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The Good

MEDITATION AND MANTRAS

PARADISE REGAINED?

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YOU ARE HERE

By the Sea of Galilee, Jesus...
...and many other things...
...of the Kingdom of God...

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PERSONAL
FROM
HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG



What we should learn from the spectacular Israeli strike to free scores of hostages from skyjack terrorism. The amazing parallel!

The first full, inside story of "Operation Thunderbolt," titled *90 Minutes to Entebbe*, is just off the press. It's on sale in paperback edition at newsstands.

I have just picked up a copy. I'm so impressed with the striking parallel between the Israeli's *determined* policy on never compromising with terrorists and compromising with God's TRUTH that I have come immediately to my typewriter while the supremely IMPORTANT truth may flash hot off my mind onto paper to be printed for you to read.

Sometimes, whether in terrorist skyjackings, or handling the Word of God, temptations tend to sweep us off our feet. So far as I can think of right now, the *only* nation that has had the WILL, the DETERMINATION — the STEADFAST FAITH — to refuse to give in to terrorist threats is the comparatively small but tenacious nation of Israel.

Forty-three years ago, the living

Christ committed to me His GREAT COMMISSION. That Commission was to carry His gospel message of the soon-coming Kingdom of God into ALL THE WORLD. It was an absolutely staggering responsibility. That GREAT COMMISSION involved, to make it possible, the RAISING UP OF GOD'S CHURCH for our present time. Without the Church standing faithfully and loyally back of me, the GREAT COMMISSION of the CREATOR GOD would be impossible.

God has always worked among humans, primarily through ONE MAN, but often this one man is surrounded with many faithful co-workers.

But during these 43 years, I have frequently been pressured to compromise — "just a little" — with God's TRUTH.

You see, God had called me to this tremendous responsibility in no ordinary manner. As Moses and others had been prepared *before* being called to God's Commission for them, so was I. In no ordinary or usual manner, God revealed to me His TRUTH. When He committed His Great Commission to me, He entrusted me with this precious TRUTH. The world did not then have it. To the world it was "foolishness" (1 Cor. 2:14).

But honestly now, **WHAT DO YOU THINK?**

Wouldn't it be all right to compromise, "just a little," on some "unimportant minor point"? Especially on some ostensibly unimportant point where we appear "crazy" to the world.

When I was first converted, in the spring of 1927, it meant to me, a TOTAL UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER to God — TO HIS LAW — TO HIS WAY — TO HIS TRUTH. It was almost seven years later when God finally committed to me the most important commission in the world! The commission was NOT ONLY to carry His

message — unproclaimed to the world for 18th centuries — but also — to back me up, and make it possible — TO RAISE UP HIS CHURCH FOR THIS PRESENT TIME.

All in His Church today, who have and are being led by His Holy Spirit, directly or indirectly, are MY CHILDREN IN CHRIST! You are not my fleshly HUMAN children — many of you are larger than I and some few older. But you are my children IN THE LORD, starting from your conversion, as "spiritual" BABES IN CHRIST. As a human child must be fed first on milk, then on stronger food, so Christ's spiritual "babes" must be fed on the SPIRITUAL WORD OF GOD.

To God's little spiritual children, in the first century at Corinth, the apostle Paul said: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able" (1 Cor. 3:1-2). Later he said: "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (verse 6).

Well, my brethren and children in our Lord, it is I who have PLANTED the precious TRUTH revealed to me from GOD — starting over the air — in *The Plain Truth*, in *The Good News* — teaching our ministers in Ambassador College, etc., etc. After this planting of God's truth, ministers trained in the truth God first revealed to me, and first disseminated by me — even to those from Garner Ted down to those who became your ministers — have "watered" — continued to FEED you on the spiritual TRUTH from God's Word. But it is GOD; not we who are MEN — who gives the "increase" — that is, develops IN YOU the spiritual GROWTH.

Nevertheless, if we begin to com-
(Continued on page 28)

WHAT IF YOU HAD LIVED IN LAODICEA?

by Garner Ted Armstrong

The Laodicean Church was one of seven specific, literal church congregations to receive the entirety of the book of Revelation from the pen of the apostle John. Contained within its pages was a special letter to that specific church from Jesus Christ of Nazareth! Did that message mark the Laodicean congregation as a sure victim of spiritual labelism? What if you had actually lived in a small city in Asia Minor called Laodicea at that time? What if you had been a first-century member of that literal Laodicean Church? Would you have suffered the shame of some kind of awful spiritual stigma?

Only one human being in the entirety of the history of humankind has ever had any possible voice in choosing his human parentage. His name was Jesus Christ of Nazareth!

The rest of us human beings haven't had any choice in the matter. You had nothing to do with either who your parents were or what particular piece of real estate they happened to occupy when you were born. You had nothing to do with your racial origins, your color, your country, your sex or even your native intelligence. You were pretty much a "victim" of genes and chromosomes.

You had no choice in either the particular millennium or the century of your birth. Ostensibly, you could have been born somewhere in Asia Minor on a Roman mail route some time in the midst of the first century A.D. By the end of that century, you could have been a fiftyish citizen of the actual city of Laodicea.

You could have even been a bona fide, baptized, called and converted

member of the Church that Jesus Christ built at the specific time the apostle John sent the book of Revelation to seven specific congregations in your country — one of which was yours!

Review and Background. In the November number of *The Good News*,

I explained that each message to each of the seven churches of Revelation 2 and 3 is also intended for the Church as a whole in all ages.

I further noted that every one of the seven churches had the opportunity to read not only Jesus Christ's own direct testimony to them personally, but also to the other six congregations. Each one was, so to speak, "in on" the sins of the others.

The letter to the Ephesian Church (Rev. 2:1-7) was expounded in the light of the fact that it may be the first of seven successive eras of God's Church down through history. The article absolutely proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that there is no shame, sin, or stigma involved in martyrdom. On the contrary, it can be (and most often is) a

great honor in God's sight. Most of the original apostles — all ostensibly members of the Ephesian Era — were martyred in apparent relative obscurity (with the possible exception of James, the brother of John; see Acts 12:1-2). (Apparently John himself died of old age.)

That first installment concluded with the thought that Christians in God's own Church ought not to judge one another's spiritual infirmities by hanging derogatory labels on certain churches, or even church eras (Matt. 7:1-2; James 4:11-12).

So much space was spent explaining the significance of Jesus Christ's own direct personal letter to the church at Ephesus that I just never got around to the other six churches. We pick up the story with Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11).

Smyrna — "Faithful Unto Death." "And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty... (verses 8-9).

Wait just a minute! Does Jesus Christ of Nazareth mean to say that a church that belongs to Him could actually be poverty stricken, and still be in His favor? Could any one in the Church actually be impoverished if he (or she) is applying the book of Proverbs, if he is hard-working, if he is thrifty and equitable, if he is a good provider for his family, if he is laying up for his grandchildren? Wouldn't abject poverty automatically be irrefutable proof of obvious spiritual squalor as well?

Can't we grasp the fact that sometimes a people can be impoverished by corrupt government officials against their own will? Sometimes members of God's Church in past ages have been literally persecuted into a condition of poverty!

Notice the apostle Paul's description of God's people in "the faith chapter": "...Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins [not the finely tailored varieties]; being DESTITUTE, afflicted, tor-

mented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth" (Hos. 11:36-38).

Here in Revelation 2:9, Jesus Christ of Nazareth lumps the terms "works, and tribulation, and poverty" all together in His commendation of the Church of God at Smyrna.

Persecution and Martyrdom Mentioned Once Again! Christ continued in verse 10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison: that ye may be tried: and ye shall have tribulation [great troubles] ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

This scripture simply underscores my point that persecution and martyrdom are in fact a great badge of spiritual worthiness in God's sight. Something is *not* necessarily terribly wrong and evil in the Church simply because it is receiving great persecution!

The apostle Paul asked: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness [extreme poverty], or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy [Christ's] sake we are killed all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter" (Rom. 8:35-36).

Paul's answer? "Nay [of course not], in all these things [persecution, poverty, martyrdom, etc.] we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (verse 37).

The closing verse in the letter to Smyrna is of especially vital significance to God's Church today. "He that hath an ear [has spiritual comprehension], let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches [plural, all seven]. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" (Rev. 2:11). *Every one of the seven churches is told to listen and heed the messages to all seven — not just their personal one! Each one is also told to overcome!*

The time may well come in your lifetime and mine when true Christians will again be brutally martyred (mainly by mad religionists and political power brokers) for their beliefs. Jesus said: "Then shall they

deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another" (Matt. 24:9, 10).

There is no true Church of God residing in the ruins of Smyrna today. It's gone! Many undoubtedly suffered martyrdom. The literal historic congregation was persecuted, scattered and finally disappeared into history.

But the message of impending martyrdom, especially for the Smyrna congregation, was also a very real possibility for any member of the other six churches along that Roman mail route. Remember al-

"And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty . . ."
(Rev. 2:8, 9).

ways that Jesus Christ of Nazareth warned seven different times to "hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (plural).

Additionally, Christ's warning of probable persecution and even martyrdom — "be thou faithful unto death" — may have applied to a whole era of God's Church typified by Smyrna. History shows that there were great persecutions in post-apostolic times.

If the Roman government found out that a group practiced a religion of one called *Christus*, they were very likely arrested, dragged away from their homes, had their property confiscated, and were possibly thrown into an arena for the pleasure of hordes of cheering barbarians hungry for violence.

I have to ask again: Is persecution

or martyrdom the worst possible label you can wear? Notice in the message to the next church, in Pergamos, that Antipas was Christ's faithful martyr! (Rev. 2:13, f).

An Open Door. Skip ahead to the church at Philadelphia. Jesus Christ says: ". . . Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it" (Rev. 3:8). If there is any one phase or era of the Church of God that most characterizes its present activity in the twentieth century, it is the fact of an open door provided to preach the gospel to the world.

But the account (Rev. 3:7-13) says absolutely nothing about the Philadelphia Church (or era) having brotherly love as an outstanding characteristic. The original city was given that Greek name, but that doesn't mean that it had any more love than any one of the other six churches.

It does go on to say that the Philadelphia Church "has a little strength" (Moffatt translates it "only a little strength") and had kept the Word of God and not denied the name of Jesus Christ (verse 8).

And because of some of these positive characteristics, Jesus Christ said to this church: "I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (verse 10). Here is a promise of apparent future protection from the Great Tribulation, but it doesn't specifically say how, when or where. It is all too easy, to gather together a number of vague scriptures about the Middle East and assume that the one and only "place of safety" is there.

But notice an almost forgotten scripture in the book of Luke. "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out . . ." (Luke 21:20-21).

Judaea was one of the Roman provinces of that part of Palestine surrounding Jerusalem. This prophecy specifically spoke only to those who were in Judaea, and not even those who might have been in other

parts of Israel, Samaria, "the Negev," or that desert area around the Dead Sea and to the southeast, encompassing the mountains between the gulf of Aqaba and Amman, the present-day capital of the nation of Jordan.

Notice very carefully what this prophecy DOES say: "... Flee to the MOUNTAINS!" There is no specific mountain, or even any specific "mountains" or mountain range, mentioned in this prophecy. Those who would be in the environs of Jerusalem were told to flee to "the mountains," which could mean virtually in ANY direction from Jerusalem, since Jerusalem is in the top of a mountain range between the Dead Sea and the Maritime Plain above the Mediterranean. Hence, those in the city Jerusalem could flee to any point of the compass, whether north, east, south, or west, and even though they might actually be descending, rather than ascending into higher mountains, they would nevertheless be fleeing (in whatever direction on the compass) to the mountains!

Further, the prophecy and the warning merely tells those "in the midst of it" (meaning the midst of that one province called "Judea") to get out! It does not tell this group of individuals where, specifically, to go — only as is inferred by the earlier statements that they ought to flee to a wilderness area, or "to the mountains."

Boiling Caldron. But what about those Christians who are *not* in Judea and perhaps not even in the Middle East? Jesus continued: "And let not them that are in the countries enter therinto" (verse 21). Jesus' best advice seems to be to stay out of the Middle Eastern area if you are not already there. According to some of the prophecies in Daniel 11 and elsewhere the Middle East is going to be a boiling caldron. Not exactly the best place to be for your physical health.

My point is that God can protect you *anywhere* you happen to be at the time! Psalm 91 talks about a thousand falling at your side and ten thousand falling at your right hand, but with no harm coming to you. It may be partially a matter of

your spiritual temperature at the time or maybe even your capacity to withstand brutal persecution or martyrdom! God says He will not try us beyond our breaking point (1 Cor. 10:13).

After describing some of the horrible terrors accompanying the Great Tribulation, Jesus Christ says in verse 36 of Luke 21: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things [previously described in the chapter] that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." No doubt about it! There is a promise of physical (and not just spiritual) protection in the Bible at the time of the Great Tribulation. But where? In one single lo-

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36).

cation somewhere in the Middle East called "a place of safety."

Take another look at the Olivet prophecy in Matthew 24. Pick it up in verse 29 where it leads into Christ's second coming. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days [the Great Tribulation also described in Daniel 12, Jeremiah 30 and Revelation 3:10] shall the sun be darkened and the moon shall not give her light and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect [from where? from a place of safety? No! from the four winds from one end of heaven [meaning the earth's atmosphere] to the other" (verses 29-31).

People are being called into God's Church from almost every nation under heaven. And the Bible certainly indicates that the people of God will still be scattered over the whole globe right up to the time Jesus Christ sets His feet on the Mount of Olives. Notice Mark's companion account. "And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven" (Mark 13:27).

The language used here is all-encompassing: every converted Christian (those having God's Holy Spirit) will be gathered together into one place at the direct behest of Jesus Christ Himself. But this occurs at the time of His second coming — not prior to it. Right up to that time Christians will be scattered to the uttermost parts of the earth, to use Jesus Christ's own language.

Christ ends His personal letter to the Philadelphia Church with the old familiar phrase stated seven times in the space of two chapters: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches [plural]" (Rev. 3:13). The message to Philadelphia is for all congregations and eras of God's Church in all ages.

Why the Poor Laodicean? To repeat my earlier supposition, what if you had had the "misfortune" of being born in Laodicea about the middle of the first century? Further, what if you had been "unlucky" enough to have actually been a called chosen and converted Christian in the Laodicean Church of God when the book of Revelation was delivered by a messenger? Would you have suffered the shame of some kind of an awful stigma?

Probably not! Members of the original historical church congregation in the city of Philadelphia (having only a little strength) probably didn't waste much of their time indulging in the dubious practice of hanging defamatory spiritual labels on Laodicean Church members.

But to many a modern Church member today, "Laodicean" rhymes with "lost." It's like a strange disease, a curse, it's almost a "sin" to be a member of the Laodicean Church.

Isn't it about time we prayerfully cleared our minds of these cobwebs of misconception and sheer assumption? Isn't it time members of the true Church of God began to quit hanging snide spiritual labels on fellow Church members? Isn't it time that we began to practice a little Christian tolerance?

Did the Laodicean Church have its problems? You bet it did! And probably more than its share. But did the other six churches also have supremely serious problems? You bet they did! The Ephesus Church lost their first love. Members of the Pergamos congregation (at least a few) were involved in some type of hideous sex ritual as a part of a religious service. Thyatira tolerated a false prophetess who advocated illicit sex and virtual idol worship. Sardis was afflicted with spiritual senility, and yes, the Philadelphia Church had its problems too!

They were told to hang on to their crowns, and that they only had a little strength by and of themselves.

And don't forget this vitally important point: Individual members of the Philadelphia Church were afflicted with most of the problems that the other six churches had. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

God's Church today has problems. Does that shock anybody? I certainly hope not! Brethren, the Church of God has always had problems, it has problems now, and it always will right up until the day that Jesus Christ of Nazareth sets His feet upon this earth once again!

Seven different times in the letters to the seven churches, Jesus Christ tells us to overcome our problems. He tells the Laodicean Church to repent of their lukewarmness! And you know that is always a distinct possibility! The Savior of all of humankind — the One who spilled His blood on the earth — doesn't tell the members of His own Body to do something He knows they simply aren't capable of. Human beings can repent, and believe it or not — they sometimes do!

Correcting of Error. Because of ignorance, liberally laced with carnal "judging" of one another, not a few have assumed that "Laodicean" also rhymes with "left." They like to

view an alleged "drift" (meaning any correcting of error of the past, in reality) in the Church as a dangerous compromise with principle, a "plot" to "drag the Church" into the "Laodicean Era," and hence seal its fate, forcing the Church to miss out on a "place of safety," and so end up in the ignominious condition of martyrdom!

This attitude has become so firmly fixed in the minds of some few that no amount of plain, clear, biblical teaching to the contrary will dislodge it! Shockingly, some have become so completely pre-conditioned to these false concepts about "Laodiceanism" that they will find themselves unable to agree with the straightforward proofs they can

The Church of God has always had problems; it has problems now, and it always will right up until the day that Jesus Christ of Nazareth sets His feet upon this earth once again!

see from their own Bibles, of their error!

To these people, there is always a "plot" afoot to change the present character and nature of the "Philadelphia" Church into the terrible, "satanic" and "worldly" ways of the "Laodicean" Church! They cannot see that the Laodicean congregation *then*, and that number of people who allow themselves to be identified with the similar-type attitudes *now*, are members of God's true Church, that the Laodicean Church is not the "Church of the Devil" but the Church of God! To these people, a "Laodicean" is the same sort of near epithet those Jewish people during Jesus' day attached to a "Samaritan"! It is a terrible spiritual condition — a terrible label to wear.

But those who are willing to

drink in of the plain truth of God's sacred Word will see clearly that the remnants of God's Church will abide just prior to Christ's second coming will be living in the most troublesome time in all of history, that their personal and collective trials will be enormous, that many of them will be brutally put to death for their beliefs (the same fate their Savior suffered, as did Peter, Paul, James, Stephen and so many prophets and righteous men down through the centuries) that others, not being able to withstand such physical suffering, will be given a "way out" — a way whereby they may be able to "bear" their fate, a place of physical (temporary) protection and shelter!

When Peter was curious about John's fate, Jesus said in effect: "Peter, what does it matter to you if I decide he shall remain, and you will not? I will decide, Peter — for my purpose and my work — who shall remain and witness for me longer, and who shall be martyred?" Jesus showed Peter the time would come when hands would be placed upon him to "lead him where he wouldst not," indicating Peter would be martyred for Christ!

Was one fate more "honorable" than the other? Was one apostle more "righteous" or more deserving than the other? Or was it a matter of God's choice in which case which individual would do the better job?

If you allow yourself to lose your first love, like the Apostolic Era did

— God tells you to *repent* and to strive to recapture it. If you live in a satanic environment of one of the big cities with its incredible crime, immorality, pollution and temptations, God commands you to *repent*, and to hold fast to your salvation. If you are becoming spiritually *dead* like Sardis, God commands you to *repent* and to be made alive! If you are drifting into a sleepy, lethargic "Laodicean" attitude, God commands you to *REPENT*, and to WAKE UP out of your sleep!

But above all things, don't make the pharisaical mistake of saying to God: "I thank thee that I am not as other men . . . or even as this publican [Laodicean]." It's far safer to be in the publican's attitude of "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" □

If there is one thing this world has always lacked, it is effective, just government. Every humanity devised system has ultimately failed to bring about permanent peace, universal human dignity, happiness and fulfillment for mankind. And all of man's governments will continue to fail until God replaces them with His own system. What will it be like to live directly under the government of Almighty God?

by Brian Knowles

The line between "civilization" and barbarism is razor thin. The bloodlust of man lurks just below the surface of his psyche. Given the right happenstance chemistry it bubbles to the surface in spates of mayhem, oppression and bloodletting. Wars and rumors of war characterize our violent "civilization" (falsely so called!).

The allegedly "free" world is a cauldron of violence, crime, graft in high places, government corruption and personal immorality. Racism, political infighting, petty revolutions and serious rebellions generate heartache and despair daily in the human realm.

It's better to be free, in the usual sense of the word, than to live under an oppressive, godless, communist dictatorship. I'll grant you that. But what a terrible price we seem to have to pay for our "freedom"! Crime statistics continue to rise with frightening regularity. Governments and political parties, supposedly built upon altruistic platforms of justice and right, seem hopelessly

impotent in the face of crime — organized or disorganized.

Wherever you go on this vast globe called Earth, you are liable to find yourself in personal danger of some sort. The term "man's inhumanity to man" has become a cliché in the modern world, and it has characterized man's entire history. Who really values any human life except his or her own and the lives of those who make up the empirical self? What government is not willing to stoop to sabotage, murder and mayhem to further its own ends? Why do we need KGBs, CIAs and other clandestine "secret agencies"?

Why the pain of Lebanon, Northern Ireland and the nations of developing Black Africa? Why such terror, such suffering, such hideous, indiscriminate bloodshed and hostility?

Governments, and conclaves of governments such as the United Nations, seem utterly helpless in the face of world violence and disorder. In fact, they often appear to instigate it!

World Out of Order. The "faint high-wine of madness" (as one writer put it) is in the air. The world is out of order, out of sync, out of harmony. When we speak of peace we must speak comparatively — not absolutely. When we think of human dignity, we must realize that it is possessed only by a very elite, very tiny minority. The overwhelming majority of the human race lives in squalor, pain and indignity.

When, and how, will mankind ever be emancipated from "the human condition"?

Not in this age! And not by the governments of man!

It will take a greater-than-human Power to rectify the sufferings of

mankind. World order can only be brought about by a world government — and a divine one at that.

Abraham Lincoln may have been "The Great Emancipator" in terms of America's slaves, but the Creator God will be the greatest Emancipator ever. He will elevate the entire human race, created in His very image, to a new plane of existence. He will progressively bring about an end to the general squalor and indignity that besets humanity.

End of War. God, through Jesus Christ, will put an end to war once and for all. An absolute end! War will be banished from the face of a scarred earth. And these scars will be healed. The world will blossom like a beautiful spring bloom and peace will break out everywhere.

The human race will for the first time in its history gain a universal concept of why it exists. Mankind as a whole will be given a great transcendental goal toward which it will be encouraged to strive. All humans will be taught to "seek first the kingdom of God" (Matt. 6:33). Spiritual values will replace materialistic goals. Man will be reoriented in a completely new direction.

First Comes Apocalypse. But before these utopian conditions can be brought about, there will come a time of apocalyptic happenings — terrifying and mind-boggling that they will be without precedent in human experience. The Kingdom and government of God will not be welcomed to this earth!

Notice what is prophesied in the second Psalm: "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and his anointed, saying, 'Let us break their bonds asunder and cast their cords from us.'" (Ps. 2:2-3)

GOD'S GOVERNMENT

WHAT WILL IT BE LIKE?

This prophecy concerns the return of Jesus Christ to establish the Kingdom here on earth! The nations of this earth will not welcome that wonderful event. Instead, shockingly, they will turn on their Creator and seek to hite the Hand that has fed them since Adam rose out of the dust of Eden!

Man does not want to be ruled by the government of God! In the days of Nimrod, the people of the world built a tower in Babel out of rebellion toward God (Gen. 11). In the days of Moses, the people rejected God in favor of a human spokesman (Ex. 20:18-20). In Samuel's time, the children of Israel rejected divine government in favor of a human king (1 Sam. 8:7).

And God has given man what he has wanted - human government. And with it enormous tax burdens, military conscription, injustice, crime, war and all of the other attendant evils of human governments! (Samuel warned of this and his warning went unheeded - see 1 Samuel 8:4-19.)

Man, it seems, wishes to be free from God and enslaved to these evils. But freedom from divine government and guidance is no freedom at all. It is bondage. It is suffering. It is pain, heartache and oppression.

As Paul wrote: "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom. 8:22, KJV). Man has been consigned to a pain-filled existence until such time as we collectively acknowledge and accept the government of God in the human realm.

God will not give man a choice of what kind of government he will have in the world tomorrow. Nor will man be able to select his own

leaders. The government and Kingdom of God will be established *in power*, and Jesus Christ will reign supreme (Mark 9:1). The divine government of tomorrow's world will be authoritarian, yet benevolent. The rule of law and justice will prevail. God's government will take loving care of the sick, the blind and the maimed. Isaiah, prophesying of that glorious Messianic age, wrote: "In that day the deaf shall hear the words of a book, and out of their gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind shall see. The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall exult in the Holy One of Israel. For the ruthless shall come to nought and the scoffer cease, and all who watch to do evil shall be cut off" (Isa. 29:18-20).

Twofold Commission. God cares for the "little people" of this world! He will oppress the sinners and avenge the oppressed. He will fight for the cause of the helpless and heal the sick. The Messiah will help the helpless and punish the unjust in that glorious world tomorrow! Christ's twofold commission is summed up by Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings [the gospel] to the afflicted; he has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn" (Isa. 61:1-2).

Jesus Himself quoted this section of Scripture, in part, in application to His earthly ministry (Luke 4:16-20). But He stopped quoting midway through verse 2! Why? Because the rest of the prophecy concerned His *second coming* and

the Messianic Age! Christ's reign on the throne of David is to be ushered in by "the day of vengeance of our God." Referring back to the previously quoted prophecy in the second Psalm, we can see that Jesus will have to begin His reign by destroying the opposition forces who will be led by Satan the devil (Rev. 19:11).

As Jesus and His armies descend to the Mount of Olives on the east of Jerusalem, the kingdoms of this world will gather together against that city (Zech. 14:1). The city will be taken and typically human plundering, pillaging and raping will follow (verse 2).

"Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle. On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives which lies before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley. . . . Then the Lord, your God will come, and all the holy ones with him. . . . And the Lord will become king over all the earth. . . ." (Zech. 14:3-9)

From that point onward, throughout all future eternity, the government of God will be established upon this earth and throughout the universe! As God's government, under Christ, spreads throughout the world, the good fruits of peace and harmony will be borne. Isaiah spoke of this utopian time: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called 'Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.' Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to es-

"For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called 'Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.' Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for evermore" (Isaiah 9:6-7).

establish it, and to uphold it with *justice* and with *righteousness from this time forth and for evermore*" (Isa. 9:6-7).

That is at once a prophecy and a promise. It will occur! The prophecy is sure and it will come to pass. "The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!"

Spiritual Knowledge Explosion. Once the Kingdom is established upon the earth, Jesus Christ will set about disseminating *spiritual* knowledge. The righteous, holy and just

laws of God will "go forth from Zion" (Micah 4:2). The nature of all living creatures will be changed — man and animal alike! Knowledge of God will begin to blanket the earth as the sun rises on the New Age. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid. . . . They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:6-9).

Today we live in a world of spiritual darkness. It's an evil time when God is pushed out of the picture by materialism and spiritual error. In God's world it will be different. Jesus Christ will shine as "the Sun of righteousness," and the gloom of spiritual darkness will be vaporized by the white light of truth.

Divine "Medical Plan."

This present evil world is a world of sickness, disease and human suffering. Medical expenses are becoming ever more unreasonable and sickness is an ever-present reality for most families. The world is sick!

Jesus Christ will make the medical profession an obsolete occupation! "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall" (Mal. 4:2, KJV).

Isaiah prophesied of that time: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be

opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy" (Isa. 35:5-6).

(A word of caution; This is *not* "the world tomorrow"! The medical profession plays a very important and needed role in *this* sick world. If you have need for medical services, by all means avail yourself of them!)

In short, Jesus Christ will institute the greatest, universal "medical plan" ever — miraculous, divine

of God, originally given to ancient Israel (see Ex. 12:16, 21; Lev. 23), will be reinstated in tomorrow's world. Even non-Israelite nations will be required to keep these days! Notice Isaiah's prophecy: "From new moon to new moon [month to month], and from sabbath to sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, says the Lord" (Isa. 66:23).

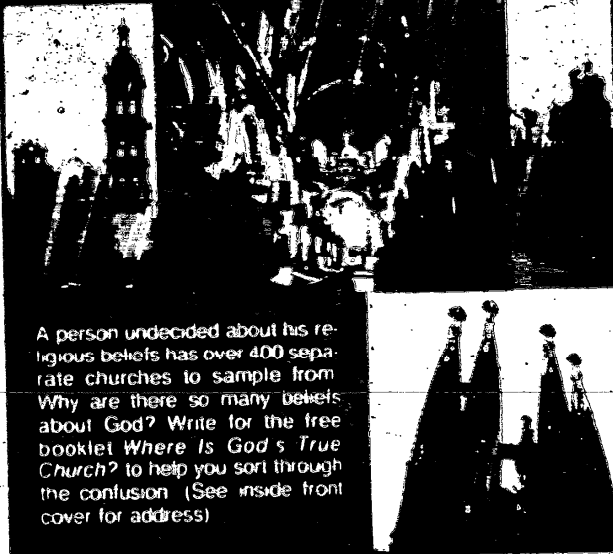
Zechariah elaborates in even greater detail: "Then every one that survives of *all the nations* that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of booths" (Zech. 14:16). (The "feast of booths" is also known as the festival or feast of tabernacles.)

Those nations that refuse to observe these festivals, for whatever reason, will be the recipients of divine wrath, according to Zechariah: "And if any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, there will be no rain upon them. And if the family of Egypt do not go up and present themselves, then upon them shall come the plague with which the Lord afflicts the nations that do not go up to keep the feast of booths. This shall be the punishment to Egypt and the punishment to all the nations that do not go up to keep the feast of booths" (Zech. 14:17-19).

(If you would like more information on these annual festivals, be sure to request our free booklet on the subject. Just ask for the booklet on the festivals.)

The End of Racism. God's government will bring about cooperation among nations instead of competition. When all nations are dedicated to seeking God, and His will, instead of their own selfish nationalistic ends, a natural spirit of harmony and brotherhood will appear.

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)

healing! As though experiencing a foretaste of tomorrow's world, many today have experienced miracles of healing (James 5:14-15). But such healings are the exception rather than the rule in a world which "has a form of godliness but denies the power thereof" (see II Tim. 3:5). Real healing, on a grand scale, will not be experienced until the government of God is established upon this earth and the knowledge of God is spread abroad.

Annual Festivals. According to the prophet Isaiah, the annual festivals

As Paul said: "... He [God] made from one [Adam] every nation of men to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their habitation, that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel after him and find him. Yet he is not far from each one of us" (Acts 17:26-27).

All of us on this good earth have a common origin — no matter what our color, ideology or creed. We have all descended from Adam, and from Eve, who is called "the mother of all living" (Gen. 3:20). And they were created in the image of God for His divine purposes.

In the new world, God will bring about peace among the nations and international cooperation on a scale previously unheard of. All people will become "spiritual Israelites" (see Gal. 3:28-29). There will be no "master race" but the Kingdom of God (Dan. 2:44). As in the community of the Church, all men will be "brethren" (Matt. 23:8). Nations will work together, without feelings of superiority or inferiority, to fulfill God's purposes.

Isaiah again sheds light on the international relations of tomorrow's world: "In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians. In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, whom the Lord of hosts has blessed, saying, 'Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my heritage'" (Isa. 19:23-25.)

God will call the Egyptians "my people" in the world tomorrow! He will regard the descendants of ancient Assyria as "the work of my hands"! And Israel will be "my heritage"!

What beautiful complimentary words! And how much they portend for the future of international relations. The common denominator among all nations will be the worship of the one true God! This will be the catalyst that binds nations together in a bond of brotherhood. The "brotherhood of man" will no longer be a mere slogan or platitude in those days — it will be a reality!

Imagine all of the races of man working, worshipping, laughing and playing together under God's sun in a spirit of mutual respect, love and commonality of worship! What a dramatic contrast to today's world of racism, bigotry, intolerance and religious division!

But it will take the government of God to bring about that marvelous prophecy of the prophet Isaiah.

To Sum Up. The government of God will be a universal theocracy. It will fill the earth and bring about the peace that has escaped mankind throughout his long history. It will be a government of justice, equity and fairness. God is not a respecter of persons. He dispenses justice with equal treatment for all. There will be no favoritism and no prejudice. God will not be guilty of nepotism or injustice.

The government of God will be instituted for the good of all. It will be authoritarian, yet benevolent. Programs of ecological reform will bring about a beautiful, verdant refurbished earth (Isa. 35:1-2, 6-7).

There will be one God and one religion. Blessings and curses will be dispensed for obedience and disobedience. God will heal and bless the righteous. He will answer the prayers of the faithful. Peace and prosperity will blanket the earth, and the knowledge of God will spread like wildfire.

The problems of "this present evil world" will disappear as the influence of the god of this present world (II Cor. 4:4) vanishes from the earth (Rev. 20:1-3). A new, millennial age will dawn. It will be the Messianic Age — the Age of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, and all of the saints, the "firstfruits of the kingdom" (see James 1:18) will reign for a glorious thousand years (Rev. 20:4).

But that new age will only come when the Kingdom of God is established upon this earth. Only the Father knows just when that will happen (Acts 1:7).

Jesus left word concerning what His followers should do until the Kingdom is established. It is found in Matthew 6:10. He said, we should pray: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

IF YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW MORE

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 (most are ordained ministers) in the United States and British Commonwealth and many other areas of the world. These men will visit you, if invited, directly in your own home.

So if you have spiritual matters to discuss or questions to ask about biblical topics such as repentance, baptism, etc., please feel free to write us and request a private appointment. Worldwide mailing addresses are as follows:

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DOES THE BIBLE TEACH

UNIVERSAL SALVATION?

Does the Bible say all will be saved? Or is it possible some will be forever lost? Here's what God's Word teaches about universal reconciliation.

by Charles V. Dorothy and
Lawson C. Briggs

But I don't wa-a-anta be saved!"
"You better straighten up and fly right or I'll show you. I'm going to throw you in' the lake of fire. You'll see."

"That's just what I want. I just want to die and have it all over with forever."

"Listen here, you! You know who I am! I'm God. And I'm going to burn you up. Then I'm going to resurrect you again, and then we'll see if you're convinced."

"But I don't wanta live forever!"

"Now you look here, you just might as well face it. I am going to save you and make you part of my family, and there's nothing you can do to prevent it. I'll throw you in the lake of fire and burn you up and then resurrect you eighteen jillion times and then eighteen jillion more if necessary, until you will be saved."

"But I don't wanta be . . ."

Impossible scenario? Not according to believers in universal reconciliation and universal salvation.

What Universalism Is. A universalist "believes or maintains the doctrine that redemption or election is extended to the whole of mankind and not confined to a part of it" (*Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. 11, p. 243). In other words, according to believers in universalism, no one can ever be lost, no matter how hard he might try.

The earliest post-apostolic writings (the epistles of Polycarp, Ig-

natius, Clement of Rome) contain no ideas of universal reconciliation, or total salvation. We will examine in this article the claims that the early Church and apostles did teach and believe such doctrines.

"The earliest Universalists . . . were Zoroaster . . . and his followers, the Parsees, who remain in this faith unto the present day. . . . Next in order of time were Jews, some of whom since shortly before the days of Christ were Universalists. Among Christians and these associated with the Church the first advocates of Universalism were some Gnostics. . . ." (*New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, vol. 12, p. 96). It was from these Gnostics — and not from the Bible or the apostles — that the later universalist doctrines came.

The original concept of universal salvation is inextricably tied with the idea that man has an ever-living, ever-conscious soul: "You can't just leave all those dead people out there . . . in the lake of fire or wherever else one might imagine. But we need to realize that the Bible reveals that man is a soul, not that he has a "soul" which cannot be destroyed. (Request our free booklets *Do You Have an Immortal Soul?* and *After Death — Then What?* for the proof.) The truth revealed in God's Word is that the dead really are dead — they are not people — they are not "out there." There is no consciousness in death, either the first or the second (and the Bible does not allow for a third). Death is, in reality, oblivion

(Matt. 10:28; Eccl. 9:5, 10; etc.)

In the *Sibylline Oracles*, a pseudo-psephigraphical work of around A.D. 150, this immortal soul basis comes out clearly. Universalism is claimed to be the result of the prayers of the saints who are affected by the sufferings of the living, conscious damned. Because of His great love for the saints, and their faithfulness, the Almighty is then pictured as granting his saints the salvation of the wicked.

Will God in His love and mercy completely restore all mankind to Himself? And we must not forget the fallen angels, demons and even Satan himself, which some apparently expect to be saved! Or will the incorrigible wicked finally be destroyed without further hope of redemption?

Universalism Contradicts the Bible.

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

And "If the righteous man — and surely many think they are righteous — "is scarcely saved, where will the impious and sinner appear?" (1 Pet. 4:18).

"And some one said to him, 'Lord, will those who are saved be few?' And he said to them, "Strive to enter by the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able." (Luke 13:23-24). There will be no second chance for them. He will say: "Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity!" (Verse 27) "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal [Greek *aiwion*, which does not mean merely "lasting an age" as some claim] fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41).

But will the results of the fiery "second death" of the workers of iniquity be permanent? "Behold, the day comes, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them" — leave them something? — "neither root nor branch. . . . For they will be ashes under the soles of your feet . . ." (Mal. 4:1-3).

To believe in a universal reconciliation, one must believe in at least

one more human age to come yet after the lake of fire and second death. But to believe this, the universalist must redefine the word "death." When Revelation 20:14 states that death itself is "thrown into the lake of fire" (see also Revelation 21:4), the meaning is that no one left alive after the lake of fire will ever die, and there will be no more dying. Yet the universalist must interpret this to say that no one who has ever lived and died can be left dead, but must again be resurrected.

Then he contradicts the statement of the Bible again. There will be no more death, by assuming that the unregenerate may have to be thrown into the lake of fire and die again and again, each time being resurrected to life!

But death itself being thrown into the lake of fire does not mean that the fire's effect on everything and everyone else who will have been thrown there is now cancelled out! If the destruction of "death" itself meant everything that had ever died had to be brought back to life, then the dinosaurs too, the gnats and mosquitoes, all that has ever lived, must revive. For they all died, just as man dies. It is obvious that this line of thought leads to a ridiculous conclusion.

The Bible speaks plainly of the possibility that a person may "accept the grace of God in vain" (II Cor. 6:1), and of "those who... shall *not* inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:21). Paul further stated that "he who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption; but he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life" (Gal. 6:8). Notice it is a contrast: eternal life on the one hand and the opposite reward on the other. "Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (verse 7).

"How shall we escape if we neglect... salvation?" (Heb. 2:3.) And Hebrews 6:4-8 reads: "For it is impossible to restore again, to repentance those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of

GOD DOES DESIRE THE SALVATION OF ALL

The doctrine of universal salvation appeals to many because quite naturally we would all like to believe none will be lost. We should not, however, hide our heads in the sand from the biblical facts.

The Lord is not slow about his promise not wishing (KJV, *willing*) that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance (Pet. 3:9). Peter used the Greek word *epithelo* which depending on its usage in context may be used in reference to a wish, want, desire, or of decisions of the will after previous deliberation (Arnold Gingrich, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 356). This verse shows us God's desire.

But does it show God will force salvation on those who do not wish to receive it? Of course not. God has given mankind free moral agency, which means their end is not predetermined. Forced universal salvation would destroy free moral agency. Under no circumstances will God force everyone to repent and be saved.

What is the context and purpose of Peter's statement? He is exhorting that no one be lost through their carelessness since God certainly wants them saved. The fact He brings it up is evidence one can be lost. He warns of the lake of fire in verse 10 then exhorts: "What sort of persons ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness. Therefore beloved, be zealous to be found by him without spot or blemish and at peace" (verses 11-14).

He then tells us Paul taught the same thing. "So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, speaking of this as he does in all his letters. There are some things in their hard to un-

derstand which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction... (verses 15-16).

They are headed for destruction, not universal salvation, says Peter. And what does Paul, whom they twist say?

Again we are informed God desires a man to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (I Tim. 2:4). But Paul uses the Greek word *thelo* which only expresses a wish or desire. It is the same word Paul used in I Thessalonians 4:13 ("But we would not have you ignorant") and Galatians 4:20-21 ("I would wish [KJV, *desire*] to be present with you... you who desire to be under [a human system of] law").

If God had decided that every one will eventually be saved, then why did He command man to make a choice? Why did He even create man with a mind able to choose? Why did He make man have to suffer all the trials of this life? Why didn't He just make us fully spirit Sons in the first place?

Man has to decide. He must choose. He must will to go God's way and resist going the way of sin and suffering if he wants immortality if — and only if — he chooses this way will God then give him freely, eternal life.

But what will happen to those who do not repent of sin to those who choose to go the way of sin and suffering? The apostle Paul answers: "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). And Jesus Christ said: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Do you notice that the two possible alternatives reveal opposite destinies — to perish on the one hand, or to receive "eternal life" on the other?

Raymond F. McMan

WHAT IS UNIVERSALISM?

"Universalism is the characteristic doctrine of those who believe that all souls will sometime be reconciled to God and that all will be saved. Advocates of this doctrine are found in nearly all denominations of Christians, and also among those who are not members of any church."

that the doctrine of universalism finally be rejected by the Christian Church. Universalism is a doctrine of despair as to the possibility of any man being saved. It is a doctrine of hopelessness.

God and the powers of the age to come, if they then commit apostasy, since they crucify the Son of God on their own account and hold him up to contempt . . . [their] end is to be burned."

Christ Reconciles to God. Perhaps the keystone of the universal salvation concept (or "universal reconciliation" as some prefer) is Colossians 1:19-20: "For in him [Christ] all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross."

Thus says the universalist. Christ has already made the entire reconciliation for every human that has ever lived, and not only for them but even for the creatures of heaven.

But there are several problems with this interpretation. First, the statement really is that God "was pleased to reconcile" mankind through Christ. It speaks of intent, of desire, of purpose. It does not state in an absolute sense that a reconciliation has actually been made between God and every person. In fact, the whole context shows plainly that such is not the case: "And you [you Christians, only those who are converted and serve God] he has now reconciled: provided that you continue in the faith . . ." (verses 21-23).

God, through Christ, has established the mechanism through which all could be reconciled. But reconciliation is a two-way street. Those who would be the recipients of God's grace must first accept the terms of reconciliation. They must accept Christ, who is the one and

only way into the Kingdom (John 14:6).

Second, the "whether on earth or in heaven" is a loosely inclusive expression not meant to specify a reconciliation of angels (as a matter of fact, those fallen angels or demons which might conceivably be subject to reconciliation are on earth, not in heaven). Rather, the expression is designedly broad enough not to exclude any human being who may come under Christ's atonement. It is a generalization intended to show the scope and magnitude of Christ's atoning sacrifice. The question of men being "in heaven" is not under discussion here.

Third, "all things" does not necessarily mean "all" in an absolute sense.

"All" Doesn't Always Mean "All." Like the English word "all," the Greek word (*pas, pany, pan*) may be absolute (including the entire universe) or limited (everything within certain parameters) or exaggerative (hyperbole for emphasis, not intended to be taken literally). As most readers will recognize, these three spheres of meaning are not due so much to the word itself or its root (and certainly not due to any dictionary's treatment of the word) as to the nature of language itself, semantics.

Says Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*: "There are many verses in which it simply corresponds to popular narrative style with the exaggeration still common today. A few examples should suffice. Thus we read of 'all Jerusalem' in Matt. 23, 'all Judea' in Matt. 3:5, 'all [hole] Syria' and 'all

[part] the sea' in Matt. 4:24. Here *pas* is not to be taken strictly. It is simply a popular way of denoting a great number" (p. 5, p. 696).

Some other examples? We read in Acts 19:10 that "all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord." Were there no exceptions among the entire population? If not, that's almost better than John's baptismal feat when there "went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan, and they were [all] baptized by him" (Matt. 3:5-6).

Ephesians 3:9 — if we take "all" in an absolute sense — seems to say that it was granted to the apostle Paul personally to reach every single human on the world with the gospel. And Colossians 1:23 even goes so far as to say that the gospel had already, in Paul's lifetime, been preached to every creature under heaven, and of which I. Paul, became a minister. (One might wonder just why the end, as prophesied in Matthew 24:14, has not yet come!)

Paul commanded the Philippians to "do all things" (Phil. 2:14). Now surely that would be both difficult and licentious! And think of poor Paul having to "endure everything" (1 Tim. 2:10).

What has been said here in reference to the universalists' use of Colossians 1:19, 20 will also suffice for the similar texts in Philippians 2:10-11 and Ephesians 1:9-10. There is no reason to believe that every animal's knee will bow, or tongue confess, as universalist doctrine would logically require. So neither is there reason to believe every man's (or angel's) knee and tongue will so respond, except those who, according to all the rest of the Bible, will be then alive and present. Even today the angels, faithful or fallen, acknowledge that Jesus is Lord (Matt. 8:29, 31; James 2:19). Paul's statement is a general one, meant to affirm that every knee will bow and tongue confess. But the question still remains — will some who bow the knee to Christ be saved, and others destroyed? The next article in this series will deal with this and other pertinent questions about universal salvation.

(To Be Continued)

RESURRECTION FROM THE LAKE OF FIRE

Universal salvation as a doctrine originates as the condemned but incomprehending "masses" of "condemned animals" in the question: "What about all these people who never had a chance for salvation, who have never heard of Jesus Christ? God couldn't just throw them into the lake of fire and that be it, could he?"

The truth is, God will give everyone a chance. The facts about that — going right on from the provision of salvation through the blood and death of Jesus Christ, the method for man's adherence to it, the teaching of the Church to provide "firstfruits" for salvation as the first resurrection, as Christ's rule in the millennium with the spread of spiritual knowledge (the "chance" for salvation) worldwide, through the resurrection of all to their chance who have ever died without it — are all shown in God's annual Holy Days (if you would like more information on this subject, write for our free booklet "The Holy Days — of God's 100 Days" which)

But the very producer of good and-evil from the first day, the example of a plant and the pots — Ps. 29, Job 12:15, 30:14; Jer. 18:6; Rom. 9:21. God can send to the gate of a garden of peace and life, a single seedling. A foot print.

God is producing here. We can become perfect, valuable products, worthy of love. It's up to us, for God has provided everything that we need to become so. Or we can refuse to become the sons. Or even being once become sons, we can deliberately drive him to the point indicated in a law found in Deut. 32:17-21. This law has been given and illustrates the

will of God — regarding the thinking and mind of God after what he has done. He has created a world and in creation created to deliver us an incomparable, rational man to a final human solution — to be restored to death. A final bodily solution to a similar situation will be much the same, except eternal. When we humans, after ample deliberation, elect from a criminal the ultimate penalty, we mean it to be final — and so will God.

If this were not also what God intends, He would have revealed in the Bible an "eternal" for the some form of immortality, not a lake of devoured and God is not that one.

In His infinite love and wisdom, God had planned that none will ever have to suffer endless unrepitible, forever wishing they could die, but never able to escape their misery. It was precisely for this reason that God made men alone, instead of animals in the beginning. Putting to a final, "second" death those who do not wish anything to be done for them, as the lake of fire. Eternal punishment for them at the hand of God is not a punishment.

Consider this: If God were to keep on producing, throwing the remaining "unrest" into the lake of fire, and resurrecting them, throwing in and resurrecting (as some occasionally irrationally believe, He will do), it would only harden the incorrigible character further. It would not change their minds and make them decide to repent. God would only be helping to harden their hearts as He helped harden the heart of the Pharaoh of the Exodus, by quickly removing each successive plague. (Read Exodus 7-11.) And He would only be making them more miserable.

And He and a "third death" would be too much. That is, a second death is just the same as the first. The "second" (not even fourth or last) death for the wicked (Rev. 20:14). This is how Christ could say of a very great act in God's plan: "... Death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more" (Rev. 21:4). No more losing the lake of fire! Some (hopefully only a few) are simply going to have to become "reconciling" with God, by being in a state of permanent nonexistence.

We read that there is a "lake of fire" which will "not be forgotten" in this age (Greek, also, in the age to come, Matt. 12:32). Why will it not be forgotten? Because "there is no more" remains a sacrifice for one who there is no other or other means of probation, either in this age or the next age, or any other age ever. Therefore, anyone who is once thrown into the lake of fire could have no chance of spiritual salvation — or even a life — even if granted a "third resurrection" in a hypothetical hypothetical "age" — but a fearful prospect of judgment (does remain) and a lake of fire which will consume the "obedient" (Job. 18:20-27).

For it is impossible to rescue again to regenerate those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit... if they then commit apostasy, since they clearly the Son of God on their own secure and hold him up to eternal scorn... and is to be "burned" (Heb. 6:4, 5, 9).

The Scriptures neither promise nor allow for universal salvation. If the righteous man is saved, saved, what will be the fate of the wicked (irreversible) since

Last month we reproduced the first part of a special report commissioned by Mr. Garner Ted Armstrong that explained the objectives and goals of the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation, with special emphasis on its relationship to the Work and to the Church. This month we feature the second part of the report, which focuses on the AICF's forthcoming new publication. Again, we would certainly appreciate any comments you have.

by Robert L. Kuhn and Stanley R. Rader

Many people have been wanting to know how our new publication is developing — who is involved in it, when it will be launched and what originally sparked off the concept of having such a new magazine. To answer these questions, we present the history of one of AICF's major projects. In addition, we would like to give you an insight into the field of commercial publishing and an update of current progress and plans.

The Paradox of Man

Herbert W. Armstrong has, as many around the world know, for many years been concerned with what man is and what man could become. On the one hand, it is obvious that humanity is plunging headlong into worldwide megaproblems that threaten our very existence. At the same time, man shows such tremendous capacity and creativity that it leaves us gasping at the incredible, paradox of it all. Even as we write, nuclear proliferation and international racial and religious warfare share the daily headlines with Viking 1 and 2 sitting on Mars, taking detailed photographs, scooping up and analyzing the soil, and sending all the results

back to earth. Such is the paradox of man. And it is this paradox that forms part of the premise for our new publication.

For years our organization's various media have shown the enormity of the world's problems. Now, we can focus on the other part of the paradox as well. Now we have the perfect complement — a magazine which emphasizes the greatness that man could achieve, the excellence potentially attainable, the incredible variety of human expression and human creativity available if we would only resolve our horrendous conflicts. It thereby shows man's need, although indirectly, for the Spirit of God. It's a goal worth striving for — truly, is there any other?

Mr. Armstrong, in his desire to share and applaud the incredible human potential, directed the Foundation to bring to Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena the greatest musical artists for a concert series reflecting the highest expression of the human spirit glorifying the Great God who created it. The results were phenomenal. But how could we bring the same intellectual, emotional, spiritual experience to others, around the world?

QUESTIONS

The answer was a magazine designed to convey the same inspirational theme of human excellence and human potential — thereby demonstrating again indirectly, the existence and character of God by the evidence of His incredible creations (Rom. 1:20).

The Positive Potential

The initial concept for publishing a major magazine was actually derived from several sources. First was Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong's long-standing commitment to publishing as a primary vehicle for reaching the general public with God's message. Second, we wanted to take the fresh creativity and inspiration of the Foundation, as expressed through its worldwide projects and cultural activities, and carry them to a larger audience through the print medium.

Third, Garner Ted Armstrong had long envisioned a publication which would be non-sectarian in nature, professional in concept and implementation, a publication that would accept advertising and convey important yet perhaps neglected information. Ted Armstrong has from time to time been critical of the media's general penchant for



only reporting bad news, tragedies and human misery by muckraking and appealing to the baser instincts of man. He has strongly advocated that the media, in order to permanently remain free of governmental controls, become more responsible in reporting, analysis, and choice of topics; become more cognizant of its powerful influence in the molding of public opinion, awareness and thought. Ted Armstrong, therefore, sees our new publication as an opportunity to reverse the trend and swim upstream, giving the public a new *responsible* source of information and entertainment — desperately needed and dramatically supplied. All the while, the magazine will represent, in a non-sectarian sense, everything the

Church believes regarding quality, dignity, achievement, the transcendence of man, the reach of the human mind and the inherent potential of human life.

Furthermore, by emphasizing both the spiritual nature — and the paradox — of man, the necessity for God's Spirit will *indirectly* be felt.

Man at His Best

Such a publication would also fully support the efforts of Mr. Herbert Armstrong in his meetings with leaders of government, education and business around the world. To graphically demonstrate the enormous accomplishments of man and his even greater potential available *if...* would enable all to more easily understand the vision Mr. Armstrong sees for mankind's future. Consequently, the magazine would have to be international in scope.

Of course, a magazine that was to show man at his best would also have to reflect state-of-the-art skills in publishing — conceptionally, editorially, artistically. It would have to be quality conscious in every respect. Yet it must not be either elitist or intellectual, but should rather appeal to all who could admire the best in life. Such a publication would also have to utilize the most efficient business practices of the

THE MAGAZINE OF HUMAN POTENTIAL

publishing industry. It would, of course, be a totally non-religious publication (in the traditional use of the term), yet would reflect the potential greatness of man that God Himself desires in every aspect of human life (John 10:10).

"Dummy" Issue

In mid-1975, the working title "Human Potential" was chosen and a mock-up "dummy" issue prepared. This was the first effort at expressing the basic concept in a physical, graphic way. Our first draft prospectus was printed on its first page. It has served admirably in showing everyone our commitment to produce a really superior publication. It also has been instrumental in obtaining the professional expertise that is necessary to make it a commercial success.

With the "dummy" issue in our hands, we began our search for the appropriate publishing professionals who would be welded into the tight, efficient team absolutely essential for the ultimate success of the venture. There are three basic functions involved in producing a magazine: 1) editorial, 2) circulation, 3) advertising. Each area needed real specialists to ensure the right results, and we searched for the best in each field: First on board was our primary publishing adviser, Mr. Arthur Murphy — one of the country's best known publishing consultants — especially knowledgeable in the launching of new magazines. Mr. Murphy was formerly a top executive — Vice President — at Time, Inc., where he helped launch *Sports Illustrated*, and was its publisher; he was also the General Manager of *Life* magazine and a close confidant of Henry Luce, etc. Mr. Murphy later became the President of *McCall's* and helped launch *Smithsonian*, one of the most successful publications of the 1970s.

SNEAK PREVIEW
ARTICLES TO APPEAR
IN UPCOMING
ISSUES OF QUEST '77

EVERYBODY'S EVEREST
Exclusive photographs
and eyewitness reports.

Philip Trimble

THE REAL MR. AMERICA
A reappraisal of Thomas
Jefferson, warts and all.

Max Lerner

FRESH FACTS
A brisk guide to the country's
newest winners, late bloomers
and talented upstarts.

Jed Horne

THE PRICE OF EXCELLENCE
Why does good so often
produce evil?

Ernest Becker

IS MAN WORTH SAVING?
Surprising answers from
surprising people.

Susan Messer

THRIVE, BABY, THRIVE
A day in the life of a country
pediatrician. Photographs
by Susan Szeaz.

Frederick Busch

Through Mr. Murphy's contacts and his own personal commitment, we retained some of the leading circulation experts in the industry, specializing in overall circulation building, direct mail techniques, newsstand sales, financial planning, computer projections, etc.

Editor Chosen

Of course, the most important position to fulfill was the editor. Mr. Herbert Armstrong told us in September 1975 that he wanted us to find the best possible individual for this crucial role — professionally outstanding, and fully identifying with the Foundation's original concept as expressed in our prospectus.

Over the next months, we discussed a large number of individuals with Mr. Murphy and others, interviewed many, worked with some — several of whom are very well known in the publishing industry. It was a difficult decision — primarily because of the necessity for the editor to reflect the expression of human potential as we saw it. The editor must have the freedom and latitude to do his job efficiently and creatively. Therefore he must want to produce the magazine the publishers want. It was an excruciatingly laborious process.

When we first met Mr. Robert Shnayerson, we quickly knew that he was fully able to make our concept a reality. Mr. Shnayerson's grasp of the concept was so identical to our own that it was merely a formality to confidently delegate to him the editorial leadership necessary for him to produce, as he puts it, "the best magazine in the world." We at the Foundation gave him our total support, and we are extremely delighted to have such a talented individual of proven excellence in the editorial field to handle our project.

Title Changed

In the months that followed, an enormous amount of work has been done. For one, we have changed our title from "Human Potential" to "QUEST/77 - the Magazine of Human Potential" (to be updated each year, i.e., "QUEST/78," etc.). This resulted from research and testing through direct mail and "focus group" (personal interview) studies. Although performing quite well in the tough world of commercial publishing, the title "Human Potential" apparently was attracting a psychology-oriented/intellectually elite audience: e.g., readers of *Psychology Today*, *Human Behavior*, *Commentary*, etc. The market we desired should transcend this influential but limited strata of society.

In fact, the concept of the magazine was significantly outrunning the initial effectiveness of its title. Part of the reason for this bias was thought to be the so-called "Human Potential Movement" - a loose amalgam of self-improvement programs, eastern philosophy, and the attaining of "higher states of consciousness" through drugs, exercise, diet, deprivation, breathing and meditation in all its multifarious forms. The association with the name "Human Potential" was there - and our market research confirmed it. Furthermore, both our editor, Mr. Shnayerson, and our publishing consultant, Mr. Murphy, intuitively felt that "Quest 77" (especially as it has been designed for the magazine logo) will crisply convey our purpose as well as be attractive to a substantially larger "universe" of potential subscribers.

Pursuit of Excellence

Following are some excerpts from material by Mr. Shnayerson describing our forthcoming publication:

For 20 years I helped edit three of the world's best magazines: *Time*, *Life* and *Harper's*. Last spring, after five years as editor-in-chief of *Harper's*, I took a hard look at my profession.

Journalism had trained me to assume that every day in every way, things were getting worse and worse. I enjoyed that notion. Yet all around me was contrary evidence. New lifestyles, inventions, works of art, world records. The quiet heroism of ordinary people coping, healing, teaching. The unknown, best and brightest in a billion corners of the earth - unknown because good news isn't news.

I'm tired of journalistic myopia.

**To enjoy human excellence.
To seek it, explain it,
teach it. To show high
performance in all arts,
skill, and roles that reflect
man's possibilities.
To share the pleasure of
watching mastery in action.**

Fed up with publications that appeal to our worst instincts. Let other editors drag readers through cesspools of mediocrity. I'm interested in people as they really are - and could become.

QUEST/77 is about the pursuit of excellence; it offers a fresh look at the human condition. It takes a sophisticated stand against fashionable despair and disengagement. With drama, humor and zest, it argues that happiness lies in squandering ourselves for a good purpose. It brings us back to life, back to our senses, the full use of our minds, bodies and emotions. It asks: Who among us is admirable and why? What in our lives is still wonderful, worth celebrating, still excellent?

To enjoy human excellence. To seek it, explain it, teach it. To show

high performance in all arts, skill, and roles that reflect man's possibilities. To share the pleasure of watching mastery in action.

To prove that human excellence can be a fact, not a dream. Thus to challenge all individuals to respond to the potential in themselves and others.

To explore man's limits on the most remote frontiers of human potential, from tiny molecules to vast galaxies. To argue that man's future can be far longer than his past. To lead in the sharing of a future that belongs to builders, not destroyers.

To stand against blind pessimism, despair, and decay. To take the measure of man and find whatever is worth nurturing. Thus to open man's eyes to things as they could become.

Thus to satisfy man's hunger for meaning and give purpose to individual lives. Thus to rekindle the human spirit, the integrity of the self; the otherness of others.

QUEST/77 is the first magazine to focus directly on mankind's possibilities with all the wit, clarity and sensibility that this great subject demands. A superb-looking bimonthly - crisp, elegant, richly illustrated in color - it combines the literary quality of the *New Yorker*, the exciting photographs of *Life* and the lush graphics of *Audubon*. It appeals to every person who wants to excel, every person in quest of the larger self that lurks within him.

QUEST/77 won't promise to make you healthy, wealthy, or wise; beautiful, strong or sexy. It won't claim to do for you what only you can do for yourself. It will show you the best in everything from art to humor, science to sports. It will leave you exhilarated by your own possibilities, or at least enchanted by the performances of others.

Calling people in demanding occupations: athletes, scientists, govern-

ists, actors, inventors, painters, surgeons, explorers — not excluding feisty eccentrics who create their own worlds.

Gallant people who personify style, spirit and substance. Free people who value excellence for its own sake ahead of fame, money or safety. Honest people who refuse to cheat, sell out or betray themselves. Joyful people who seize life and never settle for second best.

All people, famous or obscure, whose achievements bolster our courage, advance our knowledge, delight our minds and refresh the human spirit.

QUEST/77 relishes adventure. Epic rescues. Solo voyages. Treasure hunts. Business comebacks. Mystical experiences. It reveals the human stories behind great inventions like the transistor. Finds the next Bruce Jenner and describes his lonely training for the next Olympic decathlon. It introduces a Japanese daredevil who plans to dog sled alone across the Antarctic. Tells you about other quixotic characters who keep trying to fly the Atlantic in balloons. It explores the most remote frontiers of human potential, from genetic engineering to space colonization.

QUEST/77 celebrates grace under pressure: the examined life is one of its constant themes. Who among us is astoundingly immune to fear, hate, envy, moral cowardice? What accounts for the agelessness of some beautiful women and great old men? In our pages you'll read the moving words of a dying painter who spurned easy money in favor of artistic freedom. You'll meet brave Latin American policemen who secretly resist orders to torture political prisoners. You'll share the reflections of a leading U.S. politician who decided he'd rather be a reformed alcoholic than a presidential candidate. You'll meet all sorts of people who have

survived life crises, public ordeals, imprisonment, fall from wealth or power. People who've hit bottom and bounced back setting examples of resilience for all of us.

QUEST/77 asks the world's finest writers and photographers to describe things they honestly admire, preferably on the basis of personal experience. All kinds of things: ideas, places, crafts, rituals and customs; examples of artistic integrity, moral courage and intellectual elegance. We'll print informed opinions about the "best" wines, beaches and airlines — as well as the "best" poets, philosophers and presidents. We'll give you practical information about sex, health, food and chil-

To stand against blind pessimism, despair, and decay. To take the measure of man and find whatever is worth nurturing. Thus to open man's eyes to things as they could become.

dren. At the same time, we'll demand the highest standards of taste, writing and performance. We'll apply rigorous critical judgment not only to books and films but also to new fads, laws, buildings, scientific discoveries, political speeches, peace treaties, athletic performances and Supreme Court decisions. We'll "review" such things in order to explain why they're excellent or how they could have been. We will seize every opportunity to draw distinctions and puncture nonsense. We will unabashedly separate the best from the worst in all callings, trades and objects.

The first issue of QUEST/77 will appear in early 1977 and I'm determined to make it so memorable that you'll be torn between displaying it on your coffee table as a collector's

item and cutting it to pieces to send clippings to your friends. The preliminary contents already include:

- A special 16-page section on courage.

- New ways of childbirth: a photo essay... New York's street eccentrics: another photo essay... Green liberation: how ex-city women are faring in the country as self-subsistent farmers... Eras in history: In what past era were men and women sexually most compatible?

- Plus: Max Lerner on Thomas Jefferson, America's only philosopher-king... Frederick Busch: a day in the life of a country pediatrician... George Plimpton on the art of football coaching... Stan Lee on why he invented Spider-Man... Carl Sagan: the effects on man of searching for life on other planets... Paul Goldberger: America's top best designed buildings... J. B. Rhine on his 50-year search to prove the existence of extrasensory perception... Harold Schonberg: how to raise a musical prodigy.

QUEST/77 may awe you — achievement does that — but it will never bore you. It will be realistic, entertaining — full of lively writing, great pictures, good thinking and a sense of playfulness.

If you're ready for a new magazine that talks up to its readers, not down to them... embodies the excellence it celebrates... provides a relief from slackness and slobbism... makes you feel larger, not smaller... then you're ready for QUEST/77.

Experience and Expertise

With the appointment of the editor, we quickly found an appropriate office in New York in which are housed editorial and advertising personnel.

UPDATE

Further appointments were made by Mr. Shrayerson. Managing Editor: Molly McCaughan, the former managing editor of the prestigious *Paris Review*; Art Director: Noel Werrett, well-known designer for various magazines, including *Psychology Today*, *Car and Driver*, *Art News*, *Motor Boating*. Associate Editor: Jed Horne, who recently joined our staff from *People* magazine where he held a similar position. Photo Consultant: John Morris, formerly of *Life* and picture editor of the *New York Times*; Editorial Advisers include: T. George Harris, the former editor-in-chief of *Psychology Today* and Tony Jones of *Harper's*.

On the circulation front we retained Wendell Forbes (formerly circulation director at *Life*) and on his recommendation Jack Ladd, formerly of *Time* and *Saturday Review*. Mr. Ladd has been very active in helping us form our circulation objectives and bringing together the foremost magazine copy writers for our direct mail program. In fact, our initial test results for *Quest/77* have been phenomenal.

International in Scope

The excitement generated by *QUEST/77* is especially strong in the United Kingdom, where we expect television/media promotion and newsstand sales to make us nationally known. Frank Brown, director of our European operations, has been extremely active in putting together a small team, comprising some of Britain's most recognized and respected publishing professionals. We have recently finalized the positions of Publishing Consultant, European Editor, and Circulation Director, the latter having fulfilled a similar role for *Reader's*

Digest circulation throughout the United Kingdom, Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

In Britain, it is planned that members of Parliament and leaders of British industry will be introduced to the magazine through our high level publishing and public relations people to ensure that *QUEST/77* gets into the hands of the most important and influential people in Europe. The international aspects of the publication are among our top priorities. Plans are being made to eventually launch the magazine in many countries around the world.

Reaction to *QUEST* from South Africa — as reported by Mr. Bob

QUEST 77 may awe you — achievement does that — but it will never bore you. It will be realistic, entertaining — full of lively writing, great pictures, good thinking and a sense of playfulness.

Fahey — has been equally enthusiastic. They are really looking forward to a successful frontline publication to follow up — and expand upon — Mr. Armstrong's widely known initial contacts.

Other Team Members

Our internal publishing team in Pasadena is international in scope, qualified and dedicated both to our overall work and to the concept and the success of the magazine. The Director, Jack Martin, has been active in publishing, having set up the entire *Plain Truth* newsstand program in the United Kingdom and Europe. The Business Manager, Ray Wright, was formerly director of operations for *Texas Instruments*

in Europe. Other staff members include Gene Hughes, formerly business manager and publishing director of our operations in Australia; Roger Lippross, director of printing services in Pasadena; Mike Linacre, computer analyst; and Mark Armstrong, recently returned from Jerusalem where he was our correspondent.

February '77 Launch Date

After spending several months with professionals in all phases of publishing both in the United States and in Europe, Mr. Martin reports that "One of the most rewarding comments that we often hear from members of the publishing industry is the originality of the concept of *QUEST/77* — *The Magazine of Human Potential*. With most other publications presenting the negative aspects of humanity, there is a real need for a more positive, uplifting magazine that will show man what life could really be like if only he could sort himself out.

The contents for the premier issue are now being planned in our New York office. When asked about the launch, Mr. Shrayerson commented that the magazine's first issue must be absolutely superb. Like a play on Broadway, the opening must be great.

The editor is aiming for a February '77 launch date. One thing is for sure, we have the right concept with the right people at the right moment — to make AICF's debut into publishing a thoroughly momentous and successful event.

QUEST/77 — *The Magazine of Human Potential* will truly present to the world what Herbert W. Armstrong has represented for over 40 years — and what he is currently bringing before world leaders and ordinary citizens alike — with all the dignity, quality, appeal, relevance, importance, and true spirituality that has been his hallmark. □

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by D. Paul Graunke

MEDITATION AND MANTRAS PARADISE REGAINED?

East is East and West is West, but never the twain shall meet," wrote Rudyard Kipling in 1889. But times have changed. Today East and West are meeting on many levels. For several decades the rendezvous was in the Orient as Middle and Far Eastern countries acquired Western technology and styles and in limited numbers became converts of Western religions. But in the past decade, the rendezvous has also occurred in the West as tens of thousands of students, artists, movie stars, and just plain folks have taken a phenomenal interest in Eastern cultures — particularly Eastern religion and philosophy.

TM Technique. Nowhere is this meeting of East and West better exemplified than in the current rage for Eastern meditation. There are many Eastern meditation traditions, but by far the most popular in the West is Transcendental Meditation promulgated by Guru Maharishi Maheshi Yogi. The key to TM's success is that the meditation technique has been adapted to Western proclivities, and the philosophy and goals have been translated into terms more palatable to the Western mind. This makes it one of the easier meditation techniques to understand and learn — an important consideration for Westerners who are inclined to want easy, instant everything.

The technique involves the meditator sitting upright in a comfortable position, closing his eyes, and silently repeating a mantra, a few syllables drawn from the Vedas (Hindu holy books) and chosen for the effect of the sound rather than for the meaning. Each meditator is given his own special mantra, and

he is not supposed to divulge it to others.

If the meditator is proficient, his mantra will eventually become so refined that the sound will cease and so will his thoughts. The mind will "transcend" the divided consciousness of everyday awareness and achieve a higher consciousness where one can experience the "pure awareness."

The theory behind TM, according to literature put out by the Maharishi International University, is that "creativity is the cause of change and is present everywhere at all times. Intelligence is the basic quality of existence exemplified in the purpose and order of change. The single and branching flow of energy (creativity) and directedness (intelligence) is called creative intelligence.

"The Science of Creative Intelligence is the knowledge of the nature, origin, range, growth and application of creative intelligence.... The practical aspect of this science is a technique of proven efficacy [Transcendental Meditation] which allows the individual systematically to enjoy increasingly refined states of awareness until its pure state, the field of pure intelligence, is reached."

High Hopes. To buttress their argument, the International Meditation Society (IMS), one of several official organizations that spreads the word on TM, has collected reams of surveys and research reports on the effects of meditation. For example, IMS claims that meditation causes metabolic activity to drop as much as twenty percent during practice, and tracings of brain waves and galvanic skin response indicate a state

MEDITATION IN THE BIBLE

The TM meditation technique is not the same kind of meditation referred to in the Bible. Meditation, biblically defined, is not an attempt to produce an "altered state" of consciousness. Rather it is an active mental exercise — a pondering or thinking on God's ways, His laws, His greatness, and one's relationship to Him. Following are some examples of this type of meditation.

Psalm 1:1-2. "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night."

Psalm 63:5-6. "My soul is feasted as with marrow and fat, and my mouth praises thee with joyful lips, when I think of thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the watches of the night."

Psalm 77:11-12. "I will call to mind the deeds of the Lord, yea, I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate on all thy work, and muse on thy mighty deeds."

Psalm 119:15. "I will meditate on thy precepts, and fix my eyes on thy ways."

Psalm 119:23. "Even though princes sit plotting against me, thy servant will meditate on thy statutes."

Psalm 119:48, 58. "I revere thy commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on thy statutes . . . When I think of thy ways, I turn my feet to thy testimonies."

Psalm 119:78. "Let the godless be put to shame, because they have subverted me with guile; as for me, I will meditate on thy precepts."

Psalm 119:87, 88. "Oh, how I

love thy law! It is my meditation all the day . . . I have more understanding than all my teachers, for thy testimonies are my meditation."

Psalm 138:17. "How precious to me are thy thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I would count them, they are more than the sand."

Psalm 143:5. "I remember the days of old, I meditate on all that thou hast done, I muse on what thy hands have wrought."

1 Timothy 4:13-15. "Till I come, attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the elders laid their hands upon you. Practice [KJV "meditate upon"] these duties, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress."

of calm and alert wakefulness. In other words, TM helps a person to relax.

But that is only the beginning of its benefits, according to IMS. TM is purported to effect a wide range of positive changes in human health, personality, intelligence and performance.

TM devotees have high hopes for their brand of higher consciousness. The Maharishi has proclaimed a "World Plan" with such goals as "to maximize the intelligent use of the environment" and "to eliminate the age-old problem of crime and all behavior that brings unhappiness to man."

To achieve these idealistic goals, the Maharishi has established 3,600 teacher-training centers for 3.6 million teachers in order to reach the world's approximately 3.6 billion people. (The population has since passed the four billion mark.) This formula is based on what TMers call the "Maharishi effect": the belief that one percent of the population meditating will have a salutary impact on the rest. This effect was

demonstrated, they say, by a survey of 240 American cities where at least one percent are meditators: crime dropped an average of seventeen percent.

Clearly their "World Plan" is a utopian vision, a prospect of paradise regained for a meditating world. But can TM really deliver such idealistic results? Is the Science of Creative Intelligence really scientifically based? For that matter, is the Transcendental Meditation experience for real?

Technique is Not Unique. To answer the last question first: yes, TM is for real. The meditator actually experiences an altered state of awareness or consciousness. But TM has no corner on the market, neither in its technique nor in the experience of altered awareness. TM is merely one of several Hindu yoga traditions that use mantra meditation. Furthermore, Jewish and Christian mystical sects have used the technique of meditating on syllables or words for centuries.

Yet, declares one official TM booklet: "Transcendental Medi-

tation is clearly a major scientific discovery. The practice itself is unique."

What is unique about TM is that it is promoted as part of a scientific discipline — the "Science of Creative Intelligence" — rather than a mystical or religious discipline. This makes good marketing sense. Science is the religion of Western society, scientists are high priests, and computer printouts are holy writ. To be able to say, "Science has proven . . ." is to bestow the most effective endorsement of a product's authenticity and worth.

The TM organization is engaged in an extraordinary effort to acquire that endorsement. They have published scores of testimonials and results of laboratory experiments (their own and independent projects) to persuade the skeptical mind, and more experiments under their auspices are in the offing. In addition, the Maharishi has sponsored numerous conferences and seminars to pool experiences, knowledge and faith in TM.

Only a Science? To hear them tell it,

scientific correlation of TM's efficacy is certain and substantial; the concrete evidence just keeps piling up. What they don't tell you is that a growing number of independent studies on TM challenge the "scientific evidence" of TM's results. Many scientists have criticized the highly touted favorable reports for using sloppy methodology, imprecise terminology and arbitrary definitions as well as jumping to unwarranted conclusions. They point out that many of the supposed benefits of TM are highly subjective and difficult if not impossible to quantify in terms of numbers, graphs, or waves on an electroencephalogram.

The "scientific claims" for TM's benefits are hotly disputed. And so is the movement's claim that it is strictly a science — not a religion. Penetrate the outward facade of scientific jargon, and you find that Hindu religious traditions are the foundation and superstructure upon which the TM movement is built.

The first clues come when you are told to bring a clean handkerchief, some sweet fruit, and some flowers to the initiation ceremony, along with your course fee. At the ceremony itself the teacher performs a ritual that includes the singing of a song in praise to Guru Dev (the Maharishi's teacher), earlier teachers, and sundry Hindu deities. Then the initiate is given his mantra, chosen from the Vedas, and told not to divulge it to others. If TM is strictly a science, why the insistence on Hindu ritualism? Why bow before a picture of Guru Dev and a representation of the Hindu Trimurti of gods, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva? Why recite a hymn in Sanskrit? Why select syllables from the Vedas? Why keep your mantra a secret?

The influence of Hindu religious thought goes far beyond the matter of the initiation ritual. Beneath the Western terminology and scientific jargon of the TM philosophy is a concept of mind and existence also derived from Hindu theology.

The Maharishi believes in a concept of seven states of consciousness that one must tentatively accept to operate and advance within the TM framework. Dreamless sleep, dreaming, and wakefulness constitute the first three. Transcendental

consciousness, the state of pure awareness, is the fourth state and the first one novitiates of TM enter. But to achieve complete enlightenment, the Maharishi believes it is necessary to ascend to the seventh state — Unity with the Absolute. This absolute is defined by some as a mass of undifferentiated, universal consciousness.

In TM literature, it is called by the quasi-scientific term of "the field of pure intelligence."

Conflict and Challenge. This conceptualization conflicts with many traditional Christian views. In fact, it was the permeation of TM with Hindu theology that has enabled a couple of Christian groups in California to mount successful legal challenges to TM from becoming a required course in public schools.

The Bible teaches that enlight-

But TM has no corner on the market, neither in its technique nor in the experience of altered awareness.

enment and spiritual growth is a matter of a state of grace, not a state of consciousness. Spiritual insight comes through the gift of the Holy Spirit, and Christians are to be united with Christ, not an absolute. The Bible speaks of meditation — but it is totally different from TM. In biblical contexts, meditation is focused on God's laws and ways — not a mantra.

Christ spoke of a unity, a special relationship people were to have with Him and the Father: "If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him" (John 14:23). This is a relationship with personal divine Beings — not an undifferentiated mass of consciousness.

The Bible speaks of higher knowledge and spiritual understanding

coming from Christ through the Holy Spirit — not mantra meditation. The apostle Paul writes of how he strove in order that the Colossians might "have all the riches of assured understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:2-3).

And to the Corinthians Paul wrote that "we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God. . . . For what person knows a man's thoughts except the spirit of the man which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us, by God" (1 Cor. 2:7, 11-12).

In summary, the TM meditation technique isn't the same kind of meditation referred to in the Bible. The attendant rituals, ceremonies and mystical teachings of TM are derived from Hinduism and clearly conflict with the Christian concept of worship, existence and growth.

But TM succeeds — or appears to succeed — where contemporary Christianity so often fails. It fills a spiritual void in people's lives. As innumerable commentators have observed, Western man lives in physical abundance — but spiritual poverty. People are searching for meaning and values on which to build their lives. Many realize that man does not live by bread alone. He needs purposes and goals that transcend the day-to-day needs of a physical existence. But they have rejected standard-brand Christianity because of real and imagined failures.

The ultimate challenge for Christianity is to make its teaching relevant to the problems and concerns of this age. It must fulfill its age-old purpose and put man back into contact with his Creator. It must show man why paradise was lost, and how it can truly be regained.

For a further look at these important issues, write for our free booklets *What Do You Mean . . . Salvation?* and *Why Were You Born?* They provide answers that fill the spiritual void so prevalent in the world today. □

Until the fourth century A.D., Christians did not celebrate the birth of Christ. The early church recognized that the most important days of Christ's life were those of His death and resurrection, hence they placed little or no emphasis on the day of His birth. The New Testament nowhere commands Christians to observe Christ's birthday, nor is there any example of the apostles observing it. The Gospel accounts do not provide enough information to be certain of the time of year (much less the day) when Jesus Christ was actually born, and the early church did not have the information.

Nevertheless, many Christian writers, early and late, have tried to determine the day on which Christ was born. Unfortunately, however, their dates must be regarded as pure speculation: one writer came up with March 28 as the day, others decided on April 19 or May 20. Most preferred the spring because they believed that since Christ died in the spring He had to be born in the spring. But others selected dates in the fall or winter.

Perhaps needless to say, the church as a whole paid little attention to these various dates. Among others, Origen of Alexandria (circa A.D. 200), one of the most famous of early Christian writers, objected to the celebration of any birthday at all, pointing out that in the Bible only the heathen celebrated birthdays. Others ridiculed the idea of even trying to find out the time of Christ's birth.

Birth or Baptism? In some areas, the church did celebrate an event of Jesus' life besides His death and resurrection. This was His baptism. Some Christian groups decided on

January 6 as the day for this observance. Why did they select this date? Historians point out that a pagan feast of Dionysus, the Greek god of wine and revelry, was celebrated on January 6, and was associated with the lengthening of the day. Also, in Egypt, January 6, was observed as the birth of the pagan god Aeon as well as being the special day of Osiris. It is virtually certain that the date of January 6 was originally selected because of the pagan worship connected with it.

celebrated as Christ's birthday, that event was commemorated on January 6.

Constantine the Pagan. For the first two centuries of its existence, the church had grown slowly. Christianity in many areas of the Roman Empire was an illegal religion, and persecution of Christians was common.

The reign of the emperor Constantine (A.D. 311-337) changed the situation. Constantine recognized that continued persecution would serve no purpose, and in his Edict of Milan (313) proclaimed freedom of worship for Christians. Later, Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire. However, Constantine himself long remained a pagan, a sun worshiper, and sought to perpetuate a blend of Christianity and sun worship by designating the "day of the Sun" (Sunday) on which most Christians commemorated the death of Christ by a "communion" or "Eucharist," as the official weekly day of rest of the Roman Empire.

Constantine's legislation led many thousands of people to convert to Christianity—people who had previously been involved in Roman sun worship, especially the worship of the god Mithras, a sun god of Persian origin. Interestingly, the chief day of the year honoring the sun (*sol invictus*, "the unconquered sun") was December 25!

On to Rome. The Christian church at Rome was now experiencing a dramatic influx of people newly converted from pagan sun worship and Mithraism. Doubtless many of these converts wished to continue their celebrations around the end of December. Besides December 25, the preceding week, December 17-24, was the time of the Roman *Saturnalia*, a time of jubilant celebration, of eating and drinking.

In the minds of many, Christmas is the most important Christian holiday. Yet the facts of history show that this day and the celebrations which surround it are little more than a perpetuation of ancient Roman paganism!

by Scott G. Rothwell

Perhaps some Christians hoped that pagan converts would be more attracted to the church if it could offer them a festival honoring Christ at the same time as their previous pagan celebrations.

At any event, the date of January 6 spread through the eastern part of the early church as the celebration of Christ's baptism. Eventually the day became associated also with Christ's birth—the night of the 5th-6th honoring His birth, and the day of the 6th honoring His baptism. Thus long before December 25 was

partying and love-making. Such popular celebrations die hard.

At the same time, because of various theological disputes, certain parts of the church no longer wished to continue celebrating the baptism and birth of Christ at the same time their opponents did, January 6th. A new date had to be found on which to celebrate the birth of Christ. What better time than December 25, already the date of Mithraic sun worship celebrations and immediately following Saturnalia? The selection of December 25 as a major "Christian" festival would bring in many more converts to the church. So sometime in the middle of the fourth century A.D., probably in 354, Christmas was first celebrated in Rome on December 25.

To be sure, no Christian churchman of the day went so far as to admit that December 25 was deliberately chosen because of the pagan celebrations surrounding that date! Yet from their comments we can be sure the matter of sun worship was one of the motivations on their minds. Ambrose (c. A.D. 340-397), bishop of Milan, said in one of his sermons in which he contrasted paganism and Christianity, "Christ is our new sun!" However it seems the ordinary worshiper had some difficulty making the transition. Thus Pope Leo the Great (A.D. 440-461) had to rebuke those who celebrated Christmas as the birth of the sun instead of that of Christ. And even a considerable time later, Augustine (flourished c. 600) still found it necessary to urge "Christians" not to worship the sun on that day, but rather Him who created the sun. Clearly, the observance of December 25 had been strongly influenced by sun worship.

This type of evidence, as well as other facts, has led many scholars to conclude that the adoption by the

church of December 25 as a celebration of the birth of Christ was a deliberate borrowing from paganism. One scholar concluded: "... The festival of Christ's birth was changed over to December 25th, the great festival of the sun. Christ's birth was now linked up with the sun on December 25th in the same way as his resurrection with Sunday (the day of the sun)" (Cullman, *The Early Church*, p. 32).

Furthermore, not only was the date of worship of a pagan festival



ST. NICHOLAS presides over rites of December Saturnalia rebaptized under the name of Christmas.

Editorial Pictures

Christian observance, but the manner of observance as well. The pagan Roman practices of the Saturnalia (December 17-24), as well as the day of the "unconquered sun" (December 25), were perpetuated in the church, doubtless by the new converts from paganism. (Later, Germanic customs were blended with Roman practice.)

The same scholar noted: "Admonitions like those of Augustine and Pope Leo had now clearly become necessary, for this deeply rooted pagan festival of the 'unconquered sun god' did not, in fact, simply disappear but persisted in many practices which passed over into the Christian festival" (*ibid.*). Thus a pagan celebration became a "Christian observance. Some churches in the East, however, continued for many years to observe January 6; the Armenian church to this day continues to observe that date.

Meaning for Today. What does this often dry history mean for the modern Christian? Is Christmas a truly Christian observance honoring the Son of God? From the evidence presented here it is apparent that the selection of the date of December 25 by the church in the fourth century was heavily influenced by pagan Roman sun worship. Furthermore, many of the customs surrounding the modern celebration of Christmas derive from pagan Germanic or Roman practices. Christmas as observed by most does not in reality honor the Son of God, but rather the customs and the celebratory themselves, partying, revelry, the exchange of gifts.

Since the earliest church did not even deem the birth of Christ

of enough importance to preserve its date (assuming it was even known) one should ask how relevant any such observance could really be in a Christian's life today. Rather than honoring Christ, one would also have to ask if Christmas, as it is presently celebrated and given its pagan origins, does not in fact *dishonor* Him.

For more evidence that Christmas is not Christian, request our free booklet *The Plain Truth About Christmas* (see inside front cover for the address nearest you). □

WHAT IS REAL SPIRITUALITY? OR HOW TO DEAL WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE FAULTS

By Eldert Arian

Galatians 6:1 reads: "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. But how do you know if you're spiritual or not? And once you do know, how do you go about "restoring" your erring brother?"

What does it really mean to be "spiritual"? "Spirituality" can mean different things to different people. Some think the mark of a spiritual person is somber clothing — black suit, white shirt (maybe with the collar turned around backwards), and dark square-toed shoes. To others, the mark of real spirituality is a certain type of speech, liberally laced with expressions like "thine," "thou," "brother and sister," and "Praise the

Lord." Others feel that a truly "spiritual" person is one who would never laugh too much.

The Bible Definition. But are these outward signs marks of real spirituality? What is the Bible's definition? Romans 8:6 reads: "To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, indeed it cannot; and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God really dwells in you."

Notice, to "set the mind on the flesh is death," but "to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace." In other words, to be physically minded, to think like the average, normal fun-of-the-mill human being is death. As Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25 state: "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death." But in contrast to "set the mind on the Spirit," to be truly spiritual is to live in a way that produces life.

But how does one go about producing life? Is there an example to follow?

We would all have to admit that if anyone in the whole of human history was spiritual, that someone was Jesus Christ. He was spiritual when He walked this earth in the flesh and is now spiritual in His totality. Christ announced that His purpose, His reason for being here, was so that we could "have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). Christ's whole intent, His whole purpose and ministry, was to do the thing that produced life for others. His life was an example that you should follow (in his steps) (1 Peter 2:21). So a truly spiritual person will follow Christ. **Do the things that produce life in himself and others.**

The Practical Application. But why exactly was Christ's approach? What specific things is a person supposed to do to produce this kind of life? It has a lot to do with how one relates to other human beings who have faults and shortcomings.

And who is utterly without faults? Human beings seeing a person with a fault, don't often react with total spirituality. The natural reaction is

not to consider how to help this person do the things that produce life — far from it!

Suppose you or I come across a person who has a fault — not a minor fault like clipping his fingernails in church when he ought to be listening, but a really big one. Maybe he drinks too much, or is a fornicator, or a thief, or maybe he stretches the truth, or is the worst gossip who ever bit air. You know what the natural response to such a person tends to be? A feeling of superiority — thoughts like "I'm above that kind of thing!" Indignation. Looking down the nose. Disgust. Avoidance. Even loathing and hatred — or joy in finding another juicy tidbit to pass along the grapevine.

To illustrate the point: Say there is in your neighborhood or your church congregation a young lady, perhaps a teenage girl. She has been going out with the wrong crowd, perhaps drinking too much, and she's gotten herself in trouble.

What is your reaction? Would it be hard for you to accept someone like that? Could you treat her just like you would any other Christian sister who has sinned (and how many human beings do you know who haven't)? Now maybe she hasn't come up and given a confessional in front of the entire congregation, beating her chest and rolling in the dust or maybe throwing ashes in the air. But she has gone before her God in a private place of prayer and repented in bitterness and tears.

Now be honest with yourself. What would your reaction be? **Who is without sin?** Once you've honestly answered the above question, compare your projected behavior to that of Jesus Christ in a similar situation. John 8 records how Christ was accosted by a group of super-righteous scribes and Pharisees in the Temple. They brought before Him a woman who had been caught in adultery. Now you wonder how these fellows happened to catch her, but that beside the point. Trying to trap Christ into contradicting the Mosaic law, they inquired: "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such. What do you say

about her?" And Jesus, in His wisdom, at first ignored them, but finally replied: "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." And when they heard this, "they went away, one by one. . . ."

Then what did Christ do? Did He say: "Woman, you've really sinned — and we're going to put you on the rack and stretch you from here to next Sunday! And you're going to pay! Boy, are you going to pay! You're going to wish you'd never done that!" That's not what He said, is it?

If there was anyone on the face of this earth who would have been justified in putting that woman to death, it would have been God in the flesh, Jesus Christ. But this illustrates that punishment was *not* what Jesus Christ desired. That wasn't His purpose. He said rather: "Neither do I condemn you; go, and do not sin again."

He didn't spend hours counseling her, but He did give some very succinct advice *that would produce life*. He said to go and live in the way that produces not only fun and enjoyment and happiness in this life, but life forever. He didn't look down His nose. He didn't stand up in righteous indignation and pull up His robes and start running toward the hills screaming, "Sin! Sin!" He didn't go to the Pharisees and stand on the corner in the marketplace and begin to spread the whole story all over Jerusalem. He did what was best for her at that time — He extended *mercy and kindness and forgiveness*.

Does God Delight in Punishment? What would *your* reaction have been? How, does it compare? We as human beings like to see "justice" done. We like to see people punished, especially if the fault or sin has somehow impinged on our freedom, hurt us, or taken something away from us. The natural reaction is, "Boy, I hope they get theirs!"

Here is another illustration: Say someone you know has been gossiping about you for years. You can't make a false move without it being broadcast all over the county.

Then this individual goes on vacation one year, and comes back to

find his home has been broken into. Burglars have walked off with everything up to and including the kitchen sink. You hear about it, and you get this inward feeling of glee. You're bubbling over with happiness and comfort and joy in their adversity. God has finally avenged you.

But is that the way God works? He does *allow* a lot of things to happen — time and chance happen to everybody. But God says He doesn't even take delight in the death of a wicked person. It doesn't make Him happy to see misfortune happen to anyone. He says: "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked *turn from his way and live*" (Ezek. 33:11).

The basic point is that God's primary purpose is not punishment for wrongdoing. He didn't create humanity with the potential for evil, just so He could sit on the edge of His throne with some sort of spiritual flyswatter waiting to go swoof! "gotcha!" everytime somebody gets a little out of line. But sometimes we human beings reason this way.

We don't think of punishment like God does. God uses punishment as a tool — as mercy. He allows punishment to take place to get an individual to look at his or her actions and evaluate them.

When people find themselves in a tight situation, they don't like it. Their next logical step is to sit down and try to figure out what went wrong — what they did to produce the situation they are in. Maybe the situation isn't their fault — but then again maybe they can say, "I did this, and I did that, and now I'm in this great, huge, ugly mess that won't go away." God wants that person to stop and think about the way they are living, and to repent and start living His way.

That is the main reason for punishment — to cause pain, because without pain we would all continue living the way that produces eternal death. So the pain is there, but it's there to produce life.

How to Help. Now how can we apply God's thinking to our relationships with other people? Suppose we see someone "overtaken in a trespass" (Gal. 6:1). He's not in that position because God wants to provide us

with entertainment — so we can watch him squirm. God doesn't get delight out of that and neither should we.

God says that if we are spiritually minded we are going to go about trying to *restore* that individual, "looking to ourselves lest we too be tempted." And being spiritually minded means asking yourself if what you are about to say or do with regard to that individual is something that is going to help produce eternal life, for him or her. If you see someone with a fault, and your basic interest is helping, serving and seeing that person obtain eternal life, then go ahead and try to help them. But if it's not — if it's anger, or superiority, or disgust, or anything like that — then be careful, because perhaps you have no business interfering. Just get out of the way and let someone who is spiritual (perhaps God or another human being) step in and try to help them.

To recap: God is spiritual. If we are spiritual, we will think the same way God does, have the same purpose He has. And what is that purpose? God is interested in *sharing His life*, enlarging his family, bringing us all from this human plane to the God plane where we can live forever with Him and share what He has to share. That's His interest; that's His motive and intent; that's His purpose in life now. That's why Jesus Christ came and died.

If you have any other purpose than that, and claim that you are spiritual, then there is something wrong with your reasoning. Because everything that God is doing for you, and has done, is being done with that purpose in mind. And that's the end result He expects — you in the Kingdom, and also your brother.

So, when you see your brother overtaken in a fault, ask yourself: "Do I really seek his good? Am I concerned about his eternal life? Is that why I'm getting involved? Is that why I'm thinking what I'm thinking?" If you can answer yes to those questions, and have this as your overriding purpose, then you can go ahead and help, point your brother in the direction that leads to life. □

PERSONAL

(Continued from page 1)

promise with God's TRUTH, even in smallest, slightest manner, we have allowed Satan to get a foot into the door of the Church, and soon he will push open the door (he is stronger than we) and take over the whole Church.

A little leaven leavens the WHOLE LUMP! In my position, as chosen by the living CHRIST to be first under Him in AUTHORITY over the Church and the Work, I have been charged with the commission of KEEPING GOD'S WORD. Keeping it inviolate — NO COMPROMISE! I have NEVER compromised with God's TRUTH — regardless of the cost or the circumstances. I never shall!

There is a striking parallel in the recent skyjacking "Operation Thunderbolt" — the spectacular Israeli rescue to deliver innocent terrorist hostages from violent death in the 90-minute strike at Entebbe Airport in Uganda.

Other nations, one after another, have given in and submitted to terrorist demands. But Israel, a tiny nation, has an IRON POLICY NEVER TO COMPROMISE EVEN ONE INCH WITH TERRORISTS.

The real philosophy of this was printed in a brief foreword in the new paperback book just out on newsstands: *90 Minutes to Entebbe*. I want you to READ IT — carefully, and even a second time.

Quoted in the book, Yerucham Amital, former Deputy Chief of the Israeli Air Force, said: "If Israel should ever fail to protect her own, she would cease to have meaning. We have been forced into aggressive defense and the stakes keep getting higher.

"In the end, we may have to choose between action that might pull down the Temple of Humanity itself rather than surrender even a single member of the family to the executioners.

"Survival in other circumstances is not survival at all. And all of us, whatever our race, won't be worth a damn if we buy our lives at the cost of our conscience."

Just as Israel is LITTLE in population and financial means among the nations, so GOD'S CHURCH is LITTLE

in numbers and popularity among churches or religious organizations. But ISRAEL STANDS STRONG and ALONE among this world's nations in determination to NOT YIELD ONE INCH TO THE OUTRAGEOUS METHODS AND DEMANDS OF TERRORISTS!

Satan is the chief of terrorists. He HATES God's holy, sacred Word.

God the Creator talked face to face with Adam and Eve. He instructed them in HIS WAY — the way of LOVE — the way of PEACE and GOOD. Then Satan came slinking along. They listened to his subtle reasoning. "After all," they must have thought, "we have ONLY GOD'S WORD FOR IT. Maybe we ARE immortal souls, like Satan says. Maybe we WON'T DIE if we take to ourselves the knowledge and decision of what is right and what is wrong."

I have never compromised with God's truth — regardless of the cost or the circumstances.

Adam and Eve DIDN'T BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAID.

Four thousand years later, Jesus Christ came to earth with the same message from God, for mankind. Many "believed on Him" who sought to kill Him — BECAUSE THEY DID NOT BELIEVE WHAT HE SAID! (John 8:30-47.) After preaching to multiple thousands over three and a half years, only 120 believed WHAT HE SAID (Acts 1:15).

Today, so far as I know, ONLY the Worldwide Church of God, of all churches on earth, BELIEVES WHAT HE SAYS IN HIS WORD!

I did not say ten years ago — twenty years ago — forty years ago — that God had revealed THE ENTIRETY of His TRUTH to me instantaneously, even before he conferred on me His GREAT COMMISSION. Always I have said, "God has revealed His TRUTH, little by little, a single bit of truth at a time." Always I have said, "I am HUMAN — subject

to MISTAKES." Every man God ever chose and used was the same. David was a man after God's own heart BECAUSE he confessed errors, mistakes and sins — REPENTED, and turned from the wrong to what God showed him was right.

I did not compromise one inch on God's truth on the matter of the day of "Pentecost." God instructed me to "COUNT" — and in EVERY English translation then available (forty years ago) to count fifty days meant to count "from" the morrow after a Sabbath — that is, fifty days FROM a Sunday. I COUNTED ACCURATELY and FAITHFULLY. One day FROM a Sunday is a Monday! Two days FROM Sunday is a Tuesday — and fifty days "FROM" that particular Sunday fell on a MONDAY.

I am not a Hebrew scholar. My critics who disagreed and criticized me through the years are not Hebrew scholars to be compared with the translators of every English translation then in existence. I followed God's Word faithfully AS THE ABLEST HEBREW-ENGLISH translators had rendered it. That was forty years ago.

When two ABLE translators, one chairman of the Revision Committee to revise the Revised Standard Version, confessed in personal conversation that the translations had been "MISLEADING," and should have been rendered count "ON" or "beginning with" the "morrow after the Sabbath," it finally was PROVED to me that the translating SCHOLARS made the error — not I — and I then changed the count to begin counting 50 days, not from, but "beginning on" a Sunday.

I will CHANGE whenever proved wrong. I will accept NEW TRUTH as often as PROVED to be new truth to me or to the Church.

But I will not compromise with the truth! I never have!

And THAT is why God is now OPENING DOORS to me before kings, presidents, emperors, prime ministers, to admit His gospel MESSAGE OF THE IMMINENT KINGDOM OF GOD — into nations where the doors heretofore were CLOSED to that message.

I won't compromise — not even "just a little."

Are you 100 percent back of me and Garner Ted? □

...the problems of humanity... and life, and... think that this article... it should be read... all around the world... and believers, Catholic... Hindu, Muslim... Please contact...

Miroslav V. ...

...Mr. Herbert... and... why... Florida

...Mr. Charles... Why does... bit hard to... Florida

...The article... David Jon Hill... blood rush... But I got... California

My reason... The article by David Jon Hill... 'Eternity... in time?' He says

...Because I... believe that... longer... though the... from the 'per... and after... prerequisite to... God and man is... all the time.

Paikka P. ...

...I am a young man... (recently baptized)... Church a year ago... joyful at the... spiritual... Church in the six years... I can remember... from a teenager's point... for adults... teenagers... more... and once in a while... for youth primarily... months ago... sermon showing that God... an intense and... very special... cases of David... has revealed the... have been... in the... can only... blood...

... Pastor...

This is a letter in protest... recently received your August... On page 20 I saw... being... the...

...I have finished reading your... Thank you so... I've always thought... was right and never thought it... but your book... has... meaning in... instead of just paying God... to pay Him, it is a way to... love and worship Him by... free... When thinking of it... a person likes to even give... for the work, just in case we... I'd gotten something... I've always abundantly blessed... or they materially, but spiritual... that really counts).

Patrick G. ...

...I have finished reading your... Thank you so... I've always thought... was right and never thought it... but your book... has... meaning in... instead of just paying God... to pay Him, it is a way to... love and worship Him by... free... When thinking of it... a person likes to even give... for the work, just in case we... I'd gotten something... I've always abundantly blessed... or they materially, but spiritual... that really counts).

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One of our ministers would be... to visit you. See the bits on... for... of... to...



IS IT REALLY WORTH IT?

Tis the season to be jolly, right? Yes, but sometimes the holiday hassle makes it a little hard to be so jolly. Bills and traffic and maddening crowds are enough to make you wonder if it is all worth it. What are the facts about Christmas, anyhow? Why do you have to haul an evergreen tree into your

house every year? What makes mistletoe good for kissing? If you've ever wondered about these things, you'll be interested in these two free booklets: *The Plain Truth About Christmas and Pagan Holidays* or *God's Holy Days - Which?* Send your request to: **GOOD NEWS, Pasadena, Ca. 91123**



MOVING? Please print your new address below and send with your address label at right! (Clip along dotted line.) Please allow 6 weeks advance notice.

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See inside front cover for address nearest you

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