

It's
TIME TO
RENEW! PAGE 6

UPLOOK

JANUARY 1993



ILLUSTRATION BY MOIRA NICHOLSON

Intellectualism
The Ethics of Herod
Changing of the Guard

Moira M.



BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE



BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE

BEFORE you conclude from the cover that *Uplook* has gone to the dogs, give me a chance to explain. We have recently added a new four-legged member to the household, a tricolor Bassett hound named Rey-Mar Kayla Victoria. For those interested, the name Rey-Mar comes from the breeder. Victoria comes from an attempt to add a little refinement to the beast. And Kayla? Kayla is Caleb (meaning "dog") in the feminine gender, with phoneticized spelling, children's version. It is Kayla to which she answers.

I had a dog when I was a boy. Major's pedigree was kindly listed as "unknown." But he didn't seem to mind, and treated us royally just the same. A faithful mutt—that's what he was. I had objected to the idea of a dog for our kids, though. You know, the expense; house-training; walking it in the rain; complications when you wanted to travel. All adult problems. The family was not impressed. All they thought about was soft fur, wagging tails, and big, brown, sad eyes. It was an argument as lopsided as a hounddog's smile.

Having the pup around brought back some happy memories. I was especially reminded of the chief attribute of a dog. How faithful they are! Even the hand that disciplines gets a loving lick. Try if you will, it is well-nigh impossible to alienate their affections.

Which brings me back to Caleb. What a man he was. Is it true he was not an Israelite? His father was a Kenezite (Josh. 14:14). Is this the same people referred to five hundred years before as the Kenizzites who dwelt in Canaan (Gen. 15:19)? And what does Joshua 15:13 mean: "unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a part *among* the children of Judah"? And why would they call him Caleb, the common name for a Gentile?

Whatever the case, if he would be called a dog, then he would be as faithful as one. With single-focused devotion, Caleb followed his Master. Of the 74,600 able-bodied men of Judah, he was the one chosen to represent his tribe, not at official functions (Num. 7:12), but as part of the first Mossad team to spy out Israel's enemies. Caleb was one among thousands.

It is estimated that over two million Israelites stood under the hot sun on the edge of the Wilderness of Zin

to hear the report of the ten concerning the land. Only Joshua and Caleb were willing to remain faithful to Jehovah in the face of mounting pressure. With their clothes torn in mourning, they cried against the rebellion, but to no avail. The people prepared to stone them. It seems only the appearing of the Lord in glory saved the lives of the two (Num. 14:10). Two against two million. Caleb was one in a million.

Thirty-eight years rolled their course across the shifting sands of the Sinai. And strewn across the desert in a hundred graveyards lay the corpses of Caleb's peers. If my calculations are correct, they averaged about eighty-eight funerals per day! Every time they pulled up stakes, they left behind another memorial plot. Why? They did not take God's Word seriously.

But not Caleb. With Joshua he entered the land, striding ahead in the vanguard of Judah, sweeping the monstrous sons of Anak from the hills about Hebron. At eighty-five years of age, still following hard on his Master, he could give testimony at Gilgal that he was still strong of limb and ready to do exploits for God, "to go out, *and come in.*" Mission accomplished, sir. And he wasn't bitter for his thirty-eight desert years for others' sin. What blessed confidence in God (see Josh. 14:6-15). And what sweet defiance of the enemy.

Caleb knew what God had said. He would live it to the full. And he would remind the people of God, too. "Thou knowest the thing that the Lord said . . ." (Josh. 14:6). There was no place for compromise when it came to the Word of the Lord. He knew that the failure of the people (though they had statistics on their side) could be directly attributed to their unwillingness to take God at His Word.

We need not guess how Caleb lived out his days. His family shared his convictions—his daughter wanted all that God had for her (Jud. 1:15). His territory was one of the few areas that had rest from war. His city became a priestly city, where the servants of God were refreshed, and a refuge city where those fleeing the avenger found safety.

If you think that Caleb's blessing came by backing down, bowing out, or bending to popular opinion, you're barking up the wrong tree.



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INTELLECTUALISM

INTELLECTUALISM is a peril in every age of the Church, but for some reason it seems to be posing a special threat in evangelical circles today. Whenever we make such a statement, someone rises to the defense with the cry, "What do you want us to do? Throw our minds away?" That, of course, misses the point. The intellect is a God-given faculty and should be exploited to the full. But the danger comes when human reason is exalted above the Word of God. Intellectualism can become a subtle form of idolatry when man's mind rather than the Bible becomes the authority. The best use of the intellect is to "take every thought captive to obey Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5, RSV). We should test our thoughts by God's Word, and not vice versa.

There are certain distinctive marks of intellectualism as it exists in the evangelical world today. First of all, there is an exaggerated regard for what is called "scholarship." But what is meant by scholarship? When you investigate, you find that it is almost invariably linked with the possession of certain postgraduate degrees. If you check more thoroughly, you will find that many of these theological degrees were granted by universities that are not particularly noted as bastions of the Christian faith. The truth is that in order to get degrees with status in the theological world today, you have to go to colleges which are pesthouses of infidelity. You get the status you sought all right, but what a price to pay!

A second mark of modern intellectualism is a tendency to be more concerned with what prominent theologians have said than what the Scriptures are saying. If you know what Barth, Brunner, Tillich, Niebuhr, and such men have said, you are intellectual. If you only know what the Bible teaches, you really don't have the proper credentials. I am sick to death of books and magazines that rehash the pompous sayings of these theologians. I often feel like crying out with the Apostle Paul, "Do ye set them to judge who are of no account in the church? I say this to move you to shame. What, cannot there be found among you one wise man?" (1 Cor. 6:4-5 ASV).

Closely linked with this lust for intellectual status

and this preoccupation with noted theologians is an increasing esteem for men of liberal persuasion. Separation has become a naughty word; the "in" word is cooperation. Men like William Barclay are quoted and courted. It was Barclay who said, "Jesus was the end and climax of the evolutionary process." Concerning the account of the fruitless fig tree he wrote, "The story does not ring true. To be frank, the whole incident does not seem worthy of Jesus. There seems to be a certain petulance in it." In his book on

Luke Barclay writes, "The man who walks with God can say, 'I am the master of my fate, I am the conqueror of my soul.'" Perhaps one of his most brazen handlings of God's Word is in the way he explains away the raising of Lazarus. Yet it is men like this who are honored by the "intellectuals" today.

There often seems to be a more tolerant attitude toward modernists than toward those who are sneeringly called "fundamentalists." Too often there is an attitude bordering on contempt for those whom God has called, that is, the foolish, the weak, the base, the things that are despised, and the things that are not (1 Cor. 1:27-28). Have we become oblivious to the fact that the humblest believer, taught by the Spirit of God, can understand the deep things of God whereas the most scholarly unbeliever has a native incapacity for knowing them (1 Cor. 2:14)?



**There are no
men less to be
trusted than
mere
scholars . . .**

INTELLECTUALISM

Modern evangelical intellectualism also seems unaware of the fact that the gifts God has given to the Church are charismatic, not professional. The idea is abroad that only those with professional training are qualified to minister the Word. There seems to be a mounting disinclination to listen to men who, like John and Peter, are uneducated, common men (Acts 4:13 RSV). When will we learn that "some simpleminded folks know more about God and His ways than some professors will ever know"? (Barnhouse)

Though not universally true it is often a fact that intellectualism is characterized by:

1. A weak stand on the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. These men do not speak with the conviction of the Reformers. They use weasel words to hide their wobbly stance.

2. An evasive position on Genesis 1-3. When there seems to be a conflict between the Bible and science, we see a worrisome leaning toward the voice of science and a pathetic attempt to dilute the words of Scripture until, as Spurgeon said, there is not enough left to make soup for a sick grasshopper.

3. A noncommittal policy on prophetic matters: "My mind isn't made up on that as yet." Yet they can be quite vehement in their stand against dispensationalism, against pretribulationism, and against premillennialism, which creates a distinct impression that their prophetic position is more definitive than they wish to say.

4. A tendency to give naturalistic explanations for Bible miracles. A well-known evangelical scholar, for instance, has gone on record with naturalistic explanations of all the plagues in Egypt.

5. A propensity to take a slap at typology whenever possible. It begins with knocking extreme forms of typological interpretations, but before long the baby is thrown out with the bathwater.

William Kelly once wrote: "There are no men less to be trusted than mere scholars, because, being scholars, they are naturally apt to be proud of their scholarship; and whatever we are proud of is always the very thing in which God will humble us."

I am persuaded that the type of intellectualism we have been discussing is sterile and devoid of power. What we need today is Christians who have a thorough knowledge of the English Bible and Spirit-filled men who can preach with such power that wherever they go, something will happen for God.

U

The Triumph **of TRUTH**



Truth never dies. The ages come and go;
The mountains wear away; the seas retire;
Destruction lays earth's mighty cities low;
And empires, states, and dynasties expire;
But caught and handed onward by the wise,
Truth never dies.

Though unreceived and scoffed at through the
years;
Though made the butt of ridicule and jest;
Though held aloft for mockery and jeers,
Denied by those of transient power possessed,
Insulted by the insolence of lies,
Truth never dies.

Truth answers not; it does not take offense:
But with mighty silence bides its time.
As some great cliff that braves the elements,
And lifts through all the storms its head sublime,
So truth, unmoved, its puny foes defies,
And never dies.

—Author Unknown

If You Want That **UPLOOK** Outlook, Don't Overlook This Page

RENEWAL NOTICE **NOW IS THE TIME!**

EACH YEAR we ask our readers to reconfirm their desire to continue receiving *Uplook*. Since we do not charge a subscription fee, we need to be sure that we are not sending out unnecessary magazines. We do not want to waste the Lord's resources by sending the magazine to those who don't want to receive it. Also sometimes people forget to inform us of addresses changes. Thus we purge our mailing list each year.

If you have written to us or sent a donation for *Uplook* since July 1, 1992, we have automatically renewed you. If you are in this category, check your mailing label. It should indicate your status as "OK." If so, then no response is necessary at this time.

If your mailing label reads "Expired," we need to hear from you. Confirm that you want to continue receiving *Uplook* by returning the enclosed envelope.

Peel the label from the magazine or mailing envelope (CDN and foreign addresses) and affix it to the enclosed response envelope. If there is any changes to your name or address, please indicate them in the space provided.

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It is our policy at Gospel Folio Press to distribute *Uplook* to whoever requests it, without charge. The costs incurred in producing the magazine are paid for out of our general funds. However, donations from readers help cover these costs. In the next column is a summary of the donations received and costs incurred to produce *Uplook* magazine in 1992.

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OUR OBJECTIVE

Our objective at Gospel Folio Press is to publish a 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 (800) 952-2382 or write for our free catalog.

1992 UPLOOK FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Donations (for the year ended Nov. 30, 1992) \$65,729

Expenses:

Pre-press	\$10,202
Printing and binding	29,830
Mailing	<u>15,979</u>

Total expenses 56,011

Surplus for the year \$ 9,718
(Used for administrative & equipment expenses)

FRONT LINES



Paul & Lois Logan

PRAY FOR THE LOGANS

Paul and Lois Logan, missionaries to Zambia, Africa, are in need of the prayers of the Lord's people. Recently Paul has not been feeling too well and flew to Johannesburg, South Africa, for tests. There is reason for some serious concern.

While Paul was in Johannesburg, Lois was found unconscious in Zambia, and rushed by air ambulance to a hospital in Johannesburg. Doctors have diagnosed her problem as cerebral malaria, and bluntly stated that only a miracle would do. Since arriving at the hospital, she has been drifting in and out of consciousness. She is now out of intensive care, however, doctors warn that she is still "not out of the woods yet."

Please pray for wisdom for the doctors as they treat both Paul and Lois.

GOD MAKES NO MISTAKES

Brother Mariano Gonzalez (Audio-Lit Ministries) writes: "Does God make mistakes? No, but my wife does. She erroneously sent several copies of *Ministry and the Christian Woman* in Spanish to

some English-speaking sisters in Augusta, GA. One of these sisters in the Lord gave her copy to a Spanish-speaking lady, and she found the Lord through the reading of the book! Instead of criticizing my wife, I give her permission to continue making such errors. Doesn't this motivate us to praise our God?"

COMMENDATION

The elders at the North Raleigh Chapel, Raleigh, NC, have announced their commendation of Ingimar and Ivette DeRidder to the work of the Lord. Recognizing God's gift and calling, the assembly requests your prayers for them.

CONFERENCE NOTES

Greenwood Hills is getting ready for another year of camps and conferences. D. V., on January 8-10, there will be a Congress Retreat. On April 16-18, Bob Gessner will speak at the Couples' Retreat. Following this, on April 23-25 a Ladies' Missionary Retreat will be held. For more information on these and any other camps and conferences through the year, contact:

Greenwood Hills
(717) 352-2150

WINTER YOUTH CONFERENCE

Galilean Bible Camp (near Blind River, ON) will be hosting Northern Ontario's Sixth Annual Winter Youth Conference. The dates are, February 26-28, with speaker J. B. Nicholson, Jr. For registration in-

formation contact:

James Martin
6-600 Barrydowne Rd.
Sudbury, ON P3A 3T5
(705) 560-5646

TAVISTOCK CONFERENCE

Approximately 180 saints gathered for the most recent Tavistock Area Conference on Biblical Church Principles held on November 7 in southwestern Ontario. Jim Comte of Barrie, ON, gave two messages on "The Challenge of Evangelism" and Brian Gunning of St. Catharines, ON, gave two messages on "The Man's Role in the Assembly and Home." Both were very well received by those in attendance. The next conference is planned for Saturday, April 3, 1993. At that time, Jim McKendrick of Grand Rapids, MI is to tackle the challenging subject of "Divorce" while Paul Booker of Elmira, ON, will present "The Supremacy of Christ in the Church and Home." Pray with us that the Lord will be glorified and the saints built up. If you need accommodations, please contact one of the committee at:

4 Eldale Road
Elmira, ON N3B 2C8
(519) 669-8362

EAST TULSA CONFERENCES

In the will of the Lord, on March 19-21, a youth conference is planned for the East Tulsa, OK, area. The speaker is John Heller.

On April 2-3, Jean Tuininga is to address a ladies' conference there. Both conferences are to be held at a

FRONT LINES

Chapel. For more information:

John and Bobbie Heller
1801 South 120th E. Avenue
Tulsa, OK 74128
(918) 438-1306

FREE TRACT

A gospel tract entitled, *Which Way* is free to assembly Christians who could prayerfully use them to reach the unsaved. Contact:

Virgil F. Corbin
1 Rosser Street
Luray, VA 22835
(703) 743-3340

ASSEMBLIES MERGE

The Hillside Bible Chapel, Camarillo, CA, and the West Valley Bible Chapel, Canoga Park, CA, have announced the merging of these two assemblies. Effective January 1993, meetings will be held at the facilities of West Valley Bible Chapel. The new address is:

West Valley Bible Chapel
20703 Chase Street
Canoga Park, CA 91306

A NEW CHAPTER

The brethren at the Redmond assembly (WA) have agreed it is the Lord's mind that this assembly should close its doors. The assembly had always been a small fellowship, yet free from dissension. Several families were led to move away for vocational reasons which further reduced the workers there.

Please pray for the believers in Redmond, that the Lord may guide them to happy fellowship with the Lord's people in another location.

TEACHERS NEEDED

Victory Christian School, a faith ministry of the Bible Chapel, St. Louis, Missouri, is seeking several

full-time Christian teachers for Elementary teaching positions and Junior High/High School Math and Science teaching positions for the 1993-94 school year. A teaching certificate is not required. If interested in teaching in a faith ministry, please contact:

Stan Vaninger,
10255 Musick Avenue,
St. Louis, MO 63123
(314) 849-3425

GOSPEL WORK

Steve Andrews of the relatively new assembly in Reidsville (NC) writes: "In October, our assembly held two weeks of gospel meetings. Our fellowship of believers began gathering approximately three-and-a-half years ago. This was the first gospel effort of this type since our inception. Neil Dougal of Worcester, MA was the speaker. Chris and Donna Bowman of Greensboro, NC, conducted children's meetings.

"The meetings were a high point of our short history. When we first discussed Mr. Dougal's idea of two weeks of meetings, we were somewhat skeptical. However, the wisdom in this became apparent as our crowds grew through the two weeks. Our meeting averages about 40 each Sunday (including children). However, as a result of the Christians inviting friends and relatives, we saw as many as 75 attending the meetings.

"One young college student accepted the Lord and several other unsaved attended and heard the gospel in power. Please pray for the seed that was sown. We also saw the impact of the gospel on Christians in our meeting. Several have a renewed interest in spiritual things.

"We also had several friends

FOR PRAYER & PRAISE

from other local churches who attended. Many were thrilled to hear the gospel preached in power (sad to say, this is something many had not heard since childhood). The meetings helped establish the testimony of the Reidsville Bible Chapel within the community.

"The children's meetings were a real blessing. The Bowmans' involvement took a major responsibility off our small group. We averaged approximately 20-25 children each night (including school nights). The children were excited to hear Bible stories, see puppets and participate in sword drills.

"Overall, we were encouraged tremendously. We have seen that people will come out to gospel meetings if the Christians get busy and invite many. God will still work if we do our part."

PROMOTED TO GLORY

Dr. William T. Miller went to be with the Lord on October 5, 1992 in Auckland, New Zealand. The funeral service was held at Eden Chapel, Mt. Eden, Auckland on October 8th. He leaves his wife Janette, a son Raymond, three daughters, Doreen Thorburn, Joyce Hawkesby, and Sylvia Hardie, and 12 grandchildren.

Dr. Miller was born on May 10, 1915 in Aberdeen, Scotland. He was a Doctor of Osteopathy and practiced in Scotland and New Zealand. However, his greatest love was the ministry of the Word of God and he eventually left the field of medicine in order to serve the Lord in a full-time capacity. He was a gifted evangelist and well-loved Bible teacher in the British Isles, New Zealand, Australia, Fiji, and the United States.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

LESTER WILSON, one of the most effective evangelists of the last 50 years, died on Friday, November 27, 1992 at the Pittsboro Christian Village, in Pittsboro, NC. He was 87. Funeral services were conducted in Burlington, NC, at Ireland Street Chapel by brethren Dick

Andrews, Larry Batts, and Charles Crawford, all of Greensboro, NC, and Lawson Shirah, of Albany, GA.

Mr. Wilson was born in 1905 in Bexhill, England, and later moved to Stratford, ON, Canada. He is known far and wide as the evangelist who for

many years, especially in North Carolina during the late 1930s and '40s, saw many souls saved and many assemblies started. Due to failing health he had to forego preaching about 1988. He moved to the Pittsboro Christian Village in late 1990. He served the Lord for over 60 years.

Saved in 1924 at the age of 19, he was enjoying a professional hockey career, but God had other plans for him. He immediately became a staunch student of the Word of God. Very soon he began to preach in his local assembly and local community, and manifested signs of an effective gift as an evangelist.

His brethren at the Stratford, Ontario, assembly recognized his gift and

encouraged him in it. He made a trip or two back over to England and had good gospel meetings there. Shortly thereafter he became deeply burdened about North Carolina. On one occasion, a brother at the prayer meeting stood and prayed, "Lord, I have been reading about North Carolina in the National Geographic Magazine. I pray you'll send some young man down there with the gospel." Lester had asked the Lord for that very thing to happen that very night if he was to go to North Carolina. How could he help but go!

He was commended by his assembly in Stratford in 1931. In 1934, he joined two veteran pioneers, Fred Nugent and W. G. Smith, in Asheville, NC. They were holding meetings in one of only three assemblies at that time in the state. There was one in Raleigh, and another in Pembroke, NC. In 1935, he was invited to Raleigh, NC to hold gospel meetings in some rural areas. God blessed, many souls were saved, and the Raleigh assembly was built up.

In 1936, he was burdened about Winston-Salem, NC. He held tent meetings, and meetings in temporary tabernacles, and God again blessed. Soon a number of new converts were gathered as an assembly. The Glen Avenue Chapel was built. There are now three assemblies in the Winston-Salem area: Parkway, Fair Oaks, and Sedge Garden in Kernersville. Winston-Salem was his first effort at challenging a city with the gospel.

In 1939, brother Wilson had Greensboro heavy on his heart. He went there some in 1939. He arranged



**Harold MacKay
and Lester Wilson,
fellow pioneers,
came to North
Carolina in their
twenties and
blazed a trail for
God with prayer
and the preaching
of the Word.
That generation is
being called from
the field.
Where
is the next?**

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

cottage prayer meetings in the winter and some tent meetings in the summer. Brother H. G. Mackay had come to Winston-Salem to help with solidifying the work there. In the summer of 1940, Mr. Wilson held some major gospel campaigns in Greensboro, NC—some lasting for 10 to 15 weeks consecutively—in tents and tabernacles that he erected himself. He led his own singing for many of these campaigns, and trusted God for his and all other necessary expenses.

Raymond Schuster joined him as song leader in 1940 for a few campaigns. Many, many souls were saved. In 1940 he arranged for the purchase of a vacant Baptist Church on Forest Street and the Greensboro assembly was born with about 30 people meeting at Forest Avenue Tabernacle. The work grew rapidly. By 1942 the Sunday School reached over 250.

It was at this time that the Family Bible Hour, as it is known in many assemblies throughout North America today, was born. He realized that to get the crowds in the South to "preaching" services, it was best to reverse the traditional order of the Lord's Supper at 11:00 and the Sunday School at 9:30. It worked much better for most assemblies, and good growth was evidenced in many assemblies with this change.

Ernie Gross and Bill Brown came to Greensboro to help with the work in 1941 and 1942. This freed brother Wilson to move on. Brother Mackay moved to Greensboro in 1943 and quickly began to encourage the gift among the brethren, and elders were recognized.

Brother Wilson was now exercised about Siler City, Burlington, and Durham, NC—all at about the same time. In the short space of 8-10 years, these three places developed into assemblies and are going on strong today. He made good use of radio, newspaper ads, and large circulars distributed from house to house to build interest and attendance at his meetings.

Some Sundays he would preach early on the radio in Greensboro; speak at the close of the Lord's Supper; preach the gospel at 11:00; leave for Siler City to have a service there at 2:00 P. M.; drive to Burlington to have a children's meeting at 4:00 and an adult meeting at 5:00; then to Durham for a gospel meeting in a warehouse at 7:30 Sunday night. It was not unusual for him to preach ten to twelve times a week, and that was when he wasn't in campaigns!

Concentrating on Burlington, he followed up Dr. Mordicai Ham, nationally known evangelist, who had a

citywide campaign. He rented a large warehouse. After several good gospel campaigns, the new Christians bought a lot and built the Ireland Street Chapel in 1945. He stayed there until the work was going well, then moved on to continue the work in Durham. W. G. Smith settled in Burlington to help in the assembly there.

The Gospel Center was built in Durham in 1946. H. Welcome Detweiler had come down and led the singing for Lester's meetings in 1943 and 1944, and was on hand to help oversee the work in 1945. Siler City Chapel was built in 1944. Sanford was another place he was led to go to. He had good meetings there in warehouses. The Christians built the Sanford chapel in about 1947.

Brother Wilson's health failed for a time in the early '50s. He never had another major gospel campaign in North Carolina. But God wasn't through with him yet. He was invited by a family—the Bishops—from Albany, GA, to have cottage prayer meetings in their home, where several people gathered once or twice a week for Bible study. The rest is history. He remained there; improved in health; had some large gospel campaigns, and at one time the assembly had around 400 fellowship. It was fed by a large military base there, which later closed. There is a strong assembly in Albany today.

He came to the Pittsboro Christian Village to live in 1990. In his last days he was unable to do very much but to think about those great days in NC and GA. The '30s and '40s were years coming out of the great depression; some were war years. This was the Bible Belt, and there was no TV! God brought this man to *this* area for *this* time. Hundreds and thousands of souls were saved in a most remarkable way—sometimes 20-30 in a week.

More of the precious souls he won to Christ are now in heaven with him than down here. To those who are left, those who had the privilege of knowing and working with him, we give God the credit for using this man: but he is almost looked upon as a legend. Would to God we would see dozens of other young men raised up with the same conviction, power, and abandonment to God, to Christ and to the Word.

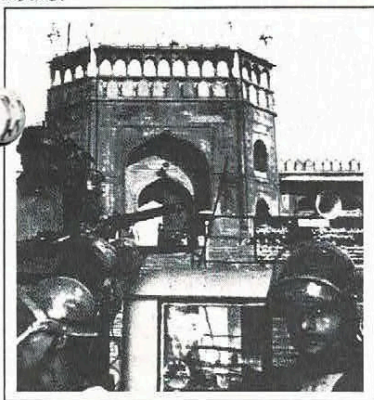
He will be missed. Who will take up the challenge in evangelism among the assemblies today?

WHAT'S GOING ON?

HINDU-MUSLIM CLASH

Hindu fundamentalists in Ayodhya, India, used pickaxes and crowbars to raze a 430-year-old mosque they say was built on the site where a main Hindu deity was born. The government declared the nation under its highest security alert and braced for a Muslim backlash.

At least four Hindu militants were killed and 100 others injured by falling debris as the 16th century Babri Masjid, or Mosque of Babar, was demolished in less than six hours.



About 1,000 people were killed in Hindu-Muslim riots that broke out in northern India in 1990 after Hindu extremists stormed the mosque in the longstanding dispute.

In Jidda, Saudi Arabia, the 50-nation Organization of the Islamic Conference accused the Indian government of allowing Hindu extremists to demolish the mosque and demanded it punish the culprits.

ASIA AND AIDS

By the end of the century, AIDS will infect one million to four million Asians a year, and there will be

at least 10 million Asians infected by the year 2000. The World Health Organization says the spread of the deadly disease in some Asian countries rivals infection rates of sub-Saharan Africa in the early 1980's. Researchers warn that AIDS could shatter some of the region's best economies and relegate the weaker ones to even more decades of poverty. —*Pulse*

RESOURCES

The September, 1992, edition of *Refugees*, the magazine of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, focuses on famine worldwide. No price listed. Write to:

U. N. H. C. R.
P. O. Box 2500
1211 Geneva 2 Depot
Switzerland

63 MILLION PROTESTANTS IN CHINA?

The Chinese Communist Party now believes there are 63 million Protestants in China, a number far higher than previous estimates. A source in Mainland China leaked the results of a two-year State Statistical Bureau survey on religious believers, completed in June, to the Hong Kong-based Chinese Church Research Center. The previous highest government estimate was 10 million. According to the source, the survey said 200 million Chinese profess religious faith, including 12 million Catholics. The Chinese Church Research Center says it is unlikely that the government will publish the survey results. —*Pulse*

MEXICAN AIRWAVES

Eighty-six million Mexicans are spiritually hungry and need the Gospel. *Think On These Things*, a Spanish gospel broadcast, can be heard in every inch of the 2,972,547 kilometers of that vast nation. Let's offer thanksgiving to the Lord for having permitted the sending of the Good News throughout that entire nation by international short wave radio and now on two local stations. Ask the Lord for open doors to more local stations in that country. —*Audio-Lit Ministries*

SAUDIS BEHEAD NATIONAL

Saudi Arabia has beheaded a Saudi national, Sadik Abdul-Kareem Mal-Allah, for allegedly insulting God, the Koran, and Muhammad. Outside observers think the real reason was because he was a Christian who was actively telling others about Christ.

ISRAEL GLAD FOR RUSSIANS

Russian Jews are helping to keep Israel Jewish. Their numbers increasing again in the last several months, 400,000 have emigrated to the Jewish state in the last three years, making Russians the largest ethnic group (617,000), a development that could swing the balance of power to the Labor Party. Authorities are glad to see them, despite the hardships of assimilation, because Arab women (who have an average of 4.7 children) continue to be more fecund than their Jewish counterparts (2.6).

U

TO RUSSIA WITH *HIS* LOVE

It was Winston Churchill who first spoke of an iron curtain that had descended across Europe. Behind it were more than one hundred language groups that, for a full generation, lived under repressive regimes. Then the wall started to crumble.

IN JUNE of 1992 more than 300 North Americans with over 2.5 million Bibles and other forms of Christian literature headed for Russia and began the ministry of a lifetime. Finally, after a year and a half, the work Rob Lindsted and Gail Baxter had started was coming to fruition. The goal was to begin in Moscow and sail up the Volga River to St. Petersburg, stopping at various towns along the way. A cruise ship filled to the brim with believers and Bibles left Moscow to begin a "labor of love." The two-week trip was exhausting, but the participants returned with joy because many Russians came to know the Lord as their Saviour.

After returning from Russia, four men who had been to the crusade in Yaroslavl, along with Rob Lindsted,

you will be greatly encouraged as you hear of the harvest which is taking place in Russia right now. The harvest is the Lord's!

It was obvious to those who went that God had opened a door in Russia—not just to take Bibles, but to go back and teach these new believers. But where should they go? It was impossible to go to every city; a group of men met to pray for God's leading as to which city to begin a cultivating work. It was decided that since there had been much response and apparent desire from the Russian people in Yaroslavl, that this would be the city to return to. Plans were made for a team of 60 to return to the city.

Yaroslavl, in eastern Europe Russia on the upper Volga River, has a population of over 650,000. In September of 1992, the group arrived to begin a series of gospel meetings. Three hours before the start of the crusade, a great crowd of people had already gathered. When the doors were opened, the auditorium was filled to capacity with more than 1500 people. And the attention the people gave to the Word was amazing! They sat on the edge of their seats as they heard the crucifixion story. At the conclusion of the meeting, over 500 people responded. We recognize the differences in culture and language, and know that some may have come out of curiosity or for other reasons, but we look to the Lord for a real work of grace in the hearts of many.

The Selah quartet from Tulsa gave numerous mini-concerts on the streets of Yaroslavl. During this time, others handed out New Testaments, tracts,



The crowd leaving the gospel meeting at Yaroslavl.

gave their accounts of this exciting trip. They told of what God had been doing there because many had been praying for the seed to be sown. As you read through this article, I believe

and did brief gospel presentations. They would then invite the listeners to the nightly meetings.

The second night, the auditorium was again packed and several thousand people were turned away. Those who came received a Bible, which included a study guide, salvation verses specially marked and the salvation message summarized.

Bible studies were established and it was during this time that the decision was made that eleven of the group, including Bill Horn of the Sunrise Bible Chapel in Wichita, KS, would remain in Yaroslavl to continue the work of preaching and teaching God's Word. The eleven would live in five different locations throughout the city. It was a joy to see a definite connection between what was happening in Yaroslavl and what had happened in Acts. The pattern was similar to that in Thessalonica.

These eleven continued in Yaroslavl and "reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead . . . And some of them were persuaded" and a great many believed (Acts 17:2-4; NKJV). This was the main goal. The initial crusades were exciting, but they soon found that the ongoing teaching of God's Word was going to be an intensive but joyous labor.

Much time was spent on their knees before the Lord. They continued "serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials." (Acts 20:19). This work was not to go on with out opposition. As in Acts 17 and 20, the religious establishment in Russia put up a fight. The Russian Orthodox Church warns people not to attend Bible

studies. They threaten them with expulsion from the church.

Door after door continued to open for the teaching of God's Word. One important door was "The Institute" as it is called in Yaroslavl. The Institute is a teachers' college. This school requested that someone from our group come and teach them God's Word. Weekly classes were made available to the students, faculty, and administrators. This is something that would not be easily accomplished in our own country.

There was an acceptance of "the group" (as these visiting believers came to be known) in the community, in large part due to the initial

crusades. Not only was the gospel freely preached, but hundreds of dollars worth of medicine was distributed to Yaroslavl hospitals. In some of the hospitals in Russia there are not even band-aids available. The people in Yaroslavl saw "the group" as coming of their own accord to freely distribute Bibles and medicine. They saw Christian love demonstrated—giving with nothing expected in return. This is crucial to them because they have been under an insurmountable burden heaped on them by the Russian Orthodox Church which requires payment for any prayers or absolution. Many would come to the crusades in tears with heavy hearts, questioning their eternal destiny because they did not have the funds required to pay the priests.

One lady who had cancer came to Mr. Horn. She was not able to receive prayers from the priest because she was penniless. This lady not only received the assurance that the believers would pray for her, but the gospel was freely given to her and she gladly accepted the "gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." She came with tears of anguish and left with tears of joy. There were many, many stories like this in Yaroslavl.

After the crusades, many responded to the preaching of the gospel. The next concern was where to begin in the area of follow-up and teaching. Sunday morning meetings were continued, but it became obvious that more time was needed for these people who had lived in a country that for 70 years did not have God's Word. "For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the Word of God which you heard

WHICH SIDE OF THE CURTAIN ARE WE ON?

A friend, who had been on the Bible-distributing trip to Russia, drove down from Ontario recently to visit us in Grand Rapids. His travelling companion had the audacity to leave a Bible on the seat of his car. When they came to the border, they were asked, "Are you preachers?"

"No."

"Then what are you doing with that Bible?"

"We're Christians. Christians read the Bible."

They were sent in to speak with the officials in the office, first the customs agent (he found no hidden contraband) and then to immigration. After extensive questioning, they were allowed entry.

"It was definitely easier getting Bibles into Russia," my friend responded.

TO RUSSIA WITH HIS LOVE

from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe" (1 Thess. 2:13 NKJV). These people, like those in Thessalonica, are responding to God's Word.

The decision was made to put an ad in the local newspaper and announce that Bible studies would soon be starting throughout the city. The goal was to have four Bible studies with 50 people in each group. To their astonishment, over 1,000 people signed up to come to these studies. The decision was made to have Bible studies on Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights. Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday were reserved for personal follow-up work with those who came to the other studies. There was great eagerness among "the group," however God was teaching them to be patient and to wait on Him (Ps. 27:14). There were times that they had to learn His timing was perfect; it was God who added to the church in Yaroslavl. Mr. Horn stated: "It became a reality to wait on the Lord and when He spoke you did it—no questions asked."

The next step was to instruct these new believers about baptism. In Russia the baptisms are public. Many in the community witness it and especially the informants for the Russian Orthodox Church. The people are allowed to attend Bible studies, but if one is baptized, there is possible ostracism from the family and excommunication from the church. This act of obedience is taken very seriously. Eventually many saw the need to be baptized and wanted others in Yaroslavl to know of their love for the Lord.



Registration for Bible studies.

After baptism the basic fundamentals of God's Word are taught. They are taken back to Genesis and from the beginning are taught the rudimentary aspects of the faith.

One of the biggest assets in forming a local church in Yaroslavl is the fact that the believers have no earthly headquarters. The question of the community leaders was "Why aren't you joining up with the Orthodox Church?"

The answer given is: Christ only is our Head; we have no organization. As believers, we belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. With no head on earth, "the group" was not a threat to the KGB or the Communist Party which still exists.

Then it was a joy to teach these new babes in Christ the beauty of what it means to gather together around the Lord Jesus Christ and to worship Him.—the beauty of teaching them what it means to break bread and remember Him as we have been commanded.

Please pray for the work going on in Yaroslavl. Trips are being planned, Lord willing, and will be going on till the doors are closed.

Another team is planned to go to Russia in late February or early March. Some of these people will stay 10 days, while others, it is hoped, will stay for three months and continue teaching classes.

Of course, it is not known if the Iron Curtain will close soon. The country is in desperate straits, not only politically, but economically. In June of 1991, one US dollar was worth 25 rubles. In September of 1992, it was worth 248 rubles. By the first part of 1993, it may be as much as 400-500 rubles. This is devastating for the Russian people; they are screaming for a change.

Plans are also being made for five trips into Russia this summer. There is no doubt that "the harvest is white." Ten major cities which have a population of approximately 200,000 or more are being considered. Please pray and seek God's direction in your life—you may be used to bring Russians to Christ. Think of it. It was not many months ago that we were perceived as their hated enemies, and now God is providing a way to take the gospel in.

This work is not a sight-seeing adventure. It is a time to venture into a country which has been paved with the blood of martyrs who gave their lives to give this people the Word of God; now God has made a way for us to go in. The harvest is the Lord's and what a joy to be co-workers together in a labor which will have results for all eternity. May we be watching, working, and waiting for His return.

If you have any questions concerning the ongoing outreach in Russia, please call (800) 733-9262.

THE REAL ISSUES

These things that we see and handle every day are not the real, lasting things. How busy we are with them; how buried in them! Heavenly realities exist unnoticed, unseen; one day we shall stand face-to-face with them and be astonished—or confounded.

—B. Munro

If you don't live it, you don't believe it.

"This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck." (1 Timothy 1:18-19)

You can measure a man's weight in this world by the strength of his convictions. Poor you may be, friendless, alone, weak, unlearned; but all this can be overcome if bright in the heart there burns the unquenchable flame of some great passion, some high faith. Given this fire within, all the tools shall be found, but without it the finest endowment of brain and body is valueless. Given but some great principle, some purpose which becomes a holy passion, something which leads you, like one of long ago who "steadfastly set His face to go up to Jerusalem," then all power is yours. The man who has faith to remove mountains always finds the picks and the steamshovels somewhere. He takes the tools he has, though they may seem but toys beside his ask, and, lo, some morning when the dreamers awake the mountain is no longer there.

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

(1 Thessalonians 2:13)

Is it possible that we become so involved in kingdom activities that we don't have time for the King?

The most serious idleness of all is being busy with things that do not matter.

—W. T. Purkiser

"Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

(2 Timothy 4:2-5)

If you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything.

On one occasion, when young in experience, I had written my preacher-father telling him of my troubles and feeling sorry for myself. His reply was something like this:

"Son, by the time you take childhood off one end of your life and old age off the other end, you don't have much time for doing good. Make the best of your time."

That was a gentle yet impressive rebuke I have never forgotten. You don't have time to complain and find fault.

—Arthur Ely

*The beautiful things are the things we do;
They are not the things we wear,
As we shall find when the journey is done
And the roll call is read up there.*

*We're illustrating the latest styles
With clothing that beats the band,
But the beautiful things are the kindly smiles
That go with the helping hand.*

*We burden ourselves with gleaming gems
So neighbors will stop and stare;
But the beautiful things are the diadems
Of stars that the righteous wear.*

*The beautiful things that we mortals buy
And flash in the crowded street,
Will all be junk when we come to die,
And march to the Judgment Seat.*

*When everything's weighed on that fateful day,
The lightest thing will be gold.
There are beautiful things within reach today,
But they are not bought or sold.* —P. Graves



FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL

THE NAME Havergal is derived from the words, "Heaver-gill," meaning the heaving or rising of the brook or gill. Frances' life was like that brook. Out of her innermost being the waters sprang up unto everlasting life, and then flowed out to a thirsty world.

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-1879), was born in Worcestershire, England, the youngest child of William Henry Havergal, a pious, gifted man (said to be something of an authority on Christian music), and a fervent advocate of foreign missions. Whatever talents William had were consecrated to God. He was offered a faculty position at Oxford University to teach music, but passed it up in order to be a preacher of the gospel of Christ. In their home, time was scheduled daily for prayer and reading or discussing the Bible. The cheery atmosphere was scented by sweet singing, often with tunes which he had composed.

Frances was an agile youngster, who might arrive home from her forays into the woods with twigs in her long, blond hair. She began reading books at three, the Bible at four, and composed poetry at seven. She picked up German by overhearing her older brothers' and sisters' lessons. She went on to study French, Italian, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. In Wales, she learned enough Welsh from her donkey-girl to intelligently enjoy the Sunday meetings. She memorized the New Testament, Psalms, Isaiah, and the Minor Prophets, poring over her Bible like a scholar. Yet she could sit among children and teach the Bible in monosyllables. Perhaps she was able to relate so simply because she never lost that childlike attitude.

William Havergal referred to his youngest as "a caged lark." From her tiny bedroom, with its little window, she would fold her arms on the sill and let her imagination fly among the clouds and trees and flowers. She would kneel on the chair, pillow her head, and sing to her heart's delight. The poor child was downhearted when she found in a book that clouds were only vapor, and that there was nothing to rest upon. She had hoped to climb them some day.

But she sought a goal above the clouds. Young Frances was determined to become a Christian. So,

seeking true repentance, she took a "sort of savage joy" in depression and anguish over sins. In adulthood she spoke of those early conflicts, in order to help the pained and perplexed. She considered those inward struggles as private, things which she had securely kept locked away all during her childhood. She was misjudged by her reserve. Her sisters never knew about her inner warring. Her soul could rush from an agony of weeping in her room to inflated laughter. Her sudden lighthearted scamper up and down stairs concealed her other more melancholy side.

Caution had to be taken not to overexcite her. If she had lived in our generation, she would be labelled hyperactive. Outwardly buoyant, she said her temperament let her "skim any waves when she was not under them." She may have looked like an angel but she utterly abominated being "talked to" and could throw a not-so-angelic temper tantrum. In adulthood she told how she overcame her angry fits when she read in Exodus how "The Egyptians which thou hast seen today thou shalt see no more again forever." By faith she looked to God for total cleansing of her habit, and confessed that thereafter she enjoyed consistent freedom.

When barely ten years old, she taught a Sunday School class of younger children, and organized "The Flannel Petticoat Society," described in *The Four Happy Days*, one of her few published books for children. Frances was deeply affected by the idea of remembering the death of Christ in the symbols of the bread and cup. Her father denied the child permission to remain in the meeting.

"One subject *often* occupied my mind in these years which would seem unusual for a child—the Lord's Supper. I begged to be allowed to stay . . . But this apparently mere curiosity was not gratified, so I used to . . . listen to the service through the door . . . I used to reckon the years to the time when the invitation would extend to me to be not by any means happy, for I wondered what I should ever do; I could not stay away, but how could I dare to go? 'Well, I hope I shall be a Christian by then, was my only comfort.'"

Shortly before Frances' twelfth birthday, her mother passed into the Lord's presence. The "lovely Jane

Head," realizing she was dying, spoke to her six children about death and eternity. This jolted fragile Frances. In a feeble but solemn voice from her deathbed, her mother advised, "Fanny, dear, pray to God to prepare you for all that He is preparing for you. You are my youngest little gift, and I feel more anxious about you than the rest. I do pray for the Holy Spirit to lead you and guide you. And remember, nothing but the precious blood of Christ can make you clean and lovely in God's sight."

Frances would reassure her mother, "Oh, Mamma, I am sure you will get better and go to church again."

"No, dear child; the church mamma is going to is the general assembly and church of the Firstborn in heaven. How glorious to know I shall soon see my Saviour face to face! Now go and play and sing some of your little hymns for me; there is one verse I should like you to sing twice over:

*'And when her path is darkened
She lifts her trusting eye,
And says, 'My Father calls me
To mansions in the sky!''*

The story of her childhood is told in her "Four Happy Days" in which, under the name of "Annie" she told the bitterness of this first grief. It was in July, 1848. She "was standing by the window in a front room, looking through a little space between the window and blind. All the shops were shut up, though it was not Sunday. She knew it would be dreadful to look out of that window, and yet she felt she must look. She did not cry, she only stood and shivered in the warm air. Very slowly and quietly a funeral passed out of the front gate, and in another minute was out of sight, turning into the church. Then she stood no longer but dashed away to her own little room, and flung herself on her little bed, and cried, 'Oh, Mamma! Mamma! Mamma!' It seemed as if there was nothing else in her



little heart but that one word."

Of the year 1850 she said, "That single half year was perhaps the most important of any in my life." There, at a boarding school run by a zealous woman named Mrs. Teed, she received "conscious faith and hope in Christ." Soon after her fifteenth birthday, she wrote, "I committed my soul to the Saviour and earth and heaven seemed brighter from that moment."

She went to Germany with her parents (her father having remarried) in 1852, and was schooled in Dusseldorf. After returning to England, she wrote:

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL

*Now, Lord, I give myself to Thee,
I would be wholly Thine.
As Thou hast given Thyself to me,
And Thou art wholly mine;
Oh take me, seal me as Thine own,
Thine altogether, Thine alone.*

Frances never married, and for many years she lived in her father's house at Shareshill, near Wolverhampton. Her father guarded his high-strung daughter and curbed her prodigious mental powers, fearing she might collapse from nervous exhaustion.

There Frances told how she wrote: "Writing is praying for me, for I never seem to write even a verse by myself and feel like a little child writing: you know a child would look up at every sentence and say, 'And what shall I say next?' That is just what I do; I ask that at every line God would give me, not merely thoughts and power, but also every word, even the very rhymes. Very often I have a most distinct and happy consciousness of direct answers."

*Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
In living echoes of Thy tone
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thy erring children lost and lone.*

As midnight struck on New Year's Day, 1859, the bells of St. Nicholas Church, Worcester, began to peal. Frances and her sister Maria were sleeping in the same room. Maria woke her sister to listen to the bells, at the same time quoting to her, as a New Year's motto, the text, "As thy days thy strength shall be." Frances was silent for a few minutes, then gave back to her sister the same thought in the form of two verses which she had just composed. The next day, she added two more verses, forming a hymn:

*As thy days thy strength shall be!
This should be enough for thee;
He who knows thy frame will spare
Burdens more than thou canst bear.
When thy days are veiled in night,
Christ shall give thee heavenly light;
Seem they wearisome and long
Yet in Him thou shalt be strong.*

In 1860, her work first appeared in *Good Words*. Thereafter she contributed frequently to Christian periodicals. Her poems are understandable—though deep.

Her volume of poems, *The Ministry of Song*, is "rich in thought, full of pathos and heart knowledge, earnest in purpose and musical in expression, forming a real combination of religion, genius, and art."

"Many have thought mine a comparatively thornless path," she wrote, "but often, when the path was the smoothest there were hidden thorns within . . ." But she evidently had learned to draw honey out of the flinty rock. Her poetry reflects her longing for a closer walk with God, disturbed by dreaded backsliding. The teachings of the "deeper life" movement, which became the themes of the yearly Keswick conferences in England, were prominent in her thinking.

Frances had a double talent; she was not only a poet, but also was a skilled musician. She called music "the only universal language, a sort of alphabet of the language of Heaven." She was a skilled pianist, able to handle Bach, Handel, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Haydn, Schumann, and Schubert. Her performances were "marvellously clear, crisp and full of refined expression." A contralto soloist, she put aside her "pleasure of public applause" to solely devote her vocal chords to sacred song. C. H. Spurgeon said Frances Ridley Havergal "sang like a seraph."

For years she had travelled to Switzerland, North Wales, and Scotland to visit friends. She rejoiced in the scenery and returned refreshed to carry on her literary work. When she first saw the Alps—"that majesty of shining eternal snow"—she remarked, "It is very difficult to believe that David never was in Switzerland."

She carried on a large correspondence of encouragement and comfort, and held several weekly ladies' Bible classes. She prepared carefully, and followed each session with personal counselling. She was apt to visit cottages and farmhouses until she was near collapse. Frances boasted that her middle name was after the martyr, Nicolas Ridley, and in self-abandon she also sought the martyr's crown. In adulthood she had a series of physical breakdowns and was a periodic victim to headaches and depression.

Her father, her protector, suffered a massive stroke and died in 1870. In October of 1878, after the death of her stepmother, Frances and her sister Maria went to live near Swansea in South Wales. Frances was practically an invalid all that winter. She seemed stronger by spring, but in May of 1879 she went out to a temperance meeting on a chilly day and came home with the beginnings of pneumonia. Only a few weeks before her

death, Frances said, "The words Mamma taught me in 1848 have been a *Life prayer with me*. This 'preparing' goes on; it is as when gaining one horizon, another and another spreads before you. So every event prepares us for the next that is prepared for us.

When she asked the doctor, "What is the element of danger?" the doctor said, "You are seriously ill, and the inflammation is increasing." Frances answered, "I thought so, but if I am going, it is too good to be true!"

"And now," records Maria, "she looked up steadfastly, as if she saw the Lord; and surely nothing less heavenly could have reflected such a glorious radiance upon her face. For ten minutes we watched that almost invisible meeting with her King, and her countenance was so glad, as if she were already talking to Him! Then she tried to sing; but after one sweet high note her voice failed, and as her brother commended her soul into the Redeemer's hand, she passed away."

The date was June 3, 1879. Buried at Astley, her tomb carries the text: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn. 1:7).

In her forty-two years, Frances Ridley Havergal gained unusual influence. At the time of her death, one of her poetry books was going through its thirtieth edition, *The Ministry of Song* was in its thirty-eighth edition, and her hymns and lyrics in magazines were being circulated and sung around the globe. Publication of *Under His Shadow*, containing her last poems, exceeded 90,000.

Her biographer, Thomas Darlow, said, "What singled her out was the note of absoluteness in her spiritual experience. In her consecration, there was no limit and no reserve. She had learned the secret of abandonment and she yielded herself utterly to God. By virtue of this, her writings reached and moved a multitude of souls with strange, penetrating power." U

All For Thee

It is generally true that the treasures we call "The Hymns of the Church" have a story behind them. In her journal, Miss Havergal repeatedly told how her music was the outflow of personal experiences with God. This fact alone sets such hymns and spiritual songs apart from much of the bulky wood, hay, and stubble that is marketed as "contemporary" religious music. How many of our modern entertainers and merchandisers can honestly say their jingles have sprung from secret communion with God? "Contemporary" is an apt pronoun, for much of this fluff makes us comfortable here, but does not prepare us for the hereafter.

She writes, "I went for a visit of five days to . . . There were ten persons in the house, some unconverted and long prayed for, some converted but not rejoicing Christians. He gave me the prayer, 'Lord, give me all in this house! And He just did. Before I left the house, every one got a blessing. The last night of my visit, after I had retired, the governess asked me to go to the two daughters. They were crying . . . Then and there both of them trusted and rejoiced. I was too happy to sleep, and passed most of the night in praise and renewal of my own consecration, and these little couplets formed themselves and chimed in my heart one after another till they finished with:

*Take my love; my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store:
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee!"*

This hymn, written in 1874, is an autobiography in poetry, each couplet described a definite experience. The line, "Take my silver and my gold," was carried out when she shipped off her personal ornaments (including a jewel cabinet which is really fit for a countess) to a Missionary Society. She did retain for daily wear a brooch that was a memorial of her parents, and a locket with a portrait of her niece. "I had no idea I had such a jeweler's shop, nearly fifty articles are being packed off. I don't think I need tell you I never packed a box with such pleasure."

A THORN IN THE FLESH

THE EXPRESSION "a thorn in the flesh" is known to nearly every man and woman to signify some kind of irritant, often identified as some person who is the source of irritation. If the Apostle Paul, who put the expression in Holy Scripture (2 Cor. 12:7), did not say what his thorn was. It could hardly be said that he was happy about having it, as he earnestly prayed to the Lord three times to remove it.

In his own words, he likened the thorn to a messenger of Satan which buffeted him, something obviously which was with him constantly to weaken him and bring him down in body and mind. In this Paul is not alone.

Most people have something associated with them which could well be called a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet them. No doubt, like the Apostle Paul, those so afflicted have often prayed that the thorn might be removed, but the heavens have seemed like brass and no deliverance has come. Has God not heard? Does He not care? Is He not able to take the thorn away?

The writer of the following words seems to understand the situation. "It is one of the great secrets of life to make friends of our infirmities. If we fight them, they are very masterful. If we accept them, they have a strange way of leading us to surprises of compensation which the Lord has hid in His marvelous mines. I wonder how much of the later and richer revelations in the letters of the Apostle Paul might be traced to the acceptance of the thorn and to making friends with his sore infirmity. As it is with infirmity, so it is with all forms of commonplace suffering. If we fight our sorrows,

they add a cubit to their stature. Our antagonism feeds them."

Surely the proper Christian outlook is to be found in 2 Corinthians 12:9. After Paul prayed three times for the removal of the thorn in his flesh, the answer came to him: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness."



What a lovely answer that was! What Christian would not gladly carry on bearing about in the body some depressing weakness, all the while knowing that there was daily grace to do so and sufficient strength from God to help. Did Paul find it so? Here are his own words recorded in 2 Corinthians 12:9—"Most gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

Consider in this connection the blessing pronounced by Moses on the tribe of Asher long ago: "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be" (Deut. 33:25). Shoes for the road, strength for the way, grace for the trial. It should always be remembered that anxiety does not empty tomorrow of its troubles, but it will rob today of its strength.

Coupled with this, the words of Matthew Henry have great force: "Let us not pull that upon ourselves all at once which Providence has wisely ordered to be borne in parcels." Let us be content. If God who is all wise has left a thorn in the flesh with us, He has also promised, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness."



TUNDRA

A SPONGY MASS. We stop, crouch down, and really look at it for the first time. It is a dense tangle of vines, leaves, berries, tiny flowers, moss, and lichen. Delightful variety.

Fellow saint, have you stopped lately for a thoughtful look at the walk by which your Lord has led you moment by moment? Think of the marvelous variety of His grace, mercy, and kindness to you. Recall the morsels of His sustaining food which have satisfied your hungry soul. Think of the beauties of His Son, which have drawn your heart away from every other object. Recall those moments of intimate fellowship with Him, when the flowers of His presence have filled your vision with beauties that none other can ever share. Even beneath your feet today lies the evidence of His tender care and sustaining grace. "Count your many blessings. Name them one by one; and it will surprise you what the Lord has done" . . . and is still doing for you.

Crouching, we thrust a hand into the dense mass. It is several inches deep and unyielding to our digital intrusion. We must push and twist and work our fingers through it. But, as we penetrate, we notice an increasing chill in the depths. Up here, where we crouch, the temperature is perhaps 70 degrees. But down there, at a depth of just 8 inches from the upper surface, it is sharp cold—permafrost. Beneath this tundra the ground never thaws. Yet walking inches above the perpetual cold, protected by the marvelous insulation of the life-filled tundra, our feet never feel the chill.

The cold, dead permafrost of this godless world is only inches away from the wilderness-crossing saint. Except for

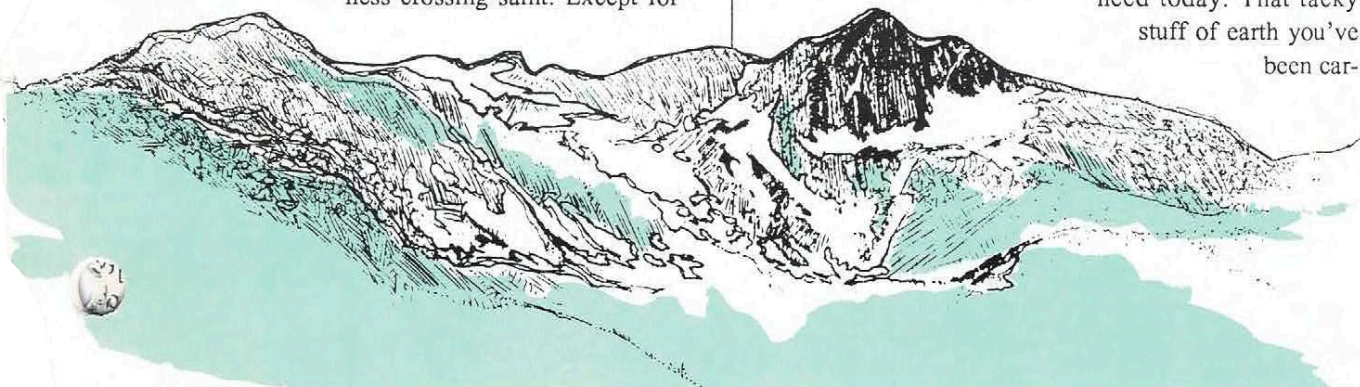
the insulating virtue of the Lord's Word, His presence and His abiding care, we would soon be as frozen as the ground beneath. We must not get down into that dreadful chill. It is all too easy to forget, after years on the road, just how close that chill is, just how devastating it is, just how hopelessly cold it could make us.

A glance at it, a breath of its frigid atmosphere, should be enough to make us hastily withdraw with joy back into the warmth of fellowship with Christ and His people. Turn away from sin, from the chilling atmosphere of earth, from the muck and mire of time and trouble. Let the tundra of God insulate your walk from it all.

The Alaskan tundra is lush this July day with berries. Blueberries abound. And there are soapberries, mountain cranberries, wild strawberries and other varieties. We cannot find a berry we don't like. The grizzly, beastly king of this wilderness, enjoys these delicacies as his main diet. For him, meat is hard to obtain, and quite unnecessary so long as the berries abound. In fact, as we move along, it is difficult not to scoop up a handful here, a couple more there, just to enrich our palates with the tasty morsels. After a while, the cabin-made sandwiches in our backpacks really lose their appeal. The berries are better.

Christian, what are you enjoying as you walk along? The tasty berries of the Word of God are yours to harvest. Perhaps it has been too long since you gathered some. "Where hast thou gleaned today?" one asked long ago. The question still haunts the undernourished.

Stop a moment. Pick the berries. Taste the richness of your Lord's provision to meet your starved soul's need today. That tacky stuff of earth you've been car-



TUNDRA

rying with you, with which you fill your mind, can never compare in richness and delight to what He gives. The sour taste in your mouth was not put there by the Lord. Perhaps you have been complaining that you are getting no food lately. Well, reach for your Bible and take some. If you are hungry for good things, ask of Him. He gives to all His children liberally.

While I'm crouching in the tundra, a certain lichen holds my fascination. It is a very branched gray-green growth that always seems to accumulate in the low spots of the tundra. It reminds me of the beautiful antlers we are constantly marveling at as we watch the caribou grazing nearby. Indeed, this material is called "caribou lichen," because of its similarity to the mighty antlers of the stately caribou. But caribou antlers are well fixed to the head of their host, while these lichen have neither root nor anchor. They are almost unnatural. Part of the tundra, yet totally rootless. The breezes that blow across Alaska's vast expanse blow them hither and thither. And because of their windblown wanderings, they always wind up in the low spots. There they congregate and later blow on again.

The caribou lichen are like some Christians—blown about with every wind of doctrine. Driven by various breezes, whether warm or cold. Weightless, rootless, cheerless, fruitless. Sometimes able to give a faint im-

itation of a more noble character, but really not part of a stable landscape. And usually found in the low spots. These are the souls who lack spiritual values, purpose, stability. Hence they stumble from one low hollow to another. Of all their fellows they spend the most time closest to the permafrost. Never building for God. Just there. Alive, but not thriving. How many of us see a caribou lichen when we look in the mirror?

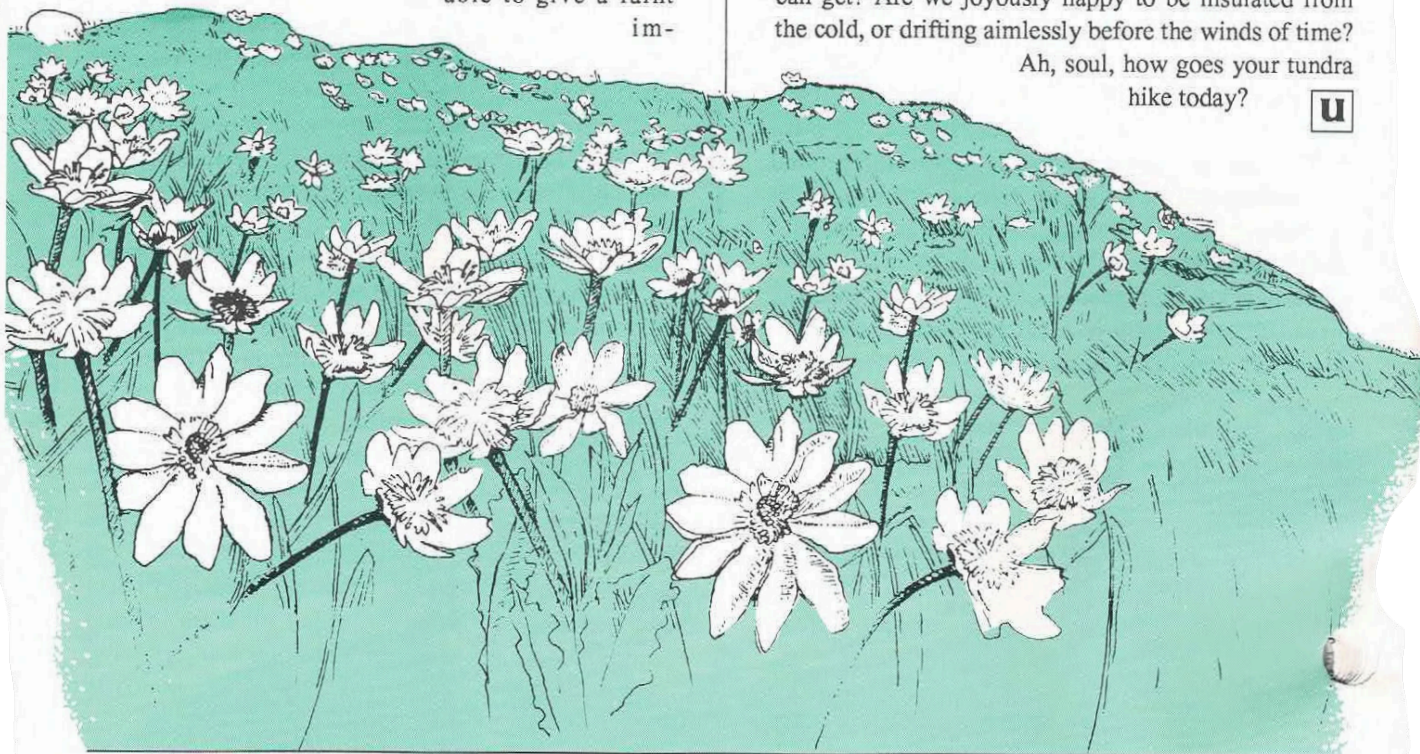
The tundra! Stretching from the valley to the tree line on the mountain heights. Full of life. Full of meaning. Full of lessons. So like the Christian walk. We tread it from the moment

of our spiritual birth until we reach the heights above. The question is, how do we walk it? In the abundance of its beauty and life, or as near the permafrost as we can get? Are we joyously happy to be insulated from the cold, or drifting aimlessly before the winds of time?

Ah, soul, how goes your tundra hike today?

**The tundra . . .
Full of life.
Full of meaning.
Full of lessons.
So like the
Christian walk.**

U



YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN

PSYCHOTHERAPY involves "communication between a trained person and the patient . . . including suggestion, counseling, psychoanalysis, etc." (*Webster's New World Dictionary*). Recently I heard a psychologist tell how he treats sex offenders. This is his specialty: he spends up to two years with a person. Much of this is spent going over the past sexual misconduct, reliving those experiences. Is the thought that by reliving the wrongdoing, one will make atonement?

Never did he speak of God or forgiveness, and he confessed that most who go through the treatment revert to their former life-style and sexual sins. He painted a hopeless picture. I cannot imagine a more frustrating type of work. He is a doctor who seldom sees healing. There is no hope for a deep, inward change.

I had the feeling that his therapy might even make things worse. To relive sinful episodes in one's life would be to arouse sinful passions once more. The character weakness would be intensified, the trauma deepened. Surely if there is any sense of guilt, conscience would cry out afresh. The only recourse would be denial that one is guilty or else denial that it is really wrong. In either case there is self-deception.

What the sinner needs desperately is forgiveness from God. Here the gospel steps into the scene with glorious hope. It is true that the sinner must face his sin and desire change. The Bible calls this repentance (*metanoia*, a change of mind) and it is the first command of God to the sinner (Acts 17:30). There must be this deep, inward despair concerning one's sin and a longing for change.

The next command is to believe: "Repent ye and believe" (Mk. 1:15). Trust Christ to save you. Upon the cross He suffered for the sins of the world. He agonized there for you, then died, was buried, and rose again. Now God offers a complete pardon if you will trust Christ for salvation and make Him your Lord and Saviour. Paul summed up his message as "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

When the sinner trusts Christ he is forgiven; he is ed (Eph. 2:8-9). He hears the words of Christ in his heart, "Thy sins are forgiven" (Lk. 7:48). No therapist

can promise him this, only Christ Himself. He is the Saviour of sinners. Now the sinner is right with God and brought into His family (Jn. 1:12).

The promise of God is: our sins and lawless deed He will remember no more (Heb. 10:17). "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us" (Ps. 103:12). God promises not to bring up the past against the believer. Christ has died for those sins and God is satisfied with the atonement He has made. To relive those experiences and to castigate oneself for past failures is to deny the complete forgiveness of God. It will reopen old wounds and arouse sleeping passions. It will lead one to introspection and depression, to a sense of failure and despair. Oh, to live life over and to make different choices!

God desires the believer to do what *He* does: Forget the past. Do not brood over sins now forgiven. Rejoice in the reality of God's love and salvation. Paul exhorts us to forget those things which are behind and press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:13-14). To be occupied with sin will be defiling and will produce weakness.

David came to know the sweetness of sins forgiven after his fearful sin with Bathsheba. He could write, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile" (Ps. 32:1-2). Today David would exhort the believer:

"Trust in the Lord and do good; Dwell in the land and feed on His faithfulness. Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (Ps. 37: 3-4).

Spiritual strength and joy do not come from introspection and self-occupation. Receive forgiveness as it is given, freely. Rejoice in your salvation. Trust the Lord, depend on Him daily. Feed on His faithfulness, His holy character and devotion to you. Delight in the Lord and enjoy fellowship with Him. This is where your strength lies, not in self but in our blessed Lord. Do as the Israelites did that night of the first Passover. They fed on the lamb that was killed to atone for sin. The Lamb is still the spiritual food of His people. **U**

IF OR THEREFORE

HOW STRANGE to Martha and Mary must have appeared the lack of the Lord's response to their earnest appeal, "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick"! But for us the record furnishes an illustration of the working of divine love and wisdom.

Their hearts are exposed by the utterance of each one: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Are we not all prone to dwell upon such ifs, and to occupy ourselves with vain regrets, instead of setting our hope in God, and asking Him to work in us His will through the sorrow He permits?

The "therefore" of John 4:6 is a very striking one. The previous verse says, "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus," and we should expect to read, "When He heard therefore that he was sick"—He hastened off to Bethany. Instead it is written, "He abode two days still in the same place where He was." Divine love always acts in divine wisdom, and sometimes permits deep sorrow that by that sorrow subjection to the will of God may be wrought, and out of it deeper joy and truer holiness may spring. So when the Lord said to His disciples, "Lazarus is dead," He added, "And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there." Was He not also glad for the sake of the sorrowing sisters, even though for the time their sorrow had been deepened through His absence?

But, in due time, He went to the house of mourning with such sympathy as none other ever displayed. His reply to Martha's "if" was a promise of resurrection—followed by a revelation of Himself as "the Resurrection and the Life," to encourage her faith. The "if" of Mary and her grief drew forth His tears of sympathy.

There was truth in the "if" of Martha and Mary, but it seemed to imply some lack of full confidence in His wisdom, or His love, or His ability to help in what to them were hopeless circumstances. His "if" was calculated to raise the heart by faith above questionings and reasonings (v. 40). Then He speaks the life-giving

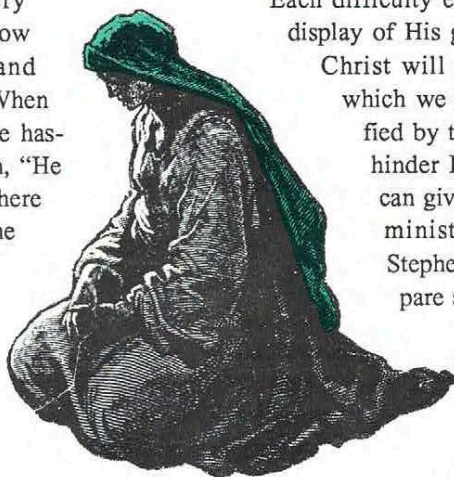
word that brings the dead to life, and so makes good the utterance, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."

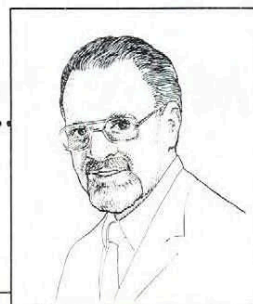
When we are tempted to say, "If that had not been," the answer to us is, "If thou wouldest believe thou shouldest see the glory of God." Faith in God, and that alone, brings comfort in sorrow and peace in perplexity. Our question must as yet remain unanswered, and we feel that "His footsteps are not known." But the voice from the sanctuary calls us to believe, and thus to see the glory of God.

Each difficulty encourages us to look for a fresh display of His grace and His power. The day of Christ will make it manifest that, in ways which we little dream, God has been glorified by the very things that seem to us to hinder His work. If He takes Elijah, He can give Elisha to carry on the prophetic ministry in Israel; and if He suffers Stephen to be put to death, He can prepare and bring forth Saul of Tarsus for yet wider service.

Would the feast of John 12 have been what it was if the Lord, being present when Lazarus was sick, had healed him? Would Mary have known Him as she did, and yielded such a costly act of worship? Should we have had such a record of His tears of tender sympathy, or the manifestation of His glory as the Resurrection and the Life?

Here we have proof that, in doing what we would not have expected Him to do, He acted in perfect love and wisdom. Then let our faith and hope in Him be strengthened. Let us remember, too, that in all His ways He is the Revealer of the Father, and when we reach the end of our course and, in the light of His presence, review the ways of the Master with His servants, and the Father with His children, we shall see that whatever "clouds and darkness" shrouded the acts of God, His ways were all perfect and worthy of Him who is Light, and in whom is no darkness at all.





GROWING ON VINES

THERE IS an interesting verse in Acts 13:36 which says, "David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep . . ." If you will allow me to apply that thought in a different context, I would say that many books and their writers serve their own generation by the will of God and then both books and writers pass away. There is nothing inherently wrong with that. In each generation, God raises up those to serve Him and His people. The members of the Church are never left as orphans.

But from time to time there are special men raised up by the Lord whose influence continues on to future generations. The Reformation period (circa 1500-1700 AD) is replete with this kind of men. And around the turn of the Twentieth Century there was also a number of men raised up that have given us invaluable help in the Word, especially with the original languages. They were prolific writers. These men have left their mark on their own generation as well as those that follow.

Mr. William E. Vine was one of those men. He was born of godly parents in 1873, and was educated in the classics. A schoolmaster for a number of years, he brought to his writings the habits of those disciplines. He is best known for the *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, which was reviewed in the September 1991 *Uplook*. However, the rest of his works have, over the years, gone out of print.

I am privileged to have three or four of his books in my library. These were picked up in used book stores over the years and have been of great help to me. I feel that his book, "The Church and the Churches," is one of the finest I have ever read on that subject. His commentaries are not wordy expositions, but succinct—to the point—opening up the passage under consideration. In his New Testament commentaries, there is great stress laid on the Greek words, their meanings and syntax, so that the reader is brought to a fuller understanding of the text.

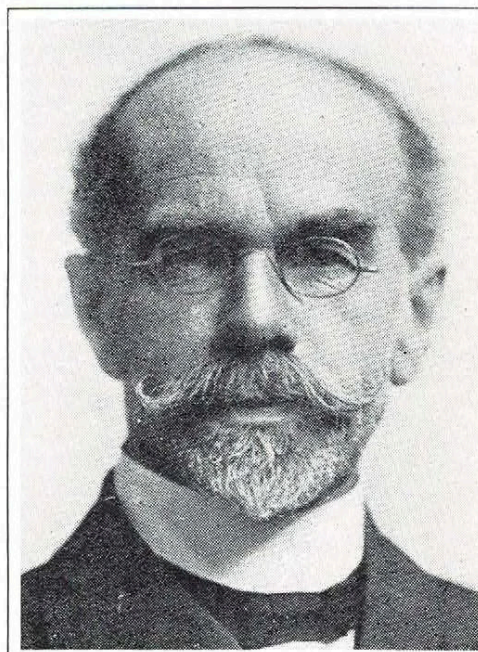
Over the years, Gospel Tract Publications of Glasgow, Scotland, has done a great service to our generation by gathering together and reissuing these out-of-print books that have enduring value and need to be

read by our generation. They published the "Assembly Writers Library," a 12-volume set containing many good articles and reprints of books of a past generation of assembly writers. And in 1985-86, they gathered together and printed many of the works of W. E. Vine—his commentaries as well as books and articles on many biblical subjects. It is a five-volume set, nicely bound, and with good print.

In this set you will find most of the commentaries on Paul's Epistles as well as John's Epistles and Gospel and the Book of Hebrews. You will find also many articles and books on "Church truth," including his book on "The Church and the Churches." In the same volume with these books is an excellent book on "The Divine Plan of Missions." It is well worth reading and learning from in these days when the Scriptures are being set aside for what is considered to be expedient.

**"May
God bless
this
effort to
reaffirm the
truth!"**

—W. R. Lewis in
his Preface to
"The Divine
Inspiration of the
Bible" by W. E.
Vine (Volume One
of the Collected
Writings)



P. S. We have just learned that this set is no longer available. However, Gospel Tract Publishers are reissuing Mr. Vine's commentaries in single volumes. —Ed.

U

EVERYDAY READING PLAN

Section 26: Jeremiah & Lamentations

February 1	Jeremiah 34:1-22	Jeremiah warns Zedekiah of the impending doom of Jerusalem
February 2	Jeremiah 35:1-19	The Rechabites: Soft drinks and hard beds
February 3	Jeremiah 36:1-32	Jehoiakim burns the Book, but the Word remains
February 4	Jeremiah 37:1-21	Jeremiah's arrest and incarceration
February 5	Jeremiah 38:1-13	Jeremiah stuck in the mud; rescued by Ebed-melech
February 6	Jeremiah 38:14-28	Jeremiah has a meeting with the king
February 7	Jeremiah 39:1-18	Jerusalem is fallen, is fallen!
February 8	Jeremiah 40:1-16	Jeremiah liberated
February 9	Jeremiah 41:1-18	Gedaliah assassinated—mayhem and massacre
February 10	Jeremiah 42:1-22	Jeremiah the intercessor: Flight to Egypt? "No!" says Jeremiah
February 11	Jeremiah 43:1-13	The proud men speak: Flight to Egypt? "Yes!" says Johanan
February 12	Jeremiah 44:1-19	Jeremiah's final plea in Egypt
February 13	Jeremiah 44:20-30	The Lord speaks and the sign of Pharaoh-Hophra
February 14	Jeremiah 45:1-5	Prologue: A message for Baruch
February 15	Jeremiah 46:1-28	A message for Egypt
February 16	Jeremiah 47:1-48:10	A message for the Philistines and Moab
February 17	Jeremiah 48:11-47	The message for Moab continued
February 18	Jeremiah 49:1-22	A message for Ammon and Edom
February 19	Jeremiah 49:23-39	A message for Damascus, Kedar, Hazor, and Elam
February 20	Jeremiah 50:1-46	Epilogue: A message for Babylon
February 21	Jeremiah 51:1-29	The message for Babylon continued
February 22	Jeremiah 51:30-64	The message for Babylon continued
February 23	Jeremiah 52:1-34	Jerusalem taken, the people exiled, a ray of hope
February 24	Lamentations 1:1-22	The cry of the mourner—and a prayer for vengeance
February 25	Lamentations 2:1-22	The chastening of the Lord—and a plea for help
February 26	Lamentations 3:1-66	Jeremiah's lament—and a prayer for vengeance
February 27	Lamentations 4:1-22	The honor of Jerusalem's past and the horror of her fall
February 28	Lamentations 5:1-22	A prayer for help and a cry for restoration

JEREMIAH & LAMENTATIONS (PART 2)

IN OUR PREVIOUS article, we gave a sketch of the author and the historical background to the book of Jeremiah. Now we would like to focus on the outline of the book and some of its central themes. We will also glance at Jeremiah's other book, Lamentations.

The books of Jeremiah and Lamentations form a cause and effect relationship. Jeremiah reveals to us the life of the pre-exile Jews. Ignoring their gracious, divine heritage, they were far from God, indulging in the grossest immorality and idolatry. They refused to heed the dire warnings of prophets like Jeremiah and finally, in their stubbornness, brought devastation upon themselves. Lamentations records the judgment of God that fell on the Israelites because of their sin.

The sorrow and anguish expressed in the book is the direct result of Israel's refusal to repent. Yet out of this grief, there is the hope of spiritual renewal. This lesson imprints itself on our hearts as we apply these books to ourselves. Our God is constantly working in us to bring about spiritual renewal and growth, so we seek to heed His Word and go on.

The book of Jeremiah is not easy to divide into sections. But we can immediately notice two main divisions. Following the call of Jeremiah in chapter 1, from chapter 2:1 to 20:18, there are prophecies addressed to Judah. From chapter 46:1 to 51:64, there are prophecies concerning Gentile nations. The last chapter contains a historical epilogue. The middle section of the book is historical, covering key events during the reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah.

The book of Jeremiah is not written in chronological order. The best way to approach the work is to simply work with the text as it comes. As we do, however, there are a few themes to watch for. Certainly there is the constant note of sorrow and weeping in the book. In fact, the dictionary lists the word *jeremiad*, defined as "a prolonged lamentation or complaint." Jeremiah could not speak of the plight of the people without real sorrow, and even his strongest messages of rebuke are tinged with anguish of heart. Of course, there is the constantly repeated message of repentance and impending judgment. Campbell Morgan suggests the four

great themes as: *denunciation* for sin; *visitation* in judgment, *invitation* to repentance; and *consolation* of coming restoration. It is also interesting to see the various illustrations Jeremiah uses to make his points, especially those that he takes from nature.

Perhaps the great message of Jeremiah, though, is its insight in living by faith. Faced with an idolatrous, unheeding people, Jeremiah pressed on for the glory of God and gives us a marvelous example of how the just shall live by faith.

The book of Lamentations is a five-part poem of lament for the destruction of Jerusalem and the enslavement of the people by the Babylonians. Although Jeremiah warned the Israelites that God's judgment would fall upon them, he still was heartbroken when he witnessed the disaster that struck the nation.

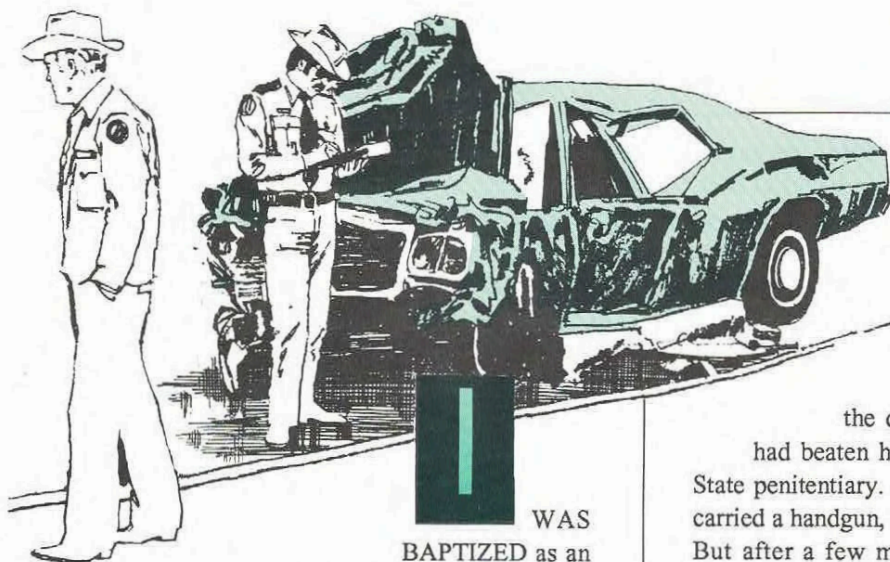
This collection of laments is easier to subdivide. Each chapter forms a separate poem. The poems themselves are highly stylized in their construction and are done in an acrostic, using each letter of the Hebrew alphabet to begin the verses.

The theme of Lamentations is summed up in its title. It is a great cry of anguish concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the consequent suffering of the people. It becomes obvious as we read these two books that behind the tears of Jeremiah is the lament of the heart of God.

Of course, the message of the book makes it clear that the destruction of the city is a vindication of the righteousness of God. The real tragedy is that the destruction could have been avoided. In sorrow God allowed His judgment to fall, but only after the people had received countless warnings. But they willfully chose to pursue the empty attractions of idolatry and forsook the moral standards of the God of glory.

It is good to close with the fact that amid the gloom there is a sense of hope. If God's people will have a positive reaction to the chastisement that has come upon them, they will be healed of their backsliding. Whom the Father loves He chastens, and if God's people will be exercised by His judgment and forsake their sin, He will restore them and bring renewal. How we need this message applied to our hearts today. **U**

No Accident



I WAS BAPTIZED as an infant, confirmed when in first grade, and attended church services every school day of every year until high school. Yet a true relationship with God didn't exist. I knew *about* Him at a very early age. However, this is far different from knowing Him personally by faith in His Son.

As a young boy, I didn't get into much trouble, but as I grew older, wayward living became my way of living. Life was just a game and a person won this game by getting all that he could. Although I didn't realize it, my pursuits were without regard to their effect on others. Experiencing all this world had to offer surely would bring happiness, right? Wrong! Fast cars, wine, women, and song nearly cost me my life many times over. Looking back, I'm certain that God's gracious hand preserved me through it all. Exceeding the speed limit and driving while intoxicated was a deadly combination: I totalled four good automobiles doing that.

One accident took place on the way home from a night out on New Year's Eve. I had had far too much to drink, but I got in my car and pressed the accelerator to the floor. The next day, when the sheriff found my car, he called my father, since I was nowhere to be found.

I had passed out at the wheel at more than 80 miles per hour, the sheriff estimated from the distance the car had traveled past the dead-end barricade. I do remember hitting several trees and the sound of the windows exploding as they shattered from the impact. When my car came to rest, it was just short of about 15 wooden bee hives. What would have happened had I hit them?

Why wasn't I killed?

During this time of riotous living, I found myself keeping company with others who pulled me down even further. At a wild neighborhood party, a girl came in the door severely beaten. The man who

had beaten her was an ex-con from the Lincoln State penitentiary. After being told that this individual carried a handgun, I decided not to attempt any heroics. But after a few more drinks and some "encouragement" from my "good friends," I went home to get my shotgun. (In the street, this is called equalizing the situation.) I then proceeded to this ex-con's house in a car with two other people. Although I was scared, the alcohol and prodding from my "friends" persuaded me to make a very foolish decision. I shattered the man's windows with buckshot. This drunken, irresponsible act set off a chain of events that endangered not only me but my family, but the Lord for His reasons kept us safe through it. I am still amazed that grace greater than all my sin was extended so abundantly to me.

"The way of the transgressor is hard." This is a very practical reality. The grim evidence of this appears in sleepless nights, and the lack of peace from day to day. Both physically and emotionally, life becomes hard. With emptiness and anguish as my constant companions, I was left with no reason to live. It was only then that I searched for some answers outside myself.

My faithful sister had shared the gospel with me several years earlier. I knew very well *Who* to look to and what I needed to do. The difficulty I had in receiving Christ was not whether the Bible was true, or if God existed, but could His grace reach down and touch *even me*? How could this holy God possibly want a relationship with someone so sinful? Complete forgiveness by simply trusting in the finished work of Christ on the cross of Calvary? Thanks be to God! This glorious good news is available to all! "For God so loved the world," and this included even me.

I placed my trust in the only begotten Son of God,

with tears of joy streaming down my face at the realization that I too had been forgiven.

*"My sin—oh, the bliss of this glorious thought,
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more.
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, oh my soul!"*

With salvation now secure, I was taught that sanctification should now become my focus. I began attending a Pentecostal assembly with my sister. The first item on their agenda was to see me get "truly" sanctified. This would be done by what they called being "baptized in the Holy Ghost." At this time, I hadn't realized my immersion had already taken place (1 Cor. 12:13). When the Sunday service was completed, I was taken to the front of the sanctuary. There I was "prayed over," to receive the power of the Holy Ghost by this baptism. Several people began speaking in strange repetitive syllables (tongues). Their goal was for me to begin speaking in this manner, which for them would be evidence of the Holy Ghost within me.

With baby-like faith, and believing without a doubt this miracle of tongues would take place, I waited patiently. Nothing happened. The associate pastor then began coaching me, "It's there, just let your voice go; don't worry how it sounds, just let it go." Feeling pressure, I uttered a very little sound, but that was all he needed. "That's it! That's it!" he exclaimed. Then I was told to practice my new-found "prayer language." Their reasoning was that after a baby is born, he or she doesn't speak fluently and neither would I at first.

Serious questions arose in my mind. Although I was a new believer, even I could tell this wasn't how it happened in the book of Acts. The disciples didn't need to practice the tongues God had given them. Nor did the people who heard them have any difficulty understanding what was said in their own dialect.

Later I was introduced to the healing meetings, and the phenomenon of being "slain in the Spirit." These only served as a stimulus for me to study God's Word. I wanted answers, and I'd come too far to accept anything less than sound doctrine.

During this very difficult time of confusion, the Lord brought several good men across my path—men in the assemblies of which I now am a part, men whose I could follow. They pointed me to books that could be relied on for their content. I was taught proper methods of interpretation, such as reading verses with-

in their context before trying to decide what they meant. This alone helped me significantly when seeking to understand correct doctrine as it pertained to Pentecostal views of Scripture. And, because of these men, true worship became an integral part of my Christian life. The privilege and purpose for exercising my priesthood at the Lord's Supper were also explained.

Space in this article will not allow me to share all the ways in which I've been ministered to since coming into assembly fellowship. Yet I can say here as did the Apostle Paul to the Philippians, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you." With God's sovereign hand upon me, and His patient saints beside me, progress in my pilgrim journey has been made.

My assembly received me into fellowship nearly 11 years ago, and the reasons I remain may be worth mentioning here. After all, I must admit that there are more exciting places to go, if excitement was really what I was searching for. Surely a more attractive building and larger numbers of people could be found, if these things were a priority to me, but they are not. Many times the Word that is preached at my assembly doesn't tickle my ears as do many messages I hear on radio or television. So, why do I remain?

In such assemblies, the Word of God is upheld by the overseers as authoritative, inerrant, and infallible. Therefore, "The faith which was once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3) is preserved. Modification or compromises to sound doctrines are not easily entertained because of the safety found in the plurality of elders. I want to meet with men and women who are determined not to be "tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine," the current trends of the day.

Worship, individual and corporate, is mentioned often in the Word of God and therefore is a practice that is emphasized in our meetings every week when we remember the Lord.

Naturally, we have our faults. However, I have seldom seen a group of God's people so intent on lifting high the name of the Lord Jesus in the hearts and minds of those they meet—especially those that gather in His name alone. I for one am thankful to the Lord for that.

It is doubtful I would be alive today had not God in His mercy and grace reached down to lift me up. A prodigal that surely deserved judgment was instead given eternal life, an abundant life because of the unfailing love that was poured out at the cross of Christ.

And that was no accident.

U

THE ETHICS OF HEROD

HEROD ANTIPAS was the most capable of the many sons of Herod the Great. He was called Tetrarch because he inherited a fourth part of his father's kingdom, namely, Galilee and Perea. He built the city of Tiberias when our Lord was in His twenties, naming it after Tiberius Caesar.

Herod the Great was partly Jewish, partly Edomite. His son (by his fourth wife) Herod Antipas had little concern for the law of Moses. He divorced his wife (a king's daughter) and took the wife of his half-brother Philip (by his father's fifth wife). This creature's name was Herodias. Her first husband was her uncle Philip; her second, Herod Antipas, who was also her uncle. This was not specified as sinful in Leviticus 18. But the faithful John the Baptist was not afraid to denounce Herod, both for adultery, and for taking his (half) brother's wife (Lev. 18:16; 20:21).

This worried Herodias terribly. Did she feel that her reputation was at stake? Or that her new husband might pay attention to John and so her marriage would be in jeopardy? Anyway, she planned to eliminate the accuser. Prison was not enough. She soon found an appropriate occasion: her hubby's birthday. Lots of wine, important guests, sensuous dancing, starring her own daughter.

Herod promised the girl that he would give her up to half his kingdom as a prize for her dancing act. Did she want gold? A mansion? To rule as a queen over, say, Perea? To his consternation, all she wanted was a platter with a human head on it, the head of John Baptist.

Herod was a man of his word. All these important people present! He chose to cut off the head of John rather than break his promise. True, he never should have promised. Which was the greater sin: break a promise or decapitate God's prophet? The one of whom the Lord Jesus said that there was no greater man? Herod

decided that his reputation was more important than John's life.

Herod had a mixed sense of ethics. Of course it is important to be truthful and reliable. Our yes should be yes, and no, no. In a dilemma, try to keep a balance. Admit you were wrong and take the consequences.

It is reported that Ferdinand Marcos, former president of the Philippines, often cheated at golf. He vigorously denied this, but what is that compared with syphoning off millions of the people's money, to buy, for example, shoes for his wife?

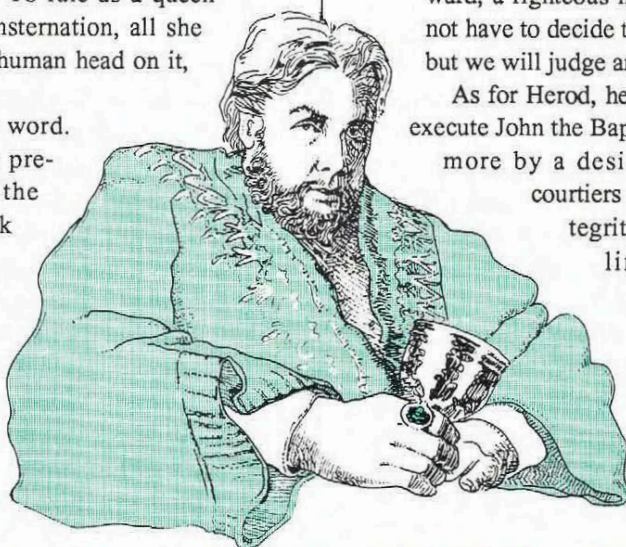
It is incumbent to keep the whole law of God. He who offends in one point is guilty of all. Our Spirit-driven goal should be to obey, and instantly. Above His commands are His words, and we should seek more ways of pleasing Him.

But in judging others, the Lord warned about tolerating a serious matter (a beam) while harshly condemning something really of far lesser importance. Imagine a citizen condemning Hitler for, say, undemocratic methods, while overlooking ethnic cleansing! We need to keep a balance. Don't major on a minor.

There are different degrees of sin, and of punishment for sin. The beast and the false prophet will be thrown alive into the lake of fire, without even a chance in court, at the Great White Throne. Conversely, there will be degrees of reward: a prophet's reward, a righteous man's reward. Happily we will not have to decide the faithfulness of any believer, but we will judge angels when the time comes.

As for Herod, he decided to keep his word and execute John the Baptist. Perhaps he was motivated more by a desire to retain favor with his courtiers than any personal sense of integrity. Peer pressure today is not

limited to teenagers. Many choose to go along with the majority rather than study the Scriptures and think through what is more pleasing to the Lord. For such, Herod is a solemn warning. **U**





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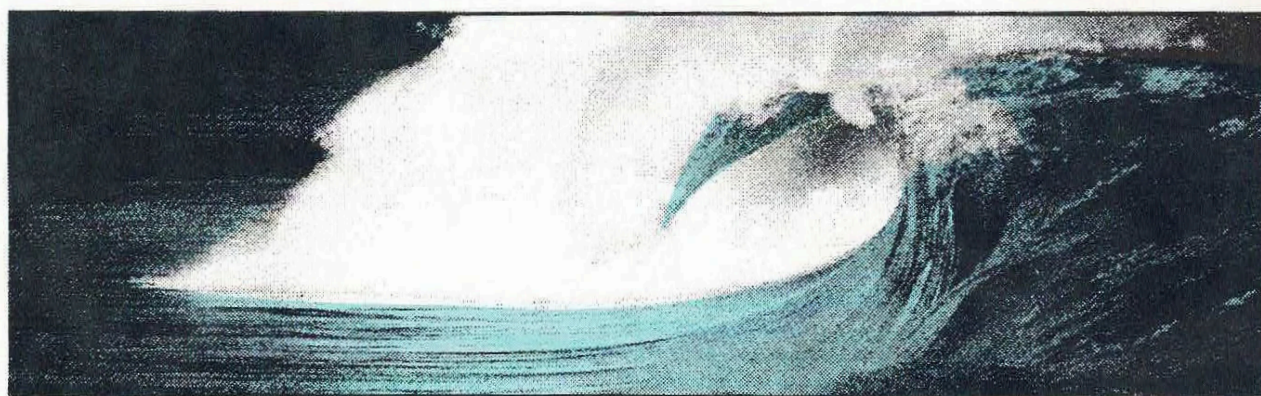
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Love's Mighty Sea

S. Trevor Francis (author of "Oh, the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus," and "I Am Waiting for the Dawning.")

Eternal Love! Oh, mighty sea,
That hath not bounds, or shore,
I gaze upon Thy tideless waves,
I know the love that loving saves,
I worship, and adore.

Eternal Love, eternal Love,
That ever shall abide;
The love that saves, the love that keeps,
What vastness in Thy glorious deeps,
Oh, ocean deep and wide!

Eternal Love that loveth me,
And loving, made me love,
That brought my Saviour pain and loss,
The awful anguish of the Cross,
To lift my soul above!

Why is it thus, O God of grace,
In Thy fair courts above?
Is it Thou wouldest have us bring,
A song no angel lips can sing,
Of Thy redeeming love?

Eternal Love that bore the curse,
That else must fall on me,
Now to the glory of Thy grace,
Mine eyes shall see the Saviour's face
Through all eternity.

Eternal Love, O Son of God,
Glorious in all Thy ways!
Thou art enthroned in light Divine,
The light in which Thy saints shall shine
Through everlasting days.