwork. He must resolve to be alone with God even if the hours spent with Him appear to rob his fellow-men of his service.

If today there went up to God united prayer similar to the earnest, faithful prayer of the early church—if there went up to God a cry for power—power for holiness, for service, for suffering—and along with it the necessary condition of submission to God's will, a current of spiritual life would run through the districts of our land.

—J. C. Ryle

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## Changed Lives

Asa Baber

“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled and took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. And beholding the man who was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.” These people evidently knew Peter and John personally, and now there was a change in them; it may have been in their looks, but certainly in their attitude.

Peter and John were ordinary men, but when men turn their lives over to Christ and become a part of His kingdom, the Holy Spirit takes over and great changes take place. People can see by their lives what has happened. Peter says that we become part-takers of His divine nature. Paul says we put off the old man, which is corrupt by nature, and put on the new man which is of the Spirit.

This gives us a new relationship by being added to His body, which is the Church. Paul says our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. When we have this new relationship, our thoughts change so that we think more of heavenly things and less of earthly things. And this causes our language to change; He desires of us a holy life and if the heart is changed the language will follow.

Our environment will change also. “Blessed is the man who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law doth he meditate day and night.” (Psalm 1:1-2.)

With these conditions, we can hope and look forward with great anticipation for the blessed hope and the appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ.



# Missionary Messenger

*"Greater things for God"*

## MAC LEDOUX SPONSORSHIP CHANGES

Beginning June 1, 1974, the church here in Jennings became the sponsoring church for Mac and Peggy LeDoux, missionaries in Vietnam. Both are fine Christians. They were raised here in Jennings, in the church here at Fourth and State. Mac's father was an elder here until his death. One of Mac's brothers is a deacon here and also serves the church as song leader and Bible teacher. His mother still lives and worships regularly with us. Other members of his family and Peggy's parents are also members here. Perhaps you can see why we are so happy that the Springtown Road church, who began as sponsoring church for these Christian workers, has agreed for us to take up this responsibility.

We want you to join us in this work. Give of your money as God lays it on your heart to give. But, most especially, we covet your prayers on behalf of this very great work. Many are being won to Him Who can alone salvage souls. Some of the new Vietnamese Christians are in turn being trained to take the Word to their people—and they are doing so with great alacrity. Join us in praising God!

A. J. Istre  
Vietnam Mission Fund  
P. O. Box 36  
Jennings, Louisiana 70546

Shichiro Nakahara

Shizuoka City, Japan

July 22

Bro. Dean Bixler and his family have now been back to the states for the summer months. As I understand it, they are to be back on September 4.

A few weeks ago we had a night when it rained so hard that at about one o'clock in the morning practically every creek was flooded. We were awakened by one of the neighbors whose child comes to the kindergarten where Teruko works, and both of us went to see the building. As most of the roads were waist deep and flowing like a river, we parked the car down the road and walked. Although it took us two hours to get across the flooded area we finally reached the place. We were in water up to our waists. The building looked like it was standing in the middle of a lake. We got in, but as we could do nothing about it, we returned home. The next morning, after the water was about gone, we went back to clean. An organ was ruined, and the piano

they had was wet halfway down. All the equipment was no longer usable. What a loss! I helped for two days, and Teruko had to go everyday for almost a week until everything was put in order. She finally got so sick that she lost her voice for several days, but we are thankful it is coming back now. Most of the kindergarten children's houses were found in two to three feet of water. What a mess! Forty-three people in our prefecture were found dead. Our place here was kept safe and sound, and we are so thankful for it.

Teruko has now gone to Atami with one of our Sunday school teachers to take a seminar especially provided for Sunday school teachers. The programs are specifically for audio-visual education. They are to spend four days there.

I have been busy programming the summer activities. We are expecting at least 50 campers this time, and as several young boys are thinking about making decisions for Christ, our prayers are being concentrated on each of them. After the camp I am to have a three-day evangelistic meeting in Fujiyoshida, where the blind folks are. I also have another three-day Bible camp to attend at the close of August.

Please pray that Teruko and I may have more strength and usefulness in His vineyard.

Addie Brown

Salisbury, Rhodesia

July 23

We women had such a good time this morning "around the Word." We are studying the book of Matthew now—by request. We get such a lift from our meetings, and a strong tie of love binds us together as we learn to love the Lord Jesus more and more. A few of us drove out to Tafara to visit their ladies' class recently. They had about twenty present that day.

Thomas Hartle

Cape Town, South Africa

May & June Letters

Since about a week ago we have had ten additions to our children's Bible class. These children are from the homes of parents who attended our Gospel meetings held during March. Pray that the children might be the medium through which we can reach the parents with the message of Christ.

Attendances at our regular Lord's Day services remain commendable, with many visitors coming of late. Since my last illness I have not been conducting services at the chest hospital, but I am hoping, God willing, to start there again, although I'm certain most of the old patients have been discharged. Please pray that the Lord may guide me to new ones.

Last Lord's day morning, just before the worship service, a 71-year-old blind man, Mr. Christian Beehre (who had been living without friends or relatives in an old, derelict building, but now lives with one of our church families), was baptized into Christ. That same evening, just before the invitation ended, Percival Marsh, a young man whose wife is a member of the church, came forward

to be baptized. A young lady was baptized just before midnight that night. She is Patricia Naidoo, and her parents are also church members.

Up to now we have had no further notice from the council regarding our plans for the new church building project in Hanover Park, so we are praying about the matter, asking God to undertake in His own way.

Leonard Bailey

Livingstone, Rhodesia

July 2

Bro. Velapi and I returned a few weeks ago from a trip south of Gwanda into the Tuli area. Our first visit was to Bro Pilate's place at Sibizini, where we were for four days. We had good meetings and six young people were baptized, most of them from Bro. Pilate's Sunday school class. The evenings were cold and we put up our family tent to meet in. One evening there were fifty—rather crowded!

Bro. Pilate went with us on to Nhwale where we visited with the Christians and held meetings afternoon and evening for three days. At Manchuchuta, our next stop, we spent four days. Some of the Christians there have gone across the border into South Africa to work and others have fallen away so the meetings were small, 29 being the highest attendance. On our way home we spent one night at Dendele where Bro. Nkala preaches.

That the Lord's blessing be with each one is our prayer. Please remember us in your prayers.

Elaine Brittell

Livingstone, Zambia

June 29

The Hobbys are in Livingstone, which is 18 miles from Sinde. I see them each time I go to town. Brother Hobby is the chairman of Team 1 of the Tonga Bible program, and he will check the final copy before it goes to the printers.

Last word I had from Daddy he wasn't well—had been in the hospital again. Please pray God will comfort Daddy and guide him safely home to Glory—the place he has prepared to go to—each day looking forward to hearing our Savior call "Welcome Home."

Dennis Allen

Hong Kong

July 20

A brother from the Philippines returned several weeks ago from a visit to China. He had wanted to go to Peking and other places but was not allowed because of the current unrest there. He said there are no churches open in Canton. They are now being used for other purposes. We know there are still Christians there, but they must meet secretly and in small groups. Also, there are quite a few who listen to the radio broadcasts. Refugees still continue to come out in larger numbers than previously.

A few weeks ago I started an English class for some refugees who have recently come out of China and have shown an interest in spiritual things. We felt this would give us added contact

with them and assure them of our interest in their other needs. The class meets two evenings a week.

We had a record attendance at the English Bible class last evening—15. The English conversation classes started a few weeks ago have also been well attended. Ten of these students have enrolled for an English Bible correspondence course.

Another of our young men has gone to the States to study since we last wrote. One of the girls who married and went to the States wrote that she and her husband who is not yet a Christian are reading the Bible together. She says he does not oppose her being a Christian and is very good to her. Two of the girls in the Church are really being pressed by their parents to get married. It's a real problem for them.

Our summer camp for the young people is to last five days and our best helpers won't be available this year. We trust the Lord will enable and provide.

The children got good results on their year's work, which we felt was well deserved as they had all worked unusually hard.

Joy Garrett

Salisbury, Rhodesia

July 18

Over our Rhodes and Founders holiday (July 5-9) we had our Women's Bible Camp meeting. On Friday night Bob gave the opening message on leadership. All of Saturday morning, until 1 p.m., I talked on a diligent Christian woman and then on a negligent one. Mother Garrett spoke in the afternoon on a Christian woman leader. There were 110 mothers there and almost as many babies and small children. On Sunday there were even more. The men not only paid for the food, but cooked it. It was quite an effort to fix accommodations there at the church for that number. Singing, teaching by African women, answering of questions, and prayers continued until the small hours of the morning. Mother and I again taught on Monday. Excellent sermons by Bro. Simon Nheweyembwa and Bob were given on Sunday when the men and children of Harare church were present. One woman from Glen Norah was baptized. At least half of the women diligently took notes—many of these are teachers back in their home congregations.

Donald Harris

Salisbury, Rhodesia

July 22

We have been very busy lately. The flu has taken its toll around here, and even I was down for a time. I have spent a great deal of time taking different children to the doctor and this afternoon I have to take our youngest girl, for we fear she may have some kidney problems or something.

The need for another children's home is more apparent as time goes by. Bro. Jack Jones of Arcadia Church has appealed to me for three more boys to come into the home, as there is no other place for them. After prayer and much thought expressing our desires to the Lord, we partitioned off one corner of the garage to allow for a garden shed, moved the work bench and other work items to

the other side of the garage and used the back of the garage for storage space. This vacated the storeroom, so we moved my office from the house to the storeroom. Lord willing, come vacation time from school, I will do a bit of fixing to make it a bit more "officy."

At any rate, we now have twelve boys and eight girls in the home, twenty in all. Bro. Robert Garrett and I have planned, Lord willing, to build the new home to house twenty-four. Matt. 19:14, Mark 10:14, and Luke 18:16 state that Jesus says to allow the children to come to Him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. What a great opportunity we have in this life to be used of our Savior and Lord. May God's richest blessings be upon all who deeply love all children.

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## *Viewing the News*

A JUDGE in California's Sonoma County has ruled as unconstitutional a kindergarten song, which ends with the line, "Thank you God, for everything." Superior Court Judge Joseph Murphy said the school board of the community of Rohnert Park was wrong in permitting students to sing the song because it did not maintain the required separation of church and state. Since the Constitution of the United States can not reasonably be interpreted to give such a meaning, it is difficult to understand what is meant by "the required separation of church and state."

SOME CHURCHES, according to news stories, are enticing children to go to Sunday School in their buses by giving them candy! Numbers of bodies present seem to make such a tremendous difference to some people. But others are too satisfied to see the numbers decreasing with no real effort at winning others to Christ.

THE NEW federal minimum wage law has cut out at least 6,000 student jobs in vacation resorts in Pennsylvania's Pocono Mountains in spite of the fact that there has been an increase in attendance at the resorts.

Remember that, the next time you applaud an increase in the unconstitutional minimum wage laws.

JAMES RESTON, the "liberal" editor of some sort for the *New York Times*, has said an interesting thing: "The world is now being run by communist governments that rule by fear and force, and by non-communist governments that do not have the confidence of the majority of the people." I would say that Rhodesia and South Africa are possibly exceptions to the latter part, but I have not been in either country.

"LIBERAL" sources often confound the liberal world. Drs. Herman Bormann of Yale and Gene Likens of Cornell, research ecologists, have made investigations that lead them to say that "anti-pollution devices being installed in smokestacks around the world are causing rain to turn to acid." Their conclusion is that the human-made acid rain is probably slowing down the growth of forests, shrinking the size of plants and shrubs, and even killing fish. This reminds me that while some "experts" are crying for more and more anti-pollution devices on cars, devices which increase



the consumption of gas, others are crying for us to cut down on the use of gas. A confusing world? Of course it is, for "the whole world lieth in the evil one."

I WARNED, a warning voiced by many, that the abortion laws would be followed by attempts at killing off "undesirable" adults. A Florida legislator has proposed a "death with dignity law" that would condemn to death hundreds of mentally retarded and ill in that state. He has been quoted as saying that he "hopes to see the day when society will kill off all children in early infancy who suffer from severe physical or mental handicaps that are disturbing to others." (Quote from the news article). The July-August issue of *The Humanist* is reportedly devoted almost entirely to propaganda for euthanasia. In one of the articles three winners of Nobel Prizes sign the plea for euthanasia.

THE FEDERAL Trade Commission has unanimously decided to outlaw all television advertising that is aimed at children if they offer toys, games, or prizes to encourage sales of the product! They continue to protect you from yourself.

A MATTER of much concern to many overseas missions is the exorbitant increase in utility costs. For example, the Far East Broadcasting Co. office in Manila had its electrical rates increased in April of this year from about \$4,600 to \$18,400 a month. ELWA in Monrovia, Liberia, says their general operating costs have risen 50 per cent since 1970 and they are now faced with an additional \$20,000 increase for electricity. A further unexpected rise has added another \$10,000 in electricity costs for 1974. A mission spokesman said of ELWA something that is true of many such works for the Lord: "Only a miraculous provision will save ELWA this year."

AN INTERESTING sidelight to the attempt to impeach the President is that not one member of the House Judiciary Committee has suggested that Federal Judge Otto Kerner be impeached in spite of the fact that he has begun serving a prison term for mail fraud, tax evasion, conspiracy, and perjury. Judge Kerner has continued to receive his \$42,500 salary

since his 1971 indictment without working and will continue to receive it in prison and return to his job afterwards unless impeached or unless he dies or resigns!

IN CASE you believe that all things that profess to be "church" organizations are what they claim, read this quote from the leader of the Ecumenical Institute in Chicago: "Let any church send us thirty laymen for a weekend and we will send back 29 awakened revolutionaries."

THE NCC (National Council of Churches) has had a vast turnover for the worse (assuming that it could be worse.) In June six of the executives were fired. They had between them devoted more than a century of service to the N.C.C. The new General Secretary, Miss Claire Randall, reportedly a "red hot woman's libber," fired them. Other firings down the line have occurred, some of them of the most competent men in their administrative fields.

THE UNIFICATION CHURCH and its head, "Rev." Myung Moon, continue to get lots of publicity. They are very active in Louisville from their present headquarters on Cherokee Road. Mr. Moon, you may recall, is the man who claims he is the reincarnation of Jesus Christ returning to complete his unfinished work. The group is accused of championing astral projection, clairvoyance, telepathy, communication with the dead, as well as reincarnation. The members need to be won to the true Christ.

A RECENT publication quotes Nobel laureate James Watson as proposing in an A.M.A. (American Medical Association) publication that no one "be thought of as alive until about three days after birth" so those with "defects" might be liquidated!

REVIVALS SEEM TO BE in some other countries. In Bolivia I hear of reports of 40 to 70 thousand people in meetings to hear Gospel preaching. In Brazil 3000 new evangelical churches are said to have sprung up last year. In Kenya Christianity is reportedly growing at an unprecedented rate so that 68 per cent of that African nation are now reported as at least nominal church members.

THE WORLD HOME Bible League is stocking motel rooms with Bibles and encouraging the occupants to "swipe" the Bibles. They want them taken home and then the recipients are encouraged to write for Bible courses. The effort seems to be making good headway.

THE LUTHERAN Church Missouri Synod is still in great danger of a split. Some of the churches are likely to ordain the graduates of the Concordia seminary in exile (called "Semines") in spite of the fact that the ruling group of the denomination has said they can not be ordained. For ordination in the group you must be a graduate of an approved seminary.

NORTH KOREA, the communist part of that unfortunate country, is advertising in foreign newspapers over the world, including Zambia and Sweden, Indonesia and the U.S., and points in between. Don't be fooled with their ads. If you see one, send it to me, please.

CHILDREN of parents in the Hindu religion Hare Krishna are taken from their homes and sent to schools until 15, schools run by the cult in various places. There is one in Dallas, Texas, for example. One of the most prominent converts to that strange religion was George Harrison, one of the "Beatles." He has added enormously to the funds of the group by gifts and by putting out the Hare Krishna Mantra LP.

DID YOU SEE the article by Geo. Cornell (AP) stating that construction is to start soon on a big temple in Jerusalem? It will be close to, but not exactly on the spot of the original temple. Cornell was convinced that the substitute temple will be built soon.

A CANDIDATE for re-election to the Michigan House is raising money for his political campaign by showing the obscene X-rated movie, "Deep Throat." The politician has acknowledged using marijuana and once smoked it at a public rally and has urged the removal of criminal sentences on the use of marijuana.

PREDICTIONS of national and world-wide depressions are being made by responsible people in high

places. Will the Christians over the world be ready for the change of life styles that will be necessary so they can give a living witness against materialism? Or will many find themselves disastrously shaken in their faith and losing their witness?

THE DANGER of evangelicals establishing richly-endowed seminaries shows up once again in Fuller Seminary's Paul Jewett, writing in *The Reformed Journal* (May-June). In the article he speaks out for women's lib and against Biblical inspiration by saying "surely the apostle's attitude reflects the historical limitations of his times." Apparently Mr. Jewett does not believe 2 Corinthians 2—and many other passages.

THE NATIONAL PRESBYTERIAN Church, the new conservative group that broke off from the Southern Presbyterians, continues to grow with over 300 congregations now in the group and over 55,000 members and 13 missionaries.

A CONCERT in New York City in May was given for the benefit of Chilean Communists. Among the sponsors of the program were a man from the NCC, a drama critic of the *New York Times*, a U.S. Representative from California, and other prominent people. A news item on the concert said that all profits were "channeled through the National Council of Churches."

CONTROL OVER Jerusalem is still the most difficult issue facing world diplomats working for "peace" in their time. Israel will not allow anyone to visit without having Israeli visas stamped on their passports. Arab Moslems usually refuse. But since from 1948-1967 Jews were barred completely from visiting their "holy places" there, Israel seems to be adamant on this. We need even more to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem."

THE CATHOLIC World is being stirred by the German Catholic theologian Hans Kung, who "shot down" papal infallibility in his controversial book *Infallible?* and who refuses so far to recant.

CHRISTIAN Crusade Weekly said that according to the Associated Press on June 19, HEW (The Department of Health, Education and Welfare of

our national government) announced that grade school boys and girls will be required to attend sex education classes together. The ruling also says that elementary and secondary schools will not be allowed to separate the sexes in physical education classes as well, but they can provide separate showers in physical education. How long do you think the latter ruling will hold up under the attacks of women's lib and the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union)?

THE ASSEMBLIES Of God are growing much faster in other countries than in the U.S.A. The Assemblies now have 1102 missionaries in 92 countries and almost four million members abroad compared to 752,000 in this country. An A/G official says that their overseas church has doubled in size in the past seven years and had doubled in the seven years before that. Domestic membership is up

6 per cent.

COURT DECISIONS in Tennessee against United Methodist and Southern Baptist publishing firms may be very costly to religious firms. The court ruled, according to Ben Kaufman, that only these activities are tax-exempt: publishing and printing materials for distribution to members of the parent denomination or to be used in specific programs of the parent denominational organization. Everything else, even if on a religious subject or for other churches, is liable to the taxes. This could open up quite a bit of trouble in other states and in other groups.

MANY THANKS for your continued encouragement and your news clippings. Keep them coming to:

Ernest E. Lyon, 2629 Valletta Road, Louisville, Ky. 40205.

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## Musing Upon Death

Mrs. Paul J. Knecht

"I live between two graveyards  
Where many bodies lie  
And oft I think upon it  
For we all have to die."

This is the first verse of a poem written on the day of this writer's birth by her twelve year old sister. (Her father was caretaker for one cemetery, and perhaps for the other.) The rest of the poem is lost but this will suffice to strengthen my point that at all ages people have thoughts of death from time to time. As for the infant born that day late in 1900—when she grew old enough to know something of death she soon reached the place where she wished she had never been born because she had to die sometime. This in spite of the fact that the coming of the Lord was then taught in the little church where the whole family went to worship at every service. But she could see that people around her died though none in her immediate family passed on for about forty years. Still the thought of death was real and palpable, while the coming of the Lord, which requires faith in the unseen, was somewhat nebulous and far away in her young mind.

School days and other childhood activities kept the thought of death somewhat in abeyance. But "every once in a while"—(Neither

in her childhood nor in all the years since has she been able to determine the length of "a while" nor count how many "once's there are in one)—but just the same every once in a while she would think of death with inward, uncommunicable fear that shadowed what otherwise were carefree happy childhood days. Always at such times there was the thought of death that must be faced some day.

Strangely enough her illnesses had nothing to do with it. They were happy times with no thought of a fatal ending. At such times she was the center of special care and attention. Loving, tender hands cared for her and nothing she needed or desires was too much for parents who had known the heartache of giving up their firstborn and who relived the poignant grief of that time whenever a later child fell ill.

But God was mindful of this child whose fears were inarticulate to other humans, yet well known to Him. When she became a young woman she remembers exactly—not the date, but—the fact that one day as she walked along Central Avenue (Cincinnati) a sudden thought in connection with death hit her forcibly. It was this: "We call it going home, but if it is to mean that to me, I must be homesick with longing to go." In later life she took care of more than one person who was crossing over into eternity. Moreover, she stood with her mother at the bedside of her father in his last moments and was present at her Mother's funeral.

But it was a dearly loved much older sister in the Lord whom God used to bless her by putting her in a position to have the help she needed in overcoming this fear of death. The sister was slipping away and suddenly the watcher at her side saw a strange look in her eyes. It just couldn't be, but it seemed that it really was a stark and terrible fear. The patient must be just now realizing that she was not going to get well. Try as she would she could not escape that conclusion. It was too late to ask, for speech was no longer possible and soon unconsciousness took over and a few hours later she was gone, leaving her young friend with a persistent question. Why should the Christian fear death—at least one who had belonged to the Lord as long as that one? And who had been as faithful as a person can be known to be?

By that time she realized that sometimes "sudden fear" can be more disastrous than "sudden death." A favorite expression of her Father's came back to her. It had meant little when she was hearing him say it often but has come of late years with a rich full meaning: "I'd as soon be killed as *scared* to death." When faith replaces fear the child of God can meet the experiences of life or death with wisdom and power from on high without anxiety, for results are in the hands of God.

Victory over fear is a must for the Christian, for "fear is the enemy of faith" to quote a much loved minister now with the Lord.

In simple words, *fear is unbelief*.

When I reached the place where I could confess it as sin and look to the Lord for victory, He was faithful to forgive and to give me overcoming power.

But to get back to death, and the fear some Christians have of it. Of course there are always some who have not lived close to the Lord and therefore have earned for themselves a few fears. But many who earnestly hope for the coming of the Lord and who undoubtedly love His appearing have so centered their thoughts on His coming while they are alive and waiting expectantly, yea, hopefully for Him that should they suddenly become aware that their life expectancy on this earth is running out feel their faith sadly shaken at the thought of death before He comes, even if they do not lack assurance of salvation.

Some little children were concerned in a noisy electric storm. Their grandmother reminded them of Peter's walk to meet the Lord on the water. A storm was raging on the sea. Those hardy seamen were thinking they saw a ghost, but as He neared the boat where Peter and the rest of the fear-ridden apostles were struggling against the storm, He called out, "Be of good cheer! It is I! Be not afraid!" "So," concludes the grandmother, "when it storms, the voice of the Lord Jesus speaks to His loved ones saying, "Be of good cheer. It is I. Be not afraid." Other people think it *thunders* but those who love the Lord hear His voice and their fear is taken away by the comfort His words bring, 'Be of good cheer. It is I. Be not afraid.'

(She did not try to give these little tots any of the numerous references in which the voice of the Lord is connected with thunder, but you readers can look them up.)

But whichever way we go to be with Him is good. Those who die in the Lord will experience the resurrection and will be with Him sooner than those left alive until He comes (Phil. 1:23, 1 Thes. 4:15-17).

Those who are here when He comes will bypass the death of the body and experience the rapture. Either way—through the valley with the Lord and the resurrection, or caught up alive to meet Him in the air—will be a marvelous experience with the Lord our God.



# Call Me BITTERNESS

Chris Turk, Australia

The day dawned still and quiet. A heat haze clung closely to the ground. Farewells would be brief. A camel, straining at his rope, moaned hideously, silencing the last parting words. Then one final glance around from the travelers and the camels surged forward. Each hoof print took them a few more feet away from famine and another few feet closer to a fairer land.

Soon the small family became mere silhouettes, merging into the dust and haze. Words were few. The journey would be fifty miles along the eastern side of the Salt Sea Valley to the fertile plateau of Moab. Time passed slowly as memories of hunger mingled with the new surroundings. Rocky gorges gave way to the sunlight of a prosperous plateau. This would be good land.

Time proved otherwise. The death of a husband and two sons in ten short years changed everything. Loneliness became a constant companion. Perhaps at home in Bethlehem there might be some sympathy, some comfort. One daughter-in-law would return also. (Small consolation to a mother's heavy heart!)

Again the journey.

Slowly the home town took shape. Distant landmarks became clearer. A pleasant April breeze rustled the barley in the fields. Familiar faces appeared. Surprised looks turned into words.

"Is this Naomi (The Pleasant One)?" murmured the people. A quick retort.

"Call me not Naomi, but Mara (Bitterness), for God has dealt harshly with me. The Almighty has afflicted me."

Then silence.

What would your name be if people called you according to your character and disposition? Perhaps a bitterness eats away like a cancer in your life as it did Naomi's. Inwardly you are shaking your fist at God. You are disappointed; circumstances are hard; there is suffering. God has been unkind.

Once you were pleasant and effervescent. But wounds have not healed; your character has changed. You want to praise God and live for Him but deep down inside you are offended. You call Him El Shaddai, the Almighty One, but He is distant and not as personal as He was.

Come back to Calvary, the place of cleansing. Confess your spiritual poverty and embrace the will of God in your life with thanksgiving. After all, God deals with us in love. His way is best. Offer to Him the sacrifice of praise, even if you don't feel like it, for praise brings deliverance. God will meet you, heal you, and restore your joy.

We must believe that the hands of God are big enough to take all the hurt and sin and harsh happenings. Get free! Unload your burden on God. Discover the liberty of living in the "now", free from the past, and confident in God for the future.

—In WEC Thrust

# NEWS AND NOTES

"They rehearsed all that God had done with them . . ."

It has been a good year at Echo Valley Camp. This last Intermediate week 15 young people responded to the Lord. Eleven came to give their souls to Christ, 4 renewed their commitments. In previous weeks there have been several others who have done the same thing.

A slide presentation is being prepared to show the campgrounds and campers in all sorts of activities. In the fall, various staff members will be showing the slides in various local churches.

The campgrounds are available now by appointment. The Women's Christian Temperance Union rented it this summer and intend to do the same next year. The Portland School teachers have a retreat scheduled. Carl Ketcherside is to be one of the speakers at Echo Valley Forum in October. The Buechel Church is having a family retreat in October, and the Community Church of Christ is another to use the camp for an entire weekend.

If you would like to be a part of a camp week next season or have ideas that would contribute to the quality of the facilities or the program, please share them. Call the Buechel church office 454-4724, or write a letter to the church to the attention of Dr. E. T. Arnn, chairman of the camp committee.

**Jacksonville, Fla.:** At the Southside church we are just beginning a series of cottage meetings for the purpose of reaffirming or reestablishing the first principles of the faith. The goal is to help each member to be able to "give an answer" and to "refute those who contradict." No doubt the W&W will aid in this endeavor. —Harold J. Adams.

## **Cramer and Hanover, Lexington, Ky.**

Thanks is expressed to all who had a part in keeping things going while the preacher was taking a week's vacation during which time he was in meeting in Borden, Indiana. The Lord blessed the efforts there with outstanding attendance and interest and two responses for baptism.

**Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.:** At Westside church we continue to praise God for progress. Our building is coming

right along toward completion. Everyone here is working faithfully and we hope to be in our new building on our target date of September 1.

We now meet in the building Sunday evenings and Wednesday evenings for services. We rejoice that fourteen have been added to the church here since the first of the year.

—Vaughn A. Reeves

## **Buechel, Ky. Church of Christ:**

Thank you brother Larry Miles! We have had a good report of your message to Buechel last Sunday evening. Thank you for coming. And come again.

Brother Sanders baptized Tommy Rogers last week. Tommy is 15 years old. We know God will bless Tommy for his decision.

## **Lilly Dale Church, Tell City, Ind.:**

Of the six baptisms at the Woodland Bible Camp the week of June 16, four were from Lilly Dale, for which we rejoice.

Robert Gill spoke at both services July 7. He is returned from service on the African mission field, and is now a professor at SCC.

There were 30 campers plus a staff of 16 at Woodland Bible Camp the week of July 21-27. Three young people from the Linton area became Christians during the week. Last week at camp, Susie Harding was baptized into Christ.

Presently (August 5-11) Brother Carl Kitzmiller is holding a meeting at Lilly Dale.

## **Rangeland Church, Louisville, Ky.:**

We were greeted at Rangeland by 100 people for morning worship (97 for Sunday School), which isn't too bad at this time of the year. The Lord blessed us with a good service Sunday night, with Debbie Frazier responding to the invitation, expressing a desire to be baptized into Christ.

**Eighteenth Street Church:** The work the hands of Brothers Herbert Ball and Gene Hardin. The Lord has blessed with an increase by the new birth. Three have come recently: Mrs. Charlene Nix and daughter Susan on August 18 and another member of the family, Missy, on August 21.

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