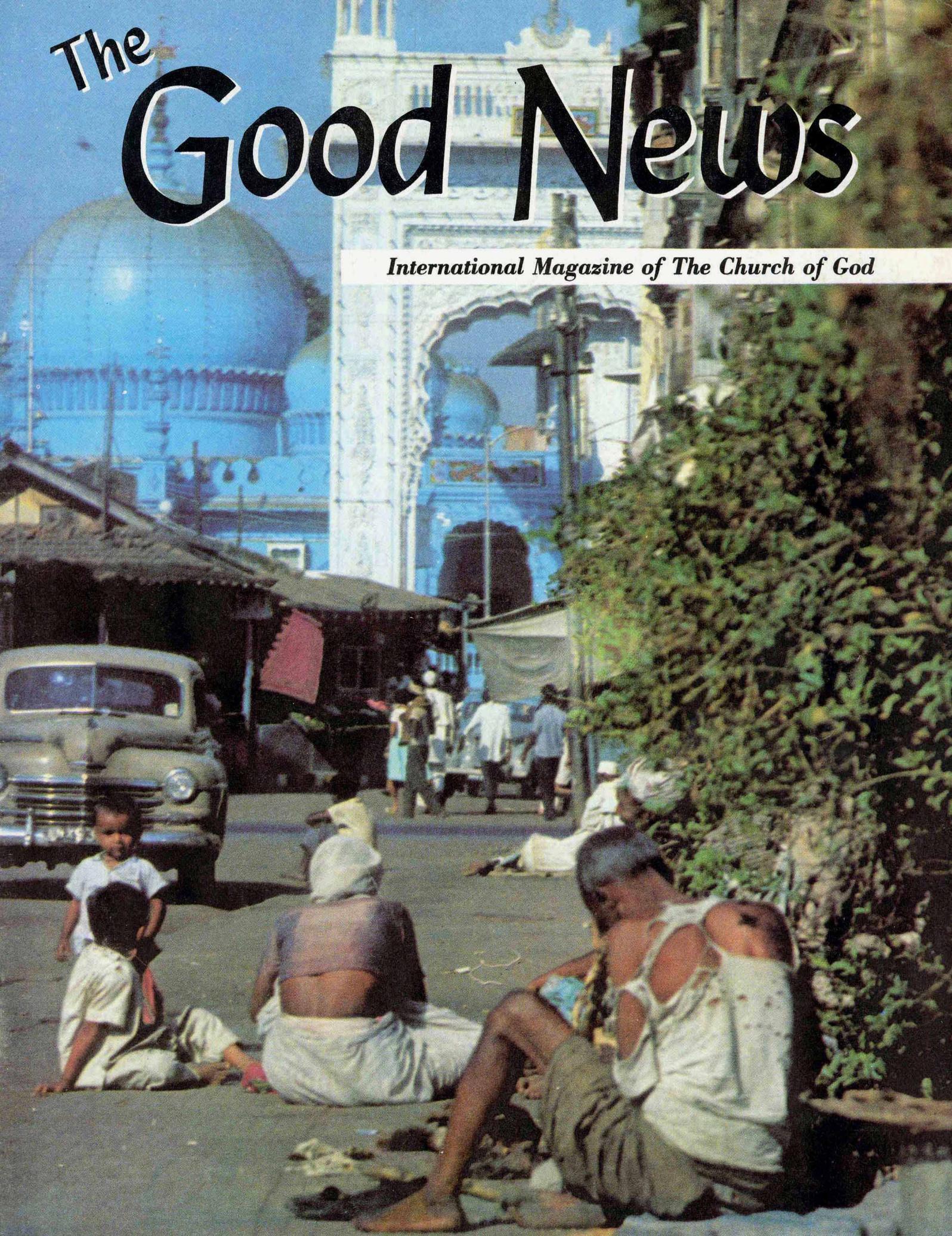


The

Good News

International Magazine of The Church of God





More About Our Cover...

India, so much in the news lately with famine ready to strike more than ten million dead this year, seems so far away and unreal. Yet God shows famine will strike us in fattened and careless Israel. Will you be reduced to the state of the poor man on the cover—what can you do to properly prepare ahead of time? Read **PREPARE FOR FAMINE!** beginning page 5.

Wide World Photo

What our READERS SAY...

Healing Restored

"I had sent to you for a prayer cloth for my ear. I hadn't been able to hear out of my right ear for 47 years and I got some infection in my other ear and was about to lose the hearing in it. The result was that God has healed both my ears."

Mr. and Mrs. S. C., Oregon

Cancer

"I must also thank you for your prayers—God healed me. I thank Him for His mercy. I sent for a prayer cloth as I had cancer on my lips and thank God He healed me."

Mrs. L. T., Wyoming

A Good Light

"I have recently received a visit from your personal representative in this area, Mr. Dennis Pyle. We discussed many pertinent matters and his visit was a blessing in many ways. He informed me of a Friday night Bible Study and Sabbath Services that are held each week in this area. I attended both, and it proved to be the most wonderful experience in my life. The people are so very friendly that it seemed more like something that I had been attending for years, not just my first service. I look forward to next week with great expectation. The attendance at the Bible Study was 234, and the Sabbath Service was attended by at least twice that amount. There were many small children attending, but as is so uncommon today, they be-

haved as angels. Praise God for such a work and a group of such fine Christian people."

D. C., Ohio

Baltimore Church

"We would like to thank God for the Church here in Baltimore. Yesterday was our first time in attendance at God's Church. How thrilled we were when we entered the House of God and saw so many hungry persons with their Bibles and pens and paper. In that one service I learned more than in my four years at Bible College. The way the word was expounded and taught—even the children were looking up scriptures and taking notes. In our previous church this just wasn't done. The sermon usually was forgotten a few hours after it was preached."

E. L., Maryland

Book Appreciated

"Your book **GOD SPEAKS OUT ON 'The New Morality'** will be a valuable guide in talking to my 12-year-old son about the beauty of marriage and of the relationship between man and woman as God had intended. He knows the truth about Creation, as questions which came up were answered in truth and not the stork story. In this day and age when the young people are being bombarded, through radio, television, newspapers, books and the music they listen to, with **SEX**, it is impossible to set a straight course for your children

(Continued on next page)

The Good News

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ministering to its members
scattered abroad

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EDITOR

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Garner Ted Armstrong

MANAGING EDITOR

David Jon Hill

SENIOR EDITORS

Roderick C. Meredith
Herman L. Hoeh

Associate Editors

Albert J. Portune Ronald Kelly

Contributing Editors

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Rose McDowell	

Editorial and Production Assistants

Paul W. Kroll
James W. Robinson
Donald G. McDonald

BUSINESS MANAGER

Albert J. Portune

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Members in Australia and Southeast Asia should address the Editor, Box 345, North Sydney, N. S. W., Australia.

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without CHRIST and the WORD OF GOD. Advertisers hardly speak of product quality any more. Instead they instill the idea that if you ride, wear, or use their product, you become a sex magnet, attracting the lusts of the opposite sex and that this is the only purpose of life."

C. D., Illinois

Visit Texas Campus

"My husband and I visited Ambassador College at Big Sandy, Texas, and had lunch there. We certainly appreciated the true hospitality that was bestowed on us by the young people. As you have stated on your radio broadcast, we were amazed at the friendliness of the students. There was no 'smart aleckness,' just pure, honest smiles and courtesy and kindness."

Mrs. J. M., Texas

Ask and . . .

"Along with my tithe and special offerings I would like to tell you of just one way God has blessed this family. After discussing with my employer the high rate of interest I would have to pay to the bank if I borrowed the money to repair our family car, to my complete surprise he suggested I not repair the old car but rather pick out a new one of my choice—he would purchase it for me. In a near state of shock I followed his advice and we now have a brand-new car. My payments are whatever I can afford a month, no interest plus a cash discount and a company discount. Third tithe year blessing, of course."

T. S., California

Think Big

"When I estimated my income back in January 1965 so we could send in our tithe of the tithe, I estimated my 1965 income at more than I had ever earned in any one year of my life. I not only earned that amount, but God has blessed us with an additional \$1,200 which made it possible for us to make necessary repairs on our house and car plus purchasing some much-needed clothing for the entire family. Proof once again that God does bless the tither."

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. S., Ohio

Learns Lesson of Deut. 6:11, 12

"Since I have been in God's Church, my income has increased about 30 to 50 percent each year. I used to wonder and fret about tithing and doubt God. I knew I owed God everything I had and even more, but I never tithed before and I was well off, I thought. I had everything paid I owed to man and had \$4,000 in the bank. I didn't think I needed to be increased, so my mind tricked me into being skeptical. God really taught me a lesson then—He allowed me to lose everything! I couldn't grasp what was going on; I just couldn't. After about 8 months of going backwards I suddenly caught on. I began to tithe and after about three months I could see things were going much better. I am now in my third tithe year and can see that after paying three tithes and offerings we have more than ever before in physical blessings and spiritual blessings."

Israel Z. S. Jr., Washington, D.C.

A Good Account

"Enclosed are two checks; one, my usual tithe, the second is the result of obedience to God's law concerning tithing. I began tithing last spring—before this time I was returning one-tenth of my *net* income. Within a few days after I had mailed the tithe I received a phone call from my former employer. He wanted some work done which only I could (or would) do. It was arranged so that I could do the work on my own time and at my own convenience so as not to interfere with my studies and homework (I am a student). The money I received from this additional work (work which I didn't ask for) made it possible for me to attend the Feast of Tabernacles at Squaw Valley. Furthermore, since returning home from the Feast I have received a raise in pay which now makes it possible for me to keep a second tithe (on student's pay). I thought you might be interested to learn of this, although I am sure you know of many similar accounts."

R. E. O., Washington

Holy Day Blessing

"Last June on the Day of Pentecost I lost my job in Virginia because I would

not work that day. On January 13, my former employer called me and offered me a job. The results of God's intervention are as follows: I went back to work, not on my old job as head mechanic, but as Assistant Plant Manager in the garment industry. I have ALL the Holy Days off this year. I received a 47 percent increase in wages and a promise of my own plant to manage in a year or two. Everything worked out for us to live in the same place for \$30 less than before. God does bless us when we tithe, but in our case tithing alone didn't bring this about. We were breaking God's laws of budgeting and marriage, and we had vanity. We now thank God for His love, mercy, and patience with us that He didn't destroy us. We know we are less than nothing."

Member, Virginia

From France

"About a year ago I wrote to you for my first booklet, then I went to Geneva to ask for the Bible Correspondence Course. Next I attended the Feast of Tabernacles, where I was surprised by the enthusiasm of your singing, even though I do not speak English and could not understand the words. I came back home delighted by the awesome things we were told. I was a Jehovah's Witness for many years, but had never learned what really counts. I was one of those who seemed 'ever learning, and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.'"

Woman, Nancy, France

Minister Learning

"Since I have been receiving and reading *The PLAIN TRUTH*, I have found it to be very helpful. I have been a licensed minister for 2 years. Since I have received your magazines, I have preached 3 sermons out of the information I've gotten from you. There is much I do not know about God's word. I would appreciate very much any books that you could send me that would help me along the way in knowing the real truth, because in teaching or preaching, I would like to tell the truth. If I am wrong, I can't tell others right."

Prince A. D., New York



PREPARE FOR FAMINE!

World leaders predict mass famine and starvation. God's Church knows total famine is coming. What should we do as members of the body of Christ? What is the balance of FAITH AND WORKS that we should have in facing THIS end-time crisis? During the last Ministerial Conference Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong commissioned Mr. Garner Ted Armstrong to begin preparing a program on this vital subject for the Church. Working directly with him in this program is Mr. Dale L. Schurter. Read the basic, beginning research in this article from the Instructor in Animal Husbandry and Agriculture at Ambassador College in Texas.

by Dale L. Schurter

HUNGER pangs plague millions today!

Jesus Christ prophesied worldwide famines would be a sign preceding His second coming. This prophecy is *being fulfilled* today. Its last stages will end in the grizzly horror of children being *eaten by their own parents!*

The world sees the problem, but doesn't know *what* to do about it. Or if a solution is suggested, how to put it into effect is an insurmountable problem in today's strife-torn and hopelessly divided world.

The World's Insoluble Problem

The latest quarterly of the National Federation of Grain Cooperatives reports: "The world is on the threshold of the *biggest FAMINE* in history." The three continents of Asia, Africa, and South America are being stricken this very minute. The populations of these continents are growing out of control and production of food is falling drastically behind. This is one of the *greatest* and most *insoluble* problems in the HISTORY OF THE WORLD.

Shocking???

"Such a famine will be of massive proportions affecting hundreds of millions, possibly even billions of persons. If this happens, as appears very prob-

able, it will be the *most colossal catastrophe* in history."

Famines in China and India are already involving thousands and even millions of persons. The peoples of the United States and the British Commonwealth have not yet had to cope with such a problem in this age. Modern Israel does not realize that its prosperity is almost over.

Dr. Raymond Ewell, vice-president for research at State University of New York at Buffalo, states, "This problem seems likely to reach such enormous proportions even by 1975 that it will dwarf and overshadow most of the problems and anxieties which now occupy our attention, such as the threat of nuclear war, communism, the space race, racial problems, unemployment, Berlin, Viet Nam, the Congo, Cyprus, Cuba, etc., etc."

"In past famines, many people have died of disease as well as starvation, but now modern medicine will keep people alive even though starving, and they will still compete for a share of the inadequate food supply . . . but it will be persistent and get worse year by year, unless ways and means are soon found to increase agricultural production."

Possible Answers Inadequate

It is hard for us, sitting in a rich, comfortable, over-fed America, to realize that total famine in all the world is just around the corner. President Johnson, British Prime Minister Wil-

son, and other men in high positions of government, around the world, have reasoned, studied, pondered the problem, and have come up with two "possible" answers: 1) Reduce the population growth rate, or, 2) Increase agricultural production, or both.

Reducing the population growth rate is the only real answer according to these men. Improved agriculture could conceivably take care of the expected increases in population *for a few more years*. Beyond that—STARVATION.

An effort to reduce population through birth control is being actively promoted by governments and private groups throughout the world. But, no marked decrease in birth rate is expected until the 1980's. By then, it will be TOO LATE!

The only remaining possibility of averting world famine in the 1970's is therefore increased agricultural production. Technically, it is possible to double or even triple agricultural production in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, through the use of more fertilizers, more irrigation, better seed varieties, pesticides, and other improved agricultural practices. Dr. Ewell believes that most fertilizers needed by these countries will have to be imported from the industrialized countries through foreign aid.

This presents another problem. Even after the quantities of fertilizer we have been discussing become available, there is still a big educational job ahead to

UPI, Bhansali Photo

TOP: Milk being distributed in Rajasthan State in Western India. BOTTOM: Bombay, India, citizens wait for rations as truck unloads.

get farmers to *use* the fertilizer. This would require an extensive and intensive propaganda campaign together with adequate economic incentives. The countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America (except Japan) do not have enough agricultural specialists of their own to put over such a program. These proposed "possible answers" are a far cry from a desperately needed solution.

Modern Israel Included

What about modern Israel? American exports of food in 1965 were larger than ever before, and the demand grows daily. Peoples of other countries, and the leaders, refuse to face the fact that the United States cannot feed the world. In 1965, U. S. surplus dwindled to a mere *seven to ten* percent of what it had been. In the same year, cash income from farm produce was at an all-time high.

What would be the result if the drought that has hit India and South Africa were to hit *the world's* "breadbasket"—America and Canada? Our government is already committed in a foreign aid program for this year that will ELIMINATE our "surpluses." Canada and Australia offer little help. The facts show famine is inevitable, worldwide, including modern Israel.

God prophesies that is exactly what will happen. "...I shall send upon them [modern Israel] the evil arrows of *famine*, which shall be for their destruction, and which I will send to destroy you: And I will increase the *famine* upon you, and will break your staff of bread" (Ezek. 5:16).

God's prophecies emphasize all facts and trends, which show that *world famine* is just around the corner.

Only Possible Solution

What a fantastic blessing it is that there is an Almighty God in heaven. What an incomparable miracle that "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7).

The rulers and planners of this world have based their predictions on the assumption that the weather and growing conditions will remain constant, and that crop yields will increase, not decrease. Not knowing God, they

neglected to take prophecy into account.

God says, "The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth. Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye vinedressers, for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest of the field is perished" (Joel 1:10-11). "But it shall come to pass *if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord your God*, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee: Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store" (Deut. 28:15-17).

God's people know the only possible way to avert a disastrous *worldwide famine* is through worldwide *obedience to God*.

Will You Suffer in Famine?

Will truly converted Christians be required to undergo the suffering of the coming famine along with the rest of the world? Is there something *you* can do to prevent it? Does the Bible offer any guide?

In the Old Testament, when the children of Israel were held as captive slaves in the land of Egypt, God sent great plagues which troubled and harassed *all* the inhabitants of the land. At first, there was no difference made between the Israelites and the Egyptians. As the plagues became more grievous, God put a division between His people and the Egyptians for a sign to all that He was the LORD in the midst of the earth (Exodus 8). The first three plagues of that tribulation were suffered by the Israelites along with the Egyptians, but they were spared worse plagues that followed.

In Matthew 24 and Revelation 6, we read that the coming of false prophets, wars and rumors of wars, world war, *famines* and pestilences are the "beginning of sorrows" [tribulation]. These sorrows are coming on the world in the *end time*. Notice Matthew 24:16-21, God is going to allow true believers to live in this world's society until

Satan brings intensified persecution on the true Church, and increased tribulation. At this time, God will deliver the Church into her place of protection (Rev. 12:13-14). There God will provide her needs supernaturally.

How God Preserved During Famine

Examples are given in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, how God guided and cared for His people when it was necessary for their area of the country to be chastened through famine.

During the time Israel (Jacob) lived in the land of Canaan there was a great famine throughout that land and Egypt. God knew famine was coming and allowed Joseph, one of Israel's sons, to be sold into Egypt in advance of the famine.

Three years after Joseph arrived in Egypt, Pharaoh, the king, had two dreams foretelling the coming of seven years of plenty followed by seven years of extreme famine. Pharaoh was greatly troubled by the dreams because he could not understand them. Joseph was summoned and God gave him the interpretation of both dreams. Joseph told Pharaoh of the seven fat and seven lean years that lay ahead, and *signified a way to HANDLE the problem*. Pharaoh looked upon Joseph with much favor and made him governor over all Egypt. His main responsibility was to initiate plans for the coming fourteen years.

Joseph appointed officers over the land to store up the fifth part of the produce of Egypt in the seven plentiful years.

When the famine came, Israel sent to Egypt for food. Soon, he and his whole household came into Egypt. Joseph told his family, when they arrived, that God had sent him on ahead to preserve them and their posterity on the earth, and would save their lives by a great deliverance.

The children of Israel and all their household were nourished for the final five years of famine.

New Testament Example

A New Testament example of how God preserved his people during the
(Continued on page 16)

THE POINT OF

NO RETURN

by Dibar K. Apartian

A FEW months ago, a Boeing 707 jet—on its way to San Francisco—developed serious engine trouble over the Pacific. In the minds of many, it was very doubtful that the plane could pursue its journey safely without having to *return* to Hawaii, where the flight had begun. Even some of the members of the crew expected the captain to *turn the plane back*. But it couldn't be done.

"We have already passed the *point of NO RETURN*" the captain said with finality; "we can't go back!"

A Law

Here we find a firmly established LAW in flying that no captain dares to defy. It is an extremely logical one. Once the distance ahead is shorter than that already traveled, a plane can no longer turn back to its starting point—however serious its mechanical difficulties may be. Literally speaking, it is supposed to have severed its ties with the point of embarkation.

This Boeing jet had just PASSED the point of no return; therefore, it *had* to pursue its journey, whatever the cost.

There is a great lesson here that we, in God's Church, can learn; there is a striking *similarity* between the plane's journey and the course we ourselves have taken in CHRISTIAN life. If we are deeply converted, we too, *should have passed the point of NO return*. We, too, should have severed all ties with our point of embarkation—*the world!*

Have you?

Some time ago, a young man in the church decided to go back to the world because his unconverted father had died, leaving him with the management of a business which was open seven days a week. This young man

had *not* reached the point of no return in his spiritual growth. In his case, he let the cares of the world and the delight in riches choke the Word of God (Mat. 13:22).

"To Whom Shall We Go? . . ."

The *parable of the sower* shows that the vast majority of those who hear the Word of God don't really bear fruit; they *never reach* the point of no return. This was true in Christ's time—and it is true in our day.

When the Jews heard Christ say that He was "the bread of life," and that no one could come to Him unless the Father drew him, they were astonished, vexed and outraged. "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" they said among themselves, and took offense at Him. But notice! Those who got so upset and protested were not all Pharisees—your Bible says that even some of *Christ's disciples* took offense at Him. "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" they exclaimed (John 6:60).

Can you imagine this? Had you thought of it before? These were disciples who had been called *out* of the world to follow Christ—*all the way*. Many of them had probably left families and friends behind. But all at once they changed their attitude before "a hard saying"—perhaps a difficult *task* or a *responsibility* they couldn't or didn't want to shoulder.

What then did they do? "From that time *many* of his disciples went back, and *walked no more with him*" (John 6:66).

Yes—they WENT BACK to the world, to its cares, its glittering lights, its lies and lusts. As you can see, these disciples had *not* reached the point of no return in their growth.

When Christ saw them walk away He

turned to the twelve and said: "Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, *to whom shall we go?* thou hast the words of eternal life." (Verses 67-68.)

How About You?

Have you ever wondered if YOU yourself have reached the point of NO RETURN in your spiritual growth? Meditate this seriously because your *eternal life* depends upon the answer. There are "members" of the Church who—even though they have been baptized years ago—have not even "taken off," let alone having reached the point of no return. Consequently, their eyes, hearts and minds are still attached to the world. They are still attracted to this world's fashions, its fads; still trying to "keep up" with whatever is the current "thing to do." Some of them even *wish* they had never heard the TRUTH!

Can this be *your case?*

Do you slumber and wait rather than keep vigilant and persevere, being determined to reach the goal? Do you realize that you—a *baptized member* of God's Church—should by now be *way past* the point of no return?

Not only is this true, but it is almost TIME FOR LANDING! Whether you think that you have just begun because you are newly baptized, or whether you feel safe perhaps in your own mind to slumber yet a few more years, the fact remains that the *point of no return is way behind*—that we are about to land.

Are you *ready?* Have you "girded your loins" with the truth—your *safety belt?* Have you taken the "whole armor" of God to withstand the difficult days which are yet ahead? (Eph. 6:13-18.) Or do you want to act like the five *foolish* maidens who slum-



Air France Photo

This Boeing 707 flying for Air France faces its "point of no return" almost daily.

bered and slept, only to find the door SHUT when Christ returned?

Every Day Is a Special Day

Here, in California, one of the large drug store chains advertises the following slogan: "Every day is a *special day* at Thrifty Mart." I don't know how true this is as far as they are concerned, but I know that—in GOD'S CHURCH—every day is and *must be* a "special day" for all of us.

Every day, indeed, gives us the *opportunity* to GROW in grace and knowledge; every day allows us to *drink in* more of *God's Word*, to converse with our Creator, to *pray* to Him, to *commune* with Him, to grow more and more toward perfection. Just imagine! Every day takes us *farther away* from the point of no return and brings us CLOSER to our destination. Can you now see why every day must indeed be a SPECIAL DAY for God's begotten children?

But is it for *you*?

Do you pray daily, with all your heart for God's Kingdom to come? Do you really mean it? Would you be happy—and ready!—if it came tomor-

row? Do you feel in your heart that every Sabbath that comes and passes takes you seven days *farther away from* the point of no return, and *seven days closer* to your landing in the KINGDOM OF GOD? Do you really pray to God having these thoughts in mind—or are you like those who haven't reached "the point of no return"—or perhaps who haven't even yet "taken off?"

Examine Yourself

Examine yourself to find the answer. Put yourself under the test—a very simple one at that. Frankly speaking, the day you were baptized, you should already have reached the point of no return in your life. Ask yourself in all sincerity and honesty if you are growing every day in the grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Examine your heart to see if *anyone* in the world—whether it be a mother, a son, a husband or a wife—pulls you back so strongly that they *prevent* you from ever reaching the point of no return. Christ said: "He that loveth

father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me" (Mat. 10:37-38).

Did you count this *cost* before you were baptized?

Search your heart to see if *anything* in the world—riches, glory, fame or lust—pulls you back so strongly that you cannot even "take off." Christ said: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Mat. 13:45-46).

Examine yourself to see whether you have *severed* your ties with the world, or whether you love the glittering and deceptive *lights* of the world more than the truly bright and *eternal* LIGHTS of the Truth. Under God's inspiration the apostle John wrote: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world,

(Continued on page 23)

The KEY To The Crucifixion Date

Scholars attempt to destroy key proof which reveals true date of Crucifixion. Theologians attempt to alter this proof to uphold "Good-Friday, Easter-Sunday" tradition. Read the astonishing and thoroughly documented proof that both scholars and theologians are in error! Here is proof that the true date of the crucifixion can be completely understood.

by Paul Kroll

CAN YOU *prove* that Christ was crucified in 31 A.D.? Do you know—and *know that you know*—Christ was not crucified in 33 A.D. as Roman Catholics teach? Could you prove to a Jew that Jesus came the very year Old Testament prophets said the Messiah would come?

Missing KEY

Here is the KEY that unlocks the PROOF. This KEY the scholars and theologians have sought to hide.

Few understand that one of the most conclusive proofs of Jesus' Messiahship is found in the date Artaxerxes issued his famous decree (Ezra 7) for the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem.

When you know the date of the issuance of the decree—you can *pin-point* the EXACT YEAR of Christ's death. That precise year, foretold by the prophet Daniel, can be simply understood and known. It is amply proved by the Bible and historical records.

How Theologians Reason

Here is how scholars misunderstood the important points surrounding this decree. They say: "One of the most perplexing and controversial problems of Ezra-Nehemiah is that of the date of Ezra's arrival in Jerusalem. Traditionally Artaxerxes is identified with Artaxerxes I (464-424 B.C.) whose seventh year was 458 B.C."

This fact would place the coming of Nehemiah several years after Ezra's appearance in Palestine. But what do scholars conclude? Just the opposite. They place Nehemiah before Ezra.

Continuing the quote: "Since Ezra followed Nehemiah into Palestine and was *not his contemporary* [which is a totally *erroneous* assumption], the Artaxerxes must have been Artaxerxes II (404-359 B.C.), whose seventh year was 398 B.C." (*Interpreters Bible, Commentary on Ezra*, vol. 3, p. 624.)

Their *incorrect* date of 398 B.C. for the decree would make Christ come in 86 A.D.—which is a totally *ridiculous* assumption! However, this totally *erroneous* date is now being supported—not only by theologians—but also by scholars and archaeologists:

Notice this statement by a well-known "authority."

"The *chronological problems* connected with the era of Ezra-Nehemiah remain UNSOLVED, though there is a growing scholarly consensus in favor of *reversing* the traditional order (which place Ezra in the seventh year of Artaxerxes I, i.e. 458, and Nehemiah in the 20th year, or 445). Van Hoonacker was the chief exponent of the view that Ezra followed Nehemiah and was therefore to be dated in the reign of Artaxerxes II (seventh year—398)." (*The Bible and the Ancient Near East*; G. Ernest Wright, editor, p. 213.)

Other scholars reason that *errors* crept into the Bible. They would tell you a scribe made an error—and later tried to "reconcile" the dates which actually need no reconciling. Many theories are advanced. But *no one* seems to have the truth!

Fundamentalists Incorrect

Even among those religionists who hold the "traditional views" there is much inaccuracy.

Here is an example:

"Then as hopeful Daniel was confessing his and Israel's sins and praying, he was given the glorious prophecy of the seventy weeks, fixing the time of Messiah's earthly advent. So understandable and so exact in its time features was it that at the DUE TIME, A.D. 29, the Jews were expectantly awaiting the Messiah." (*Equipped for Every Good Work*, p. 229.)

What deception!

This religious sect, as some others, would *incorrectly* place the decree as going into effect as late as 455 B.C. Why? So that they can place the crucifixion on *Friday* in 33 A.D. But the Bible and the *true facts* of history reject such an *erroneous* date.

It seems so few really understand and correctly place the decree of Artaxerxes. If they do, *none grasp* the tremendous significance of this date. Yet, as Christ said, these things *are revealed* to babes.

We can understand them!

Decree of Artaxerxes

This important decree as found in Ezra 7:11-26 reads:

"Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace, and at such a time.

"I make a decree, that all they of the

people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thcc." (Quoted from verses 12-13.)

This decree of Artaxerxes contained the commandment to go forth and *build Jerusalem*. It gives the *starting year* of the prophecy recorded in Daniel 9:25, 26. Thus, it reveals the *key year* in which Christ was to *begin His ministry!*

"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to *restore and to build Jerusalem* [contained, as we shall later see, in the decree of Artaxerxes] unto the Messiah the Prince shall be *seven weeks*, and *threescore and two weeks*: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."

Daniel records that there would be sixty-nine (7 + 62) prophetic weeks till Christ would begin His ministry. Sixty-nine prophetic weeks equals 483 days (69 x 7). But a *prophetic day* equals *one year* in prophecy (see Numbers 14:34, Ezekiel 4:6 for the Biblical proof). Therefore, we have a total of 483 *YEARS!*

If we discover the *beginning year* of Daniel's prophecy, we can know the exact year Christ began His ministry. But since Daniel's prophecy refers to the decree of Artaxerxes for the beginning—we must go to that prophecy to discover the *key year*.

We must determine the EXACT YEAR of Artaxerxes decree in order to fix the starting date in Daniel's prophecy! Once we know the exact year of the decree, we can pinpoint—from this date—the *exact year* (483 years later) in which Christ began His ministry. It would be a simple task then to find the date of His *crucifixion*—three and one-half years later.

Why This Confusion?

Theologians and scholars deny Christ by claiming that He was buried on *Friday* and rose on *Sunday*—in *HALF* the time He said He would (Mat. 12:40).

But these same men cannot escape the fact that Christ was crucified at the *END OF THE PASSOVER!* Hence, they have inherited another

problem. They must incorrectly say that the crucifixion occurred in a year when the *Passover fell on Friday*. The only possible *Friday - Passover - crucifixion year* would have been 33 A.D.

Theologians force themselves to put the crucifixion of Christ in 33 A.D.—to maintain the "Good-Friday, Easter-Sunday" tradition. This is the *ONLY POSSIBLE year* in which Christ could have been crucified at the end of the Passover—and still rise in time for Sunday morning (according to the *false "one-and-a-half days" theory*).

If we prove Christ was not crucified in 33 A.D.—this false idea would be destroyed!

Of course, it is quite clear that Christ's ministry lasted three and a half years. If you have not proved this, be sure to write in for our article, "The Crucifixion was not on Friday."

Now, in order to substantiate a 33 A.D. crucifixion—these scholars must date the beginning of Christ's ministry in 29 A.D. Therefore, they must either suggest the decree of Artaxerxes cannot be understood—or put it in a year which will make the 483 years end in 29 A.D.

Now it is clear why the decree of Artaxerxes is of such monumental importance. If theologians place the crucifixion in 33 A.D., they falsely place the decree of Artaxerxes in 455 B.C.

Now see the proof that Artaxerxes DID NOT issue his decree in 455 B.C.—the "Good-Friday, Easter-Sunday" tradition is shattered!

Ezra Holds Key

The book of Ezra holds the key for a *correct understanding* of this most important decree. Therefore it is of tremendous importance to understand what was taking place—and the *chronological* sequence of the book of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Ezra 1:1-2, reads "Now in the *first year* of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation . . . Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven . . . hath charged me to build him an *house* at Jerusalem . . ."

Remember, this was to build the *TEMPLE—not the city*. This decree therefore is *not the one* spoken of by Daniel in chapter 9:25.

So the people of Judah and Benjamin arose to go to the land of Palestine and began rebuilding the house of God (Ezra 1:5). They kept the Festival of Tabernacles that year in Palestine (Ezra 3:1). In the second year the ministry was installed (Ezra 3:8).

But then their troubles began!

The Samaritans began to harass the Jews. First, they tried fifth-column tactics—and attempted to overthrow the project from within. When this failed, they hired people to frustrate them. Finally, the work was stopped.

"Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building. And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia" (Ezra 4:4-5).

Here is the account of the Jews' problems with the Samaritans concerning the building of the temple. It lasted throughout the days of Cyrus.

Problems Continue

Now, note this. In Ezra 4:6-23, THE SUMMARY of all the problems the Jews had is recorded. However, this is an *inset* in the chain of events. The account of the problems with building the temple during the reign of Darius I ENDS at verse five and *resumes* in verse 24!

"And hired counsellors against them . . . all the days of Cyrus [538-529] king of Persia, even *until* the reign of Darius [the first] king of Persia [521-485] . . . Then ceased the work of the *house of God* which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the *second year* of the reign of Darius [the first] king of Persia" (verses 5, 24).

It was at this time—around 520 B.C. that the books of Haggai and Zechariah were written (Ezra 5:1). The matter finally came to Darius I concerning the temple—and he ordered the construction to continue (Ezra 6:11-12). Again, this decree was to build the *house of God*—not Jerusalem. It is

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Are YOU a Philadelphia Christian?

There is no need to be in doubt. There is a way you can tell whether you are in the Philadelphian or Laodicean condition. Check yourself by the FRUITS!

by L. Leroy Neff

DID YOU realize that there are members of God's true Church, today, who are Philadelphia era Christians *in name only*? Ministers in the field report, and visiting program meetings discuss, a growing problem of LETHARGY.

Where do YOU stand?

You need to KNOW what kind of Christian you are—in God's sight! God promises His Philadelphia Church protection in the time of great trial which is coming (Rev. 3:10). Will you qualify to receive that protection?

Or will you wake up—too late—to discover you have been in a *lukewarm* spiritual condition? Will you have to endure the Great Tribulation in order to build the character needed to serve in God's Kingdom, and inherit eternal life?

No Question More Important

Jesus Christ said, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall *know* them" (Mat. 7:20). It's as simple as that! You can tell by your fruits whether or not you are in God's Philadelphia Church!

The way to tell that this Work, with Headquarters in Pasadena, California, is the Philadelphia era of God's Church is to look at the *fruits*. It is by the *description* that Jesus Christ gave in Revelation 3 that we can be sure that this great Work of God, which is proclaiming the good news of Christ's Kingdom to this end-time society is in *truth* the Philadelphia era of God's Church.

Any church is the *sum-total* of its membership. If the individuals are

lethargic and lazy, the whole church will be that way. If the individuals making up the church are lacking in love then the whole church will be cold.

The point is this:

Since the Philadelphia Church is made up of many members which are described in Revelation 3 then the *individual* member of that church will have the *same description*! You probably never thought of it that way. You can see that this is God's Philadelphia Church because of the description. *Most* of the people in the Church also fit this description. But some do not. What about you? Does Revelation 3:7-13 describe you also? In order to find out if this description fits you let's examine *very carefully* and minutely the description of the Church. Only in this way can we come to know whether or not we are really part of this church.

What Does Philadelphia Mean?

God names things what they are. And, He has named this the *Philadelphia* Church. Philadelphia is a Greek-derived name which comes from two Greek words: *philos*, and *adelphos*. *Philos* means *loving* or dear and *adelphos* means *brother*.

When put together these two words literally mean *brother-loving*.

Have you ever noticed how much love there is in God's Church? Have you noticed how friendly God's people are, and how much they enjoy being together on the Sabbath, or any other time?

As has been said many times, God's

people are about the "hand-shakingest" people there are. This is just one indication of how God's people love to be together. There is a bond of true love and fellowship in this church that exists nowhere else on earth.

But there are some people among us who *do not* share this love and companionship. They enjoy other people's company more than God's people! When they come to church they like to come at the last minute and leave just as soon as it's over. They don't like to fellowship with God's people; they have their own interests; **THEY ARE NOT BROTHER-LOVING.**

How about *you*?

Jesus gave 12 descriptive points and promises about the Philadelphia Church in Revelation. Let's examine them one by one. Apply the description to *yourself*. See if the description fits *you*.

Are You Going Through Your "Open Door?"

The first thing that Jesus said about this church is that it has works (verse 8). These could also be called "fruits." Jesus knows what our *fruits* and *works* are. He knows how to describe us *individually* and *collectively*. And, the first work that He mentions relates to an "open door" which He has set before us.

God has given this end-time Church the powerful instrument of radio and the printing press to proclaim the soon-coming Kingdom of God to the whole world. The Church is going through that open door! The Church is fulfilling the command of Jesus Christ:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all na-

tions, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Mat. 28:19-20).

Put this on a personal, individual level. If the Philadelphia Church is fulfilling this commission, then all those who are *truly* a part of this Church are also doing their *own* important part in carrying out this same Work. Each person has an important function in this Work just as I Cor. 12 plainly shows. We cannot all do the broadcasting. We cannot all write magazine articles or booklets. *But each has his own essential part!*

What are some of the "works" that the individual can do in order to do his part? How can the *individual* go through this *open door* of evangelism?

Each person has equal opportunity to pray fervently each day for this Work. After all, we all have 24 hours a day.

We all have equal opportunity of paying a tenth of our income to support this Work. In tithes, no one gives more than any other person! But God has instructed us to also give offerings. The tithe is *required*. Offerings are required, but the *amount* of offering is left up to the individual. The *amount* of offerings is an indication of how vitally *interested* we are in God's Work.

Another way that we can help in God's Work is fasting, so that we might grow closer to God and overcome our human nature.

Our continual *concern* and *interest* in this Work—the measure of *zeal* that we have towards God's Work—our dedication to God's Work—shows how much a part we have in spreading the gospel to the world. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mat. 6:21).

How much are you preparing for greater service in *this Work*, as well as for the rulership that God has promised in the World Tomorrow? How humble and meek are you? These fruits set us apart from the church of Laodicea—or lack of them could show that we are a part of it.

One of the outstanding fruits of this

end-time work is that it has been increasing approximately 30 percent a year in almost every phase of operation. The church of Philadelphia is growing in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, it is also growing in size and in influence. Are *you* growing 30 percent a year?

God has given each one of us *our* "open door" to do His end-time Work. If we are *not* doing that work, we are not a part of the Philadelphia Church.

Do You Have Little Strength?

The second point mentioned in Revelation 3 is that this church has "little strength." Compare this with the Laodicean Church, who say, "I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing." (Rev. 3:17.)

We live in a very *weak* and *degenerate* age, and yet few people are aware of this weakness. When we compare our accomplishments with the exploits of men in ancient times, we see how *puny* we really are.

We do not have national leaders with wisdom like Solomon today. Where are the men with the faith of Abraham, the organizational leadership and meekness of Moses, the steadfastness of Noah? Certainly we have "*little strength*," compared to such people.

The apostle Paul wrote that there are not many wise, mighty, or strong that are called in this age (I Cor. 1:26-31).

Have you ever heard Mr. Armstrong or the other ministers mention how much they lack, and how much they continually must call out to God for strength? They recognize how little strength the people carrying on this Work actually have.

Consider how few we are in *number*, how *poor* we are, how lacking we are in knowledge, wisdom, faith, love, and every other way.

This church *realizes* that of itself it can do nothing! Jesus said that He could do nothing, it was the Father that worked through Him. If Christ could do nothing, certainly we can do *less than nothing* by ourselves.

Do you realize how weak, helpless, lacking, and in need of help *you* are? Or, do you feel you already have wisdom, you are strong spiritually, that you are not weak like some of the

other people you see? If so, you are not in God's Philadelphia Church! Yes, God's people in the Philadelphia Church are weak, they know it, and they are *constantly forced to cry out to God for help*, to do the great Work that He has called them individually and collectively to do.

The third point that Jesus gave concerning this church is that it has *kept His Word* (verse 8). What does it mean to keep Christ's Words?

It means to *do* what He has commanded, in preaching and publishing the gospel to the whole world. It means to FAITHFULLY preach and obey His Word—His TRUTH. It means to *live* by every one of His words. He said that if we love Him, (that is if we are brother-loving) we will *keep His words* (John 14:23). He is the Spokesman or Word who inspired the *whole* Bible, so it also means to *obey* the whole Bible. Our standard of conduct is to live by all of His words—to *obey* Him.

On the personal or individual level it means that we are searching and *seeking* to know God's will by reading His Word *daily* and making it a very part of our being. How can we obey His words if we do not know what they are?

Next, Jesus said that this Church has not denied His *name!* (Verse 8.)

The name of a person *represents*, or *is* the person. If we deny the name of Jesus Christ then we deny Him. How do we deny Him? By verbally saying "I deny Christ"? No! It means much more than that. Jesus inspired the apostle Paul to say "They profess that they know God, but in *works* they *deny Him*, being abominable and *disobedient*, and unto every good work reprobate" (Titus 1:16).

We deny Jesus Christ if we have the *wrong kind* of works or deeds.

We can also deny Him by not being *obedient* to Him. He has authority in every aspect of our lives. He rules us through His Word and through His Church (Ephesians 4:11). If we are not obedient to those He sets over us in authority in His Church, if we do not obey His Word, He is not our *Lord and Master*. One of Jesus' names is

Lord which means *boss*, one having complete authority over us.

What Is Patience?

The fifth point is that true Philadelphians have "kept the word of My patience" (verse 10).

All of the promises of God are to the overcomer who *endures* to the end. What we are today does not prove what we shall be tomorrow. We may be winning the race today and lose it tomorrow. It is the one who *continues* in patience and who is steadfast even in tribulation who will receive the reward.

Jesus said "in your *patience* possess ye your souls" (Luke 21:19).

Jesus Christ says that this Church is patient, and that it endures all these trials and tribulations until the very end.

Are you personally being *patient* in the time of adversity, sickness, and trials? Or do you give up when times get difficult? If you are a "quitter" you may not be a part of the Philadelphia Church.

The sixth point that Jesus mentioned concerning this Church is the promise of protection. Before Jesus Christ returns to this earth, He will reward the Philadelphia Church by keeping it from the great time of trouble that is going to come upon the whole earth.

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev. 3:10).

Other prophecies show that perhaps 90 percent of the people of Israel are going to be destroyed in the terrible war and holocaust that is shortly ahead. The people of the Laodicean Church will be tortured and martyred by fiendish men during the tribulation.

What a great and precious and comforting promise this is, that Jesus will keep the Philadelphia Church from this *great* time of trouble!

Jesus Is Coming Quickly!

In view of such a great and precious promise Jesus exhorts us to *hold fast*, so that no one will take *our* reward. The crown of righteousness that is kept for us will go to someone else if we

do not continue faithful. When we are in severe trial or sickness the time may seem *long*. But, the day finally comes when the trial is completely and totally removed, just as though it had never existed. When you look back it doesn't seem as if it were so long after all.

That's just the way it's going to be when we receive that great reward of *eternal life*. The trials and tribulations of this age will then seem very small, and to have taken but a very short space of time. Almost like a dream that has gone in the night. So Jesus says, "Behold I come quickly." We think that He is slow in coming, but He promises that He will come *quickly*! It will not *really* be *long*. We must look forward with *great hope* and anticipation to that promise, realizing that it will come quickly.

After all, God has called us to endure and overcome for only a few years. Many of the worthy prophets of old had to endure many times over the number of years that God has called most of us to remain faithful. Consider the hundreds of years that such men as Enoch, Noah, and Abraham remained faithful to God. Our few years are short by comparison.

If you are a part of God's Church now, endure to the end, hold fast! Do not become offended at anything or let a root of bitterness come in. Do not become lukewarm and fail to fulfill any of the obligations that Jesus has placed upon you personally. If you do, you will find that *someone else* will take YOUR crown.

More Rewards!

Jesus next mentions an *additional* reward. But this reward will come *after* the resurrection. He has promised us (verse 12) that we shall become a *pillar* in the temple that is to be built in Jerusalem. A recent article in *The GOOD NEWS* explained that this is speaking spiritually and symbolically about the positions of authority in the government of God, at the Headquarters of this whole world.

God has called the people in the other church eras to be kings and priests over various cities, states, and nations. But He has chosen us in this Church era to have a very *special* part

in the *headquarters* government. We will be with Jesus Christ at Jerusalem.

This is the Church era that has experienced firsthand the modern technological advances of science and industry. We have been able to see the good and the bad results from these tremendous advances in science. The World Tomorrow is going to be a very peaceful utopia, but a *truly modern world*. There will be great advances in agriculture, science and industry.

God is calling those who have had firsthand experience with some of the modern developments and advances of science to *properly control* them. We may have responsibility to control the world's *international affairs* and activities such as transportation, communications, education, and news.

God is giving us experience in these things *now* so we might use this experience and knowledge in His Kingdom!

What a wonderful calling this is! Are you *qualifying* to have a part in that government? The Philadelphia Church is! Be sure that *you* are!

Jesus next mentioned the position of rulership again. He said that no longer will we have any possibility of being discharged from that rulership and responsibility. We shall "*go no more out*." We will always be in God's favor. We will be with Jesus Christ *for ever* and *ever*.

We will have the *name* of God written upon us. God names things what they are. When He writes His name on us, that means we are then born into His very family. We will *be* God, just as Christ is now God. We will not have the same rank, position or authority that He has, but we will still be a part of that very divine family!

The name of the city of God will also be written on us. In other words we will have the blessing of ultimately living in the very city called New Jerusalem where God the Father will dwell for ever.

The twelfth point is that He will also put on us His new name. This Church is to be a part of the Bride of Christ. A bride always takes the name of her husband. When we become

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YOU CAN SERVE IN GOD'S CHURCH

*How can YOU be a more effective help in the Church of God?
How can you have a greater part in SERVING your brethren?
Here are ways you can be a valuable servant—ways you may well
have overlooked!*

by Dean R. Wilson

MANY continually ask, "What can I do to serve in God's Church?" They are eager and very desirous of doing MORE to help the Work of God—but they don't see what they can do—they wonder how they can be of greater use to God.

Yet many, who ask these same questions, are overlooking a vital part of service—a way in which they can have immeasurable influence on the lives of others!

WHERE Does Service Begin?

To most people, the grass always looks greener on the other side of the fence. They are constantly wishing they had some other job, are dissatisfied with their particular talents, would like someone else's position. Outwardly, they tell you they want to SERVE MORE—but inwardly, their basic motivation is selfish—they want greater "glory" and "honor" for themselves!

How do we know?

The answer is obvious—by the FRUITS of their personal lives! By the EXAMPLE they set in their everyday living! By the fruits of their CHARACTER—or lack of it!

The KEY to being of greater service in the Work of God, and the Church of God, is not persistent pestering or importuning one of God's ministers. The KEY is to QUALIFY for greater service—on your knees, before the throne of God; and by studying God's Word daily, absorbing His truth into your very being!

And then—put this influence to WORK in your OWN personal life!

This vital Scriptural principle is amplified in I Corinthians 14:12—"Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, *seek that ye may excel TO THE EDIFYING OF THE CHURCH*"!

Too often people have a lethargic attitude toward the very Church of God—the Church Jesus Christ built (Mat. 16:18), and gave His life for. Too many think of it as just "another church"—at least, they seem to bear witness to this attitude in their personal lives! They have not had the very *mind of Christ* toward His Church (Phil. 2:5).

Christ gave His ALL for the body—the Church. But—do you realize His sacrifice would have been totally IN VAIN if His personal life had not been sinless, perfect in character, holy before God? If Christ had *sinned*, YOU would have no Saviour! And all His service would have been in vain!

The point is simply this—are YOU QUALIFYING to serve in God's Church, by setting the RIGHT KIND of Christian, godly EXAMPLE?

Take a long, HONEST look at yourself! Are you walking WORTHY of the tremendous vocation to which you have been called? (Eph. 4:1.) Although God *has* indeed called the WEAK of this world (I Cor. 1:26-28), *He does not intend that we REMAIN that way!* If we are to enter God's Kingdom, and if we are to SERVE in God's Church, then God shows we must GROW spiritually, OVERCOME past weaknesses and shortcomings—even to the point where God can use us to confound the wise of this world! Per-

sonal growth is a vital KEY to service!

Are YOU growing, in the following ways?

Grow in Wisdom

Jesus Christ meant that wisdom, knowledge and understanding should come through the Church of God. Note in Proverbs 9:1 that wisdom has built her house in seven pillars. As mentioned in chapter eight of Proverbs, this wisdom is priced far above gold or any other precious metal. You will note in Revelation that there are seven stages or eras of God's Church, and in Ephesians 3:10 Paul, under the inspiration of God, tells us: "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known BY THE CHURCH the manifold wisdom of God." Paul again in I Timothy 3:15 tells us, "...the house of God, which is the church of the living God, THE PILLAR AND GROUND OF THE TRUTH."

Yes, Jesus Christ shows us very pointedly that wisdom, knowledge, understanding and truth do come through His Church. Can you *honestly*, before God, say that the Church of God is cleaning you up and washing you through the Word of God (Eph. 5:26)? If you are not growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ every day as the result of the broadcast, PLAIN TRUTH, GOOD NEWS magazines, Correspondence Course and regular church services, you need to examine yourself to find out if you are even *in* the faith and not reprobate (II Cor. 13:5). Remember, your only

source of true and lasting knowledge and wisdom comes through the Church of God.

Why is Jesus Christ cleaning you up as an individual and all who are a part of the body through His Church and the Word of God? This is answered in Ephesians 5:27: "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Jesus Christ is in the process of perfecting all of us and using His Church and ministers to do it (Eph. 4:11-13). Are you letting Jesus Christ work and do this in your life?

How to Edify the Church

To "edify" means to "construct, build up, improve, enhance or benefit." Sad to say, God's ministers spend the vast majority of their time during a given week with people who are *not* edifying the Church of God, but on the other hand are tearing down, bringing degradation and shame upon the Church that Jesus Christ gave His very life for.

There are many areas where you as an individual, IF YOU WILL, can grow in wisdom and knowledge and edify or build up God's Church rather than tear it down.

In one area, an individual—uneducated, uncouth and unconverted, but yet in his vanity assuming himself to be spiritual and full of knowledge and wanting to be a teacher—on occasion would frequent a local bar and drink excessively. After consuming too much alcohol, he would proceed to preach and try to convert all with whom he came in contact. Paul mentioned a circumstance of excessive drinking to the Church at Corinth and accused the individuals concerned of *DESPISING* the Church of God (I Cor. 11:22).

Do you ever drink too much? Do you ever, through vanity, try to teach when you are not *called* to teach? God plainly in Romans 10:15 and Ephesians 4:11 tells us He calls His ministers. Then in James 3:1 He warns against being a teacher when you are not called to that office. Do YOU *DESPISE THE CHURCH OF GOD*? Or on the other side of the ledger, are you

striving with all of your being to be temperate in all things and are you one hundred percent behind God's called and chosen ministers? In other words, ARE YOU EDIFYING AND BUILDING UP THE BODY OF JESUS CHRIST?

What about cleanliness of *the flesh* and the spirit (II Cor. 7:1). The works of the flesh are listed for us in Galatians 5:19-21 and Paul concludes the section by stating very dogmatically that "...they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God." Uncleanliness is one of the things listed there, yet when we ministers walk into the homes of some who proclaim to be Christian, to be members of the Body, we find that home dirty and unkempt. Many are not particular about the area in which they live, but will move *into* the slum and dirty areas of some of our major cities.

Is Your Home Clean?

Let me put it to you in this way, God's way of life laid down in the Bible is the epitome of perfection and the way of life that He would have all men live. In fact, in a few short years we—IF WE QUALIFY—are going to help Jesus Christ (Rev. 20:6) educate this entire world to this way of life. Now with this in mind, ask yourself *HONESTLY*—would you want to see the entirety of this society living in the same way, in the same area in which you are now living?

What about your home? Would you want everyone's home to be *just like yours*? What does your home LOOK like? Is it clean, orderly, well kept—an example of a home that Jesus Christ would enjoy entering and possibly even living in? If it isn't, you need to make some changes. Be an example or light in your community that through your good works men might glorify God (Mat. 5:16).

God's Church and ministers through the various media we use, *The PLAIN TRUTH*, *GOOD NEWS*, broadcasts, sermons in church and so on, are teaching you the way God would have you live. God lays a responsibility upon you to take these sermons and act on them. Be a doer of God's Word and not a hearer only. This is one of the greatest

ways you can be a help to the ministers and *all of God's Church*.

In summarizing it all, examine and look at yourself. Christ wants you as a part of a glorious Church (Eph. 5:27). From the dictionary we find that "glorious" means, "showing qualities or doing acts that deserve glory, or renown; splendid, magnificent." Are you really working on yourself to become a part of a group that is to become this way? Are you striving to do acts that deserve glory or renown?

Perfection Our Goal

This Church is finally to be presented to Christ, the Creator of this universe, not having spot or wrinkle. Look at your life in the light of the Bible. Are you diligently striving to get rid of *your* spots and wrinkles? Are you setting the example in your family and your home that you hope to be teaching the whole world in the future? Would you want the world to be like you? If you are honest, you will have to answer that, "No." Begin to do something about it—*CHANGE!* Develop not only the mind of Christ, but also the very character and habits of Christ so that in the future you can help pass this way of life on to a miserable and unhappy world.

This Church is to become *HOLY* and without blemish! It is not blasphemy to strive to become holy. God tells us through the pen of Peter, "But as he which hath called you is holy, so *be ye HOLY* in all manner of conversation [conduct]; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Pet. 1:15-16).

How YOU Can Serve—NOW

Do you see the point? Do you grasp the lesson?

Right NOW, in the example you set, by the very way you live, YOU can serve in God's Church! You can help EDIFY the very body of Jesus Christ! You can help, inspire, and build up your brethren by your personal conduct—your personal cleanliness and neatness—by the way you take care of your home, the way you guide with wisdom your family—in short, by the way YOU LIVE!

Radiant friendliness, hospitality, con-
(Continued on page 22)

PREPARE FOR FAMINE

(Continued from page 6)

time of famine is mentioned in Acts 11. "And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be a *great dearth* throughout all the world; which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar" (verses 27-28).

This drought was extensive in the region around Jerusalem, Palestine. History records that it was during this famine, that the apostle Paul wrote the first book of Corinthians. In chapter 16, he gave an order to the brethren at Corinth: "Let every one of you lay by him in store . . . and I will bring your gift unto Jerusalem."

Paul also had ordered the same type collection from the church in Galatia. This order instructed the brethren to lay in store for the famine stricken saints at Jerusalem. Paul urged them to have it ready so he could pick it up later that year and take it on to the headquarters church.

In these examples from the Bible, we see that it is *wise* to *prepare* for what God says is imminent in the very next few years.

There IS Something You Can Do

The time has come for true believers and members of the body of the Living Jesus Christ to *begin thinking* about and preparing to save up to "lay by him in store." Jesus Christ commands us to watch (Luke 21:36) the *signs* and *events* that were prophesied to come. They are now happening before our very eyes. It is time for us to prepare for the coming, *last*, worldwide famine. There are ways that all of us can lay aside supplies of food.

There are several commodities of high nutritional value that can satisfactorily and economically be stored for long periods of time. The Bible speaks of high-quality foods such as grain, honey, milk, the fatted calf, and others. The following are suggested basic staples that you will want to consider in beginning your "storehouse":

wheat (or other kinds of cereal grains), honey, cheese, smoked meat, canned and frozen meats, fruits and vegetables.

Do NOT Become a Pharisee

Understand thoroughly, brethren, before we go into the technical and physical details that **NO MANNER OR AMOUNT OF FOOD STORAGE CAN SAVE YOU! Only God can!**

If you get to looking to the physical, dedicating all your time, efforts and energies to food storage to save your physical life—then you will be the greatest loser of all time! Read Luke 9:24-25—"For whosoever will save his life [seek to selfishly maintain his physical life at all costs] shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?"

Avoid the extremes!

Don't be *super* and *pseudo-spiritual* and declare that you are going to trust the Lord and not do *anything* for yourself. Remember God's admonition given through Solomon, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer [the time of plenty] and gathereth her food in the harvest." (Proverbs 6:6-8.) We have been warned ahead of time and should do everything within our power to prepare, **ALL THE TIME KNOWING ONLY GOD CAN SAVE US THROUGH THESE END-TIME CATASTROPHES!**

And **DON'T** become a *food fanatic!* Don't look to the physical. Pray for Godly **BALANCE**. In fact it would be a good idea for you to do **JUST THAT RIGHT NOW!** Before you continue with this article, go to a private place, or drop to your knees with your whole family and ask God to help you see this instruction in its proper balance, to see it **THROUGH HIS EYES!**

It may well be that many of you, being city and apartment dwellers, will not be *able* to follow through on this as much as you wish you could. But if

your *attitude* and *spiritual* growth is right, God will supply your needs when the time comes—*directly*, or through the other brethren as those in the provinces supplied the saints in Jerusalem in their need.

Now About Wheat

Wheat ought to be the core of your storage program since it is the most generally available grain in our Western countries. It is a well-known fact that human beings could survive in health indefinitely on wheat and water alone.

Scientific and medical research shows that wheat contains the properties to help: strengthen nerves, develop muscle tone, promote a healthy heart condition, improve circulation, build resistance to disease, increase the ability to learn and remember, aid normal reproduction, increase the power of a mother to nurse her babies.

Any wheat is better than none. We should select the best available *while it is available*. In the selecting and storing of wheat, the following points should be kept in mind:

Kind or variety: Dark Hard Winter Wheat (Turkey); Dark Hard Spring or Marquis Wheat.

Grade: The grade should be No. 2 or better (Not less than 58 lbs. per bushel). Protein should be from 11.50 to 12.50 percent or more. Wheat should be cleaned for human consumption and free from smut and foreign material. Be sure it has not been treated for use as seed.

Moisture: *Moisture content is most important.* It is recommended that the moisture content be 10 percent or less. (Some say 12 to 13 percent, but the dryer the better). This may pose a problem necessitating your drying the wheat artificially in areas—or times—of high humidity by means of heated, forced air. Insects are unable to reproduce in clean grain with a moisture of nine percent or below. (A moisture test can be made at most feed stores and grain elevators.)

Containers: Containers should be suitable to hold weight of grain, protect it from rodents and insects, and should be non-conductors of moisture (metal containers have been most satis-



Wide World Photos

U.S. wheat sent to aid India's hungry is shown being unloaded into sacks at port in Madras. A massive wheat clog is developing in India's old-fashioned ports and the nation's bureaucracy is unable to get the grain to villages in the interior.

factory). Also be sure the covers fit *tightly*.

Quantity: Quantity will vary according to needs. An active person will require more than an inactive one. As a guide, one year's requirement will vary from 70 lbs. for children to 100 lbs. for adults. (This refers only to bread, cereal, and other normal requirements. If circumstances cause wheat and wheat products to become the principal diet, the amount required per individual would be proportionately increased.)

Storage: Wheat will keep indefinitely if properly stored in a cool, dry place with moisture content under 10 percent. Wheat stored for more than one year should be aerated by turning it at least twice a year. Wheat can be cleaned by screening it over a hand sieve made of screen similar to wire door screen. Five- to ten-gallon metal containers are a handy size to use for storage and aeration.

You may check with farmers in your local area about acquiring wheat.

Honey

Honey is a natural, unrefined food that can be stored for an indefinite period of time. It is safe and wholesome. Bacteria, which cause certain diseases in human beings, cannot live in honey because of its high sugar content. Honey is available the year around and may be purchased in various forms. It is on the market in liquid, comb, chunk, cut comb, solid, sometimes called *granulated* or *finely crystallized*, and *creamed honey*. The various forms do not change its food value. Here are

some points to keep in mind:

To purchase honey: Select the flavor you desire. The flavor depends upon the kind of flowers from which the bees gather nectar. Honey producers frequently mix several honeys by heating moderately and stirring to produce a blend with a flavor that is most satisfactory.

To store honey: Keep liquid honey in a dry place. Freezing does not injure the color or flavor, but may hasten granulation. Avoid damp places for storage because honey has the property of absorbing and retaining moisture. It is best not to put honey in the refrigerator. Containers should be suitable to hold the weight of the honey (one gallon weighs 12 lbs.), protect it from rodents and insects, and should be non-conductors of moisture.

To liquify honey that has granulated or solidified: Place the container in a bowl of warm water, not warmer than the hand can bear, until all crystals are melted. See that the honey container does not rest on the bottom of the water container. Getting it too hot will injure its quality and food value.

Dried Products

You are all familiar with canning (or bottling) as a means of preserving fruits and vegetables, but what about *drying*? Drying, which used to be a common method of preservation, has become a lost art. Instructions *are* still obtainable as stated at the end of this article if you care to try it. This is a good way to preserve *fruits* if you don't have much storage space, or if

you have an *abundance* beyond what you are able to can. Apples, apricots, cherries, peaches, pears, figs, grapes and even berries may be dried at home with a minimum of equipment.

Unprocessed raisins may be bought directly from vineyards at a price substantially less than that of processed and packaged raisins. The unwashed raisins keep better than washed ones, too. They will stay in good condition two years or longer if stored in tightly covered metal containers.

Some vegetables may also be dried. These include corn (maize), green lima beans, okra, peppers and green peas. In general, however, vegetables are more *palatable* canned or frozen than dried.

Cheese

Cheese has been a popular food for thousands of years. An important point to consider about cheese is the fact that it is a concentrated source of many of the nutrients of milk. Finished cheese contains a large proportion of the milk protein, the minerals, the fat (if it is a "whole milk" cheese), and the fat-soluble nutrients of milk. It is interesting to note that the peoples of the world who exhibit the highest degree of national health, on the basis of longevity and infant mortality rates, are also the leading cheese eaters of the world. Some points to consider are:

Types: There are only eighteen distinct types of cheese, of which there are over 400 varieties. Despite the diversity among cheese varieties, it is possible to classify all cheeses under three main divisions—hard, semi-hard, and soft. The relatively low moisture content of hard and semi-hard cheeses permits their storage for long periods of time, if conditions are favorable. Soft cheeses, which contain a higher moisture content, are more perishable.

Purchasing: United States and foreign cheeses have no difference in food value if they are of the same variety. Cheese manufactured in the United States consists largely of hard cheeses (cheddar and swiss). Wisconsin and New York are the leading cheese-producing states. In Wisconsin, most cheese is made from pasteurized milk, while in New York, raw

milk is used almost exclusively. During the curing or aging period (60-day minimum), the cheese not only develops a desirable flavor and texture, but through bacterial action all harmful micro-organisms are devitalized. The longer cheese is held or aged past the minimum 60-day period, the better the flavor and texture if proper temperature is maintained.

Storage: Hard and semi-hard cheeses are best for storing. Many varieties of these cheeses are cured for as much as 12 to 16 months. The length of time aged usually appears on the label of both New York and Wisconsin cheeses. Most cheeses purchased in a large lump will be coated with paraffin which helps to preserve it. In such cases, a wedge of the cheese can be cut out and wrapped in foil for immediate use while the larger remaining piece will keep better if the cut surfaces are spread with softened butter before wrapping in aluminum foil. Cheese should be stored in a cool place, preferably the refrigerator—or no warmer than about 50° F.

Digestibility: Some people are reluctant to use cheese freely because of their mistaken notion that it is difficult to digest. This idea is not supported by research. Experimental evidence of the high digestibility of cheese shows it to be 90-99 percent digestible. This range compares favorably with that found for other foods normally used in a mixed diet.

Preservation Methods

There are various methods of preserving foods for storage. Those most frequently used are: canning, freezing, smoking, drying, pickling, brining, and making preserves or jellies of several types. Each one of these methods has merits of its own, depending on the food selected for preservation and the pleasure of the user. In each case, the proper selection of the food, choice and care of equipment, preparation of food, suitable application of heat, packaging, labeling, dating, and storing are necessary if products of excellent quality are to be your reward. Each method may be checked to determine which would serve you best.

Instructions for the above methods

mentioned can easily be acquired by writing for information from your local Home Demonstration or County Agent. They usually maintain offices at the County Court House. Another excellent source of detailed information is, The United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. This material is free for the asking.

Plan To Save

To be effective in your planning you will need some definite goals. Few will be able to lay up large quantities of food all at once. It would be wise to first take time to sit down and consider what you want to store, its availability, and the quantity you wish to purchase. It is helpful to schedule your planning in the form of an outline or chart.

At certain seasons of the year there are usually special sales on various products. If you make room in your budget to begin saving a little from each paycheck, you will be able to take advantage of these sales when they become available.

Another method of saving that is simple, yet effective, is to set aside certain portions of items each time of major shopping. You should use a method or combination of methods you

feel will best satisfy your needs. Whatever your decision, begin now.

Physical Preparation Alone Is NOT Enough

Our Creator, a loving, benevolent God, *wants* us to "... prosper and be in health" (III John 2). Jesus Christ foretold the signs and world conditions that would appear just prior to His second coming. Immediately following, He gave those of understanding a solemn admonition, "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21: 28).

Remember, lack of obedience to God's laws is the *reason* the world is in its present condition. If we are not prepared *spiritually*, our spiritual house being in *disorder*, all the physical preparation in the world will avail *nothing*. We need *desperately* to keep close to our Lord and Savior. Obedience to Him needs to become automatic.

The prophecy of *world famine* is being fulfilled before your very eyes. God may not intervene to help you, if you, *knowing* famine is coming, do not help yourselves—according to your ability to do so.

The KEY To The Crucifixion

(Continued from page 10)

not the decree spoken of in Daniel 9.

Ezra 6:14-15 recapitulates the history of the *restoration of the temple*. "And the elders of the Jews... builded, and finished it [the temple], according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of *Cyrus* [538-529], and *Darius* [the first, 521-485], and *Artaxerxes* [the first, 464-423] king of Persia.

"And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius [the first, 516-515] the king."

Temple Completed

The Jews began to build the temple during the reign of Cyrus but accomplished nothing until the beginning of the *second year* of Darius I [520-519]; Four years later in his *sixth year*, in 515 B.C.—the temple was finished.

Again, how miraculous that the temple was restored *exactly seventy years* from the final captivity in 585 until 515 B.C.

Later, *after* the temple was completed, Artaxerxes I (464-423) included as *part of* his decree to rebuild Jerusalem a clause to procure any further materials necessary to *beautify* the temple (Ezra 7:16).

Now we must retrace our steps to pick up the account of Ezra 4:6-23. This gave the *summary* of problems the Jews encountered.

We saw that the temple—except for finishing touches—was completed in the sixth year of Darius I.

Jerusalem Rebuilt

Now the account continues. It takes us past the completion of the temple. "And in the reign of Ahasuerus, in the

beginning of his reign, wrote they unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem" (Ezra 4:6). This is the Ahasuerus of the *book of Esther*. He is generally regarded as the Xerxes of Greek history (485-464).

The narrative then continues: "And in the days of Artaxerxes [the first, 464-423] wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, . . . Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem, BUILDING THE REBELLIOUS AND THE BAD CITY, and have set up the walls thereof, . . . Then sent the king an answer . . . Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this CITY be not builded, until another commandment shall be given from me" (Ezra 4:7, 12, 17, 21).

This was probably near the beginning of the reign of Artaxerxes I. Notice that this concerned the building of the city—Jerusalem! Artaxerxes commanded that the city and wall should not be built—until he sent another commandment. How clear that this "other commandment" he sent is the one we read about in Ezra 7—the one sent by Artaxerxes in his seventh year!

How clear that the Artaxerxes of Ezra 7 is the one who reigned from 464-423 B.C.

Other Proofs

An important fact to remember: Daniel 9:25 is dated from "the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem"!! It is *not dated* from the time ACTUAL BUILDING began or terminated.

The prophecy states that the wall would be built in troublous times—during the 7 prophetic weeks (49 literal years) before the 62 weeks. Although the decree was issued by Artaxerxes in his seventh year, apparently little or no building on the city took place. It was not until the *twentieth year* of Artaxerxes-I (445-444) that Nehemiah took action concerning the construction (Nehemiah 2:1).

This proves *scholars are incorrect* in placing Ezra AFTER Nehemiah. Ezra was of the SAME GENERATION as Nehemiah. In the book of Nehemiah, chapter 8, verses 1-9—we see them *working together!*

We have historical and archaeological findings which uphold the fact that the Artaxerxes mentioned in Ezra and Nehemiah is Artaxerxes I, who reigned from 464-423 B.C.

"In the Elephantine papyri AP 30 and 31 we learn that *Johanan* was high priest in Jerusalem in 407 B.C. This was during the reign of Artaxerxes II. He [*Johanan*] is mentioned in Nehemiah 12:22-23 [also in Ezra 10:6] as a SON of a high priest *Eliashib*. *Eliashib* held this office UNDER NEHEMIAH!! (Neh. 3:1)" (Horn *Chronology of Ezra* 7. p. 90).

Eliashib was of the same generation as Nehemiah. But at the same time *Eliashib* is the FATHER of this other priest—*Johanan*!

Johanan was high priest around 407 B.C.—which makes him of the same generation as Artaxerxes II (404-358).

The conclusion is inescapable!

This puts *Johanan's* father, *Eliashib* with Nehemiah into the PREVIOUS GENERATION. So both must have lived during the reign of Artaxerxes I (464-423).

Again, the scholars are *incorrect* in trying to make Artaxerxes II, the one mentioned in Ezra 7. Here is a diagram to make the simple relationship very clear.

Artaxerxes I (464-423)—*Eliashib*—Nehemiah
Darius II (423-404)

Johanan (c. 407)

Artaxerxes II (404-358)

Since we know which king issued the decree (Artaxerxes I, 464-423 B.C.)—we begin the solution of our problem.

Fall-to-Fall Reckoning

Now, we can begin to determine the exact year in which Artaxerxes I issued his decree. We must now consider whether the Jews counted a king's reign beginning from spring or fall. Otherwise, we could be as much as one year wrong in our calculations.

Carefully note this!

The Jews had both a civil and a sacred year. When God revealed the Passover to Israel, he said that it was in the "beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you" (Exodus 12:2).

However, the calendar is pegged to and centers around—the molad (con-

junction) of the seventh month. Tishri is the seventh month of the sacred year!

But it is the FIRST MONTH—as we shall immediately see—of the civil year! In some ways, the United States has this dual system. The calendar year begins in January. But the business year is determined from July to July.

Below is a listing of the months in God's calendar—according to sacred and civil designations. (The names were added by the Jews.)

TWELVE-MONTH YEAR

SACRED	CIVIL
1. Nisan	Tishri
2. Iyar	Heshvan
3. Sivan	Chisleu
4. Tammuz	Tebet
5. Ab	Shebet
6. Elul	Adar
7. Tishri	Nisan
8. Heshvan	Iyar
9. Chisleu	Sivan
10. Tebet	Tammuz
11. Shebet	Ab
12. Adar	Elul

Study the above chart carefully. It is very important in proving the next point.

In Nehemiah chapter one, verse one Nehemiah tells us he received certain news concerning conditions in Jerusalem, "In the month CHISLEU, in the TWENTIETH YEAR." After this time, Nehemiah sends a petition to the king, "In the month NISAN, in the TWENTIETH YEAR of Artaxerxes the king." This is found in Nehemiah 2:1.

Notice! The month Chisleu was regarded as coming BEFORE the month Nisan—in the SAME year! Look at the chart above. If the civil year began in the spring—this is AN UTTER IMPOSSIBILITY!! Nisan is the first month of the sacred year. It could not possibly come AFTER Chisleu in the same year.

On the other hand, reckoning the first month in the fall—it is quite easy to see that Chisleu DOES COME BEFORE Nisan in the same year!

This is the simple proof showing from the Bible that the Jews used a fall-to-fall calendar for reckoning civil months during the Persian period in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Talmud Proves Fall-to-Fall Reckoning

The Talmud is also a witness to this fact! It helps to prove that the Jews

began their civil year in the *fall*.

"That the fifth century Jews actually counted the regnal year of the Persian kings according to *their own fall-to-fall* calendar is attested not only by Nehemiah, . . . later on (it is) traditionally by the Talmud.

"According to the explanation of Rosh Hashanah . . . the first of Tishri (the seventh month) is the *NEW YEAR FOR FOREIGN KINGS!*" (Horn, *The Chronology of Ezra 7*, p. 73.)

There you have it! The Jews began numbering a king's year *from the fall*—or the seventh month of the *sacred* calendar!

Artaxerxes' Accession Month Known

Archaeologists have further confirmed these facts.

The following tablets which have been unearthed determine and prove the *exact period* in which Artaxerxes came to the throne.

"A cuneiform tablet found in the excavation campaign of 1930-31 in Ur [concerns itself with], an agreement dated in the thirteenth year of Artaxerxes I, but states that the original arrangement was signed in the month *KISLIMU IN THE TWENTY-FIRST YEAR OF XERXES!*" (Horn, *Chronology of Ezra 7*, p. 101.)

In Babylonia, Kislumu began on December 17, 465 B.C. (see Parker and Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology*, p. 31).

Xerxes twenty-first year corresponds to our year of 465-464 B.C. This document proves that Xerxes was alive in late December 465 B.C. (since the tablet shows Xerxes was still alive in the month Kislumu). Hence, his successor—Artaxerxes I—could not have taken the throne until *after this date*.

Precise Time Absolutely Fixed

Another document, AP 6, fixes the *exact time* of the ascension of Artaxerxes. This papyri bears the following dateline: "On the 18th of Kisleu which is the (17th) day of Thoth, in year 21, the beginning of the reign (accession year) when King Artaxerxes sat on his throne" (Horn, *The Chronology of Ezra 7*, p. 101-103).

The eighteenth of Kisleu of year 21 was January 2/3, 464 B.C. (see, Parker and Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology*, p. 31).

Therefore, on January 2, 464 B.C. we see that King Artaxerxes is *ALREADY SITTING ON THE THRONE!!* But Xerxes' death, as we have seen, could not have occurred before December 17, 465 B.C. Here is the only conclusion! Artaxerxes I came to the throne between December 17, 465 and January 2, 464 B.C.

The Jews reckoning from a fall-to-fall basis counted the time from December/January to the fall of that year (464 B.C.) as Artaxerxes' I *accession year*. Therefore, Artaxerxes' regnal years according to Jewish reckoning began *SIX MONTHS LATER* than the Persian count—or in the *fall* of 464 B.C.

This is the conclusion! The accession year of Artaxerxes I extended from around late December, 465 B.C. to the fall of 464 B.C. *YEAR ONE* of Artaxerxes I extended from the *fall of 464 to the fall of 463 B.C.*

THE SEVENTH YEAR OF ARTAXERXES I

The *seventh year* of Artaxerxes extended from the fall of 458 to the fall of 457 B.C. It was in *this year* that the decree of Artaxerxes was issued.

Ezra's journey to Jerusalem began in Nisan and ended in Ab of 457 B.C. (Ezra 7:8-9). Thus, according to our

months, Ezra's trip lasted from April to late July 457 B.C.

The decree of Artaxerxes I *went into effect* after Ezra's arrival in Palestine in the early fall—or late summer—of 457 B.C. This was "the going forth" of the decree recorded in Daniel 9:25-26.

The Prophecy Fulfilled

We can now determine the *EXACT YEAR* in which Christ—the Promised Messiah—would come. According to Daniel 9:25-26, from the going forth of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem (issued and put into effect in the late summer or early fall of 457 B.C.) there would be 69 prophetic weeks (7 + 62) until Christ would come.

As we have seen before—sixty-nine prophetic weeks equalled *four hundred eighty-three years!*

And 483 years after 457 B.C. would bring us to the autumn of A.D. 27—*THE YEAR IN WHICH CHRIST BEGAN HIS MINISTRY!!* Three and a half years later, brings us to a 31 A.D. crucifixion. Proof positive—completely destroying the false theory that Christ's ministry terminated in 33 A.D.

Study this article several times. Become thoroughly familiar with the books of Ezra and Nehemiah—so that you *really understand* the chronological sequence of events! Don't assume one quick reading is enough. Be sure to get notes in your Bible. Mark this article. Know and *know* that you know!

The Bible Answers Your Questions

Please address any questions YOU would like answered
in this column to the Editor.

How long should our prayers last? The Bible seems to say we should not pray very long: "When you pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their *much speaking*" (Matthew 6:7).

Heathen prayers always use vain repetitions. The mob at Ephesus cried for *two solid hours*, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians! Great is Diana of

the Ephesians!" (Acts 19:34.) In the Old Testament, the priests of Baal pleaded, cajoled, screamed, and whined for the entire day to no avail (I Kings 18:26-29).

Even today, the millions in Asia and Africa pray this way. Monks of India have been known to repeat a single "holy" word until their strength was exhausted and they could no longer

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Bible Questions

(Continued from page 20)

speak. Every false religion has its endless repetitions that are supposed to buy God's attention.

The God of your Bible does not want to hear a broken record! God wants "effectual, *fervent* prayer" (James 5:16). But does that mean prayers should be "short and sweet," a short rhyme before going to sleep or eating a meal? Are we really close to God with a thirty-second ritual per day? And more important, is God satisfied?

Jesus Christ set us an example that we should follow it point by point (I Peter 2:21). "He that saith he abideth in Him [Christ] ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked" (I John 2:6).

How long did Christ pray? In public, Christ prayed only a few seconds (John 11:41, 42). But in daily, private prayer between Himself and His Father, Christ prayed for long intervals, but *without* vain repetition. At one time of extreme urgency, Christ prayed ALL NIGHT LONG (Luke 6:12). At other times, Christ's standard for prayer was about an *hour per day*. "Sit ye here while I go and pray yonder . . . and He cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, 'WHAT! Could you not watch with me ONE HOUR?'" (Mat. 26:36, 40.)

Christ got INVOLVED in His prayers. It was never a matter of length, though—it was a matter of *heart*. We, too, should never pray by the clock, rather by the *heart*. But Biblical example and practical experience have shown Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong and all God's ministers that an average of a half-hour per day is certainly a *minimum* if we want to really walk with God.

"Where do I find the time," people will ask? Christ found the time, and He was busier than any of us. "IN THE MORNING, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place and there prayed" (Mark 1:35). Where there is a *will*, there is a way.

Christ taught "to *this end*, that men ought *always* to pray, and not to faint"

(Luke 18:1). "Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry *day and night* unto Him?" (Verse 7.) God wants His people to "get involved" in prayer.

Philadelphia Christian

(Continued from page 13)

married to Jesus Christ we will then share His NEW name!

Will YOU Qualify?

Now you have read the twelve points showing what a true Philadelphia member of God's Church is like, will be doing, and how God Himself will reward the Philadelphia Church in the World Tomorrow.

Look at your fruits! Have you been bringing forth the fruits of a zealous, inspired, dedicated Philadelphian? Is your whole life, your whole heart really behind and in this great Work of God being carried on today? Are you sacrificing so this Gospel can go out with greater power and force?

Are you obeying God's Word—living by His every command?

Are you yielded to His Government, His authority over your life? Are you AWARE of your own personal weakness, inability, and wretchedness? Are you constantly crying out to GOD for His help in overcoming, growing, and inspiration in serving?

Are you really looking forward to the glorious blessings and rewards and responsibilities which God will prepare for those who endure to the end, faithfully serving Him?

You have heard how God wants you to be. *Act on these things!* Don't let someone else steal your crown! Consider these things. Meditate on them. THINK about them, seriously, earnestly, and *take a spiritual inventory of yourself*.

Examine yourself before God in prayer.

You can know where you stand *by the fruits* being produced!

If it is evident by your fruits that you are not a part of the Philadelphia Church of God, then *repent, change* your ways before it is too late. Ask God to give you that *love* which the Philadelphia Church has, to help you do the *work* that He has given you to do. Keep

Christ's Words. Don't deny His name, ask for His help that you might *endure* to the end.

Remember, it is not the one who *starts* in the race—not just the one who is enduring at the *present* time that will be given the reward. It is the one who ENDURES to the *very end* who wins the race!

Be sure that you are a Philadelphia Christian—and don't let your spiritual zeal grow lukewarm, don't let spiritual pride overthrow you, don't let vanity deceive you.

Remember the warning of the apostle Paul—"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth *take heed* lest he fall" (I Cor. 10:12).

YOU CAN SERVE

(Continued from page 15)

stant good cheer—a positive, exuberant outlook on life can do wonders for other people who may feel cheerless, depressed, or who have been suffering setbacks and reverses in their own lives.

These BASIC things are fundamental to being of service in God's Work. No matter what your talents, or supposed abilities, if you are neglectful of your person, or negligent of your family and home—these physical things are sad commentaries of your SPIRITUAL condition as well! Often, if we diligently take good care of the details—the LITTLE things—the big things will take care of themselves!

God desires earnestly that each one of us GROW "... in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a PERFECT MAN, unto the measure of the stature of the FULLNESS OF CHRIST: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro . . ." (Eph. 4:13-14). God wants YOU to be a MATURE Christian, serving others by living an exemplary life of Christian conduct!

Examine yourself—and set yourself to accomplish these goals! God will bless and reward each one of us, according to his WORKS! If you are diligent, your life will be blessed abundantly, far more than you ever imagined—and you will have that rewarding sense of real usefulness and SERVICE to God!

THE POINT OF NO RETURN

(Continued from page 8)

the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (I John 2:15-17).

The Bible warns that there will be some in this condition at the time of the end. "Let him which is on the house top not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field RETURN BACK to take his clothes" (Mat. 24:17-18).

Will you be guilty of this?

Again, ask yourself: Is there ANYTHING in the world that can make you yearn to go back? Is there ANYONE you miss so much, or you want so badly to be with, that you would like to go back—for his sake—to the ways of the world? Some, in God's Church, are extremely slow in growing because they have unconverted relatives who take most of their thoughts and prayers and time.

Is this your case?

If so, then you have not reached the POINT OF NO RETURN on your journey to the Kingdom of God—even though it is soon time to land. What will it take to shake you up? What do you need to wake you up?

God says: "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we [first] believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus

Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:11-14).

God's Great Promise

Occasionally, in talking over the problems with members of the Church, we ministers feel that their discouragement is mainly due to the lack of confidence or TRUST in God's concern for them. Some people even think and act as though God were trying to make it impossible for them to enter the Kingdom.

This, of course, is utter nonsense! God truly wants each and every one of us to SUCCEED; it is His will and desire that we BE SAVED. He will bend backward, so to speak, to help us out.

What then is there to fear? If God is with us—and HE IS with us—whom shall we fear? Are your "trials" or "tests"—when the going is really tough—more than you can bear? This, too, is an impossibility. To find your life "unbearable" is to make God a liar, for it is written: "There hath no temptation [trial or test] taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted [tried or tested] above that ye are able; but will with the temptation [trial or test] also make a way to escape" (I Cor. 10:13).

What a magnificent PROMISE! Take God at His Word. Have courage! Live your life with a strong, cheerful and positive attitude. God does not expect of you what you aren't able to give, do, or make. But He certainly expects you to make the best and the fullest use of whatever He has given you.

Look Forward

The very fact that you know the Truth—and that you are a member of the Church, Christ's body—should be

already a positive proof in itself that you must have passed the point of no return. Act on it then—accordingly. It doesn't take more effort to believe than to doubt. It doesn't take more power to go forward than backward. In fact, oftentimes, the contrary is true!

If you are constantly faithful to God's Word, then you have His absolute GUARANTEE that you will succeed and gain ETERNAL LIFE. Always keep your eyes on Jesus Christ, knowing perfectly well that He wants you—more than you can ever want—to make the Kingdom. Instead of looking back to the world behind you, look forward to the WORLD TOMORROW, and rejoice that every passing hour brings you closer to God's Kingdom.

When you consider the reward, no sacrifice whatever can be too high a price to pay. The apostle Paul wrote under divine inspiration: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18). And again: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (verses 35-39).

Remember therefore that, whatever trials and tests you may encounter now, you truly have already passed THE POINT OF NO RETURN. Your difficulties may be compared to the "engine trouble" of a "crippled" plane, but our journey—as true Christians—is quite different from the hazardous and perilous journey of a plane. Ours is an absolutely SAFE and MAJESTIC one, and we can all anticipate, with joy, a perfect landing in the near future—not just on any field, but in God's own Kingdom!

THE STORY BEHIND THE 1966 ENVOY!

Beginning an informative series, the Director of Printing takes you behind the scenes at Ambassador College Press. This article helps you to participate in the production of your 1966 ENVOY!

by David Jon Hill

WHAT goes into the making of a book? Where do you start? What materials do you need? How about staff and machinery? What size will it be? What kind of paper should be used? How many pages? How much color can you afford?

AFFORD!

That brings up the toughest questions of all—what will the book cost—how will it be financed!?

That's where YOU come in!

Five Dollar Gold Mine

In 1965 the Work of God had to subsidize *The ENVOY* with considerable thousands of dollars. This year—with our doing our own printing—if you send in your five dollars for your book, the Work will not have to subsidize *The ENVOY* one penny!

The ENVOY for 1966—a big nine by twelve inch book with the finest of paper (Sirocco Embossed Enamel from Consolidated Papers), over four hundred pages with full color used elaborately throughout, with a fine richly embossed cover—would cost you a minimum of \$25 if you could buy it at a regular bookstore! But since it is only available through Ambassador College—since it is a collectors item, a first-run edition by Ambassador Press—since it keeps you up to date with the Work of God worldwide as no other publication can—we are going to "force" you to pay . . . only \$5!

Of course, if someone, without detracting from his offerings to the Work, were to donate any extra we would not feel badly about receiving the extra help!

Honestly and sincerely, there is no other publication which gives you more

for your money—*The PLAIN TRUTH* is free! *The ENVOY* is not the Gospel, so we can't give it away. But *The ENVOY* does show you vividly how, where, by whom and with what means the Gospel is being carried to the world.

Personal Delivery This Fall

Your personal copy of *The ENVOY* will be delivered to you at the Feast of Tabernacles site you attend. This delivery date may sound a little disappointing, but here are the reasons—so you will know why, and see how you are helping directly in the 1966 *ENVOY* production: by not having to pay postage and packaging costs, we will save—with your help—over \$5,000! . . . also, this delivery date gives us a little more time to produce the book . . . and this later date makes it possible, for the first time, to include all the activities of the entire school year in the book of that year, whereas before, many of the end-of-the-year activities had to be included in the next year's book.

You may reason that it would be best to wait till Fall to purchase your *ENVOY*—BUT DON'T! There is a vitally important reason why you need to order as soon as possible. Since Ambassador College is doing the printing, we have to pay the bills as they come along. Paper has to be purchased—more than \$12,000 worth! Portrait photographers have to be paid to take the students' pictures. Special photos of overseas offices and personnel have to be paid for. Certain equipment has to be purchased for us to be able to do our own work—money, money, money!

We're counting on you! If you are planning to get an *ENVOY* at all—order it now! We need this monetary

help from you to do the best job for you. This is another way you share the experience of this pioneering effort with us.

Progress Report to Date

We are nearly ready to go to press with 160 pages! Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong has approved the theme and general coverage planning, as well as many of the full two-page color photos of the Feast sites and many of the campus shots.

Although the press you saw on page 21 may be used on part of *The ENVOY*, the special press we recently ordered from Italy—a four color press to do the covers for *The PLAIN TRUTH* and some of the larger booklets in color—is presently on its way to us. *The ENVOY* will be the first big job done on it. As soon as it arrives I'll show it to you and tell you a little more about it.

Don't forget! Order your *ENVOY* NOW! Use the card and envelope supplied for you. Print your name and address clearly—AND KEEP YOUR PART OF THE CARD. Bring that part of the card with you to the Feast, and we'll personally hand you your 1966 *ENVOY*.

If you want to order more than one *ENVOY*—this yearbook provides friends and relatives with the best description of the Ambassador Colleges and the Work of God available—just enclose a slip of paper with the proper name and address (and \$5 for each book) and we'll gladly mail *The ENVOY* to the one you indicate. Or perhaps you'd rather pick it up at the Feast and deliver it personally yourself—whatever you'd like, just let us know.

Whatever you do—ORDER NOW!