

UPLOOK

DECEMBER 1991

Innsight

Why the Incarnation?

The Gifts of Grace

Long Live the King!



EDITORIAL

Long Live the King!

J. B. Nicholson Jr.

On several trips to the land of Israel over the past few years, I have been privileged to have as my guide a gracious and well-informed Jew, named at birth Philip Halperin. Philip was the name of one of the kings of Romania, and it was not a wise thing to give Hebrew names to little Jewish boys in wartime Europe. It could be dangerous for their health.

Philip Halperin was one of the fortunate ones. His family was able to escape. Making their way to Palestine, however, they were stopped by the British blockade and sent to a detention camp on Cyprus until the end of the British mandate and the declaration of the state of Israel. Philip's brother was born in the camp.

Finally settled in their homeland, little Philip began attending school. "Philip?" queried the teacher, looking down at the little fellow who had already lived a lifetime in the span of his few years. "That's not a Jewish name! From now on, you will be Yechiel." And so it was.

Yechiel means *long live God*. Fortunately, in a world full of worry, that is not one of the issues we need be concerned about. Our God not only is the possessor of eternal life, but the giver of such life to all who seek it from Him.

But the life of God seems so remote, so unlike the life we have, or even the life we need for our earthly pilgrimage. If only we could see it up close — a life that could weep, yet smile through the tears and find a certain hope beyond the grave. If only there was someone like us (and yet unlike us) who could walk with us and talk of God in such a way that we could know this One who dwells in light unapproachable. If only . . .

Moses longed for this. "He said, I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory" (Ex. 33:18). But the Lord could show him only the afterglow as he hid in the cleft of the rock for, said the Lord, "Thou canst not see My face: for there shall no man see Me, and live" (v. 20).

Job desired a daysman "that might lay his hand upon us both" because God, said Job, "is not a man, as I am" (Job 9:32-33).

David cried, "Bow Thy heavens, O Lord, and come down" (Ps. 144:5), as did Isaiah: "Oh that Thou wouldest rend the heavens, that Thou

wouldest come down" (Isa. 64:1).

At last He did! The King came down, down from His palace to a stable, from a throne to a manger. No longer was it the afterglow, but the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6). Not a daysman to lay hands upon us both, but "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:5-6). He did not rend the heavens in a mighty display of His power, but slipped quietly in among us, making Himself "of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:7).

In human affairs, as one king succumbs to the Last Enemy and another takes his place on the throne, the cry is heard through the land: "The king is dead. Long live the king." With the best of kings or the worst of kings, it was ever the same. The scepter would slip from their grasp and the sovereign would become another subject to the King of Terrors. Until this King came.

Born to die, He followed His mission unerringly through life. At last He came to His coronation at the hands of men. They fashioned for His diadem the symbol of the cursed earth, the curse He would bear for them. The royal scarlet He wore was drawn from His back with the lash. And then, alone, He descended into the hideous darkness of death to deliver His subjects from its bondage, and blaze a pathway of light through it into the very presence of God.

Standing by the cross, they watched the King die. Over His head His charge had been inscribed: This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King . . . At last, a shout of triumph, and the King is dead.

Heaven, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Galilee, Jerusalem, Gethsemane, Gabbatha, Golgotha, the grave, the glory. Long live the King!

The King has promised a return. The colt will be exchanged for a prancing steed; the thorny wreath for diadems of glory; knees will bow again, not now in mockery. "And of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:33).

Long live the King!

U

UPLOOK

(USPS 620-640)

Founded in 1927 as *Look on the Fields*,
is published eleven times per year by



GOSPEL FOLIO PRESS

P. O. Box 2041

Grand Rapids, MI 49501-2041

POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to:

UPLOOK

P. O. Box 2041

Grand Rapids, MI 49501-2041

UPLOOK magazine is intended to encourage the people of God in fidelity to His Word, fervency in intercessory prayer, labors more abundant and love to the Lord. Believing in the practical Headship of Christ and the local autonomy of each assembly, this is not intended to be an official organ of any group or federation of local churches. The editor and authors take responsibility for materials published. For any blessing which accrues from this publication, to God be the glory.

Gospel Folio Press is a tax-exempt corporation looking to the Lord to provide for the needs of this ministry. This magazine is sent freely to those who request it, but evidently is not freely produced. Donations should be made payable to "UPLOOK" and sent to:

U.S. donors:

P.O. Box 2041
Grand Rapids, MI
49501-2041

Canadian donors:

P. O. Box 427
St. Catharines, ON
L2R 6V9

An official receipt for income tax purposes will be issued.

Be sure to enclose your former address label when sending a change of address. Please let us know of changes six weeks in advance.

UPLOOK is copyrighted solely for the purpose of maintaining the integrity of the material. It is not intended to limit the proper use of articles contained in the magazine. Please include the words: "UPLOOK magazine, by permission" on photocopies made for personal use. For large quantities or other purposes, contact UPLOOK.

Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope with all unsolicited material.

ISSN #1055-2642

Printed in the U. S. A.

Copyright 1991 Gospel Folio Press

CONTENTS

Volume 58 Number 11

FEATURES

IT'S TIME TO RENEW!	4
BATTLES WITHOUT & WITHIN <i>Richard Bishop</i>	10
GIFTS OF GRACE <i>Robert McClurkin</i>	12
WE WOULD SEE JESUS <i>Robert Brown</i>	14
MARVELOUS NAMES <i>Montague Goodman</i>	15
INNSIGHT <i>Stephen Anderson</i>	20
MAY I HELP YOU? <i>W. Alan Parks</i>	22
WHY THE INCARNATION?	28
PEACE ON EARTH? <i>Colin Anderson</i>	30

DEPARTMENTS

EDITORIAL	2
FRONT LINES	5
WHAT'S GOING ON?	8
BOUQUET OF BLESSINGS	13
HEROES	18
LOOK AT BOOKS	24
MANNA: FOR JANUARY	25
LET ME INTRODUCE: 2 KINGS	26

Founding Publisher

WILLIAM J. PELL

Previous Editors

LEONARD SHELDRAKE

PETER J. PELL

DR. H. A. CAMERON

Editor

J. B. NICHOLSON, JR.

Managing Editor

JOHN N. STELLEMA

Contributing Editors

JOHN A. BJORLIE

ALEXANDER McEACHERN

JIM McKENDRICK

Circulation Manager

HAZEL JOHNSON

It's Time To Renew!

If you want to keep getting the
OUTLOOK
that you receive from
UPLOOK,
don't
OVERLOOK
this page!

Please return the enclosed envelope indicating your desire to continue receiving **UPLOOK**. Print your name and address in the space provided and indicate if this is different from what currently appears on your label.

In order to keep our costs down, we want to ensure that as few unwanted copies as possible are being sent out. If we don't hear from you, we will assume you no longer want to receive **UPLOOK**.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE

It is our policy at Gospel Folio Press to distribute **UPLOOK** to whomever requests it, without charge. The costs incurred in producing the magazine are paid for out of our general funds, however we depend upon donations from subscribers to help cover these costs. Please see below for a summary of the donations received and costs incurred to date.

Donations to Gospel Folio Press are deductible for income tax purposes by U.S. residents and by those who have U.S. source income, within certain limits as prescribed by law. Please make your check payable to "Uplook" and send it in the enclosed envelope. An official receipt will be issued for all gifts received.

Canadian residents can obtain a tax deduction for donations by sending them in care of Counsel Magazine Inc. Counsel Magazine Inc. is the official Canadian distributor of Uplook and is authorized to issue official receipts for income tax purposes for Canadian gifts. Please make your checks payable to "Uplook" and not to Counsel.

ABOUT GOSPEL FOLIO PRESS

Gospel Folio Press is a non-profit corporation, incorporated under the laws of the state of Michi-

gan. We are exempt from federal and state income taxes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

We appreciate the importance of good stewardship of the Lord's funds. To demonstrate our commitment to this, we are in the process of seeking membership in the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability. The ECFA ensures that it's members comply with a stringent set of standards for accountability and integrity.

OUR OBJECTIVE

Our objective at Gospel Folio Press is to publish and print literature that is glorifying to the Lord Jesus Christ, that helps to build up His people, and that seeks to reach the lost with the glorious Gospel. We endeavor to charge a reasonable price for our publications, sufficient to cover our costs, yet low enough to make them affordable for everyone. In addition to *Uplook*, Gospel Folio Press publishes the *Choice Gleanings* calendar, various books, booklets and Gospel tracts, a monthly Gospel paper called *Words of Peace*, and a complete curriculum of Sunday School materials. Call or write for our free catalog.

STATEMENT OF DONATIONS AND COSTS

For the period Jan. 1, 1991 to Nov. 30, 1991.

Donations	\$37,900
Expenses:	
Direct -	
Production costs	
(paper, plates, ink and supplies)	11,970
Postage	6,840
Wages and benefits	17,010
	<u>\$35,820</u>
Indirect -	
Equipment overhead	543
General overhead	3,413
	<u>3,956</u>
Total expenses	<u>\$39,776</u>
Deficit for the period	<u>(\$1,876)</u>

Front Lines

UP IN THE U.P.

The believers meeting at Pelkie Gospel Hall in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan have seen some encouragement, in part due to the periodic visits of brothers Joe Balsan, Don Welborn and Jonathan Brower. All three of these men travel long miles to be with the saints there at least once a year. Working among the sturdy Finns in that frozen northland, it has taken patience, a straight walk, and straight talk to build up the testimony. Joe Balsan is today seeing the fruit of Gospel meetings spanning three decades. If present growth continues, the congregation may soon outgrow their meeting place. Prayer is appreciated for the saints that they will continue to enjoy a oneness of mind and fervent Gospel zeal.

THREE OAKS GROWING

Three Oaks Bible Chapel of Macon, Georgia held its first Fall Bible Conference on November 23-24. The speaker was Tom Taylor (PA) whose ministry centered around Colossians 2:6-7 with a fourfold theme: *Emphasize the Gospel* ("As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord"); *Emphasize a Godly Walk* ("So walk ye in Him"); *Emphasize Spiritual Growth* ("Rooted and built up in Him"); *Emphasize Worship* ("Abounding therein with thanksgiving").

The conference was well attended, with several visitors from the area and a good number from other assemblies in Georgia, Alabama, Florida, and North Carolina.

Many assemblies in the

southeast are small, and this is a good opportunity to gather for mutual encouragement.

The chapel is located near Interstate 75. The saints there extend an invitation to those traveling through to stop over and fellowship with them. The Christians have proven to be very hospitable in providing overnight accommodations to those traveling through.

VANCOUVER CONFERENCE ON THE FAMILY

A midwinter conference is planned in Vancouver, BC, Lord willing on January 24-26 at the Sixteenth Avenue Gospel Chapel, 2756 West 16th Avenue.

Dr. Paul Irwin of Calgary, AB is to be speaking on *The Christian Family*. For further information, contact:

David Baker
5958 182nd Street
Surrey, BC V3S 4M7

ANOTHER ONE HOME

Our dear sister, Edith Stultz, age 80, of Westbrook, Maine, passed peacefully into the Lord's presence on December 3. The Lord took her while on her knees in prayer. Faithful to the Lord and the assembly, she was a real "mother in Israel." She was given to hospitality and entertained many of the Lord's servants. She leaves two sons and one daughter, all in Christ, as well as many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

A few weeks before her homegoing, she wrote:

When God found me, I was no better than a cobblestone, hardly worth picking up. But He took me into His laboratory of Grace and ...

processed me. I came out as His jewel, a bit rough, I'll admit, but after a few years of cutting, buffing, and polishing, He will present me at last before the throne, and I shall be absolutely flawless ...

OTTAWA-AREA OPEN AIR MEETINGS

From late Spring until the snow flies, Christians from the Canadian capital are privileged to hold Gospel meetings in markets, parks and beaches. One still continues every Tuesday.

Thousands of tracts were distributed to the crowds this year and dozens of contacts were made.

One interesting case is a young Czechoslovakian woman who was studying in Canada. Having professed salvation four years ago, she was not living for the Lord. Contacted at these meetings, she has returned to happy fellowship with the Lord and His people.

Prayer is requested for her husband who is unsaved, and for her as she returns to her homeland and seeks to begin a children's work for the Lord.

Also pray that the city of Ottawa will continue to grant permission for these meetings.

A GLIMPSE SOUTH

East-central Georgia is referred to by its State Department of Tourism as "The Classic South." That expression likely brings to mind scenes of large antebellum homes, fragrant magnolia trees, azaleas blooming in a burst of color, a slower pace of life, and sipping iced tea on the front porch on a lazy summer afternoon. That, and

FRONT LINES

more, is Augusta, "the Garden City." It is a thriving metropolis on the Savannah River, a retail, manufacturing, and industrial center.

Augusta is also the center of a work for the Best of Masters. New Testament assemblies have been functioning in the area for more than fifty years, with early pioneer workers starting small gatherings in several outlying communities, and several businessmen beginning the work in the city.

Through the years there have been hive-offs to nearby communities and other parts of the city itself, so that now there are nine assemblies within a fifty mile radius. There are meetings in Aiken and North Augusta, SC; in Washington, Wrens, and Waynesboro, GA, along with four in the city itself.

Several brethren have their own Gospel radio broadcasts on secular stations, while another operates a Moody Network station in the area. One assembly operates a Christian Servicemen's Center specifically oriented to the Army Signal Corps at nearby Fort Gordon. Several believers serve at the Operation Mobilization warehouse in Waynesboro from which Gospel literature is shipped around the world. One assembly sponsors a small Christian elementary

school, another an annual Easter conference, and still another an annual youth conference. There are numerous opportunities for involvement among the believers such as home Bible studies; prison ministries; meetings in nursing homes and retirement centers; ladies' Bible studies and missionary meetings; as well as a strong emphasis on camp work. In previous years, there was also a Bible school and Gospel printing ministry in the area.

The reality of the nineties tells us that the evil one is making his attack in unprecedented force, and the Augusta area is no exception. But God is still at work among the people there. For any good that has been accomplished over the years, may the Lord receive the glory.

KOREA REVISITED

Brother John Ferris writes:

After four years of Annette's illness, we were able to resume our visits to Korea in October, visiting seven assemblies.

It was a joy to see dear friends met in the 1960s and thereafter. Korea has changed considerably and the assemblies have increased in number and size. We were thrilled to see the assemblies in Incheon where we worked during our last four years in Korea. We were delighted with the Song Pa assembly

in southeastern Seoul where our host and hostess began meeting a few years ago and the Lord established an assembly. We spent our last Lord's Day with the Nor-YangJin assembly in southern Seoul where we fellowshipped in the 1960s. This was the first of the 120 or so more recent assemblies in the republic.

We thank God for the opportunity to visit our former mission field and hope to return in 1992. Should unhindered travel in North Korea occur, some desire to go in with the Gospel and hope to find assemblies that remain. Remember the saints in North Korea when you pray for those in the republic.

Prayer for the Kunzes in Osan, Korea is valued, as both suffer health problems.

ANGOLA

The following extracts are from a letter sent by Roy and Karen Wood after a recent trip to Angola:

Karen and I arrived home safely after a very arduous six months of nonstop travel and constant preaching and teaching the Word. Angola bleeds from a thousand wounds after 30 years of war; it will take just as long to heal most of these wounds — a wrecked country with a shattered economy, 300,000 killed, thousands of widows and orphans and 40,000 amputees.

We arrived in Luanda on April



Christians gathered on a Sunday morning in Seoul, Korea

FRONT LINES

13, and found everyone tired of suffering, sickness and death. We obtained flights to Saurimo on April 29. Mary Stewart was alone as Ruth Hadley was on furlough. Mary had written, advising us not to come as a UNITA attack was expected. The letter failed to reach us, so she was surprised yet pleased to see us. We stayed nearly seven weeks, and as conditions improved, were able to visit further afield. The Lord has really answered prayer there but still much prayer is needed.

We flew back to Luanda and then a brother drove us to Malange where we spent a month intensively visiting the 15 assemblies in the area. We found them very open to the teaching of God's Word. Many were displaced persons from the Camaxilo and Songo speaking areas. We then flew back to our Luanda base for the National Conference. Iris and Marjorie Beckwith (CAN) care for so many visitors and those in transit.

On August 7, we flew to Luena and spent a month there comforting the suffering people of God and ministering to many assemblies in the area. They were still recovering from the 45-day siege by UNITA in April and May. Even UNITA were amazed as to how the believers and halls survived such a bombardment. As many as 400 civilians were killed but only two believers lost their lives in the city. The believers have nothing and yet shared with us their meagre rations. Our civil wedding ceremony took place in Luena and so we celebrated our 35th anniversary there. Ruth Hadley then drove us to Biula, where we had a tremendous welcome from the believers who had suffered so much. We stayed for two nights.

We then prepared for our visit to the diamond mine area. For three weeks we tried to reach some of the

500 assemblies in the area. We found the need for teaching overwhelming, and the ignorance often incredible. Great crowds enthusiastically gathered and even with three or four meetings a day, it was impossible to meet the need. It was very hot and every meeting was like a sauna with the metal-roofed halls full to overflowing with still more outside. After a busy final week, we flew home.

Elections are due to take place in September 1992, but problems abound. Refugees will want to return home but the country is without the basic necessities.

It was wonderful to see how the Lord has preserved His Church through the persecution and war. A communist official admitted to us that they had made a mistake: "Anyone trying to stop the work of God was like trying to stop the wind with his hands!"

Peace in Angola will present innumerable opportunities. Will you pray that the Lord of the harvest will thrust forth younger laborers into His harvest and guide us as to our future service.

THE HOUSE OF HOPE

The past year in Israel, especially in the Territories, has been



full of struggles, violence and bloodshed — and this in the part of the world where our Lord was born. Yet people have refused the Babe of Bethlehem who brought with Him peace. One day they will see Him in all His glory, the Prince of Peace

and the Giver of Eternal Life.

The House of Hope sits on the main road through the town of Bethlehem. Begun many years ago to aid blind Arabs, its ministry has expanded to include mentally handicapped children as well.

Michael David writes:

The Lord has helped us to open a new section for the mentally handicapped, so we can take the most needy ones; still, our waiting list continues to grow. The Lord has provided help with five volunteer house mothers. We have also added one more classroom in the school section.

We have begun a small olive-wood factory. We are limited in marketing these articles and wonder if you are interested to sell some of these to friends. It would be a great encouragement to the handicapped and the home.

The House of Hope family ranges from six up to 91 years of age, with about 60 people in the boarding section and 23 others who come by the day to work and learn. When many of these go home, even for a short time, they return in a pitiful condition, often needing medical treatment. We know they are precious in the Lord's eyes. He

will look after them.

We are listening very carefully

to the peace talks. Many are still suffering. People come to our doorstep, asking for help. As we see the changes taking place in the world, we become more certain that the Lords return is at hand, and we cry "Come, Lord Jesus!" Pray for the 'Peace of Jerusalem.'

WHAT'S GOING ON?

News from Around the Globe

MOHAMMED'S FRANCE

Islam's growing influence in France was reflected in the dismissal of the head of the immigration office for writing a book that criticizes Islam. In it, Jean-Claude Barreau called Islam the most intolerant and anti-democratic of all religions. He said his firing proved the government caved in to Muslim pressure and that Islam was virtually taboo as a subject for intellectual inquiry.

"It is possible for a top civil servant to doubt the divinity of Jesus Christ, but it is forbidden to ask questions about the prophet Mohammed," he said. Islam is France's second largest religion after Roman Catholicism.

— from *World Pulse*, 12/91

ZAIRE UPDATE

Here are excerpts from a message sent recently by Mert Wolcott from Zaire:

I have been in Zaire since Wednesday. Steve Dix was also on the flight over from Nairobi. We spent Wednesday afternoon and Thursday visiting missionaries and Africans and several shopkeepers. The atmosphere is peaceful and calm and people seem to think that the danger of violence is past. There is a feeling that there might be more looting in the cities if political progress is not made, but there is little fear for personal safety.

I was encouraged that basic supplies are available in the shops. Because of the mega-inflation, prices are very high for our Zairian friends. Consequently the economy is very slow, far fewer vehicles are on the roads, and Bunia appeared less crowded than it has been in the past.

Steve drove me to Nyankunde late Thursday. I have been very warmly received, and everyone has thanked me profusely for coming at this time. Friday and Saturday I talked with dozens of people as I walked around the hospital and station and in a couple of villages close by.

There is plenty of food for nearly everyone. Those who do not have adequate gardens suffer because the price of food has skyrocketed along with the prices of everything else. Many people cannot afford to come to the hospital for medicine, so rely on traditional healers in the villages. Sugar is \$1.00 a pound, toilet paper a dollar a roll, kerosene and gasoline \$4 a gallon, a small can of oatmeal \$4.30, a can of powdered milk \$3.80.

Africans are resilient and tough and bear suffering with good spirits. Where we are outraged by injustice, they accept their lot and go on with life.

The Christians are people of prayer and continue in prayer for their leaders despite their ruthlessness. We join them in prayer that God would intervene and place men of integrity in positions of leadership both in government and among His people. Pray with us to that end.

When I have asked the believers about the return of missionaries with families, they agree that it would be wise to wait until the first of the year when the political picture should be more clear.

MAF has brought a second plane and pilot and family back to Nyankunde, so transportation is adequate for moving around the country.

Our missionaries are all fine. I shall be trying to get to Itendey to

see the MacDowells as soon as I can, possibly toward the end of the week.

SHAKEUP IN PHILIPPINES

One major disaster after another over the last 17 months has left the Philippines reeling. Latest to hit: Tropical storm Thelma, which battered the central islands of Leyte, Samar, and Negros, and left at least 5,000 dead. The spell began with a 1990 earthquake, followed by Typhoon Mike, and then the eruption of Mount Pinatubo. Half of the country's people live beneath the official poverty line. Servicing the foreign debt of \$30 billion takes a quarter of all export earnings.

— from *World Pulse*, 12/91

RETURN TRIP

The British government has decided the Vietnamese boat people living in Hong Kong must be sent back to communist Vietnam. Many of the boat people have gone through a great deal to escape and will not likely go back without a fight.

The refugees feel betrayed. Fearing torture and death back in Vietnam, many have threatened violence and even suicide should they be forcibly removed from Hong Kong.

Hong Kong is presently ruled by Britain and about 60,000 Vietnamese are already being held in detention camps there.

Many other Vietnamese have escaped to Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Over the years, more than one and a half million souls have fled the horrors of Vietnam, mostly by boat.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

Abortion foes have long warned that since abortion has been legalized, it would only be a matter of time before infanticide and euthanasia would also become common practice. Though euthanasia (meaning "easy-death" from *eu* easy + *thanatos* death) is not generally practiced and remains a hotly disputed issue, numbers of euthanasia advocates are gaining a wide hearing.

Derek Humphry's best selling how-to book on suicide, "*Final Exit*," has come at a time when elderly people are taking their own lives more than ever. Older white males, in fact, have the highest suicide rates in the country — even higher than the rates among young people that have caused so much concern.

One federal study published recently shows that in virtually every grouping there is an increasing trend. Between 1980 and 1986, suicides by Americans aged 65 and older jumped 23 percent for white men, and a startling 42 percent for black men. The rate for white women rose 17 percent.

Doctors studying this issue find that most of those considering suicide are suffering from only a passing illness, or are depressed. Most are genuinely glad when they recover that no one tried to help them die. One study showed that of the elderly committing suicide, only thirteen percent had a terminal illness.

Of course, statistical analysis will not provide real answers, but will only reflect where our collapsing society is headed. It is only in the Bible that we discover what our duty is to our neighbors, the reason why suicide and so-called "mercy-killing" is a sin, and how God can deliver from these.

MUELLER'S FUND-RAISING CRISIS?

We've recently received notice of the upcoming National Religious Broadcasters' annual convention, to be held January 25-29 in Washington, DC. It calls to mind the worldwide outreach of Christian radio in general and the way many assemblies have been able to use the airways for the Lord. We should

remember to pray for all such: for wisdom in the allocating of resources for the greatest benefit, for help in preparation, for listening ears and open hearts.

One item that caught our attention on the schedule is a workshop entitled: "*The Current Fundraising Crisis — What Would George Mueller Do?*"

Oh, that the Church would do less fund-raising and more praying! Then George Mueller's God would do it again.

STILL RED

Although Marxism has been discredited elsewhere, it's going so strong in Peru that Shining Path rebels are carrying the fight from their Andes Mountain strongholds to Lima's impoverished shantytowns, where they appear to be winning.

Caught in the middle, and sometimes killed, are Catholic and Protestant relief workers, as well as foreign aid technicians and even housewives running soup kitchens. A violent showdown for control of Lima could come as early as next year.

— from *World Pulse*, 12/91

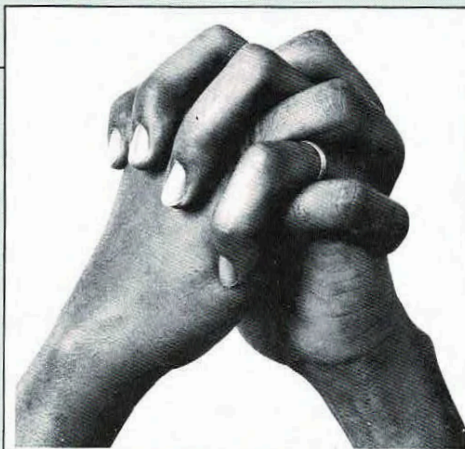
THE SECRET

*The weary one had rest, the sad had joy that day
And wondered how.
A ploughman, singing at his work, had prayed,
"Lord, help them now."*

*Away in foreign lands they wondered how
Their feeble words had power.
At home, the Christians — two or three — had met
To pray an hour.*

*Yes, we are always wondering, wondering how,
Because we do not see
Someone unknown, perhaps, and far away,
On bended knee.*

— Author Unknown



Battles Without, Battles Within

Richard Bishop

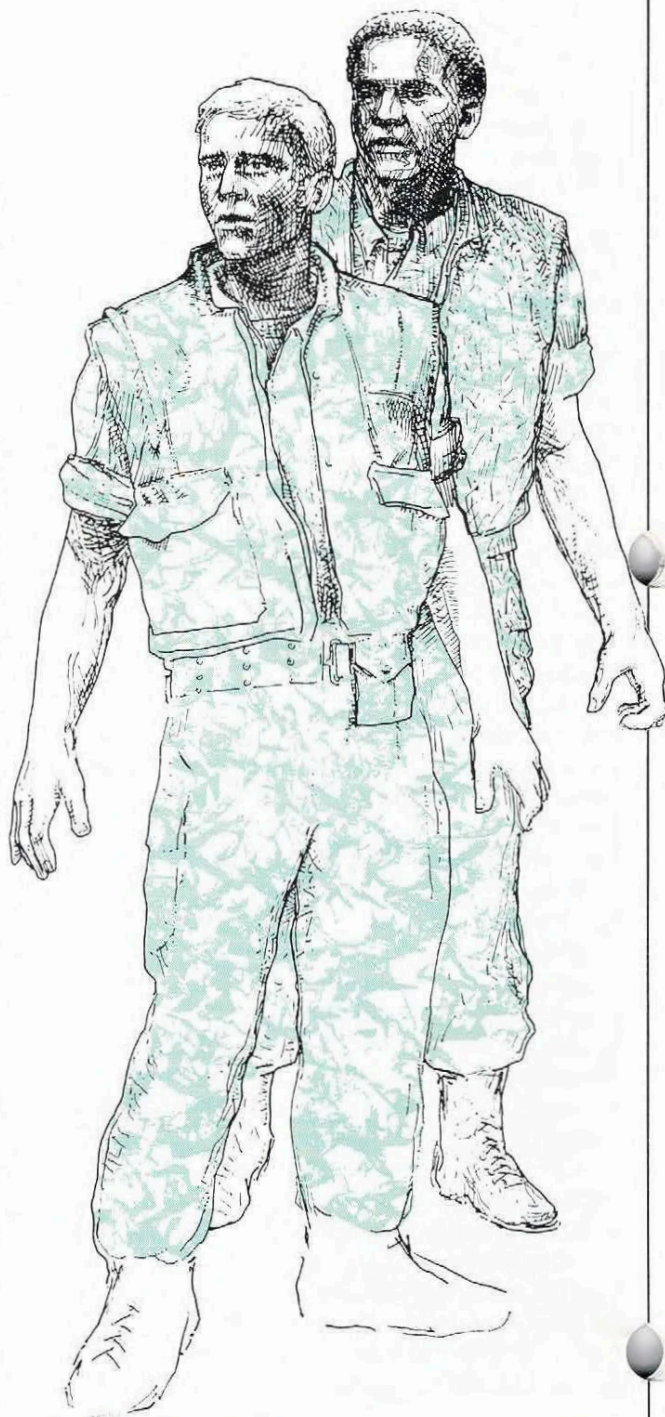
*I*t was hotter than I had ever experienced, and the convoy of trucks made dust so thick it seemed we were traveling in a cloud. The 45-mile trip to our Vietnam base camp seemed to take forever. I had my M-16 loaded and in my lap; I was scared, but so glad to be on dry ground again I wanted to kiss it. Twenty-one days on a troop ship, and twenty-one days of seasickness for two of the 1600 soldiers; I was one of the two.

Nobody really wanted to be here. Attitudes were rotten, tempers were short, and everyone yearned for loved ones back in the States. We all wondered what the next twelve months had in store. I soon discovered that the Viet Cong weren't our only enemy.

After we arrived at base camp and began to set up tents, I could sense that the tension within the camp was almost as great as it was outside the perimeter of the berm and bunkers. Racial conflict was raging, and as we arrived, it seemed that most of the men took sides, even though our company wasn't yet involved. Lines were drawn, and the side you took was automatic according to the color of your skin. Within days, one of the fellows had lost an eye as a glass was first broken over a table, then slashed across his face. Coming from Colorado, I had no roots in racial conflict, and, having become a Christian a year earlier, I knew that sin, not skin, dictated racial bias and attitudes.

My rank was one step below that of sergeant, but hard work and providence had me in a sergeant's slot, with a tent of twelve men under my command. My squad was actually six men including myself, and we shared a tent with another squad. Depression, loneliness, no shower water, one-hundred-twenty degree heat, food rationing, and sixteen-hour workdays seven days a week left me with only one thing for which I was thankful: somehow our tent had a measure of peace. The racial tensions had escaped us.

Within weeks, our company had lost several



BATTLES WITHOUT, BATTLES WITHIN

men for various reasons. Our platoon had the enormous job of putting communications in the camp, and we were short-handed. Very few worked willingly; most had to be pushed and intimidated to get them motivated, and that was my job.

Six weeks passed, and we were still hurting; my squad had lost two men, and we desperately needed help. That afternoon at a platoon meeting, the sergeant announced that three new men had been assigned to us. As he spoke, he glanced up and said, "Oh, here they come now." I looked down the pathway between the tents, and saw three black men coming our way, two of whom resembled Paul Bunyan reincarnated. Impulsively my heart cried out, "Oh, Lord, not in my tent!" A closer look revealed a mustache on one of them that covered his upper lip and came down a half inch on each side of his mouth, making an already intimidating-looking giant look as if he were mad enough to kill. This one was assigned not just to my tent but to my squad.

My attitude had been hardened by the conflicts involved in keeping peace. After the platoon meeting ended, I snapped at the new arrival with as much mean macho as I could possibly fake, "Get your stuff, soldier, and follow me!" not even offering to help him with his heavy load. Much to my surprise and pleasure, he quickly responded, "Yes, Sir!" When we arrived at our tent, I got in his face like our basic drill sergeant and roared, "That's your cot, trooper. You need to know that we haven't had any trouble in this tent, and we're not going to have any, understand?" "Yes, Sir!" came another stunningly quick reply.

The other squad in our tent was scheduled to leave on a convoy the next day, and they were scared. They were stretching the tent rules with a bottle of whiskey that someone had smuggled in and thought they had better drink while they still could. They were keeping the noise to a minimum, and I was looking the other way because I understood that a man without Christ needs a bottle for the battle.

Our new tent-mate had received nothing from me this first evening except a put-on tough-guy sergeant attitude. I hadn't even so much as looked him in the eye. I was having my own battle with God. "How could You do this to me? How could You take away the one thing I had to be thankful for? You've left me alone, with no Christian fellowship, and now You've given me trouble on top

of the troubles I already have. Lord, I just don't understand . . ."

My cot was set up at the end of the tent, and I had just lifted the mosquito netting to climb in when a deafening hush fell over the five or six whiskey drinkers in the middle of the tent. As I turned, I saw a look of reverence and awe on their silent faces. I looked where they were looking, and saw the giant on his knees beside his cot. He began to pray, not silently, but out loud, just as he had done every day since he had been drafted. His stature and demeanor commanded respect; no one dared laugh, hoot, or make a sound. I listened as he prayed something like this: "Heavenly Father, thank You for the Lord Jesus Christ who died on the cross and rose up from the dead so that all men might be free. I want to pray for these here men in my tent, that they too might know Jesus; that they might understand that all men are sinners and need a Saviour . . ." Suddenly I wasn't alone anymore; God had sent another believer, and now I was one of two!

As I stood there in awe and silence for what seemed like hours, I realized that I had a decision to make, but the victory in my heart that night was so great that I hardly remember the struggle I had in making it. I walked over to the giant's cot and knelt down beside him. When he finished praying, I prayed. When I finished, we met — this time eye to eye and tear to tear. I never dreamed that I would meet a man with strength and conviction enough to kneel in such a setting and pray, let alone pray aloud. In turn, he had never conceived of the idea that someone would kneel beside him either.

It's hard to sum up all that took place that night. The man I met was Henry Robinson from Little Rock, Arkansas. But the spiritual truths I came face to face with that night are like our Lord, infinite in provision and instruction. We all experience times of aloneness that seem to be largely caused by our impression of God's lack of presence or care. "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: The Lord knoweth them that are His . . ." No matter how great the battle, within or without, no matter how alone we seem to be, we are always one of two with the Lord. For each of us the battle rages, but "what shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

U

Gifts of Grace

Robert McClurkin

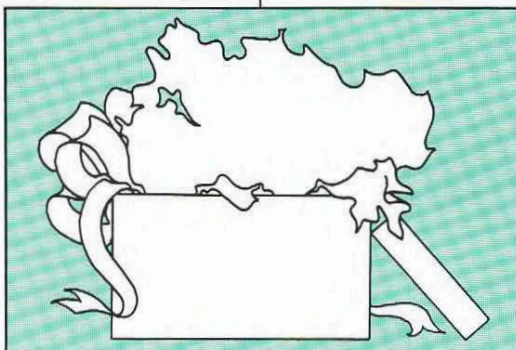
There are in the New Testament four words that describe the gifts God has given to the Church. First of all, they are called "spiritual gifts," reminding us that they are given by the Spirit of God and can only be used rightly in the spiritual realm. They are called "gifts of grace," and that means that they are given by the unmerited favor of God. Then they are called "ministries," and by that word is inferred that they are intended for the blessing of others. They are also called "powers," because they are employed by the Spirit of God to accomplish the high purposes for which they are given.

Look at the divine Trinity as they link themselves with spiritual gift: the same Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4); the same Lord (v. 5); and the same God (v. 6). Thus the divine Trinity enriches the Church with gift. We are told that "there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." That is, there is a variety of gift and that variety of gift is given to meet a variety of need. In verse 5, "There are differences of administrations, but the same Lord." There is a variety of service, and yet behind that variety there is one Lord. Then in verse 6, "There are diversities of operations." There is a variety of ways of going about our ministry. So there is a variety of gift, and a variety of ministry, and a variety of operations; but behind that variety there is the one Spirit, the one Lord, and the one God.

There are two earmarks of ministry. The first is in verse 3. It will always sanctify Christ as Lord. The second is in verse 7. It will always be to the edifying of God's people. Wherever spiritual gift is in exercise, Christ will be set apart as Lord, and God's people will be edified — built up in their most holy faith.

Now let us look at four principles that operate in the body of Christ. The first is that every member of the body has some gift through which he might function in the body of Christ. Look at verses 15 to 18: "If the foot shall say, Because I am not

the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? . . . But now hath God



set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him." In this variety of gift, the first principle that operates in the body of Christ is this: every member has some gift so that each might function for God where God would place us. Let us write over that principle — *no laziness*.

The next principle in this chapter is that there is a variety of gift. Look at this variety in verse 17. The body is not one great eye. It is not one great hand. The body of Christ is made up of many members. There is variety of gift in the assembly. Let us write over that principle — *no monotony*. There is not the monotony of a one-man ministry — not one great eye — but a variety of gift so the variety of need will be met.

Look at another principle in verse 21: "And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee." Let us write over that principle — *no independency*. All gift is necessary so that God's people and God's assembly may appreciate the riches of God for the enrichment of each other. There is independency in government — every assembly stands upon its own base and is responsible to God alone, but there is an interdependency in fellowship. We are all the complement of each other.

But now we see another principle in verses 25 and 27: "That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another . . . Now ye are the body of Christ." That is, you at Corinth are part of this great whole. We write over this principle — *no jealousy*. God has so fitted the body of Christ that we all need each other.

This variety of gift is baptized in the sea of love in chapter 13 and it rises to resurrection ground to function under the superintendency of the divine Spirit of God.

The Grace of Giving

It has been suggested that there are three kinds of givers. They are typified by the flint, the sponge, and the honeycomb. To get fire from the flint, you must hammer it — and then you only get sparks. To get water out of a sponge, you must squeeze it, and the more you squeeze it, the more you will get. But to get honey, you need do nothing; the honeycomb just overflows with its sweetness. Some people are hard and stingy; they give nothing away unless they can't help it. Others are good-natured; they yield to pressure, but do not give wisely. A few delight to give without being asked at all, and of these the Bible says: "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver."

My shoemaker friend had just sent his boy out the door with some of his garden produce for a nearby widow.

"How can you afford to give so much away?" I asked him.

"I give nothing away," he said. "I lend it to the Lord, and He richly repays. I am ashamed that people think I am generous when I am paid so well."

Give all thou canst;
High Heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely calculated less or
more.

— William Wordsworth

*Oh, what a Gift the Father gave
When He bestowed His Son!
To save poor, ruined, guilty man
By sin defiled, undone.*

*Of all the gifts Thy love bestows,
Thou Giver of all good!
Not heaven itself a richer knows
Than the Redeemer's blood.*

— William Cowper

In appreciating the gifts, forget not to adore the Giver.

The Lord Jesus said, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over."

(Luke 6:38)

"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

2 Corinthians 9:15

*Frugality is a good companion if
liberality is her fellow traveller.*

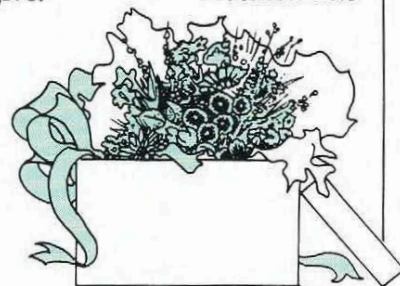
Most of us have so much of material things, we often lose our gratitude for little things. Spurgeon tells of a widow with two little ones who lived in absolute penury. He writes: "In the depth of winter, they were nearly frozen, and the mother took the door of a cellar off the hinges and set it up before the corner where they crouched down to sleep, that some of the draft and cold might be kept from them. When she wept at how badly off they were, one of the children whispered to her, 'Mother, what do those little children do who have no cellar door to put in front of them?' Even there, you see, the little heart found cause for thankfulness."

*A generous man is always sorry
that he can't give more.*

You may give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.

A man there was, though some did count him mad,
The more he gave away, the more he had. — John Bunyan

Freely ye have received, freely give. Matthew 10:8



I gave My life for thee,
My precious blood I shed,
That thou might'st ransomed
be,
And quickened from the dead;
I gave My life for thee,
What hast thou given for Me?

My Father's house of light,
My glory-circled throne,
I left for earthly night,
For wanderings sad and lone;
I left it all for thee —
Hast thou left aught for Me?

And I have brought to thee
Down from My home above
Salvation full and free,
My pardon and My love;
Great gifts I brought to thee —
What hast thou brought to Me?
— Frances R. Havergal

We Would See Jesus

Robert Brown

"And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast . . . saying, Sir, we would see Jesus" (John 12:20-21).

The feast of the Passover was at hand. The City of Jerusalem overflowed with worshipers. There was hardly an available space in home, shop, or byway. The grasping, shouting merchants waved their wares about their heads to make the most of this once-a-year "bonanza." People pushed and shoved to get the best spaces or the best merchandise. The animals, the dust, the smoke from the many fires, and the smell of food all mingled together. We can barely imagine this scene as we sit in the luxurious comfort of 1991 America.

And yet, as they say, the more things change, the more they stay the same. Once again we will be pressing through the holiday season. We struggle to maintain a balance in our Christian lives. Trying not to get caught up in the plastic and tin-foil, the glitter and sparkle that the world dangles before us, and yet trying not to appear too "bah-humbug" about what is purportedly the celebration of the birth of our lovely Lord Jesus. Some of our favorite hymns blare out over parking lot loudspeakers as shoppers push and shove to buy "silk-like" poinsettias, foil trees, battery-operated gadgets, and the ingredients for their low cal, no cholesterol, sodium free, decaf, vegetarian Christmas dinner! (No offense, please, to those of you indulging in any of these items. Was there anyone left out?)

Commercialized religion, or was it religious commerce, was prevalent in first century Jerusalem as well. Yet, in the midst of it all, there were certain Greeks. We know almost nothing about them beyond conjecture. They may have been very much like the people around us. Perhaps they sought favor, or personal gain, or freedom from those things that oppressed them. Or was it that they sought reality, honesty, and simplicity amid the sham and emptiness that man's religion offered. So of all the solutions they could have sought, they hit on the solution of the ages: "We would see Jesus!"

Today, as then, we sense something missing.

We grumble and complain and long for a "simpler time." Yet amid it all, we can see God working. The hearts and minds of a few, hardened and cold, are melted (if only for this brief time) and turned miraculously to think, even superficially, about the Saviour of their souls! Men and women who at any other time of year may even disallow the mention of His name. Men and women who have no sense of need, of loss, of sin, much less any desire for this same Jesus to become their Lord and Saviour. Yet these same men and women are heard singing:

*O Holy Child of Bethlehem!
Descend to us we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in;
Be born in us today.*

*Joy to the world! The Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heaven and nature sing.*

*Hark! the herald angels sing,
Glory to the newborn King:
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.*

How wonderful is that innate knowledge that for empty hearts there is filling — in the Lord Jesus! Amid the tumult there is peace — in Christ Jesus! Amid the sham there is reality — in the Lord! Amid the grasping, mercenary world, there is grace and mercy — in the Saviour! Amid sorrow, bewilderment, and loss, there is salvation — in Him! But then doesn't Isaiah say He would be called Wonderful?

Saint of God, hold Christ high. Grasp the "in season" opportunities to speak a word for Him to unsaved family and friends. Labor on; pray on, as we behold the wonder of our God stirring up the ashes of men's hearts yet once more to see if, per chance, a spark might catch. It could be that this season that last living stone may be set in place! Because they see in you a balance, a joy, a wonder, may they say: "Sir, we would see Jesus!"

U

Marvelous Names

Montague Goodman

*T*he use of a name, whether for a person or a thing, is to indicate and identify them. Thus the name, whether in itself expressive and significant, or merely artificial and meaningless, comes inevitably to signify that in which the person or thing named is unique, and by which he or it is to be distinguished from all others. But names in Scripture often go further than this, and are expressly selected because they themselves express certain qualities which will be found adhering to the persons upon whom they are bestowed.

God indeed attaches great importance to names, and much emphasis is laid upon them in Scripture. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that when His Holy Son was to enter this earthly sphere and bear a Name, the selection of it was not left to the caprice of men. It was chosen beforehand and revealed by God Himself. Nor was it possible to express the glories of the Son in His person and offices by any single name ever uttered by human lips.

Accordingly there are in Scripture seven God-selected names, bestowed upon His Son prior to His birth in Bethlehem — names indicating to those who looked for Him seven great outstanding characteristics of the promised Messiah, in which He was and is forever unique and without a peer. A thousand other precious qualities exist in Him and combine to produce that moral perfection that dazzles the wondering gaze of men and declares Him to be Divine, but which language is utterly inadequate to express.

*Join all the glorious names
Of wisdom, love, and pow'r,
Which mortals ever knew,
Which angels ever bore:
All are too mean to speak His worth,
Too mean to set the Saviour forth.*

Yet while this is true, the names which God before chose and bestowed upon His Christ were so chosen because they bring to the attention of men the seven all-important qualities of the Son of God in His relation to the men He came to redeem. Consider then these marvelous names.



1. IMMANUEL

The first is revealed in Isaiah 7:14. "A virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." What a name for a human babe! — "God with us." Truly a mystery name attached to a mystery birth! "A virgin shall conceive." A babe born as none other ever was born — to bear a Name none other ever bore. An immaculate birth of an immaculate Babe.

MARVELOUS NAMES

The first God-given name thus focuses the attention on the first great fact of Christ — that He was God manifest in the flesh. Not a godly man, but God-man. A great mystery but a great glory. The holy God condescending to human form. "The Word was made flesh and tabernacled with us, and we beheld His glory," just as God tabernacled with Israel and they saw the Shekinah Glory. He "came into the world," an expression that could be used of no other born of woman. "I came forth from the Father" (John 16:28), said He, and men marveled as they heard. "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him" (John 1:10), and so His Name was called Immanuel and nothing less.

Then in Isaiah 9:6-7, we read five other names revealed to faith whereby the Child-to-be-born and the Son-to-be-given seven centuries later should be known.

2. WONDERFUL

"His name shall be called Wonderful." Could any name be more appropriate for One about whom everything was wonderful (that is, caused men to be full of wonder)? His birth, His life, His words, His works, His death, His resurrection, His ascension — all wonderful!

He was a daily wonder to all. Every one "marveled" at Him. The shepherds marveled, Mary marveled, the doctors in the temple marveled at Him. The people did the same, and when at last He stood bound and beaten, a sorry spectacle before His judge, we read, "Pilate marveled" (Mark 15:5). Even the disciples who knew Him best shared the same wonder and marveled most of all. For Jesus our Lord was wonderful and remains wonderful today.

There is no explaining Him from any rationalistic viewpoint; men can but marvel. He is past belief to all but those to whom He is revealed as Lord, and to them He remains for ever wonderful, as they worship and adore His worthy Name.

3. COUNSELOR

"His name shall be called . . . Counselor." And rightly so, for the wisdom of God was upon Him. He taught with authority and not as the scribes. He drew nothing from the wisdom of men who had preceded Him. He "never learned." His words were not logical conclusions but assertions as by one who knew. "I say unto you" was the astonishing confidence with which He addressed

His generation, and the generations that have followed have never proved one word He spoke other than the perfection of truth

His name truly was "Counselor," for He answered hard questions. He solved the riddle of life and revealed the secret of all human bliss. He is the standard of wisdom for all time, and is man's supreme Counselor in every age. He gives wisdom liberally so that the wayfaring man though a fool does not err in his way. His people need no other Counselor but find all things necessary for life and godliness in the knowledge of Him in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

4. THE MIGHTY GOD

It will be at once conceded that neither Isaiah nor any other Hebrew prophet would of his own volition have applied such a name to one who was to be born of human flesh. Such a statement is in itself evidence of inspiration both in its inception by the prophet and its reception (and rejection) by the people; for it was solely because Jesus applied this name to Himself that the Jews went about to slay Him, not for any mighty works, but because "He being a man made Himself God" (John 10:33). Yet this was the name and nothing less by which the Messiah was to be known. God! THE MIGHTY GOD! Was He not worthy to bear it? Did He not claim and exhibit all the attributes of Deity? He had the Omnipotence of God: "All power" (Matt. 28:18). He showed the Omniscience of God: "Knowing all things" (John 18:4). He claimed the Omnipresence of God: "There am I in the midst" (Matt. 18:20). He asserted His eternity as God: "Before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:58). He assumed identity with God: "I and My Father are One [lit., one thing]" (John 10:30). He proclaimed Himself as the Universal Judge of Men, and, most significant of all, He accepted the worship of men, which is the sole prerogative of God.

To us today He is not only our Redeemer and Lord, but "Our Great God and Saviour," Christ the Wisdom of God and the Power of God. Well is He named "the Mighty God."

5. THE EVERLASTING FATHER

"The Father of Eternity" (R.V.) is Jesus our Saviour. All creation springs from Him, and "by Him all things consist." Yet the Name is His in a closer and more evangelical sense, for by virtue of His Saviourhood, He has a wondrous seed. He

MARVELOUS NAMES

will bring many sons to glory, and will present them faultless before the presence of His Glory with exceeding joy, saying, Here am I and the children Thou gavest Me (Heb. 2:13). "He shall see His seed," said Isaiah, and that seed will be His constant satisfaction. Like as a father pitieth His children, so the Lord (Jehovah Jesus) pities them that fear Him. Yes, Christ has a father's heart, a father's care, a father's concern, a father's thought, a father's regard for His children, and to those who, like Philip, say, "Show us the Father," He replies gently, "Hast thou not known Me? . . . he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9), and so He is rightly called "the Everlasting Father."

6. THE PRINCE OF PEACE

"His name shall be called the "Prince of Peace." For this is the central fact concerning Him in His relation to men as it is the central theme of the "Gospel according to Isaiah."

Those wonderful Gospel chapters of Isaiah (40 to 66), so distinct from all that preceded them as to tempt the critics to challenge their authorship, have for their theme the peace He was to procure "for them that are afar off and them that are nigh." In Him and in Him alone could righteousness and peace meet together, and so completely did He abolish in His flesh the enmity, that He was able to proclaim peace to Gentile sinners who were "afar off," and Jewish rebels who "were nigh."


The princes of this world gain their glory by wars. He alone is the Prince of Peace.

7. JESUS

But the last of the names He bore before His birth is the most renowned of all. It was twice bestowed: first on the eve of His lowly birth, and again on the occasion of His glorious session at the right hand of God (see Phil. 2:9-10). It is the name of "Jesus." "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).

JESUS! JEHOVAH SAVIOUR! In this wondrous name is comprehended all the other names He bore. It is the one word (and the only word) common to mankind. Millions in every age have tasted its sweetness, have lived in the joy of all its predicates and have whispered it with their dying breath. Children have lisped it at their mothers' knees, strong men have named it in their hour of

trial, poets have woven it in their hymns, and above all, the pages of the New Testament are studded with it as with a precious gem upon an average of four times to every page. It is a Name supreme of all the names that are named for the One who for all time and eternity will bear it alone.


Immanuel
Wonderful!
counselor
THE MIGHTY GOD
the everlasting
Father
THE PRINCE
of PEACE
Jesus NAME
ABOVE ALL!

Hans Nielsen Hauge

John A. Bjorlie



*I*n Norway, the rivers can be swift and hard to cross by boat. Hans had the feeling that danger was close by. He tells the story in his words:

"When I was thirteen, my father and I, a brother, and another man, were nearly drowned hauling hay across the river by boat. One of the men fell into the water and, in grabbing hold of the side of the craft where the rest of us were lying, tipped us all into the stream. All day I had a premonition of danger. Nor did I escape.

"When we fell into the water, I looked round to see if there was anything to keep me afloat. I saw nothing but my companions who were calling for help. I remember thinking, 'What are they shouting for? There is no hope of rescue here!'"

"Other ideas kept running through my mind. First, I thought about my mother, who became deeply upset even by little things. And now my father, brother and I were to perish here. That would be an unbearable sorrow for her.

"I remembered the small possessions I had in the line of clothing and the rest, and said to myself, 'My brothers will get all that.' It was hard for me to give up these things which I loved, even though death seemed imminent. When a person's pleasures are in temporal things, the end result is

just as Christ says in Luke 12, about the man who had received such a good harvest: 'Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. Then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?' I prayed God to be gracious to me for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ. But the anguish of hell gripped my soul and I began to fear its darkness as I realized that I had not loved God as I ought. The dark terror of death filled me with such dread that my heart weeps when I think about it. The physical pain was nothing to compare with the terror in my soul and the anguish in my conscience. And though I longed for light, it grew dark around me. I lost consciousness.

"Where my spirit was at that moment I do not know. My companions have told me that I lay still and floated on the water. Then the current carried me to shore and my brother pulled me out. I was like a dead person. When they were not able to find any signs of life, my father prayed to God to show mercy on my soul. In the meantime they tried to resuscitate me. Soon I began to breathe again. Within half a day I was, by the grace of God, as well as ever."

Hans revived, but the dread he felt in that river followed him. And though he was very religious, he still knew he was not prepared to meet God.

HEROES

Twelve years passed and Hans lived for himself; he made money, but was not rich toward God. Working on his father's farm, the "Hauge Gaard," just fifty miles southeast of Oslo, he excelled in mechanics. He became the village handyman, as a self-taught cabinetmaker, carpenter, beekeeper, and blacksmith. Many of the tools he used he both invented and forged himself.

On April 5, 1796, at twenty-five years of age, while working in the field, an old song came to his mind:

*Oh, take Thou captive each passion and win me,
Lead Thou and guide me my whole journey
through!*

*All that I am and possess I surrender,
If Thou alone in my spirit mayest dwell,
Everything yield Thee, O Saviour, most tender,
Thou, only Thou, canst my sadness dispel.*

Hans knew that to trust the Lord Jesus Christ would mean surrendering all to Him and, until then, Hans had lived to make money. There in the field, Hans saw the love of Christ for him and he confessed all his greed and covetousness to God. Instead of serving himself, Hans said, "Now I wanted very much to serve God. I asked Him to reveal to me what I should do. The answer echoed in my heart, 'You shall confess My name before the people; exhort them to repent and seek Me while I may be found and call upon Me while I am near; and touch their hearts that they may turn from darkness to light.' "

That same spring Hauge (pronounced How-gee) published a little book entitled "*Meditation on the Folly of the World*." In all, he would write thirty-three books. During the first year of his evangelistic work, Hauge confined his activities to his own community, but within a few years he had reached practically every valley in the country.

Traveling by foot, on ski, on horseback and by boat, in all seasons and in all kinds of weather, he journeyed more than ten thousand miles in the first eight years of his ministry. Speaking to cottage gatherings, Hauge was shocked when, as he spoke from the Bible, his audiences would melt down before his eyes. To see stoic farmers and fishermen, sitting beside their wives and children, break into tears, caused Hauge to marvel. It was evident that the words spoken were accompanied with spiritual power. Home prayer and testimony meetings became commonplace throughout that

rugged land.

But Hauge's evangelistic message was not universally appreciated. Between 1796 and 1804, he was arrested ten times, accused of violating the Conventicle Law (which required special permission from clergyman of the state church to assemble for religious purposes), as well as witchcraft, drunkenness, adultery, theft, dishonesty, and insubordination toward constituted authority. He was physically assaulted three times. On one occasion, the local clergyman came down to the police station to see his prize in order to spit in his face and slap his cheek. His enemies either caricatured him as an eccentric phenomenon, a religious fanatic, or else feared his influence and warned that he had ambitions to lead a peasant revolt. Dogged by police, and hailed into court, he would prove his innocence and be set free, usually with a warning that he stop preaching lest he violate the Conventicle Law.

Hauge had his own interpretation of the Conventicle Law, which he said was an outmoded attempt to control heretics and fanatics, of which he was neither. But the state church felt differently. On a preaching trip to the Eker diocese, he was arrested October 24, 1804, on government orders from Copenhagen. He was put in iron chains and placed in custody. Despite a general outcry and many appeals, he remained in prison, awaiting trial, for about a decade.

During the time of Hauge's imprisonment, England had imposed an embargo against Norway and Denmark, which resulted in a shortage of salt. Hauge had often used his mechanical genius in his travels. For instance, he would confer with local businessmen and explain how they could harness the fast moving streams and waterfalls for mills, or how they could set up a potash plant. In these ways, Hauge went about doing good. So it was that he was briefly taken from his imprisonment and asked if he would help devise a way to economically extract salt from the sea water, which Hauge happened to know how to do. That task completed, back to prison he went.

The eventual trial was a lengthy, far-flung ordeal in which one hundred and thirty witnesses testified. The courts finally decided that Hauge was innocent of all charges except the crime of preaching to gatherings without government permission. He was then fined and released.

Hauge's health was broken by this long imprisonment. He entered prison as a robust thirty-three

HEROES

year old, and left eleven years later, having lost most of his teeth and hair, an old man ready to go Home. But the movement God had begun was enjoying the strength of it's youth. Most of Hauge's remaining years were spent as a semi-invalid on his farm, called "Bredtvet." From his couch, he was confidant and counselor to a vigorous evangelistic and missionary movement until his death in 1824.

Hans Nelson Hauge is known as the apostle to Norway. In the eight years after his conversion to Christ, he criss-crossed mountainous Norway preaching the Gospel. His imprisonment made him a symbol of true, experiential Christianity, laboring against ritualistic, worldly religion. Following his vindication in a court of law, thousands were saved and began home Bible study and prayer meetings, and hundreds followed Hauge's example and became what the clergymen call "lay preachers."

The common people loved Hauge but many of the religious leaders scorned him. Today in Norway, Hauge is praised as a national hero, and the same religious system that persecuted him, now erects statues to his memory and yearly observes "Hauge Day" garnishing the sepulchre of this prophet as others have done to others before.

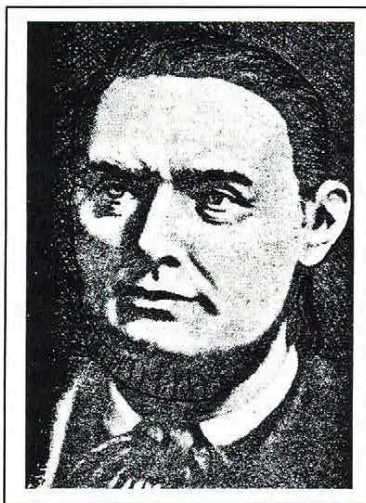
FURTHER READING:

The Apostle of Norway, Hans Nielsen Hauge, by M. Arntzen

Autobiographical Writings, by Hans Nielsen Hauge

The Light in the Prison Window, by W. Pettersen

Pulpit Under the Sky, by Joseph M. Shaw



Hans
Nielsen
Hauge

Innsight

Stephen Anderson

"How do we learn what God is like?" The question invites the response, "... by reading His Word." This is a good answer, and must be our foundation for all others. But is it only that? We may know what the Bible says about God's character, but through shallowness of perception or lack of motivation we find ourselves unable to see how His character should influence our lives. It may not be until the Lord brings us into circumstances that challenge our ideas about Him that we discover that His Word speaks the truth and that His perfect character touches our practical needs. In these few verses, we see a demonstration of this principle in the life-experiences of Mary and Joseph.

Mary had gained a new appreciation of the nature of her God. He had shown His great condescension by taking her up for His use in a ministry of unique and inexpressible privilege. By His direction, Gabriel, the messenger of God, had revealed to her that she would be the mother of the Messiah. Upon the confirmation of the words spoken by the angel, Mary had exclaimed, "... He has had regard for the humble state of His bondslave ... And has exalted those who were humble ..." (Luke 1:48, 52). The Lord did not leave the matter there: He prepared a demonstration of this great truth concerning Himself, so that not only Mary but also all who would read her story would see the practical reality of these words.

The time for Mary to give birth was at hand. The trip to Bethlehem would be a great hardship for a woman in her condition, and the possibility of precipitate delivery in the midst of unfavorable surroundings was very real. Joseph would have been most solicitous of Mary's welfare, and because of the dream given him by the Lord he understood the significance of the Child she carried.

Upon arriving in Bethlehem, did Joseph and Mary immediately seek out a dingy animal-stall into which the Son of God might be born? Assuredly not. They sought to provide such as they could for the birthplace of the Christ-child, even if all that was within their means or opportunity was a clean and quiet corner of a common caravanserai. This "inn" would not have been much

by modern standards of accommodation. This lodging house would have probably been little more than a crude compound consisting of a sheltering house, an open courtyard, a central water-source, and surrounded by a wall to provide protection from marauders. No service was provided in such places. Those who came would have to tend to their own beasts, provide for their own washing, cook their own meals, and supply their own bedding.

But in their attempt to provide even this minimal accommodation, Mary and Joseph failed. There was no room, except among the livestock. On one side of the compound, but usually outside of the wall, would be a stable. Doubtless this stable little resembled the tidy and snug manger scenes so common at this time of year. The town was full of people who had come for the census, so the stables would have been full as well. Thus the provisioners of the Son of God had to vie for space with the pack-animals of their kinsmen. But it was all they had; and He was there because they were there.

There, in the midst of this squalor, Mary brought forth into the world the Lord of Glory. Then we read these remarkable words: "... she wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger." What a picture is presented to us, as the little maiden of Nazareth bows over the Child and lovingly wraps Him in a band of rough cloth, then makes Him to lie down in a bed of straw! Who could consider this and not marvel? What pathetically insufficient attentions for the Son of God! How unworthy of His Person! And yet the

facts are recorded in Scripture without apology; indeed, they are eternally inscribed as a part of the inerrant revelation of Him, for it was to His glory that He was there. With His presence He dignified their woefully insufficient provisions and services, showing how He could make our most shameful inadequacies to praise Him.

But there is more. Had He not come so low we could not have perceived the extent of His condescension, and could never have so boldly proclaimed that the Lord has come to the lowest of mankind. Truly He exalted the humble and disdained the proud rulers of men, for He bypassed the courts of the mighty for a stable in Bethlehem. Had his earthly guardians been able to provide better, we might not have discerned this; but their failure was God's success.

What can we take from this for our present needs? Which of us who desires to truly serve our magnificent God never feels the pang of his own inadequacy. In so many ways we fall short of His deserving. Our service to Him is so paltry, even in our own eyes. Our commitment to His beloved people is such a wavering, half-selfish thing. Our giving is so insufficient. Our obedience is so hampered by self-interest. Our worship is so often impoverished by our own coldness of heart. When we ponder the greatness of His unspeakable Gift to us, which one of us can stand unashamed? But lest we despair by being so focused on ourselves, let us consider this: that the most inadequate service is dignified by the One to whom it is rendered. Let us determine to give our God such as we have, and may the glory be to Him.



May I Help You?

W. Alan Parks

Service. In contemporary society, it is a word with scores of connotations, many of them very positive. Yet it was not always so. Being a servant meant hard hours of laboring in obscurity for a master whose expectations were high, and whose commendations may have been few.

In our world where you *are* what you *do* or *have*, the concept of willing service to others is becoming an alien concept. We are surrounded by support personnel and high-tech equipment to assist us in our relentless pursuit of fame, fortune, and power. Perhaps a pause from our hectic lives is in order, to reacquaint ourselves with a principle woven through Scripture: service, from a servant's heart. To our unchanging God, this has always been His way, and has always characterized those whose lives have made a difference. Today God needs new volunteers for His army who have recognized that the secret to His high estimation is through being humble in our own estimation — men and women like those recorded for us in Hebrews 11:34 who "... out of weakness were made strong."

Through every dispensation, as God progressively revealed aspects of Himself, He chose human examples through whom the truths were revealed. All (at best) were mere shadows of the Great Exemplar, the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul reveals the downward progression of His humility in Philippians 2:5-11 as we see Him emptying Himself of all (inherent, intrinsic) reputation and taking the servant's form, humbling Himself and being obedient to His Father's will, even to the point of the shameful, hated death by crucifixion outside Jerusalem's walls. Yet the narrative culminates with the Father's exaltation of His Son, both presently and in the future! We may thrill in the vastness of this truth without ever realizing that He is to be our example — both in serving Him and His people! Of crucial importance is whether our lives, like His, can be summed up by saying that we "... came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Matt. 20:28). To the degree that our lives emulate His, we will serve Him and others. It cannot be any other way.

God has always placed a premium on com-

mitted service. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for service (*ebed*) is mentioned no less than eight hundred and seven times. Mr. G. A. Smith defines this word as, "A person at the disposal of another." This defies human nature, but it defines God's. The Son who could have come as a King with pomp and ceremony, was found wrapped in swaddling bands in the stable of the Bethlehem Inn. He came to serve, to win us back to God. He knew the cost, and still He came. And He is our example! What weight this places on 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, "... ye are not your own ... ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

Paul could tell the church in Corinth (1 Cor. 12; see also Eph. 4:15-16) that the relationship of Christ and His Church was analogous to a body with its head. Christ is the Head, and we are all parts of His body. Anyone who has injured even a small part of the body, knows just how much suffering it can cause, and how it places a burden on the surrounding parts. This is the principle of the Church; when we serve the body, we serve the Head. The converse is also sadly true; when we fail to serve the body, we harm the Head. He who has so uniquely formed us, who has brought us out of myriad backgrounds of family, culture, environment, and geographical region, has also given us a distinctive personality with strengths all our own; with different likes and dislikes, talents, and gifts. And He has never made an accident! This same grand and glorious God has something for us to do. Is He getting what He paid for?

The inspired New Testament writings contain nine different original words to portray service and servants. The most frequently used word (*doulos*) usually refers (in its noun form) to the relationship between a servant and his master. It refers not to unwilling bondage, but rather to subjection. This gives us a great insight into the servanthood of our Lord who was bound to Calvary not by nails, but by far stronger cords — supernatural love! So, with us, we don't serve Him out of unwilling or grudging necessity, but out of a heart and life devoted to One we love, who loved us first.

MAY I HELP YOU?

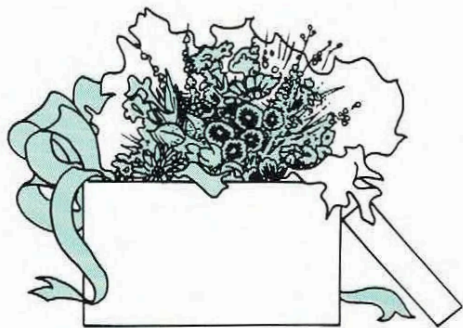
In ten of the twenty-seven New Testament books, we find the work of deacons mentioned (*diakonos/as*) some twenty-five times. While *doulos* refers to the servant and his master, here we have in view the servant and his work. Deacon work is usually considered a physical labor; (Vine — "an attendant rendering free service; servile work") but it is by no means limited to such. It is used to describe following Christ (Eph. 6:21), "serving one another" (Mark 9:35), and "serving the church" (1 Tim. 3:8). Examples today might include Sunday School work, preparation of meals for sick or shut-in saints, and the upkeep of facilities. If the work of deacons is to be done well, it will require some planning and ability to be sure, but mostly hard work! We can all help out here, but all too often, the tasks fall to the same few people. Our Example removed His outer garment, put on a towel, and washed the journey's defilement from the feet of His disciples (John 13). Any of the disciples could have done the same, but they didn't! Yet He did, and in so doing, He showed Himself a servant. Perhaps we don't think that deacon work is important — not "public" enough. Don't despair! His all-seeing eye watches all such service, and His hand faithfully records it. And at the Bema, He will make public the things done in secret, when they've been done for Him and His own.

Anyone who has a care for assemblies gathered alone to His Name will recognize that there is much need for strong leadership today. Many and varied are the problems, and powerful is the adversary. In short, we need elders! (*episkopoi* — "overseers"). Men raised up by the Holy Spirit for the guarding and guiding of the flock (Acts 20:28), men of repute (1 Tim. 3:1-7), guardians of the truth (Titus 1:9). Men who recognize that being an overseer isn't an "office" or "title" to be attained, but a work to be done; shepherding by example while keenly aware that they will answer to the Chief Shepherd; men with Christ-like compassion and firm resolve; men with tender hearts and yet thick skin! Men with a thorough knowledge of the Word of God, and the ability and willingness to apply its teachings. Men of discernment and vision too, but above all, men willing to work! Are there men out there with Timothy's strong desire to "stretch out after" and passionately "long for" such a work? (1 Tim. 3:1). We need you! The God we serve is never remiss in His rewards to any, but a special crown awaits those who shepherd

well; a "crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Peter 5:4).

The Church of Jesus Christ has, through the centuries, experienced many dark and trying days. Christian character has been honed and refined in the crucible of persecution. But for those who feel the cold, biting north wind, there is a desperate need today for healers. Three of the Gospels (all but Mark) record for us those who are "healers" (*thereupon*). These are people with empathy, understanding, and discretion. Christians still suffer from employment loss, wayward children, persecution from unsaved family members, temptations, and trials. We need people who are good listeners, wise of counsel, and understanding. Men like beloved John, whose greatest desire was in leaning on, and listening to, His Lord. His post-resurrection writings are redolent with the fragrance of the kindness of the Son of Man. Men like a young Levite named Joseph who the apostles renamed Barnabas — "son of consolation." Women like Phoebe (Rom. 16), a servant and a helper, and Mary of Bethany who first communed at the Saviour's feet, and *then* got to work. Healers — are you out there? Your abilities are desperately needed!

In these times of apathy, when we demand to be served, may we realize that *what* we are, *who* we are, *where* we live, and *why* the Lord has us in these present circumstances, is no accident! We have been formed to serve the Head in one part of the body. Are we doing our part? Are our lives governed by the question, "May I help you? One day at the Judgment Seat our earthly existence will be compared to "... a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1-2). Will He be able to say that we've done our "reasonable service"? May we go in for finding out what He would have us do, and then JUST DO IT! Not for self, but for Him, and His people. And, to ultimately hear Him say to us, "Well done — thou good and faithful SERVANT."





LOOK AT BOOKS

Biographies

Jim McKendrick

When was the last time you read a good biography? You should resolve to read at least one in this coming year. Let me define "good biography." A biography that is written to praise a man and exalt his wonderful work is not a "good biography." You will come away from a "good" biography praising God for what He has done and a renewed commitment to serve Him.

Whenever I want to read just for the enjoyment of reading, a good biography is likely to be on the top of the list. Maybe I feel this way because it was the reading of a biography that turned my life around a number of years ago. It wasn't that I was living in sin, but I was living for self. A good job, working six days a week for a large corporation, getting to meetings on Sunday's but no time for midweek meetings or any other spiritual exercise. Then I read the biography of Jim Elliot, *The Shadow of the Almighty*, and God used that book to convict me of my wrong priorities.

As you read about the lives of men and women of God, you will be convicted, inspired, encouraged, and challenged to go on for God in your own life. As you read of how God worked in their lives, you will come to a fuller understanding of His working in your life. As you read of their doubts, discouragements, and frustrations, you will grasp with firmer hand the great God who is there even when you can't see Him.

Since there are so many good ones, let me mention a few of them for you. There are biographies of pioneers such as William Carey, Hudson Taylor, Mary Slessor, and George Mueller. If there is more

than one author writing about an individual, choose the one who is interested in presenting the heart of the person and not just their history. God's work in the man is more important than God's work through the man.

There is a series called the *Pioneer Series*, published in Britain, of men who were used of God in the British Isles, Canada, and the U.S. around the turn of the century. These men preached the Gospel and saw New Testament assemblies established in great numbers: Donald Munro, Alexander Marshall, and many others whose names are in God's Who's Who list in glory.

There are biographies of men who are so intertwined with their work that you can't separate the

men from the work. I mention *Angola Beloved* by T. Ernest Wilson or *Grace Triumphant* by Cyril Brooks, or *He Loved to Plant* of T. B. Gilbert.

And while I'm mentioning series, let me introduce you to: *That the World May Know*, ten volumes on assembly missionary work around the world — men and women following the New Testament pattern, taking the Gospel to the unreached corners of the world. It was compiled by Frederick Tatford and published by Echoes of Service, a British missionary service group, similar to CMML in the United States.

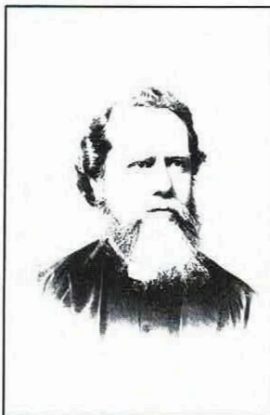
You will find that these are ordinary men and women with all the foibles of humanity, but picked up by God and used by Him in an extraordinary way. He has done this so "that no flesh should glory in His presence" (1 Cor. 1:29). May your heart be warmed, your vision enlarged, and your goals redefined as you read a good biography this coming year.



George Muller



Mary Slessor



J. Hudson Taylor

Every Day Reading Plan

Section 13: 2 Kings — Elisha's ministry and Israel and Judah's slide toward exile

January 1	2 Kings 1:1-18	Ahaziah's sickness and death
January 2	2 Kings 2:1-25	Elijah's translation & Elisha's double portion
January 3	2 Kings 3:1-27	Elisha & Jehoram's victory over Moab
January 4	2 Kings 4:1-44	Elisha performs four miracles
January 5	2 Kings 5:1-27	Naaman is healed of leprosy
January 6	2 Kings 6:1-33	A floating ax head and a blinded army
January 7	2 Kings 7:1-20	Repulse of the Syrian siege
January 8	2 Kings 8:1-29	Predicting Benhadad's death & Hazael's rise
January 9	2 Kings 9:1-13	Elisha sends a prophet to anoint Jehu
January 10	2 Kings 9:14-37	Jehu executes Jehoram, Ahaziah & Jezebel
January 11	2 Kings 10:1-17	Jehu judges two royal families
January 12	2 Kings 10:18-36	Jehu's character & Hazael's career
January 13	2 Kings 11:1-21	Athaliah's terror & Jehoiada's revival in Judah
January 14	2 Kings 12:1-21	The repairs and declines of Jehoash
January 15	2 Kings 13:1-25	Jehu's son and grandson reign in Israel
January 16	2 Kings 14:1-29	War between the north and south
January 17	2 Kings 15:1-22	Azariah struck with leprosy
January 18	2 Kings 15:23-38	Pekahiah, Pekah & Jotham
January 19	2 Kings 16:1-20	Ahaz' reign
January 20	2 Kings 17:1-23	Fall of the northern kingdom
January 21	2 Kings 17:24-41	Assyria repeoples Israel
January 22	2 Kings 18:1-16	Hezekiah's reforms
January 23	2 Kings 18:17-37	Sennacherib's attack
January 24	2 Kings 19:1-19	Hezekiah spreads the letter before the Lord
January 25	2 Kings 19:20-37	God answers through Isaiah
January 26	2 Kings 20:1-21	The shadow goes back ten degrees for Hezekiah
January 27	2 Kings 21:1-26	Manasseh's life runs riot
January 28	2 Kings 22:1-20	Hilkiah discovers the Book
January 29	2 Kings 23:1-37	Such a passover had never been held
January 30	2 Kings 24:1-20	Jerusalem's fall & the first deportation
January 31	2 Kings 25:1-30	Jerusalem's destruction & the Babylonian exile

2 Kings

The book of 2 Kings takes up the story of the divided kingdom of Israel and Judah just before the translation of Elijah, and carries through to the record of two great national tragedies — Israel's destruction in 721 B.C. and Judah's exile to Babylon concluding with the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. The overlap of the history of Elijah into 2 Kings reminds us that this is the second half of the single book of Kings. Since 2 Kings is really a continuation of 1 Kings, in many ways it sums up ideas introduced in 1 Kings.

For example, 1 Kings begins with King David; 2 Kings ends with the king of Babylon. 1 Kings opens with Solomon's glory; 2 Kings closes with Jehoiachin's shame. 1 Kings opens with the building of the temple; 2 Kings closes with the burning of the temple. 1 Kings traces the progress of apostasy; 2 Kings describes the consequences of apostasy. 1 Kings introduced Elijah the prophet; 2 Kings presents the ministry of Elisha the prophet. 1 Kings tells of the long-suffering of the Lord; 2 Kings relates the Lord's sure punishment for sin.

2 Kings covers about 270 years, more than twice the period dealt with in 1 Kings, nevertheless, half the space is given to the lifetime of Elisha the prophet. Also, Hezekiah and Josiah are mentioned in detail, while others, in spite of their long and prosperous reigns, are given only brief notice.

The book may be divided into three main sections. The closing days of Elijah's ministry and his translation with the ensuing ministry of Elisha is shown in chapters 1:1 through 8:15. Chapters 8:16 through 17:41 describe the period of the kings of Judah and Israel until the fall of the northern capital, Samaria. The last section, from 18:1 through the end of the book, treats the period from the ascension of Hezekiah to the captivity of Judah.

The first section, portraying the kindly ministry of Elisha, reveals the *goodness of God*. In spite of man's rebellion and ignoring of the claims of God, the Lord still works His generosity through the miraculous works of His servant. You will notice that Elisha's ministry is additive — he always seems to be putting something in.

The second section reveals the long-suffering *grace of God*. Time and time again, the people and

their leaders ignored the warnings of God through His prophets. Yet God waited on until, at last, judgment was inevitable.

While we see Israel and Judah's rulers stride (or stumble) across the pages of 2 Kings, we also see some of the great Gentile kings as well — Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, Pharaoh-Necho, Esarhaddon, and Nebuchadnezzar, to name some. Also, against what is often a dark backdrop, flash brilliant luminaries for God — Hosea and Amos in Israel; Joel, Micah, Isaiah, Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah in Judah.

The third and final section (18:1-25:30) deals with the Single Kingdom period while the kingdom of Judah outlasted Israel by about 135 years. Here we see the *government of God*. During this time, there were two great efforts to turn the people from idolatry to the Lord. The first of these was under good king Hezekiah, who reigned for twenty-nine years between a wicked father and a more wicked son. Yet he is given higher commendation than any other king of Judah.

His son, Manasseh, and grandson, Amon, were both evil influences on the people of God. But fifty-seven years after Hezekiah's death, his great-grandson, Josiah, ascended the throne. He made a final (and futile) attempt to bring Judah back to God. The most outstanding event during this time was the recovery of the Book of the Law from the temple. Isaiah spoke for the Lord during the reign of Hezekiah and Jeremiah wept over Jerusalem during the time of Josiah. The work of repentance in these days seemed to be superficial and the kingdom ran on to its doom.

The exiles were taken away in three waves: in 606 B.C., during the reign of Jehoiakim, when Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem and took Daniel and his three friends; in 598 B.C., he attacked again during the reign of Jehoiachin, taking Ezekiel and Mordecai; the third time, he razed the city in the days of Zedekiah (587 B. C.).

2 KINGS

The Road to Bondage

And a Demonstration of the Longsuffering of God

Kings of Judah

JEHORAM: 8 years — bad
(2 Kings 8:16-24)
AHAZIAH: 1 year — bad
(2 Kings 8:25-29)
(ATHALIAH): 6 years — bad
(2 Kings 11)
JEHOASH: 40 years — good
(2 Kings 12)
AMAZIAH: 29 years — good
(2 Kings 14:1-20)
AZARIAH: 52 years — good
(2 Kings 14:21-15:7)
JOTHAM: 16 years — good
(2 Kings 15:32-38)
AHAZ: 16 years — bad
(2 Kings 16)
HEZEKIAH: 29 years — good
(2 Kings 18-20)
MANASSEH: 55 years — bad
(2 Kings 21:1-18)
AMON: 2 years — bad
(2 Kings 21:19-26)
JOSIAH: 31 years — good
(2 Kings 22-23:30)
JEHOAHAZ: 3 months — bad
(2 Kings 23:31-34)
JEHOIAKIM: 11 years — bad
(2 Kings 23:35-24:7)
JEHOIACHIN: 3 months — bad
(2 Kings 24:8-16)
ZEDEKIAH: 11 years — bad
(2 Kings 24:17-25:21)

SAMARIA
(Capital of Israel)

JERUSALEM
(Capital of Judah)

Into Assyrian
Captivity (721 BC)

Into Babylonian
Captivity (587 BC)

Kings of Israel

AHAZIAH: 2 years — bad
(2 Kings 1:1-18)
JORAM: 12 years — bad
(2 Kings 3:1 to 9:26)
JEHU: 28 years — bad
(2 Kings 9:1-10:36)
JEHOAHAZ: 17 years — bad
(2 Kings 13:1-9)
JOASH: 16 years — bad
(2 Kings 13:10-25)
JEROBOAM II: 41 years — bad
(2 Kings 14:23-29)
ZACHARIAH: 6 months — bad
(2 Kings 15:8-12)
SHALLUM: 1 month — bad
(2 Kings 15:13-16)
MENAHEM: 10 years — bad
(2 Kings 15:17-22)
PEKAHIAH: 2 years — bad
(2 Kings 15:23-26)
PEKAH: 20 years — bad
(2 Kings 15:27-31)
HOSHEA: 9 years — bad
(2 Kings 17)

Prophets of God

ELIJAH (2 Kings 1, 2)
ELISHA (2 Kings 2-13)
JOEL (2 Kings 12-17)
JONAH (2 Kings 14)
AMOS (2 Kings 14:21-15:7)
HOSEA (2 Kings 14-17)
ISAIAH (2 Kings 15-20)
MICAH (2 Kings 15-20)
NAHUM (2 Kings 21-24)
ZEPHANIAH (2 Kings 22-24)
JEREMIAH (2 Kings 22-25)
HABAKKUK (2 Kings 23:31-24:16)
DANIEL (2 Kings 23:35-25:30)
EZEKIEL (2 Kings 24:17-25:30)

Why the Incarnation?

That the Lord Jesus Christ is at once both God and man is one of the most profound secrets that God has been pleased to reveal to His own. "The mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh," is one of the two mysteries of the Word of God called great. We cannot understand it, much less explain it; there it is, and we believe it! This truth is the very foundation of all that we are and have as the people of God (Matt. 16:16-18), and in these perilous times Satan is blasting at the Person of Christ as never before. "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist" (1 John 4:3). Multitudes of the leaders of Christendom today are the "many antichrists" we are warned against in 1 John 2:18, and they are paving the way for the coming and reception of the antichrist of 1 John 2:22 and his dreadful blasphemy. Why did God become man? Some suggested answers follow.

1. TO REVEAL GOD

In the Old Testament, God ascribes to Himself human attributes. We read of His face, mouth, eyes, ear, nose, arm, hand, finger, feet, etc. We know that "God is a Spirit" and that "a spirit hath not flesh and bones"; but the fact that God so spoke reveals Him as One who longed for His creatures to know Him. His speaking thus, humanly anticipates His incarnation in the person of His Son, the One who could say, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." And so even a child can listen to the stories in the four Gospels and know what God is like! In Christ the Infinite becomes finite, the One who inhabits eternity comes into time, the Invisible becomes tangible, the One far off draws near.

2. TO BECOME OUR NEAR KINSMAN

In the Old Testament times, there was the possibility of an Israelite becoming so poverty-stricken that he would sell both his inheritance and himself to keep body and soul together. In Leviticus 25, we read of the Lord's gracious provision for such a one whereby a near kinsman of his could redeem both the inheritance and the person.

Through sin we lost our inheritance, were ourselves "sold under sin," and doomed to eternal bondage in hell (Matt. 22:13). But because "None . . . can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him," God Himself became our kinsman and thus qualified as the Redeemer of sinners!

3. TO BECOME THE RANSOM

In order for the poor Israelite to be liberated so that he could possess his inheritance, he must have a kinsman who was both able and willing to pay the ransom. In the book of Ruth, the poor Moabitess found her nearest kinsman able, but unwilling, to pay the price; he cared nothing for her and the cost was too much. But our blessed Boaz was both willing and able! God became a man in order to be able — in order to take upon Himself the capacity to suffer and to die for needy sinners. Our blessed "mighty man of wealth" became poor that we might be rich. He gave Himself a ransom for us.

4. TO BECOME THE ONE MEDIATOR

A mediator is one who interposes between parties at variance to reconcile them. An everyday example is the board of mediation appointed by the government to iron out the trouble between the employer and labor. The God-man, because He gave Himself a ransom, is able to reconcile the believing sinner. He is able to take hold of man with one hand, so to speak, and of God on the other and bring man back to God, annihilating the gulf that separated them.

5. TO BECOME THE LAST ADAM

It has been said that the Bible is the history of two men: the first Adam and the last Adam. These two are the representative heads of two races of people. By nature, we are "in Adam," members of a ruined race; by grace we are "in Christ," members of a redeemed race. Adam transmits natural life to his posterity; Christ gives spiritual life, eternal life. As natural men, we bear the image of Adam; as new creatures in Christ, we are renewed after His image and at His coming even our bod-

WHY THE INCARNATION?

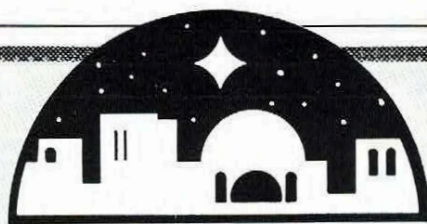
ies will "bear the image of the heavenly." We are "to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren."

6. TO BECOME OUR SYMPATHIZING HIGH PRIEST

There is a man in heaven, now glorified, who, in the very scene we find ourselves, "was in all points tempted like as we are." In that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted. God becoming a man added nothing to His perfect knowledge of "our frame," nor to His compassion toward us, nor to His all-sufficient grace to help us; He changes not. But the God-man suffered in this world all that we will ever be called upon to endure, and infinitely more, thus enabling us to enter into His compassions, makes His sympathies real to us.

7. TO BECOME OUR EXAMPLE

In the Old Testament, the Lord gave detailed precepts to regulate every department of the Israelite's life. There are precepts for the Christian too, setting even a higher standard; but we have something far more blessed in that Life portrayed in the four Gospels, those precepts practiced! It is far easier to learn by being shown how, than by merely being told how. So Christ left us an example, "that ye should follow His steps." A Christ-like life is a powerful testimony to the world, a benediction to the saints and a delight to God. For the remaining "little while," may we seek to follow His steps.



STAR LIGHT

Calm on the listening ear of night
Come heaven's melodious strains,
Where wild Judea stretches far
Her silver-mantled plains.

Celestial choirs from courts above
Shed sacred glories there;
And angels, with their sparkling lyres,
Make music on the air.

The answering hills of Israel
Send back a glad reply,
And greet from all their holy heights
The Dayspring from on high.

O'er the blue depths of Galilee
There comes a holier calm;
And Sharon waves in solemn praise
Her silent groves of palm.

"Glory to God!" the sounding skies
Loud with their anthems ring;
"Peace on the earth — good will to men
From heaven's Eternal King."

Light on thy hills, Jerusalem!
The Saviour now is born!
More bright on Bethlehem's joyous plains
Breaks incarnation morn.

And brighter on Moriah's brow,
Crowned with her temple spires,
Which first proclaim the newborn light,
Clothed with its orient fires.

This day shall Christian tongues be mute,
And Christian hearts be cold?
O catch the anthem that from heaven
O'er Judah's mountains rolled!
When nightly burst from seraph harps
The high and holy lay —
"Glory to God; on earth be peace;
Salvation comes today!"

— Edmund Hamilton Sears

Peace On Earth?

Colin Anderson

*T*wo people stand at your door earnestly proclaiming the advent of God's kingdom on earth. You reply that you expect to go to heaven, and they, in turn, tell you that such a hope is only for a few persons; their work is to prepare people for the kingdom of God on earth. Your two visitors use many Bible verses to support this teaching.

Later, you hear a radio preacher who is just as sincere as were the two men at your door, but you find yourself more in sympathy with him because he honors the Lord and preaches the Gospel. However, he too speaks of God's kingdom, making it clear that as far as he is concerned, all saints will be in heaven; God's kingdom is in the hearts of His people now, and the idea of Christ reigning over a restored earth with the people of Israel as the head of the nations is regarded by him as a materialistic view, and "only misguided Christians believe such a thing."

We should seek to avoid both of the above errors. The one loses sight of the special hope of the Church, and the other ignores the clear promises made to Abraham. We should note that the Bible teaches us to "set our affection on things above," and remember "the hope laid up for [us] in heaven." On the other hand, the earth is yet to be "filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Col. 1:5; 3:1-4; Isa. 11:9).

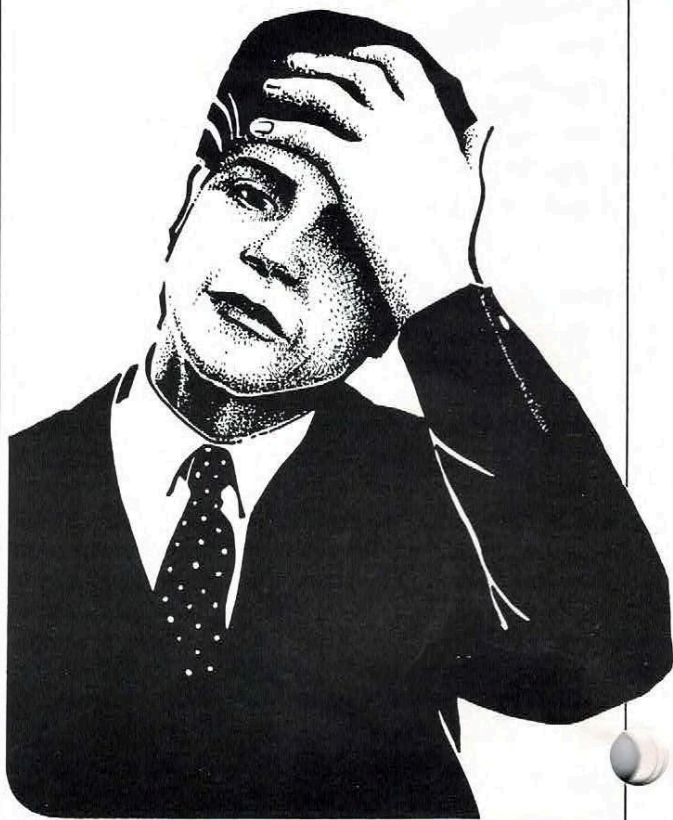
At the beginning, God planned that man should rule over all the earth. This world was not to be just a temporary thing, a mere springboard from which the redeemed would get to heaven. Instead, it is the arena in which His kingdom is to be established and His will done "as it is in heaven." For this the disciples were taught to pray (Gen. 1:26; Matt. 6:10).

Over one thousand years after Adam's race forfeited all right to have dominion over the earth, the Holy Spirit through David reaffirmed God's original plan. Another thousand years roll by and it is stated yet again. This time we are told through which Man all is to be fulfilled (Ps. 8:4-9; Heb. 2:5-9). While on earth, the Lord Jesus said others would reign with Him in that day (Matt. 19:28. See also 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 2:26-27; 5:10).

Many other passages teach that earth, as well as heaven, will be renewed and blessed. Some emphasize one side and some the other, but both are clearly taught.

The "Christmas" prophecies surrounding the birth of Christ speak of the blessing of Israel and the nations on the earth (Matt. 2:6; Luke 1:46-56, 67-70; 2:11-14). For nearly two thousand years, those promises have been suspended while the Lord Jesus fulfills His word, "I will build My Church." But "the gifts and calling of God" concerning Israel will shortly be reactivated (Rom. 11:25-29). When all is brought to pass, the words of Luke 2:4 will be more appropriate than they are presently:

"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace..."



New for 1992!

Three-in-one style

Adapt your new *Choice Gleanings Calendar* for use as a wall, desk, or book style. Photo-label and instruction sheet provided.

A gift item whose blessing lasts all year long.



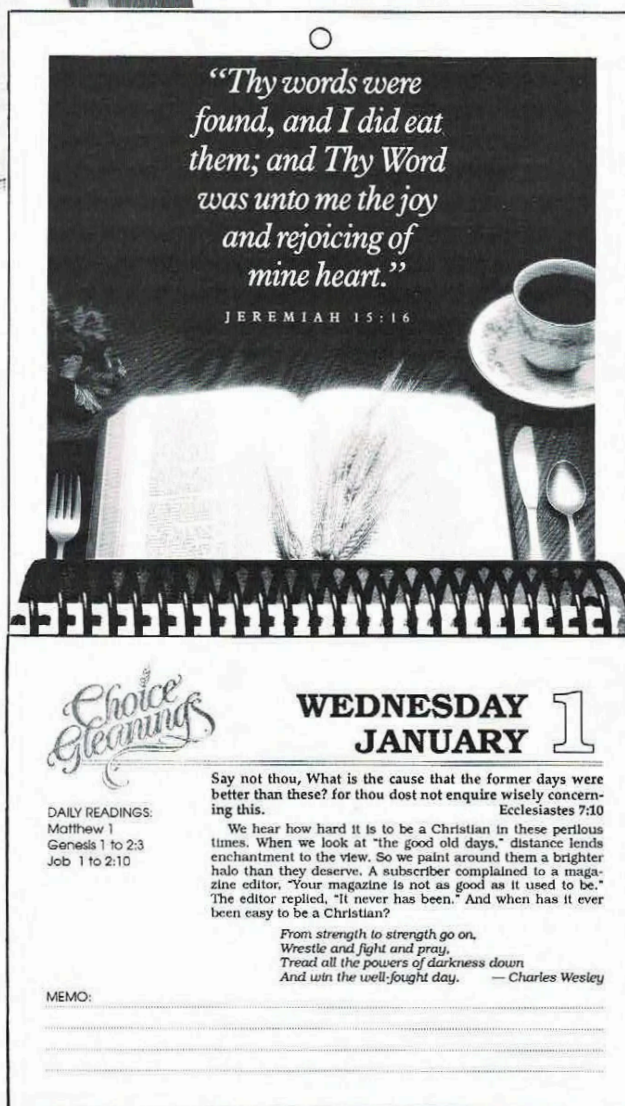
For more than fifty years, millions of readers have started the day with their Bibles and the *Choice Gleanings Calendar*. Read through God's Word in a year using the Daily Readings. Jot down your prayer list or "things to do" in the memo section. And enjoy fresh insights into the Word each day, with all new meditations every year.

Choice Gleanings doesn't replace your Bible — it whets your appetite so you'll want more!

Available now @ \$7.95 ea.

Special Offer: \$7.00 ea. for four or more to the same address; \$6.50 ea. for twenty or more to the same address.

Please add 20% for postage
Canadian orders 7% GST



GOSPEL FOLIO PRESS
P. O. Box 2041
Grand Rapids, MI 49501-2041

Please include 20% postage and handling for each *Choice Gleanings Calendar* ordered. Canadian customers add 7% GST on all orders, in addition to postage. All amounts are in U. S. funds.

UPLOOK

(USPS 620-640)

P. O. Box 2041

Grand Rapids, MI 49501-2041

SECOND CLASS
U. S. Postage
PAID

Grand Rapids, MI

Thoughts for the Coming Year



Do not wait to do a great thing; you may waste all your life waiting for the opportunity which may never come. But since little things are always claiming your attention, do them as they come, from a great motive — for the glory of God, to win His smile of approval, and to do good to men. It is harder to plod in obscurity, acting thus, than to stand on the high places of the field within view of all and do deeds of valor at which rival armies stand still to gaze. But no such little but faithful act goes without the recognition and the ultimate recompense of Christ.

To fulfill the duties of your station; to use to the utmost the gifts of your ministry; to bear the chafing of the unthankful and evil; to find the one noble trait in people who find joy in disturbing you; to put the kindest construction on unkind acts and words; to love with the love of God even the unlovely; to be content to be a fountain in the midst of a wild valley, nourishing now and again a thirsty sheep — and to do this always, not for the praise of man, but for the pleasure of God — this is the secret of a great life.

— F. B. Meyer