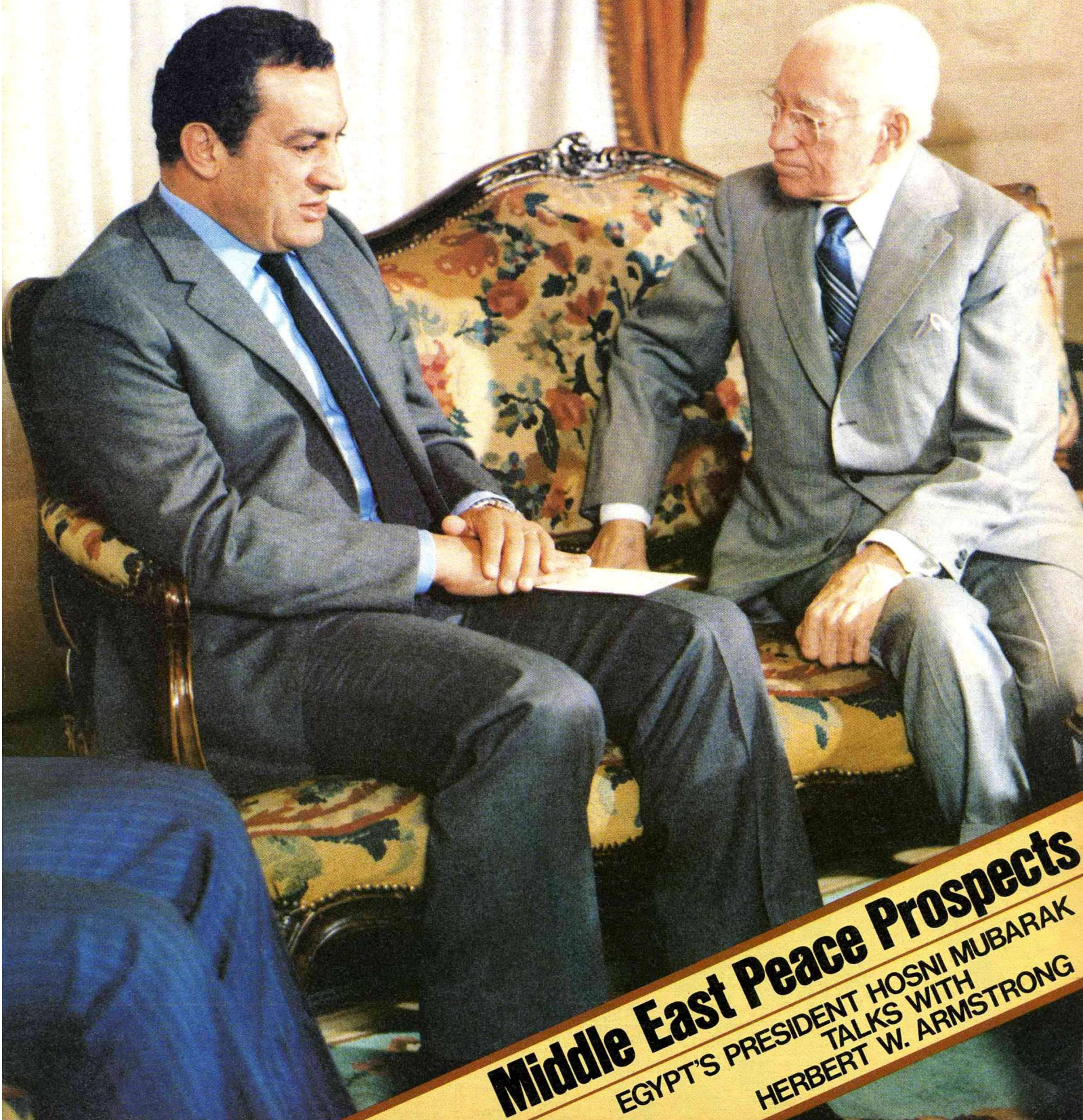


FEBRUARY 1982

*the*

# PLAIN TRUTH

*a magazine of understanding*



**Middle East Peace Prospects**  
EGYPT'S PRESIDENT HOSNI MUBARAK  
TALKS WITH  
HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG



Personal from...

*Robert A. Rothenberg*

# Meeting Egypt's New President

**T**HE BOILING CALDRON in the Middle East continues to boil over. Even the Polish crisis has not taken world attention off the Middle East.

Right now we are in the recess between World War II and World War III—the nuclear war that would blast all humanity off this planet except for the supernatural intervention of God Almighty. And the final massing of the world's armies at ARMAGEDDON will occur on a battlefield north of Jerusalem.

We should be tremendously interested, therefore, in the Middle East.

Somewhat more than a year ago, in October, I had personal visits with both Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel and President Anwar Sadat of Egypt. Last October 6, on the eighth anniversary of the Yom Kippur war initiated by Mr. Sadat, the whole world was shocked by the assassination of Anwar Sadat. He was in the reviewing stand watching the anniversary military parade. I had expected to have another private meeting with the Egyptian president this past November.

I did have the private meeting with the Egyptian president on November 21 last—but with the new president, Hosni Mubarak, in his palace in Cairo.

President Mubarak has received little publicity in the United States, and is not known by the public in the Western world as was Anwar Sadat. Yet he is now a very important world leader in the explosive Middle East, and I think the Western world needs to know more about him. I therefore devoted an entire telecast to my meeting with him, and we are devoting the cover article of this issue of *The Plain Truth*, and this "Personal," to him and Egypt's role in the peace process started in the Camp David meetings with former U.S. president, Jimmy Carter.

As I said plainly to President Mubarak, the peace negotiations are not going to bring peace. Only the intervention of God Almighty himself, and establishment of the Kingdom of God—a

ONE-NATION RULE over all nations—can bring us peace. Hosni Mubarak agreed. But we both agreed that efforts of national leaders toward peace should be carried on. We should do what we can. But it will require the supernatural power of the Great God to do what we humans cannot do for ourselves.

As long as humans are ruled by human nature there can be no peace. We humans cannot achieve peace by ourselves—it will

have to be done *TO* us! Jesus Christ, soon to come in the supreme POWER and GLORY of God Almighty will have to *compel* the people of earth to live GOD'S WAY of life—to *compel* humans to enjoy peace, contentment, (Continued on page 45)



Larry Omasta—PT

# WHAT DO CHURCHGOERS BELIEVE? AND WHY?

by Herbert W. Armstrong

A large segment of American life attends church on Sunday mornings. WHY do they go? WHAT do these churchgoers BELIEVE, and WHY? The plain truth is a little shocking—and illuminating!

**N**OTHING is so astonishing as the truth! It *is* often stranger than fiction.

Most people who attend church regularly, or even occasionally, would be really surprised if they should probe into their own minds far enough to ask WHY they go, and just WHAT is their religious belief—and WHY?

## Do You KNOW?

As a baby, I was taken to church. As a child, I was taken to Sunday school and church. It was a Quaker church. I attended church until I was 18. Then I began attending the theater, the athletic contests or dances. When we were married, my wife and I felt we ought to attend church. We looked over the churches in the general area of our home, selected one that was convenient, respectable, with a modern building, a friendly and personable pastor, and members we liked socially.

But WHY did we join? WHY did we attend church?

Well, we just felt we ought to—that's about all. Did we stop to analyze *why* we ought to attend church? Well, no. We supposed all people *should* attend church, should they not? We probably didn't think much about *why!* But hasn't everybody always *heard* that one should go to church? It seems we had.

Most people simply assume, take for granted and accept without question what they've always heard. Usually they don't know WHY.

## What Did We Believe?

Did we have a definite religion? Reflecting back, my answer would have to be "No." How about you?

What did we believe? Well, we had no deep-rooted convictions. We believed, of course, those things we had most often *heard* in church. We supposed there is a heaven and hell—an ever-burning hell. We believed—or supposed we did—in the immortality of the soul. We believed in Sunday, and Christmas and New Year's and Easter, and from boyhood I had heard the pastor talk about a few weird things, or names, or something that had abso-

lutely no meaning to me—"Pentecost," "grace," "Antioch," "sanctification," "justification," "dead in trespasses and sins." Of course I knew all those things came out of the Bible—but then, I always said, "I just can't understand the Bible."

And, speaking of the Bible, what *does* the average churchgoer think about the Bible? I think that in those years I was typical of many. It was "the *Good Book*." I did, in a way, regard it with a certain superstitious awe. It was beyond my comprehension. Of course I assumed our church got its beliefs out of the Bible. The preacher could understand it. But then, too, I grew up looking on the minister as a person *different* from the rest of us. He was a sort of holy man, not tempted to sin or to enjoy the worldly pleasures like the rest of us. He was like a man from another world. But the Bible was the Book men laid their hands on when taking the oath of office. And it was the one Book I should have been too embarrassed to carry down the street.

Did I look on it as "the Word of God"? Well, yes, I suppose so. But then I never thought of it in *specific* terms as the message, the

instruction of God, to give man the explanation of what he is, and why he is here, and where he is going, and how he ought to live, and how he can be happy, and prosperous and enjoy life more.

Somehow "religion" was for Sunday morning—except that I had been taught that its prohibitions lasted all day Sunday. It was sin to go to the theater on Sunday, and it was a sin to dance, or smoke, or swear, or drink at any time—and even theatergoing was "worldly" and probably a sin at any time. Playing cards was sin too. Aside from a few such things, I had no idea what my church *believed*.

Except for a few such church teachings, "religion" was for Sunday morning and had no connection whatever with my life otherwise. Of course church membership often supplies a portion of one's social life, and many men attend to make valuable business contacts.

Religion? Well, vaguely I had heard that Adam was the first man, and that he sinned, and "fell"—whatever that meant. As a result I vaguely conceived that life was like a one-way trip on a train. Because

of Adam, the switch in the track at the end of the line is thrown to shoot us all down to hell. So I supposed we needed to "get saved," although I had been taught that I had a "birthright membership" in the church, so I guessed I probably was already "saved"—at least I don't remember that I ever worried about it. When one is "saved," the switch in the track at the end of life's journey is then thrown so that, when he gets to the end of the line he will be shot instantly up to heaven, "to be with the Lord" in mansions above, "over the river," or "on the other shore," wherever

all that was. Anyway, it was "up yonder" and when they called the roll, I took it for granted I was going to be there.

And what was my idea of GOD—and of Christ—and of the devil? Well, God was One to fear and be appeased, in a way—and yet, if we pleased Him, He could make things break our way for us. If we faced a frightful tragedy and possible death, crying out to Him might save us. But generally, I think I rather took it for granted that God didn't want us to be happy or enjoy



"I vaguely conceived that life was like a one-way trip on a train. Because of Adam, the switch in the track at the end of the line is thrown to shoot us all down to hell. So I supposed we needed to 'get saved' . . ."

life—He certainly frowned on all worldly pleasures. Christ, however, was more kind and loving—He was our Savior. Above all, neither God nor Christ were REAL to me—they were in reality "far off."

Now these were not definite, concrete beliefs or deep-rooted convictions. They were just ethereal, vague assumptions. I never gave them deep or specific thought. I just took them for granted, supposing everybody believed these things. My mind was focused on the material interests of the moment—things closer to hand. As I said, religion was for Sunday. It

had no relation to or connection with the rest of life as a whole—my school, fun, play, hobbies, and, as I grew older, business, philosophies and beliefs.

#### What a "Bible Christian" Is Like

But when I was 34 years of age, my religious nonchalance was rudely jolted. My wife and I were visiting my parents in Salem, Oregon. Mrs. Armstrong returned from a visit with one of my mother's friends—a neighbor. This woman seemed to be a sort of "Bible Christian." She had handed her Bible to my wife and asked her to read a certain passage aloud. Then, without any comment whatever, she asked my wife to turn to another passage and read it aloud—then another and another. All these passages seemed to connect in an orderly sequence.

"Why!" exclaimed my wife in astonishment, "this is not what I've always been taught! Have I always been led to believe *just the opposite* of what the Bible teaches?"

"Well, don't ask me," smiled my mother's neighbor. "I didn't teach you a word. You just read it yourself out of the

Bible."

Mrs. Armstrong came running to tell me what she had discovered. Suddenly her religious belief had been changed. To me, she had become a religious fanatic. What she had read out of the Bible was diametrically contrary to the general teachings of the churches. I was angered, furious. Argument did no good. She had all the answers—and right out of the Bible. This was the incident that challenged and angered me into the first real study of the Bible of all my life.

I said: "You can't tell me that all these churches are wrong. I know

they get what they believe out of the Bible!" So I devoted six months to intensive, almost night and day, research and study to try to find, *in the Bible*, what I had been taught in church. I, too, was astounded to find just the opposite. I obtained the literature of churches supporting their beliefs. I searched the commentaries, the lexicons, the Bible encyclopedias. I searched out the arguments of higher criticism on these points. I tried my best to overthrow my wife's new Bible beliefs—but they definitely were in the Bible.

I entered an in-depth research of the theory of evolution. I studied Lamarck, Darwin, Haeckel, Huxley, Spencer, Vogt. I almost doubted the existence of God, researched science and philosophy, and PROVED irrefutably that the all-intelligent personal Creator God does exist. Then I put the Bible to test—and by several infallible proofs, PROVED it to be the very revelation of the living God to mankind, carrying final AUTHORITY.

Now I was no longer carelessly assuming or taking for granted without question what I had heard or what others

accepted. I was *proving* what was true. And it was *not* what I *wanted* to accept. Rather, it wounded my pride. It was humiliating. It was traumatic. It brought me to the most difficult decision of my life—to admit not only that I had been wrong—but to see my own self, for the first time, as I really *was*—an abhorrent, rebellious, vain human who was evil by nature and unworthy of God's grace and mercy and love.

It was a bitter decision—I now felt my life was worthless, but I told God that if He could use such a worthless life, I would give it to Him in unconditional surrender.

At last, once I swallowed my pride, admitted defeat, was humbled, had repented, and accepted the Christ of the Bible—a different Christ than I had previously pictured—I had found the true SOURCE for belief.

*What a difference* there is between professed "Christians" who are churchgoers, and a true BIBLE Christian! I *know* that difference because I have been both!

Regardless of whether one has been *angered* into an honest study of the Bible, as I was, or whether

today's "enlightened" clergy, and its theological seminaries where young ministers are educated, spend more time trying to determine how much of the Bible they wish to classify as myth, and how little as truth—when only 1 percent of theological students in the U.S., by actual survey, believe in any Second Coming of Christ which is stated and affirmed repeatedly in the Bible—when theologians and the professional clergy interpret the Bible to mean the very opposite of what it plainly says, in order to pretend that it supports their teachings—then you may *know* what is wrong.

If you will read Jeremiah 23, Ezekiel 13, and 34, which are prophecies of conditions *now*, in our day, and of Christ's statement of Matthew 24:4-5, 11, 24, of the false preachers that would deceive the MANY; and of the many statements in the Bible that the whole world would be deceived, you will begin to understand. It is, indeed, hard for one born, reared, and steeped in this world's education, religion, customs and ways, to realize that this is *not* God's world, but Satan's.

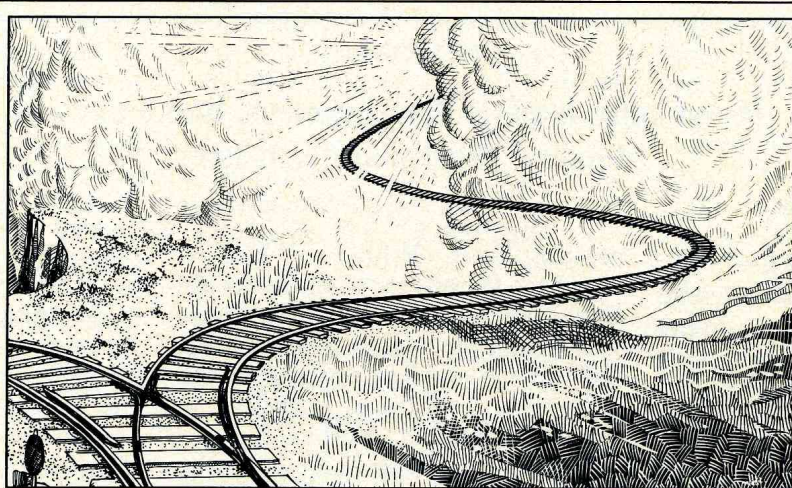
It comes as a jarring

*shock!* I know. I've experienced it!

The Bible interprets itself. It means what it says, and it says what it means. Taken as it *is*, it *makes sense*.

Don't be a spiritual coward. Look into it *for yourself*. It's full of surprises—it's full of TRUTH—it's full of the way to a positive peace of mind, to happiness, to prosperity, abundant living here and now and to salvation in joyous eternal life—FOREVER!

God's world is soon coming—the peaceful, happy WORLD TOMORROW! □



Illustrations by Monte Wolverton

“... When one is ‘saved,’ the switch in the track at the end of life’s journey is then thrown so that, when he gets to the end of the line he will be shot instantly up to heaven, ‘to be with the Lord.’ ”

he had never been to church or heard anything else in the first place, or WHY he looks into the Bible for himself, he will find the same thing there that I found—if he is honest and willing.

A person who is born and reared on a faraway uninhabited island in mid-ocean, having never heard *any* religious belief, if he had a Bible and was able to read, would be a total stranger to many of these things I was taught in church—he would see, in the Bible, just what everybody else does who looks into it *honestly*.

What's wrong, then? When

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# FALSE CONVERSION!

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by Herbert W. Armstrong

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Millions have been led to think they are “saved,” who are only deceived and don’t know it! Here is a frank, daring article, making the truth PLAIN!

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**I**T’S DIFFICULT to believe, but it’s true. In *today’s* religious confusion *millions* have supposed they had salvation spiritually—they have believed on Jesus Christ—and *are not saved!*

Would you suppose one could actually *worship* Christ—and all in vain?

Do you know *what* Jesus himself said of these people who want to worship him without *obedience* to God’s Commandments?

Listen to his words: “Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men. . . . Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition” (Mark 7:7-9).

#### Back to the Faith Once Delivered

But what does GOD tell you in his Word?

Through Jude, God says: “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the *common salvation*, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for *the faith which was once delivered* unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares. . . . ungodly men, turning the GRACE of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only

Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ” (Jude 3-4).

Yes, even before the New Testament was completely written, ungodly men had crept inside the Church to corrupt it—turning GRACE into LASCIVIOUSNESS.

And what is “lasciviousness”? It means “license”—unrestrained liberty—abuse of privilege. In other words, license to do that which seems *right* in human eyes—according to human *conscience*—though it *disobeys God’s LAW!* And that is exactly what those ungodly men, even in the first century, did—turned GRACE into unrestrained privilege to disobey God’s law and turned to *human conscience* as a guide! And once introduced, the practice has persisted and spread over the whole world until today!

This is one of the FABLES the apostle Paul warned us men would turn to. Paul said: “But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, *deceiving*, and *being deceived*. . . . For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts [lasciviousness—*human* reasoning] shall they . . . turn away their ears from the *truth*, and shall be turned unto FABLES” (II Tim. 3:13; 4:3, 4).

But, one will argue, Jude said these men would *deny* the Lord Jesus Christ. Do not the men who teach a “no works” doctrine *believe in Christ?* Do they deny him?

Yes, they DENY him! God says: “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). The way of human reason—that *seems* RIGHT—is often DISOBEDIENCE to God!

#### What the Savior Himself Taught

These deceived teachers have just one favorite text. They quote Acts 16:31: “BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

Now that text from the inspired pen of Paul means what it says. But there are *two kinds* of BELIEVING—the *living* faith that brings salvation, and a *dead* “no works” faith that produces only DEATH!

But WHY do they, in their tracts and their sermons, never quote *what the Savior himself said* in answer to the question? WHY?

Jesus was asked: “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” (Luke 18:18.) Some might try to tell you that the SAVIOR himself did not know, or teach, the way of SALVATION—he was teaching Old Testament religion. Well, he was asked HOW to gain ETERNAL LIFE. Is that salvation? It certainly is! Old Testament religion teaching lasted *until* John—not until the cross—not until “Pentecost.” Just UNTIL JOHN (Luke 16:16). Jesus preached the SAME gospel he commanded his disciples to teach ALL nations—gentiles included—the

same gospel Paul preached to gentiles. He preached *only* the NEW Testament gospel. He revealed the WAY OF SALVATION.

Here is his answer—that of the SAVIOR HIMSELF ON HOW TO BE SAVED:

“IF thou wilt enter into LIFE, *keep the commandments.*” And he enumerated enough of the Ten Commandments to show it was this particular law that must be obeyed AS A CONDITION to receiving eternal life as God’s GIFT. Jesus said “IF”—(THERE WAS A CONDITION)—“IF” we are to be saved, by God’s grace, WE MUST KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS! God lays down his own terms and conditions. His FREE GIFT is conditional—you get it ONLY if you “keep the commandments.”

You can’t EARN it. God GIVES it—but only to those who “KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS.” God will not GIVE you eternal life *in sin*. And what is sin? “SIN IS THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAW” (I John 3:4).

Some who pervert God’s truth insist Jesus did not name ALL of the Ten Commandments in the above scripture. Sin is the transgression of THE LAW. It is a COMPLETE LAW. He named enough of its points to designate WHICH LAW he was talking

about. And James says that law has “POINTS”—and, if we break any ONE of the 10 points of the Ten Commandments, we BREAK THE LAW, and are sinners (Jas. 2:8-11).

The very same day the Holy Spirit came—the very day the NEW TESTAMENT Church commenced—thousands, hearing the inspired Peter’s sermon, which struck straight to their heart, asked, “What shall we do?”—yes, WHAT SHALL WE DO TO BE SAVED?

The *inspired* answer was:

“REPENT, and BE BAPTIZED every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift

of the Holy Spirit” (Acts. 2:38).

Jesus said, “REPENT YE, and BELIEVE THE GOSPEL.” We must BELIEVE not only in Jesus as Savior, but we must believe also THE GOSPEL he brought and preached—the Gospel of the Kingdom of God—the AUTHORITY of God and the WORD of God *over our lives—a message not preached today by most organized churches!*

After his resurrection, in his parting instructions to his disciples for preaching the way of salvation, Jesus said: “Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third

*True repentance means you give yourself to God. And the only kind of repentance that is prerequisite to the gift of eternal life is complete and unconditional surrender to God—to his will, which means to his law. You become his, literally, and wholly, with no reservations! Repentance is a complete change in your life—in your attitude toward life—your purpose in life—your thoughts and actions.*

day: and that REPENTANCE and *remission of sins* should be preached in his name *among all nations*, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things” (Luke 24:46-48). This is the gospel for ALL NATIONS!

But *what* must we repent of? WHAT IS SIN? Do you realize that VERY FEW people know? Very few know the BIBLE definition of SIN.

God’s inspired definition of sin is this: “Sin is the transgression of the law” (I John 3:4). Paul would not have known what was sin, except by the law. But *what* law? The very law which says: “Thou shalt not covet” (Rom. 7:7). That law is the Ten Commandments.

This law is summed up in the one word—LOVE! It is further defined in the two great Commandments, LOVE to God, and LOVE to neighbor. But the same law is further defined and divided into 10 points, by the Ten Commandments—the first four of which tell us how to love God, the last six of which tell us how to love neighbor.

#### James’ Inspired Answer

And thus it is explained in James: “If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well” (Jas. 2:8). Here is the royal law—the whole law—as a general principle.

The law is LOVE—and LOVE is the fulfilling of the law. Jesus fulfilled it, setting us an example that we, too, should fulfill the law. We fulfill it *with* LOVE—not any natural, carnal love in human nature, but “*the love of GOD* is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 5:5). The Holy Spirit in us is merely GOD’S LAW IN ACTION IN OUR LIVES! And so, if we fulfill this royal law we do well—but if not, we commit sin (Jas. 2:9). Now read verse 10. If we keep the WHOLE LAW—the general principle of LOVE to neighbor—yet offend *in one point*, we are guilty—we have broken the law—and the penalty is DEATH, not eternal life.

Notice, please, the law is divided into points! And it is divided into 10 POINTS—the Ten Commandments. These are merely the 10 points, or subdivisions, of the general royal law, LOVE to God and to neighbor. “For he that said [or, that law which said], Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery”—if you do not break that specific point—“yet if thou kill”—you just break that one point—“thou art become a transgressor of the law” (Jas. 2:11). So you see the TEN COMMANDMENTS is the

very law it is sin to transgress.

It is a SPIRITUAL law (Rom. 7:14). It is fulfilled by the SPIRITUAL LOVE that is God's precious gift to us—his love placed within us. "Wherefore the law is HOLY, and the commandment HOLY, AND JUST, AND GOOD" (Rom. 7:12).

To REPENT of sin means to turn from sin. It means to QUIT SINNING! And that means to *stop transgressing God's holy law*. And the way to stop breaking it is to begin KEEPING God's Commandments—ALL OF THEM, for if you break only one, you bring on yourself the penalty—ETERNAL DEATH—and you *lose salvation*.

Now Jesus "magnified the law, and made it honourable" (Isaiah 42:21). When we put a spiritual "magnifying glass," so to speak, on the Ten Commandments, it is enlarged in spirit and principle into many more points. And in a larger aspect the ENTIRE BIBLE is a magnification of God's law. The law is the basis of all Scripture. It defines THE WAY of life—the way to happiness, joy, eternal life!

Notice how *like God* it is! The law is GOOD (Rom. 7:12). God is good.

The law is HOLY (Rom. 7:12). GOD is holy!

The law is JUST (Rom. 7:12). GOD is just!

The law is SPIRITUAL (Rom. 7:14). GOD is spiritual!

The law is PERFECT (Psalm 19:7). GOD is perfect!

The law—including all his Commandments—is immutable, ETERNAL, stands fast FOREVER AND EVER (Ps. 111:7-8). And GOD is eternal!

Of course—for the law is the very character, the very nature, of God! It is the WILL of God.

#### Conscience Not Your Guide

But in the modern-day Babylon—confusion of conflicting teachings—you have been taught, falsely, that YOUR CONSCIENCE tells

you what is sin. But your conscience only troubles you when you do what YOU THINK *is wrong!* And what you think is wrong, *another* may think is *right!* Your CONSCIENCE IS NO GUIDE!

Sin is not the doing of what you think is wrong. Not the transgression of conscience—sin is the transgression of God's LAW (I John 3:4). Sin is thinking and doing what GOD SAYS is wrong—and he says it in his law.

One who does what he thinks is right may be committing a great deal of sin!

God says: "There is a way that

*But neither your repentance, followed by your obedience, nor your faith earns any salvation! They are merely prior conditions. But when you supply these two ingredients, then God stands bound by his promise to impart to you by his Holy Spirit his righteousness, and Christ's faith—and these, supplied by God, are the ingredients that save and impart eternal life!*

seemeth *right* unto a *man*, but the end thereof are the ways of DEATH"! (Prov. 14:12 and 16:25.) Again, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes" (Prov. 12:15). And: "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes" (Prov. 16:2). The world has been going the WAY that seems right to man for some 6,000 years. But this WAY has brought only unhappiness, emptiness, discontent, poverty, sickness and disease and finally, CHAOS and DESPAIR all over the world! It has produced NOTHING GOOD!

God says: "SEEK YE the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; let the wicked

forsake HIS WAY, and the unrighteous man HIS THOUGHTS: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. FOR MY THOUGHTS ARE NOT YOUR THOUGHTS, NEITHER ARE YOUR WAYS MY WAYS, saith the Lord" (Isa. 55:6-8).

And *there* is THE WAY of salvation! There is THE WAY to find GOD! SEEK HIM, by forsaking—WHAT? Forsaking YOUR WAY—your thoughts! The way you have THOUGHT to be right.

#### The WAY of SALVATION

The first step toward salvation is to REPENT, and that means forsake your way—the customs and traditions you have been following, the ways of man, the ways you have been living. FORSAKE YOUR OWN WAY. Turn to God's way—the way of HIS LAW! The way of HIS WILL! Yes, the WAY of success, achievement, doing good, of prosperity—the WAY of ETERNAL LIFE!

Since the entire Bible contains the magnified explanation of GOD'S LAW, the Bible becomes OUR GUIDE FOR RIGHTEOUS AND SUCCESSFUL LIVING! That is why Jesus said man shall live by *every word of God!*

True repentance means you give your SELF to God. And the only kind of repentance that is prerequisite to the gift of eternal life is COMPLETE AND UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER TO GOD—to his will, which means to HIS LAW. You become HIS, literally, and wholly, with no reservations! Repentance is a COMPLETE CHANGE in your life—in your *attitude TOWARD life*—your *purpose* in life—your THOUGHTS and your ACTIONS.

It means forsaking some of your old friends and companions—if they are living the worldly life that seems *right* to MAN. It means turning from and forsaking worldly



social and religious customs, interests, pleasures that are contrary to GOD'S WAYS.

It means THE BIBLE becomes the SUPREME AUTHORITY over your life—your *guide to living*—yes, to happy, abundant, gracious living, and SUCCESSFUL and righteous living, henceforth and forever—to live your life from now on with GOD'S HELP, and BY HIS POWER, according to the spirit and principle, as well as the letter and precept of his Commandments. You henceforth STUDY THE BIBLE—not just carelessly read, but STUDY, to learn GOD'S WAYS, and to LIVE BY EVERY WORD OF GOD!

Now ask yourself, candidly: HOW MANY people who profess salvation—who have “accepted Christ”—do you believe have REALLY COME TO THIS KIND OF REAL REPENTANCE? “Except ye REPENT,” warned Jesus, “ye shall all likewise PERISH” (Luke 13:3, 5). And again, “He that SAITH, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a LIAR, and the truth is not in him” (I John 2:4). Yes, MILLIONS ARE DECEIVED!

But if millions are deceived about the prior CONDITION of repentance, just as many millions are deceived today as to the KIND OF FAITH that really SAVES!

### The FAITH That SAVES

Now *think* a moment! *Use your REASON!* We are taught, and rightly, that we cannot EARN our salvation—it is the GIFT of God. It is by GRACE—and “grace” means *undeserved pardon* and *free gift*. Yet, notice how inconsistent people are! They argue there must be NO WORKS—no OBEDIENCE to the Commandments, or doing GOOD—no recognizing of God's AUTHORITY over your daily living—because salvation comes by GRACE—God's free GIFT. And yet they seem to believe that somehow WE must supply the FAITH that brings salvation! If WE work up, or if WE supply this FAITH by which we are saved, *would not that*, in fact, amount to our producing *our own salvation* by the very WORKS of *supplying this FAITH*?

So notice, briefly! Notice more CLOSELY than you did before! “FOR BY GRACE are ye saved through FAITH; and that [that FAITH] not of yourselves; it [this saving FAITH] is *the gift of GOD*!” (Eph. 2:8.) The faith that really saves is GIVEN TO US by GOD—it is a GIFT from HIM! YOU don't supply it, or work it up.

Did you ever notice that before?

Well, what then? In Gal. 2:16, Paul explains a man is justified only “by THE FAITH of *Jesus Christ*.” Notice, he does not say, by the man's faith IN Jesus Christ—he says by “the faith of Jesus Christ”—which means CHRIST'S FAITH—the faith HE has and uses—the same faith with which he performed all his miracles—the same faith by which he lived—his faith, placed by a miracle, as a gift direct from God, into the man!

So, PLEASE UNDERSTAND! Salvation is GOD'S GIFT. You do not, cannot, earn it. God GIVES it. But—and here is where people become mixed up, and stumble—God will GIVE it only on condition! Yes, there are terms and conditions! God has set these terms, and you can't alter them, and he won't change them!

I want to make this perfectly PLAIN. It is not *your* faith in Christ—a faith YOU supply by BELIEVING in him as Savior—that saves you. It is CHRIST'S faith, which *he* supplies and places in you by his Holy Spirit, which actually IMPARTS ETERNAL LIFE. But WHAT, then? Is it not necessary for YOU to believe, with YOUR OWN faith, in Christ?

Now let me make this PLAIN! Salvation is GOD'S FREE GIFT—it is by GRACE ALONE. Yet the very purpose of God demands TWO prior CONDITIONS on YOUR part. First, you must REPENT! Second, you must BELIEVE in Christ as Savior. But you cannot believe in Christ unless you also believe his message—the gospel of the Kingdom of God (Mark 16:15-16). But NEITHER your repentance, followed by your obedience, NOR YOUR faith earns any salvation! They are merely prior CONDITIONS. But when you supply these two ingre-

dients, then God STANDS BOUND BY HIS PROMISE to impart to you by his Holy Spirit HIS *righteousness*, and CHRIST'S *faith*—and THESE, *supplied by GOD*, are the ingredients that SAVE AND IMPART ETERNAL LIFE!

Paul explains: “Even we have *believed* IN Jesus Christ, *that we might be justified* BY THE FAITH OF CHRIST” (Gal. 2:16). You must repent and believe *in Christ*, as a condition, a prerequisite, IN ORDER THAT you may receive, and be saved by the faith OF Christ—by his faith placed within you!

### Cut Off From GOD

All have sinned!

All have gone the way that seems right in human eyes. And our sins have cut us off from God: “Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear” (Isa. 59:2).

Now salvation—eternal life—comes from GOD. But your sins have cut you off from God. The connection is SEVERED. YOU severed it! God will not GIVE you his gift of eternal life until you are reconciled to him!

But he SO LOVED you, that he GAVE his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to DIE FOR YOU so that you need not perish—but, through Jesus Christ, be brought into contact with him so he can GIVE you eternal life!

The PENALTY of transgressing his law is DEATH! Jesus paid that penalty in your stead. If, and when, you TRULY REPENT, as I have explained at length, and BELIEVE on Jesus Christ as your Lord and personal Savior from sin and from sinning, then by and through HIM you gain access to GOD THE FATHER.

The two conditions of turning FROM sin, and *accepting* Christ (including baptism), YOU *must* DO YOURSELF! That's what YOU must do! That is NOT *what saves you*! It merely *reconciles* you to GOD—brings you into CONTACT *with God*, so that *God will then* GIVE YOU HIS HOLY SPIRIT—and his SPIRIT imparts the *gift of the FAITH that saves*—and is also the Spirit of UNDERSTANDING, of *knowledge*, of

the love that FULFILLS the law and imparts GOD's *righteousness*.

*Millions* have been *deceived* and *falsely* believe that they *have* a salvation that they do NOT yet have at all! GOD HELP US, then, to UNDERSTAND.

### What You Should Do

Now, finally, just HOW shall you go about it?

Must you go down the aisle in a church? Must you go to a public altar, and shed tears in front of others, and pray aloud before others?

Being converted is not an initiation into a lodge or secret society! It is not a rite or ceremony! It is a matter of turning FROM the old life that was false, yet may have seemed right to you—of turning TO a new and TRUE way of life in Christ Jesus, living by every word of God, in and by the power of God's Holy Spirit! When you UNDERSTAND the real MEANING and the PURPOSE, you'll see that it is something that takes place down deep in your HEART and not a matter of THE PLACE or THE SURROUNDINGS, or the presence of other people. What Jesus said about confessing or denying him before men did not refer to a rite, or ceremonial form of being converted. Being converted is the receiving of the Holy Spirit—the *very life*—of God.

You CAN, of course, make this full surrender and consecration to God in front of others, at an altar. You *can*, also, make it just as sincerely and fully, in a private room at home, all ALONE with God! You can pray in church before others and do it sincerely from the heart. Yet Jesus said, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet [any private room], and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

WHEN you have *really* repented—repented of what you *are* as well as what you have *done*—WHEN you come to this *parting of the ways* from the old life—when you come to the place of making this COMPLETE CHANGE—this total

unconditional surrender to God—this complete consecration, GIVING your SELF to him, accepting Christ as your personal Savior—turning FROM your sins, and TO GOD's way of life as you'll find it in the Bible, you'll want to PRAY! Yes, you'll want to throw yourself completely on God's mercy, and ask him through Jesus Christ to FORGIVE YOU all your past sins and transgressions against him.

The apostle Paul reveals how. He confessed: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth *no good thing*: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Rom. 7:18-19).

He saw human nature in its gruesome reality. He struggled with it—fought against it—only to find that it was more powerful than he!

What could he do?

Paul cried out, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Read the answer to the problem in the Moffatt translation: "Miserable wretch that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? *GOD WILL!* Thanks be to him through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (verses 24-25).

It is not, perhaps, of great consequence *where* you do it! But the IMPORTANT thing is to DO IT! The longer you put repentance off the harder it will become. WHY it should be difficult to just go and throw yourself on God's mercy, and ask his forgiveness and give your SELF to him, is hard to understand—yet something in the human nature within you will keep tempting you to PUT IT OFF. That temptation is not of God, you may be sure.

If you are sick and tired of the empty, fruitless, materialistic life you have been living—IF in your heart you DO want to turn from it to the FULL and JOYFUL life filled with God's SPIRIT, then WHY DELAY? This is *just the start* of the real Christian life. Don't look for a certain feeling, but repent and believe. □



## TAKE A TEST.

### WHAT IS "CONVERSION"?

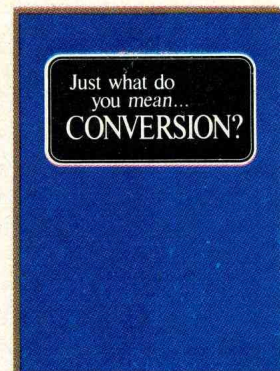
- 1) an intense emotion
- 2) joining a church or organization
- 3) suddenly becoming "saved"
- 4) an intellectual commitment
- 5) living a perfect life

#### ANSWER:

None of the above. Conversion begins when a person receives God's Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9). It then involves, for the Christian, a lifelong process of development and growth.

Conversion is a much misunderstood subject — even among professing Christians. We offer a brief booklet that makes plain, through a survey of the Scriptures, the God-ordained purpose and process of conversion. Repentance, baptism, sin, death and the hereafter are all covered.

Why not request immediately your free copy of *Just What do You Mean . . . Conversion?* There's absolutely no charge or obligation.



Request immediately your free copy of *Just What do You Mean . . . Conversion?* Just use the reply coupon or write to *The Plain Truth* at the office nearest you. There's absolutely no charge or obligation.

**T**HERE IS A WAY—a *tried and proven way*—a SURE way—to end all fear of any all-out nuclear hot war between the United States and Russia.

What a pity that the governments and the PEOPLES of this world remain blinded to THAT WAY! And it is so simple!

It's just as simple as this: There is a CAUSE for every EFFECT—yet our whole society and way of life today is based on treating the *effect*, IGNORING the CAUSE! Our people do it in treating sickness and disease. They do it in dealing with crime. They do it in WORKING FOR PEACE!

### Working for Peace

Everybody *wants* PEACE—or at least, so we profess! We WORK for peace! The pope pleads for PEACE! Prime ministers strive for PEACE! Yet *there is no peace!*

WHY?

The very NEWS of all this “working for peace” was reported millenniums ago in biblical prophecy! But, it was also reported, “The WAY OF PEACE *they know not . . .*” (Isa. 59:8).

So, the nations and world leaders CRY for “peace”—*work* for “peace,” while they endorse, sanction and continue *the way of* WAR! They follow *the way* that is the CAUSE of WAR, trying to STOP war by dealing with the *effect*, ignoring the CAUSE!

The world today is a good deal like the dope addict, who finds he is “hooked,” and can’t “kick it” off on the one hand—and, on the other, he is forced to keep gradually *increasing* the dosage to just hold his own. It becomes very costly, and most dope addicts resort to stealing, crime—*anything* to get their hands on enough money to keep up their growing, escalating, ever more-costly habit.

Isn't it about time we come to UNDERSTAND?

*The Plain Truth* is a magazine of UNDERSTANDING. All right, let me give you a little UNDERSTANDING of war and PEACE.

Why can't the heads of government in the nations of the world

# 1982 THE YEAR OF VIOLENCE?

by Herbert W. Armstrong

WHY do wars, riots, violence escalate—with no hope in sight for peace? World leaders do not know! They do not know that they could have peace now, in 1982, in full security for the future. Read the answer in this eye-opening article.

realize that ONLY GOD has the ANSWERS! That the BIBLE is the most up-to-the-minute source of knowledge and UNDERSTANDING in today's world for the solution of all problems. LISTEN to a little SENSE!

### WHY The Plain Truth

*The Plain Truth* is a world NEWS magazine, keeping you abreast of the KEY world happenings leading us directly into the PEACEFUL and HAPPY WORLD TOMORROW—but, too, it is MUCH MORE! It is a magazine of UNDERSTANDING—understanding *not only* of key happenings in world news, but UNDERSTANDING of life itself, of the PURPOSE and real meaning of life—of the CAUSES of problems and troubles, whether personal and individual, national or world-problems—and of their SOLUTIONS, and of HOW, and WHEN, and by WHAT MEANS all these giant problems *are going to be solved!*

More, and most important of all, *The Plain Truth* brings you UNDERSTANDING of the very Word of God, the SOURCE of TRUTH—and of the PROPHECIES of events soon to occur, in the next two, five, or 10 years!

WHY do nations go to WAR? WHY does God *allow* wars, violence, human suffering? Many reason if God is LOVE, he surely would not *want* all this suffering! And if he is all-POWERFUL, he could prevent it. So WHY doesn't he?

Certainly God could stop it—and in fact, soon will!

But why not millenniums ago?

For a supremely important reason! A PURPOSE is being worked out here below. Man was put here on earth for the development of right CHARACTER. That PURPOSE requires free moral agency in man. It is necessary that man be given both the prerogative and the ability to *make his own decision!* Otherwise he would be an automaton—no character.

There is A WAY that will produce peace—a way to happiness, abundant well-being—and with it, God will *give* eternal life!

What is that way? The Eternal Creator set in motion not only the laws of physics and chemistry—laws like gravity and inertia—but also a *spiritual* Law that is THE WAY to all these wanted blessings. It's a simple matter of CAUSE and EFFECT! That Law is *the way* of LOVE. And love is

outgoing concern. It is giving, helping, serving, sharing—but human nature *pulls* humanity in the exact opposite direction—into being SELF-centered, selfish, greedy, the way of vanity—the way of getting, taking, accumulating—of competition, strife, envy, jealousy, resentment, hatred.

God's great spiritual LAW is simply, the CAUSE of peace, happiness, abundant well-being. The violation of that Law, by yielding to the pulls of human nature is, simply the ABSENCE of peace, happiness and abundant well-being.

God laid before man the knowledge of his Law—his WAY! He compels man to CHOOSE! Would man *want* God to FORCE him to go God's way, *contrary* to the desires of human nature? Never! He would cry out "God is unfair!" Man *wants* the right of free choice.

To fulfill His PURPOSE, the Creator marked out a duration of 7,000 years. The first six of those millennial "days" was set aside for man to CHOOSE whether to OBEY God's Law—that is, voluntarily come under GOD'S GOVERNMENT—or work out his own ideas of HUMAN government. Man chose to reject God, his government and his Law. He elected to follow the desires of his carnal self-centered nature.

Yielding to HUMAN NATURE is the CAUSE of war.

Rebellion against God's Law of peace is the CAUSE of war.

### **Nations Never NEEDED Go to War**

So now let's take a look at one of the 10 POINTS of God's basic spiritual LAW. I mean that point that has to do with WARS!

In respect to WAR, the basic point is the Sixth Commandment. It says, simply, "*Thou shalt not kill.*"

If all nations obeyed that commandment and followed the way of LOVE toward other humans, there would be no war.

But, one argues, that's a pretty platitude—but it's not practical—it won't work. WHY? Because, he argues, if *your* nation obeys that commandment and is disarmed with no military force, it would be attacked and beaten by some *other* nation that disobeyed God's Law, and believed in WAR. Your nation

would therefore be helpless.

Oh, but it WOULDN'T! The Creator understands human nature better than we humans do. HE PROVIDED FOR THAT!

Let's open our eyes to down-to-earth practical TRUTH—to FACT!

You think the Almighty Creator-God is impractical—that he leaves those who OBEY him, who accept his GOVERNMENT over them, HELPLESS? One of the responsibilities of GOVERNMENT is to protect its own subjects! You think—do you?—that the GOVERNMENT OF GOD is so feeble and lacking in power that it is unable to protect the individual or the nation it governs?

Open your eyes, now, to the FACTS! God did take a people to be his nation. He took a family of some two million helpless SLAVES—all descended from God's friend Abraham—and offered to set them up as a nation under his government.

Notice now, in your Bible, the specific application of the commandment, "*Thou shalt not kill,*" to military force and war.

Notice how GOD says to those under HIS GOVERNMENT, that HIS GOVERNMENT—an all-powerful supernatural and supernational government—will PROTECT His people against any invading force.

God said to Israel: "... if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that *I* speak; then *I* will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries... and *I* will cut them off" (Ex. 23:22-23).

God promised supernaturally to fight any invading enemy to protect the nation and people under HIS government. I intend to give you ample case histories to verify this.

But is it just as wrong for GOD to fight an invading army, and if necessary, take human life, as for humans? ABSOLUTELY NOT! God is the GIVER of human life. Human lives *belong to him!* He, *alone,* has the RIGHT to *take* human lives. The Sixth Commandment forbids MAN, of his own volition and at his discretion—to take human life!

### **Why Ancient Israel Went to War**

But did you notice—there were CONDITIONS to God's promise of divine protection. He said he would protect them "... if thou shalt

indeed obey his voice, and do all that *I* speak."

During this first 6,000 years, in God's Master Plan, He does not *force* any nation, or individual, to come under his GOVERNMENT. That decision is left to man's free CHOICE.

When God, with his own thundering voice, delivered the 10 basic points of his inexorable spiritual Law from Mt. Sinai, he was outlining for MANKIND *the way* to peace, happiness and abundant well-being. This applies to every individual and to every nation. Transgression of this basic Law is SIN (I John 3:4). This Law—the very principle of RIGHT as distinguished from WRONG—had, of course, existed from the time of Adam.

You'll find the account of God's delivering of this Law in Exodus 20:1-17 and Deuteronomy 5:4-22. But, beginning Exodus 20:18, you will read the account of God laying down basic laws and statutes of his national civil government delivered through Moses.

Then, once God had restated before this vast family of Israelites his basic spiritual Law—the foundational PRINCIPLE for all the national civil statutes, judgments and ordinances—and also basic civil statutes and ordinances, God put it to these people, through Moses, to CHOOSE whether they would accept HIS GOVERNMENT over them.

Notice the completing of the COVENANT—the AGREEMENT between God and this PEOPLE—to form them into a NATION under GOD'S GOVERNMENT.

"And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words" (Ex. 24:6-8).

### **Government Protection Against War**

NOTICE CAREFULLY! A *part* of God's PLATFORM OF GOVERNMENT that he laid before the people

before they became HIS NATION was the promise that HIS GOVERNMENT would protect its citizens from need of going to WAR. That is the OPEN PROMISE OF GOD, which would apply to ANY nation. Later, God offered the SAME government, and its protection and blessings, to the first WORLD EMPIRE—the gentle Chaldean empire under King Nebuchadnezzar—as we shall see. God plays no favorites. He does not bless one nation and harm another by his arbitrary choice.

But human nature is human nature—and facts are facts. And humanity had rebelled against God from the beginning—before the Flood, and after the Flood. From the time of the Tower of Babel, men had *organized themselves* into nations, with HUMAN ideas of government—CONTRARY TO God’s laws, and God’s government over them. They had chosen *other gods!* Their religions were empty superstitions. And they were WAR-making kingdoms! God had dealt in no unmistakable manner with mankind, ever since creation!

NO PEOPLE, except a downtrodden SLAVE people in bondage, would have made the CHOICE to say to God, “All that the Lord hath said, will we do and be obedient.”

Not only had this enlarged family of Israelites been suffering under the lash of slavery, but God had DEMONSTRATED to them HIS POWER—and HIS LOVE in outgoing concern for them, by delivering them from slavery by SPECTACULAR MIRACLES!

By the miracles in PLAGUES upon the Egyptians, God had freed them.

#### Human Nature at Work

And HUMAN NATURE? Yes, these Israelites were full of it!

WHY do world leaders, scientists and educators even today reject God, and ply their trades, professions and interests *as if God did not exist?* God himself tells us—in HIS WORD to mankind: “Because the carnal mind [human nature] is enmity [hostile] against God: for it is not subject to the LAW of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom. 8:7).

These Israelites, even while

being blessed and delivered by God with MIRACLES, still were rebellious.

Even before they had reached Sinai a chain of significant incidents occurred. After the MIRACLES God had performed in FREEING them from slavery in Egypt, protecting them, blessing them, FIGHTING their military battle for them, leading them miraculously by a cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, these people began to gripe, grumble, complain and DISOBEY God. Even in the face of such incredible MIRACLES, they began, even then, to LOSE FAITH.

These people—600,000 men, beside women and children—came

“

There is a cause  
for every  
effect—yet our  
whole society  
and way of life  
today is based on  
treating the  
effect, ignoring  
the cause!

”

to the Red Sea. There were no ships, no bridges. They could not swim such a distance. They could not walk on the water. They were STOPPED by this obstacle beyond their own power.

They looked, and within eyesight, Pharaoh’s ARMY was coming after them.

Right here, *before* they reached Mt. Sinai—*before* they heard God’s own great voice thundering his Ten Commandments—God *demonstrated* the pattern he would follow in preserving his people from having to undergo military service or fighting in war or taking human life!

Here is God’s *living* EXAMPLE NUMBER ONE!

Yet even here, the people of Israel, in fright, grumbled, com-

plained, accused—lacked faith in God.

These Israelites had *started* out of Egypt “with a high hand” (Ex. 14:8). “But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, *and his ARMY*, and overtook them encamping by the sea. . . . And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the Lord. And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness” (Ex. 14:9-12).

But God’s PURPOSE was not to be defeated. He PURPOSED to deliver them out of Egyptian slavery. He PURPOSED to *show them* and *all nations* and all humanity that HE would fight their battles for them. So, in spite of their faithless complaining in this initial EXAMPLE of God’s faithfulness, he was determined to fight their battle and save them.

“And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which HE WILL SHEW TO YOU today. . . . *The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace*” (verses 13-14).

The Israelites were not to fight—but STAND STILL! They were to *see* God save them from Pharaoh’s ARMY. God was going to SHOW THEM that he would fight their wars for them! They were to remain at PEACE!

#### How GOD Fights for Us!

Then God’s angel moved behind the Israelites, and the great dark cloud moved between them and the Egyptian army. It held the Egyptian army from attacking Israel all night, but illuminated the way before Israel. Then God parted the waters of the sea, holding them back by divine MIRACLE,

so that the waters formed a high wall on both sides, and the Israelites marched across on the dry floor of the sea.

Now notice the dramatic example of how God miraculously fought Israel's battle for them, as recorded in the Moffatt translation:

"Moses stretched his hand out over the sea; the waters parted. Then the Eternal swept the sea along by a strong east wind, all night, till the bed of the sea was dry, and the Israelites marched through the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall to the right and left. The Egyptians in pursuit of them went into the sea, all the Pharaoh's horses and chariots and cavalry. And in the watch before the dawn the Eternal looked out from the column of fire and cloud on the Egyptian army and threw them into a panic; He clogged their chariot wheels till they drove heavily.

"The Egyptians cried, 'Let us flee from the Israelites! *The Eternal is fighting for them* against the Egyptians!' Then said the Eternal to Moses, 'Stretch your hand out over the sea, to make the waters flow back upon the chariots and cavalry of the Egyptians!' Moses stretched his hand out over the sea. Then, as morning broke, the sea returned to its wonted flow, and while the Egyptians were fleeing against it, the Eternal overwhelmed the Egyptians in the middle of the sea; the waters did flow back over the chariots and cavalry, over the whole army of the Pharaoh, which had followed them into the sea, till not a single one of them was left. But the Israelites had walked through the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall to right and left.

"Thus did the Eternal save Israel that day from the Egyptians, till Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the sea-shore; Israel saw the mighty act of the Eternal against the Egyptians, AND THE PEOPLE STOOD IN AWE OF THE ETERNAL, BELIEVING IN THE ETERNAL and in His servant Moses" (Ex. 14:21-31).

Yes, for a short while, the spell of AWE still over them, these people actually BELIEVED in God. Trusting

God to DO what he has promised requires believing in MIRACLES, you say? OF COURSE! Salvation requires miracles! God is a miracle-working God!

After this miraculous delivery from disaster—from a WAR—a whole army of a then great nation destroyed—those Israelites expressed a little temporary FAITH. With Moses, they sang a song of praise and rejoicing: "I will sing unto the Lord. . . The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation. . ." (Ex. 15:1-2).

But now UNDERSTAND the lesson here!

Ancient Egypt is a type of SIN.

“

Everybody wants  
peace—or at least,  
so we profess! We  
work for peace! The  
pope pleads for  
peace! Prime  
ministers strive for  
peace! Yet there is  
no peace!

”

God was, figuratively in type, delivering these people out of SIN. They were starting out on GOD'S WAY of life.

But, UNDERSTAND!—God's way of life requires FAITH. It is a life of OBEDIENCE to GOD. Obedience requires FAITH. WE are SAVED by GRACE through FAITH "and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift of GOD*" (Eph. 2:8). But not by a DEAD faith! It is a LIVING faith that makes obedience possible.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (Dan. 3) obeyed God's command against idol worship—but their stout refusal to bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's idol was possible *only* by their RELIANCE ON GOD to protect and deliver them. They TRUSTED God (Dan. 3:28). They exercised FAITH—*living faith!*

Empty, dead faith—just BELIEVING that God exists—is not the faith that saves. "The [demons] also believe, and tremble" (Jas. 2:19).

But faith and obedience must ENDURE! The newly freed Israelite slaves, still under the spell of AWE after experiencing such miracles, expressed faith and sang.

But they didn't believe very deeply or for very long. When they came to Marah, they found the water too bitter to drink. This one little problem in their path brought them again to complaining and DOUBTING (Ex. 15:24). Again, by a miracle, God made the waters sweet.

Moses led these people on to the wilderness of Sin—between Elim and Sinai. They had now been gone from Egypt one month. And again, "the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron. . . and. . . said. . . Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt. . . for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger" (Ex. 16:2-3).

So God gave them a test of obedience, along with miraculously providing food. God said, "I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, *whether they will walk in my law or no*" (Ex. 16:4).

The particular LAW God was testing them on was his Sabbath. And remember, they had not yet reached Sinai. On the sixth day of the week he would provide them with a TWO-DAY portion. On the seventh day, God's Sabbath, he commanded them to rest and refrain from gathering manna. On the sixth day God provided the two-day supply. Nevertheless, on God's Sabbath, some of the people, in a spirit of rebellion, and greedy for gain, went out to gather manna.

"HOW LONG refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?" thundered God at them (Ex. 16:28). They were neither *trusting* nor *obeying* God.

The vast congregation journeyed on and pitched tents in Rephidim. Again, there was no water. Again

they griped, murmured, accused, lost faith, and "tempted the Lord" (Ex. 17:1-2).

Now we come to the CRUCIAL INCIDENT that explains WHY Israel went to war. Regularly they had been grumbling, complaining, accusing, disobeying, LOSING FAITH—in face of constant MIRACLES from God. Now, again, as God performed another miracle, causing water to gush forth out of a rock, the people DOUBTED that God was with them. "... they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us or not?" (Ex. 17:7.)

Now consider what had happened. Repeatedly, God had given these people awe-inspiring and miraculous demonstrations of his intention to *fight their battles for them*. These were VISIBLE miracles, which the people witnessed with their own eyes. God had demonstrated his faithfulness, his POWER, his willingness, HIS WAY! Yet repeatedly, these people doubted, complained, found fault, grumbled. Repeatedly they LOST FAITH. After all of this OVERWHELMING PROOF, these people DOUBTED God's faithfulness—DOUBTED his power—even DOUBTED his very existence. They disobeyed. They went *the way of SIN!*

In effect, they had their own "God is dead" movement!

At this point, Moses was distraught, his nerves shattered, his patience about exhausted. After all, Moses was only human!

"What am I to do with this people?" Moses appealed to God (Ex. 17:4). "They are almost ready to stone me."

God answered Moses, had him move ahead of the people, and smite the rock at Horeb with the same stick he had used in the parting of the waters of the Red Sea. Then again God performed a visible MIRACLE—water gushed out of the rock.

But, at this juncture, Amalek came against the Israelites in great strength with an invading army. This time God ALLOWED the Israelites to *write the lesson of experience*. He allowed them to SIN. God does not forcibly prevent humans from sinning.

Moses, at the end of his patience trying to induce these stubborn,

rebellious people to believe in and TRUST God, said to Joshua, "Choose us out men, and go out, FIGHT with Amalek" (Ex. 17:9). Lacking the faith to trust God for their protection, Moses feared they would be slaughtered. Although Moses weakened and gave the order for WAR, it was THE PEOPLE themselves who actually had MADE THE DECISION for war, by their utter lack of reliance on God.

It was altogether unnecessary for these Israelites to arm themselves and wage WAR. It was WRONG! It was SIN. But God let the decision be theirs!

This incident was the *turning point*.

It occurred even before they reached Mt. Sinai. It was after this that God laid before them HIS PROPOSITION for them to become his nation, ruled by his government. It was after this that God promised, conditioned on obedience and faith, always to fight their battles for them—to protect them from war—to give them constant PEACE. It was after this that they accepted his government over them. But already they had shown lack of faith and trust, even during the days when God was DEMONSTRATING his power and faithfulness by so many miracles!

They had experienced a taste of war. They could have—*should have*—turned from it, afterward, and relied on God instead of their own power. But they didn't.

#### God's PURPOSE Stands!

Even though God ALLOWS humans to make their own decisions—allows them to SIN—allows nations to go to WAR—nevertheless God's purpose must stand! HIS PURPOSE was to settle these descendants of Abraham in the land he had promised Abraham—"the PROMISED LAND."

God's promise to Abraham, 430 years before, had been made UNCONDITIONAL. Abraham had performed *his* part of that agreement. He had obeyed God, kept God's Commandments and laws. Now God's faithfulness demanded that he plant these people in that land, regardless of their conduct!

These descendants of Abraham had *made their decision* to be a

fighting, war-waging nation. That decision was theirs to make. And since they had made it, God used *them* to do the fighting in driving out the inhabitants illegally possessing the land God had allotted to Abraham's descendants. Consequently God gave orders for *them* to do what fighting—and killing—was necessary to accomplish God's PURPOSE of putting them in the land of promise!

But that did not make war RIGHT. Whether to DO right or wrong—that is MAN'S decision! These Israelites did not need to fight.

So it was BECAUSE of Israel's faithlessness and disobedience that God ALLOWED them to SIN by taking up arms. And therefore God used them as his instruments in driving out the nations illegally in the land. Even now the Israelites could have REPENTED, *changed* their decision and trusted God to fight their battles for them.

#### Nations CAN Choose Peace!

Would it seem preposterous to chiefs of state today, to believe that even NOW, in this new year of 1982, God Almighty actually *would* fight our wars for us—that OUR nations, today, *could actually have* PEACE—and have it *this very year*?

Undoubtedly it would! World leaders today—in ALL nations—have gotten so far from God and God's ways, and God has become SO UNREAL to them that it probably would seem ridiculous even to suggest such a thing. The scientists, the industrial and commercial leaders, the educators—yes, and even the CLERGY—have all departed SO FAR from God and HIS WAYS, that such a thought would not even enter their minds.

Yet the ETERNAL has not left us without absolute ASSURANCE! He has recorded, in his Word, not only his promises and assurances, but three additional concrete *case histories*—in addition to those recounted in this article—proving that he ACTUALLY DID DO THE FIGHTING for a nation being invaded, when that nation and its rulers TRUSTED HIM.

We will continue this exciting story in the next number. □

## Personal from...

(Continued from page 1)

happiness, prosperity and eternal life.

I repeat again and again, there is of necessity a cause for every effect. The effect is appalling troubles, evils and sufferings worldwide, paradoxically simultaneous with awesome human progress and achievement in material and mechanical progress.

The insolvable problems, troubles and sufferings are caused by a wrong way of life. But humanity has never learned the only way of life that can CAUSE happiness, peace and the rich blessings that are spiritual in nature. That way of life is GOD'S WAY OF LIFE.

Humanity has never come to the KNOWLEDGE of that way of life. It is the spiritual way of life, and knowledge of that way is undiscoverable by man on his own. It must be revealed. It can be revealed only through the Holy Spirit of God. And there are two major conditions to receiving God's Spirit and the begetting of eternal LIFE. Those two conditions seem to be the most difficult for a human to perform.

The first is admit you are WRONG. That seems to be the most difficult for any person to do. It means submit to confessing you are wrong—not only in what you have believed, what you have done, but in what you ARE! It means submission. The biblical term for it is "repent," but few—even theologians—know what it really means. It means the kind of change of mind and heart that almost no one is willing to make. And second, almost as rare, is to BELIEVE GOD.

Many still will say they believe in God—that is, such a Being exists. But they do not believe HIM—they do not believe what he says. The first created human, Adam, did not believe him, even though God spoke to him in person, face to face. God came in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus proclaimed his Message to multiple thousands of people for three and a half years. Yet only 120 believed what he said.

So the world does not know, or

live, God's way of life. What is God's way of life? It's the way God lives.

God has lived eternally. You read of the beginnings of all things in the Bible in John 1:1-4, 14. God was eternally DUAL—two spirit Personages forming one God. One was "the Word" or Spokesman, the other was God; yet "the Word" also was God. And the Word was born as a human, Jesus Christ, God With Us, in human flesh. In him was LIFE. He lived. God, who became the Father of Jesus, also lived—had LIFE inherent. But HOW did they live?

Ah—that, the way they lived and do live, is GOD'S WAY OF LIFE. They lived the way of mutual LOVE, cooperation, teamwork, concern

“  
The peace negotiations  
are not going to bring  
peace—only the  
intervention of God  
Almighty himself can.  
”

each for the other, loyalty. Two cannot walk together except they be agreed. They have never changed, but have remained the same yesterday, today and forever. So Jesus reflected their attitude toward each other. He was the Word, yet he said he had spoken only what the Father had commanded him. So God was Head. But there was mutual loyalty, agreement and LOVE. God said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," when Jesus was about 30 years old.

Love is always outflowing. It is giving, not getting. Cooperating, not competing. Helping, not hindering.

God made that way of life his divine eternal spiritual Law. Sin is the transgression of that Law. And all humans have sinned. The penalty of sin is DEATH—the second death—eternal death. But Jesus loved us all enough to pay that supreme penalty for us in our stead. He had not sinned or come under its penalty—yet he paid the penal-

ty—for YOU and for ME—IF we repent and believe, and live GOD'S WAY OF LIFE.

No, as I said to President Mubarak in Cairo, we humans cannot bring peace by our own efforts. But God *will* intervene, send Christ in all the supreme POWER and GLORY of the Creator GOD, to set up the KINGDOM OF GOD, the super divine nation to rule all nations with GOD'S WAY OF LIFE. And that will CAUSE world peace, contentment, happiness, joy, and bring us ETERNAL LIFE! □

## HOSNI MUBARAK

(Continued from page 6)

history of the Middle East have had to confront a more imposing agenda upon taking office.

Among the challenges he faces at home are reforming a deteriorating economy and stemming the rise of Islamic extremism that has already threatened national unity.

Abroad, President Mubarak will have to deal with the knotty negotiations on Palestinian autonomy, continuing tensions with Arab neighbors and the threat of Soviet inroads into the region.

To date, Egypt's new President has successfully weathered a crucial transitional period. He has won the respect and confidence of the Egyptian population at large, and commands the loyalty of his colleagues in government and the military.

President Mubarak will have to continue to muster all the strengths he has brought to the Egyptian presidency if he is to successfully come to grips with the immense challenges facing Egypt.

And even then, the onrush of events in the volatile Middle East could prove overwhelming. □

### For the Record

In "Comparative Expenditures" chart accompanying the December (January in some areas) edition's article "The World Is an Armed Camp," GNP figures for the United States should have been 1,696,119 million dollars. Also military expenditures for Iraq should read 1,659 million dollars. India's education expenses 2,326 million dollars.