What do you do when a church gets sick?
see page 4
NOT IMPRESSED

The fact that Dr. Bacchiocchi obtained his advanced degree in the heart of Rome (MINISTRY, July, 1979, p. 11) neither intrigues nor impresses me. By his own admission, he entered the Pontifical Gregorian University with a totally prejudiced point of view. However, in all fairness, his suggested areas of possible cooperation deserve sincere and prayerful consideration by my "unbiased" viewpoint.

Assembly of God minister
Hawaii

AMEN!

Dr. Fritz Guy’s article, “Truth Is Something You Are” (November, 1979), prompts me to say a hearty Amen! It is something I would like to share with my friends and associates. I feel that MINISTRY is a highly professional magazine for clergy; each month I learn something helpful. I really appreciate it.

Seventh Day Baptist Minister
Connecticut

NONEVENT

I shall have to ask you not to send any more copies of MINISTRY to me, not because it isn’t a good publication (it is), nor because as a Lutheran I disagree with Seventh-day Adventist theology (I don’t all that much, really), but because I simply receive too much mail and must cut out those in which I have little interest. The arrival of MINISTRY is as close to a nonevent in my life as I can think of.

Lutheran minister
Nebraska

And right up to the last sentence or so, we thought the letter was going fairly well—Editors.

EXTRA DIMENSION

I find the contents of MINISTRY interesting and thought-provoking. I have especially appreciated the articles “The Shroud of Turin” and “Does the Ice Age Disprove the Bible?” (July, 1979). Both of these shed new light on subjects that I have looked into previously. I sense the spirit of your magazine as being warm and evangelical, and its pages have brought an extra dimension of spiritual blessing to my own ministry.

Church of the Nazarene minister
Australia

BREADTH OF A MATURE MIND

Your note, “An Outstretched Hand,” is excellent. A professor once said to me that the breadth of a mature mind is knowing what to accept, what to reject, and what to hold in suspension. I appreciate MINISTRY very much; it is the best publication dealing with the pastoral field I have ever read. The helpful information and scholarly articles have proved stimulating, and the section on the pastor’s wife is a valuable aid that is often neglected. I don’t always agree with your positions, but neither do I agree with all the articles in my newspaper or with all the books in my library, and I continue to subscribe to the paper and to keep my books. Please continue sending MINISTRY to me; I maintain a regular file of it.

Independent Baptist minister
North Carolina

ALBERTO'S BIBLE

The Wynans say, “To find your minimum target exercise heart rate take the number of 220, subtract your age, and multiply the result by 70 percent.” Thus, for a would-be jogger who is forty years old the minimum target exercise heart rate would be 126 (220 minus 40 times 70 percent).—Editors.

DEVI'S BIBLE

As for the revised King James Bible (reviewed in the September, 1979, MINISTRY) I wouldn’t buy one. The first King James Bible was written by God; the revised one by the devil. Please do not send MINISTRY anymore. I do not like it.

Christian minister
Kentucky

ALTERED UNDERSTANDING

Thank you for an excellent publica-

tion. It has completely altered my understanding of Seventh-day Adventists.

Anglican minister
British Columbia

SOMEONE CARED

I look forward to receiving MINISTRY and welcome it with open arms. It is educational, inspirational, and unpreju-

diced. You have made me feel as though someone cared.

Interdenominational minister
Florida

NO DOGING

I have received MINISTRY for some time and have really enjoyed it. Your magazine does not dodge issues. It has

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What do you do when a church gets sick?

House calls by doctors may be a thing of the past, but for pastors they are a part of his healing ministry.

If you find yourself the pastor of a church in which attendance is low, financial support is poor, and there is little spiritual or numerical growth, you need to ask yourself, realistically and searchingly, Why?

We read often of healthy, vibrant congregations that are increasing by leaps and bounds, venturing out in faith to accomplish incredible feats for God. As a matter of fact, however, ailing congregations composed of spiritually ill members are no doubt much more common. If your church fits this unpromising diagnosis, the first step is to be sure that the condition cannot be laid at your own doorstep. After all, if as pastors we feel entitled to the credit when our congregation is thriving, should we not be willing to assume the responsibility when it is ailing? Often a church reflects to a surprising degree the spirituality, personality, and attitudes of its pastor.

Assuming, however, that the church’s unhealthy condition cannot be traced to a glaring deficiency in your ministry, consider the individual components of your congregation. Usually the malaise demonstrated in an ailing congregation results from one or more of the following causes: carelessness, neglect of private devotions, failure to gain the victory over some cherished sin, Biblical ignorance, divided homes, spurned Christian standards, active resentment against church leaders or other members, a knowing and intentional violation of health laws, and, in far too many cases, the utter loneliness of not feeling needed or wanted. By conducting a healing ministry in an ailing congregation you live up to the highest ideals of your calling. To nurse a sick congregation to health and vitality justifies your ministry and identifies you as a genuine pastor. (Beware, however, of the prevalent occupational hazard of ministers in which you see yourself as indispensable—the spiritual champion who rides off on his white horse in all directions righting every wrong and restoring harmony.

How does one go about this healing ministry? The first step is to think of yourself as the servant of your people. Jesus Himself, the true Shepherd, the great Healer, said, “He that is greatest among you shall be your servant” (Matt. 23:11). The followers of Christ should labor as He did. Your governing emotion, then, will be compassion. Your business and pleasure in life will be to help people—help them move from where they are to where God wants them to be. If you find yourself annoyed by people who make demands on you or by unattractive members you’re certainly in the wrong business. Yours will never be a healing ministry.

Home visitation is of vital importance in pastoral work, for that is where the healing process usually begins. Yet it is a work that is often neglected. “I haven’t the time to do all that I’m supposed to be doing already. How am I to find the time to visit?” This common lament is intended to excuse a lack of pastoral visitation. Pastors are busy, no doubt about it, yet some with congregations of 2,000 and more manage to visit each of their members once a year if not more often. It is largely a matter of setting priorities, proper management of time, scheduling regular visits by neighborhoods, and advance planning. It may not be easy, but if you are convinced that visiting your members is one of the more important of your pastoral duties, you will find the time.

As an essential part of healing, visiting is not a mere social diversion; it is a tool that the faithful shepherd uses in the accomplishment of his work. Your primary purpose in visiting must be to draw your members closer to the Lord Jesus, by Halvard J. Thomsen not to yourself. Avoid useless chitchat, criticism, gossip, fault-finding, or self-praise. You are not in the home merely to pass the time of day; you are there as an ambassador of heaven to direct the thoughts to eternal values. This doesn’t mean that you must be pompous or formal. It doesn’t mean you cannot laugh or be a friend. But it does mean that you will keep to the business at hand. Don’t stay too long, tempting though that may be on occasion, nor appear to be in a hurry to leave. No pastoral visit is complete without prayer for the person, his family, his home. All you say and do during the visit prepares the way for this prayer, and few in your congregation will forget that you knelt in their living room and earnestly committed them to the care of God.

Especially seek out those who need your gentle care—the disenchanted, the disheartened, and the lonely. Among these will be the ill, the elderly, the youth, the backslidden, and those with financial or domestic problems or a strong sense of guilt. You will have to visit most often those members who need it most, not merely your officers and most congenial supporters. And you’ll soon learn, if you haven’t already, how much people appreciate a visit from their pastor. You will see how much you can accomplish in private that you never could do in public, especially since a substantial number of your most needy members seldom attend services.

Exactly what do you do when you visit a member? If you are a new pastor in a particular church getting acquainted with your members, or if for some other reason it’s a first call, explore gently. Encourage the person to talk about himself; ask questions near to his heart without being nosey or offensively personal. Make the questions arise naturally and draw him out by your interest in his spiritual welfare. For example: How long have you been a member of our congregation? When were you baptized? Who baptized you? Are you enjoying a good Christian experience? If not, why not? What spiritual exercise gives you the most joy, the greatest uplift? Are all your children in church school? Do they enjoy a good Christian experience?
What literature are you reading these days? Do you get the church paper? What kind of sermons do you feel our church needs most? How can I be most helpful to you as your pastor? Allow time for the responses to come out. Everything about your first visit should be natural and comfortable; remember, you are not an inquisitor nor a survey taker. End your visit with prayer. When you leave there should be a glow that will be remembered with pleasure, an empathy between you and this member of your flock.

Subsequent visits will have more specific purposes, tailored perhaps to one of the nine sources of spiritual ill health mentioned above. When a doctor is confronted with a patient, he must first diagnose the problem correctly, and then he must prescribe an effective cure. Likewise, your success in treating the spiritual maladies of your congregation will depend on how well you diagnose their needs during visits and on the specific remedies you prescribe. When you knock on the door of a spiritually ailing member, it is important that you have clearly in mind a definite purpose that corresponds to the particular needs of that individual.

Some members do not have a clear, Bible-based understanding of what they believe because they have not discovered the benefits of regular Bible study. Your first goal will be to get them to study their Sabbath school or Sunday school lesson. As they advance, encourage them to deeper study. They may also need to learn how to pray beyond the formalized prayers of public worship.

Family worship, according to numerous surveys, is rare even among active church families, and you will find many opportunities to emphasize its importance. It should not be drudgery or a boring exercise, but it often is and is therefore abandoned. Successful family worship may take many forms, but it must always include togetherness and involvement based on an appreciation of God's goodness. Children will find it the best part of the day, when it is done with love and forethought. They will look forward to this close fellowship with their parents and with God. In the case of small children, brevity helps; if adolescents are in the home they should be given an active role. Although it is ideal to start the day with morning worship, any time convenient to all is preferable to none. If you succeed in getting family worship into a busy home you will definitely be performing a healing service. Another objective in your visiting will be to foster the reading of good Christian literature. In this electronic, fast-paced age, in which television reigns supreme, not many people read substantial books. Novels find a wide circulation; fantasy-feeding literature gets attention, but too few take advantage of the vast wealth of Christian literature now available. You will find those whose spiritual weakness stems from the "junk food" with which they fill the mind, and it will be your healing privilege to introduce them to the soul-strengthening menu of great Christian literature. A word of caution needs to be sounded at this point. Religious publishing has exploded in recent years, and here, as elsewhere, not all that glitters is gold by any means. Much froth, glorification of personalities, and human theories can be found. Encourage your members to feed on that which is of lasting value to the soul.

Another recurring reason for visiting a home will be domestic strife. Here, perhaps more than in any other area, the pastor may be the only human source of help. Each such situation is unique, and you will need to ask divine counsel for each one. However, keep in mind that it is easy to become part of the problem instead of the solution. These circumstances require much skill and understanding, and it is easy to blunder by taking sides, by taking a position when none is required, or even by speaking of the problem to others or in public.

You will sometimes visit parents who do not know how to train their children, who expect surrogates to handle this chore for them. Far too often television is the main source of children's home instruction. The results speak for themselves. You may need to make frequent visits to some homes to give tactful guidance in child training.

Health and nutrition will be the reason for some pastoral visits. Many diseases of the soul can be traced to improper diet.

(Continued on page 23.)
Better known as the Lord’s Prayer, the familiar words take on a new significance when viewed as a prayer belonging to His disciples.

Among the most familiar of Bible passages is that passage we usually call the Lord’s Prayer. Actually, it ought to be known as the Disciples’ Prayer because in both the Gospels in which it occurs (Matt. 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4), the prayer is given by the Lord to His disciples.

Luke 11:1 states that one of the disciples specifically asked Jesus for a prayer comparable to the prayer that John had taught his disciples. It was common at that time for various groups to have distinctive prayers. Indeed, such prayers identified individuals as belonging to this or that particular group. The Pharisees had their prayers; the Essenes had theirs; and, according to Luke, John the Baptist’s followers had theirs. So Jesus’ disciples asked for a prayer, and Jesus gave them one—the Disciples’ Prayer.

This well-known prayer, as it appears in the Gospel of Matthew, actually consists of three parts. The first part is the address: “Our Father who art in heaven” (chap. 6:9). Then follows a set of three petitions couched in the second person singular (for that reason they are called the thou petitions): “Let Thy name be hallowed”; “let Thy kingdom come”; “let Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.” A second set of three petitions employs the first person plural (thus they are called the we petitions) and forms the third division: “Give us today our bread for tomorrow”; “forgive us our debts as we have forgiven our debtors”; and “lead us not into (the) temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”

The first set of petitions is carefully formulated in synonymous parallelism, and thus its three clauses have one basic significance.

What are we to make of these three petitions? Recent literature on the Disciples’ Prayer has stressed an element that is usually given little attention. Separately and together these three petitions have a distinct eschatological significance. They relate to the future and suggest that the disciples of Jesus should “pray in” that future. This is not to deny that they also have an existential significance, but the eschatological emphasis is primary.

When we consider the first of these petitions—“Let Thy name be hallowed”—the question immediately arises, Who is intended as the “agent” in this hallowing, or sanctifying, process?

The early church fathers discussed this issue at length. Many argued that the agent referred to was each individual disciple. It was his/her responsibility to hallow, or sanctify, the name of the Father. Among these were Augustine, and at a much later time, his most famous disciple, Luther.
But others felt that such an interpretation was not quite fair to the petition itself. They held that the reference was to God. They called attention to the fact that the verb occurs in the passive form, and that this construction often serves as a surrogate for the divine name. They furthermore pointed out that in the Old Testament it is God alone who is holy within Himself, and that only through worship of God or through service for Him do people and things become holy.

Actually, there are very few references in the Old Testament to the idea that man may in any way hallow the divine name. Rather, there is a consistent view that God Himself sanctifies His name in and through His people, and in and through salvation history (see Lev. 11:45; Ps. 89:18; Eze. 36:22-27).

When we turn to the New Testament, we find precisely the same notion. God manifests His holiness and hallows His name in and through Jesus Christ, who is described as "the Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24). This idea is most clearly expressed in John 12:28. At the close of His public ministry, Jesus prays to His Father, "Father, glorify thy name." To this the Father replies, "'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.'"

We should note the deliberate use of both the past and the future tenses. First of all, God has glorified His name in and through the words and works of Jesus. He will glorify His name again in the future, both in the return of the Son to the Father and in the giving of the Holy Spirit, through whom He will continue to be with His people.

Thus there is, in both the Old and the New Testaments, an implicit eschatological notion associated with the idea of the hallowing of God's name. When the disciples of Jesus pray, "Let Thy name be hallowed," they pray that God will accomplish that ultimate sanctification of His name that will result from the complete manifestation of His holiness through the finalizing of His salvific intentions. This is borne out by the second and third petitions in this first group, which indicate that the sanctification of His name consists in the final coming of His kingdom and in the perfection of His will.

Let us, then, look at the second petition, "Let Thy kingdom come." Again the early church had quite a debate as to whether or not this phrase referred to a divine act or to a human one. Is it a prayer in which the disciples ask that God allow them to bring in His kingdom, or is it a prayer in which the disciples request the Father to bring it in? Tertullian and Chrysostom, and later Luther and Calvin, wrestled with this question, finally concluding that the petition is intended as a request addressed to the Father, asking that He bring in His kingdom, and that it contains a genuine eschatological reference. And indeed, that is what we should certainly anticipate from both the Old and the New Testaments.

Isaiah 24:23 connects the signs of the last days—including the darkening of the sun and the moon—with the time when "the Lord of hosts will reign" and His glory be magnified. Daniel 7:18 clearly points out that the saints of the Most High receive the kingdom of God after all other earthly kingdoms have been moved out of the way. In both of these texts it is clear that God is the agent, and in both there is a very distinct eschatological overtone.

Surely no one can read the parables of Jesus in Matthew 13 and Mark 4 without concluding that one of the very basic elements in His teachings concerning the kingdom of God is that man does not bring in the kingdom. To do so is not within his power. Jesus is quite clear that it is God who brings in the kingdom; man responds to the actions of God.

Furthermore, it is equally clear that the kingdom of God about which Jesus speaks is His eschatological kingdom. Of course, one might object that, because of the teachings and the activities of Jesus, the kingdom had already been brought in. One might quote Jesus' words in Luke 11:20: "If it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." One might also recall that, according to Luke 17:21, Jesus claimed that because He was in their midst, the kingdom of God was in their midst. And surely we must agree that there was a proleptic (or inaugurated) fulfillment of this eschatological hope in both the words and the works of Jesus. But it is equally true that if indeed Jesus has already established the rule of God on earth, then He has also prepared the way for its fuller establishment in the future.

So when Jesus invites His disciples to pray "Let Thy kingdom come," He is encouraging them to pray that God will bring about His complete and ultimate rule. Again the eschatological factor is obvious. Indeed, the idea in the phrase "coming of the kingdom," which occurs in a number of places in the New Testament, regularly expresses a future eschatological concern.

The third petition reads, "Let Thy will be done." Once more, the early fathers debated the intention of this petition. Is it a call to the disciples of Jesus to fulfill God's commands, or is it an invitation to them to pray that God will effect His will on earth as it is in heaven? The idea of the divine will's becoming effective in human experience is a notion that is consistently given an eschatological accent in the New Testament. For instance, Ephesians 1:5-12 sets out the salvific plan of God and refers to it as the expression of the divine will, in such terms as "the purpose of his will" (verse 5), "the mystery of his will" (verse 9), and "the counsel of his will" (verse 11).

By inviting His disciples to pray "Let Thy will be done," Jesus was inviting them to pray that God might accomplish His ultimate will in all the earth.

If this is a fair interpretation of these three petitions, then the three are closely linked and are really expressing different aspects of the same basic thought—the eschatological expression of God's glory in the presence of man. Petition one, regarding the name, emphasizes the more internal aspects of His expressed glory. Petition two, regarding the kingdom, expresses the more external aspects. And petition three, regarding His will, emphasizes the more universal aspects.

The second set of petitions—the we petitions—is also threefold: "Give us today our bread for tomorrow"; "forgive us our debts as we have forgiven our debtors"; and "lead us not into (the) temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

Here we must consider the possibility of a rather distinct shift. There is a shift, as we have already seen, from the third person imperative to the second person imperative and from the second person singular pronoun to the first person plural pronoun. But many modern scholars have seen another shift, from an eschatological concern to an existential one. Others say that there is no such shift at this point and that the eschatological element is still the primary one. So let us look at these three petitions and see whether, in fact, they do have an eschatological dimension.

I have translated the first petition in this group as "Give us today our bread for tomorrow." The key to a proper translation hinges on the meaning of the Greek word epiusios. In the third century A.D., Origen puzzled over this word and scoured Greek authors to find other examples of it. He
came to the conclusion that the word occurs nowhere else in Greek literature. Today, seventeen centuries later, we are without any additional literary evidence. How then shall we proceed in an attempt to determine the meaning of this key term? We may turn to etymology, but meanings based on etymology alone are seldom to be trusted. Some have suggested that epiousios is derived from the preposition epi plus a form of the verb "to be." From this they have then derived either the meaning "daily (bread)" or "(bread) for existence."

Others have proposed that the word is derived from the preposition epi plus a form of the verb "to come." Such a derivation is possible, and if correct, the word epiousios would mean "(bread) for the coming day" or "(bread) for tomorrow."

Obviously, those who interpret the prayer existentially refer to the former of these derivations, and those who understand it eschatologically draw on the latter. Incidentally, the latter understanding is very old. For example, the commentary of Jerome on Matthew 6:11 clearly indicates that he understood this verse as having eschatological significance.

If we translate this petition "Give us today our bread for tomorrow," we have a prayer essentially meaning "Bring the future into the present..."

In Psalm 78:24 the psalmist says God "gave them bread from heaven" (T.L.B.), and, according to John 6:32, Jesus extrapolated from this verse as follows: "Don't read the psalm as if it referred simply to the children of Israel, but read it as a reference to yourselves, and read it in an eschatological sense: 'Your Father gives you the bread from heaven, namely, the Son of man.'"

As Jesus later develops the idea that He is Himself the bread from heaven, He adds, "'He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day'" (verse 54). Surely there is here a patent eschatological reference.

The second of these three we petitions reads, "Forgive us our debts as we have forgiven our debtors." What about this matter of the forgiving of debts? It is interesting that within the New Testament, and especially within the teachings of Jesus, wherever the idea of the remission of debts (of sins) occurs, the context almost always refers to the coming judgment. On that basis, should we not understand that this language also has an eschatological dimension?

"Do not lead us into temptation" is the usual translation of the third petition in this grouping. The Greek word translated temptation is understood in a general, abstract sense. But if the term temptation is to be understood in this way, then significant theological problems arise regarding God as one who tempts man. In order to overcome these difficulties, some have attempted to translate the phrase, "Do not allow us to fall into temptation." However, that really forces the Greek text.

What, in fact, is the real meaning of the word temptation in this context? Does it refer to temptation in a general sense? Quite possibly James was responding to such an interpretation when he wrote, "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God'; for God... himself tempts no one" (chap. 1:13). James was well acquainted with the teachings in the Sermon on the Mount. He treats them at several points in his letter. Therefore he may well be dealing with this particular petition of the Disciples' Prayer.

Or does it refer to temptation in a more specific sense? The early church fathers understood the term temptation to have an eschatological sense—to refer to the ultimate and final temptation. At this point there are two helpful messages:

The first is the story of Jesus' ordeal in the Garden of Gethsemane. Here He is in an ultimate struggle with the devil, and in the midst of this He says to His disciples, "'Pray that you may not enter into temptation'" (Mark 14:38). It seems that He is urging the disciples to pray that they may not be overtaken in the great, final conflict.

The second is Revelation 3:10. Jesus promises in this text that because of their faithfulness, He will keep His people from the hour of temptation. The temptation referred to here seems clearly to be that diabolical struggle in which the devil will make his ultimate onslaught against Christ and His people.

If this is right, then the petition has an eschatological dimension. The prayer then might rightly be translated, "Do not bring us into (the) temptation."

In the next clause—"'deliver us from evil'"—we seem to move to a climax. If temptation in the preceding clause does not refer to an abstract, general notion, but to a very specific event in the working of the history of salvation, then may not this parallel expression refer not to an abstract notion of evil, but to a particular person involved in that final struggle, namely the devil himself? Should we not then translate it as "deliver us from the evil one"?

Jesus spoke in clear terms of the evil one. In the parable of the sower and the seed, it is the "evil one" who snatches away the seed (Matt. 13:19). In the parable of the tares, the weeds are the sons of the "evil one" (verse 38). John, interpreting his Lord, contends that the "evil one" can never touch the One who is begotten of God (1 John 5:18). And Paul, speaking of the return of our Lord, says, "The Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one" (2 Thess. 3:3, N.I.V.). Does not this promise remind us of the petition that Jesus taught His disciples?

Perhaps closely related to this is another prayer of Jesus found in John 17 (which, by the way, ought to be called the Lord's Prayer). In it Jesus prays to His Father, "'I do not pray that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil one'" (verse 15).

Obviously, both clauses in the last petition of the Disciples' Prayer have a very distinct eschatological emphasis.

Now, does this eschatological interpretation of the Disciples' Prayer do away with the more common existential interpretation? I think not. Rather, the former lays the primary accent where it rightly belongs. Here is a prayer in which the disciples of Jesus are invited to "pray in" the kingdom of God. But, in a sense, that kingdom has already arrived in the life and deeds of Christ. The eschatology is not only futuristic but also proleptic (or inaugurated). That being the case, it is legitimate to extrapolate from this eschatological element to the more common interpretation in terms of our day-by-day experiencing of the kingdom.

However, would it not be helpful, in view of the fact that we have so often prayed the Disciples' Prayer stressing its more existential significance, to pray it, at least now and again, emphasizing its more eschatological significance?
Reflections on a leader

He handled an embarrassing situation so adroitly that the passengers were not irritated, but impressed.

I anticipated an uneventful flight from London to the United States. The departure was announced a little earlier than the advertised time. Our passage through security was swift, and the quiet-voiced agent soon invited us to board the wide-bodied transatlantic jet airliner. This flight was going to leave on time for sure. The passengers found their seats, stowed their hand luggage, and fastened their seat belts while the ever watchful stewardesses hovered over their charges with calm dignity.

But in moments it became obvious that ours was not to be a routine departure. The stewardesses exchanged puzzled glances. Officials scuttled from the main door of the plane to the cockpit. The pilot emerged, lacking the urbane calmness associated with his office. The time for departure passed, and the normal small talk of getting acquainted with one's seatmate and the excited voices of more boisterous travelers gave way to a strained silence. "What is the problem?" became the unspoken question in every mind.

At last the captain appeared at the front of the cabin. In measured tones and clear voice he explained. He and his copilot were ready to depart. The plane was ready for flight, and he had no doubt that the passengers were eager to be on their way. All the crew members were at their assigned posts—except the flight engineer. The individual scheduled for our flight had failed to report for duty. Human failure had shattered his preparations. Yet he showed no irritation, and his calmness inspired the passengers to act similarly. His leadership was genuine and effective.

Concerning one of his countrymen in the past it was written that "he did the best things in the worst times." Modern leaders must be similarly motivated, particularly those who lead and administer in spiritual matters. The following quotation says it best.

"The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall."—Ellen G. White, Education, p. 57.

That kind of leadership will take God's people to where He intends them to be.

Roy E. Graham is provost of Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.
Whatever happened to Eden?

by Allan Magie

The climate was ideal. An endless variety of foods was provided to delight his taste. Flowers and trees in a profuse number of colors and shapes filled the landscape to please his senses. Birds of various hues sent melodious trills across the open spaces. Different kinds of fish glided easily through the crystal water of streams and lakes. Animals moved over the green carpet, each with distinctive features that made them unique in the habitat they occupied. Natural laws were set in motion that governed the development and relationships of all, both animate and inanimate.

Into this perfect setting God placed man. He would be the custodian of this world. God would be his teacher. The earth was his schoolroom, all nature the object of study.

"And the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it" (Gen. 2:15). Unfortunately, most of us take this to mean that man is to cultivate his own food without considering the deeper implications. "Dress" and "keep" imply far more.

Great care was to be taken with the living plants and animals in man's environment. The resources entrusted to man were to be protected from abuse. Future generations would depend on how he "preserved" and "conserved" this bequest. The earth was to be held by man as a trust, and he was to serve the land as a guardian. The Owner expected him to maintain its perfection and intricate balance.

Then man sinned, and all nature responded to the change. Death stalked the land. The soil still brought forth food for man's sustenance, but along with desired plants it grew weeds. More effort was required to "dress it and to keep it." Man increased in number. He abused his surroundings. He became a linear process in a cyclic world. He began to look on nature as an enemy to be conquered. He built cities. He dug treasures from the bowels of the earth. Factories, powered with the energy of buried pre-Flood life, turned out products that restructured man's environment. And soon man forgot that he was a part of the life around him, although he depended on this life for his very existence.

Now, suddenly we find that it may already be too late. Entire species of animals have disappeared. Our basic needs—water, air, and food—are fouled with the products of our own
design. We have been forced to remember God’s command to preserve and conserve the earth’s resources.

Ecology. An old word, yet with striking new meaning today. It describes the relationships that exist between living things and their environment. It offers to us some disquieting facts:

1. The earth’s resources are limited. All life must share its bounties. The sun’s energy, trapped by green plants to convert lifeless atoms into life-sustaining food, passes on to man and animals, then to bacteria, maggots, and fungi. Simply put, all forms of life are dependent on one another.

The current energy crisis—caused by fears of an inadequate supply of petroleum fuel to power our ravenous technological marvels—is part and parcel of our entire environmental problem. It is the sort of symptom we can expect when a part of nature (in this case, man) begins to exceed the capacity of its habitat to provide unlimited raw materials.

The energy shortage portends the shortages of metals and other essential raw materials. We must begin to face up to the reality that man is pressing dangerously close to the limits of the resources and resilience of the earth. Food shortages and famines are becoming all too frequent. Fishery stocks in the ocean are rapidly declining.

2. Every organism is absolutely dependent on other organisms. For example, certain plants depend on animals to pollinate their flowers, eliminate their natural competitors, and disperse their seeds in an interdependence of different organisms that we call a community. Following the strands far enough leads us to the obvious conclusion that everything in the environment is virtually connected to everything else. A small disturbance or problem in one part of the interdependent network of organisms may become amplified as it reaches other organisms and cause large, distant, and long-delayed effects.

The people in Minamata, Japan, are a striking illustration. For centuries they had lived on rice and the fish caught in the waters of Yatsushiro Bay. But one day a chemical plant was built on the bay, and the wastes from the plant were pumped through a long pipe that extended for some distance out into the bay. But the pipe did not extend far enough. Bacteria in the oozy mud on the bay bottom converted one of the wastes, the metal mercury, into an organic form called methyl mercury. Other organisms picked it up. These were eaten by small fish, which, in turn, were eaten by larger fish, which were then caught in the nets of the fishermen from Minamata. Scores of those who ate the poisoned fish began to develop such disorders of the nervous system as blindness, insanity, and the inability to carry out simple body functions. Although the chemical company was required to compensate the victims, who can place a value on one human’s potential? Are the material gains worth such a price?

3. The mercury disaster in Japan brings us to a phenomenon often overlooked—everything has to go somewhere. We extract large amounts of material from the earth, convert it into new forms, and discharge it into the environment. Often the natural processes of organisms cannot use or destroy it, and it accumulates. We are, belatedly, noticing accumulations in harmful amounts of many substances in places they don’t belong. And, suddenly, we are reminded that anything that fails to fit into the normal process of life is a threat to its finely balanced cycles.

4. Every gain is won at some cost, or as has been aptly stated, “There ain’t no free lunch!” When man interferes with natural processes to provide himself with a more comfortable life he must accept the consequences. Anything extracted from the environment must be replaced. The payment cannot be avoided. The subsequent degradation that has followed man’s interference with the environment has involved the air we breathe, the water we drink or bathe in, and the soil in which we grow our crops. Even the esthetic quality of our recreational facilities has been hampered—pine trees dying from air pollution and beaches coated with oil spilled by a passing tanker or dotted with the smelly, rotting carcasses of fish killed by chemicals dumped into the water.

Air pollution is well-nigh universal. It is no longer just a nuisance, but a threat to our health. It is a reminder that our most celebrated technological achievements—the automobile, the electric power plant, the jet airplane, the gigantic industrial complex, and, indeed, the modern city itself—are, from the standpoint of environment, rapidly becoming costly failures. Our purpose here is to respond as Christians to the obvious need for a change, lest man eliminate himself from the earth.

It is clear that humans are a major part of the problem. We can’t blame ignorance. We are all polluters, either directly or indirectly. Materialism drives people to want lots of things cheap, regardless of social costs. Greed leads industry to seek the quick dollar. No one can deny that our environment, and us with it, is in peril. We have come a long way from the unspoiled beauty of the Garden that God provided us. The earth’s surface has been reshaped. Rivers have been redirected. Forests have been obliterated. In addition to extinct species, more than one hundred are seriously threatened. Suddenly we have nowhere to throw our wastes, and we face being buried in our own litter.

Cities have grown together, forming immense metropolitan areas that continue for vast distances, and the quality of life in these cities has declined. We have become a country in which licensed drivers outnumber registered voters. Two cars roll off Detroit’s assembly lines for every baby born, and the average commuter spends the equivalent of one month of daylight hours driving to and from work each year.

Let’s face it. We’ve failed to follow God’s plan. It wasn’t His idea that we should build vast cities. He knew that selfish use of the earth’s resources would pose unknown hazards to our health. The only answer to our dilemma is to turn to the Source of all life. As in the spiritual dimension, so in the physical, God has provided a way out. It takes courage, commitment, and sacrifice. Christians must shun a life style that contributes to the wasteful use of resources and alters the environment, making it unsuitable for the abundant life. Christ has shown us that here on earth we are to practice the principles of heaven and begin to live its life.

And what type of life is that? A simple one, with simple needs, a life maintained with few frills and sustained with the natural products of the earth, a life that relates properly to nature because we want to be a part of God’s original pattern of harmonious interdependence. It is a life that is learning to do without the artificiality of modern life.

God’s plan will work if we are willing to do it His way.

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Why then the law?
by Sakae Kubo

Grace is a most important concept in the New Testament. It is the quality of God that makes salvation possible for us. But we cannot truly understand grace unless we understand precisely its relationship to law. Law and grace are very closely related. The understanding of these two and the right relationship of one to the other is vital to a true appreciation of the gospel. It is not enough to see that law is opposed to grace as a method of salvation; we must also understand that law makes grace necessary, and grace upholds and establishes the law. Thus John Murray says: "It is not only the doctrine of grace that must be jealously guarded against distortion by the works of the law, but it is also the doctrine of law that must be preserved against the distortions of a spurious concept of grace."—Principles of Conduct, p. 182.

In order to understand this subject correctly we need to be very precise in the way we define the different aspects of law and grace and their relationship to each other in these respective aspects. From the standpoint of access or approaches to God law and grace stand in complete antithesis. From the standpoint of the sinner law stands as that which brings condemnation, though from the standpoint of a Pharisee, law is that which brings merit and self-justification. In neither of these cases is grace present.

Because the sinner apart from Christ is weak in the face of the demands of the law, he cannot help but feel its condemnation. In despair, when he comes to Christ, God by His grace forgives him, delivering him from the condemnation of the law and giving him the guilt-covering robe of Christ's righteousness. Law in this sense made grace necessary. Without its condemnation for failure to fulfill its demands we would have felt no need for grace. But because grace is needed for our failure to keep the law, the validity of the law is upheld. From the standpoint of the Christian law no longer condemns, and through grace he seeks never to fall again to its condemnatory power by living in harmony with its divine precepts.

It is difficult to understand how anyone can say that the law has been done away with or that it has no validity for the Christian. All Christians admit that we need redemption because we are sinners. Christ saves sinners and saves us from our sins. But what makes us sinners? We are sinners because we have broken God's law. But some propose that since we are sinners, having broken God's law, in saving us God does away with the law. According to this view we no longer need to observe the law. The law is no longer valid. The law is something bad that must be put out of the way. Thus, on the one hand, the validity of the condemnation of the law is accepted. That it condemns us as sinners is valid. We are sinners because we have broken the law. The law's verdict is upheld. It is the standard of righteousness which we have failed to reach. It is God's standard which is infallible. Therefore we human beings stand justly condemned. On the other hand, when Christ died, He supposedly did away with the law. The law is supposed to be expendable. The saved Christian supposedly has nothing to do with the law.

In the first instance the law's validity is upheld; in the second instance its validity is denied. If as a standard of righteousness the law is invalid now for the Christian, then it was also invalid before. If the law had no authority to condemn to begin with, if it was only an illusion, if only a false understanding, then in reality the human race was never sinful at all—the law having no validity. What Christ does in such a case is only to disclose this information. He only needs
to tell us that the law has no validity; therefore we are not sinners at all. This is the kind of salvation that Christ brings if what they say is true.

"Sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). If this is so, then the law is indeed the standard of righteousness. If it is, then the death of Christ (grace) does not do away with it, but on the contrary affirms it all the more. Otherwise His death is in vain. In reality it is the death of Christ (grace) that establishes the law. If the law could have been done away with, then Christ would not have needed to die.

What has been done away with for the Christian is the condemnation of the law. This is what Christ does. He does away with the condemnation of the law, not the law itself.

This means that the law remains as the standard of righteousness. True, the Christian does not look at the law merely from the standard of the letter of the law alone. He seeks to fulfill also the spirit of the law. In fact he sees in the life of Christ the living law. He sees that the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" does not simply mean the actual act of killing, or even that one should not hate one's brother. But more positively it means that one should sacrifice oneself for others. It means that one should do everything to save life, not merely physical but total life. In Christ, then, the Christian sees his standard of righteousness in its complete fullness. This goes far beyond the mere letter of the law.

From our discussion it is evident that Paul cannot mean that Christ brings a termination to the law. The New English Bible says, "For Christ ends the law" (Rom. 10:4).* The Greek word telos, as is the English word end, is ambiguous. We can mean "Christ is the end of the law" in the sense that The New English Bible brings out or in the sense that He is its goal. If it means "end" (termination) then it can only mean the law as an instrument, as a way of salvation. That is legalism. Christ ends man's vain attempt to achieve salvation through works.

In recent years many Protestant scholars have upheld this point of view that Paul does not do away with the law through grace. Carl Henry affirms: "Since it is based on the nature and purpose of the changeless God, the Law can never be abolished, but remains forever. Not even Christ abrogates the Law taken in this sense, nor is the Divine salvation of sinners by grace accomplished in violation of the moral law or in disregard to justice."—Christian Personal Ethics, p. 350. Charles Cranfield asserts: "For Paul, the law is not abolished by Christ. This thesis is stated in full awareness of the widespread tendency today, observable not only in popular writing but also in serious works of scholarship, to regard it as an assured result that Paul believed that the law had been abolished by Christ. This 'assured result,' like so many others, needs to be re-examined."—"St. Paul and the Law," Scottish Journal of Theology, 17 (1964), pp. 44, 45. Martin Lloyd-Jones writes: "We certainly are no longer under law but are under grace. Yet that does not mean that we need not keep the law. We are not under the law in the sense that it condemns us; it no longer pronounces judgment or condemnation on us. No! but we are meant to live it, and we are even meant to go beyond it."—Studies in the Sermon on the Mount, p. 12.

One passage frequently cited to show that the law is no longer valid is Galatians 3. Let us look carefully at it. Paul presents the function of law in this passage in its relation to faith. First of all Paul shows that Abraham was saved by faith, and thus all who exercise faith are sons of Abraham. Then he contrasts the way of faith against the way of works. Since only by faith can a person be justified, the one who relies on works of the law is under a curse. The latter does not rely on faith but on achievement—"He who does them shall live by them," (verse 12. R.S.V.).† The Christian knows that works of law do not deliver him but place him under a curse. In fact, he knows himself to be a sinner and so under the curse of the law. He takes, therefore, the way of faith.

The promise of inheritance to Abraham came 430 years before the law was given formally on Sinai. The primacy of faith is unquestioned. The law coming afterward did not in any way affect the promise. The method of salvation by faith remains valid. "This is what I mean: the law, which came four hundred and thirty years afterward, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to make the promise void" (verse 17).

Why then the law? If the law in no way affects the promise, then why was the law given? Paul's answer is that the law was added "because of transgressions" (verse 19), that is, in order that there might be transgressions. It came to keep the promise alive by showing humans their need of the promise of the Saviour. Without a clear-cut standard even when sin is present, it is not explicitly pointed out. But when the law is published, sin becomes clearly recognized, identified, and visible. Thus Paul says in Romans 3:20, "Through the law comes knowledge of sin." Again he says, "Yet, if it had not been for the law, I should not have known sin. I should not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, 'You shall not covet'" (chap. 7:7).

Actually Paul goes beyond this when he says that "law came in, to increase the trespass" (chap. 5:20). It not only makes us recognize sin as sin, but it makes us greater sinners. Prat defines the law from this point of view as "a barrier provocative to a perverse will" (Theology of St. Paul, p. 102). This "barrier" aspect Paul does not emphasize in Galatians 3 because he is trying to show how the law assists the promise. By pointing out the sin in us it keeps us aware of our need and thus keeps alive the promise of relief in Christ. The men of the Old Testament who had the promise had also the law—not as a new way of righteousness but as a way to be kept under restraint until faith should be revealed, that is, until Christ came. The law does not stand against the promises of God; it points out sin so "that what was promised to faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe" (Gal. 3:22).

The law worked with, not against, the promise. It could not bring life. It could not bring righteousness. But by showing the sinner his need of a Saviour it kept his eyes on the promise, which ultimately found its fulfillment in the coming of Christ. Since the promise has found its fulfillment, the function of the law to keep the promise alive is of course no longer necessary. However, the law still functions. It commands and demands. "It is only a light illuminating the intelligence without strengthening the will," as Prat states it.—Prat, op. cit., p. 103. It is still this in the Christian's experience, but through the grace of God his will is strengthened. He walks no longer "according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" (Rom. 8:4). "For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, indeed it cannot" (verse 7). But the Christian who lives according to the Spirit is reconciled to God and submits to God's law.

One of the most misused verses is Romans 6:14: "For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under the law but under grace." Many have explained this verse to mean that since the Christian is under grace he is free from the law and need not longer fulfill it. But these fail to continue to read the next verse, which says, "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace? God forbid"
fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit” (verse 14). It means that “there is . . . now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (verse 1)

Paul has identified law and sin, and this could lead to misunderstanding. So he clarifies this point emphatically: “What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means!” (verse 7). Then, in verses 8-11 he shows clearly that the real culprit is not the law but sin. Because of the weakness of the flesh sin has taken advantage of the law to deceive and to kill. In Paul’s view, far from being an evil thing, “the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good” (verse 12). It was not the good law which brought death. Absolutely not! “It was sin, working death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin” (verses 13, 14).

This exonerates the law from any stigma. For Paul the law itself is holy, just, and good. He points his accusing finger not at the law but at the true culprit—sin.

In Romans 7 and 8 Paul describes our human condition in three levels. First occurs the time when we are “apart from the law” (verse 9). Some look at this period as the age of innocence, when in childhood one is not aware of the law. According to the rabbis man had two laws but becomes a law unto himself. He lives without law, without conscience to sin; grace gives power to overcome sin, to break the dominion and power of sin, and promotes its opposite, namely, righteousness. Being freed from sin, we are delivered to righteousness. Through God’s grace we are servants of righteousness. Righteousness stands directly opposite sin. Sin is the transgression of the law. Then righteousness must be conformity to the law, that law which Paul calls “holy and just and good” (verse 12), which is the standard of righteousness and sin. We have seen above how law defines sin; but if law defines sin in terms of transgression, it defines righteousness as conformity to it.

In this verse the term “under law” cannot mean living in obedience to God’s law. As we have seen, it is the one who lives according to the flesh, who is hostile to God, who will not submit to God’s law (see chap. 8:7). Clearly, living “under law,” from the verse itself, must mean being under the dominion of sin. How is one under the dominion of sin? One is under the dominion of sin—“under law”—when he encounters the law without grace. Paul says, “When the commandment came, sin revived and I died [he had been under the complete domination of sin, under law]; the very commandment which promised life proved to be death to me. For sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and by it killed me” (verses 7-9).

It is through the law that sin maintains its mastery over the sinner. The weakness of the flesh cannot fulfill the demands of the law. Thus sin reigns as a tyrant.

In another connection Paul says, “The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law” (1 Cor. 15:56). “If the flesh is sin’s host,” says Furnish, “then the law is sin’s agent.”—Theology and Ethics in Paul, p. 138. Without grace we fall helpless victims to sin, which gains its power through the law.

Because Paul here thus shows the close relationship between sin and the flesh, it is easy to see why he can say, “For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace” (Rom. 6:14). To be under grace, on the other hand, means to be under the dominion of righteousness. It is to encounter the law knowing “that the just requirement of the law . . . [has been] self. But because sin has control over me, I end up doing the opposite from what I want to do and from what the law demands. “Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me” (verse 20). Anyone in such a condition is wretched indeed!

There are two remedies to this situation. One is to look at the law merely from the legal and external point of view; in fact, to use the law as an instrument of merit, to justify oneself before God. Only when the law is brought down to the level where we can say, “All these I have observed from my youth,” can some satisfaction come, however false and temporary.

But if we look at the law as it truly is—an expression of the character and will of God—and see that only love in its authentic form can fulfill it, then the sinner can only cry out, “Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” (verse 24).

The remedy can only be Jesus Christ. “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit” (chap. 8:2-4).

Thus we arrive at the third stage, when sin in the flesh is condemned and the Spirit takes over and controls in place of the flesh.

From this discussion it becomes clear that the law is indeed holy, just, good, and spiritual. Sin exploits the law. And when we live apart from Christ, apart from grace, the law appears to be our enemy. Under grace we are freed from the condemnation and dominion of the law. We are freed, too, from law as a way of salvation. We now live through grace. And in so doing we at last live in true harmony with the holy, just, good, and spiritual law.
Knowing nothing but Christ
by Ellen G. White

This article originally appeared under the title, "Christ the Minister’s Theme," in the March 24, 1896 Review and Herald. The eighty-three years that have passed since then have not made the emphasis of this appeal outmoded in the least degree. We still need to be reminded of the importance of knowing nothing but Christ.—The Editors.

The ministry is a sacred office: for the minister is to preach a crucified and risen Saviour—the power of God unto salvation to all who believe. He is to lift up Christ as a complete Saviour to all who accept Him. He is to present the science of salvation, and this subject can never be exhausted. Christ is our living intercessor today, before the Father in the heavenly court. Jesus, the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but for the sins of the whole world, is the theme instinct with divinity, which the servant of God is to present before his hearers. He is to make it plain that through the merits of Christ, through His example of sufferings, the disciples of Christ are fitted for every work, for every trial and discouragement. He is to direct the people to look unto Jesus, to contemplate His self-denial, His self-sacrifice, His humiliation in our behalf, and to be ready and willing to follow in the footsteps of Jesus—to endure the cross, despise the shame, and go without the camp bearing reproach for His sake...

The preaching of the word is not to be undervalued. To preach the grand and solemn truths of the gospel which is to save men’s souls, is a sacred, holy work. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth!" (Isa. 52:7). What an honor is conferred upon men who are called to be laborers together with God. As John, they are to be messengers to proclaim the coming of Christ! Like him they are to cry, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29). "Lift him up, the risen Saviour," and say to all who hear, Come unto him who "hath loved us, and hath given himself for us" (Eph. 5:2). Lead men to contemplate the self-denial, the compassion, the great love wherewith He has loved them which led Him to pay the purchase money of His own life for our sakes. Let the science of salvation be the burden of every sermon. Let it be the theme of every song of praise. Let it be poured forth in every supplication. Let nothing be brought into the preaching to supplement Jesus Christ, the wisdom and power of God. Let His name, the only name given under heaven whereby we may be saved, be exalted in every discourse...

Ministers of Christ, great is your responsibility. Go forward in Christian experience from light to a greater light, reaching a more exalted standard continually. As the power of darkness works from beneath with intense activity, so let God’s human agents work more vigilantly, cooperating with the divine; giving the trumpet a certain sound. Present the living oracles of God, showing the relation of the law and righteousness, and let no watchman fail to sound an alarm, and take up the warning coming from heaven, that all may be aroused to watch for souls, as they who must give an account. Light from heaven is waiting to be imparted to those who will walk in the light, as the light is given them...

The way has been made clear for all those who choose to hear, repent, and believe. All heaven is waiting the sinner’s cooperation, and the only barrier that stands in his way is one which he alone can remove—his own will. He must submit to the will of God, and through repentance and faith, come unto God for salvation. No one will be forced against his will; Christ draws, but never compels, service from any man. . . . He says, "Come unto me [he gives an invitation to draw the soul] all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest!" (Mat. 11:28). Man is required to surrender self, to submit to be a child of God, to submit to be saved by His grace, and when this is done, divine agencies cooperate with the human agent, and the character is transformed. It is in the surrender of the will that the line of demarcation between a child of God, an heir of heaven, and the rebellious, who refuse the great salvation, is distinctly drawn.

The apostle asks the question, "Who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?" (Gal. 3:1). It is the truth that sanctifies the soul. It is Satan that beclouds the mind, so that eternity is lost out of the reckoning.

Let us follow the example of Christ, and daily consecrate ourselves to His service that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with the Father; then we can bring glory to our Master. Abide in Christ, as the branch abides in the living vine, and you will bear rich clusters of fruit to the glory of God. Jesus rendered perfect obedience to the divine requirements, and offered to the Father an unblemished offering. Those who believe in Christ as their personal Saviour, are "made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). As you value your own salvation, hold fast to your faith in Jesus Christ, for He is all and in all to those who believe. The time is come when Christ is to be preached as never before. Do we rejoice in this? We are constrained to set forth Christ as a complete Saviour, the necessity of every soul.

"And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2:1-5).

God calls upon the ministers of the gospel not to seek to stretch themselves beyond their measure by bringing forward artificial embellishments, striving for the praise and applause of men, being ambitious for a vain show of intellect and eloquence. Let the ministers' ambition be carefully to search the Bible, that they may know as much as possible of God and of Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. The more clearly ministers discern Christ, and catch His spirit, the more forcibly will they preach the simple truth of which Christ is the center. They will then preach the truth as it is in Jesus, and there will be no betraying of the sacred trust that has been committed to them in the work of the gospel.

Ellen G. White—church leader, lecturer, preacher, counselor—has been called the most prolific woman writer of all time, having written some 25 million words for publication.
The pipe organ has been the musical instrument most closely associated with Christian worship since the early Middle Ages. It was occasionally found in the basilicas as early as the seventh century, where its rather strident voice lent support to the singing of the chant.

The many years of development and refinement of the pipe organ rendered it an almost ideal instrument for the support of a large group of voices in the praise of God. This affinity with the human voice makes it possible for the organ to give support and encouragement to congregational singing without drawing undue attention to itself.

There have been times since the introduction of the organ as an instrument of worship, however, when its use has been criticized. In some cases, it was excluded from use in Christian worship. The period of the Reformation in the sixteenth century, for instance, was a time when the instrument was criticized bitterly. One would be mistaken to assume that opposition to the organ was confined to the Calvinists and the Zwinglians, whose puritan zeal had caused them to exclude the organ from their worship services.

Many Roman Catholic bishops of that period were opposed to the organ. As a result of the opposition, its use was severely limited in the Catholic services by the actions of the Council of Trent in the middle of the sixteenth century.

Even the art-loving Martin Luther was less than enthusiastic about the use of the organ in the Lutheran services. He did not allow it to accompany the hymn singing, but confined its use to short introductions to the chorales and, occasionally, brief interludes between the stanzas. Yet it was the Lutherans who, in the period between the lifetimes of Luther and J. S. Bach, brought the organ and its literature for worship to its greatest heights.

Most evangelical Christians today have come to consider the organ as a positive aid to worship. Let us consider ways in which the organ and organist may make a vital contribution to corporate worship.

When we speak of music in Christian worship, the key words must be “Christian worship.” By this I mean to say that all the music of the church must be subservient to greater goals of corporate worship: the praise and adoration of God and the celebration of our new life in Him.

The goals of the organist in Christian worship, then, are not essentially musical goals, but religious ones. This does not mean that the organist should not exhibit the best possible musicianship in his playing. He should, indeed. His contribution goes beyond musicianship, however. It was on this very point that the criticism was based in the sixteenth century. The claim was that organ playing was a distraction in worship, rather than an aid to reaching the spiritual goals of worship.

Today, the organ has at least three basic functions in corporate worship: (1) It accompanies the vocal song of the soloist, choir, and congregation. Effective organ accompaniment can enhance the “sung” message. (2) It assists in our individual and corporate devotion by the solo-playing at certain points in the worship order. This is brought about both by the intrinsic beauty of the music and by certain associations of an order that we might classify as direct and indirect. (3) Finally, a far less important function may be described as “mechanical.” While we tend to disparage this role of music in worship today, there have been times when it was rather prominent. It should be remembered that, in the Temple services of the Old Testament time, music was used to signal the movements of the priests. On one occasion, even the
walls of the city of Jericho were leveled by the playing of musical instruments!

It would be well to elaborate on and perhaps clarify one of these functions. In (2) above, we referred to two kinds of associations, direct and indirect. Direct associations are formed, for instance, when the organ music is based upon a hymn whose text is generally familiar to the congregation. Our thoughts, it may be hoped, are turned toward the message of the hymn. Much of the great organ literature for the church is of this type, ranging from the organ chorales of Pachelbel, Buxtehude, and Bach to the hymn settings by some of the fine composers of our own day.

A second use of direct association—though less frequent—is that of programmatic music for the organ. An excellent and moving example is Herman Berlinski’s “The Burning Bush,” a musical depiction of this Biblical event.

When the playing of the organ leads us to a deeper worship experience purely on the basis of its beauty and orderliness, or by certain stylistic features of the music, we are making indirect associations. This may be likened to the effect that beautiful architecture has upon the worshiper. It is in this kind of music that the organist takes some chances, for a certain selection may have the desired effect upon some of us, but not on others. This is the point at which the organist must be most sensitive to the needs of the congregation.

Among the most rewarding tasks of the organist should be that of unifying the worship service. Worship at its best must speak to us, not only through its individual elements, but as a unified whole. To say it another way, the individual parts of the service speak most clearly when they are related to the whole. This means much more than the superficial use of a “theme” for the service. Who of us have not been bored by the worship service on the theme of Christian love in which every hymn and anthem had the word “love” in the title? The most creative planning of worship calls for a more profound relatedness in which the organist may play an essential role.

In introducing and accompanying congregational hymns, the organist should be careful that (1) the introduction and the singing of the stanzas agree in tempo, volume, and style, (2) that the text is brought to life in his playing rather than obscured, and (3) that a variety of registration and textures are employed in the various stanzas. The accompaniment can be lightened in one stanza by the omission of the pedals. Interest can occasionally be added by the use of freely harmonized accompaniment. While this device should be used with modesty, it has the added benefit of encouraging unisonal singing by the congregation.

The psychological progression of the service must be considered. When short interludes are called for at certain points of the service, they should be in keeping with the emphasis of the moment. It can be especially effective to draw a short interlude from a vocal piece previously used in the service, especially when the vocal piece itself has been particularly fitting. This tends to give a cyclic effect to the worship procedure.

The cyclic principle can be particularly striking by using a postlude based upon the tune of the first hymn of the morning.

When hymn or chorale settings are used, they should be generally related to the emphasis of the service, when possible.

Even the printed titles of the organ music can influence the worshiper. It has always seemed to me that “Largo in D” and “Organ Symphony in Bb” were titles more suited to the concert hall than to worship.

Let’s use the instruments of worship to enhance the spiritual goals of worship. This calls for study, practice, a search for a deeper understanding of the worship of God, and for the most profound kind of commitment to our task as leaders of worship.

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According to Revelation 14, all those who do not “follow the Lamb” will eventually find themselves worshiping the beast.

In sending forth this first in a series of articles exploring the meaning of Revelation 14:9-12, I am well aware of the fact that there are those who feel that much, if not all, of the book of Revelation is so mysteriously symbolic that it cannot be understood. It is true that the book—especially the symbolism of the beast, his image, and his mark—has puzzled Bible students for centuries, and from a human viewpoint it is easy to sympathize with those who feel that Revelation is difficult or impossible to understand, since much of it is written in symbolic language.

Yet the introductory verses announce that the Apocalypse is a revelation of Jesus Christ, not an incomprehensible puzzle. Furthermore, a blessing is promised those who read, hear, and keep those things found in this prophetic book (see chap. 1:1, 3). A similar blessing appears also in its climactic closing chapter: “Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book” (chap. 22:7). In order for a person to be blessed because he reads, hears, and keeps the sayings of the prophecies of “this book,” he obviously must have an understanding of what he reads, hears, and keeps. Surely it is not presumptuous to believe that the prophecies and messages between the opening and closing blessings are understandable under the direction and aid of the Holy Spirit.

Even in connection with the puzzling beast symbolism, chapter 15:2, 3 declares that those who gain “the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name” stand on the sea of glass singing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. It’s a bit difficult to imagine such a group who have gotten victory over the beast and all that goes with it, and who even sing about it, and yet who are totally ignorant of the meaning of it all!

It is also rather curious that John, in his closing testimony, gives a severe warning against anyone who would add to or take away from the prophecies of this book. It almost seems as if, looking down through the future’s halls, he anticipated those who would claim that Revelation is mysterious and incomprehensible. Such an attitude, it seems to me, takes away from the great truths God has in this book for the church in these latter days.

Finally, John closes Revelation with the thought that our Lord, the One who is the central theme of the book, has here given His testimony (see chap. 22:20). Surely His witness and His testimony are not only true and reliable, but comprehensible.

Bible students who agree that Revelation’s prophecies contain important information that the church today can interpret and understand under the guidance of the Holy Spirit are nevertheless awed by chapter 14:9-12 because of the severity of its language. It is perhaps the most fearful denunciation to be found in Scripture, and this fact itself is a good reason to believe that we can understand its meaning. Would a God of infinite love give a warning message of such awful magnitude and such terrifying consequences if His servants are incapable of understanding its meaning? He would never require His people to avoid worship of the beast, nor threaten dire punishment for failure to obey, knowing they could never understand the symbols sufficiently to be obedient. It may be added that the tremendously negative aspects of this passage imply the existence of an equally tremendous positive truth. Counterfeit $20 notes are proof of the existence of the genuine; no one produces counterfeit four-dollar notes! And the more marvelous the right way is, the more awful is the wrong!

It is true the warning is couched in somewhat mysterious terms. But before we dismiss it, we should recall that Noah’s warning of a coming flood undoubtedly was labeled mysterious by the vast majority of his hearers. For a man to preach a world catastrophe in the form of a devastating flood seemed not only mysterious but ridiculous in those stormless, rain-free years! Attitudes toward Noah’s warning probably differed little from current attitudes toward attempts to decipher and preach the meaning of chapter 14:9-12 for today. Could this be one reason why Jesus declared, “As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be” (Matt. 24:37)?

To ignore the warning of chapter 14:9-12 places one in a dangerous position. For whatever the beast power may represent, Revelation is convincingly clear regarding its scope, influence, and final disposition. Let’s notice certain characteristics and descriptions of this power.

We have already mentioned John’s picture of a victorious group, standing on what appears to him as a sea of glass, singing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb (see chap. 15:2, 3). These are identified as those who have gained the victory over the beast, his image, his mark, and the number of his name. The importance of this victory includes even more than ultimate deliverance from sin and death. In chapter 16:2, John explains that the first of the seven last plagues just prior to Christ’s return falls on those who have the mark of the beast and who worship his image. The ultimate destruction of this power is described in chapters 19:20 and 20:10.

Chapter 13 contains the most detailed information about the beast. Those who worship this power ask rhetorical questions that indicate its strong influence and hold on the human race: “Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?” (verse 4). The picture of the beast drawn in this chapter is one of a power whose major characteristic is blasphemy against God, His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven (verse 6). Its power and influence extends over “all kindreds, and tongues, and nations” (verse 7). And “all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (verse 8).

A second beast is introduced in chapter 13 that makes an image to the first beast and causes “that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads” (verses 15, 16). Thus the beast, its image, and mark have worldwide, all-inclusive, all-powerful influence. It is against the force and influence of this powerful system that the Lord of the universe warns the human race in chapter 14:9-12.

In considering this passage, we must take into account its setting. In the first five verses of chapter 14, John sees in...
vision a specific group of people known as the 144,000 who are “redeemed from the earth” (verse 3). Although most commentators feel this number is symbolic, the important feature about this group is not their number but their unique spiritual experience, which includes (1) the “Father’s name written in their foreheads,” constituting the seal of God (verse 1; see also chap. 7:2-4); (2) a “new song” that they will sing “before the throne,” for they have gone through a unique experience (verse 3); (3) a total surrender to God, symbolized as unde-filed virginity and seen in their practice of God’s truth unmixed with error and tradition (verse 4); (4) following the Lamb (Christ) wherever He goes, signifying total dependence, surrender, and obedience to Him (verse 4); (5) guileless mouths, indicating a tremendous depth of Christian experience (verse 5; see also James 3:2); and (6) standing “without fault before the throne of God,” representing their trust in the righteousness of Christ rather than their own merits and works (verse 5).

This faithful, obedient group stands in stark contrast to those who “worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand” (verse 9). Obviously, this scene takes place after our Lord returns at the end of the age, or the end of world history. But verses 6-12 of this same chapter set before us a description of a message that must go to the world prior to our Lord’s return. It is a threefold preparatory message given to the world under the symbolism of three angels. The depth and scope of these messages have great significance, especially in view of developments that are taking place in these latter days. All three messages are inseparably woven together and cannot be fully understood unless studied as a whole. In other words, the third angel’s message containing the warning against worshiping the beast has a direct connection with the first and second angels’ messages.

The first angel’s message (verses 6, 7) is a combined command and announcement of “the everlasting gospel” being preached to “every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.” It is vital to keep in mind that the concept of “the everlasting gospel” being preached throughout all the earth is an introductory preface to all three messages. Actually, it is not merely an introductory remark but the theme, or core, of all three messages. This key point plays an important role in deciphering the symbolism of the mark of the beast. In opposition to the principles of “the everlasting gospel” stands a religious system that sweeps the world with a false gospel deceiving all except those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

The second element in the first angel’s message is the startling announcement that the hour of God’s “judgment is come” (verse 7). Then follows the command to fear God and worship Him as the creator of “heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water” (verse 7). This point is also of utmost significance, as we will see in future articles.

The second angel’s message declares that “Babylon is fallen, . . . that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication” (verse 8). Compare this verse carefully with John’s vision of the great whore in chapter 17, “with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication” (verse 2). Also note that on this whore’s forehead “was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH” (verse 5). Obviously, John was not referring to the ancient city of Babylon, for it lay abandoned in ruins when he wrote these words, and continues to be so until this day. We can conclude only that the terminology is used symbolically to refer to the opponents of God’s people, just as ancient Babylon was the unparalleled enemy of God’s Old Testament people. “The wine of the wrath of her fornication” would represent the intoxicating sway she exercises over all who yield to her charms.

Following the second angel’s message comes the third angel with his awful denunciation against those who “worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand” (chap 14:9).

As we continue this study in future articles, may each of us ask God’s guidance through His Spirit in understanding aright the puzzling, yet supremely important, truths of the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

J. R. S.
WATER OF LIFE

This precious fluid is essential for every form of life, and throughout the Bible, it is the inseparable companion of life and beauty.

Is there life on our sister planet Mars? Of the many questions about our universe for which the United States space program seeks answers, this is probably the one of greatest interest to most people. The final answer is still forthcoming, but the evidence indicates that the existence of life on Mars is doubtful because of an absence of something so common here on earth that we scarcely pay any real attention to it—water.

The preliminary data appeared promising when the Mariner 9 mission was sent aloft in 1971 to photograph the red planet and test for such items as temperature conditions, composition of the atmosphere, and presence of the all-important liquid, water. Results showed evidence of an atmosphere conducive to living processes. Temperatures were within the life-supporting range, and photographs showed what appeared to be massive polar ice caps and dry river channels. But Mariner 9 also returned pictures of immense dust storms, indicating the planet is dry.

In 1976 the Viking spacecraft landed on the Martian surface with sophisticated instruments. Crucial tests, scientists hoped, would confirm the desired presence of life. But results were inconclusive, and the dry, barren landscape revealed in transmitted photographs suggested strongly that Mars is lifeless.

Water and life are close companions. An environment without water is an environment devoid of life. The difference between earth and the arid moon, or the verdant meadow and the barren desert, is largely the effect of water. This commonplace but quite extraordinary liquid forms a major portion of all living organisms and is necessary to numerous vital physiological processes. With the exception of dry seeds, in which the water content may be as low as 2 percent, living things consist of from 40 to 95 percent water. For example, the human body is about two thirds water.

A close look at the water molecule's unique suitability for its various life-supporting roles leaves one with the compelling impression of a Master Intelligence behind its creation. Consider first its chemical structure. Water is a small, simple molecule consisting of one atom of oxygen and two atoms of hydrogen—H₂O. Its relative size can be better appreciated by comparing its molecular weight of 18 with that of one of the smallest proteins, insulin, which has a molecular weight of 5,733. The small size of the water molecule is of great significance since it allows the membranes of living cells to retain the larger molecules that make up their own contents while at the same time permitting water to pass through freely.

The arrangement of the three atoms in the water molecule is such that the molecule, though electrically neutral, is polarized, having both a positive and a negative pole. Its neutral charge allows it to enter into chemical processes within the cell without altering the cell's delicate ionic balance. But its polarity allows the water molecules to interact with one another, forming loose bonds and thus creating a continuous water film. This creates the surface tension that enables a needle to float if carefully placed on the water's surface or a water strider to glide smoothly over the surface of a pond. The cohesive quality of water that results from this bonding of molecules, combined with its adhesive property (which also derives from its polarity) is frequently demonstrated in the sticking together of glass slides or drinking glasses that have been put together wet. This adhesive property makes water a most efficient wetting agent.

But water cohesiveness has far more important consequences. It allows numerous tiny water drops to come together high in the colder atmosphere and form large drops that are heavy enough to fall to the ground before they vaporize. Without such a coalescing of drops there would be no rain, since water would remain in the atmosphere as a vapor. Also, it is the cohesiveness of water that allows a tree to absorb water from the soil in much the same way that water is pulled up a drinking straw. The thin water columns moving up the tiny tubes, or xylem vessels, in the roots and stems are pulled upward by negative pressure (suction) created in the leaves by the evaporation of water from their surfaces. The equivalent of about 20 atmospheres of negative pressure is required to pull water up to the top of a giant redwood tree. Without tremendous cohesive forces the water column would break, flow would cease, and tree growth would be limited to only a few feet.

Several other physical properties of water seem to have been designed for a life-supporting system. One such property is its very high specific heat, which allows water to absorb large amounts of heat without a proportionate rise in temperature. This property is readily seen when water is heated in a kettle. The metal gets hot in a few minutes while the water slowly heats to a boil. Not only does water heat slowly, it also cools very slowly. As a result, living things, which contain a proportionately large amount of water, can maintain a fairly constant body temperature amid fluctuating environmental temperatures. For the same reason ocean-living creatures enjoy a uniform temperature even when atmospheric temperatures range widely.

Water's tremendous solvent property is also an important part of its life-support role. Water is known as the universal solvent because it is capable of dissolving a wide range of substances. The importance of this fact becomes evident when one realizes that all substances that pass in and out of living cells do so only as they are dissolved in water. The food we eat, the substances stored in seeds to feed the growing seedling, the waste products of metabolism—all must go through the bodies of living organisms in solution. Without this amazing liquid, living things could neither absorb food nor eliminate chemical waste and therefore could not survive. This unusually efficient solvent property results from the polarity of the water molecule and makes it an indispensable washing agent.

Another property of water with wide-ranging and important consequences for living things is its ability to exist in different physical states at normal atmospheric temperatures. Liquid water is continually being converted to a vapor until the air becomes saturated. This vapor then condenses back to a liquid state and falls as rain. During this cycle, air currents carry water over long distances from lakes and oceans and distribute it over the earth to make life...
beauty. Possible and to promote growth and water vapor crystalizes into snow, and liquid water solidifies into ice. In this solidified state the water is retained on the surface of the ground, where rising temperatures cause it to slowly melt and supply necessary water for plants and animals. Much of the earth's fresh water is stored in this solid state, especially in the expansive ice sheets and permafrost that characterize the polar regions.

Indeed, the relative stability of the earth's temperature is largely due to the effect of water vapor in the atmosphere, which, by its high specific heat, maintains a blanket of warm vapor around the earth and prevents atmospheric heat from radiating back into space. It is the low water content of the cloudless skies of desert regions that gives these climates their wide daily range of temperature. The difference between day and night temperatures in desert areas may exceed 50 degrees.

One of the most amazing phenomena associated with water is its behavior as it cools to the freezing point. Most materials contract on cooling, reaching their greatest density at freezing. But water behaves differently. Like other liquids, it contracts as it cools to 4°C; then it begins to expand until it freezes at 0°C. This expansion decreases the density of ice compared to water, allowing ice to float. Thus lakes and rivers freeze at the surface instead of upward from the bottom, and the living creatures within them remain alive in relatively warm water even when the surface is frozen solid.

In order to avoid oxygen deficiency for aquatic life forms when the surface of a lake is sealed with ice, the Master Designer provided water with another interesting quality. The ability of water to absorb oxygen increases as the temperature decreases. For example, the solubility of oxygen in water at 0°C is approximately twice that at 30°C. This is the reason why fish are usually much more abundant in cold water than in warm tropical waters.

Water is vital to the existence of every form of life. Its great abundance and its natural ease of circulation make it accessible to living things everywhere. It has no taste to create excessive craving or rejection by others. For the same reason, it has no smell and no color. Imagine taking a bath in red or yellow water, or of drinking water with a sweet, sour, or any other taste!

Strangely enough, the two compounds most similar to water in molecular structure, hydrogen sulphide (H2S) and ammonia (NH3), are both pungent gases with strong acid/base reactions, forbidding in taste and smell, and toxic to living cells at relatively low concentrations.

Since most animals, unlike plants, must take in water voluntarily by drinking, the Master Designer created in animals a mechanism for sensing when the water level of the body needs to be replenished. In the vertebrate brain this "thirst center" is located in the hypothalamus and functions to create a sensation of thirst when the body's water supply runs low. Once the thirst is satiated the inclination to drink ends, preventing oversaturation of the system. Closely associated as water is with life, it is not surprising that the Bible so often uses it as a symbolic ingredient of spiritual growth and rejuvenation. Thus the prophet Isaiah invites all who are spiritually thirsty to drink of the water of life (Isa. 55:1) and Jeremiah chides the Israelites for forsaking God, the "fountain of living waters," and building for themselves broken cisterns that can hold no water (Jer. 2:13). Speaking of His promised gift of the Spirit, God, through Isaiah, said, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty" (Isa. 44:3), and the final outpouring of the Spirit upon the church is depicted as rain—the latter rain (Hosea 6:3).

In His discourse with the Samaritan woman Jesus promised that whoever drinks of the water that He gives shall never thirst, but that the water shall become in him a well, springing up into eternal life (John 4:14). The cleansing of the sinner and his rebirth into the kingdom of God is symbolized by washing with water at baptism. Thus Jesus told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (chap. 3:5).

At the beginning of Creation God's Spirit moved upon the waters and formed a beautiful, habitable earth out of the great deep (Gen. 1:2, 6, 7). In the garden paradise of Eden, man's first home, a river flowed to water the Garden and the surrounding country (chap. 2:10). Thus from the beginning, water and life and beauty have been inseparable companions.

We may take this extraordinary liquid for granted, but the barren view of a lifeless, dry Martian landscape is enough to remind us of God's wise gift of such a commonplace thing as water. Even today, after ages of degeneration, much of earth's original beauty can still be seen in mountain streams and quiet lakes, in roaring rivers and tranquil bays. And many a weary soul still finds his spirit lifted by listening to the quiet babbling of a woodland brook or watching giant waves break against a rocky coast. Even eternity would not be perfect without an abundance of water. In his vision of our future home John saw "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God" (Rev. 22:1).

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Wellness is more than the absence of sickness. A well human being is a dynamic and growing person, developing toward his full potential.

by Ruth M. White

We used to think of oil as something thick and greasy, that the mechanic poured into an obscure hole in our car’s motor or as the stuff Texans pumped out of their back yards to finance another shopping spree at Neiman-Marcus.

No longer.

The words energy crisis now seem to be a natural (although ominous) combination, and oil has come almost to mean survival itself.

With all the concern about the critical shortage of petroleum fuels, another energy crisis potentially as dangerous and pervasive has been largely overlooked. The human energy required to adapt oneself to a world of increasing stress; the vigor, power, and emotional glow associated with sound physical, mental, and spiritual health are alarmingly depleted in far too many of us.

This kind of energy is much more intangible than a barrel of Saudi Arabian crude. Yet it is infinitely more important. The energy that makes us vibrantly alive in every sense of the word cannot be isolated in a test tube or seen under a microscope. No one has developed a fatigue quotient or a vigor profile. We can determine the number of calories burned as fuel to provide energy for a particular activity. We can even, in some instances, measure the amounts of electrical energy used by the heart or the brain, but such calculations say nothing about the vitality one feels who is truly alive.

Life has never been tranquil, but today the individual faces constantly increasing demands—information to be retained and retrieved, complex human interactions to be successfully handled, the pace of life to be weathered. Such books as Future Shock, by Alvin Toffler, and Overload, by Leopold Bellak, have highlighted the considerable nervous expenditure required to cope with today’s rapid changes, disorganization, and multiple stimuli.

Hans Selye, renowned stress physiologist, compares human adaptive energy to an oil deposit. When it is used up, replacement is impossible. Attempts to restore one’s energy level with drugs, coffee, alcohol, or other stimulants actually serve to deplete it even faster. We live in a hurry-up world in which competition, aggression, and anxiety keep us stewing in our own adrenaline, and as a result, we are living longer, but aging faster.

Although there is much that we still do not know about the mystery of human energy, we do understand certain principles. Halbert L. Dunn, author of High Level Wellness, proposes that within man is a system of organized energy—a balance that exists between the functioning of the body and its intake of energy (in the form of food and oxygen) from the environment—that results in a state of wellness. Habits of healthful living and thinking achieve the necessary balance for optimum performance of body, mind, and spirit.

A well human being is a dynamic, growing person who is developing toward his or her full potential. And since it is the spiritual component of man that is the seat of his values and purposes in life, it is this element that is crucial to a state of full, vigorous health.

“The pastor may have unique temptations to a way of living that is hazardous to total wellness.”

All those methods for achieving physical and emotional health that neglect spiritual concerns cannot enable one to really develop peace of mind and conserve vital energy.

When the entrance of sin first made the healing arts necessary, God saw that in order to keep man’s physical, mental, and spiritual wholeness under consideration at one time, healing must be entrusted to one who embodied the attributes of both physician and priest. This is why we find a combination of religious and medical functions outlined in Scripture.

This consideration for the whole person (still discernible in mutated forms among societies in which medicine men serve as both physical and spiritual healers) became perverted through the passing ages as Satan sought to make man more dependent on self and less mindful of God’s principles of total health. At the same time, scientific knowledge erased centuries of ignorance regarding health and how the body functions. Industrialization brought about drastic changes in life styles; infectious diseases were controlled only to be replaced with stress-related maladies. Maladaptive life styles have resulted in dysfunction of the mind, body, and spirit as man’s vital energy is depleted without being renewed.

In such a situation, the pastor has a unique opportunity to restore an attitude to life that centers on mental, physical, and spiritual harmony both with God and with the environment. He may, by example and instruction, point people to personal energy conservation. In a society that values activity and drive, the pressure is intense to achieve and reach the “top.” Even children are pushed into a precocious round of clubs, lessons, sports, and social activities. Pastors need to call attention to the necessity of quiet time to watch the clouds, to think, to swing slowly, to read. They need to emphasize the importance of seeing things in perspective, of relaxing, of openness to God’s direction in the efforts made. Pastors need to proclaim that reaching the top is not necessarily synonymous with inner peace and feelings of self-worth; that success is not primarily the result of effort, but rather the consequence of knowing we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

Unfortunately, pastors, who ought to be in the forefront of those presenting the advantages of an integrated life style, often become swept up themselves in the fragmented existence that is characteristic of modern society. Indeed, the pastor may have unique temptations to a way of living that is hazardous to total wellness.

There is the tendency to take his work so seriously that he feels the well-being of others rests almost exclusively on his...
shoulders. Therefore, he may labor unceasingly to do those things that could be better delegated to others. Pastors are prone to distrust the ability of others to complete a task, make a decision, or solve a problem as well as they can. From such a position it is an easy transition to such serious conditions as workaholism, a Jehovah complex, and burnout.

Pastors need to periodically review their attitudes, searching carefully for symptoms. Do I feel that God has placed a mantle over me that sets me apart from the “common” individual? Do I enjoy being a martyr for the cause? Do I receive a boost to my ego by searching for people to rescue? Has my job become more important to me than my family or friends; do they suffer as a result? Do I find myself volunteering excessively for additional duties? Has life become a treadmill on which I seem to be falling farther and farther behind, never meeting my own expectations? Do I feel like a pawn in the “system”?

What can the pastor do who detects signs of an energy crisis in his own well-being? Here are some conservation measures to put into practice:

**Ten rules for high-level wellness**

1. Reorganize your priorities to allow time daily for quiet meditation, and let God shoulder some of the burdens you have been carrying. Concentrate on the fact that the work is His work; you are responsible only for what He has delegated to you.

2. Exercise daily in the fresh air vigorously enough to increase your pulse rate, get sufficient sleep, and eat nourishing food in moderate amounts. (A high-fiber diet with reduced amounts of sugar and fats is best.) Enjoy something in nature, or work in your yard each day.

3. Develop a thankful and joyful attitude toward life. Sing and give praise to God. Express gratitude to others. Enjoy a good laugh.

4. During times of deep concentration or problem solving take a five-minute vacation to step aside and enjoy a bird’s song, a flower, or children at play. Relax; the Creator has you in His hands.

5. Rest one day a week besides your day of worship.

6. Spend time with someone you love, enjoying his or her fellowship and expressing your caring. A spouse or friend is very important to your well-being.

7. Be master of your time; do not let circumstances control your life.

8. Learn something new. It need not be in a classroom situation. Whatever appeals to you and is a change of pace from your normal routine will be relaxing.

9. Avoid getting your “high” from mood elevators. Alcohol, tranquilizers, coffee, and cigarettes only deplete your energy supply and give a false sense that all is well. Restrict television viewing.

10. Identify the gifts God has given you and those with whom you work. Seek to develop them under the direction of His Spirit rather than pursuing “success” and asking God’s blessing on self-generated efforts.

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**What do you do when a church gets sick?**

*(Continued from page 5.)*

and other poor health habits. For these problems you will need to fortify yourself by example and by a thorough acquaintance with reliable sources. Sometimes people secretly violate health laws and develop a crushing load of guilt. Others resent what they consider to be an intrusion of the church into their private lives. They need to learn the connection between physical and spiritual health.

But perhaps the most frequent source of weakness in a congregation is in the area of human relationships. In any church, there are those who are especially sensitive to either real or fancied slights and who are easily offended. Too many church members drop out of active participation because of hurt feelings. Your task is not to take sides but to heal the wounds. Hurt feelings are often a sign of immaturity. Psalm 119:165 tells us, “Great peace have they that love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.” So when you’re confronted with a case of hurt feelings, what do you do?

First, offer up a silent petition for tact and guidance. Avoid all dogmatic statements, demands, and criticism. You must be gentle, patient, and understanding. Many times a member needs only a little sympathetic understanding to help him see how foolish is his hurt.

Never argue the merits of the case from the other side, as that only adds fuel to the flames. Instead say, “I can see why you feel the way you do. If I were you, I’m sure I would feel the same way.” (Of course, if you were that person you would feel just as he does.) This simple approach nearly always stops arguments, eliminates ill feelings, and creates good will. Having thus soothed jangled nerves you are then able to ask, “But have you tried to understand how the other person thinks about this?” With gentle delicacy, suggest the member ask himself, “If Jesus were in my place, what would He do?” Once it becomes clear that there are other ways to look at the situation, the healing process has begun. Of course, in some cases there will be a legitimate cause for offense, and at any rate you will need to help facilitate a reconciliation of all concerns. However, be careful not to allow yourself to be manipulated by various feuding factions. To carry out your healing role does not mean you must be the mediator of every disagreement that arises. Indeed, your healing efforts will have the goal of educating church members to handle their own conflicts in a Christlike manner.

So if you find yourself the pastor of an ailing congregation, don’t isolate yourself for fear of catching the disease. Mingle with your members, let them see that you desire to help them, and point them to the One who can heal.

Halvard J. Thomsen is pastor of the Janesville Seventh-day Adventist church, Janesville, Wisconsin.
SHEPHERDESS

THE BEAUTY OF FRUSTRATION

A 3-year-old with a dead mouse and muddy feet was only the beginning.
But in the end, she had special pictures in her mind’s album.

Dear Shepherdess: My husband was assigned to two convocations in our Hawaiian Mission in September. I was overjoyed at the opportunity to accompany him.

We were met in Honolulu by two of the mission officers and garlanded with beautiful plumeria leis—just the beginning of the kind hospitality and love shown us during our stay in this tropical paradise. We flew on to the island of Molokai, where we were met by Pastor John Kendall, who also presented us with leis.

I had to blink my eyes to realize we were still in the United States as we roamed around our hotel. It could have been Tahiti or Fiji. The foliage and tropical atmosphere entranced us. The ocean lapped the shore a few feet from the tiki-lighted A-frame cottage where we were housed.

The members of the church on Molokai were hosts to the mission officers and their fellow church members from Lanai, the pineapple island. Some of these dear Christians had never been off Lanai before, so it was a treat for them, as well as a privilege for us to meet them. We were honored again with orchids and leis, along with the mission officers and especially Pastor and Mrs. Shigenobu Arakaki, the newly-elected president of the mission. Indeed, each person visiting from Lanai received a welcome of flowers.

Bountiful meals were served by Kathy Kendall and her helpers from the lanai (veranda) of the two-room church and school building. We were overwhelmed by the many kindnesses shown. The church resounded with good preaching, music, and praise. Across the way stood a tall grove of coconut palm trees, and beyond that the vast ocean. As if in ben-

diction, the Lord unrolled a magnificently gorgeous sunset across the sky.

Michael Nuluai presented a concert of hymns, and a well-beloved “Auntie Hole” (Holly) played her ukelele and sang words that I wish to share with you.

“I’m only human and I’m just a woman;
Help me believe in what I could be and all that I am.
Show me the stairway I have to climb.
Lord, for my sake, teach me to take one day at a time.”

As I read Beverly Owen’s article in the “Caromate Newsletter” I felt we could all benefit from taking “one day at a time.”

The remainder of our trip through the islands was equally as rewarding as our days on Molokai. Being members of the family of God is a true blessing. With love, Kay.
I must have given notice to the world to take arms the moment I threaded the needle. Surely someone had given the order, "Do anything you have to, but keep her from sewing!"

It was a hectic day. There was so much to be done, and I had a hopeless feeling that never would there be enough hours in this busy day to accomplish my tasks. I had discovered in a few short years of being a minister's wife that it could be a full-time job, and since I had given birth to my second child just a few months previously I sometimes felt that I was working both the day and night shifts!

But I decided I was going to take some time this particular day to indulge one of my favorite pastimes—sewing. I had neglected my sewing for too long! I pulled out my portable machine and proceeded to arrange things on the dining room table. Since having the baby, I had found it increasingly difficult to set aside even a small portion of each day to devote to an activity I enjoyed. "But today is going to be different," I told myself. "Today I'm going to do it." That's what I thought! From the beginning things went drastically wrong.

First, 3-year-old Derek bounded through the front door playfully swinging a dead mouse by the tail! With shrieks and yells I convinced him that his new-found friend. As he turned to his new-found friend. As he turned to

Nor does she mumble to herself like her roommate.

Days drag for these patients in their sterile environment, but Hazel tells me the nights are worse. "I can't sleep," she cries. "That old lady groans, the other rings her bell at all hours, and people are screaming in other rooms."

Dear God, it seems a mockery for me to visit at all. How can I really know what it's like to be old and sick and alone? Is it possible for me to encourage Hazel, or will my presence taunt her with memories of the days when she was young, independent, and energetic?

Thinking about old age scares me. Will my parents one day be as helpless as these residents? If I cannot care for them, will circumstances force Dad or Mother to finish life in a stark room? Might I one day stare with bleary eyes as I shuffle along behind a walker?

What shall I say? Asking Hazel about her family will make her remember that no one has come for weeks. If I tell her about church programs, she'll realize they no longer involve her. To talk about the weather seems inappropriate, for Hazel never gets outdoors. Your Word describes the honor and dignity that should accompany aging—rare qualities in the routines here. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Ps. 37:25).

I'll read that to Hazel! If she won't accept it, I'll remind her that one day "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain" (Rev. 21:4). Please use me to brighten Hazel's day as I witness of Your tender concern for the elderly.

Prayers from the parsonage

by Cherry B. Habenicht

Father, I dread entering this dingy nursing home, but when our group sang here, I promised Hazel I'd come again. When we visited then, Hazel griped the whole time. Some people say she's cantankerous and advise me to ignore her complaints. I don't know her well enough to judge. Should my attitude be brusk and cheerful or sympathetic and conciliatory?

She says the aides are mean, handling her roughly and neglecting her requests. To me the middle-aged workers seem listless and bored, but not unkind. She claims she doesn't belong here with "these crazy old people." Perhaps she's right. Hazel isn't tied in her wheelchair like the withered woman down the hall.
When Sennacherib, king of Assyria, sent his troops to Jerusalem demanding its surrender, Hezekiah knew that his kingdom of Judah faced possible extinction. The Assyrians had already conquered Samaria, thus ending the northern Hebrew kingdom, but so far God had preserved Jerusalem and Judah. Hezekiah couldn't know, of course, that through divine deliverance God would grant Judah another century's probation, until the nation was finally destroyed, not by the Assyrians, but by the Babylonians.

The story of this most dramatic confrontation between the kings of Assyria and Judah occupies nearly two chapters in 2 Kings (18:13-19:36) and is repeated in two chapters of Isaiah (36, 37). The narrative's length and its repetition show how crucial the situation was. This pivotal struggle between Judah and Assyria has given rise to considerable scholarly controversy, mainly on the question of whether Sennacherib campaigned against Hezekiah once or twice. Everyone agrees that at least one invasion is described in Sennacherib's annals of his third campaign in 701 B.C. Yet that record corresponds directly only to the first four verses of the Biblical account (2 Kings 18:13-16). A comparison of these verses with the Assyrian annals shows differences and apparent conflicts with the rest of the record in 2 Kings. Thus the question is: Does 2 Kings 18:17-19:36 describe a continuation of the same campaign or a later campaign?

The record in 2 Kings begins with the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, which corresponds to 701 B.C. Sennacherib came to the throne in 705 B.C., at the death of Sargon II on a foreign battlefield, and conducted his third campaign in his fourth regnal year, 701 B.C. Thus the two accounts coincide when the dates are translated into their Julian calendar equivalents. The Bible record follows with the statement "Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them" (2 Kings 18:13, R.S.V.). In his annal entry, Sen- nacherib was more specific: "As to Hezekiah, the Jew, he did not submit to my yoke. I laid siege to 46 of his strong cities, walled forts and to countless small villages in their vicinity, and conquered (them) by means of well-stamped (earth) ramps, and battering-rams brought (thus) near (to the walls) (combined with) the attack by foot soldiers, (using) mines, breaches as well as sapper work."

Consequently Hezekiah decided to submit and pay the tribute demanded. He sent an embassy to negotiate the payment with Sennacherib at Lachish (verse 14). We have extra-Biblical evidence that Sennacherib campaigned against Lachish in the scenes of the so-called Lachish reliefs, which adorned the walls of his palace in Nineveh and depicted his conquest of that city. According to both Biblical and Assyrian accounts Hezekiah paid the tribute required of him—in verse 14, he paid thirty talents of gold and three hundred talents of silver; but in Sennacherib's annals, thirty talents of gold and eight hundred of silver. The difference can be attributed either to scribal error or to Assyrian exaggeration. In addition, the annals list other payments in luxury goods.

The two sources thus far reveal four relatively direct correspondences indicating essentially the same course of events: (1) the date of 701 B.C.; (2) the Assyrian conquest of the cities of Judah; (3) the inclusion of Lachish among those cities; and (4) the amounts of tribute.

Here the entry ends in Sennacherib's annals for his 701 B.C. campaign. The Biblical account continues, although with a narrative that appears different in character and sometimes in conflict with what has been related previously. Instead of being satisfied with the amount of Hezekiah's tribute, as one would infer from the annals and from the Biblical verses considered thus far, Sennacherib, according to verses 31-35, sent his general to Jerusalem with a demand for unconditional surrender, elaborated at great length with threats based on earlier Assyrian conquests!

Furthermore, chapter 19:9 mentions Tirhakah as a king who came from Egypt to aid Hezekiah. But Egyptian chronological data indicate that Tirhakah did not begin to reign until 690 B.C., a decade later than Sennacherib's 701 B.C. invasion. Sennacherib's record does mention (without naming the pharaoh) an engagement with the Egyptians, but it places that engagement before the invasion of Judah instead of during or after it, as chapter 19 appears to do. Those who hold to a single Assyrian invasion of Judah in 701 B.C. explain that Tirhakah, actually only a prince in 701 B.C., could have been called a king in the Bible because he had become king by the time the account was written.

Because of these considerations, and because it is difficult to synchronize the place names mentioned in the two accounts into a coherent and strategically reasonable record of one campaign, some scholars feel that the records of two campaigns have been joined together in the Biblical text. Most Egyptologists and Assyriologists have held to one invasion because the annals record only one; Biblical scholars, who have felt the difficulty in seeing one campaign in the Biblical account, have held that there was a second campaign of which no extra-Biblical records exist (the last eight years of Sennacherib's annals have never been recovered). I am sympathetic with those who favor a second campaign and would suggest that an Assyrian text brought to light in 1974, when two clay-tablet fragments were joined, relates to such an event.

This Assyrian text consists of two pieces from an originally complete text. Both were known separately in the British Museum for some time, but only recently did scholars discover they belonged together to form what Assyriologists call a "join." Sometimes fragments of one original text are found in different museums; making such a "join" requires difficult scholarly detective work.

These two fragments were originally attributed incorrectly to Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II, respectively. The brilliant deductive work of Israeli Assyriologist N. Na'aman demonstrated this join and showed convincingly that the Judahite king referred to in the text must have been Hezekiah, even though his name is damaged in both of its occurrences. Thus, this text was written for Hezekiah's Assyrian foe Sennacherib. It was not a part of Sennacherib's annals; it was a particular type of text, known as a "Letter to God." Assyrian kings had their scribes write on occasion rather self-laudatory reports from the king to his god, couched in a more elaborate literary style than the dry and monoto-
Protected by archers, Sennacherib's army attacks Lachish.

Defenders of Lachish fight from a tower as inhabitants flee.

Reconstructed fragments of Sennacherib's "Letter to God."

nous phrases of the annals. It was from such a letter that the pieces in question came.

When joined together, these two fragments provide 16 lines of text, which can be divided into two sections. The first section deals with the conquest of Azekah in Judah, and the second with the conquest of a royal city of the Philistines that Hezekiah had previously annexed to his kingdom. The second section furnishes more direct evidence of being a record of a second campaign of Sennacherib in Palestine.

10) the city of Azekah I besieged, I captured, I carried off its spoil, I burned with fire . . . .
11) (name broken away) a royal (city) of the Philistines, which (Hezek)iah had captured and strengthened for himself . . .
12) . . . . . . like a tree (standing out on a ridge?) . . . .
13) surrounded with great towers and exceedingly difficult . . . .
14) palace like a mountain was barred in front of them and high . . . . it was dark and the sun never shown on it, its waters were situated in darkness and its overflow . . . .
15) its mouth was cut with axes and a moat was dug around it . . .
16) . . . (warriors) skillful in battle he caused to enter into it, their weapons he bound . . . .
17) I caused the warriors of Amurru, all of them, to carry earth . . .
18) against them. In the seventh time his . . . the great like a pot . . .
19) (cattle and she) ep I carried out from its midst . . . .
20) . . . (warriors) skillful in battle he caused to enter into it, their weapons he bound . . . .

We need examine only a few points in this dramatic description of Sennacherib's conquest of the city. The reference to a dark and sunless place appears to be a description of a tunnel that brought water within the city's fortifications (comparable to Hezekiah's famous water tunnel at Jerusalem). "Amurru" refers to the "Westlands" from the point of view of Assyria; that is, not only Assyrian soldiers were brought to fight against this city, but also those from other western kingdoms ruled by Sennacherib.

Though the name of this "royal city of the Philistines" is lost because of a break in the tablet, it must have been one of the five royal cities of the Philistines. Three of these, Gaza, Ashdod, and Ashkelon—all on or near the coast—can be eliminated as being too far from Azekah. None could have been the next city besieged by Sennacherib's troops according to any logical geographical order for this campaign. (Azekah has been identified with Tell Zakariyeh, 10 miles north of Lachish and 15 miles west of Bethlehem.) The choice, then, must lie between the other two royal cities farther inland—Gath and Ekron. Their sites are disputed, but they are the only serious candidates for this identification.

If Sennacherib invaded Judah only once, this text describes the siege of either Ekron or Gath in 701 B.C. His annals for that campaign tell us that he conquered Phoenicia first and Philistia second, then turned his attention to Judah, after being momentarily distracted by the Egyptian attack. His major problem in Philistia was Ekron. The Ekronites had taken their pro-Assyrian king and handed him over to Hezekiah for safekeeping, according to the annals: "The officials, the patricians and the (common) people of Ekron—who had thrown Padi, their king, into fetters (because he was) loyal to (his) solemn oath (sworn) by the god Ashur, and had handed him over to Hezekiah, the Jew (and) he held him in prison, unlawfully, as if he were an enemy."

While Sennacherib was dealing with Ekron, the Egyptians arrived, hoping to bring relief to Philistia. The Assyrians turned them back, then completed the task of subduing Ekron. "I assaulted Ekron and killed the officials and patriots who had committed the crime and hung their bodies on poles surrounding the city. The (common) citizens who were guilty of minor crimes, I considered prisoners of war. The rest of them, those who were not accused of crimes and misbehavior, I released. I made Padi, their king, come from Jerusalem and set him as their lord on the throne, imposing upon him the tribute (due) to me (as) overlord."

From this it is evident that Hezekiah was not in possession of Ekron at the time of Sennacherib's 701 B.C. campaign. He had not captured the city; the Ekronites themselves had taken control of it and sent Padi to Hezekiah. Thus if Ekron is the city mentioned in Sennach-
erib’s “Letter to God,” which also refers to the conquest of Azekah, that text could not refer to 701 B.C.

Could Ekron have been the city besieged in a later Assyrian campaign? Yes. Sennacherib did not destroy it in 701 B.C.; he left it with Padi as king. Further, Ekron appears in Assyrian records not only before Sennacherib’s period (in the time of Sargon II) but also later, in the reigns of Sennacherib’s son Esarhaddon and his grandson Ashurbanipal, both of whom mention its king Ikasu (Achish).

On the other hand, Gath, the only other possibility for the city in question, was probably no longer in existence during Sennacherib’s day; the last clear reference to it is the record of its destruction by Uzziah of Judah, who “broke down the wall of Gath” (2 Chron. 26:6, R.S.V.), at least fifty years before Sennacherib’s 701 B.C. campaign. Gath is mentioned in Amos 6:2 as having been destroyed by the prophet’s time. Did Gath ever recover from this blow? It seems unlikely, since the Assyrian records mentioned above in connection with Ekron commonly mention three of the other royal cities of Philistia (Gaza, Ashdod, and Ashkelon) but never Gath. Thus it appears that Gath could not have been besieged by Sennacherib.

The conclusion is that Ekron was the royal Philistine city named (but now lost) in Sennacherib’s “Letter to God.” Since the city, according to that text, had been annexed and fortified by Hezekiah, and his besieged by Sennacherib, and since these circumstances do not fit the status of Ekron in the 701 B.C. annals, the events of the “Letter to God,” including Sennacherib’s siege of that city, should be attributed to a later campaign of that king against Hezekiah.

Another interesting feature of this “Letter to God” from Sennacherib also suggests it belongs to a second Palestinian campaign. The god to whom Sennacherib addressed his letter was Anshar. Anshar was not Ashur, the national god of Assyria, but an old Babylonian god. References to this Babylonian god do not appear in Sennacherib’s inscriptions until 689 B.C., after he conquered Babylon and disposed of the threat that city had posed to his rule of the Assyrian empire. Sennacherib’s inclusion of Anshar among the gods of his inscriptions after 689 B.C. was a theological way of expressing the political realities that had come to pass.

By invoking the name of this Babylonian god in connection with this Palestinian campaign, Sennacherib indicated his belief that the gods of Babylon were on his side and that they would defeat his enemies, just as they had handed their city over to him. Thus the fact that Sennacherib invokes the name of the god Anshar instead of Ashur at the beginning of this text indicates a time after the fall of Babylon in 689 B.C. and requires a second campaign to Palestine conducted late in his reign. It cannot belong to his first Palestinian campaign in 701 B.C.

From the conclusion that Ekron was the royal city of Philistia mentioned in the “Letter to God,” its history through this period can be reconstructed briefly. The Ekonites rebelled and disposed of their pro-Assyrian king Padi; Sennacherib in 701 B.C. punished them and put Padi back on the throne as a vassal king, then in this same campaign subjugated Judah and divided pieces of Judahite territory among the kings who reigned in the Philistine cities of Ekron, Ashdod, and Gaza (no mention of Gath), according to the entry in the annals for the campaign of 701 B.C. Later, when Sennacherib was absent from the west—especially 694-689 B.C., when he occupied Babylon—the kings in the west had an opportunity to rebel. Hezekiah appears to have done so, and his interest would naturally have centered in reclaiming his territory lost to Philistine cities. The one nearest to Judah that had received some Judahite territory was Ekron; thus, when Sennacherib returned on his second Palestinian campaign, he found Ekron in the hands of Hezekiah and had to reconquer it. That return invasion most likely occurred after his five-year campaign against Babylon, ending in 689 B.C. (where his annals that we possess end) and before 686 B.C., Hezekiah’s death year, according to the chronological data in the Bible. The year 688 B.C., commonly suggested, seems reasonable.

These factors fit the reference to Tirhakah (2 Kings 19:9) as king of Egypt and ally of Hezekiah, since he became pharaoh in 690 B.C. Likewise, the title “king of Ethiopia” (he was of the Nubian Twenty-fifth Dynasty) is valid.

The line dividing 2 Kings 18 into two accounts of separate invasions by Sennacherib must be drawn, then, between verses 16 and 17. In that case the Assyrian king must have left off the first siege of Lachish during his first campaign, 701 B.C., when Hezekiah paid tribute (chap. 18:14), and besieged it again during his second campaign, in 688 B.C., at which time the city was conquered. While his general was away at Jerusalem, Sennacherib moved on from Lachish to besiege Libnah (chap. 19:8). Thus the conquest of Lachish, as depicted in the reliefs on his palace walls, probably served as a consolation prize for his failure to conquer Jerusalem.

Dating the conquest of Lachish to Sennacherib’s second Palestinian campaign explains its remarkable absence from the annals entry for his 701 B.C. campaign, a strange omission otherwise, since he thought so much of that victory he had it depicted on the walls of his palace.

Sennacherib’s recently pieced-together “Letter to God” provides the best indication, thus far, that he was indeed on a second campaign in Palestine when he took Ekron away from Hezekiah and threatened Jerusalem.

Bibliography


For extracts from the annals of Sargon II, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, and Ashurbanipal, including especially the record of Sennacherib’s third campaign in 701 B.C., see Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament, J. B. Pritchard, ed. (Princeton University, 1955).


Watch out!

Thank you for a very stimulating magazine. Sakae Kubo, in his article “Love That Will Not Let Me Go” (September, 1979), had better watch out or he will preach himself into that strange, wonderfull, and awesome doctrine of the eternal security of the believer!

Baptist minister
Arkansas

Uses articles

I plan to use the articles on Biblical archeology and science in religion in my class on apologetics. The article by Dr. Kubo (September, 1979) was excellent, as is so much of his work on the Bible versions.

Church of Christ minister
California

Don’t miss the article by Dr. Sakae Kubo, “Why Then the Law?” appearing on page 12 of this issue.—Editors.

Common interests

I agree with you that the time has come when all of us in the religious community can gain a great deal by sharing with one another and keeping all lines of communication open while respecting and acknowledging our differences. I believe our common interests are much greater, and I welcome the hand we see extended.

United Methodist minister
Michigan

Proud day

I was pleased to see the high marks given Clinton Morrison’s scholarly efforts in the Analytical Concordance to the R.S.V. New Testament (November, 1979). What I missed, however, was mention of the fact that this has been a work sustained by the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. It was a proud day last May when the initial volumes were presented to the N.C.C.C.-U.S.A. Governing Board by Dr. Morrison. Were it not for the National Council, this “invaluable volume” would not now be available for Biblical scholars to use.

James Rein
Albany, New York

Statements not made

The September, 1979, MINISTRY included an article on the New King James Bible. The article was both fair and friendly, but through absolutely no fault of your own, it has some quotations attributed to me that I never said. This is the fault of an advertising agency that our publisher used and later dropped. While I am very pleased with the New King James New Testament and pray that it will have an extremely wide outreach, the rather inflated and pompous remarks attributed to me by the agency, and quoted in your article, are statements that I would never make. In the first place, it is not my place as editor to praise our work lavishly; and in the second place, the Scriptures forbid such self-glorying remarks. I would appreciate your letting your readers know that we are not quite as conceited as they might have thought!

Arthur L. Farstad
Executive Editor
New King James Bible
Dallas, Texas

Another view

As a member of the United Church of Canada for more than thirty years, and through those years a member of seven different congregations, I have become acutely aware of the clashes that frequently arise between minister and congregation. I wonder how many churches across Canada and the United States were subjected to ministerial digs through reference to John Drescher’s article, “Why They Fired the Pastor” (September, 1979)? It was reprinted in our church newsletter.

I am not totally convinced that congregations are unfeeling, demanding, selfish entities that exploit their ministers and expect superhuman, celestial behavior from them. This is the picture often portrayed by clergy who are frustrated by the expectations of the congregation, that prevent them from doing their own thing. The minister is in a church to be a co-worker for the glorification of God, not for ministerial glorification. In defense of the often-maligned congregation, I submit the following poem:

I’m tired of the wrist slaps and arrows that sting,
Of the guilt-shroud that’s tossed with contemptuous zing,
In an effort to bring us, repentant and bowed
On our knees, to his office, our heads duly bowed.

The pastor was fired for being like us?
Conclusion is wrong and completely unjust.
The pastor was fired for appearing to rob
The people of services that were part of his job.
And part of that job was to give more than take,
To soothe out the anger, frustrations, and make
The anguish more bearable, but not with the line
“I guess that’s your problem; I know it’s not mine.”

And part of that job was to serve on committee,
Where his favorite words were “Just leave it to me.”
The intentions were good, and the members as one
Left the job to the expert, who left it undone.
And part of that job was to help those who mourn,
The parents whose babe died having barely been born.
For some it takes longer for healing to grow,
But he said, “Your time’s up; now get on with the show.”

And part of the job was to visit the old,
The sick, and the troubled—without being told.
“I’m busy,” he said, “I’ve too much to do.
Have them come to the office or sit in a pew.”

So, why must it be it’s the flock that is wrong?
Do pastors ignore what we’ve known all along—
That a job is important to do well, without fuss,
And he’ll never be fired for being like us?

It’s the shirking of duty, the indifferent nod—
The pastor was fired for not doing his job!

Mrs. Donna Jack
United Church of Canada member

Since the article “Why They Fired the Pastor” appeared last September, it has been one of the most popular pieces MINISTRY has printed, with scores of pastors writing for permission to reproduce it. We thought our readers (who apparently were quite favorably impressed with the article) would like to see the reaction of a church member who was not. We suspect that church members may have some things to learn from the original article and that pastors may have some things to learn from Mrs. Jack’s poem.—The Editors.
Prelude to the banquet

A charismatic priest from Little Falls, New York, John Bertolucci, says he regrets bitterly that all Christians "at present cannot practice inter-Communion. I long for that day," he says, "when we can all banquet at the same Lord's table."

While waiting, Father Bertolucci has a suggestion: "Perhaps we could wash each other's feet. I would like to propose liturgical foot-washing ceremonies in which we all share."

His proposal makes a lot of sense. To celebrate inter-communion while still representing the divided body of Christ makes mockery of the ceremony itself. But foot washing seems a good place to start. Out of the contemplation of servanthood might well come the humility that the ordinance encourages. It was arrogance and pride that brought apostasy and division into the church; the recovery of humility would seem a basic step toward that oneness of love that must precede true unity.

Hans Kueng and church rights

Catholic Theologian Hans Kueng, in reply to a Vatican order silencing him because of his opposition to the "truth" of the Catholic faith, says, "I am deeply ashamed of my church."

According to Kueng, the church "has now begun to defend human rights" while it "defames and discredits its own theologians."

The Swiss-born professor of theology at the University of Tuebingen is the author of several books and scholarly papers that question and often reinterpret traditional Roman Catholic doctrine. He spoke in response to a Vatican declaration that denied him the right to teach as a Catholic theologian.

Said Kueng, "I plan to continue as a Catholic theologian, in a Catholic church, to be an advocate for numerous Catholics. And I know that I have behind me countless theologians, pastors, religion teachers, and lay people in our church."

One thing Kueng doesn't have behind him, though, is the Pope, who personally approved the declaration against the theologian. And the Pope, according to an 1870 declaration, is "infallible" when speaking ex cathedra—that is, in an official capacity on faith and morals. It is this doctrine of infallibility, among other things, that Kueng has attacked.

Certainly Kueng could call to his support more than adequate Biblical testimony concerning the nature of any human claim to infallibility—on or off the "chair." But it should not be ignored that Kueng promotes other views that many Protestants as well as Catholics would label heretical, including a humanistic reinterpretation of Christ's claims to divinity. And his view on Biblical inerrancy would hardly endear him to evangelical churchmen.

But a church, too, has its rights, and one is to ask its members to operate within a context of approved doctrine. This, Kueng is not doing. A church has another right—to discipline and, ultimately, to disfellowship (excommunicate) members who refuse to do so. Given the traditionalist views of Pope John Paul II, Kueng is well on his way toward this most drastic Roman Catholic disciplinary action.

Somehow, rather than expressing shame of his church, it would seem the honorable thing for Mr. Kueng to do would be to (1) cease his attacks on Roman Catholic doctrine or (2) leave the church voluntarily and unite with another religious body within which his teachings could be accommodated.

Of Hare Krishnas and truth squads

Next time you're accosted by a Hare Krishna solicitor in Denver's Stapleton International Airport, don't rush to make a contribution. Free entertainment may be on the way!

According to a suit filed by a Denver Hare Krishna temple, a Pentecostal "truth squad" has been harassing and discrediting temple devotees who solicit donations at the airport.

The suit claims that members of the Lovingway United Pentecostal church "dog" the Krishnas by distributing pamphlets that call them "poor brain-washed dupes," and that label the solicitation "a lucrative con game." The suit asks that church members be ordered to keep at least ten feet from Hare Krishna solicitors at the airport.

Says Church Pastor Maurice Gordon, "We feel the public has a right to the knowledge the Bible teaches about behavioral traits of these groups." The Hare Krishna sect is a cult, he said, that worships a "heathen god."

Mr. Gordon acknowledged that one church member may have overdone it when he "touched" a Hare Krishna devotee at the airport and began to speak in tongues. "We've agreed not to do that anymore," he said. "We'll behave ourselves."

As one who has been annoyed by Hare Krishna solicitors in a multitude of airports, I like the idea of a truth squad. But I'm quite sure I wouldn't like to be "touched" (likely a euphemism for "grabbed") by someone spouting gibberish in my ear.

The apostle Paul exhorted the Christians in Corinth to speak intelligibly rather than to use an unknown tongue where it could not be interpreted. "If I know not the meaning of the voice," he said, "I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me" (1 Cor. 14:11).

"For," he explained, "if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" (verse 8).

Given the probability of a "battle" between the contending forces at Stapleton International Airport, Paul's counsel should not be dismissed lightly.

There is another thing that troubles me—the "behavioral traits" of the "truth squad." Is the Denver United Pentecostal church really living up to its name—Lovingway?

Good news

Here's a case where what seems to be bad news may instead be good—after a fashion. A new census report reveals that the number of unmarried couples living together in the United States has more than doubled since 1970.

The report shows 1.1 million U.S. households contain "two unrelated adults of opposite sexes"—the report's quaint way of defining cohabitation. Unmarried couples under age 25 increased more than eightfold during 1970-1978. Unmarried households headed by persons under age 45 increased sixfold. There was no perceptible change in the over-45 age group.

Also since 1970 there has been a 40 percent increase in single-person households. Twenty percent of all Americans now live alone.

The good news? With the number of unmarried couples living together climbing rapidly, the number of divorces—you need marriages for that—seems certain to decline. One wonders, however, whether the good news is worth the price.
Killing the prayer meeting

In the winter, 1979-1980, issue of The Preacher's Magazine, Pastor Harry A. Rich, of the Metropolitan Church of the Nazarene in Kansas City, lists ten sure-fire ways to kill the midweek prayer meeting:

1. Never change the format.
2. Never bother to advertise or promote what you will be doing on Wednesday night.
3. Do not waste time preparing for the service.
4. Do not use any visual helps.
5. Never plan any special music.
6. Make sure you do not let anyone participate in the service or take part in the discussions.
7. Never involve the young people in the meeting.
8. Make it a prayer meeting in name only.
9. Never ask for suggestions on how to improve the prayer meeting.
10. Never allow testimonies.

Rip-off

In a culture apparently gone crazy over lawsuits, more and more clergy are purchasing liability insurance to protect themselves against being sued for malpractice. Unnecessarily so, warns a current article in Liberty magazine, which has researched industry claims of suits against malpracticing ministers and has yet to find a valid example.

Several national publications, as well as religious magazines and insurance industry journals, have covered the clergy’s supposed need to purchase protection against litigious parishioners. But the case histories cited have failed to bear close scrutiny. One attorney, named as handling a case in which a minister was being sued, denied that professional counselor’s liability insurance would have protected the minister. He called such insurance “the biggest hype and consumer rip-off that I have ever heard about. If our brothers and sisters of the cloth buy it, they’ve been sold a bill of goods.”

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Celebrating the new arrival

In one California church new mothers receive a rosebud to commemorate the happy event. Information regarding the new arrival appears in the church’s morning bulletin (if there is time) and during the service a single rosebud occupies a conspicuous place at the front of the church. Following the service, the pastor delivers the flower to the new mother at the hospital or in her home.

Your turn

Have you thought of a good, new idea that makes your ministry more effective? Have you run across a new product, a shortcut, a better way of doing something? Would your fellow pastors be interested in it? Give us the chance to print it in “Shop Talk” and make yourself $10! For each idea or helpful hint printed in this column, Ministry will pay $10 to the person who first sends us the item. Keep your contribution short (no more than 250 words) and mail to Shop Talk Editor, MINISTRY, 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012. In the event of duplicate items being submitted, the one bearing the earliest postmark will be given precedence.
LIVING IN THE SHADOW OF THE SECOND COMING: AMERICAN PREMILLENNIALISM 1875-1925

Weber is on the faculty of the Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary in Denver, Colorado, but his book began as a doctoral dissertation in the Divinity School at the University of Chicago. The author is true to the best of the conservative and liberal traditions of those respective institutions—respect and sympathy for prophetic interpreters together with good historical scholarship.

Weber's argument is that dispensationalism or, as he calls it, "the new premillennialism," greatly affected the actions and attitudes of its adherents. "Belief in the imminence of Christ's return gave people's personal life an expectancy and urgency even as it aided evangelists in the battle for souls. Weber's work is marred, however, by his attempt to create an unwarranted distinction between his "new premillennialists," and the earlier premillennialists, who, like William Miller, belonged to the historical school of prophetic interpretation. This is not a major burden of his book, but it is worthy of consideration.

Seventh-day Adventists, of course, are "historicism" premillennialists, believing apocalyptic prophecies are fulfilled within history and thus finding themselves at a certain point along the stream of fulfilling prophecy. Dispensationalists, however, belong to the futurist school of prophetic interpretation, which teaches that no "last day" prophecy will be fulfilled until just before Christ's return. Because dispensationalists believe they are living in a great parenthesis between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks of Daniel's prophecy, they are relieved, according to Weber, of the "dangerous and often embarrassing task of matching Biblical predictions with current events, and the task of setting dates for the Second Coming."

As a matter of fact, since Seventh-day Adventists declared 1844 to be the last identifiable prophetic date before the eschaton, they have been just as free of date setting as any dispensationalist.

On the other hand, by Weber's own evidence, the dispensationalist saw the "signs of the times" in actual historical events around them. "Time after time," Weber says, "their views seemed to be verified in the morning newspapers." And again, "Dispensationalists...believed they could accurately assign current developments to their proper place in God's prophetic program."

Thus it is the dispensationalist Hal Lindsey who toys with date setting and who recently told a Toronto audience something an Adventist preacher would never risk: "I am looking on the faces of some who will never die." (See Stanley Walters, "Hal Lindsey: Recalculating the Second Coming," The Christian Century, September 12, 1979, vol. 96, p. 840.)

Weber's book is a lucid and useful explanation of dispensationalist life and thought. However, on the issues discussed in this book the difference between dispensationalism and historicism is not as great as he imagines.

Ron Graybill

IN ABSOLUTE CONFIDENCE

William Johnsson makes a strong case for the Epistle to the Hebrews being one of the most encouraging books of Scripture. In a lucid, scholarly treatment of the book, he sets forth five bases for confidence as expounded by the apostle—Christ as son of God; Christ as son of man; Christ as high priest; Christ as sacrifice; and Christ as king.

Special note is taken of the alteration within Hebrews between theology and exhortation. In fact, says Johnsson, the book may best be seen as a sermon, so carefully and progressively has it been put together.

As associate dean of Andrews University Theological Seminary, Johnsson writes from an Adventist perspective but in a way that provides exegetical insights for the reader of whatever persuasion.

Orley Berg

QUEST: AN EXPLORATION OF SOME PROBLEMS IN SCIENCE AND RELIGION

Science and religion have done most to shape our lives in the modern West. At first it might seem there is little relationship between them and none that could ever be close. Indeed, the usual attitude is that science deals with objective facts and demonstrable truth while religion concerns itself with rather mystical suppositions and subjective matters. In Quest, Vick, who is head of the department of religious studies at Forest Fields College, Nottingham, England, demonstrates with a logic and style somewhat reminiscent of C. S. Lewis that both science and religion are ways of looking at the same questions.

According to Vick, the book is based on the conviction that religious questions can be discussed in a nonpartisan manner. But he does not claim a neutral impartiality. Rather, he says, "To be able to discuss religion impartially means that you don't have to be worried all the time that you will end up believing, or that you have not made the other person believe yet! You don't have to be committed to discuss the issues. Just interested, even a little."

For those who are interested, even a little, Quest can afford some pleasurable and profitable hours. Russell Holt