

The Sabbath

# Recorder



July 1914

# The Sabbath Recorder

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A Magazine for Christian Enlightenment and Inspiration

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## IN THIS ISSUE

Editorials: "Come Ye Yourselves Apart".....	3
The Highest That We Know.....	4
Features: The Sabbath.....	5
Death in the Church.....	7
Peace.—The Sabbath and Seventh Day Baptists.....	9
God's Law in the Heart.....	10
Evangelists.....	11
Protestantism in Belgium.....	12
The Bible Speaks.....	14
The Season of Advent.....	17
Children's Page: The Wise Men Find the Baby Jesus.....	18
News in the World of Religion.....	2
What a Challenge!.....	19
A New Leaf.....	Back Cover

## Front Cover Picture

"Hope of the World." — RNS Photo.

# NEWS in THE WORLD OF RELIGION BY W.W. REID

The Golden Rule Foundation (60 East 42nd Street, New York City) is broadcasting an appeal to American Churches and churchmen, especially those in the rural areas, to contribute wheat in order to stave off the terrible conditions of hunger that prevail among the relocated or displaced people of India. In this appeal the foundation has the approval of Premier Pandit Nehru of India, now in the United States; he says wheat is today India's number one need. The proposal is that those who have quantities of wheat to give, or know where it may be secured from farmers and farm associations, give this information (including quantities) to the foundation; it, in turn, will use the facilities of CROP (Christian Rural Overseas Program) to gather in the wheat and ship it to India. Says foundation president, Robert M. Hopkins, "A recent visitor to India says that it is necessary to feed that nation's empty stomachs until next rice harvest if the people are to be saved from Communism."

Six hundred rural pastors and Church leaders of Protestantism met recently in Lincoln, Neb., under the auspices of the interdenominational "Committee on Town and Country" (Home Missions Council of North America, Federal Council of Churches, and the International Council of Religious Education) to consider the problems of Churches in small communities. Some conclusions of the convocation were: American rural life is changing so rapidly, and the secular influence of the city and of the industrial town is becoming so marked upon the farmer and his way of life, that Church methods — especially those of the rural Protestant parishes — must change to meet new needs or be swept aside as a religious and social influence. The one-room, one-day-a-week (or one day per month) Church can never meet the growing needs of their communities. Co-operation, interdenominational planning, and emphasis upon men's basic religious needs, with the gradual disappearance of emphasis upon Church differences, must be the order of the day in the rural and village Church. Rural people cannot afford the waste and "luxury" of divisive denominationalism.

## "Come Ye Yourselves Apart"

"Weekends with God" is the title of a feature article which appears in the American Magazine for January, 1950. This title reminds us, by way of contrast, of another title that appeared a few years ago — "The Lost Weekend." From certain popular comment at the time our impression was that as far as human decency, sobriety, character, and usefulness are concerned — they were "thrown out of the window." As far as recognizing the Maker and their responsibility to Him are concerned — the characters in "The Lost Weekend" were worse than lost.

As we return to the first title, "Weekends with God," we are deeply impressed with the growth of the retreat movement. The article to which we referred was written by Rev. W. Robert Hampshire, chairman of the Retreat Committee, American Church Union. Mr. Hampshire tells of the quiet, yet surprisingly steady development of the idea of withdrawing from the world of men and affairs to become re-oriented to the divine spirit and purpose. Men and women enter upon the retreat experience with differing backgrounds and motives, and emerge with varying degrees of spiritual strength. Something actually happens in the lives of those of many faiths. If folks can be saved from themselves to a life of usefulness and sacrifice for Christ and their fellow men, a weekend retreat is worth the attending. An influence that will recall men and women from their wanderings, defeat their frustrations, revitalize their flagging zeal for righteousness, and redirect their life's purposes in this selfishly obsessed society is a definite gain for the kingdom of God.

Transformations are taking place among retreatants. Rev. Mr. Hampshire writes:

"Such transformations of character occur frequently among those who seek self-renewal at the wells of religion. They will multiply in number if the retreat movement continues to spread and grow, as it shows every indication of doing.

"The idea of temporary withdrawal from society in order to return to it with greater religious insight and power is by no means new. Long before the birth of Christ, the Hebrew prophets frequently sought spiritual replenishment during periods of retirement from the world, and founders of the great pagan religions did the same. Jesus made a retreat of 40 days in the wilderness before starting His ministry. Most of the saints followed His example.

"But the world has never seen anything quite like the present spontaneous desire on the part of so many men and women to seek days of voluntary seclusion with God. In all probability it reflects a widespread revulsion against the materialism of our times. But, whatever the cause, it is a spiritual phenomenon of the first order, and one which contains tremendous possibilities.

"Speaking a few years ago in England, where the retreat movement is growing faster than it is here, the Most Reverend William Temple, late Archbishop of Canterbury, said that religious retreat offers the most promising avenue through which the vital power of religion and lasting peace, might be brought to the world. 'The way of advance,' he declared, 'is the way of retreat.'

"Thousands of Americans are finding that to be true during their weekends with God. The great religious retreat movement is bringing them peace as individuals. Whether or not it also can bring enduring peace to the world remains to be seen, but it is one of the brightest and most hopeful features of our tragic century." — The American Magazine, January, 1950. Used by permission.

The Master Teacher understood perfectly the need of His disciples to withdraw from the world. One day He said to them, " 'Come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat." Mark 6: 31 (R.S.V.)

If we as Sabbathkeeping Christians are to dynamically witness to salvation in Christ and the sanctity of His Sabbath, we would do well to withdraw at least for a "weekend with God" to rediscover His plan and purpose for our personal and group life. When the life of the individual is in the proper perspective with God, the life of the group will become that way — that is, if the group is made up of individuals who are earnestly seeking to have their lives in proper perspective with God. The real issue is to inspire folks to want their lives, first of all, to be in proper

perspective with God. Only the Holy Spirit can do that.

Our part in making it possible for the Holy Spirit to work is to provide the witness by word and deed, and the way by planning and co-operation. To be sure, we cannot interest others in something about which we are lukewarm or indifferent and in which we do not share.

Apparently the Holy Spirit is working mightily and marvelously in and through the "weekends with God." Dare we to be lukewarm about this matter or indifferent concerning its possibilities?

## The Highest That We Know

Several years ago we heard a speaker in Columbus, Ohio, offer a definition of a Christian that appealed to us strongly. "A Christian," he said, "is a person who gives the best that he has to the highest that he knows."

This is altogether true when the highest that a person knows is Jesus Christ, and he is giving Jesus Christ his best. But when the highest a person knows is less or other than Christ, how can he be called Christian? Such a person would probably be the first to deny his being a Christian, unless he is an honest seeker after the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Anyone who has been converted to Christ, and recognizes in Him the highest, most desirable way of life, will, by the very nature of his new-found experience, be exerting himself to give his best to Christ.

Since we know Christ to be the highest, it is our privilege and place to give Him our best. God gave His only begotten and best when He sent Christ to be the Saviour of the world. We can ill afford to give Him less than our best.

If Christ comes first in our lives, the best of our time will be His. It is well to consider this matter, especially at the close of 1949 and at the beginning of 1950. Do worship and devotion have a prior claim on our time. Then the best is Christ's. If someone or something else

comes first in our time, then Christ is being crowded out and He is receiving less than our best.

If Christ comes first in our lives, the best of our energies will be His. Time and energy are so closely linked. Does work for Christ and the Church demand the best of our energies? Then the best is Christ's. If an interest foreign to Christ is receiving the cream of our energies, and He is getting the dregs, then certainly we are giving Him less than our best.

If Christ comes first in our lives, the first of our money will be His. Time and energy and money are near kin. Do the interests of Christ and His kingdom receive first consideration when we get our pay? Then the best is His. Or, does He get what is left? One of the best ways to make sure that we do not rob God, and cause Christ's work on earth to suffer, is to tithe. "All things come of Thee, O Lord: and of Thine own have we given Thee."

The only way to give our best to Christ who is the highest that we can possibly know, is to know Him better day by day and year by year, and to become more obedient to His will. If we are surrendered to Him, He will reveal to us His will and the way He wants us to go. No greater thought and effort can possibly engage us now and forever. Amen.

## The Sabbath

By REV. EARL CRUZAN  
Pastor, Seventh Day Baptist Church, Dodge Center, Minn.

"We believe that the Sabbath of the Bible, the seventh day of the week, is sacred time, antedating Moses and having the sanction of Jesus; that it should be faithfully kept by all Christians as a day of rest, and worship, a symbol of God's presence in time, a pledge of eternal Sabbath rest." Seventh Day Baptist Beliefs, page 79.

There is but one reason why there should be a Seventh Day Baptist denomination. We are one in thought and practice with most Baptist groups except for one point, and that one point is the Sabbath of God. As a denomination in history, ours goes back to the early Anabaptist movement in England and had its beginning in this country very early in the history of the colonies.

We have maintained a separate existence throughout the history of this country. Our membership has never been large, but our Churches have continued to function, and we have gained a place of recognition among Church people as we have co-operated in community and national religious movements. Why have we not grown larger in numbers? This is a question often asked. No one can give all the answers, but I would suggest two: Many of our people have failed to witness for the Sabbath, and, many others have not had the religious stamina to leave the things of the world and stand firm for the observance of the Sabbath as the Bible indicates it should be observed. I do not mean that Seventh Day Baptists have less religious stamina than other people, but it is much easier to obtain the things of the world offered by the resources of a good job if one does not try to keep the Sabbath holy.

We believe in the Sabbath of the Bible, the seventh day of the week. Search the Scriptures as you may — you may read them from cover to cover and search them

a thousand times and you will find but one Sabbath that has ever been observed during all the Bible days.

There are those who have tried to claim that the seventh day is a Sabbath given to the Jewish people alone and that it was done away when Christ fulfilled the ceremonial law with His death upon the Cross. How comforting to many would that be if it could be proved. It would be much easier to live in the world; but there has never been any day substituted to take its place which carries either a command from God or His sanction.

Let us pause for a moment to look at the argument that the Sabbath is of Jewish origin and for the Jewish people. If this were true, it could not have been in existence before the time of these people as a race. Yet we find it in the creation story as a memorial unto God, as a rest from the work of creation. And as we follow references to it through the Scriptures, we find that God never ceased to call it "My holy day."

Some would say: "This comes from Jewish tradition." Be that as it may, we find it also in the tradition of the Chaldeans and others. We find the word for the seventh day of the week in many primitive languages designating the seventh day as a day of rest. This goes to prove that the Sabbath was in existence before the time of the Jewish nation for many of these languages are older than the Jewish nation.

We do not hear much about the Sabbath until Moses led the Jewish people out of Egypt, but we do not have much record of what took place before that time. This we do find, that before the Ten Commandments were codified by God on Mt. Sinai and given to His people, that the Sabbath was observed. This evidence is clear in the instructions given concerning the gathering of the manna in the wilderness.

Moses is known as the greatest lawgiver of all time. It was through him that God gave many laws. There are three types of laws which were given: moral, ceremonial, and social. The ceremonial law pointed to and typified Christ. That, we believe, has been done away through the sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross where His blood was shed as the ransom for all who believe in Him and in salvation through Him. The social law dealt largely with the social conditions of the times — some of them have been carried over into our time and some have lapsed.

The moral law, the ten words of God to His people, has formed the basis for civilization. National laws have largely been patterned after them — that is, the last six laws which deal with man's relationship to man. And for Christians, the first three are looked upon as necessary in their relationship to God, but the fourth, which is the keystone and central part of this moral law, has oft been neglected. Man would uphold the nine but leave out the fourth — the command to sanctify and keep holy the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath unto God.

As we follow the history of God's people, we find that as they observed the Sabbath they kept close to God, but as they neglected it they separated themselves from Him and lost thereby.

Jesus was born the Son of God and the Son of man. He came to earth for a divine purpose — to save the souls of men. He was learned in the Jewish law and Scriptures. His action and His teaching should tell us much as to what He would have us do. We find that He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath as His custom was. He constantly worshiped with His disciples on the Sabbath. Many burdens had been placed upon Sabbath-keeping which were not in the divine command nor in the intent of it. Jesus did not heed these restrictions, but healed and did good as the occasion indicated. He said that He is the Lord of the Sabbath.

He also said that "the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." God made the Sabbath for man — man is the important part of creation — the Sabbath was made for him for rest, for worship. It was given to bring him closer to God.

The Sabbath as a day of rest and worship was fully sanctioned by Jesus, and the disciples continued to rest and worship on the Sabbath as nearly as we can determine from the Scriptures. They add this to the final sanction of Jesus.

Does it not follow that with the Sabbath instituted at the beginning of time and having the full sanction of Jesus, it should be faithfully kept by all Christians as a day of rest and worship?

Most Christians have forgotten the Sabbath of God. They have substituted a day for it, but it is a day without any divine sanction. There have been attempts to place the sanctity of Sabbath upon Sunday. But now there is an apparent no-sabbatism in the world. What else can you expect when leaders cannot turn to the Bible for sanction of their day of worship? And many leaders are admitting to those who know the Scriptures that there is no basis in them for either abolishing the Sabbath or observing the first day as a day holy unto God.

The Sabbath is a symbol of God's presence in time. It is necessary to have a Sabbath that man may rest. It is also necessary that man take time to worship God. We are so busy, we have so many things to do, that we will not take time for the things that are needful to refresh our souls, unless we have a specific time to drop all else and turn our thoughts to God. Did not God know this when He gave us the Sabbath?

Does it not seem reasonable that Christ would have given a command to His disciples indicating His desire, had He desired the transfer of the day of rest from Sabbath to Sunday, or had He desired that there be no day of worship?

## Death in the Church

By MRS. MAY HENKE

Deaconess, First Seventh Day Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.

The story is told of an artist who was engaged to paint a picture of a dying Church. Those who commissioned him rather naturally expected that he would portray a ramshackle old structure, set in the midst of a neglected yard overgrown with weeds, with broken windows, weath-

er-beaten and unpainted walls, and surrounded by a general air of decrepitude.

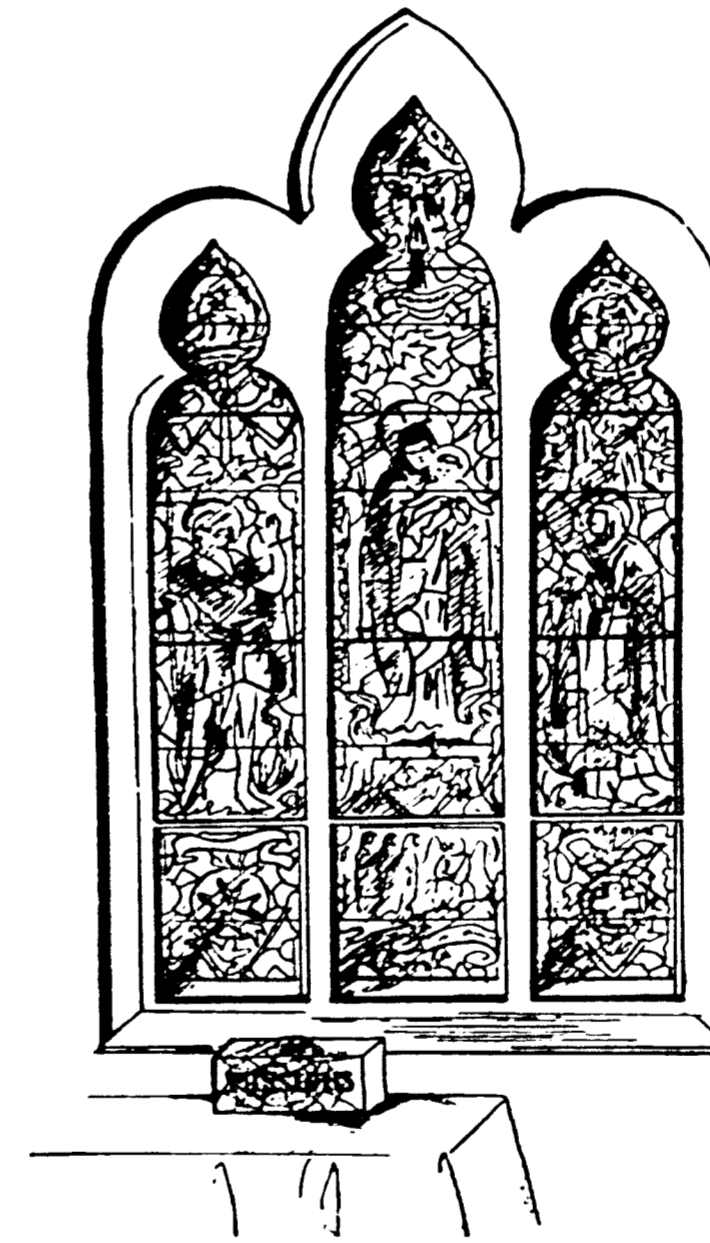
little opening designed to receive the contributions there was a cobweb. There is a profound truth underneath the artist's satire. A Church may be meeting in a glorious Gothic cathedral and yet be in the throes of death. The actual life of a Christian congregation cannot be measured by the building in which the people worship, but by their concern for the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth.

The marks of death are upon any congregation of Christians who worship God on the Sabbath day in the midst of comfortable surroundings, and who carry upon their souls no burden because of the world's need.

It is one of the marks of death in a Christian Church when its membership is made up exclusively of those of the privileged class. Someone expressed a great truth in a simple epigram when he said: "God have mercy on the Church when the poor cease knocking at its door."

It is a sure mark of death upon any congregation when to one individual, or a clique of persons, there has gravitated the power to make all the decisions for the congregation. One of the fundamental beliefs of Protestantism is that God makes Himself known to the individual, and that He reveals His will and mind to persons, not to institutions. The history of the Christian Church bears eloquent testimony to the fact that God has, on many occasions, made Himself very plain to persons who have occupied inconspicuous position and status. The governing board of any Church should be composed of those who because of their Christlikeness may be expected to receive such revelations.

It is a certain mark of death upon any Church or congregation when there are no young people in its worship services. The Church, as an institution, is never more than one generation away from ex-



J. L. W.

er-beaten and unpainted walls, and surrounded by a general air of decrepitude.

Instead, the artist painted the picture of a stately building with expensive art glass windows, a considerable expanse of richly carved wood, a high pulpit, and comfortable pews. In the foyer, in a conspicuous corner of the wall, a box was fitted, across the front of which were the words "FOR MISSIONS." Over the

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inction. The congregation which is spending all its income on the services designed for the older people is only paying its own funeral expenses.

It is almost a fatal illness in a congregation when one or two rich men do most of the giving. There is a spiritual value to be derived from generosity which contributes incalculably to the spiritual power of the people. The gift of the poor may open the channels through which the power of God will flow upon a congregation, when the great benefactions of the rich do no more than erect buildings and provide equipment.

Death is not far away from the Church which can worship in the midst of want, undisturbed by poverty, the unrest, and the juvenile delinquency which swirl about its building all week long.

The Church that is not advancing is dying. Christianity was never designed to be a static thing. The Master's commandment, "Go ye into all the world," contemplated action, effort, enterprise, initiative, struggle, organization, and enlistment. Every Church which has goals that are ahead of its accomplishment may be sure that it has the breath of life still in it.

There is considerable suspicion of the life of a congregation which is unable to maintain a prayer meeting.

There is no doubt as to the status of the congregation which has no evangelistic passion, which is unconcerned over the unconverted people in its neighborhood, which is satisfied without going out into the highways and hedges.

The Church is moribund which is living comfortably and on good terms with the liquor business. The widespread use of intoxicants is certain to destroy everything that the Church of Christ proposes to build up, and a congregation that can get along with the liquor traffic is going the traffic's way.

That Church is dead which arouses no sense of fear among evildoers. That Church is dying in which there is no hunger and thirst after righteousness, among whose families there are no family altars, whose adults are not studying their Bibles and applying their faith to the contemporary problems of life.

It is a fixed sign of death within a Church when any other authority is set up over that of Jesus Christ, its founder, whether the usurper be political, economic, social, or financial.

Now do we want that to take place in our Church? God forbid. It is up to us as a Christian organization to "Go out" as Jesus has commanded, and get people who have families of young children to come, hear, and learn the truth. If they will not come to Church, let us take the gospel to them, hold prayer meetings in their homes until they become interested in coming to Church, and help them to learn that we must not forget to assemble ourselves together in God's house. We must be spiritual and sincere and stick together. By doing this, it will please God more than any other way.

We must not fail in our own Church in doing the things that will please Him most. We must not become weary in well-doing, and grow cold, indifferent, and unconcerned, and think perhaps the Church would get along better without us. When a member drops out, it is like losing a spoke in a wheel. If too many spokes drop out, the wheel will fall down. We must put our whole trust in God and put our shoulders to the wheel, if we want to make our Church a success.

" . . . let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Hebrews 12: 1.

We must work together with patience and not give up and turn back. We must pray for one another, and for the dying world which is in sin. An all night prayer meeting will do us good. Prayer changes people. Prayer changes Churches. So let us pray without ceasing.

#### SPECIAL ISSUE

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## Peace

By CLARA LOOFBORO

New Auburn, Wis.

Peace is the love you feel for those in the circle of the home, and good will for all the peoples of the earth.

Peace is the joy you have for the happiness and good fortunes of others, and the laughter and trust of a little child.

Peace is the beauty of the sunset sky, the blanket of new-fallen snow, lighted homes, and silent, wooded hills.

Peace is the courage that forces you to speak out, when you know it means a loss of prestige or popularity.

Peace is communion with God who controls the inner workings of your heart, and conditions you to meet life squarely.

Peace is your living faith, your demonstration of the power of love, a conviction that love is stronger than hate.

Peace is sorrow, so deep at times that it shakes your very being, yet prepares you for a wider sympathy and a broader understanding.

Peace is Christ -- a Babe in a manger, a Man of Galilee, the Son on the Cross, and a Victor over death.

Peace is Christ; and Christ is peace to a world so sick that it fears its own extinction, yet hesitant to lift its suffering face to the one great Healer, the Prince of Peace.

## The Sabbath and Seventh Day Baptists

By REV. TREVAH R. SUTTON

Jackson Center, Ohio

The Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, is a Bible fact which no one denies. But it is more than Old Testament as many Christians think, for it is important in the New Testament as well. Jesus kept and taught it. Paul observed it, or the Jews would have strongly objected -- the Book of Acts shows Paul and the New Testament Church observing it. History indicates its observance by Christians for some time until man substituted Sunday. Catholics will tell us they made the change. There are good evidences a few Christians kept the Sabbath through the Dark Ages, and it is still observed by some Christians.

As the Baptists arose out of the Protestant Reformation, the old stream of Sabbathkeeping Christians merged with others in the formation of the first known Church

organized as Seventh Day Baptists. This was in London, England, about 1617. Then Seventh Day Baptists came to America preaching the gospel of Christ and the Sabbath.

The movement spread across America. While never large, though widely scattered, the Sabbath influence reached to other Christians -- influencing some in the Millerite movement resulting in the formation of the Seventh Day Adventist body, influencing some of the German Baptist Brethren (Dunker) movement in Pennsylvania resulting in the formation of the German Seventh Day Baptist body.

What is our place today? Just to perpetuate a denomination? No. We should be working for the day when Seventh Day Baptists are no longer needed, when

the Christian world has accepted the Sabbath truth. Perhaps that day may be closer than we think. There are evidences that Luther almost included the Sabbath in the Reformation. There are some stirrings (even among larger bodies of Protestants) regarding a return to the Bible Sabbath, not because it's the law, but under grace so that one will desire to obey God's moral laws, of which the Ten Commandments are central. Should that happen a big step towards Christian

unity will be taken. Then the task of Seventh Day Baptists will be finished. Our message isn't alone to individuals who will accept the Sabbath and join with us, but also to Churches and denominations that will accept it as one essential with the other nine for Christian living, along with the few basic essentials of the evangelical faith. We do not ask for separation but unity on these few essentials.

— The Church Echo, Autumn, 1949.

## God's Law in the Heart

By ADELBERT BRANCH

White Cloud, Mich.

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." And, "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day." The above are the words of the Psalmist David and of the writer of the Book of Hebrews.

The commandments of God, in the nature of things, are binding on His creation, and all of them, I believe, were in full force prior to their being written at Sinai.

The Apostle Paul said that "where no law is, there is no transgression," and the Apostle John points out that "sin is the transgression of the law."

Cain, who lived many centuries before the law was written on stone, killed his brother, and was said to be a murderer. Prior to the flood, sin was in the earth, and the people were destroyed for their sins.

God's word is unchangeable, and He has declared that He will never change the word that has gone out of His mouth.

Think you not that you would rather appear before God in the judgment, having kept all of His commandments, than to appear before Him to say, "I have fol-

lowed the traditions of men, I have kept nine of the Ten Commandments, I have served and bowed down to gods of wood and of stone," or, "I became mad at my neighbor last week, and I cursed with all of my might, taking the name of God in vain, and finally in a fit of anger I killed him," or, "I have faithfully kept all of the commandments of God, except one that says that the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.

"Circumstances did not seem to make it convenient to do so, and I have followed in the wake of Christendom, and have kept Sunday for the Sabbath, and Lord, while I did not have much faith in it as the Sabbath, and I knew that it had its origin with people who worshiped the sun, and that many people among whom were the Romans, and that finally Constantine, the Roman emperor, living 300 years this side of Christ, began to, and did put their seal upon that day, since which time people have falsely said that Christ arose from the dead on that day, and therefore falsely stated that the Sabbath holiness was transferred to Sunday."

Again, the words of the Psalmist, "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day."

## Evangelists

By REV. ROLAND BAHNSEN

Minister, Grant Avenue Presbyterian Church, Plainfield, N. J.

Our Lord said to a man who had been healed and helped by Him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." Mark 5: 19 (R.S.V.). In other words, Become an evangelist!

### What is evangelism?

"Evangel" is from a Greek word which means "good news," as does the Anglo-Saxon word, gospel. Evangelism is helping others to know the evangel or gospel. It is telling them clearly and convincingly about Jesus Christ. It is making them aware of the love and presence and power of the living God as disclosed in Christ. Evangelism is a primary purpose of the Christian Church. A Church has no reason for being unless it is bringing Christ to individuals and to society, and helping bring individuals and society to Christ.

### How shall evangelism be carried on?

First of all, all the time. It cannot be done in a few days, or in a week or two of the Church year.

If we thank God for His bounty before we eat our meals, and do more "gripping" than thanksgiving the rest of the day, the good habit of grace before meals has little worth. But if those few moments of praise before meals help us to keep constantly aware of the varied gifts of God's providence and grace, they have deep worth.

If we have a few days or weeks of special emphasis on evangelism, with the thought that during a short time we are doing all of a disagreeable task that needs to be done, little real good will come of it. But if that special service begets a passion which pervades the Church through the whole year, it has deep worth. All the time is the time for evangelism.

### All Christians are to be evangelists.

By our enthusiasm for Christ or by our indifference toward Him, by our zeal and devotion in His work or by our inaction and apathy, we are helping to bring others to Him or to repel them from Him. It cannot be overstressed that "The Church stands or falls with the devotion, consecration, the sense of mission in the heart of every individual Church member and Christian." Every one of us is to help make the gospel known and loved.

Of course we must use sense and judgment. Evangelism has often fallen into disrepute by the crudities which marred it. To stand on a street corner ranting at passers-by and urging them to "come to Jesus" is not enough. To ask a stranger out of a clear sky whether he loves Christ is even more impertinent than asking him whether he loves his wife. It is a more intimate question, and he would have the right to resent it.

Real evangelism is something more difficult and more decent. If we appreciate Jesus Christ deeply, we shall want the people we know and for whom we care to love and follow Him, too. If we take Jesus seriously, we shall want others to do so, too; not necessarily in our way, but rather in their own.

There is nothing indecent about that. If we appreciate a book, a musical composition, a scene, a hobby, a piece of work, a friendship, we let that be known. We want those whom we know and for whom we care to share that which means most to us.

Should that not be true of our friendship with Christ? Is there not something deeply wrong with your religion and mine, if we are not eager to spread it, and share it?

**Every one of us can be an evangelist?**

Lest this seem unreal and impossible let me suggest some things we can do:

1. We can give Jesus Christ first place in our interest, loyalties, and life.
2. We can deeply want to bring someone else to Christ, and into His Church.
3. We can invite and bring someone to the services of worship. There are plenty of neighbors who need this.

4. We can be enthusiasts for Christ and His way.

5. We can pray in private for someone who needs Christ.

6. We can work at forming a clear and simple statement of what Christ means to us. When we can tell ourselves what Christ means to us, we can tell others, too.

"Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you."

## Protestantism in Belgium

By DR. A. L. WARNSHUIS

Missionary Statesman

Protestants in Belgium are an isolated minority. The Roman Catholic Church dominates the general situation. In Flanders especially the influence of the priests is very great. The Roman Catholic Christian People's Party can count on forty-five to fifty-five per cent of the votes at every election. The flourishing Roman Catholic university of Louvain, the boarding schools, and the Church press, greatly influence public opinion.

On the other hand, the religious culture of the people does not receive much attention, not even from their own priests. In a census every other question is asked excepting one pertaining to religion, and an honest statistical statement of the unchurched has never been ventured. In Roman Catholic lands this is often the case. Because in the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, Protestantism is never considered as an alternative, a breach with the Church always signifies militant atheism. The present-day issues that awaken passionate interest, as, for example, the return of the king, or the subsidizing of private schools, are never debated upon their own merits, but are always considered as subordinate points in the never-ending struggle to reduce or to justify the influence of the Church upon public life.

At the time of the separation of Belgium from the Netherlands in 1830, it was barely possible to speak of any Prot-

estant life in these southern provinces. So it is the more remarkable that the Protestants now, in spite of their numerical weakness (about one per cent of the population), hold a morally strong position. There is little anti-Protestant action, but rather the opposite. This is especially true among those for whom Roman Catholicism has lost its spiritual value, and who are friendly towards Protestantism.

Legally Belgium recognizes the complete equality of the Churches. Whether or not this toleration is credited to the Roman Catholics or is maintained in spite of them, the reality is a fact. Religious instruction in the higher schools, religious work in the army, representation at all official ceremonies, everything is done on the basis of completely equal rights. However, this does not mean that any religious contact between the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches can be assumed. On the contrary, whenever the Roman Catholic press pays any attention to Protestantism, this is done to make plain to the reader that Protestants are nothing more than a number of mutually antagonistic sects.

It must be frankly admitted that the weakness in the Protestant situation in Belgium is in part the result of division. Fortunately it is now possible to speak of a measure of co-operation in a federa-

tion, which is a consequence of contact with the ecumenical movement that centers in Geneva. The two largest groups are the "Alliance of the Protestant Evangelical Churches of Belgium" and the Missionary Churches. The first is a state Church in the sense that a large part of the financial support is provided by the state. Excepting for these financial relations, these Churches are completely free. Some contact with the Churches in the Netherlands is maintained, and a number of their ministers have come from Holland. The Missionary Churches include those aided by the American Methodists and those supported by "S. I. L. O.," a missionary society in Holland. Due to exchange restrictions that prevented the transfer of money from the Netherlands, S. I. L. O. has asked for and has received considerable aid from the American Churches given through Church World Service. Much of this missionary work is located in the Walloon provinces, and a considerable number of the ministers and evangelists are Swiss. Some financial aid also comes from Switzerland. Union of the Churches has seemed impossible up till now, because the Missionary Churches do not want any connection with the state.

The Belgium Protestants believe that they now confront a great evangelistic opportunity if they can overcome a number of difficulties.

In Belgium, Protestantism is still considered to be an import of foreign origin. The Protestant Churches have not yet ventured to assume the financial burden of supporting a theological seminary of their own; but the disturbing fact is not that their ministers have been trained in the Netherlands or in Switzerland or in Paris or in Strasbourg, but that they are themselves foreigners. There are hardly any native Belgian clergy in the Protestant Churches.

As a consequence of historical developments, Protestantism is not rooted in the country districts, but continues to be principally a city matter. The opposition of the priests in the past, especially in Flanders, has made it difficult to contact the rural people. Moreover, in the cities the Protestants are scattered and distances make churchgoing difficult. In Antwerp

and Brussels it costs a family of four at least three or four guilders to go to Church.

The most serious difficulty is the isolation of the Protestants. They have no real part in Belgian political or cultural life. It is not that any actual handicaps are experienced, but the simple fact of being a Protestant places one in a different position and relationship in whatever is undertaken.

All these circumstances emphasize the importance of well-considered assistance to and co-operation with the Belgian Churches. The development of "Benelux" suggests closer relationships with the Churches in the Netherlands, which at the same time would assist the real Belgian character of these Churches to find expression in continuing responsibilities in cultural and political developments. The missionary opportunities call for assistance from the American Churches, but again that assistance must be given in such ways as will encourage the development of native initiative and responsibility. Such aid can probably be best given through Church World Service and the World Council of Churches.



# The Bible Speaks to a World Beginning Again

By DR. FRANCIS CARR STIFLER

Public Relations Secretary, American Bible Society

The voice of the Bible is never silenced by world upheavals, however great. On the contrary, God speaks at such times with greater power through His Word. Indeed it has often been God's Word, in times when an old age must die and a new one be born, that has guided fearless leaders toward the new path. It was so in the beginning of the Christian movement. It was so at the time of the Reformation. It was so when Puritanism cleansed English life and gave birth to America. It was so in the great Wesleyan revival. Will it be so in the days upon which we are entering now?

If ever a world had to begin again, it is at the present time. Consider the panorama of the continents. There is Germany, the nation which has been "calling the shots" for the world for a generation or more. She virtually does not exist as a sovereign state. Around Germany lies a ring of nations prostrated by the savagery of six years of war and blinded by the bursts of a million bombs and groping for a place to begin again. Russia is entering a new age of power and prestige. Austria has become a republic. The Balkans are again seething with bitterness as they seek for those cherished footholds they never seem to get. North Africa and the Near East are in turmoil. China is no longer the grab bag of Western imperialism. She has started on the road to mighty sovereignty for herself as one of the "Big Five."

Maybe no nation has been pushed farther back toward "scratch" where she must begin again than has Japan whose proud military sovereignty has been wiped out, and whose ancient ideologies are being challenged in the interests of Western ideas of democracy of which her people know scarcely anything.

Even America, unscathed by the bombs

of history's most destructive war, has finally bid adieu to her cherished isolationism and has become host to the Council of the United Nations of the world. The noble experiment of federating independent states, which she has maintained with great success within herself for a century and a half, is now to be undertaken under her leadership on a much larger and vastly more difficult scale. If the United Nations succeeds with half the success that has marked the history of our Federal Union, generations to come will be amply justified in looking upon this as a year of new world beginnings, unprecedented since the coming of Christ.

Can the Bible speak to a world like the world of today? Ah, indeed it can. Such a situation constitutes the Bible's very stock in trade. And the people of the world seem to sense it more this time than in any earlier upheaval.

Just before Christmas, 1945, Dr. T. W. Strieter of the Lutheran Commission for Prisoners of War in this country forwarded to the American Bible Society a request from Chaplain Henry F. Gerecke, attached to the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, Germany. It called for twenty-four German Bibles and one hundred German New Testaments. High ranking Nazis on trial had asked for these books. Sometime, somewhere, some one of these blind leaders of the blind had remembered hearing, it may be, words like these:

"Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for

in these things I delight, saith the Lord." Jeremiah 9: 23, 24.

Six weeks after the ceremony of Japan's surrender on the deck of the battleship Missouri, four American churchmen arrived in Japan. Said one of them, Dr. Luman Shafer, "It was never clearer than in our reception in Tokyo that Christianity is a powerful force for binding the peoples of the world together." Then he described how unmistakably sincere was the deep affection revealed as the Christian leaders of Japan greeted their fellow Christians from America. When on his return Dr. Shafer landed in San Francisco, he wired to New York for a million Japanese New Testaments and 100,000 English Bibles for immediate shipment to Japan. Was not Dr. Shafer, who for many years served as a missionary in Japan, letting his emotions run away with his judgment in making such a request? Let another American serving in Japan supply the answer to that question.

Chaplain George H. Hixson wrote to the Bible Society from Hiratsuka, Japan, on almost the same day that Dr. Shafer sent his wire. He began: "You will be interested to know that there is being born in Japan today a hunger for the Word of God such as I have never before witnessed." He then related an incident growing out of an invitation he had received to speak to a group of Japanese students concerning Christianity. To his amazement he found one thousand people gathered to hear him speak through an interpreter. The interest shown was intense. After the meeting Chaplain Hixson was entertained at the house of a prominent citizen where for three hours they discussed various political, social, and religious activities in the United States, Japan, and the Allied Nations. Before he left, the chaplain presented autographed copies of the English New Testament to his hosts. The next day other invitations of a similar nature began to arrive. One was from the leading physician of a town of approximately twenty thousand people in which he asked that Chaplain Hixson come back regularly to teach a Bible class to be attended by nine hundred young men between the ages of thirteen and twenty-five and hundreds of others, lead-

ing citizens and schoolteachers of the village and neighboring communities.

The burden of Chaplain Hixson's letter was a plea to his friends in America to make it possible for the Bible Society and others to rush as soon as possible to Tokyo as many Japanese New Testaments as could be secured for distribution throughout the prostrate nation. He concluded:

"The door is now open to the gospel of Christ here in Japan as never before. 'We must' is the only slogan we can adopt in getting out the message of God's love. . . . If I only had the New Testaments to present, I could use several thousand . . . putting them into the hands of Japanese young people who today are willing to sit for hours with an English-speaking dictionary so as to translate a New Testament which is printed in English."

There is another most significant way in which the Bible is speaking to the Japanese as they begin again. It is in the life attitudes of the American soldier now in their midst. He is so different from their idea of a soldier. Where yesterday he fought with brutal skill, today, with equal earnestness, he seeks to help and befriend. He goes about unarmed. He plays with little children. He befriends the helpless, homeless people. He protects a Buddhist from harm as earnestly as he does a Christian. But as General MacArthur says, "These soldiers are fine diplomats of the United States."

Well, the Japanese have always been a people of intense curiosity. They are today studying the American G.I. to see "what makes him tick." The more thoughtful Japanese are discovering that he is not a militarist at all. Unlike the soldier of a totalitarian state, he was not taken in his early years and deliberately toughened into a brute who knows nothing but the stoic temper of the killer. He is a civilian in uniform. His basic training came not from the army camp but from the American home, the American school, and the American Church.

However imperfectly its teachings have been reflected, the Bible is nevertheless the basic textbook of all three of these institutions, and the American soldier, however little he may be able to quote the Bible,



is, nevertheless, in many cases unwittingly, reflecting its teachings, the teachings of the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule, and the even more radical of Jesus' injunctions, such as "If thine enemy hunger, feed him," "Love thine enemy," forgive "till seventy times seven." If it were some non-Christian nation that had conquered Japan, it could never be expected that there would be such understanding good will as is now making the American G.I. "more than a conqueror" through his sincere spirit of helpfulness. No, the American soldier is different because there has been bred into his soul and the souls of his forbears through many generations, the counsel of Christ who taught that the only irresistible power in the world is the power of love. In their desire to know the source of this conquering genius the Japanese are being guided to the Bible.

This is not a new phenomenon in the Orient. The Chinese have been gravitating toward the voice of the Scriptures for many years and especially since they have discovered three things: that devotion to the Book has a bearing upon the moral and spiritual strength of their Generalissimo and his wife; that it had influenced the missionaries, at the outset of the hostilities in China in 1937, to spurn the advice of their home governments and remain with their Chinese friends to face the hazards of starvation, pestilence, and enemy action; that the principles of social democracy — and this was a widespread discovery on the part of the students in China's government universities — which they wished to embody more fully in China's life, were eloquently endorsed by Jesus in His teachings. The new China that has been emerging gradually since 1911, but with accelerated speed in the last decade, has been listening with absorbing interest to the voice of God's Word.

What the world in its new beginnings today is looking for is a chance for lasting freedom for the human soul. This constitutes the Bible's supreme opportunity, for the answer to this longing is the central message of the Book. Beyond the glory of freedom for his own land, Samuel F. Smith wrote into our beloved hymn "America" one even more universal idea. It is that God is the "Author of Liberty." Lib-

erty does not have its origin in man. Left to himself man enslaves his fellows and becomes himself a slave. The very longing in the human breast for release from the chains of tyranny, of lying propaganda, of fear, is of divine origin. True liberty cannot be rightly understood without reference to God's purposes. It cannot be gained and held without obedience toward God. Disobedience toward God is the beginning of the end of freedom. And God's will, as well as the power to discover and follow it, is found supremely in the pages of the Bible.

In its present extremity, the world is discovering this and so demanding copies of God's Word. In many European countries where the Bible has held an honored place for centuries but was suppressed by Nazi paganism, it is now revealed that all through the war it is the people of the Churches who remained faithful to the Bible who are now emerging as the leaders of national thought. Dr. A. L. Warnshuis, when he returned from Europe shortly after V-E Day reported that "the dominating aspect of this revival of the Churches is the central position that is being given to the Bible." He related how all over Europe Christians are again studying the Bible and seeking afresh to learn its lessons. They know that even when political liberty is regained, and with it freedom of religion, the deeper moral struggle must go on, must go on among all people and in every generation — the struggle against the chains of self-interest and selfishness, of ignorance and vice, of coarse living, of cynicism and despair, of racial and national and class hatreds — against that complexity of human weakness and perverseness that is sin. Here, too, they know the Word of God is supreme, both as the revelation of the standard of life to which God calls us and also as holding out to men in Christ the power whereby they may live in accordance with it.

It is nothing new for the Bible to come into its own in a time of national and world distress. It is, however, something new for it to have attained so quickly so much recognition in so many widely scattered areas of the world. Just as the Bible climbed to new heights in the world's

affairs with the beginning of the Christian Church, pressed out to new horizons in the days of Luther and of Wesley, and again in the beginning of the modern world mission of the Church about 1800, so today, as the world begins again, the Bible, its pages now intelligible to the leadership of practically every nation; with the index of literacy rising rapidly in so many places; and with the eyes of the world upon America and her ways that have grown out of Bible teachings, the

Bible faces possibilities for influence and acceptance that have never been offered before. The problem of how to meet this stirring challenge is a complicated one, but one requirement stands out clearly and demands a priority on attention. The copies of the Book in adequate supply must be provided in the languages required and at such prices as an impoverished world can afford. This is clearly a challenge to the Christian people of America. What will they do about it?

## The Season of Advent

By H.R.H. PRINCESS WILHELMINA  
of the Netherlands

The weeks of Advent are singularly fit to concentrate on the boundless opportunities God puts before us, opportunities open to us because of the coming of Christ as our Saviour and Redeemer.

This should not be just because this period of preparation comes back annually or as a matter of routine, but because the time we live in makes it a spiritual necessity. Man has lost the habit of seeking the communion of prayer, of "walking with God as seeing the Invisible."

But baffled and overcome by the overwhelming problems of our days, he is thrown back on himself and realizes his own futility and helplessness. Then a sincere search follows, trying to obtain what he has not yet or only in part obtained.

Here Christmas has the answer. Speaking to you a few words about "PEACE," I hope it is quite clear that it is the inner peace, the peace of soul, I exclusively have in mind.

As I approach this subject it is as if a long road loomed up before us, a road cutting deeply through man's life, carrying us straight through its tensions and strife, through the crisis and chaos of our times; in a word: straight through the disintegration of man and society, up to the moment when this road leaves behind all I have just mentioned and rises to those heights where Peace prevails — a peace

that no unrest or disharmony can interfere with, the Peace that enables us to meet with power anything that we find on our path.

On this road, mind and intellect can never be our guides. Only the heart can find the trail and follow it until the goal is reached — the heart, to which God gave such a central place and noble task, but which in life is so often disregarded and prevented from revealing the deepest stirrings of our inmost being.

Why do we not listen to this voice? Why do we not entrust ourselves to that guide? Only the heart can catch the rays of love from the Great Heart, the Heart of our Redeemer, after whom our hearts are shaped.

Love is the basis of all ministration of Christ and our world is the focusing point of His love, today, tomorrow, and forever.

Please understand: I do not speak of the love that usually obtains between man and man, but of the Holy Sacrificial Love that dares to attempt anything for the sake of her or him she wishes to help or save, even up to confronting them with sore trial or a cross, knowing the Power, inherent in Her Very Being, to be sufficient.

How can this be achieved? The following simple story may clarify my meaning. Years ago, at a children's contest for the best care given to plants, the first

prize was won by a little girl, living in an attic room, with just one small window, in a narrow and dark alley. When called upon to receive her prize she was asked how she had managed to make her geranium bear such lovely flowers. She answered she had always been on the lookout for the sun, whether it shone through the narrow window or through the chinks and rifts of the roof and walls of her attic and she had carried her plant about so that it might intercept even the slightest ray of sunshine.

If only we would take similar care of our hearts as this girl did of her plant and in the utter darkness of our days were constantly looking out for any chink or rift through which He, who is the Light of the World, might enter into the depth of our soul! Then it would bring forth flowers of gratitude, even as this plant. And we would find the ineradicable Peace, no storm can dislodge.

When I give this testimony, I know I do not stand alone. "We are surrounded

by a great cloud of witnesses," who have confirmed this truth through the centuries. They testify to the unity and communion, the brotherhood of all people in and through Christ, "looking upon Him as author and finisher of our faith."

It is an encouraging sign that there is a longing, an increasing longing, for more spiritual unity and for the removal of all that keeps us divided. This shows that there is an awakening consciousness as to what Christ demands of us and a turning towards Him, not in outward forms only, or in words, but with the fullness of our personalities. Through the power that is given to us by absolute self-sacrifice we are enabled to do this in full commitment.

May this coming Christmas festival strengthen us in all this, for it calls out to us:

One Shepherd, One Flock,  
One Love, One Peace,  
Compassing All.  
—Contributed.

## The Wise Men Find the Baby Jesus

By MIZPAH S. GREENE  
Andover, N. Y.

There lived many, many years ago in the faraway country called Persia some very wise men who were called Magi. Night after night they would sit up until early morning studying the bright stars



in the heavens. In fact, they spent most of their time in study and were indeed very wise for their time.

In those faraway times many people believed that when a great man was born a great star would appear in the sky, thus telling of his birth and shining above the place in which he was born. These Wise Men were watching to see the star which

should tell of the birth of One who was to become the King of the Jews.

After watching the heavens many nights, at last they saw a very bright star. They had never seen it before. The star night after night seemed to shine down on the very same place.

Many years before, a certain wise man had foretold the birth of this long expected Jewish King who would deliver His people from their cruel rulers. These Wise Men decided after careful study of this beautiful star that it was the very star for which they were looking. They thought it must shine over Jerusalem. So they decided to go there at once to search for their king.

Taking with them gold, frankincense, a very rich perfume, and myrrh, a gum used for perfume, they started for the great city.

As they journeyed on they were surprised to see the bright star going before

them as though leading the way. So they hurried on across the Arabian desert until they reached Jerusalem. There they inquired for Him "that is born King of the Jews," but no one had heard of Him. They found that the Jews expected a great king to come, heralded by wonderful signs. They had no thought of greeting a poor little babe as king.

Then the Wise Men asked, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." (R.S.V.)

When Herod, the ruling king of the country, heard why the Wise Men had come to Jerusalem, he sent for the Jewish priests. He ordered them to tell him, if they knew, where this king which they called the Christ was to be born. They answered, "In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet."

Then Herod sent the Wise Men to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." (R.S.V.)

Of course Herod did not really mean to worship Jesus. He was worried. If Jesus was really King of the Jews, that is an earthly king, and should live to grow up, He would take the throne away from Herod and his sons. This is why Herod was so anxious.

Soon the Wise Men were on their way

### WHAT A CHALLENGE!

Miss Glora M. Wysner, who has recently returned from the Bethlehem area after making a study of the entire refugee problem in the Near East, puts it this way: "What a challenge these refugees are with their physical needs, their temptations, their spiritual distress! The flight from their homes took place in the intense heat of the summer of 1948. Not even temporary provisions had been made for such a flight. The refugees, exhausted, frightened, hungry, many of them ill, settled under the olive trees, in caves, wherever they felt they would be safe. The rains came before sufficient clothing, tents, and blankets could be secured for them. Hundreds of schools employing refugee teachers could be opened if only we had sufficient funds to provide the teachers and equipment.

to Bethlehem. As they started out, lo! they saw before them the beautiful, bright star they had been following. It led them over the hills to Bethlehem. As they entered the village, the star seemed to rest over one certain building, a stable. Upon entering, they found Jesus, a little babe, with Mary His mother. "And they fell down and worshiped him. Then opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh." (R.S.V.) You see Jesus' parents were poor and these rich gifts were God's blessing for them.

The Wise Men then were starting for Jerusalem to tell Herod the wonderful news. But God told them not to go back to Herod because he only wanted to harm Jesus, not to worship Him.

Now Jesus came to bless the world,  
And so each year on Christmas night,  
With thoughts of Him our hearts are stirred,  
Our windows glow with candles bright.

Because He came we sing His praise,  
Our hearts are full of joy and cheer.  
We long to share our happiness  
With needy souls throughout the year.

We'll try to show the whole year through  
Real loving-kindness in His name,  
In loving deeds throughout the year,  
Till all shall know that Jesus came.

"Missionary societies in the Arab countries have been loaning personnel, making buildings and equipment available, and ministering in every way possible to the needs of the people. But they can only carry on this work as special funds are made available. The few schools for refugee children need to be augmented by hundreds.

"Are you making funds available through your denomination for Church World Service? Will the Christian Church fail to heed this cry of need from the land of our Saviour? He who healed the sick, blessed little children, comforted the sorrowing, and gave direction to bewildered lives, calls us to a ministry of reconciliation, of alleviation of suffering, of healing for mind and body in Palestine today, a ministry alike to Christian and Moslem." — CWS Release.

# The Sabbath Recorder

## A New Leaf

By KATHLEEN WHEELER

He came to my desk with quivering lip —  
The lesson was done.  
"Dear Teacher, I want a new leaf," he said,  
"I have spoiled this one."  
I took the old leaf, stained and blotted,  
And gave him a new one all unspotted,  
And into his sad eyes smiled,  
"Do better, now, my child."

I went to the throne with a quivering soul —  
The old year was done.  
"Dear Father, hast Thou a new leaf for me?  
I have spoiled this one."  
He took the old leaf, stained and blotted,  
And gave me a new one all unspotted,  
And into my sad heart smiled,  
"Do better, now, my child."

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*In Honor of  
White Cloud Church Founders*



Left to right: Mrs. Nettie Fowler (daughter of Adelbert), Erastus G. Branch, Adelbert Branch, Mrs. Adelbert Branch. See back cover.