

# THE WORLD AHEAD

A view of today...A vision for tomorrow!

March-April 1998

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a glass of whiskey with ice cubes. The hand is positioned at the top of the frame, with fingers gripping the rim of the glass. The glass is filled with a golden liquid and several ice cubes. The background is dark, and the lighting highlights the texture of the hand and the clarity of the glass.

*The*

*Dark Hole*

*of Alcoholism*

# THE WORLD AHEAD®

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Issue 2

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## The Dark Hole of Alcoholism

For millions who feel depressed and helpless before life's problems, a bottle promises deliverance—but instead brings far worse grief and misery. Yet true deliverance IS within reach.

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## EDITORIAL

## Will You "Walk in the Light"?

We constantly read today that people are searching for genuine "values" or "standards of conduct." And as we've repeatedly pointed out in these pages, the *basic* standards to which Jesus constantly referred are the Ten Commandments. These foundational points of the magnificent spiritual law of God tell us *how* to love our Creator and *how* to love our fellow man. And this law is even more meaningful when we see how it is magnified in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7) and throughout the entire New Testament.

The "key" to the *real* standards expected of us by the Jesus Christ of your Bible is best expressed in Galatians 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (KJV). For He truly was the "Light of the world" (John 8:12)—the *perfect example* of how all human beings ought to conduct themselves. So when we consider almost *any* aspect of life—family, work, entertainment, etc.—we need to ask ourselves this question: How can the standards or values taught by Jesus Christ be applied to this area of life? And since Christ is the "Word" incarnate (1:1-3, 14)—what does the *entire Bible* have to say about it?

I am the father of six children—two girls and four boys. Since two of the boys are still teenagers, I am forcibly kept in touch with the "reality" of modern life by these young men and their friends. And even though I love young people and have deeply enjoyed working with thousands of them—including teaching college classes for about 35 years—I am nonetheless *appalled* at the hedonism, the debauchery and the sheer BRUTALITY to which this current generation has been exposed!

And I sense that our totally decadent adult society is slowly but surely losing any sense whatsoever of the *true* values and standards that some of us may have been taught in years past. How *dare* we sit back comfortably when we read that nearly 35 MILLION unborn babies have been slaughtered over the past quarter century of *our* lives! Remember, this "legalized murder" that we call abortion has occurred on *our watch!*

How *dare* we call ourselves a Christian nation when our officials knowingly sanction this kind of mass murder! When they give legal



Roderick C. Meredith  
Editor in Chief

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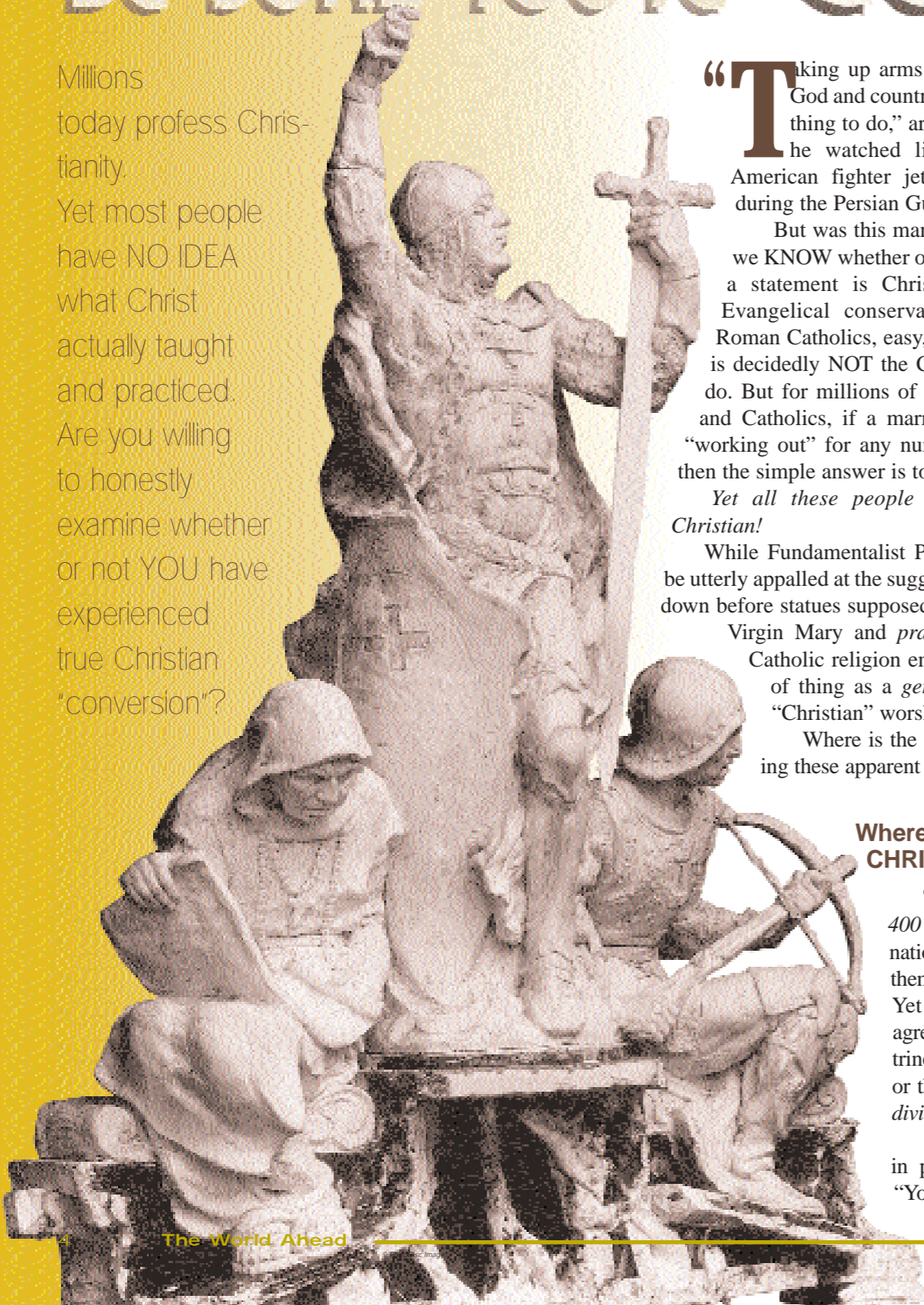
All scriptural references are from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.

*The World Ahead* (USPS 012-784) (ISSN 1091-515X) is published bimonthly by the Global Church of God, 16935 W. Bernardo Dr., San Diego, CA, U.S.A.  
Copyright © 1998 Global Church of God®. Printed in the U.S.A. All rights reserved.  
Periodicals postage paid at San Diego, CA, and at additional mailing offices.  
Postmaster: Send address changes to *The World Ahead*, P.O. Box 501111, San Diego, CA 92150-1111.

# How Can You Be SURE You're "Converted"?

by Roderick C. Meredith

Millions today profess Christianity. Yet most people have NO IDEA what Christ actually taught and practiced. Are you willing to honestly examine whether or not YOU have experienced true Christian "conversion"?



**T**aking up arms and fighting for God and country is the Christian thing to do," argued one man as he watched live coverage of American fighter jets bombing Iraq during the Persian Gulf War.

But was this man right? How can we KNOW whether or not an action or a statement is Christian? To many Evangelical conservatives and strict Roman Catholics, easy, no-fault divorce is decidedly NOT the Christian thing to do. But for millions of other Protestants and Catholics, if a marriage isn't really "working out" for any number of reasons, then the simple answer is to part company.

*Yet all these people call themselves Christian!*

While Fundamentalist Protestants would be utterly appalled at the suggestion of bowing down before statues supposed to represent the Virgin Mary and *praying to her*, the Catholic religion embraces this type of thing as a *genuine part* of its "Christian" worship.

Where is the "key" to explaining these apparent contradictions?

## Where Does CHRIST Come In?

Today, *more than 400* different denominations and sects call themselves Christian. Yet they ALL disagree on certain doctrines and practices or they *would not be divided!*

Let's take a case in point. Jesus said, "You have heard that

it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matt. 5:43-45). But DO all the professing Christians in our Western culture follow Christ by LOVING their enemies and *turning the other cheek* as He commanded? (v. 39).

*Of course not!* That would not be "practical," we are told.

The truth is that many of the greatest and bloodiest wars in human history have been waged in Europe—the very *heart* of "Christian" civilization. German believers slaughtered French believers, French believers butchered English believers, and so on—*ad infinitum*.

In fact, the professing Christian Church *directly instigated* a series of "holy wars" during the Middle Ages called the Crusades. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* describes the supposed BLESSING put on the murderous and bloodthirsty activities of the Crusaders: "The knight who joined the Crusades might thus indulge the bellicose side of his genius—under the aegis and at the bidding of the Church; and in so doing he would also attain what the spiritual side of his nature ardently sought—a perfect salvation and remission of sins. He might butcher all day, then at nightfall kneel, sobbing for very joy, at the altar of the Sepulcher—for was he

not red from the winepress of the Lord?" ("Crusades," 11th ed., vol. 7). Were THESE men *true followers* of the humble carpenter of Nazareth who said, "Love your enemies"?

Yet remember that they assumed the NAME of Christ—that's why they called themselves *Christian*. And modern histories, encyclopedias and other reference works all go along with this assumption. Similarly, it seems that nearly all Western religions, philosophies and sects must persist in applying the *name* of Christ to their ideas, teachings and practices—even today.

## Using Christ's NAME Proves Nothing!

Since the death and resurrection of the Son of God, a great *deception* has resulted in pasting His NAME on every type of pagan, heathen, perverted philosophy of man that has come along!

Shocking as it may sound, the fact that many churches, doctrines, ideas and practices of men are called Christian proves absolutely NOTHING!

Did *Christ* start these ideas and institutions? Do they actually follow *His* teachings and example?

*How can you know?*

Almighty God inspired the Apostle John to describe the evil spirit who is really "running the show" here on planet Earth: "that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the WHOLE WORLD" (Rev. 12:9). It is later described how Satan will soon be restrained "that he should *deceive the nations* no more" (20:1-3).

These verses show that most people and nations—even in "Christendom"—have NOT followed Christ's teachings and example. Rather, they have been misled and DECEIVED by Satan the Devil!

This, quite frankly, is the "key"

that explains why there are so many obvious contradictions in our supposedly Christian society. It shows *why* this world is so mixed up and CONFUSED about what the word "Christian" really means. It shows that our civilization has NOT been following Christ, but has been DECEIVED into going *many different ways* under Satan's confusing influence!

Strangely, yet at least honestly, some of this world's noted religious leaders and scholars have acknowledged that professing Christianity has not even seriously *attempted* to follow the literal *teachings* and *example* of Jesus Christ—its supposed Founder!

Such a candid admission was made by a philosophy professor at Haverford College in Pennsylvania. In his acclaimed work, *The Church's Debt to Heretics*, Dr. Rufus M. Jones acknowledges, "If by any chance Christ Himself had been taken by His later followers as the model and pattern of the new way, and a serious attempt had been made to set up His life and teaching as the standard and norm for the Church, Christianity would have been something VASTLY DIFFERENT from what it became. Then 'heresy' would have been, as it is not now, deviation from His way, His teaching, His spirit, His kingdom" (p. 15).

This noted Church historian here plainly admits that Church leaders did NOT take Jesus' *life and teaching* as the standard for their so-called Christian churches!

But ask yourself honestly: *What other true standard could there possibly be?*

## What About You?

Jesus said of the religious leaders of His day, "Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both

will fall into a ditch” (Matt. 15:14).

Frankly, I myself grew up BLIND, for the most part, to the truths of the Bible and the real meaning of conversion. And this was despite growing up in a highly respected “mainstream” Protestant denomination that had millions of members. My parents, grandparents and many of my friends belonged to this church. This, along with the fact that I did pretty well in academics and athletics, meant that I had no trouble “fitting in” with the world around me.

But was I truly a *Christian*?

Frankly, NO! For I did not even understand the *basic truths* of the Bible, had NO IDEA of the meaning of Bible prophecy (*which constitutes more than one-fourth of the entire Bible!*) and had never really *surrendered* to let Jesus Christ rule my life. Instead of being properly baptized after *real repentance*, I had been “sprinkled” as a little baby—before I even knew my right hand from my left. And instead of really *studying* the Bible to find out what Jesus Christ actually required of His true disciples, I just “went along” with my relatives and friends in observing what I later found to be PAGAN days of worship. I voluntarily joined the military reserves—learning how to fight and kill the enemy. And I was involved in all the “normal” vices teenage boys so often participate in—fighting, cursing, cheating, drinking, etc.

So, again, even though I regularly attended a mainstream church and was at one time even president of my Sunday school class, I was not truly a *Christian*.

What about YOU?

Has God opened *your* mind to the fact that He is REAL—the great Spirit Personality who created and now RULES the universe? That He—the Great God—requires you to genuinely SURRENDER your

life to Him through Jesus Christ *before* you can be forgiven your sins and granted eternal life in His Kingdom? And that you—as an *understanding adult*—must be BAPTIZED as an outward symbol of this TOTAL SURRENDER?

Simply put, then, if you have not gone through this experience of genuine *repentance* and *surrender*, you are *not* converted! You do *not* yet have God’s Holy Spirit to help you really understand the Bible and overcome the pulls of sin. And you will therefore *not* be protected during the coming Great Tribulation and later be given eternal life at Christ’s Second Coming!

Does this offend you?

I hope not. For the real TRUTH is the *only* thing that can actually help you gain eternal life in Christ’s soon-coming Kingdom. As Jesus said, “if you abide in My Word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and **the truth shall make you free**” (John 8:31-32).

### Believe the True Gospel

We find Jesus’ ministry described in Mark 1:14-15: “Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. **Repent, and BELIEVE in the gospel.**’”

A true Christian will not only believe “in” Jesus, He will also believe WHAT JESUS TAUGHT! And as the above passage explains, Jesus taught the Gospel—a message of “Good News”—about the coming Kingdom or GOVERNMENT of God to be set up on this earth (cf. Rev. 2:26-27; 5:9-10; 1 Cor. 6:2-3). And Jesus always taught *obedience* to the LAWS of God’s Government (Matt. 5:17-19; 19:17).

After Christ’s death and resurrection, His disciples were told to go

to *all* nations and preach that *same message!* “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching them to observe ALL THINGS that I have commanded you;** and lo, I am with you always, even to the *end of the age*” (28:19-20).

And Jesus told His disciples, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who *believes* and is *baptized* will be saved;

The real Truth is the only thing that can actually help you gain eternal life in Christ’s soon-coming Kingdom.

but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mark 16:15-16).

Also in the latter part of His ministry, Jesus promised His disciples, “But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Luke 22:28-30). Will Jesus *keep* that promise when He returns to this earth as King of kings? *Of course He will!* And any professing Christian minister who tries to “spiritualize away” these verses—and literally *dozens* of others like them—will answer to the *true* Jesus Christ in the Judgment!

The inspired “prayer of the

saints” recorded in Revelation reaffirms the genuine Good News Christ brought: “And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and *we shall reign on the earth*’” (5:9-10).

So the true Gospel that Jesus and the early apostles preached has to do with not only the fact that Christ died for us and has “redeemed” us by His blood—but also that He is COMING AGAIN as King of kings on this earth and that the true saints will *also* become kings and priests under Him. At that time, the saints will assist Christ in teaching, training, ruling and BLESSING the entire world—as part of the literal GOVERNMENT of God that will be set up over the earth with its Headquarters in the city of Jerusalem! (cf. Is. 2:1-4). For more information about the true Gospel, please call or write us for your *free* copy of our thoroughly documented booklet, *Do You Believe the True Gospel?*

If you, then, personally BELIEVE the true message of Jesus Christ and want to genuinely serve and obey Him *as He tells us to*, then what should you do?

### Act on What You Know

Perhaps one of the best definitions of a Christian contained in any one verse of the Bible is found in 1 John 2:6. The Weymouth translation makes the intended meaning clearer than the older King James wording. It reads, “**He who says he abides in Him [Christ] is BOUND to live as He lived.**” Yet how many of today’s professing Christians feel *bound* to actually LIVE as Jesus did?

To truly become like Jesus Christ—to fulfill the PURPOSE for

which you were born—you need to STUDY the Bible as most of you have *never done before in all your life!* You need to earnestly and regularly PRAY to God the Father *on your knees*—developing the *habit* of personal communication with your Creator! You need, occasionally, to set aside time for FASTING—in order to realize your own *nothingness*, to *draw closer* to God and to have the *extra time* and *impetus* for earnest prayer and study.

To be a *true* Christian, you must begin practicing total HONESTY in your *speech*, in your *business* and in your entire *way of life!* You need to *forsake* your personal idols and *obey* the laws of God and man. You must WORSHIP your Creator and Heavenly Father—SEEKING Him in prayer, study and fasting like the prophets of old!

And once you have decided to *totally surrender* to God, you need—as already mentioned—to be *baptized!* Then through the POWER of the Holy Spirit, which you are promised to receive after baptism—as we will see—you will have within you the very *nature* and *character* of God Himself! You must *develop, strengthen* and *nurture* this character! Never forget the instruction to “GROW in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).

### Repent and Be Baptized

Remember that at the beginning of His Ministry, Jesus said, “REPENT, and *believe* in the Gospel” (Mark 1:15). And when Peter gave His inspired sermon on the “birthday” of the New Testament Church, he declared, “**REPENT, and let every one of you be BAPTIZED in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.** For the

PROMISE is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:38-39).

Peter had just finished telling his audience of thousands that they had KILLED the promised Messiah! (vv. 22-23, 36). Many of them were overwhelmed with remorse and asked *what to do*. So first of all, Peter told them to REPENT. But what is true, genuine spiritual repentance? It goes *far beyond* mere human remorse—coming as a result of spiritual conviction of sin and DEEP SORROW over the recognition that we have *done* wrong and that we *are* wrong! As the Apostle Paul explained, “godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death” (2 Cor. 7:10).

Peter later stated, “**Repent therefore and BE CONVERTED**” (Acts 3:19)—that is, CHANGED! Therefore, true repentance involves our willingness to TOTALLY CHANGE—to *turn around and go the other way*. If you, personally, can see that you have been “going along” with this deceived world under the sway of Satan the Devil and *now* you really want to CHANGE, to be “converted” through God’s Holy Spirit, then you need to ask God—as *I also had to do*—for the understanding and strength to *do your part*.

You need to be absolutely SURE of what you are doing. Jesus explained that before a man starts to build a tower, he should first sit down and “count the cost” (Luke 14:28). He must be certain that he can *totally commit* himself to the project. In the same context, Christ said, “Whoever comes to me cannot be my disciple unless he loves me more than he loves his father and his mother, his wife and his children,

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## The Human Race—

# On the Brink of Genocide!

Can responsible world leaders control the spread of deadly chemical and biological weapons—which could decimate the entire human race? Or is it now possible for a rogue dictator to unleash a pandemic that would kill untold millions?

by Raymond F. McNair

The human race recently received an alarming wake-up call. Seemingly, much of the world was blissfully unaware of the deadly peril that all humanity now faces: **the imminent threat posed by terrorists or rogue leaders unleashing on an unsuspecting world deadly chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction.**

*The San Diego Union-Tribune* recently reported, “More than 25 nations have or may be developing nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and ways to deliver them, Defense Secretary William Cohen said yesterday, calling the threat ‘neither far-fetched nor far off’” (Nov. 26, 1997). And on December 16, a *Union-Tribune* headline stated that the “Pentagon [plans to] vaccinate every soldier against *anthrax*, one of the most deadly biological agents ever known.” The United States has 1.4 million military personnel on active duty, plus 1 million reservists.

Clearly, United States military leaders realize lethal chemical and biological weapons could be used against their troops in any number of possible scenarios—with thousands facing the prospect of suffering horrific death by these terrifying weapons!

### Enter the “Butcher of Baghdad”

Almost 2,000 years ago, the Apostle Paul warned that **“in the last days perilous times will come. For men will be... without self-control, BRUTAL, despisers of good”** (2 Tim. 3:1-3). Mil-

lions have seen fulfillment of this prophecy in such brutal leaders as Hitler, Tojo, Stalin and Pol Pot of Cambodia. “Under the leadership of Pol Pot, it is estimated that from 1975 to 1979 **his government caused the deaths of about 2 million people** from forced labour, starvation, disease, torture, or execution” (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., vol. 9, p. 552).

More recently, Saddam Hussein, who has been called the “Butcher of Baghdad,” has already brought death and untold suffering to millions of Iranians, Kuwaitis and his own Iraqi people. And even more ominous for the world, Saddam used lethal gas in the Iran-Iraq Gulf War of the 80s, as well as against his own citizens, the Kurds—many of whom died in agony.

Many have reported on Saddam’s brutality. One story tells of an Iraqi government minister who dared to suggest that—because of Saddam’s very costly and unsuccessful war with Iran—he should temporarily step down. Saddam promptly had him arrested. When his wife begged the Iraqi leader to allow her husband to return to her, he assured her that her request would be granted. Then Saddam promptly returned her husband’s corpse in a body bag—*gruesomely chopped up* with a butcher’s cleaver!

Another report concerns two of Saddam’s own sons-in-law who fled Iraq and revealed certain horrors of his government. A few years afterward, Saddam granted them permission to return to Iraq, and then promptly had them murdered.

**Few doubt that Saddam would use deadly chemical or biological weapons against Israel—or against the United States or other nations of the West—if he ever thinks the time is right to avenge his humiliating defeat in the 1990 Gulf War.**

During that war, Saddam tried to link the Israeli-Palestinian dispute to Iraq’s plight in order to win the favor and support of the Islamic world. To that end, he sent more than 30 Scud missiles crashing into Israel’s cities, as frantic Israeli civilians donned gas masks anticipating deadly payloads of chemical or biological agents. During the bombardment, the Israelis used great restraint by not retaliating devastatingly against Iraq—so as not to break up the American-led coalition of Allied forces then arrayed against Iraq’s invading army.

### Deadly Game of Hide and Seek

Since the Gulf War ended, United Nations’ forces have diligently sought out and destroyed many of Saddam’s doomsday weapons. But he has not permitted U.N. inspection teams to destroy *all* of his missiles—nor his nuclear, chemical or bacteriological materials and facilities!

The American nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS George Washington steams through the northern Persian Gulf during early morning on February 10 as the flight crew readies jet fighters for operations over Iraq to enforce Operation Southern Watch—Reuters.

Since his defeat, Saddam’s strategy has been to “cheat and retreat”—as he stubbornly hinders U.N. inspection teams in their efforts. During 1997, inspectors were denied access to 16 out of the 43 sensitive sites they planned to investigate for contraband weapons and materials. And late in the year—just as the inspectors were reportedly about to discover some of Saddam’s most sensitive weapons materials, records and facilities—he unceremoniously kicked out the American members of the U.N. team. Why? Most believe it was to buy critical time to move lethal materials or records to safer locations, so that when the inspectors returned they would find *nothing!* But his total refusal to “come clean” has not deceived the world as to his intentions.

It is now universally believed that Saddam still possesses a number of operational Scud missiles and has also stashed away considerable quantities of chemical and biological weapons materials, with which he could quickly arm his missiles and send them crashing into Israeli cities.

What would the Israelis do if Saddam yielded to the insane hope that he could get away with bombing Israeli cities with chemical or biological weapons?

If Saddam attacks Israel with missiles, it plans a swift retaliation. Recent reports say the Israelis would devastate Baghdad and other major Iraqi cities—*if* Saddam dares attack them with doomsday weapons. “According to the authoritative intelligence newsletter *Jane’s Foreign Report*, **the Israeli military will launch a devastating NEUTRON BOMB BARRAGE on Iraq, should Saddam Hussein attack the Jewish State with either chemical or biological weapons.** The Israeli Home Front Command has installed nearly 350 sirens around the country and expects to have them all ‘on line’ by the end of the year” (*The Jewish Press*, Nov. 21-17, 1997).

## A Spine-Chilling Warning

During the standoff of late 1997, President Clinton and other government leaders warned the whole world of the very real dangers of allowing rogue leaders, such as Saddam Hussein, to develop and deploy terrifying nuclear, chemical or biological weapons of mass destruction.

One of the unforgettable moments in the recent standoff came when Secretary of Defense William Cohen displayed a small bag of sugar on a Sunday-morning news program, pointing out that **five pounds of deadly anthrax would DECIMATE the entire population of a city as big as Washington, D.C.!**

The world—the West in particular—now faces the very real possibility of not just Iraq, but also Iran, North Korea and Libya acquiring and *using nuclear, chemical and biological weapons!* Worse still, responsible governments around the world now have to deal with the very real nightmarish scenario of **TERRORISTS** (homegrown *or* foreign) developing and using such indescribably horrendous weapons.

Not long ago, *Newsweek* magazine gave Americans a chilling warning: “But consider a more frightening scenario: determined to avenge his humiliation in the gulf war, enraged by the crushing economic sanctions imposed by the U.S. and its allies, Saddam decides to make Americans share the suffering of his people. **He hires a terrorist cell to launch a biological- or chemical-weapon attack against an American target.** In an age when instructions for building weapons of mass destruction can be found on the Internet and a toxin of lethal germs can be mixed in a *bathtub*, mass terror is *exportable*. A zealot with an aerosol pump hidden in his briefcase standing inside a New York subway station—or outside the White House—could create chaos and slaughter” (Nov. 24, 1997, p. 26).

The article continues, “Or think about this chain reaction: paranoid about his enemies, addled by visions of martyrdom, **Saddam launches a Scud missile tipped with lethal chemicals into downtown Tel Aviv, killing thousands of Israelis. Israel retaliates—as it almost surely would—by dropping a NUCLEAR BOMB on Baghdad.** With hundreds of thousands of Arabs incinerated, the Middle East erupts into a *holy war* that could spread anywhere. Including, perhaps, your local shopping mall. In such a conflagration, the U.S.—the Great Satan to Islamic fundamentalists—would hardly be safe” (p. 26).

Would such a scenario conceivably trigger a global war, fought with doomsday weapons too frightening to even contemplate? *Newsweek* goes on to say, “Weapons

of mass destruction, in the hands of *outlaw states* like Iraq or Iran, Libya or North Korea, could become very real and present d a n g e r s . . .

Relieved by the passing of the long nuclear face-off against the Soviet Union, Americans don’t want to live with fear again. But they may have to. At least 16

countries have the capacity to make biological or chemical weapons. Saddam is clearly determined to build his own. The question is whether the Iraqi strongman is twisted enough to *use* them—and whether America and its allies can stop him” (p. 26).

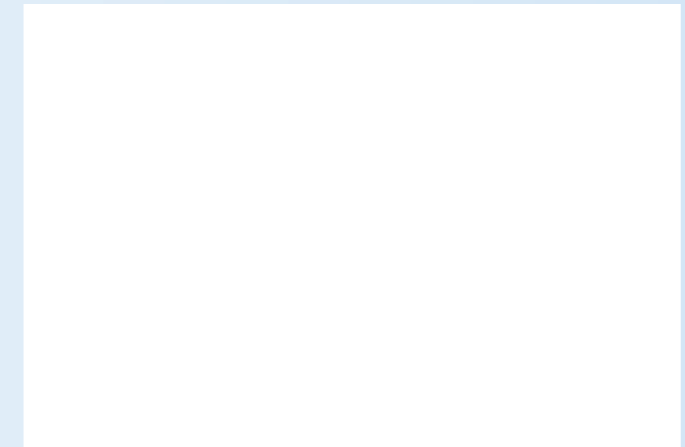
What is so troubling about chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction is that they are so cheap and comparatively easy to produce. Even if a *rogue dictator* doesn’t instigate a chemical or biological attack upon America, it would be very easy for a “freelance extremist” (perhaps a disgruntled chemist) to produce and use any number of very deadly chemical or biological weapons. America hasn’t completely forgotten the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on February 26, 1993, in which Islamic Fundamentalists detonated powerful explosives, hoping to demolish at least one of the 110-story twin towers. They also hoped the bomb would kill 250,000 Americans!

Today’s world faces a terrible dilemma regarding cheaply-produced weapons of mass destruction. Raymond Zilinskas—a University of Maryland biologist who took part in two inspection tours of Iraq—is reported as saying that “the mixing of poison can be carried out by technicians with only modest scientific training using ordinary commercial equipment. The fermenters and centrifuges used every day in dairies, wineries and pharmaceutical houses, for example, can be quickly converted to churning out lethal weapons and then switched back to innocent uses before inspectors show up” (*Time*, Dec. 1, 1997, p. 55).

In that same article, Bruce W. Nelan asked, “If BIOWEAPONS can be *hidden* almost anywhere and scientific amateurs can turn them out in a small room... how can U.N. inspectors hope to find them?... The U.N. teams were physically turned away from 14 [of the

inspection sites] and were held up at the front doors before being let into 38 others. In some cases of delay, **U-2 reconnaissance planes working for the U.N. spotted cafilecades of trucks hauling material out the back doors.** From March to October, Iraq blocked or interfered with 25 inspection efforts” (p. 56).

Many shudder to think that a lone terrorist could wreak widespread death and destruction if he carefully planned and executed a deadly attack against any large population center in the United States or anywhere else on earth!



*Left: Israelis wait their turn for more than four hours on February 10 to renew their gas masks in Ramat Gan near Tel Aviv. Above: United Nations’ vehicles carrying weapons inspectors led by American Scott Ritter wait outside the heavily guarded U.N. headquarters on January 13. Saddam Hussein had accused Ritter of espionage—Reuters.*

*Newsweek* magazine says, “There is a real risk that Saddam could counterattack with poison gas released from a truck or canister somewhere in the U.S. If Clinton *provokes* that attack with bombings that fail to nail Saddam personally, the president and nation will pay a big price. On the other hand, if we *ignore* Saddam, we open ourselves up to charges that the U.S. is letting the gulf-war loser set the terms of his own defeat. An *appeased* Saddam will make much more trouble later.... There are no good options—only bad ones” (Nov. 24, 1997, p. 34).

Even though the U.N. demands “unconditional Iraqi compliance,” Saddam Hussein’s failure to cooperate will probably ensure that he will be treated by the international community as **a rogue dictator on parole!**

## How Deadly Are These Weapons?

The same *Newsweek* article also mentioned that “on a clear, breezy night” it would be possible for “a few planes carrying a small payload of chemical or biological

weapons [to] spray a sleeping city in minutes—and kill thousands, even *millions.*” If 200 pounds of *anthrax* were “sprayed over a city the size of Omaha, it would kill up to 2.5 million” (p. 37). Anthrax produces vomiting, black pustules, fever and suffocation within two to four days.

*Time* magazine reports, “‘A fatal dose is,’ says a U.S. Defense official, ‘smaller than a speck of dust, something you wouldn’t even see.’” One bacterium of anthrax “can explode into a billion copies in 10 hours” (Dec. 1, 1997, p. 55). Furthermore, as stated in *Newsweek*, “U.N. inspectors have established that Iraq produced some 8,000 liters of anthrax spores during the 80s—enough, by some estimates, to kill every person in the world”! (p. 36). That’s undoubtedly one reason the U.S. military recently began inoculating its active-duty personnel against the disease.

A mere 200 pounds of BOTOX (*botulinum toxin*) “could kill up to 40,000 in an area the size of the Mall of America [in Minneapolis]” (p. 37). *Botox* attacks the central nervous system, causing suffocation due to respiratory failure within two to twelve hours. “Saddam’s forces also manufactured 20,000 liters of botulinum toxin” (p. 36).

If 200 pounds of deadly VX were “sprayed over a site the size of Disneyland, it would kill up to 12,500” (p. 37). VX causes paralysis, which in turn causes involuntary muscles to strangle vital organs of the body. VX “is readily absorbed through any orifice; even a *drop* on the skin can kill within minutes” (p. 36).

What kind of “toxic terror” is Saddam planning? And what is he hiding? The United Nations’ Special Commission (UNSCOM) suspects Iraq “of hiding nearly 4 tons of deadly **VX** nerve agent, 10,000 liters of **botulinum** toxin and 6,000 liters of **anthrax** spores. ‘This is the central conflict,’ says one U.N. official. ‘UNSCOM has to go after these institutions, which are concealing weapons and documents’” (*U.S. News & World Report*, Dec. 1, 1997, p. 44). Iraq’s cache of deadly chemical and bacteriological materials alone is more than enough to kill everyone on this planet!

U.S. Secretary of Defense William Cohen recently warned that a single drop of the deadly VX toxin on the tip of the finger would cause convulsions, producing death in only five minutes. Further, he said that “one nine-millionth of one gram of anthrax germs” would prove *fatal* in 100 percent of its victims—in only 5 to 17 days. Let us not forget Christ’s prophetic words that “**unless those days [ahead of us] were shortened, no flesh would be saved [alive];** but... those days *will* be shortened” (Matt. 24:22).

So where do we go from here?

*(continued on page 25)*

# Some Advice from Dad

by John H. Ogwyn

My two sons recently embarked on one of life's greatest and most potentially rewarding adventures. They got married!

"Sons are a gift from the LORD and children a reward from him," the psalmist tells us (Ps. 127:3 NEB). My wife and I have thought of this verse many times throughout the almost 27 years of our marriage. Through life's triumphs and trials we've shared in both the joys and the disappointments of our children. We've also given lots of advice!

And now marriage. For Charles and Cathrine it was last May. For David and Jennifer it was in February. We've shared in their excitement, yet we also know that all marriages encounter "speed bumps" on the road of life. Of course, it's how they're dealt with that's important.

Happy marriages aren't accidents—nor are they simply a matter of "luck." Everyone wants to be happy, but far too few actually are. In the Western World, only about half of all marriages remain intact. And many of *them* are little more than empty shells. Starry-eyed couples walking down the aisle don't envision themselves fitting into those statistics—yet, sadly, overwhelming numbers of them do.

As a parent I would love to offer insightful, helpful advice to ensure that those I love most could always traverse safely through life's minefields. So what's the *best* possible counsel that I can give as a father to my children?

A lot of dads (and moms too!) have given some pretty good advice over the years. However, there is a source of fatherly counsel that outshines them all. Indeed, so good was it that our Creator had it preserved for all time. In fact, He inspired it to begin with! God gave to ancient King Solomon wisdom that exceeded that of any man (1 Kings 4:29-34). Much of what Solomon wrote in the biblical book of Proverbs was a father's advice to his son (Prov. 1:8)—advice far more valuable than any man could dream up on his own!

In Proverbs, Solomon sets forth the principles that apply to human life. And they're every bit as dependable as the ones that apply to physics, chemistry or mathematics. For the same Creator is, after all, the author of all these things. Explanation of these governing principles is coupled throughout the book with numerous examples of good and bad choices. Though valuable for any reader, Proverbs is a book *especially* designed to give prudence and shrewdness to those who are young and lack experience in life (1:4). And while the lessons of Proverbs embrace the whole breadth of human experience, there are several that are specifically designed as advice to ensure a happy marriage.

There can be no greater key to a happy marriage than absolute faithfulness between spouses. Proverbs 5 vividly describes the consequences of infidelity. Notice the picture painted in this chapter: "For though the lips of an adulteress drip honey and her tongue is smoother than oil, yet in the end she is more bitter than wormwood.... Do not go near the door of her house; or you will lose your dignity in the eyes of others and your honour before strangers; strangers will batten on your wealth, and your hard-won gains pass to another man's family" (vv. 3-10 NEB).

The final result of an immoral life is graphically explained in the next two verses: "And you mourn at last, when your flesh and your body are consumed [e.g. by a sexually transmissible disease], and say: 'How I have hated instruction, and my heart despised correction!'"

Proverbs enjoins a young couple to forever enjoy the tender embraces of one another. *The Living Bible* tells us, "Drink from your own well, my son.... Rejoice in the wife of your youth. Let her charms and tender embrace satisfy you. Let her love alone fill you with delight" (vv. 15-19). In other words, be lovers as long as you live. Be faithful to one another in both thought and deed. By guarding the sanctity of your home, you are taking one of the most important steps toward a lifelong, happy marriage.

Not only does Proverbs contain direct advice from a father to a son, but it also gives some specific instructions to women. Proverbs 14:1 shows the great effect a woman's actions have on the long-term success of her marriage and family: "The wisest women build up their homes; the foolish pull them down with their own hands" (NEB).

A wife's character and her relationship with God are vitally important. She is truly the "heart" of the home just as much as her husband is to be the "head." Her words and actions, coupled with her attitude toward husband and children, will serve to either build up or tear down the marriage.

We live in a less-than-ideal world. Every man, in the course of trying to provide for his family, encounters failures and setbacks. Some wives have encouraged, supported and tried to bring out the best in their mate—while others have belittled and berated with tragic consequences for all concerned. A "virtuous wife," literally a "wife of strong character" as the Jewish *Soncino Commentary* explains (p. 73), is one in whom her husband can always have confidence. He *knows* that she will stand by him. "The heart of her husband trusts in her confidently.... She will comfort, encourage and do him only good as long as there is life within her" (31:11-12 *Amplified*).

Another vitally important aspect of marriage is communication. It has been called the "lubricant" designed to reduce friction between human beings. In our hectic, fast-paced society, with its myriad forms of near-instantaneous global communication, the person with whom we communicate the *least* is often the one who's sitting across the table. And when we *do* talk to the one who's closest to us, it isn't always for the best. For though words can *help*, they can also *hurt*.

It should be no surprise, then, that Proverbs is chock-full of instructions about communicating. "Kind words are like dripping honey, sweetness on the tongue and health for the body" (16:24 NEB). Combine this thought with the reminder in Proverbs 15:1: "A soft answer turns away anger, but a sharp

word makes tempers hot" (NEB). This is powerful advice for every couple.

And in the course of communicating, we should never forget that *what* we say is tempered by *how* we say it. With our tone of voice and inflection, as well as our body language, we convey as much, if not *more*, meaning than with the actual words themselves. We need to apply ourselves—*restrain* ourselves if necessary—to make sure that our speaking is delivered in a positive and encouraging manner. For kindness can do more to soothe hurts and frustrations than almost anything!

Proverbs 17:1 states succinctly, "A dry crust eaten in peace is better than steak every day along with argument and strife" (*Living Bible*). A similar sentiment is expressed in chapter 25: "It is better to live in a corner of an attic than in a beautiful home with a cranky, quarrelsome woman" (v. 24 *Living Bible*). To argue and nag, berating your mate with harsh words is destructive. It's an approach that won't resolve your problems, but will rather guarantee that your home will be a most unpleasant place to be.

And make no mistake—this isn't solely advice for women. For a nagging or quarrelsome *husband* can tear down his family and destroy the joy and happiness of the marital union just as surely! God tells husbands that "a quick-tempered man starts fights; a cool-tempered man tries to stop them" (15:18 *Living Bible*).

Your home should be a place where both of you enjoy being. So try to spend a lot of quality time together—talking openly and listening attentively to one another. If you nurture your *friendship*, your love will always be fresh.

In Proverbs 31:28, we read that the husband of the virtuous wife praises her publicly. He doesn't put her down or tell embarrassing stories about her. Always strive to uphold your mate, to both those within and those outside your immediate family.

A happy marriage is one of life's most wonderful adventures. It results not from *good fortune*, but rather from *diligent effort*. None of us should ever forget that a good mate is a gift from God—and that His Word reveals how to *take care* of that gift so it will last a lifetime!

A loving and happy marriage is one of the greatest blessings that the Eternal God has ordained for His sons and daughters. If you would like further information on how to build a more godly marital union, please call or write for *Marriage*. It will be sent to you absolutely free of charge and with no obligation.

# God and Man— A Universe Apart?

by Thomas E. Robinson

If you've ever stood out in the desert on a clear night—away from city lights and pollutants—perhaps you've been awestruck and humbled at the infinite grandeur of the stellar expanse overhead. And well you should be. But realize that there is far more there than you could possibly see with the naked eye. "The unaided human eye can see and count about 1,029 stars. With a pair of binoculars or an inexpensive telescope you can see over 3,300 stars. In the last few years modern telescopes have allowed us to view over **two hundred million stars** in our own galaxy called the Milky Way" (Grant R. Jeffrey, *The Signature of God*, 1996, p. 108). And that, as we will shortly see, is just the tip of the iceberg!

Since its repair in 1993, the Hubble Space Telescope has provided the world with stunning images in previously unknown detail of not only beautiful star clusters, nebulae and supernova rings in our own galaxy, but also of other galaxies and blazing quasars billions of light-years away. In fact, *vast numbers* of new galaxies have been found using this incredible feat of engineering (URL:<http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/PR/96/01.html>). Every day, knowledge

of astrophysics, cosmology and related fields increases dramatically. Never before has mankind understood so much about the workings of the universe—in a sense.

In *another* sense, though, there is a big piece of the puzzle missing. It's a piece that men of past ages were much more ready to acknowledge than are many scientists today. One such acknowledgment came from King David of ancient Israel: "**The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork**" (Psalm 19:1). When David wrote these words about 3,000 years ago, he understood that there is a *message* written in the sky—a proclamation of extraterrestrial origin for all humanity! (vv. 2-4). Looking up at the amazing celestial objects of our own solar system—the sun, moon and visible planets—all moving in precise time and perfect harmony, as well as the twinkling stars in the vastness beyond, he perceived a truth that modern astrophysicists and cosmologists would do well to heed.

Though David did not understand modern scientific theories, he knew something far more important—that there is an Omnipotent God who *made* the heavens: "For He commanded

and they were created" (148:5). And through this awesome creation, God gave logical and reasonable proof of His existence. The Apostle Paul would state more than 1,000 years later, "Since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that [men] are without excuse" (Rom. 1:20). Indeed, David was led to remark, "The *fool* has said in his heart, 'There is no God'" (Ps. 14:1).

Sadly, however, there are apparently an awful lot of "fools" in modern science. But their atheistic sentiment is not universal. Many noted scientists have expressed a belief in the Creator. And while they may not believe everything the Bible has to say about Him, they at least accept the idea of an intelligent Designer who brought the universe into existence. Albert Einstein was such a person. Though he was disposed against the concept of a *personal* God, notice what he did say: "Everyone who is seriously involved in the pursuit of science becomes convinced that a spirit is manifest in the laws of the Universe—a spirit vastly superior to that of man" (Einstein Archive 42-601, quoted by Alic Calaprice

(ed.), *The Quotable Einstein*, 1996, p. 152).

Einstein had earlier written, "The scientist is possessed by the sense of universal causation.... His religious feeling takes the form of a rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural law, which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly insignificant reflection" ("The Religious Spirit of Science," *Mein Weltbild*, 1934, reprinted in *Ideas and Opinions*, p. 40, quoted by Calaprice).

So what about this idea? *Are* human beings "insignificant"? We do appear to be. In fact, David himself recognized this when he asked this very question in Psalm 8. And considering how awesome the heavens reveal God to be, we may also ask, "Why does He even care about us at all?"

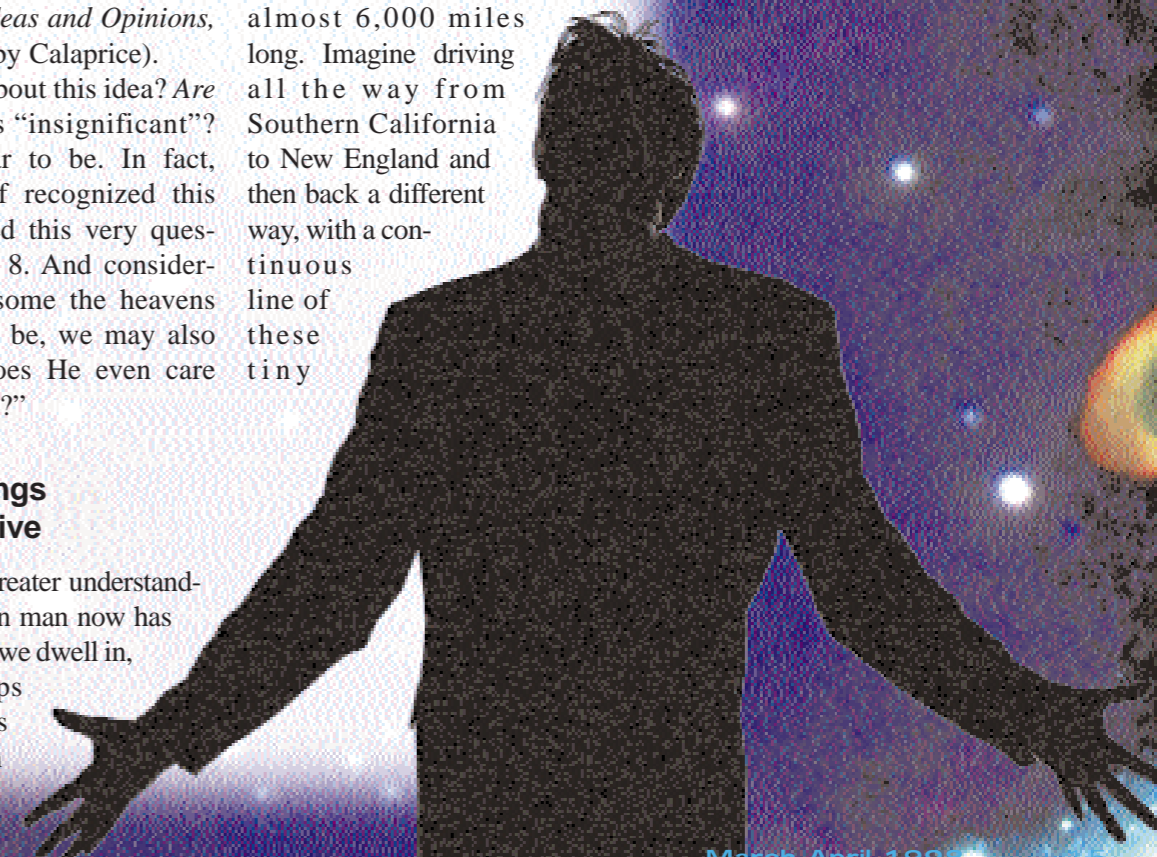
## Putting Things in Perspective

With the greater understanding that modern man now has of the universe we dwell in, we can perhaps appreciate this question even

more than David himself did. Just what is an individual human being's place in the universe?

Let's first see where each of us stands among the teeming masses of humanity. There are almost 6 billion people in the world. But what does that *mean*—can we even *begin* to fathom it? Let's put this in more understandable terms. If each person were represented by the head of a pin, 1/16th of an inch across, then lining up 6 billion pins right next to each other would form a line almost 6,000 miles long. Imagine driving all the way from Southern California to New England and then back a different way, with a continuous line of these tiny

"When I consider  
Your heavens, the  
work of Your fingers,  
the moon and the  
stars, which You  
have ordained, what  
is man that You are  
mindful of him...?"  
—Psalm 8:3-4





spheres running along the highway. If you're racing along at 65 miles per hour for almost four straight days of round-the-clock, nonstop driving, how noticeable is a particular pinhead beside the road? Even so, how discernible is each of us in the total human population?

Yes, mankind's numbers are staggering. And from the influence we wield over the earth, we can see that it is under our dominion. Yet how did man *arrive* at this station? According to Genesis 1:26-28, God *gave* man dominion over the earth and its atmosphere. After asking why the Lord was mindful of men in Psalm 8, David commented on this terrestrial dominion (vv. 5-8). So when all the nations are considered as a single population with such wide influence over this planet, they seem truly great and significant. *But are they?*

If you gave each person 9 square feet of space (3 ft. x 3 ft.), everyone alive could fit in the confines of an area less than 45 miles by 45 miles—about the same size as the state of Delaware. This would be an almost imperceptible dot if represented on a world map. Thus, it still seems somewhat ridiculous to refer to this planet as “our earth,” doesn't it? The earth, after all, is about 25,000 miles in circumference and, as Isaiah 40:17 tells us, “**all nations before [God] are as nothing, and they are counted by Him LESS than nothing and worthless.**” Individ-

ual nations are not so big and mighty after all. It's the earth itself, then, that is incredibly HUGE. *Or is it?*

The earth is the third planet of our solar system, located on the Carina-Cygnus Spiral Arm of the Milky Way Galaxy. And if your perspective were broad enough to see this entire part of the galaxy, the earth would be utterly indistinguishable. To understand this, let's change our scale so that the whole earth is represented by the 1/16th-inch pinhead used previously. So just how big is the imperceptible dot on the globe representing all of mankind *now*? On this scale, the sun would be a ball 6 inches in diameter and 18 yards away.

Now we often think of our sun as really BIG. And compared to the earth, it certainly is. But there are many stars out there that are *supergiants*—such as Antares. If this particular star were placed in the center of our solar system, it's outer boundaries would extend beyond the earth to the current orbit of the planet Mars! And on our scale, it would have a diameter of 50 yards!—compared to the 6-inch sun we now have.

On this scale (remember that the earth is but a pinhead!) the *nearest* star to our system, Proxima Centauri, would be 3,000 miles away!—like looking at a 6-inch light bulb in Los Angeles from Bangor, Maine. On this scale, the diameter of our Milky Way Galaxy would be 60 million miles (two-thirds of the actual distance between the earth and the sun). The *real* diameter of the Milky Way is 100,000 light-years—a light-year being the distance light travels in a single year. Every second, light covers a distance

equivalent to circling the earth 7 1/2 times. Yet it takes 100,000 years to cross the Milky Way! Such distances are inconceivable.

Our galaxy is not only large, but it comprises about 400 billion stars. Incredibly, “the total number of stars in the Galaxy is roughly the same as the number of grains of rice that could be squeezed into a warehouse the size of a cathedral” (John Gribbin, *Companion to the Cosmos*, 1996, p. 158). The Milky Way, then, is unfathomably great. *Or is it?*

Though the Milky Way is the largest of our “local group” of galaxies, this group forms only a small part of the Virgo *Supercluster*—which itself is insignificant among the millions of superclusters making up the vast universe. To visualize this, let's change our scale again, shrinking the entire Milky Way to a large plate about one foot across. So how big is the earth, which WAS the size of a pinhead, now? How big are WE? The nearest major galaxy, M31 in the constellation Andromeda, is now 25 feet away (in actuality it is two million light-years away).

On our new scale, the known universe (to say nothing of what is UNknown) could, for simplicity's sake, be represented as a sphere almost 60 miles in diameter. Now think about one galaxy every 25 feet or so in every direction, including up and down, throughout this sphere. Considering that there are “hundreds of billions of galaxies,” according to Dr. John O'Keefe of NASA (Robert Jastrow, *God and the Astronomers*, 1992, p. 114), the Milky Way is not very easy to pick out.

As for the total number of stars

in the heavens, the count is beyond our grasp. For consider that the universe is estimated to be about 15 billion years old. But to name every star (even shooting low at 100 billion galaxies of 100 billion stars each) at a rate of one per second would take more than 21,000 *times* the age of the universe! (which, by the way, is *nothing* for God—Ps. 147:4). Yet all the stars together are tiny compared to the vastness of the universe itself, which some put at 30 billion light-years in diameter or larger—enormous beyond reckoning. Surely there can be nothing greater. *Or can there?*

Let's change our scale one last time. Imagine the 60-mile sphere representing the entire cosmos condensed down to the size of a tennis ball—something you could pick up and hold in the palm of your hand. Amazing as it is, that's exactly what God can do! He holds the *entire universe* in the palm of His hand—at least that's the way He is able to view it if He chooses. As Isaiah 40:12 states, God “measured heaven with a span.” A span is a hand-width. Of course, the infinite God can be however “big” He wishes—whenever He wishes. For He “stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in” (vv. 22). And when we factor in God's omnipresence through His Holy Spirit, we find that *nothing* can contain Him. As Solomon prayed, “**behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You**” (1 Kings 8:27).

So sticking with the tennis ball scale, where does that leave us? The smallest particles we as human beings are presently aware of are quarks within the nuclei of

atoms. Yet in this picture, we are infinitesimally *smaller* than quarks! Thus, we are *way* down there—way, way, way down there!

### Man's Incredible Heritage

The greatness and glory of God, then, is proclaimed by the heavens louder today than ever before. And all of this should give new meaning to David's question in Psalm 8—“what is man that You are mindful of him?”

Yet God IS mindful. In fact, the same Being who says He calls the countless stars, *humanly* speaking, by name has looked down and numbered every hair on our heads! (Matt. 10:30). For somehow He is aware of *everything*. Do we *begin* to grasp the majesty and power of God?

Furthermore, look at what God—not just the Father, but also Jesus Christ through whom the universe was created (John 1:1-3, 14; Eph. 3:9)—has done for us. Christ came to this earth as a human being to die for the sins of all mankind. Paul says that He “emptied” Himself in becoming one of us (Phil. 2:7 NRSV). Indeed, look at *how far down* He came and just *how much* He emptied Himself. It is staggering to contemplate!

Christ, however, was not to *remain* a mortal human. At the end of His physical life, He prayed, “And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was” (John 17:5). But Jesus is the first of MANY to be glorified. Romans 8:29 calls Him the “firstborn among MANY brethren.” Indeed, when spiritually begotten of the Father by His Holy Spirit, we become His very own

children and thus His heirs (vv. 14-18). But what do we stand to inherit? Nothing less than divine glory! For as Hebrews 2:10 explains, God is “bringing *many* sons to GLORY.”

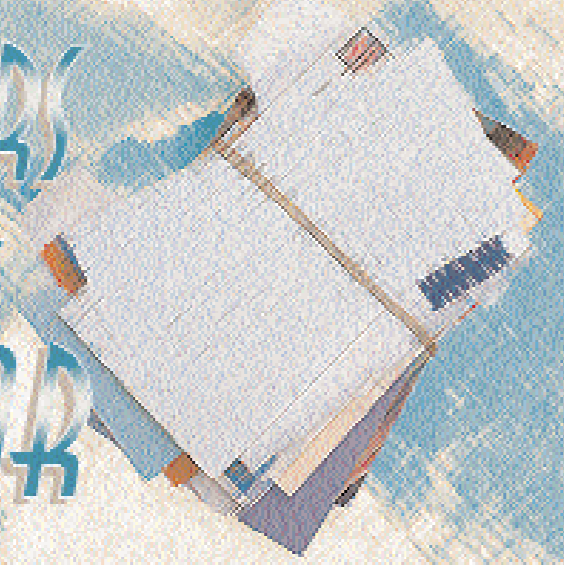
But what does that entail? Part of the answer is revealed in the immediately preceding verses. This chapter reiterates the question asked by David in Psalm 8. But where David saw man's dominion extending over the earth, the book of Hebrews goes even further: “**You have put ALL THINGS in subjection under his feet. For in that [God] put all in subjection under [man], He left nothing that is not put under him**” (2:8). The same Greek expression translated “all things” in this verse has been translated “THE UNIVERSE” in the previous chapter (cf. vv. 2-3 Moffatt Translation). We can conclude, therefore, that our God has decreed that the *entire universe* will be put under *man's* subjection! “But now we do NOT YET see all things put under him” (v. 8). However, the universe IS already under *Christ's* subjection (v. 9).

This amazing destiny was even revealed long before in the days of Moses. Notice God's instruction to the ancient Israelites concerning the pagan practice of worshiping celestial objects: “And take heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, **which the LORD your God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage**” (Deut. 4:19).

Yes—the entire universe is our

*(continued on page 25)*

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



## PRAYER

I am writing you to convey my *deepest appreciation* for your recent January–February issue of the *World Ahead* magazine! Dr. Meredith's article titled "Answers to Unanswered Prayer" has been a *tremendous encouragement* to me here in prison. God has blessed me with a lot of time to truly get to know my Creator better and to learn what He wants me to do in service to Him. And this article has "opened my eyes" to many wonderful ways in which I can increase and strengthen my personal relationship with our Creator God. Please give my sincere thanks to Dr. Meredith for this wonderfully researched and very thorough article on prayer!

I.H.  
Abilene, Texas

## THEY WILL LIVE AGAIN

I want to thank you for your article "They Will Live Again" by Gerald Weston in the November–December issue of the *World Ahead*. My dad died 16 years ago. I stopped eating, drinking and sleeping for a whole year. I was so upset that my father died without accepting Jesus as his Lord and Savior that I went on a prayer vigil for him. Your article has finally "put it to rest" in my mind as to my dad's whereabouts. I'm so grateful to know that he'll have a real chance to know God when he is resurrected to physical life. Thank you. You've helped clear my mind and given me peace.

Cynthia Sequin  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Greetings. I must say the November–December issue of the *World Ahead* has lifted my spirit. Every article is well done—especially the one titled "They Will Live Again." I am always anxious and eager to read anything and everything on the second resurrection. You see I have lost a son. Thank you.

Aloma Smith  
Kingston, Jamaica

## ABP

First let me compliment you on your brochure *America and Britain in Prophecy*. I have just finished reading it for the *second time* and am even more thrilled. And I'm sure subsequent readings will be every bit as rewarding. It's the best I have ever read on the "Identity Message"—a belief I have held since I was 30 years old. I'm now 69! God bless you all.

James Harold Sr.  
Gentry, Arkansas

## TELEVISION

The *World Ahead* magazine is a joy to receive. But I particularly want to let you know how much help I get from Dr. Roderick Meredith's TV program on the VISION channel every Sunday evening. May he long continue this most enlightening Bible study and prophecy.

C. Yorke  
North Vancouver, B.C., Canada

I would like to take this time to thank you for the *World Ahead* magazine and

the other booklets that I have received. I found them to be very informative and spiritually uplifting.

Since 1981, I have been following God's Truth taught by Herbert W. Armstrong, Now I'm glad to see that Roderick Meredith is teaching that same vital Truth.

I also enjoy the *World Ahead* television program, and recently was surprised and glad to see Richard Ames presenting the program. I hope Mr. Ames will be a permanent addition to the *World Ahead*. I'm looking forward to seeing more of your programs each week, and receiving your magazine. Thank you.

Troy Craig  
Scarborough, Ontario, Canada

*The World Ahead television program, presented by Dr. Roderick Meredith and Richard Ames, both longtime evangelists in God's Work, can be seen weekly throughout the United States, Canada and certain other international areas. For complete program listings, please refer to the inside back cover of this magazine—ed.*

Thank you for the outstanding literature and for the inspirational television program, *The World Ahead*. May God bless your efforts to bring this troubled world the true Gospel of Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Thanks again for your encouragement!

John MacKenzie  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

## MARRIAGE & FAMILY

I was so absorbed by the article titled "Keeping Love Alive" in the November–December issue of the *World Ahead*. In my eagerness to find out more about building strong marital relationships, I am writing for your free booklet titled *How to Have a Joyous Marriage*. Thank you.

Edward Truma  
Boroko, Papua New Guinea

I was very touched by the articles in the November–December *World Ahead* titled "Keeping Love Alive" and "Family Matters," written by Roderick C. Meredith and Larry R. Salyer respectively.

In fact, I don't really know how to express my joy and gratitude to God for mightily using your ministry to reveal His

wonderful Truth—especially your advice and solutions to everyday family problems facing the entire world.

I immensely thank you for this great Work—keep it up and may the Almighty God bless you and your entire ministry.

Dominic Nze  
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

My wife Janet and I express our profound gratitude and appreciation to Larry R. Salyer for writing the article "Family Matters" in the newly launched regular feature in the *World Ahead* magazine called "Living Christianity."

The article has thrown a big light on our marriage. It has resulted in improvement in our family. It is my prayer that many will read and study the contents well.

Boachie Donken  
Wlamoose, Ghana

## MAGAZINE APPRECIATED

We would like to commend you for the wonderful and fantastic articles you published in the past year (1997). You brought us more information and more understanding about the wonderful plan God has for all mankind.

We would like to especially note the cover story of the November–December issue about Princess Diana and its observation that obsessive interest in every detail of the life of any human being is not only unhealthy but is, in fact, a sin.

Chester and Cookie Magtibay Co  
San Pedro Laguna, Philippines

I recently had the good fortune of reading the *World Ahead* magazine and was so enlightened by its contents that I was inspired to write and request that I be added to your mailing list. I'm an inmate. Nevertheless, I've searched far and wide for what I believe to be the Truth. Finally, I've found it with the Global Church of God.

L.H.  
Joliet, Illinois

We welcome your comments, criticism or questions. Please mail letters for this section to "Letters to the Editor" at our U.S. address. Be sure to include your name, address and daytime phone number. We reserve the right to edit your comments for clarity, propriety or space.

## EDITORIAL

(continued from page 3)

validity and even certain blessings to sexual perverts! When they themselves are often known to be liars, cheaters, adulterers—disreputable persons of almost every description!

How *dare* we claim to honor God when we pass laws to protect and even encourage the torrent of violence and illicit sex that through television is spewed into living rooms across North America and Britain nearly *every day* and *every night*! This isn't what God wants. His Word tells us the attitude each of us should have: "I will set *nothing* wicked before my eyes" (Ps. 101:3). How dare we use the word "music" to describe the grinding, shattering NOISE of hard rock and rap songs to which our young people are continually exposed!

The *real* Jesus Christ said, "Whoever looks at a woman *to lust for her* has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt. 5:28). The graphic television and motion picture scenes of sex and violence, the lurid lyrics of most rap and hard rock songs—all these are the *total antithesis* of everything Jesus Christ taught and for which He lived and died! Are we raising a generation of MONSTERS?

Will the crime rate once again spiral out of control—as many predict—when today's misguided kids reach their late teens and early twenties? Can our present adult society be brought to a depth of REPENTANCE so that a number of *really significant* steps can be taken to halt the downward spiral of morals and behavior in our professing Christian nations?

Make no mistake! We *are* living near the end of an age. Dark clouds are swiftly forming around the American and British-descended peoples of the world.

Even though our nations—as a whole—probably will NOT repent and turn to God, each of us individually is held responsible to "walk in the light" to the extent that God shows us that light. I pray that thousands of you who read this will want to ACT on the Truth—on the entire *way of life* we have been revealing to you month by month in these pages and through the *World Ahead* telecast. And I pray that many of you will carefully, *prayerfully* read and respond to the lead article in this issue.

For truly, knowledge is of *no value* unless it is used or applied. We have been giving you awesome knowledge of the *true values* and the magnificent PURPOSE for human existence through these pages, through our *free* booklets and through the telecast. What you *do* with that precious knowledge is now up to you.

As we pulled to the end of the country driveway Bill walked out onto the porch to see who was coming. In his 50s, but looking haggard and aged beyond his years, he was at the end of his rope. As we talked, his sense of utter despair and hopelessness was apparent. Life hadn't always been this way for Bill. He'd been a young naval officer and later a successful banker. He'd had a wife and children. But he had also become addicted to alcohol.

As the years passed, alcohol was increasingly the controlling factor in his life. It came before his career, his family—even God. Finally, he just disappeared—sort of dropped out of sight for a couple years. When he resurfaced, it was with high hopes and promises to his wife and children that things would be different if they would just give him another chance.

Within a matter of months, however, things began heading back down the same bleak path. Bill left home again. A few days later, it was on a hunch that a friend and I showed up uninvited at this house in the country where we found him. While I certainly felt deep compassion for Bill, my friend had an even better understanding of how he felt. That's because this man was a recovering alcoholic.

As our conversation progressed, the depth of Bill's despair was evident. He saw only one way out of his pain. In fact, he'd been carrying around a gun—contemplating suicide.

Before we left him that day, Bill gave us his pistol and agreed to enter a halfway house my friend recommended. It was a place where he could “dry out” and get some help.

### The Impact of Alcoholism

“Alcohol figures in 41 percent of traffic crash fatalities and is a factor in 50 percent of homicides, 30 percent of suicides, and 30 percent of accidental

deaths” (*U.S. News & World Report*, Sept. 8, 1997, p. 58). According to government statistics, it claims at least 100,000 lives a year—many times more than all illegal drugs combined (Nov. 30, 1987, p. 57).

While two out of three adults in the United States use alcohol, a mere 10% of those drink more than half of all the beer, wine and liquor consumed! The issue of *U.S. News & World Report* first quoted estimates that **there are 50 million problem drinkers in the United States, 10 million of whom are confirmed alcoholics** (that is, those who are physiologically dependent upon alcohol). Problem drinkers include all whose drinking causes financial difficulties, physical abuse or broken families. More than ten years ago the *annual* economic cost of alcohol abuse to society was estimated at nearly 120 billion dollars!

This figure, however, is only the tip of the iceberg. A 1987 Gallup Poll reported that one American family in four had been troubled in some way by alcohol. According to a January 18, 1988, article in *Newsweek*, titled “Alcohol and the Family,” more than 28 million Americans have grown up in a family where at least one parent was an alcoholic. “Imagine a child who lives in a chaotic house, rides around with a drunk driver and has no one to talk to about the terror. Don't think it doesn't happen: more than 10 million people in the United States are addicted to alcohol, and most of them have children” (p. 63).

Clearly, the scope of the problem is monumental. Make no mistake—those addicted to alcohol aren't merely confined to the periphery of society. They're not simply the “down-and-out losers” or skid-row bums. They're young and old, male and female. They're from every income and social level—and every profession. They are college students, attorneys, doctors, businessmen, government officials and housewives—whose lives are all controlled by alcohol.

And remember, for every person who is *physically* dependent on alcohol, there are four others who have developed a *psychological* dependence.

For some, primarily young people of the college crowd, excessive drinking may be just a phase they will “outgrow.” But for millions of others, it's something they seem *unable* to leave behind—even when their life unravels.

### The Dark Hole of Addiction

While there are millions who are able to drink in moderation—to have an occasional beer or a glass of wine with a meal—there are many others for whom this simply isn't possible. For them, temperance or

self-control is a quality that they're only capable of exercising *prior to* taking that first drink. The reasons for this can be both physical and psychological.

The Bible permits the use of alcohol in moderation. Its uses in Scripture are chiefly as a beverage, generally in the context of a festive meal (cf. Deut. 14:26; John 2:1-10), and as medicine (cf. 1 Tim. 5:23). Wine in particular has been shown to have a number of beneficial effects. Moderate use of red wine is thought to lower cholesterol levels, reduce the risk of heart attack and aid in digesting food.

On the other hand, alcohol *abuse* and *drunkenness* are treated as very serious matters. So much so that the Apostle Paul warns that no drunkard can inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9-10). Why? “How does alcohol abuse violate God's law?” some might ask. Simply put, *idolatry* is at the *spiritual core* of addiction. When someone becomes enslaved to something, it is then master over him (cf. Rom. 6:16)—in place of God (cf. Matt. 6:2; 4:10).

Under certain circumstances, drinking alcohol can make most people feel better. The Bible refers to this quality when it tells us that wine “makes glad the heart of man” (Ps. 104:15). But the beneficial social effects of alcohol are generally limited to small doses only (James Milam, *Under the Influence*, 1984, p. 24). And we must never forget that God's way of life—including the use of strong drink—*never* allows for “losing control” (cf. Gal. 5:22-23). The *only* proper use of alcohol is in MODERATION.

Use of alcohol can in some ways be confusing. In small amounts it works as a stimulant. In large quantities alcohol has a sedating effect and can even be toxic. It will put portions of the brain to “sleep.” Not only is this reflected in the impairment of motor functions, but



# The Dark Hole of Alcoholism

by John H. Ogwyn

## The Genetic Factor

While prolonged abuse of alcohol will damage virtually anyone's ability to properly metabolize alcohol, scientific studies have shown that there is a *genetic* aspect to true alcoholism. It's widely recognized, for example, that there are whole ethnic groups, such as most Native Americans, whose bodies don't seem to be able to process alcohol as efficiently as others.

Studies by researcher Donald Godwin during the 70s helped establish this hereditary aspect of alcoholism. "Godwin was able to separate hereditary influences from environmental influences by studying the children of alcoholics who were taken from their parents at birth and adopted by nonrelatives.... Godwin found that the children of alcoholics do have a much higher risk of becoming alcoholics themselves—four times that of nonalcoholics—despite having no exposure to their alcoholic parent after the first weeks of life. They were also likely to develop the disease earlier in life, usually in their twenties. The children of nonalcoholic parents, on the other hand, showed relatively low rates of alcoholism even if reared by alcoholic foster parents" (James Milam, 1984, pp. 39-40).

The key to understanding why some seem to have a hereditary predisposition to alcoholism lies in realizing how alcohol is broken down or metabolized in the body. Though small amounts of alcohol are eliminated from the body through sweat, urine and breath, the vast majority is processed by the liver. This organ contains enzymes that metabolize alcohol into acetaldehyde and then, in turn, metabolize the acetaldehyde into acetate. In a third step, acetate is broken down into carbon dioxide and water and eliminated from the body.

Charles Lieber, chief of the research program on liver disease and nutrition at the Bronx Veterans Administration Hospital, "discovered that the liver mitochondria in alcoholics are abnormal and unable to change acetaldehyde into acetate at as great a rate as in nonalcoholics. Significantly, this low capacity was evident even in the early stages of alcohol consumption, indicating that the alcoholic's cells are altered *before* he starts drinking heavily and continually" (pp. 35-36).

The chemical roots of addiction seem to lie in the way acetaldehyde behaves in the brain. It reacts with neurotransmitters to produce opiate-like compounds that act on the opiate receptors in the brain to produce addiction. Simply put, the bodies of those who are physically addicted to alcohol don't metabolize it normally.

also in the fact that people "under the influence" will begin to say and do things they otherwise wouldn't. Inhibitions are "relaxed" and judgment is impaired because the portion of the brain that controls these functions is being anesthetized.

Because of this quality, alcohol has been used for centuries as a drug to help people change the way they feel. It has been used to block out the pain of disappointment, to help a person "fit in" or simply to produce a giddy, euphoric feeling. But when alcohol is used this way—as a mood-altering drug—the road of life has taken a detour that can spiral downward into a dark hole.

The Christian must instead learn to *deal* with life and its difficulties—turning to God and others for help. But the problem drinker is seeking to *escape*. He has discovered the "magic elixir" of life! He's found something to block out his pain, inadequacy and frustration. The problem, of course, is that you can't *really* escape. As soon as you sober up, life is still there—waiting for you.

The psychological roots of addiction lie in using alcohol to cope with life. While at first one might drink in pursuit of a "buzz," eventually he is simply drinking to try to feel "normal." And in addition to psychological dependence, there is also physiological addiction. In this case, the body is physically "hooked." Going too long without a drink causes very real—and very *severe*—withdrawal symptoms.

### There Is Hope—and Help

The story is told of a man who began experiencing physical problems as a result of his drinking. He decided that these problems were caused by consuming too many fluids. Therefore, instead of the half-case of beer that he had been drinking, he now substituted smaller quantities of scotch and soda. When his problems continued he decided that the *soda* must not be agreeing with him, so he switched to scotch and water! Needless to say the problems continued, so what did he do? He eliminated the water! Insanity? You bet!

The Bible vividly illustrates the alcoholic's warped reasoning: "Whose heart is filled with anguish and sorrow? Who is always fighting and quarreling? Who is the man with bloodshot eyes and many wounds? It is the one who spends long hours in the taverns, trying out new mixtures. Don't let the sparkle and the smooth taste of strong wine deceive you. For in the end it bites like a poisonous serpent; it stings like an adder. You will see hallucinations... and you will say foolish, silly things that would embarrass you no end when sober. You will stagger like a sailor tossed at sea, clinging to a swaying mast. And afterwards you will say, 'I didn't even know

it when they beat me up.... Let's go and have another drink!'" (Prov. 23:29-35 *Living Bible*).

Actual cases are myriad. Some of them would be humorous if it weren't for the tragedy of human suffering hidden within them. These people are wrestling with the greatest hurdle that stands in the way of their recovery. That hurdle is *denial*. God's Word tells us that "the heart is deceitful above all things" (Jer. 17:9). In other words, a primary ingredient of human nature is self-deceit.

Jesus said, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Facing and admitting the truth about ourselves can often be very painful. Yet it's the most important step a person can take to climb out of the dark hole of addiction. Without that step, none of the others will work.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), founded in 1935, is the "granddaddy" of virtually all current treatment programs. From two men in a hotel room in Akron, Ohio, this program has spread to every continent. Millions have walked through the doors of AA meetings. While many professional treatment programs for alcoholism and chemical dependency have sprung up in recent decades, most utilize AA principles as a part of their overall recovery program. Why? What has been behind this program's staying power and success?

Joe McQueeney, executive director of Serenity Park, a recovery facility in Little Rock, Arkansas, explains a key point in his book, *The Steps We Took*. The success of any program of recovery is determined by the degree to which it is in harmony with this point. "When God created the world and everything in it, He created it with a set of principles that wouldn't change, principles that govern everything including human life" (p. 13).

In other words, God's laws are living laws. To the extent that individuals are in harmony with them, they will reap benefits and blessings.

The first step of the Alcoholics Anonymous program is: "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable."

Commenting on the next step, Mr. McQueeney asserts, "There is a solution beyond ourselves. This is what sanity is: the ability to see the truth. And if we can see the truth then we will be free from the problem. Step 2: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity" (p. 27).

"Once we see that we can't handle a problem ourselves, a whole new set of possibilities opens up. Then we can look at avenues beyond ourselves. We don't have access to those possibilities as long as we are trying to solve everything *within* ourselves" (p. 29).

The third step of recovery as outlined in the twelve steps is, "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives

over to the care of God as we understood Him." As Joe McQueeney explains, "our great trouble is that we are trying to make ourselves better. We can't really do that. We have to have God's help. We have to quit playing God because it hasn't worked. We have to make a decision that hereafter God is going to direct our lives" (p. 37).

Other steps go on to demand that the individual make a searching and fearless moral inventory of his life, become willing to admit his wrongs and make amends where possible.

They also involve humbly asking God to remove defects of character and praying for a knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out. These are steps that recognize the reality of human inadequacy, the power of God, and the necessity of personal honesty and responsibility. They are based upon living principles that the Creator of the universe Himself set in motion.

While any number of institutions can provide facilities to "dry out" an alcoholic, that alone won't solve the problem. It's a necessary step, certainly. But what happens when he or she walks out of the institution? Unless the person has begun learning an entirely different way of handling life, it's just a matter of time until he'll reach once again for that old "magic potion."

And what of the millions of other problem drinkers? Some of them may quit drinking but never really go on to develop a healthy, mature approach to life. Their thinking continues to be dominated by resentment and blame of other people, places and things for their problems. They may be "dry," but their lives still display evidence of an alcoholic mentality. True development of mental and emotional health can occur only in a life guided by the spiritual principles that derive from God's Word.

For an alcoholic, the sense of despair can be overwhelming. Guilt and self-loathing become all-consuming and lead to more drinking to block out the pain. But the *good* news is that it *is* possible to come back from the depths of alcoholism's dark hole! Recovery is possible for anyone who is capable of being honest with himself.

Bill, whose story was recounted at the beginning of this article, finally came back home after several months in the halfway house. During that time his body had been gradually detoxified from the ravages of alcohol and his mind had begun to clear. His life took a drastic turn as he learned how to truly let himself be governed by spiritual principles—one day at a time. This time he was equipped to *stay* sober! He had finally climbed out of addiction's dark hole—and had emerged into the light. Though Bill has now passed away, the last ten years of his life, free from the ravages of alcoholism, were—according to both him and his wife—the happiest they had ever experienced! WA



I've heard that you teach the observance of a special evening called the "Night to Be Much Observed." Is this the same as the Passover?

The scripture that instructs us to mark this special night in which the Israelites left slavery in ancient Egypt under the leadership of Moses (c. 1446 B.C.) is found in Exodus 12:41-42: "And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years [from the Abrahamic covenant]—on that very same day—it came to pass that all the armies of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. It is a **night of solemn observance** to the LORD for bringing them out of the land of Egypt." The original King James Version says, "**night to be much observed.**" This is a separate occasion from the Passover.

The Passover occurred on the 14th day of the first month of the Hebrew calendar. In Exodus 12:6, we read that the Israelites were commanded to kill the Passover lamb just after the sun had set, at the beginning of the day, according to biblical reckoning—from sunset to sunset (cf. Gen. 1:5-31; Lev. 23:32).

The Passover began with the **sacrifice of a lamb**. That evening, at midnight on the 14th, in a final stroke of humiliation, God slew all the firstborn of Egypt (Ex. 12:29). By taking some of the blood of the lamb they had slain and placing it around the doors of their houses, the Israelites were "passed over," or protected from this plague (v. 13). As they ate the roasted lamb with their families, they were to be **prepared to leave** (v. 12), but were specifically commanded to NOT leave their houses until morning (v. 22).

Approximately three million Israelites DID leave their houses the next morning—and were organized into "armies" (v. 51) throughout the day. By the time the sun was setting, the vast sea of people was prepared to move, led by a spectacular pillar of fire (13:21). And the Israelites actually left Egypt by night on the 15th (Deut. 16:1). This night following the Passover began the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:5-6). The children of Israel were com-

manded to **remember** this and to **observe** it for all time (Ex. 12:17).

God had commanded them to remember the Passover on the *previous* evening—to thus memorialize the lessons of God's protection from the death angel "passing over" them. But He *also* commanded them to remember THIS evening, one night later, for different reasons. The focus of *this* evening was not on the blood of the lamb protecting them from death. It was, rather, on their miraculous departure from the land of Egypt, which had held them captive for generations. Remember, Exodus 12:42 reads, "It is a night of solemn observance to the LORD for **bringing them out of the land of Egypt.**"

Even in our modern world, the lessons of Israel's exodus from Egypt still apply (cf. Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:1-11). The parallel for Christians today—who, as God's New Testament Church, form the spiritual "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16)—is that, through Christ, we have been delivered from enslavement to *sin* (Rom. 6:17), which is breaking God's law (1 John 3:4 KJV). And as the Apostle Paul explained, we are still to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which pictures putting sin out of our lives (1 Cor. 5:6-8; cf. Luke 12:1). That obviously includes this Feast's opening night—the Night to Be Much Observed.

As brothers and sisters in Christ gather together for this special occasion in individual homes, marking the evening with a thoughtful meal and fellowship, we are reminded not only of what God did for ancient Israel, but also of what He is doing in our own lives now.

Jesus Christ instructed His disciples that His followers should take up their cross daily and follow Him. What did He mean by this?

The answer to this question reveals the deep and profound commitment to God's way of life that a Christian must have. Notice what Jesus said: "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross [daily], and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his

life for My sake and the gospel's will save it" (Mark 8:34-35; cf. Luke 9:23).

Christ's instructions reveal important requirements for becoming a disciple. To begin with, one must "deny himself." Jesus began to explain to the disciples about His imminent death. It was during this occasion that He rebuked Peter sharply for being focused on the things of men, rather than the things of God (Mark 8:31-33). To deny oneself means to be totally surrendered to *God's will* in deep, heartfelt repentance and humble obedience. "And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (Gal. 5:24). Nothing should come before God the Father and Jesus Christ (Luke 14:26-33). A true Christian must be willing to forsake everything else in order to follow Christ.

In addition, all true disciples "will suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12; Matt. 10:24-25). Our Savior was constantly being tempted, maligned and persecuted for teaching and obeying the Father's will. Though innocent, He willingly endured the shame of the crucifixion (Gal. 3:13; Heb. 12:2-3). To bear one's personal cross is to share in Christ's own sufferings—enduring faithfully to the end (1 Peter 4:12-13). A disciple must be willing to suffer for righteousness' sake and not be ashamed of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:38).

If you are a Christian, you have been called to suffer as Jesus Christ did—for righteousness' sake (1 Peter 2:20-24). The Christian calling and discipleship is a profound opportunity and way of life. It contains within it the tremendous reward of eternal life and positions of great authority in the Government of God when Christ returns (John 14:1-3). Therefore, we must prove ourselves faithful to Jesus Christ—denying ourselves, bearing our cross and following His example.

To learn more, please call or write for our free booklet, *What Is a True Christian?*

## GENOCIDE (continued from page 11)


### The Bible and Doomsday Weapons

Many students of Bible prophecy believe that the book of Revelation may allude to some kind of "nerve gas" or other *chemical agent* that will affect man's central nervous system. In the apocalyptic description of an end-of-the-age struggle between East and West, Revelation 9:1-11 describes some kind of unusual warfare: "Then out of the smoke *locusts* came upon the earth [perhaps modern air weaponry].... And they were not given authority to *kill* [men], but to *torment* them for five months.... In those days men will *seek death* and will not find it; they will *desire to die*, and death will flee from them" (vv. 3-6). Might this describe some terrifying chemical or biological weapons?

The Bible clearly shows that great *pandemics* are also destined to sweep across the globe at the time of the end. AIDS and the Ebola virus are two recent scourges. Jesus Himself said that as the "end of the age" approached there would be increasing "famines, PESTILENCES [disease epidemics], and earthquakes in various places" (Matt. 24:3, 7).

Ezekiel's pandemic prophecies *include* modern English-speaking peoples, many of whom will die of terrible sickness and disease epidemics (Ezek. 7:15). Furthermore, nearly 3,500 years ago, the Prophet Moses also mentioned that these peoples would experience long-continuing sicknesses of every sort in punishment for our national sins: "The LORD will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever... with... boils... tumors... the scab, and... with madness and blindness and confusion" (Deut. 28:22-28). God further says, "I will even appoint *terror* over you, wasting disease and fever" (Lev. 26:16). For proof that these prophecies primarily apply to the modern English-speaking peoples, request our free brochure, *America and Britain in Prophecy*.

Will madmen, possessing great oil wealth, produce and use both chemical and biological agents to achieve their sinister ends—just before Christ's Second Coming to restore peace and prosperity to all nations?

Truly, we are living in "perilous times" and, as warned in Luke 21:36, need to "**watch... and pray always that [we] may be counted worthy to ESCAPE all these things** that will come to pass, and to stand [blameless] before the Son of Man"! 



For most people, financial well-being is an elusive dream. But did you know that for thousands of years, a vital secret of financial security and success has been written in the pages of the Holy Scriptures? This door to personal economic freedom is open to YOU. Our new booklet explains how.

**Make God Your  
Financial Partner**


Call or write for your free copy today.  
See page 3 for the address or phone number nearest you.

## UNIVERSE (continued from page 17)

*heritage!* But it's not going to be how modern science fiction movies and shows portray it. For there is another aspect to the purpose God has for us that is more amazing still!

When glorified at the resurrection, we will be LIKE our literal Brother, Jesus Christ (1 John 3:2). For we will then be "filled with all the fullness of God"! (Eph. 3:19). It should *blow our minds* to realize that our destiny is to join the Father and Christ on Their level of existence! *Talk about rags to riches!* Indeed, in the vastness of space, we seem like absolute nothingness. But in reality, we are at the very *center* of God's plan and purpose. For He intends to take us from this limiting physical existence and make us like Him!

Then it would not take millions of years to traverse the cosmos—intergalactic travel would be instantaneous. And glorified Christians will wield infinite power over all stars and galaxies as literal, full children of God, sharing His omnipotent Spirit. It is no wonder that the Apostle Paul stated, "**For I consider that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God**" (Rom. 8:18-19).

If we repent of breaking God's law and embrace His way of life, then we can be empowered with His Holy Spirit now (Acts 2:38)—the same Spirit through which He made the universe. And as His literal sons and daughters (2 Cor. 6:18), we can look forward to the most awesome future imaginable! To learn more about what God has in store for you, please write or call for our free booklet, *Your Ultimate Destiny*. 

Probably her last memory was of screaming tires, breaking glass and a tremendous BANG as two huge pieces of metal crashed into each other at speeds of more than 60 miles an hour. It's early evening on a crisp fall night in September of 1997. A young teenage girl is riding in the family car on a freeway not far from St. Louis. For some reason, another vehicle crosses the median and strikes her car, causing severe trauma.

Rescue teams and ambulances soon arrive on the scene. The girl's condition is critical. A helicopter is called in to airlift her to the nearest trauma center. But her injuries are too serious—she dies en route to the hospital.

Her grieving parents give permission for any of her internal organs to be donated if useful. Even though her brain function has ceased and her heart has stopped beating on its own, other parts of her body

won't completely deteriorate for several more hours and can be made available to those who need them.

Several hundred miles away, in a small town in central Kansas, another teenage girl is at home watching television. She's been suffering from kidney failure for 12 years—being kept alive by traveling three days a week to a clinic more than 100 miles from her home for hemodialysis. Much of her life has been spent lying on hospital beds, wondering how much longer she and her parents could endure. All the while, she's valiantly struggled to keep up her schoolwork and live as normal a life as possible—trying to be like other kids her age. Her name is Lana, and she is completely unaware of the horrible collision near St. Louis. I know her story, for Lana is the daughter of one of my best friends.

The kidneys from the teenage girl who died in the car crash are flown by

helicopter to a major hospital in Lincoln, Nebraska, for blood and tissue typing and crossmatching. You see, kidneys filter blood—a marvelous thing. Not only must the blood type match, but at least 16 other blood components, called antigens, must correspond perfectly before this organ can be paired with a recipient.

Have you ever thought about your own blood? Why is it red? Why does it clot? Why does there seem to be so much of it? Blood is very complex and performs functions that are not yet completely understood by modern science. And blood is what kidneys filter—keeping it “clean” day by day, hour by hour.

Late that night, the telephone rings in Lana's rural Kansas home. The crossmatching shows that the donated kidney is a perfect match. In only a few hours she must be in Kansas City at that familiar place—the hospital. But this time will be different. This time she will receive a priceless gift that will change her life—a useful, functioning kidney. A girl who had waited so many years to live a truly normal life would now have the chance.

### Blood Gives Life

Blood is the “life stream” of the human body. This marvelous red fluid is essential to every one of our cells—in fact, no part of the body can live without it. Blood circulates through 100,000 miles of vessels in the average human body and supplies the cells with food and oxygen. Moreover, blood fights disease organisms that enter the body and automatically clots when there is a wound.

The Word of God revealed thousands of years ago that the “*life... is in the blood*” (Lev. 17:11). Modern biologists are continually discovering more amazing qualities of this life-giving liquid that circulates through our bodies.

When Jesus Christ died for the sins of mankind, He shed His blood. In fact, when introducing the new symbols of the New Testament Passover service, He instructed the disciples, “This is My *blood* of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. 26:28). But why was the shedding of blood necessary for the Creator to forgive our sins?

God's original plan for mankind centered around the sacrifice of Jesus Christ from the beginning—in fact, from the very *foundation* of the world (Rev. 13:8). In Eden, the first man, Adam, chose to disobey God. As a result, he and his wife Eve were thrust out of God's presence and were thus separated from their Creator. The vast majority of their descendants continued to disobey God's laws and became, in the Apostle Paul's words, “enemies” of the Almighty (Rom. 5:10). So God began to teach mankind about His plan to reconcile us to Himself by means of a perfect sacrifice.

### The Passover in Egypt

The first instance we know of the Passover being observed is when the Israelites were slaves in Egypt. God used it as a means of freeing them from their bondage.

He instructed each family to select a lamb. This was done on the 10th day of the Hebrew month of Abib. Many years later Jesus Christ would come to the earth to be the “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29). On this same day of God's calendar, Abib 10 in A.D. 31—He was symbolically “selected” by the masses as He rode a donkey from Bethany into Jerusalem (Luke 19:35-38). They thought He was coming to be their physical king and to overthrow their Roman overlords. In reality, He came to defeat Satan the Devil and make a

way for men to be reconciled to God.

The next step for the Israelites was to kill the lamb on Abib 14. They were to put some of the blood on the sides and tops of the door frames of their houses. The people were to roast and eat the meat and remain inside their homes until morning (Ex. 12:7-22). The death angel, as God had promised, passed through Egypt at midnight and killed all the firstborn of the Egyptians. From the house of Pharaoh to the lowliest prisoner in the dungeons, every firstborn human and animal died—except the firstborn Israelites. For true to God's word, the death angel “passed over” the houses of those who had the lamb's blood on their doorposts.

The Israelites' firstborn were clearly protected from the plague of death by the **blood of the lambs** that had been applied to the doorposts of their houses. It was a “token” or sign showing that the household was to be spared. Today, we can be spared through the **blood of Christ**, our *Passover Lamb*, from the penalty of death that our sins have incurred: “For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us” (1 Cor. 5:7).

The slain lambs were a type or foreshadowing of Jesus Christ, who as the “**Lamb of God**” (John 1:29) would come nearly 1,500 years later to shed His blood, giving His perfect, sinless life as a sacrifice to pay the penalty of our transgression of God's law. For centuries the Passover was celebrated by the eating of a meal—primarily of roast lamb and unleavened bread. The unleavened bread stood for the perfect, sinless Son of God who would come later to be the *atonement*—the sacrifice for mankind that could make us “at one” with God.

### Could Man Save Himself?

The fate of mankind without the Passover sacrifice of Jesus Christ

# HE SHED HIS BLOOD FOR US...

by Rex I. Sexton

“And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His head, and began to salute Him, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him. And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led

Him out to crucify Him.”

—Mark 15:17-20

would be very bleak. All of us have sinned (Rom. 3:23) and the wages of sin is death (6:23). The result of this sin is that we are under a death penalty, in a state of spiritual death, unless we have been redeemed by Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:1, 5). But sadly, mankind has never seemed to realize the deadly consequence of breaking God's law.

God is love (1 John 4:8), and the laws that He gives describe and illustrate that love. In fact, God's law is called the "law of liberty" (James 2:12), for only by keeping God's commandments can we be free to enjoy the abundant life that God wishes for us all. One of the last instructions Jesus gave to His disciples was, "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15)—a truth that is reiterated for us in 1 John 5:3: "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments."

Yet today we continually witness around us a callous disregard for God's commandments. One writer recently observed that much of our modern entertainment actually centers around *breaking* God's laws. How must the Almighty feel when people, who have received bountiful blessings at His hand, walk up to a ticket window and pay six or eight dollars so they can watch two hours of His commandments being virtually trampled asunder? Think about it—what are the scenes that recur most often in modern entertainment? Why are we so fascinated with adultery,

murder, coveting, lying and profanity?

Apparently, many people feel that breaking God's commandments is "no big deal." But in truth, the breaking of God's laws is a terrible and serious thing—so serious, in fact, that God has decreed that it require the shedding of blood to make amends. God's Word states, "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (Heb. 9:22 NRSV). So if you have sinned—and we all have—then the only way to escape the death penalty is through the shed blood of a sacrifice acceptable to God.

### Jesus Kept the Passover

Now back to the special day set aside by God to picture this sacrifice—the Passover. Throughout His life, Jesus kept all of God's annual Festivals, including the Passover (Luke 2:41-42). He, as the God of the Old Testament (1 Cor. 10:4), is the One who revealed these Festivals to Israel and kept them Himself during

His life on earth as a human being! For more information on the identity of the God of the Old Testament, please write for our free brochure, *The God You Can Know!*

During much of Jesus' teaching ministry, He was preparing the disciples for His coming crucifixion. He taught them that He was the "bread of life" (John 6:35, 48) and that His followers would, symbolically, partake of His body and blood (v. 56). These teachings were in preparation for the

time when He would institute the new symbols for the Passover.

Before His crucifixion, Christ instructed His disciples how the New Covenant that He was making with man should be commemorated at the Passover. Since He was the "Lamb of God" and "our Passover," and His sacrifice needed to be made only once (Heb. 9:28; 10:12), He instituted a way to "do this in remembrance" of His sacrifice once a year.

Luke records that Jesus had a desire to eat this last Passover with the disciples (Luke 22:15). Perhaps He was eager to explain to them the real meaning of His coming torture, crucifixion and death. "And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, 'This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you'" (vv. 19-20). So Jesus instructed His followers to commemorate His sacrifice with bread and wine. The unleavened bread symbolized His body—beaten and broken for our healing. The wine represented His blood—that precious, life-giving fluid—shed to pay the penalty for our sins, thus enabling us to be reconciled to our Creator.

Jesus also promised that He would not partake of the Passover symbols again Himself until He could do so with His disciples in the Kingdom of God (v. 16). That is why the Apostle Paul taught that keeping the Passover was a way to "proclaim the Lord's death till He comes" (1 Cor. 11:26).

### Jesus' Broken Body and Blood

After instituting these new Passover symbols, He and His disciples sang a hymn before Jesus led them across the Kidron Valley to the

Garden of Gethsemane on the western slope of the Mount of Olives. Jesus went off by Himself to pray, and when He returned, Judas Iscariot, His betrayer, came with a company of Roman soldiers to arrest Him.

There in the garden, Jesus was arrested like a common criminal. As He was led away, His disciples deserted him (Matt. 26:47-56). He was brought before the Sanhedrin (the Jewish court) by night, and was beaten and spat upon before being sent to Pilate and Herod to be mocked and struck by their soldiers (Luke 23:11; John 19:1-3).

Yet in all this, Jesus never sinned, never became angry, vindictive or accusatory. He knew all of this was an essential step in God's plan to expand His divine Family. And understanding the end result, Jesus counted it as a joyful thing! (Heb. 12:2).

Christ was then scourged and beaten so severely that His features were unrecognizable (Matt. 27:26; Is. 52:14). Scourging was a merciless whipping that tore open the flesh and caused severe bleeding. Jesus was so weakened by this terrible punishment that he was unable to carry His cross to Golgotha (Luke 23:26).

On Golgotha, a small knoll just outside Jerusalem, Jesus was crucified with criminals. On the authority of many ancient New Testament manuscripts, the Ferrar Fenton translation of the Bible includes what is left out of the King James Version of Matthew 27:49. As He hung on the cross in agony, "another taking a spear pierced His side, when [or whereupon] blood and water came out." The next verse: "And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit." John 19:34 explains that this is why other soldiers later found Him already dead. So fulfilling the requirement

that the Passover lamb should be bled to death, Christ's actual death was caused by a loss of blood.

Our Savior suffered an incredibly painful, brutal death. And He did it *voluntarily* so that each of



us—in fact, the whole world—could be reconciled to God. As the Creator of all mankind (Eph. 3:9), Jesus' life was worth more than the sum total of all human life. Therefore, His death paid the death penalty for everyone (Heb. 2:9-10).

At the moment of His death, the huge, thick veil in the temple was torn in two (Matt. 27:51), signifying that a way had now been made for all men to approach the very throne of God the Father! The "blood of the lamb of God" was accepted by the Father in heaven on our behalf! That's why it's possible for our sins, which separate us from God (Is. 59:2), to be forgiven—by being laid upon, and crucified with, the human Jesus Christ who walked this earth 2,000 years ago (53:6). So we can now go on our knees to God in prayer and know that we have boldness to come before Him in His very throne room in heaven by the blood

of Jesus! (Heb. 10:19).

Soon after these events the disciples began to understand the real meaning of what Jesus had done. They were inspired to preach powerfully that all men are guilty before God and need to repent and accept Jesus Christ as their Passover. This was a central part of the message they preached as they obeyed the Great Commission in the ensuing years by going out into all of the known world.

### Passover Kept Today

Since Christ Himself commanded, "Do this in remembrance of Me," true Christians today should observe the Passover on the eve of the day of His suffering and death (Luke 22:19). It is the most solemn and sacred occasion of the religious year. And it reaffirms year by year the Christian's faith in Christ's sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin. Blood truly is an amazing thing. Flowing through our arteries and veins, it gives us life. Without it we are dead—we have no life. What's even more astounding is that the "blood of Jesus Christ... cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Through His shed blood, God our Creator has provided a way for us to be reconciled to Him and, through His resurrected life, we too can live forever (Rom. 5:9-10).

One final note: It has been almost a year and a half now since Lana's life was changed by the new kidney she received. She looks healthy, and is now active. Lana and her parents are very thankful for this gift that has removed so much suffering and hardship from their lives. How much more thankful should we be for the gift of God's Passover Lamb—whose perfect offering makes forgiveness of sin and eternal life possible for every one of us? ■

## CONVERTED?

(continued from page 7)

his brothers and his sisters, and himself as well” (vv. 26-27 *Today’s English Version*).

So the Jesus Christ of your Bible demands *total, unconditional surrender* to Him and to the Father in heaven. He requires that we “burn our bridges,” so to speak. We must exercise real faith, develop TRUST in Him and be willing to *do what He says!* For Jesus challenged those who falsely professed to follow Him

“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.”

even in His own day, saying, “**But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do the things which I say?**” (6:46).

Remember that Jesus said, “He who believes and is BAPTIZED will be saved” (Mark 16:16). So once you have made the decision to become a *real* Christian—one who is filled with and led by God’s Holy Spirit—you should be *baptized*. Baptism pictures the BURIAL of the old, “selfish” self—our total surrender to God through Jesus Christ. And it also pictures being “resurrected” with Christ—to walk in newness of life. Notice Paul’s inspired words: “Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore

we were BURIED with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, **even so we also should walk in newness of life**” (Rom. 6:3-4).

Just *how* is this “newness of life” to be lived? Again, let Paul explain: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, **but Christ liveth in me:** and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20 KJV). Through the promised Holy Spirit, Christ will actually LIVE HIS LIFE within the true Christian! Jesus, in effect, said the same thing in John 14:23: “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.”

### Stop Putting It Off

Thousands of you have come to realize that you are getting the *Truth*, a right *understanding* and the very *message* of God through this Work—the *World Ahead* magazine and telecast. You are beginning to realize that this is the true Work of God on earth—preparing for Christ’s return and the wonderful world that will follow.

But many of you are *delaying* and *procrastinating*—still not DOING anything about this knowledge you have been given!

If you are in this boat, then *stop putting it off*—quit *arguing* and *reasoning* and *delaying*—and begin to OBEY according to the precious spiritual Truth God is showing you through His servants on earth in these last days!

Although God may use *whomever* He wishes, He does not primarily work through false ministers—those who are themselves blinded to the true Gospel, the inspired prophecies of the Bible and the awesome *pur-*

*pose* of human existence. So for real spiritual guidance, you should counsel with *true* ministers of God—who are now being used to preach His message to this dying world.

If you are being called by God and want to ACT on the Truth He has been revealing to you, then call or write us *at once!* Our addresses and phone numbers throughout the world are listed on page three of this magazine. Upon receiving your request, we will send your address and/or phone number to our nearest minister or trained representative. Then he will contact you to set up an appointment for spiritual counseling *at your convenience*.

You will NOT be pressured into baptism or into “joining” anything. In fact, our minister may well give you some material to read and then suggest that you study and pray further about any decision to be SURE of what you are doing. But *you*—perhaps for the very first time in your life—will be talking to a *true* minister of God (usually accompanied by his wife or another representative), affording you the opportunity of a tremendous “give-and-take” discussion about this Work of God, about the real meaning of life, about repentance and baptism, and about any questions you may have regarding the Bible or related issues.

So call or write us TODAY. As the Apostle James writes, “**be DOERS of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves**” (James 1:22).

We look forward, then, to hearing from you, and to helping and serving you in any way we can. For you are now in contact with the true Work of the Living God near the end of this present age. Ask God for the *faith* and the *courage* to ACT on the precious knowledge you have been given. And let us hear from you *soon!* 