

Volume 24 Number 4 February 2005

R E F O R M E D

Perspective

**A MAGAZINE
FOR THE
CHRISTIAN
FAMILY**

Who sent the Earthquake and the Tsunami?

What's inside?

**Terrorism: A
Many-Headed
Monster**

**Reflections
while in a
Waiting Room**

Hiding



Editorial

by Jon Dykstra



Are Civil Unions an option?

AN ALTERNATIVE TO GAY MARRIAGE

A third option has entered the gay marriage debate. While many Canadians would be quite happy if marriage was left well enough alone, the Liberal Party rejected this option and instead introduced legislation to redefine marriage to include homosexual couples. Stephen Harper, the leader of the opposition party Conservatives, quickly responded, calling for gays to be given all the privileges of marriage, but under a different name. Instead of being “married” gays would enter into “civil unions” or some such similarly named arrangement.

This proposal is similar to one that has been promoted by reformed Christians such as John Hiemstra, a political science professor at *The Kings University College* and Gerald Vandezande, who is well-known for his work with *Citizens for Public Justice*. But while Christians have promoted this alternative, so far they have offered very little Christian or Scriptural backing for this position. Christians are left to wonder, is this an option?

The short answer is, no.

1. Compromise not welcome

There are at least two significant problems with this proposal. The first is spelled out eloquently by author Midge Decter:

Let me return to the idea being proposed by some that we invent a kind of second-level marriage – call it “civil union” – that would provide homosexual couples with certain legal and financial marital rights without the full standing of heterosexual marriage. I am not against allowing a homosexual to be his partner’s legal heir, for instance, or be granted official status as rightful partner in a hospital emergency room or other such thing. But this idea of creating a new level of marriage – call it whatever you want – smacks of the congenital passion of politicians to invent a compromise where none will serve. For it is not compromise that the homosexual rights movement is after. Nor do they even want the standing in the community that heterosexuals

have. They are radicals. What they want is not a room of their own; they want to bring the whole house down.

By now we as a society have pretty much ceased the persecution of homosexuals. They are not ostracized from polite society – and indeed, if truth be told, many never were. In addition, they now freely camp around to a most appreciative audience on prime-time television and, as we know, have for some time served as arbitrators of high fashion. In New York City they have a high school that has now become an official part of the city’s public school system. And though they have been seen on the newscasts standing outside the San Francisco courthouse smiling and waving their new marriage licenses, it is vitally important to remember that they are the denizens of a radical movement: I will say it again, they do not want what the rest of us have – they want to bring the whole house down.

If this fight was simply about homosexuals getting the benefits of marriage then the battle would already be over – for the most part they have already won these benefits. And yet they keep pushing for more; it is clear that compromise is not a welcome option to them, only surrender.

2. Government’s proper role

In a Jan. 10, 2005 article in *Christian Courier* Gerald Vandezande proposed the civil union option calling it, “neutral,” “impartial,” “inclusive,” and “consistent with the principles of the Charter” but nowhere in the piece was Scripture ever referenced, either directly or implicitly.

This is a strange omission, particularly when you consider that Christians (for the most part still) recognize that Scripture views homosexual acts as sinful. And yet Mr. Vandezande has proposed a marital alternative that would involve the government giving an official stamp of approval to homosexual relationships. Isn’t it the government’s job to discourage evil?

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There are really only two alternatives in the same-sex marriage debate and this civil union option doesn't fit either: if homosexuality is a-okay then the only reason to oppose same-sex marriage seems to be because one is bigoted, but if homosexuality is indeed sinful then same-sex marriage and alternatives to it that would encourage homosexual relationships, should clearly be banned.

Some will argue that this civil union proposal is the lesser of two evils – it's at least better than giving homosexuals the word Marriage. However, Christians are called to be a light unto the world, and to do that we must shine forth with the Truth, not simply lesser evil (Matt 12:30, 2 Cor 6:14, Rev 3:16).

Conclusion

Still, this third option may seem attractive when considered in light of how unattractive the other two options are – either giving in to the evil of gay marriage, or fighting it and probably (almost certainly?) losing. But God has warned us repeatedly that, for a time, the wicked may prosper (Jer 12:1) so we shouldn't be surprised when they win some of the battles. The fact that they do win some shouldn't prompt us to propose compromises with them on issues where God's intent is clear and unequivocal. Gay marriage is wrong because it endorses a sinful lifestyle. Civil unions are wrong for the exact same reason.

So the third option – civil unions – is no option at all because gay activists don't want it, and more importantly, we Christians can't offer it.

Midge Decter extract reprinted by permission from Imprimis, the national speech digest of Hillsdale College, www.hillsdale.edu.

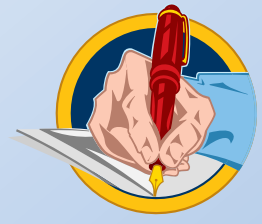


In This Issue:

Editorial – Are Civil Unions an option? — <i>Jon Dykstra</i>	2
Readers' Response	4
Do You Have a License for that Child? — <i>Michael Wagner</i>	5
"Same-Sex Marriage": A Call to Action — <i>Ron Bremer</i>	8
Terrorism: A Many-Headed Monster — <i>Dick Wunnink</i>	9
Homefront – Mind Made Up — <i>Jane deGlint</i>	13
Reflections While in a Waiting Room — <i>Joanna Vanderpol</i>	15

Report from Australia — <i>Rene Vermeulen</i>	17
Who Sent the Earthquake and the Tsunami? — <i>Nollie Malabuyo</i>	19
Justified by His blood — <i>Christine Farenhorst</i>	22
Hiding — <i>Michelle van Driel</i>	23
What Exodus 21:22 Says About Abortion — <i>Gregory Koukl</i>	24
Alberta's Oilsand Boom — <i>Margaret Helder</i>	27
Puzzle Page — <i>Bob Leach</i>	31
Crossword Puzzle Series 12, No. 10	32

Readers' Response



Dear Editor,

I just read your News Bites on Movie Ratings in the November issue of the magazine. You recommended a website, www.kids-in-mind.com, as a tool to determine if a film might be acceptable or not. I would like to make you aware of another website that is very useful. It is www.pluggedinonline.com and is done by Focus on the Family, so everything is done from a Christian perspective. They also review videos, TV shows, and music. I have personally found this website to be extremely helpful in determining what I allow my children to watch or listen to and it helps to explain to them why a particular movie, show, or song is acceptable or not. Perhaps you could let the readers know about this website in a future magazine. Focus on the Family also puts out a monthly magazine, *Plugged In*, which recently featured an article which discussed the issue of ratings creep and the importance of parents being aware that the ratings have changed over time and become much more permissive. With today's cultural climate being what it is, tools such as these are a great help for parents who want to direct their children in the way the Lord would have them go.

*Mary DeBoer
Burlington, Ontario*

Dear Editor,

Michael Wagner's analysis of the current political situation in Canada in his article "The Charter Changing Canada" (Dec. 2004) was right on the mark. As Wagner rightly states, since the Charter of Rights and Freedoms came into effect there has

been a "dramatic institutional redesign" of our political system. Although I might quibble with some of Wagner's assumptions in the final analysis I agree with his point that the Canadian parliament is now subservient to the principles enshrined within the constitution.

It would have been helpful, however, if Wagner could have given some comment or direction as to what we as Christians should do with this new reality. It seems clear that if the Charter, and by extension the courts, has usurped the traditional role of parliament then we need to be redirecting our energies towards this new "theatre of operation." While I also agree with the editor that we need to need to be writing letters to our parliamentarians expressing our concerns about same-sex marriage and other issues, I can't help but wonder if this will result in anything significant. What we may want to consider is exploring ways to challenge legislation so as to ensure that the courts provide the rulings that protect our freedoms and rights as Christians in Canada so that we continue to practice our faith in obedience to the scriptures.

*Timothy E. Nijhof
Winnipeg, Manitoba*

Dear Editor,

I would like to comment on the same sex marriage debate. In his article "Making a mockery of marriage" (Jan 2005) Rev. Tangelder mentioned how social trends have set the stage for what is happening today. This is true and it is sad that the church has played along on this stage. We can blame Pierre Trudeau for playing with the Charter of Rights and the rest of the spineless politicians that have followed in his footsteps. They obviously serve a different god. It is somewhat understandable how society has played with marriage. But what excuses does the church have?

The divorce rate in the church is just as high, (and in some areas I have heard is

higher) as in secular society. Brothers, this ought not be. Sadly in the church today we hear more about when divorce is acceptable than hearing about divorce being unacceptable. Too often much is spoken on Matthew 5:32 and very little on Malachi 2:16. God hates divorce. In the Old Testament God many times referred to Israel as His bride. And when Israel departed to worship other gods, she was guilty of adultery. Throughout most of the Old Testament Israel had many affairs. God could have divorced her, but He didn't. If we treated our spouses like this, divorce in the church would be scarce.

If marriage is so sacred, the church needs to start treating it as a sacred institution. How can we say no to same-sex marriage when the church has held marriage in contempt for so many years. The church needs to return to its first love, Jesus Christ. The church needs to pray for those who are trapped in sexual sins. The church needs to start setting an example for the world to follow. Above all, we need to pray that the church would regain its light and learn to be faithful. So when the Great Shepherd comes, we may hear those glorious words: "Well done good and faithful servant."

Is it too late? Is it hopeless? I do not know the answers. I do know this. Whatever the outcome, the harvest field is ready. Pray that there would be workers.

*Theodore P. Middel
Rocky Mountain House, Alberta*

Do You Have A License For That Child?



by Michael Wagner

Many years ago the idea of “rights” was associated with the restriction of government power. People were commonly seen (at least in English-speaking countries) as having the rights to life, liberty, and property. This meant that the state couldn’t kill anyone, restrict anyone’s freedom (criminals excepted of course), or confiscate anyone’s goods. Rights placed limits on the power and activities of the state.

In recent times, however, rights have often become a vehicle for extending government power. The idea of “children’s rights,” for example, is being advanced as a justification for requiring “parent licenses” to have children.

Even bigger government

The prestigious Canadian public policy journal, *Policy Options*, carried such a proposal in its September 1998 issue. The

authors of the proposal, Katherine Covell and R. Brian Howe, are both professors at the University College of Cape Breton. Entitled “A Policy of Parent Licensing,” their article argues that, “a licence to parent should be mandatory” (p. 33). Such mandatory licensing is, in their view, an outgrowth of protecting rights. “Children have basic rights, including ones related to parenting, and the state has the responsibility for ensuring that children are provided those rights” (p. 34).

Of course, children are frequently too immature to claim their rights or exercise their rights, so certain adults must claim and exercise those rights on the children’s behalf. In this way the idea of children’s rights extends power, not to the children themselves, but to adults purportedly acting for the children’s best interest. Usually those adults are agents of the state. In

short, then, “children’s rights” are really a vehicle for empowering the government, usually at the expense of the family.

State is the problem, not the solution

Covell and Howe are correct to point out that many children these days manifest notable problems such as antisocial behavior, poor school performance, substance abuse, and in later years, depression and even suicide. Current policy is not adequately addressing these problems. If they were to dig a little deeper, Covell and Howe would find that a root cause of this situation is the decline of the traditional family. But the solution they propose, instead of strengthening the traditional family, is to strengthen the power of the state. They want the government “to institute a system of parent licensing” (p. 34).

In order to qualify for a parent license, one would have to fulfill three basic requirements. First, the applicant would have to demonstrate that he lives his own life responsibly. Basically that means he would have achieved a certain level of maturity and have completed at least a high school education. Secondly, the prospective parent would have to sign a contract promising not to neglect or abuse his child. Considering that earlier in the article Covell and Howe refer to “physical punishment” as an inappropriate discipline method (p. 33), the contract would likely be understood as forbidding spanking. Thirdly, in order to receive a license, a parent would have to complete “a certified parenting course on early infant development. Subsequent courses, appropriate to developmental stages (toddlerhood, preschool, school-aged child, early adolescence, later adolescence), would be required for license renewal” (p. 35).

What would happen if a parent’s license was not renewed? Probably the same thing as what would happen if a license is revoked for breaking the contract mentioned above: the child (or children) would be removed from the parents – whisked away by uniformed people intent on enforcing “children’s rights.”

In keeping with Canada’s commitment to equality, all parents would have to obtain licenses. “Parent licences would be required for all Canadian parents, fathers as well as mothers, biological and adoptive parents. Immigrants with children would be given provisional licences for a limited time period during which they must apply and meet the conditions for a licence” (p. 35). People who flee oppressive countries to come to Canada will suddenly be faced with the possibility of losing their children if they don’t have a high school-equivalent education, or fall short in some other way.

Only bigots don’t like it

Covell and Howe are aware that they will face opposition. “Critics may argue, as they did in opposing voting rights for women or laws against discrimination, that such change will do more harm than good” (p. 35). In this way, Covell and Howe attempt to discredit opponents of their plan by identifying them with people who opposed women voting and supported (racial?) discrimination. According to them, only bad people will argue against parent licenses.

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The contract would likely be understood as forbidding spanking.


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Covell and Howe conclude their article by comparing parent licenses with driver licenses. The benefits of requiring licenses to drive motor vehicles is obvious. And yet people have to learn basic skills to qualify for a driver’s license. “The benefits to all individuals and to society as a whole must be expected to be at least as great if parents also are educated and licensed” (p. 35). Unfortunately for them, this analogy does not work. Every motor vehicle is a potential killing machine. Putting an unqualified person behind the wheel of a car or truck creates a serious threat to the life and well-being of anyone within driving distance. Indeed, even with driver licensing people are killed in motor vehicle accidents in Canada every day. Parenting is not analogous to this. Besides, licensing does not prevent careless driving, and licensing would not prevent careless parenting.

There are bigger problems with parent licensing than the failure of the driving analogy, however. It is based on a “guilty until proven innocent” principle.

Someone cannot be considered eligible for parenthood unless he or she has fulfilled certain requirements. It is assumed that people will be incompetent parents unless they meet the conditions stipulated by children’s rights proponents. Even then the license must be renewed and can be revoked. Certainly there are abusive parents, and there may arise unfortunate situations where children should be removed from their parents’ custody. But these are very rare occurrences and can be dealt with on a case by case basis. There is no reason to consider every parent a potential abuser who must sign a contract promising to restrain his or her abusive tendencies. No one supports bad parenting, but that’s not the issue. The issue is, how can we deal with bad parenting? Certainly not by assuming everyone is incompetent (or worse) and requiring them to prove otherwise by qualifying for a license.

Parents are children’s God-given caretakers

In the Biblical Christian worldview children belong to God and He entrusts them to parents to raise them according to His Word. Parents don’t own their children, but they are the ones to whom God has delegated the responsibility for proper upbringing. Parents are trustees of the children on behalf of God. In the children’s rights view represented by Covell and Howe, it seems that children are fundamentally the responsibility of the state. The state grants conditional custody to a parent in the form of a parent license. Parents are thus trustees of the children on behalf of the state. In this view, then, the state effectively takes the place that God occupies in the Christian worldview. The concept of “rights” is used to justify a dramatic expansion of government power. Clearly, the idea of parent licensing is anti-Christian. 

“Same-Sex Marriage”: A Call to Action

***If this isn't going to spur us to action,
what will?***

by Ron Bremer

On February 5, 2005, over 100 Christians from various backgrounds and denominations gathered at King's View Community Church in Stoney Creek, Ontario. Billed as a “Rally for Marriage,” the purpose of the meeting was to motivate Christians to speak up about the redefinition of marriage in Canada. Various speakers presented their thoughts on how to persuade MPs in the House of Commons to support traditional marriage.

“If we won't stand up now and speak to defend marriage, when will we stand, and what will we stand for?” asked Rev. Tristan Emmanuel, Executive Director of the ECP Centre, which sponsored the rally. The purpose of ECP Centre is to equip Christians for the public square – that is, to encourage and train Christians to speak out in public about social and political matters that affect our life and service to God.

Rev. Emmanuel was encouraged by the attendance at the rally. Thankful that so many came out on a foggy Saturday evening to participate, he acknowledged that there was room for at least one hundred more. Located centrally in the “Golden Horseshoe” region, which runs from Toronto to Niagara Falls, Stoney Creek was expected to draw a large crowd of concerned Christians at a time when the federal government tabled legislation to redefine marriage to mean “the lawful union of two persons.”

While many reasons could be suggested for why the church was not filled to overflowing, including the poor weather or

choice of evening, there was an unmistakable feeling that apathy continues to plague Christians in Canada.

If not us, who?

In his speech later in the evening, Rev. Emmanuel addressed the problem of apathy among Christians when it comes to political issues:

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***Apathy continues to
plague Christians in
Canada.***

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“Our forefathers have carried the gospel of liberty in times of great persecution, and despite all the odds, prevailed by the grace of God. We are the inheritors of

their efforts. We are privileged with a great blessing - the freedom of the Christian religion. A freedom not only to practice privately, but publicly! But what do we have to show for our freedom? Give to Caesar what is his, but don't forget that marriage belongs to God. If we will not tell Caesar that marriage doesn't belong to him, woe unto us. If we, as Christians, don't defend our faith and God's sacred institutions, who will?”

Believing that God uses men and women as His instruments to affect change in society, other speakers offered their insights in becoming politically involved.

God was attacked

Scott Brockie, the Mississauga businessman who was brought before the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal by homosexuals for his Christian stand (he refused to print literature promoting the



Rev. Tristan Emmanuel addressed the problem of apathy among Christians.

homosexual lifestyle) spoke about how his trial was not a personal attack on him, but an attack on his Savior. It was not that they did not like him, but rather they did not like the Bible and what the Bible says about homosexuality. Mr. Brockie does not consider himself a hero, but simply someone who did what God expected of him.

Rev. Domenic Tse, minister of the North York Chinese Community Church, indicated that the Chinese Christian community has not been, up till now, active in matters of civil government and politics.

That is changing, however, with the realization that the current government is prepared to destroy what is precious and dear to Chinese Christians. As Rev. Tse put it, "Chinese Christians are being awakened." Although the estimated 100,000 Chinese Christians in Canada (about 10% of the Chinese Canadian population) have been followers up till now, it is his desire to see them rise up and actively work together with other Christians to oppose the threat to marriage.

We must pass on the truth

Jim Hughes, President of *Campaign Life Coalition*, offered some very practical suggestions in contacting and convincing MPs to vote against "same-sex marriage." Mr. Hughes said that Christians must contact their MPs at their constituency office in the local community, either in person, by letter, or by phone. Emails and petitions are worth doing, but less effective than direct contact with the MP. An action plan for contacting your MP is provided in the accompanying article.

Dean Allison, Conservative MP for Glanbrook-Niagara, was able to confirm the practical advice given during the evening. A personal visit to the MP's office to speak with him or her has more impact than an email or just a phone call. If personal contact is not possible, a letter or even a phone call to the MP's local office is better than no contact at all.

First the ministers. . .

In his speech, Mr. Allison also underlined the seriousness of the same-sex legislation. Contrary to what is reported in the media, Bill C-38, "The Civil Marriage Act", does not protect clergy who will not perform a marriage ceremony for homosexual couples. Since the administration of marriage is the responsibility of the provincial governments, the federal government cannot guarantee the rights of individuals in this matter. Furthermore, at some point this "protection" will likely be challenged in the courts. As Scott Brockie's case clearly illustrated, when religious rights conflict with what is perceived as equality rights, religious rights are usually trampled by the courts.

Based on the buzz heard after the meeting, the "Rally for Marriage" was definitely a success. People were motivated to speak up and do whatever they could to preserve marriage. With so much at stake, how can any Christian not want to do the same?

A two CD set of these speeches can be purchased online at www.ecpcenter.org/builder.html for \$9.99 plus \$3.00 shipping



An Action Plan to Save Marriage

1. Pray for strength, wisdom, and words, and God's blessing on your political action. Pray for your MP that he may be receptive to your message.
2. Write a personalized letter to your MP, clearly stating your position and why. Each voting adult, including young people, should write a separate letter. Avoid form letters, where you fill in the blanks with your name and address. Be polite, and include your name, address, and phone number.
3. If your MP supports traditional marriage and intends to vote against Bill C-38, thank him and assure him of your support on this issue.
 - Otherwise, end your letter with:
 - "Please be aware, if you choose to vote in favor of same-sex marriage, I will work actively against you in the next federal election." For an MP, knowing that many people will be working against him in the next election has a much bigger impact than simply saying that you will not vote for him.
3. Call your MP's local constituency office and arrange a visit. Go with one or two friends to make it easier. Take your letter and give it to your MP as a record of your conversation.
4. If you cannot visit, speak to your MP on the phone and, if necessary, read your letter to him.
5. If you are uncomfortable speaking with your MP or a staff-member, call in the evening after 9 p.m. and leave a message on the answering machine. Read your letter, and be sure to leave your name, address, and phone number.
6. If you did not see your MP, be sure to mail your letter as a written record of your phone message.
7. Speak to your family, friends, and church members, and get them to follow this action plan too.

Remember, the more people that participate in this action plan, the more effective it will be.

For more information, please contact Ron Bremer at 905-921-2106 or ron@c-infotech.com

Terrorism: A Many-Headed Monster

by Dick Wunnink

One of the twelve tasks of Hercules was to slay Hydra, a monster with nine heads. But whenever Hercules struck off one of Hydra's heads with his club, in the place of the knocked-off head, two new ones would sprout out.

This story from ancient Greek mythology reminds me of modern day terrorists. When we think that one terrorist movement has been conquered, another one raises its ugly head. Terrorists have mushroomed on all continents and claim dedicated supporters and sympathizers. We are now in an age of terrorism.

Definition of Terrorism

Terrorism, while difficult to stop, is an easy concept to define. It means deliberate, premeditated random violence against noncombatants intended to make the public fearful. It is done with the aim of advancing a political goal. Terrorists use the indiscriminate killing of civilians to undermine a nation's will to resist, and destroy its economic and social stability. And to achieve the desired instability terrorists will often target law enforcement agencies. (In a manual for revolution, a former official of the Brazilian Communist Party said that "every urban guerilla can only maintain his existence if he is disposed to kill the police.")

But despite the fact that "terrorism" is an easy term to define, the way some Western media report on terrorism, one might think that the term is veiled in un-



After September 11 many approving sermons were delivered from mosques throughout the vast Muslim world.

certainty and ambiguity. Many journalists refuse to use the "T" word. For example, Canada's national public broadcaster, the *CBC*, is fond of using politically correct terms for terrorists. It refers to those who kill and maim innocent women and children and blow up buses and restaurants as "activists," "freedom fighters," "insurgents," or other similarly bland terms.

But terrorism is anything but bland. In terrorism we see the face of nihilism, and are confronted with the celebration of hatred, resentment, destruction and death. It is destruction of politics by all possible means. For example, to challenge the role of Israel in the Near East, terrorists have resorted to bomb threats, actual bombings, hijacking of international flights, the destruction of planes, and the ransoming of passengers, crews and planes.

In the immediate aftermath of the murderous attacks of September 11, 2001, on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington President George W. Bush declared that America was at war against "terrorism." But it is more difficult to cope with and longer lasting

than a war. War is limited to geographical and time boundaries. Terrorism knows no boundaries. Terrorists can strike at any time and anywhere.

Terrorist Groups

Terrorist groups are numerous, espousing various causes. Some are limited to nationalistic goals. Others operate on an international scale.

One of the better known groups, the Irish Republican Army (IRA), has often been in the news. This terrorist organization was originally formed in the early part of the 20th century to fight for Irish independence. Its main targets have been security forces and "soft" targets of propaganda value, although its members have also participated in sectarian violence against the Protestant community. For example, on November 8, 1987, an IRA bomb killed 11 people, and more than 60 were injured. The IRA acknowledged responsibility, but claimed that the bomb had been intended for army personnel rather than civilians and that it had exploded accidentally.



Television gives terrorists an immediate and unedited platform.

Another infamous terrorist group was the Red Army Faction (RAF), a German left-wing revolutionary group. It had close connections to the Palestinian revolutionary movement, and their exploits made headlines throughout the world, especially in the Middle East. Most of the members were well educated, and came from middle-or-upper-class families. Soon after their inception in 1970 they received some training in a refugee camp controlled by the Marxist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in Jordan. On their return to Germany they began to rob banks. In December 1975, members of the RAF joined with the notorious terrorist Carlos Ilych Sanchez known as the "Jackal" in holding hostage eleven oil ministers from the OPEC oil-cartel at their meeting in Vienna. After a few hours Chancellor Bruno Kreisky gave in to their demand to be flown with their hostages to Algeria. There the hostages were set free and the terrorists were allowed to walk away even though three people had been shot in Vienna. The West German government re-

sponded to the RAF with increased security measures and surveillance. Many members were arrested, but sporadic attacks continued into the 1980s.

These two terrorist groups, which operated in late 20th century, did not resort to suicide missions. Suicide missions, in the strict sense of the word, seem to have been pioneered by Middle-East organizations like Hamas and Hezbollah, who from 1982 onward carried out a number of such missions in Lebanon and Israel. A remarkable innovation was the use of female suicide bombers – by Kurdish terrorists in Turkey in 1996-1999, and by Palestinians from January 2002 onward.

Who are Terrorists?

Terrorists are hard to detect in a crowd. Unlike soldiers, they don't wear uniforms. They hide among hundreds of thousands of civilians. They can look like anyone and be anywhere. For example, in Israel they have disguised themselves in stolen Israeli army uniforms, as bearded Orthodox rabbis, even a sixteen-year-old punk rocker with hair dyed blond.

But terrorists share a number of characteristics: they are absolutely sure they are right; they do not practice self-criticism; and they are not interested in the subtleties of diplomacy or in compromise solutions.

These days terrorism is mainly associated with radical Islamists. After the September 11 attacks strenuous efforts were made to represent terrorism as contrary to the teachings of Islam. Both the American government and the media have taken pains to emphasize Islam as a "religion of peace" and any civil or military response to 9/11 as a war on "terrorism." In his Ramadan message to Muslims in November 2002, President Bush said that, "Islam is a peace-loving faith."

This perception makes it difficult to criticize the Islamists, the Muslims who do support terrorism. Those who call them terrorists are accused of "Islamaphobia." This is a term coined in Great Britain. It describes "Islamaphobia" as "a useful shorthand way of referring to dread or hatred of Islam – and therefore to fear or dislike of all or most Muslims." Are we negatively stereotyping Islam when we express our dread of the Islamists? We have every reason to fear the mindset of the Islamists. After September 11 many approving sermons were delivered from mosques throughout the vast Muslim world, while hordes of ordinary believers cheered and danced for joy in celebrating the terrorists as martyrs who would be rewarded with a special place in Paradise. In one article in the Egyptian newspaper *Al-Arabi* a contributor wrote: "I am rejoicing over America's misfortunes. And I will be more frank and say that I am happy for this great number of victims."

As Paul Pillar notes in *Terrorism and US Foreign Policy* a majority of the Islamists terrorists are "worldwise young adult males, unemployed or underemployed (except by terrorists groups) with weak social and familiar family support, and with poor prospects for economic improvement and advancement through legitimate work."

Not all are young though. Muhammad Shaker Habashi, a well-to-do, middle-aged merchant with two wives and ten children blew himself up at a train station, killing three bystanders and wounding eighty more Israelis, including three Arabs from his own Galilee village. After the attack a video was released of the bearded Israeli citizen holding an M-16 and a Koran. "I am going to commit a religious self-sacrifice," he boldly explained.

Media Attention

While terrorist groups may differ in aims and motivations they are all interested in gaining publicity for their cause. For them the slaughter of innocent and uninvolved civilians is not "collateral damage," it is the prime objective. Thanks to the rapid development of the media, and especially of television, the more recent forms of terrorism are aimed not at specific and limited enemy objectives but at world opinion.

.....
They have disguised themselves as bearded Orthodox rabbis.

With the introduction of television even in the most remote and poor locations, more and more disadvantaged groups will become well acquainted with terrorists and their tactics and may well emulate them. For the Arabic-speaking world the most popular television station is Qatar's *Al-Jazeera*, the *CNN* of the Arab world, which broadcasts pictures of the Palestinian intifada from Arab perspectives, unifying Arabs behind the Palestinian struggle. It tells the Arab world that they are innocent victims of a plot hatched by Jews and Christians, and their poverty, lack of freedom and weakness are not their own fault in any way. *Al-Jazeera* is freely available

throughout Saudi Arabia and often broadcasts Osama bin Laden's speeches and "Islamic" decrees. *Al-Jazeera* has often been referred to by U.S. government investigators as "Jihad-TV."

Television gives terrorists an immediate and unedited platform. The competition between media organizations seems to bolster sensationalism in news gathering as opposed to the informational aspect of news reporting. Live reporting makes entertainment of public violence rather than performing a public duty to inform. Terrorists are aware of this phenomenon and consciously script what has been termed "live-action spectacles" – news events which cannot be ignored by the media. A leading American researcher has summed up the situation in the following terms: "There is no way that the Western media can ignore an event that has been fashioned specifically for their needs. Television terrorists can no more do without the media than the media can resist the terror-event." Television has been remarkably insensitive to the victims of terrorism, to the feelings of the hostages and their families. It has displayed a lack of taste in the way it has presented personal suffering as entertainment for a voyeuristic public. In *The Warrior's Honour* Michael Ignatieff comments, "As a moral mediator between violent men and the audiences whose attention they crave, television images are more effective at presenting consequences than in exploring intentions; more adept at pointing to corpses than in explaining why violence, in certain places, may pay so well."

What Provokes Terrorism?

In an interview at conference dealing with terrorism, Renato Cardinal Martino, head of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, said, "We are facing a Fourth World War. We have to identify the causes. What provokes terrorism? Why? Until we have the answer, and until we try to address the causes, terrorism cannot be defeated."

But we already know what causes terrorism. The root cause lies within the heart of human beings. The Bible says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" (Jer 17:9). We should not be surprised, therefore, by the horrendous evil perpetrated by terrorists. We live in a fallen world. Violence among fallen humanity is inevitable. Human beings are tainted by original sin and the lust for domination.

.....
We have every reason to fear the mindset of the Islamists.

While we know the ultimate cause for terrorism, Islamists have their own explanations. They blame the West and direct their anger there, perhaps never more explicitly than two days after September 11, in the Hamas weekly, *Al-Risala*: "Allah has answered our prayers." Many in the Middle East rarely missed the opportunity to point out that the Americans brought it on themselves. Even some Americans pointed to America as the root cause for Islamist discontent and terrorist attacks. A Yale professor opined that the "underlying causes" of the 9/11 attacks were "the desperate, angry, and bereaved" circumstances of the lives of "these suicide pilots," who were responding to "offensive cultural messages" spread by the United States.

But as Salman Rushdie, the Muslim writer against whom a fatwa ordering his death was issued in 1989, observed, "the savaging of America by sections of the left...has been among the most unpleasant consequences of the terrorists' attacks on the United States. . . . A country which has just suffered the most devastating terrorist attack in history, a country in a state of deep mourning and horrible grief, is being told,

heartlessly, that it is to blame for its own citizens' deaths."

The state of Israel is the greatest bone of contention for the Islamists. They are strongly impacted by a deepening anti-Semitism among Muslims – hateful images of Jews are embedded in Islamic popular culture. They believe that foreigners [the Jews] are occupying the lands of Islam. They also point to American military support for Israel, which amounts to some \$3 billion per years. The events of September 11, and the reactions from the Arab world that followed, show how thoroughly America has become identified with the Jew of anti-Semitic traditions. Islamists exhibit unquenchable hatred of America and the only successful democracy in the Middle East, Israel. They believe that no peace or compromise with Israel is possible, and any concession is only a step toward the true final solution – the dissolution of the State of Israel, the departure of the Jews and the return of the land of Palestine to its true owners, the Muslim Palestinians. Norman Spector comments in *A War Foretold* that "a Palestinian state is not, as some believe, a cure-all for the ills of the Mideast. In fact, Islamic extremists do not want two states, with theirs beside Israel; they want one Muslim state to replace the Jewish one."

A Mixed Response to Terrorism


So how can terrorism be defeated? There is no consensus.

The great liberal hope is that the objective causes of terrorism will be attacked. They believe that if we can only remove injustices and end exploitation of the poor in the Arab world, the terrorists will no longer have any reason to fight. Thus their focus is on the redistribution of power and wealth, the provision of adequate social services and the settlement of just claims for ethnic, religious, and social rights. But these goals will not be achieved, probably never and certainly not quickly enough to suit those who are disadvantaged.

Some think that moral persuasion could lead to the end of terrorism. If only terrorists could be persuaded to see "the light," the folly of their deeds, they will cease their barbaric attacks. The idea that "pure moral suasion could solve every social problem" may be a form of self-delusion. This kind of liberal idealism ignores the fall and the inheritance of sin and embraces an overly optimistic view of human nature.

In *A Fury for God: The Islamist Attack on America* the British scholar Malise Ruthven argues that Muslims should privatize their religion, remove their faith from the sphere of social action into the realm of private, spiritual thoughts and experience. But the "naked public square" offers no solution. Secular fundamentalism will fill the void vacated by religious groups. British Muslim academic Ziauddin Sardar called for urgent recognition of a problem the Islamic community should address: "Muslims are in the best position to take the lead in the common cause against terrorism. The terrorists are among us, the Muslim communities of the world." The United States is involved in seeking to exact a heavy toll from its terrorist perpetrators, protectors, and state-sponsors – by military means if necessary. I agree with Norman Spector's comment that it will take a sustained campaign of intelligence, preventive measures and covert operations, including assassinations, to win the war against Islamic extremism. "And, if need be, it will take the use of overwhelming military force – potentially against other regimes."

But there is also a personal response needed. I believe we should show compassion for those responsible for terrorist attacks. These people are fanatically committed to a false belief. They are so filled with hatred and bitterness that they can willfully cause fellow human beings to suffer. They are people who need the Lord. The main task the Church has is to preach the Gospel of reconciliation. As peacemakers we should pray and work that these terrorists will hear the Gospel, respond to it and be

reconciled with God. Reconciliation brings the fruit of peace (cf. Gal 5:22). There is no true or lasting peace in anyone's heart, or in the world, apart from being reconciled and at peace with God. If we believe in the Triune God, we can – and indeed must – accept that it is within His power to bring about the conversion and transformation of even the most hardened Islamists. 

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(politics)

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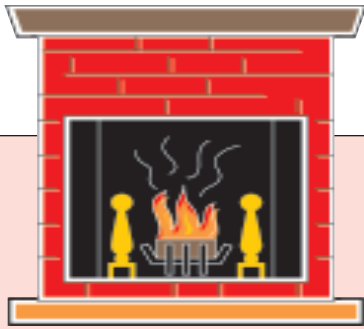
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HOMEFRONT

Mind Made Up

by Jane deGlint

*“Confusion wraps around the mind –
Thoughts are imperiled, eyes are blind.
But even in the dark terrain
The faithful King of Glory reigns.”*

A Soliloquy.

Hi there. Are you looking my way? Be careful with people from the East. Don't trust those ancient civilizations. The Sumerians, and the Persians, and the Syrians. They are different from the Irish monks who brought the gospel to the European continent, especially Boniface. Oh, and the Babylonians. Don't trust them either. Take the tower of Babel! The towering pillar of the babbling people. Very unbelievable. Who can fool God? Who did they think they were? But they kept talking, in all the different languages. Imagine all the prattle between them before they separated. What a confusion.

I keep talking too. When I stop talking, everybody else starts. All the police officers and especially the priests. They keep talking, even at night. No decency at all. Sometimes my ears ring. I must admit it makes me very confused. It drives me wild at times. What is even more troublesome: people try to hide from me all the time. But I see them! They don't fool me! I detect them behind the couch and in the linen closet and under the table, and there! As a matter of fact, look there, in the hallway! The Queen of Sheba is running away from Solomon. She does not trust him for the life of her, despite all his wisdom. I would not either. Too many wives, who turned his heart away from the Lord.

I notice you are listening. Well, let me introduce myself properly. I was taught proper manners from my youth. And I was never unwilling to learn. My name is George. I live right here, in Villa of Hope.

Villa must mean care home, I figure, but I do not fathom what the hope is all about. There does not seem to be a whole lot of hope. I live here already for eighteen years. They don't let me out. I wonder what I have done wrong. I am a decent man, you know. And God-fearing. Yes, I fear the Lord, but I don't think I am afraid of Him. He is one to trust. And He is wise too.

But not people. You can never trust people. Take the nurses here. I guess we need them, but they are always after me. George, time for the shower. George, time to clean up your room. George, time for your medicine. Yes, that medicine. I tell you, those pills trick you. You cannot trust a pill either. And the nurses watch you take them, like hawks. They do not trust me, so why should I trust them?

.....

***Those nasty grins.
They made me so
angry. . .***

.....

There are some good nurses, I must admit. They are the ones trained on the Isles. The best are from Ireland. That is because of the monks. They brought the gospel to the European continent. That is how the gospel eventually came to the North American continent. That really is a miracle. The Word is spreading over the earth, like a fertile flood. What a miraculous sight. Don't you think? The world inundated by the Word. Immersed, like baptism. That is what life is all about. You see that nurse, Stella? The one with the hawk nose? They say she is from Scotland. The highlands, the kilts, the bagpipes.

And John Knox, the student of John Calvin. There you see it again, how the Word spreads, back and forth over Europe. It is a miracle. Stella is good, but tough. You don't fool her.

But they don't fool me either. Sometimes they take my wallet away. I know they do. They think I am going to buy a gun. I know they think that, because the other day Stella came up to me with her stern face and she said, "The police phoned. They have proof that you want to assassinate the queen." They took me away, and that is when they took my wallet. When I came back here, after about a week in the lock-up, my wallet was gone. It is a special wallet. My parents gave it to me when I turned sixteen. I am proud of it. They have no right stealing it from me. But I tele-materialized it back into my pocket. Now I can give money for the collection bag again. I love going to church. I am always surprised they let me go. But they do. I love the minister, and the bible reading. The singing is good, but sometimes too noisy. But that is not God's fault. Giving your money for the needy is good too. There are a lot of needy. You just have to find them. And I have always more money to give. It never runs out. It seems the more I give, the more I get back.

But sometimes people get back at me for no reason. That happens a lot. It started when I was young, in high school. The other students were calling me names all the time. And I overheard them plotting to burn the principal's office. Wherever I went, they were whispering together about it. I know where they stockpiled the matches. They always stopped whispering as soon as I looked their way. They just smiled back at me. Those nasty grins. They made me so angry, that one day I could not

stop myself. I went over to them in a rush of madness and started fighting. I punched them plumb into their puckered faces. I got madder and madder. Who gave them the right to plot against the principal? I could hear all the teachers cheering me on. Their sounds mixed with the cries of pain from the conspirators. It was a glorious moment. Suddenly the principal turned off all the lights. It became pitch black. Then some police officers started to rough-handle me. They pulled my arms behind my back and handcuffed me. For many days they kept me in complete darkness. Their voices drove me crazy. They talked about the communists, who had instructed them to keep a sharp eye on me. You know, there are communists everywhere. People don't know that. The newspapers are not allowed to report it. But sometimes the police collaborate with the communists.

Eventually they let me go. I was glad to be home again. I have good parents. They gave me a wallet when I turned sixteen. That wallet is a token of their love for me. I always take it with me. My mother always smiles at me, but one day my father said, "George must go back to school." I was terrified. You cannot trust the students. My parents called up the principal and he came to our home. The police officers waited outside. The principal convinced me to come back. I trusted his smile. He reminded me vividly of king David. King David did some stupid things. Take Bathsheba and the whole mess. But he was sorry afterwards. That is the whole difference with Solomon. You cannot put your trust in kings or princes, only in those who really serve the Lord. The principal was a good king. I decided I would try school again. It went fairly well right till the end. I learned a lot about the ancient civilizations. Science was a revelation to me. And I loved reading books. I tasted the words and the stories and the facts. My mind has a rest when I am reading. But sometimes the students started talking so loud, that I could not read anymore.

One day Frank, a younger student, came to sit beside me on my bench across from the science room. Science is very intriguing. There are many things you can try to prove, for example my no-mass theory, which claims that some elements have no mass. If there is a world made from those substances, you would have different manifestations of attraction and gravity. But it would be created matter. That could be the material of which heaven is made. Of course it is a theory. I know. Hopefully I find out more when I get there. But when you are close to the science room, you are close to heaven. The same with the library, but the benches there were for lovers. I could see that Frank was a good boy. He said, "Can I sit here," and I said, "Sure." We talked. He asked about my parents, and about the book I was reading. He liked reading too, but he was also into ice-hockey. Frank changed my life. Finally I had a friend. He still is my friend. He visits me here quite often, as do my parents, and my minister.

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They lift me up, like a spaceship.

.....

My minister is mostly like God, especially on the pulpit. But when he visits me here in Villa of Hope, his words are the same as on the pulpit. They are God's words, no doubt. They lift me up, like a spaceship. I become absolutely weightless. No matter what we talk about, he answers me Word for word. With those Words he fights off the devils who try to betray me to the FBI agents. He tells me they do not stand a chance, because Jesus has conquered them. When he says that, they flee. They don't know how fast they have to get away. Jesus is King. I like the sound of that. King Jesus is a King David without Bathsheba messes.

There are messes everywhere. I get tangled up in them too once in a while. The other day Frank dropped by when I was very agitated. I told him to be quiet, for crying out loud. There were so many police officers on the ward. Even the high priest of the year could not convince them to leave me alone. Frank might say the wrong thing and unwittingly give me away. Just then the minister walked in too. He said Stella called him. Do I have to believe that? He put his hand on my shoulder, to restrain me. That did it. I broke loose. I charged at both of them with all my force. The voices cheered me on. I became panicky. Why was I going to hit God's priest and my best friend? Why did King Jesus not stop me? Why could the priest not stop me with one word?

Just then three FBI agents overpowered me. They wanted to handcuff me, but my priest said, "Please don't." And they didn't. I was so glad. His words do have power. Then the lights went out again. But there seemed to be glimmers of hope. Eventually I got to the end of the tunnel. I thought I was in heaven. I saw the angels bringing in the harvest.

But they sent my spacecraft back to Villa of Hope. Miraculously the light had won there too. It was truly amazing when I opened my eyes. There were my faithful mother and my trusted father and my wise minister and my loyal friend. I was inundated by their love, as the world is being baptized by the gospel. Their voices sounded all at once, "Hi, George," but the different pitches did not scare me. The minister took my right hand. It was good. I was peaceful. "King Jesus looked after you, all the way," he said. His words lifted my soul. I realized my mind was made up – by God and for God. Jesus is my hope, the light that pierces darkness. Trust me.

"Thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, and he who formed you, O Israel: 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.'" Isaiah 43:1



Reflections While in a Waiting Room

by Joanna Vanderpol

"ICU 2, Cathy speaking."

"This is Mrs. Vanderpol. Okay if I come in to sit with my husband for awhile?"

"Just a moment please. I'll check with his nurse. . . She's just getting ready to change his dressings. Can you call back in 45 minutes?"

I hang up the phone and walk back to my chair. It's a reasonably comfortable chair. I look around the critical care waiting room and notice again that it is tastefully decorated. Subdued colors. The upholstery a grayish burgundy. A few comfortable love seats. Low armrests. Okay to sleep on.

The doctor's words go round and round through my head. "One of the main causes of atherosclerosis is smoking. . . is smoking. . . is smoking. 35 years of smoking. Struggling to quit for 30 of those years. Open heart surgery. Drastic. Dramatic. Finally forced. Finally quit smoking.

"ICU 2, Cathy speaking."

"This is Mrs. Vanderpol again. Can I come in and sit with my husband now?"

"I'll check with his nurse. . . They have just begun changing his dressings. I'm sorry but could you call back in 30 minutes? Thanks."

I walk back to my chair. The operation to repair the abdominal aortic aneurysm went fine. But some of the plaque that had built up in his arteries loosened and made it's way down the arteries of his legs, the larger pieces getting stuck in the larger arteries, the smaller ones continuing deeper and deeper into his legs, stopping the blood flow there. Atherosclerosis. . . smoking. I sit in my chair. Rest my head against the wall. Close my eyes. Pray. Pray what? My mind so numb. My brain so tired. This is a quiet



place. Small groups of people talking in subdued voices. All holding vigil for a loved one who is struggling for his or her life. All waiting. All anxious. All so tired.

"ICU 2, Cathy speaking."

"This is Mrs. Vanderpol. Are the nurses finished yet with Mr. Vanderpol?"

Just a moment. . . You can come in for a few minutes. They plan to transfer Mr. Vanderpol to a rotobed shortly."

I walk down the hallway. A very long hallway. A rotobed? What is that? His pneumonia is quite bad. I enter the unit and see my dear husband unconscious, 7 pumps dripping fluid of one sort or another into him; an NG feed; this time round, also blood platelets, albumin and packed cells. Sometimes there are 14 bags hanging around his head. His legs are heavily bandaged.

After the initial operation of four hours, the blood would not circulate through his legs which required another surgery of seven-and-a-half hours to try and find the blockages. A bypass in his groin. Unsuccessful. Incisions on both sides of his legs, from knee to ankle, to relieve the pressure build up. Atherosclerosis. Plaque build up. Smoking, a major cause.

I kiss his forehead. He's feverish. The ventilator is breathing for him now while his body tries to heal itself. I sit with him for 20 minutes and then am asked to leave again. I walk back down that long hallway past ICU 3, past the Neurosurgery ICU, past the Burn Unit. A hallway of sadness. A hallway of many doors and quiet rooms for grieving families. A hallway of tragedies. Back to the critical care waiting area. A cup of coffee would be nice.

An hour later I'm back. He's on the rotobed, strapped on. Side railings holding him in place. A metal cradle holding his head. Straps across his body. He tips from side to side to 62 degrees. The cycle takes two minutes. I sit beside his bed but I can't hold his hand. Tip to one side. . . tip to the other side. . . back and forth. Hour after hour. Day after day. Have to keep the fluids moving in his lungs. His pneumonia is serious. Called ARDS. Smoking. . . a major cause. Life goes on hold. The waiting room my living room.

The waiting during the initial surgery was fine. All as expected. But then, as he came out of the anesthesia he suffered such pain, intolerable pain, excruciating pain, as the blood flow in his legs was blocked. After about three hours he had to go back to the operating room. Hopefully it won't take long, the doctor said.

The waiting room is getting quiet. Families are going home. 10:00 p.m. 11:00 p.m. 12:00. I doze. 2:00 a.m. I settle on the loveseat. The armrests a pillow. My jacket a blanket. I sleep a bit. The nurse comes to check up on me and brings a pillow and blanket. 4:00, 5:00 I doze fitfully.



Sometimes there are 14 bags hanging around his head.

Finally I hear the door! The doctor. . . the doctor comes with drooping shoulders, exhaustion written all over his face. “A tragic complication,” he says. Tragic! Tragic! Tragic! Tragic?!! “We may need to amputate his legs below the knees. We can’t find all the blockages. We did a bypass in the groin area to bring blood to his thighs. But the rest of his legs. . . .” Amputate, Atherosclerosis. . . a major cause is smoking. . . smoking. . . smoking.

The doctors wait with the amputation. Wait and see...Each day I come in. Is this the day I sign the papers to permit the amputation? I will be the person responsible. I’ll have to answer to my husband. . . if he lives. . . Wait and see. . . Each day, wait and see. The legs start to improve but the kidneys start to fail. Toxins in his blood! Why? Dying muscle tissue. A muscle bundle in his leg has died and needs to be removed. “We won’t amputate yet,” says the doctor. “We are waiting and seeing.” Another operation. But the incisions in his legs are still open so it’s easy to go in and remove the muscle. I ask the doctor, “if he didn’t have atherosclerosis, would all of this have happened?” “Probably not,” he says.

By now I’ve settled into my little corner in the waiting area. When the children come to visit their dad, they know where to find me. If I’m not there, I leave a note in my chair to let them know where I am. The children, though adults, suffer. They suffer to see their dad lying there, the dad on whom they depended, the strong dad. Dads aren’t supposed to be sick. Smoking. . . atherosclerosis. . . amputation. . . kidney failure. Dad as helpless as a babe.

CRISIS! Falling blood pressure; rising fever; severe pneumonia! He needs medicine for his kidneys which will affect the circulation in his legs. Don’t worry about his legs! Just let him live! He needs a lot of fluids to flush the kidneys but he needs to be dry for his lungs. Which will it be? Better to first control the pneumonia.

After twelve hours he’s stable again. His feet have gotten colder. But he’s still alive. Over the next few days miraculously his feet start to warm up again. Day after day he remains stable. Nothing changes. Be thankful he isn’t getting worse.

Waiting. . . waiting. . . waiting in the waiting room. Nothing to do but think. So I remember. Working in the high school library a young, healthy, vibrant girl comes to talk to me. I can smell that she has just had a cigarette. It’s in her clothes, in her hair. Inside I cry for her. Smoking. A major cause of. . .

Finally he starts the long climb back. Two steps forward, one step backward; two steps, one step; step by baby step. Then the day comes when he is off most of the IVAC pumps. No sedation. Waking up slowly. Too slowly. Are there other problems which we can’t see? His kidneys have been on the point of failing for four weeks now. It’s possible that they were damaged during surgery or during the trauma of the last four weeks. Or possibly, before surgery . . . atherosclerosis, the hated cardiovascular disease. A partially plugged artery to the kidney? Dialysis! Perhaps for the rest of his life. The toxins of his body and of the medicines are not being processed well through those over-taxed, exhausted, struggling kidneys.

He’s coming out of sedation. Slowly; so slowly; too slowly. Could it be his brain?! Clogged arteries to his brain? A stroke?!! Don’t think about it! But the doctor said those words. He’s starting to move his hands in a strange way similar to

stroke patients. Waiting. . . waiting again. Always waiting.

He’s still on the ventilator. The weaning process is so slow. Slowly he awakens a bit more. He becomes more conscious of the pain in his legs and feet.

Atherosclerosis. . . Smoking. . . A major cause.

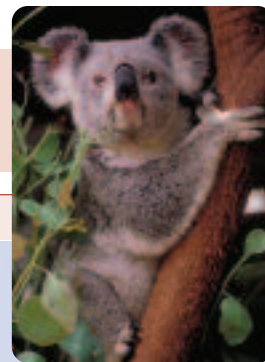
He has lived healthy the last year and a half after the open heart surgery. Lots of exercise. Good diet. No smoking. But. . . too little too late. Too late. Ohhh, too late. 35 years of abuse to the body. The plaque quietly building up, clogging arteries.

What awaits him? Amputation for sure. How much? We don’t know yet. Painful skin grafts on his legs to close the incisions. Rehabilitation eventually. How long will this all take? We don’t know. 3, 4, 5, months maybe. Waiting. . .

**Please, PLEASE STOP SMOKING, Please
For your family, for yourself,
For your God,
whose temple you are.**

I wrote this back in April of 1997 when my family was going through these events. My husband and I decided to publish this only after some hesitation because it is a very personal story, but we do so now hoping that it may motivate someone reading it to quit smoking or to make a decision never to start. In the Spring of 1997 many people sent up prayers to the Throne of God. During those dark and difficult months the prayers of the Saints were felt as a physical support surrounding us as family. It is His grace that allowed Bill to live and to be able to carry on with his task as husband and father and to be active again in the church. Thankfully “only” four toes were amputated. He has been left with deep, ugly scarring of his legs because the bi-lateral fasciotomies did not heal well. Bill spent 3 months in the hospital and a year in rehabilitation as an out-patient. Although his feet do bother him often, he can still be suitably active. Thankfully the Lord allowed him to celebrate his 60th birthday last Fall.





devastated by the tsunami, divided by fighting

Recently much has been written and heard on the news about the situation in Aceh, a province in the north of the Indonesian island of Sumatra. The people of Aceh have suffered terribly from the earthquake and tsunami that devastated the coastal areas and killed well in excess of 100,000 people.

You might also be aware that Australia has sent many of its soldiers to this area to help out in the many needs of these people. This has caused some concern among leaders of the Indonesian military forces and some of its politicians. Their concern is with how this presence of soldiers and other aid workers will be regarded by the people of this province.

Always been a trouble spot

This province has a long history of opposition to any occupation. The people of Aceh are of the Muslim religion, but even more important, an extreme form of that faith. Back when the Dutch occupied Indonesia, they had to fight a long battle with elements of the Acehnese, and it was a battle that cost many lives on both sides. Near where I lived in the Netherlands there was a monument to the man regarded as the conqueror of this part of Sumatra. His name was General Van Heutsz and when at primary school we were told that he brought peace to that part of Indonesia (or as it was then known, the Dutch East Indies). Now it is not my intention to show you how much I remember from my school

days. Nor to write about the Dutch in that part of the world.

What I do find interesting is how the media report on this trouble spot. Time and again one hears reporters saying that the Indonesian government has been militarily involved, fighting rebels in this province for some twenty years. With all this in mind I decided to dig out some of my Dutch books, one of which I knew dealt with Aceh. I had read it while a teenager and thought it might now be worth reading again. This book was called (for those who understand Dutch): *Waar Kris and Klewang dreigden*, and was by one T. R. L. Oehmke. Translated the title is: *Where Kris and Klewang threatened*. The Kris and the Klewang are weapons much loved by the people of Aceh. In the book it becomes clear that many of these people were rather fanatical. Thousands were killed in fights with the Dutch troops.

If it had only been a case of strong anti-Dutch sentiment one would have expected that the troubles in this province would have ceased when Sukarno, the first president of Indonesia, achieved independence from the Dutch in 1949. But I remember an uncle of mine, who had remained in Indonesia, who in fact never came back to the Netherlands, was shot rather badly in the same area well after 1949. But then he was white and therefore an infidel, so perhaps he was viewed as fair game.

It is a little unclear when the first Achinese rebellion started, but it was soon after independence, sometime around 1953. Why did it start? It was, and is, all a question of Islam and its implications. Aceh supported this Islamic rebellion against Indonesia. The reason obviously was that Indonesia and its leaders were not Islamic enough – while certainly more friendly to Muslims than to Christians, the Indonesian government wants to be secular, not religious. So since the early 50's there has been a Free Aceh Movement (GAM). The GAM want an Aceh free from Indonesia, an Aceh where their type of Islam can be freely practiced. To achieve that they are prepared to sacrifice many of their own people.

Atrocities all around

Indonesian military forces have been accused by the GAM of widespread human rights abuses. Knowing a little of Aceh and Indonesian history I would expect fault can be found on both sides. By all accounts the Acehnese rebels are rather violent. To be clear, I'm not saying that Indonesia's troops are angels, but to evaluate it fairly one would have to come to the conclusion that there has been fault on both sides.

One Australian academic (with an obvious anti-American slant) accuses the Indonesian Government and the international company Exxon Mobil of being part of the cause of all the fighting. Dr. Ian Wilson, from Murdoch University in Perth, W.A., argues that Exxon Mobil should be

far more generous in helping out the people of Aceh. He writes: "Throughout the 1990s, Exxon Mobil's Aceh operations counted for nearly a quarter of its total profits, which in 2004 were estimated to be around \$215 billion US. In 2001, a civil lawsuit was filed against Exxon Mobil in the US by a labor rights group on behalf of 11 Acehese villagers. The villagers claimed that Indonesian military, who had carried out human rights abuses against them including torture and rape, had been paid by the company and even used its facilities. Like many foreign corporations in Indonesia, Exxon Mobil has employed Indonesian military personnel as security – up to 5000 in total according to the respected Indonesian news weekly Tempo – blurring the line between legitimate law-enforcement and private protection."

While what Wilson writes may well be true, the point he fails to note is why these things happen – Indonesia has for many years, really since independence, been a very corrupt state. Add to that the fact that its armed forces, while very large, are not particularly well paid, and it becomes clear why the soldiers jump at the chance for extra work. Obviously Exxon Mobil wants to protect its investment in this region, Indonesia likewise wants to see the company succeed, for the country needs the royalties, and so the Indonesian government closes its eyes to any moonlighting its soldiers may do.

And as for abuses of human rights? This, unfortunately, is not a new problem. The people of Indonesia are generally loyal first to whatever island or province they come from – they are Javanese, Balinese, and Moluccans first, and only secondly Indonesian. When the government sends troops to Aceh these men are often of Javanese or some other background, so to them the Acehese are strangers. On top of that the Acehese practice a more extreme form of Islam than the people of Java. All this makes conflict more likely and

that makes winning over the Acehese so much more difficult.

In a way it was understandable when the Indonesian foreign minister announced that the foreign (read Australian) troops must be out of Aceh by the end of March. He was not just expressing some form of nationalism but was more concerned that these troops might come under attack by the rebel Acehese who have already complained that the "infidel" soldiers should not be allowed to influence their people.

Reason to be very wary

Aid, if delivered to people of Christian persuasion, would be received with thanks and any mistakes that individual aid workers, be they soldiers or civilian, made would be regarded as par for the course. But not in Aceh. The extremists among these people will soon fall over every perceived slight against their beliefs. They will interpret the Australian effort differently than we would expect. I don't know if the Australian government is sufficiently aware of that difference.



*A Kris
(small knife)
and Klawang
(larger one)*

The Acehese want a referendum similar to what was conducted in Timor-Leste (East Timor), which achieved independence from Indonesia in 1999, an independence supported by Australian forces. There also a long and bitter conflict caused much misery. But there are also notable differences. Timor-Leste was only a part of Indonesia for a very short time – until 1976 it was a colony of Portugal, when it was then annexed by Indonesia. Also, the Timorese are largely Roman Catholic unlike Indonesia which is largely Muslim and in fact regarded as the largest Muslim nation in the world.

The Achenese, on the other hand, have been part of Indonesia since its inception. And while they are more radically Muslim, the Acehese do still share the same religion as their overlords in Jakarta.

From where we live in Australia we can only hope and pray that our Australian soldiers (our unarmed soldiers, I might add) may do their job of restoring some order in the lives of these people, uninterrupted by conflict with the people they are trying to help, who are in a terrible situation caused by the tsunami.

Having written all this we must remember that we see the hand of our God in the events that have taken place. After all our Savior did warn us "And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." (Matt. 24:6-8). In a world broken by sin we see in these events the footsteps of our Lord who is warning us and all people of His coming return when He will establish that New Age in which righteousness and peace and joy will dwell forever.

Maranatha. Come Lord Jesus.



Who Sent the Earthquake and the Tsunami?

by Nollie Malabuyo

The South Asia disaster of December 26, 2004, says a Hindu, was caused by “huge pent-up man-made evil on earth and the positions of the planets.” A Jewish rabbi agrees, “The world is being punished for wrongdoing.” A Muslim disagrees, saying, “It has nothing to do with God punishing evil, otherwise, why doesn’t God punish evil in other places?” An Episcopalian bishop concurs with the Muslim, saying “God doesn’t choose who’s going to live and who’s going to die,” and he is “in no way responsible for what happened.” And a Buddhist monk is philosophical: “This is how nature works, it is like a cycle. From time to time these things happen. We never know where it happens.”¹

Since the first man Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, mankind has sought to answer some of life’s most difficult questions: Why do disasters happen? If God is a good God, why is there suffering in this world? Why me? These age-old questions come to the forefront again after the South Asia earthquake-tsunami disaster. Most Christians, of course, answer with an affirmation of God’s sovereignty. But some of us ask, Is God sovereign only over good, and not over evil? Many Christians today say yes, God is sovereign only over good, but not over evil. Some others, like Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, suggests that we should not seek for answers, but only to be involved in a “passionate engagement with the lives that are left” and to seek “ways of changing the situation.”² But what does the Bible say?

God’s Providential Care of His Creation

The Bible affirms God’s absolute, sovereign rule and control over all creation. This is so because He has decreed, before the creation of the world, “the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done” (Is. 46:10). After He created the universe, God did not just let it spin unhindered on its own course, and only intervenes at times so He can accomplish his purpose. Rather, God, in his providence, is *always* involved in its affairs: He *preserves* it, He *governs* it, and He *causes all his creatures to act precisely so that his will is done*.

God continuously upholds his creation, and creation only endures through his preservation (Neh. 9:6; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3). He gives life to all his creatures (Acts 17:28), and “gives food to all flesh” (Ps. 136:25). God also guides man to act according to his purpose, “fashion[ing] the hearts of men” (Ps. 22:13-15)., Even “the king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it even turning the king’s heart “wherever he will” (Prov. 21:1). And lastly, God also rules over all his creation as the King of the universe (Ps. 22:28; 103:19; Dan. 4:34,35; 1Tim. 6:15). He controls the courses of the sun and the moon (Ps. 104:19; Jer. 31:35), and determines when each sparrow will fall to the ground (Matt. 10:29). He calls each one of the billions of stars by name (Is. 40:26), numbers each hair on our heads (Matt.

29:30), and directs each lightning’s target (Job 36:32). Even decisions made by casting lots, seemingly by chance, are determined by God (Prov. 16:33).

The Bible also teaches that God works in every act of His creatures – whether good or evil. Does this make God responsible for man’s sinful deeds? Of course not, because God, in his perfect holiness, cannot sin (Num. 23:19; 1 Pet. 1:16). He wills not only the good deeds of men (Phil. 2:13), but also their evil deeds (Acts 14:16). He uses man’s willful sins to accomplish his purpose in saving his people: through Joseph’s brothers (Gen. 50:20), through Pharaoh of Egypt (Ex. 14:17), and through the Jews who killed Jesus (Acts 2:23). God’s sovereignty and human responsibility is a paradox that belongs to the realm of “the secret things” of God (Deut. 29:29).

God’s Providential Control over Evil

But most incomprehensible to mankind is the fact that God’s almighty power not only blesses us with peace, prosperity, and health, but also afflicts us with wars, disasters, and diseases. He sent the Babylonians to fight and destroy Israel (Hab. 1:5-11). He destroyed the whole earth with a flood (Gen. 7:23), and reduced Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes with fire from heaven (Gen. 19:24). He causes earthquakes (Ps. 60:2), storms (Ps. 83:15; 89:9; 107:25), famines (Gen. 41:28-30; Jer. 14:11-12), pestilence (Ex. 9:15), and disasters on cities the earth (Ps. 46:8; Amos 3:6).

God says summarizes all this in Isaiah 45:7, “I form light and create darkness, I make well-being and create calamity,” and in Psalm 46:8, “Come, behold the works of the Lord, how he has brought desolations on the earth.” Thus, when a great disaster like the South Asia earthquake-tsunami strikes, Christians must acknowledge that God’s sovereign, almighty power is at work.

But doesn’t Satan, not solely God, also cause disasters, as when he sent brigands, fire, storm, and disease to take away the health, wealth, and the children of Job (Job 1:6-19), a man who was “blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil” (Job 1:1, 8)? Yes, Satan did, and still does. But he can do so only by God’s consent, and within limits set by God (Job 1:12). Moreover, at Christ’s death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven, he exchanged places with Satan: Christ conquered death (1 Cor. 15:54-56) and ascended into heaven (John 12:31-32; Heb. 2:14; Rev. 12:9) into the “abyss” of death (Rev. 9:1-6), and bound “so that he might not deceive the nations any longer” (Rev. 20:3; Mark 3:27). The devil is still “blind[ing] the minds of the unbelievers” (2 Cor. 4:4) and “prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). “Satan is alive and well on planet earth,” declared Hal Lindsey in his 1972 bestseller of the same title, but God does not allow him to deceive people and nations *en masse* as he did before Christ came.

If Satan is not the cause of great disasters on earth, and God is, then what is God’s purpose in bringing destruction to people? The Bible says that God is a holy, righteous God who does not tolerate sin. But even though sin, at times, is the obvious reason for afflictions, this does not mean that in all cases of affliction, sin is the cause. In fact, most life situations call for silence – we must not point a finger on one’s sin when a serious illness strikes, as when Job’s friends unjustly did. Jesus’ disciples also fell into the same error: they thought that a man who was born blind, or his parents, must have committed a griev-

ous sin that God plagued him with such a miserable condition at birth. But Jesus rebuked them, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, *but that the works of God might be displayed in him*” (John 9:1-3, emphasis added).

Thus, the Christian believer must not hastily conclude that God sent this disaster to South Asian nations because of their Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, or pagan religions. It is certain that there are also Christians (and Jews) among the victims, whether nationals or vacationers. And even more telling is the fact that there are many followers of these non-Christian religions in Western nations today. The effects of a fallen creation do not fall randomly on certain individuals and cultures, but universally, since the *whole creation* is subject to futility and is groaning together in pain (Rom. 8:20-23).

“Does God’s Plan Include Many Casualties?”

On the other hand, God frequently warns and punishes wicked men with disasters: “the earth reeled and rocked; the foundations also of the mountains trembled and quaked, because he was angry” (Ps. 18:7ff). In Noah’s days, when “the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth,” he decided to “blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land” with a great flood (Gen. 6:5-7). When the Israelites conquered the Promised Land, God commanded them to completely destroy some of the cities they captured – along with men, women, and children – because those cities were idolatrous (Deut. 7:1-5).

Many Christians today cringe at this idea. Isn’t this God of the Old Testament so cruel and unjust as to order the random killing of innocent men, women, children, and even infants? But they forget that no one is “innocent,” that “none is righteous . . . no one understands. . . no one does good, not even one” (Rom. 3:10-12). If God were to send a meteor today to destroy this planet, he would be completely justified in doing so, because “all have

sinned,” and “the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 3:23; 6:23).

Obviously, as Archbishop Williams notes, many will “feel something of a chill at the prospect of a God who deliberately plans a programme that involves a certain level of casualties.”³ Some may waver in their commitment to Christianity; others may even reject the faith. But, as in the great early church persecution, or in the fourteenth century plague that killed one-third of Europeans, the true Christian will always fall back on God’s providence and sovereignty. He, and not just “those closest to the cost,” is able to declare “with authority about these terrible matters”⁴ that God is in providential control, and all his decrees are “*according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace*” (Eph. 1:5-6, emphasis added).

But the believer’s confidence in God’s sovereignty must also be balanced by fervent prayer, compassion, generous giving, and even participation in the worldwide relief and rebuilding efforts now under way. Christians must encourage churches and missionaries in the disaster regions to accompany their ministries of mercy with the message of Christ’s gospel of love, mercy, forgiveness, and transformed lives.

God is Merciful, Gracious, and Slow to Anger

Finally, the message of wars, disasters, and diseases is not only that God is wrathful towards sinful people, but also that God is also “merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love” (Ps. 103:8; 145:8, 9). When Jonah warned the Ninevites of their impending destruction, they repented of their evil ways, and God spared them from destruction (Jon. 3:10).

Today, “he commands all people everywhere [*not just those affected by the earthquake-tsunami*] to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed” (Acts 17:30-31). Let us not scoff at God’s patient call to repent from our sins and to put our faith in his Son

WRITERS REQUESTED!

We've got questions! Do you have answers?

Calvinism vs. Arminianism

February 20 deadline

If Reformed Christians are Calvinists, and Presbyterians are Calvinist, then what's the difference between the two? What's Hyper-Calvinism? Are Calvinists fatalists? The Twisted TULIP – how do we respond to Calvinist stereotypes: that we're not interested in evangelism, that we're the "Frozen Chosen," the "Once Saved Always Saved." It seems simply logical that free will and predestination can't both be true – what does the Bible say? What is TULIP and why does it matter? Who was Jacobus Arminius and what did he believe? What are the practical differences between Calvinists and Arminians – is this just some theoretical issue that only affects theologians, or do the differences have down-to-earth consequences? What denominations are Arminian and which, other than our own, are Calvinist? Can you be Baptist and be a Calvinist? Is there a difference between Pelagianism and Arminianism? How would Arminians answer that question? Arminians insist that their salvation is based on faith, so why do Calvinists often accuse them of basing their salvation on works? Can you be "partly" Arminian? What is a 3-point Arminian and what are these "points"?

Movies

March 20 Deadline

This magazine issue has been two years in the making and still isn't nearing completion. Are there any movies Christians *should* watch? We're starting to get skeptical! What should be a Christian's criteria? Even if you're not up to writing an article for this issue please send in any movie recommendations you might have with a line or two about why you like each one, and why you think other Christians would enjoy them.

Reading the Bible literally

April 20 Deadline

What does it mean to read the Bible literally? When Jesus says, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters – yes, even his own life – he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26) are we supposed to take that literally? Does God use hyperbole in the Bible? How about Metaphors? Similes? Personification? How about symbols, allegories and parables? If we take these sections of Scripture literally are we making a mistake? Or are there different ways to read the Bible literally? How do we address those who say that the first few chapters of the Bible are simply a large metaphor, or mere poetry? Are there any good books on this subject?

The "ism" issue

June 20 Deadline

What is Liberalism and libertarianism? How about Post-moderism and modernism? Darwinism and Racism? Some "isms" seem mostly political and economic, like communism and capitalism, but others seem to delve more into spiritual matters like Mysticism and Occultism, and yet they're all worldviews that compete with Christianity.

We need articles on a variety of issues, so don't feel limited to what's mentioned here.

You can send your articles via email or via regular mail to:

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Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 3:9), because earthquakes, tsunamis, storms, famines, and other disasters are only warnings and foretastes of that *coming day of terror* (Matt. 24:7-8). And that man who will judge the world is Christ Jesus himself, who on that unknowable day of cosmic and earthly upheavals, will come again "with power and great glory" (Matt. 24:29-31).

And to those who repent, take heart! When the world seems to be engulfed in evil, suffering, and upheaval, you have a secure shelter, both in this age, and in the age to come:

God is our refuge and strength,

a very present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear though the earth

gives way,

though the mountains be moved into the

heart of the sea,

though its waters roar and foam,

though the mountains tremble at its swelling

(Psalm 46:1-3).

Let this be the message of Christians who are bringing both physical and spiritual comfort to those who are in unspeakable grief and confusion, in Asia as well as in the West.

Endnotes

¹ CBSNews.com, "Religions Try To Explain Tsunamis," January 7, 2005, <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2005/01/06/eveningnews/main665307.shtml>

² Rowan Williams, "Of course this makes us doubt God's existence," January 2, 2005, *The Daily Telegraph*

³ Williams, "God's existence"

⁴ Williams, "God's existence"

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You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been

JUSTIFIED BY HIS BLOOD

how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through Him. (Romans 5:6-9)

by Christine Farenhorst

There are many stories regarding the Covenanters of Scotland – those courageous men and women who stood up for religious freedom in Scotland during the 1600s. Some of the stories are true and others are the stuff legends are made of. There is one such story of that time which deals neither with reform for country, nor with zeal for freedom of religion. Aside from not dealing with reform or martyrdom, it is nevertheless a story, or perhaps a legend, which teaches much about the quality of compassion, of love. As a matter of fact, it faintly foreshadows that great love which God has for His people in Christ Jesus.

There was a woman, a Scottish mother, who, aware that there was a large contingent of pillaging soldiers behind her who had massacred most of the people of her village, ran as fast as she could across a meadow in the dusk of an evening. A dog ran at her side and she carried a child. Had she set the boy down and left him, she might indeed have been quicker and escaped without their knowledge of her proximity. But she loved the child and could not do it. She hung on to the lad in her arms and ran. Breathing heavily, she at length thought she could not take another step when she at last reached the road. There was a river next to the road. And spanning the river – a bridge. The woman half stumbled, half fell down the embankment, and just before the soldiers behind her were visible, crept underneath the protecting shelter.

Holding her hand over the child’s mouth, she shivered in anticipation. The dog, who had not left her side since she first began her exodus from the village, sat down next to her. Soon the woman heard the soldiers advancing. The child, not understanding what was happening, struggled in her arms. She held him tighter and rocked back and forth. The boy, eyes wide open, looked at his mother. The water sloshed gently against the shore and the soldiers passed over the bridge. She heard them and held her breath. They passed noisily. Boots stomped. Muskets rattled.



The soldier drew his saber. . .



Men whistled. She waited silently, pressing against the stonewall, willing the men above her to move on and out of sight. The dog, tongue hanging out of his mouth, moved not an inch. She almost dared not breathe. And the soldiers kept on passing, until the sound of their company faded – faded even as the sun was setting fast.

It became quiet and still she dared not move. But at length, having stood some ten minutes after the last footfall had passed by, she took her hand away from the boy’s mouth and smiled down at him. He smiled back, even laughed in delight. And then to her horror, she heard a voice above her, on the bridge.

“What was that noise, Jack?”

The reply came softly.

“I don’t know, sir.”

“Well, I can tell you what it was. It was a child – a child hiding under this bridge, Jack. Go down and make an end to him.”

The next instant a man came sliding down the embankment, a young man, not yet twenty years old. He saw her instantly and their eyes locked. She was ready to die, he noted, but the child, she could not stomach the child dying. She held it in her arms and her left hand was clamped over his mouth to keep him from making more noise. The boy’s blue eyes looked at the soldier wonderingly and the dog’s hackles stood straight up as it bared its teeth. At a motion from the woman, the animal lay down. The young soldier made a split second decision. He strode forward, bayonet gleaming in the darkened area, and drove the sharp end deep into the dog. The animal rolled over with a small whimper. The bayonet dripped red. The woman did not move but stood like a statue as the soldier turned and climbed back up the embankment to the bridge.

“That’s a lot of blood,” the officer said, and then went on, “and I don’t believe it’s human blood. That was a dog’s whimper I heard just now. Must I go down and do the job myself? Go back and kill the child or I will kill you.”

The soldier turned and slid down the embankment once more. The woman stood exactly where he had left her. The dog lay at her feet and the river ran on as calmly as if nothing had happened. The soldier drew



The young soldier made a split second decision.

his saber, and in one quick motion grabbed the child's hand, cutting off the one of the boy's fingers. The child screamed. But the scream was halted by the mother who stuffed her plaid into his mouth as she silently watched the soldier smear the blood onto his sword. A second later he was gone. And then, after a minute or so, she heard both men leave and she was finally left alone – alone with a dead dog and a bleeding child.

Many years later an old soldier, traveling through that same region, was in need of overnight shelter. He stopped and asked for the hospitality of one of the cottages he passed. The owner of the small home allowed him to come in, gave him supper and gave him a place by the fire.

"I see you're a soldier," said the peasant as his wife and children stared at the visitor's bayonet. The man nodded his assent.

"And what," the peasant went on, "was the worst thing you have ever seen in all your years of soldiering?"

The man hesitated somewhat before answering.

"It was a long time ago," he then said, speaking slowly, "and it was a battle that took place not too far from here – a battle at Glencoe."

The peasant drew in his breath sharply. "You were at that battle?"

"Yes," the soldier answered wearily, as he looked into the flames, "and it was truly the most terrible thing I have ever..."

He stopped and sighed. The peasant did not press the matter but offered to bring the man to his bed in the loft. After having brought him to the room over the stable, he came back inside. "I will make an end of him in the morning," he said to his wife,

"were not our grandparents killed at Glencoe and must I not avenge?"

His wife shook her head.

"You must ask him more about the battle," she answered, "what if you are mistaken?"

The next morning, at breakfast, the soldier was again asked what he knew of Glencoe. And the man told his host the story of a little child, hidden under a bridge with his mother and a dog. The peasant abruptly pushed back his chair and walked to the door. He opened it and stood in the doorway, looking outside for a long time.

Then he turned and held up his hand – a hand from which the right little finger was missing. The soldier and the peasant parted as friends.

The soldier was saved from death, was put into a right relationship with the peasant because of the blood of a little finger. Even so, (can you see a faint parallel?), sinners are put into a right relationship with God through the innocent blood of, not a sinful little finger, but that of Jesus Christ, His Son.



Hiding

He was never

ashamed to cry.

He was never

ashamed to lift up those fallen down.

He was never

ashamed of the sick.

He was never

ashamed to pray with others.

He was never

ashamed to stand up for His Father's will.

He was never

*ashamed to carry those
who could no longer walk.*

He was never

ashamed of the love He had to give.

He was never

*ashamed of confronting those
who had sinned against Him.*

He was never

ashamed of His emotions.

He was never

ashamed of His faith.

So why, oh, why am I?

Michelle van Driel

What Exodus 21:22 Says About Abortion

Is there a biblical case for abortion? This argument is coming up more and more often and it centers around one particular text in the Torah about accidental “miscarriage.”

Is this text pro-life or pro-abortion? Here are the facts. You decide.

by Gregory Koukl

Most attempts to argue against abortion from biblical texts are misdirected. In the absence of specific prohibitions against abortion in the Scripture, Christian pro-lifers quote equivocal passages.

Some verses use personal pronouns to describe the unborn, but many of these are in poetry texts, so the conclusion is not entirely convincing. God’s personal acquaintance with the unborn can be explained by His omniscience. After all, some texts make it clear that God “knows” us even before we’re conceived.

One text, however, is strong. Exodus 21:22-25 is usually used to argue that the Bible assigns a lower value to the unborn than to other humans. Rabbis and Jewish thinkers I’ve discussed this point with on the radio have been especially adamant – even irate. I think the evidence shows, though, that Moses taught just the opposite. If I’m right, we have a powerful argument for the value Scripture puts on the life of the unborn.

Dead or Alive?

The New American Standard Bible (NASB) renders Exodus 21:22-25 this way: And if men struggle with each other and strike a woman with child so that she has a miscarriage, yet there is no [further] injury, he shall surely be fined as the woman’s husband may demand of him; and he shall pay as

the judges decide. But if there is any [further] injury, then you shall appoint as a penalty life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.¹

This translation suggests that if a miscarriage takes place and the child is lost, the antagonists are simply fined, but if the mother dies in the scuffle, then the penalty is “life for life.” In the Torah, it seems, the unborn is not considered fully human.

Most attempts to argue against abortion from biblical texts are misdirected.

Theologian Millard Erickson notes that in this view, “the *lex talionis* [life for life] is applied only if the mother is harmed. On this basis it is concluded that the fetus was not considered a soul or a person, and thus is not to be thought of as fully human.”²

At issue is the phrase translated “she has a miscarriage.” There is an assumption made about this word that is crucial. In English, the word “miscarriage” implies the death of the child. *Webster’s New World Dic-*

tionary defines miscarriage as, “The expulsion of the fetus from the womb before it is sufficiently developed to survive.”³ In the struggle, the child is aborted, and so a fine is levied.

Here’s the crux of the issue: Does the Hebrew word carry the same meaning? Is it correct to presume that the miscarriage of Exodus 21:22 produces a dead child, just like an abortion? This is the single most important question that needs to be answered here. If it does, the English word “miscarriage” is the right choice. If it does not, then the picture changes dramatically.

Are we justified in assuming that the child is dead? The answer is in the original language. There’s a history of how these words are used in the Hebrew Bible, and that history is important. Let’s look at it.

Yeled and Yasa

A word’s meaning in any language is determined in two steps. We learn a word’s range of meaning – its possible definitions – inductively by examining its general usage. We learn its specific meaning within that range by the immediate context.

The relevant phrase in the passage, “. . . she has a miscarriage. . .,” reads w’yase û ye ladêhâ in the Hebrew. It’s a combination of a Hebrew noun – *yeled* – and a verb – *yasa* – and literally means “the child

comes forth.” The NASB makes note of this literal rendering in the margin.

The Hebrew noun translated “child” in this passage is *yeled*⁴ (*yeladim* in the plural), and means “child, son, boy, or youth.”⁵ It comes from the primary root word *yalad*,⁶ meaning “to bear, bring forth, or beget.” In the NASB *yalad* is translated “childbirth” 10 times, some form of “gave birth” over 50 times, and either “bore,” “born,” or “borne” 180 times.

The verb *yasa*⁷ is a primary, primitive root that means “to go or come out.” It is used over a thousand times in the Hebrew Scriptures and has been translated 165 different ways in the NASB – “escape,” “exported,” “go forth,” “proceed,” “take out,” to name a few. This gives us a rich source for exegetical comparison. It’s translated with some form of “coming out” (e.g., “comes out,” “came out,” etc.) 103 times, and some form of “going” 445 times.

What’s most interesting is to see how frequently *yasa* refers to the emergence of a *living* thing:

Genesis 1:24 “Then God said, ‘Let the earth **bring forth living** creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind’; and it was so.”

Genesis 8:17 [to Noah] “**Bring out** with you every *living* thing of all flesh that is with you, birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. . . .”

Genesis 15:4 “This man will not be your heir; but one who shall **come forth from** your own body. . . .”

Genesis 25:25-26 “Now the first **came forth** red, all over like a hairy garment; and they named him Esau. And afterward his brother **came forth** with his hand holding on to Esau’s heel, so his name was called Jacob.”

1 Kings 8:19 “Nevertheless you shall not build the house, but your son who shall be **born** to you, he shall build the house for My name.”

Jeremiah 1:5 “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before

you were **born** I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

2 Kings 20:18 “And some of your sons who **shall issue from** you, whom you shall beget, shall be taken away; and they shall become officials in the palace of the king of Babylon.”

As you can see, it’s common for *yasa* to describe the “coming forth” of something living, frequently a child. There is only one time *yasa* is clearly used for a dead child. Numbers 12:12 says, “Oh, do not let her be like one dead, whose flesh is half eaten away when he **comes from** his mother’s womb!”

... ***it is concluded that the fetus was not considered a soul or a person.*** . . .

Note here, that we don’t infer the child’s death from the word *yasa*, but from explicit statements in the context. This is a stillbirth, not a miscarriage. The child is dead before the birth (“whose flesh is half eaten away”), and doesn’t die as a result of the untimely delivery, as in a miscarriage.

Yasa is used 1,061 times in the Hebrew Bible. It is never translated “miscarriage” in any other case. Why should the Exodus passage be any different?

Clues from the Context

This inductive analysis shows us something important: Nothing about the word *yasa* implies the death of the child. The context may give us this information, as in Numbers 12:12, but the word itself does not.

This leads us to our next question: What in the context justifies our assumption that the child that “comes forth” is dead? The answer is, nothing does. There is no indication anywhere in the verse that a fine is assessed for a miscarriage and a more severe penalty is assessed for harming the mother.

This becomes immediately clear when the Hebrew words are translated in their normal, conventional way (the word “further” in the NASB is not in the original):

“And if men struggle with each other and strike a woman with child so that the child comes forth, yet there is no injury, he shall surely be fined as the woman’s husband may demand of him; and he shall pay as the judges decide. But if there is any injury, then you shall appoint as a penalty life for life. . . .”

The text seems to require a fine for the premature birth, but injury to either of the parties involved incurs a more severe punishment.⁸ Millard Erickson notes that “there is no specification as to who must be harmed for the *lex talionis* [life for life] to come into effect. Whether the mother or the child, the principle applies.”⁹

Gleason Archer, Professor of Old Testament and Semitic Studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, concludes:

“There is no ambiguity here, whatsoever. What is required is that if there should be an injury either to the mother or to her children, the injury shall be avenged by a like injury to the assailant. If it involves the life (*nepes*) of the premature baby, then the assailant shall pay for it with his life. There is no second-class status attached to the fetus under this rule; he is avenged just as if he were a normally delivered child or an older person: life for life. Or if the injury is less, but not serious enough to involve inflicting a like injury on the offender, then he may offer compensation in monetary damages. . . .”¹⁰

Two Rejoinders

Two further objections need to be dealt with. First, if this is a premature birth and not a miscarriage, why the fine?

Babies born prematurely require special care. Because their prenatal development has been interrupted, they are especially prone to difficulty. Pre-term babies often can’t breast feed, and there can be respiratory problems leading to permanent brain damage. The fine represents reimbursement for the expense of an



There is very little in the Bible dealing explicitly with abortion.

untimely birth, and punitive damages for the serious trauma.

Anyway, even if the fine was for the miscarriage, this wouldn't prove the child was less than human. A few verses later (v. 32), Moses imposes a fine for the death of a slave, but this doesn't mean the slave is sub-human.

Second, was this the only word that could be used to indicate a miscarriage? No. Two other words were available to convey this particular meaning, if that's what the writer had in mind: *nepel* and *sakal*. These are used seven times in the Hebrew text.

The noun *nepel*¹¹ means "miscarriage" or "abortion," and is used three times:

Job 3:16 "Or like a **miscarriage** which is discarded, I would not be, as infants that never saw light."

Eccl. 6:3-4 "If a man fathers a hundred children and lives many years, however many they be, but his soul is not satisfied with good things, and he does not even have a proper burial, then I say, 'Better the **miscarriage** than he, for it comes in futility and goes into obscurity.'"

Psalms 58:8 "Let them be as a snail which melts away as it goes along, like the **miscarriages** of a woman which never see the sun."

The verb *sakal*¹² means "to be bereaved" and is used four times, including one time when it's actually translated "abort:"

Genesis 31:38 "These twenty years I have been with you; your ewes and your female goats have not **miscarried**, nor have I eaten the rams of your flocks."

Exodus 23:26 "There shall be no one **miscarrying** or barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days."

Hosea 9:14 "Give them, O Lord— what wilt Thou give? Give them a **miscarrying** womb and dry breasts."

Job 21:10 "His ox mates without fail; his cow calves and does not **abort**."

Moses had words in his vocabulary that literally meant abortion or miscarriage, but he didn't use them in Exodus 21:22. Instead, he chose the same word he used in many other places to signify a living child being brought forth.

Yasa doesn't mean miscarriage in the sense we think of that word. Instead, the combination of yeled with yasa suggests a living child coming forth from the womb. Nowhere else is this word ever translated "miscarriage." Why? Because the word doesn't mean the baby is stillborn. It simply means the child comes out.

Three Questions

When someone raises this issue with you, ask these three questions.

First, why presume the child is dead? Though the English word "miscarriage" entails this notion, nothing in the Hebrew wording suggests it. Yasa doesn't mean miscarriage; it means "to come forth." The word itself never suggests death.¹³ In fact, the word generally implies the opposite: live birth. If it's never translated elsewhere as miscarriage, why translate it that way here?

Second, what in the context itself implies the death of the child? There's nothing that does, nothing at all. The fine does not necessarily mean the child is dead, and even if it did this wouldn't indicate that the child wasn't fully human (as in the case of the slave in v. 32).

Third, ancient Hebrew had a specific word for miscarriage. It was used in other passages. Why not here? Because Moses didn't mean miscarriage. When his words are simply taken at face value, there is no confusion at all. The verse is clear and straightforward. Everything falls into place.

Regardless of the translation, it's clear that killing the child – and the text does refer to the unborn as a child – is a criminal act. There is no justification for abortion-on-demand from the Torah. Instead, we have a reasonable – even powerful – argument that God views the unborn as valuable as any other human being.

Footnotes

¹ The 1995 updated version of the NASB now renders this verse, "If men struggle with each other and strike a woman with child so that she gives birth prematurely, yet there is no injury, he shall surely be fined. . ." etc.

² Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985), p. 555.

³ *Webster's New World Dictionary*, Second College Edition (New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1984).

⁴ Strong's *Index* word #3206.

⁵ Definitions come from the *New American Standard Exhaustive Concordance*. For further documentation, see the Hebrew/English Lexicon of the Old Testament, by Brown, Driver and Briggs, the standard lexicon of ancient Hebrew.

⁶ Strong's *Index* word #3205.

⁷ Strong's *Index* word #3318.

⁸ The New International Version is correct in rendering this passage, "If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman's husband demands and the court allows. But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life."

⁹ Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985), p. 556.

¹⁰ Gleason Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), p. 248.

¹¹ Strong's *Index* word #5309.

¹² Strong's *Index* word #7921.

¹³ Again, in the Numbers passage the context indicates the death, not the word yasa itself.

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ALBERTA'S OILSAND BOOM

The Best of Times: the Worst of Times

by Margaret Helder



People in Alberta can be pardoned for nostalgia about the good old days after 1947, when conventional oil was plentiful and environmental damage was relatively low. Those halcyon days are fast disappearing. The good news, however, is that the oil-sands are rapidly replacing conventional oil sources. The bad news is that this process requires astronomically more money and the environmental effects are much more serious. So is this a good news story or a bad news story? The reader will have to judge.

The streets were paved with. . . oil?

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, people of European descent first noticed strange oily outcrops which extend for about 200 km along the Athabasca River in northeastern Alberta. Early in the twentieth century, agents of both the federal and provincial governments expressed interest in finding economic uses for this unusual resource. Some streets in Edmonton were actually paved with the material in those early days, but the transportation costs made it an uneconomical activity.

Chemist Karl A. Clark (1888-1966) first became interested in the oilsands when he worked for the Road Materials Division of the federal Mines Branch. Upon leaving that job in 1920, he joined the

newly formed Alberta Research Council. This man then devoted almost his entire career to developing the hot water separatory process in use today at the major open pit mines. During the late 1940s, Alberta Research Council established a small extraction plant north of Fort MacKay.

Starting slowly

Presumably the objectives of the provincial government had now been met since big multinational oil companies began to express interest in developing the oilsands. The provincial government then began the lucrative business of leasing the underground rights to huge tracts of oilsands.

Soon interest in the oilsands was very apparent. In 1959 a consortium called Syncrude (representing three multinational oil companies and a Canadian business) established a 1000 barrels per day (bpd) pilot plant at Mildred Lake in the vicinity of Fort McMurray. Then in 1960, a company called Great Canadian Oil Sands (GCOS) applied for provincial approval to build a plant in the Mildred Lake area. At first there was no response. Two years later, the provincial government had two applications under consideration. GCOS was still applying to build a plant at a cost of \$235 million which would yield 45,000 bpd while Syncrude

wanted to build a plant at \$325 million which would produce 100,000 bpd. For whatever reason, the provincial government in 1964 gave GCOS the go-ahead, while Syncrude was told to defer their application for a further four years.

One can imagine the frustration of Syncrude officials as the GCOS plant opened in 1968 while permission for Syncrude to build was deferred yet again. Some commentators have suggested that the provincial government was reluctant to disturb the market for conventional crude oil – as if something more expensive and harder to manage could ever do that. At any rate, finally in 1973, Syncrude received permission to build a plant expected to cost \$1 billion which would yield 125,000 bpd. It soon became apparent however that costs were escalating dramatically. In 1975, in the face of threats by Syncrude to abandon the whole project, three governments agreed to contribute substantially to the project. The partners in Syncrude now were Canada (through crown corporation Petro-Canada) at 15%, Alberta at 10%, Ontario at 5%, Imperial Oil at 31%, Canada Cities Service at 22% and Gulf Oil at 17%. By the time the Syncrude plant finally opened in 1978, the costs had escalated to \$2.15 billion. This was a sign of things to come.

One can imagine how annoyed the Syncrude shareholders must have felt. Regulatory delays had cost the company almost two billion dollars. For twenty-five years, the GCOS plant (now called Suncor), and the Syncrude plant remained the only major oilsands developments. Both were open pit mines. Both greatly expanded their production in the ensuing years. As of 2003, Suncor was producing 225,000 bpd with 330,000 bpd expected by 2007, and Syncrude in 2003 was producing 285,000 with 427,000 bpd expected by 2005.

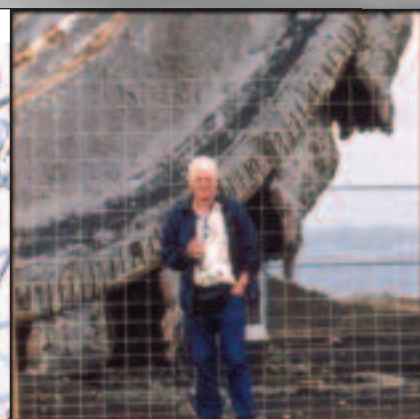
Doomed by the NEP

About the time that Syncrude finally obtained permission to build a plant, other multinational firms were appearing on the scene. In 1973, Shell Canada (78% owned by Royal Dutch Shell) and partners Petrofina Canada and Home Oil applied to build a pit mine at Shell's Muskeg River (Lease 13) holding. No word came on this application. Then in 1978 Shell tried again. This time the consortium included nine firms, but Shell was the largest partner with a 45% interest. The Alsands consortium proposed to spend \$13.5 billion by 1986 to build a pit mine which would produce 140,000 bpd. The plan was duly approved, but Shell abandoned the whole project in 1982. The federal Liberal government of the day had initiated a policy which kept Canadian oil prices low at a time when world energy prices were escalating, driven by the OPEC cartel. Since the Alsands plant would need high oil prices to be profitable, this large mega-project was doomed by the National Energy Policy or NEP.

About the same time as the successful Shell application was made, Imperial Oil (another American based multinational firm like most of the petroleum companies doing business in Canada), applied to build a steam injection oilsands plant farther east in the Cold Lake area. In that region the oilsands lie much deeper, not accessible to open pit techniques. Imperial Oil had operated a small pilot plant in the area since 1960. They now proposed to spend \$4 billion to build a plant which would yield 125,000 to 145,000 bpd. Their application was approved in 1980, but in 1981, after the



More huge oilsands equipment – the man in the picture is 6'4" and he's still dwarfed by the immensity of this digger.



National Energy Policy was instituted, Imperial Oil cancelled their plans for the steam injected in situ (in the ground) oil plant. Their steam injecting method is extremely expensive, requiring the equivalent of 25,000 bpd of oil to generate steam for the extraction.

Since Imperial Oil had already spent more than \$40 million on this in situ project, they were unwilling to forget the whole project. Thus they decided to begin with a small commercial plant (yielding 25,000 bpd in 1985) and gradually expand from there. This system worked well and by 1997 they were generating 130,000 bpd.

It is amazing how interested the multinational companies remained in Canadian oilsands at times of relatively low petroleum prices. They knew however that conventional crude oil sources were about to decline precipitously, so they wanted a part of future resources. This was a very prudent policy but the obstacles must have seemed frustrating during those early years. In 1987, a consortium of American multinational companies and smaller Canadian interests made application to develop an open pit mine near Shell's Lease 13. They dubbed this new venture the OSLO application for "other six leases operation." The group pro-

posed to spend \$4.5 billion for a plant which would yield 75,000 bpd. This was the culmination of exploratory work carried out since 1982. Apparently permission to build was accompanied by hefty financial incentives from the federal and provincial governments. However politics in Canada is never boring and antagonism between federal and provincial governments is often apparent even when they represent the same political philosophy and party. At any rate in February 1990, the federal minister of finance, as part of a deficit cutting budget, cancelled \$600 million in aid to the OSLO project. This doomed the project. Later in 1996, Syncrude obtained these leases. Companies have twenty years to develop a lease. This can be renewed once, but after that, if the resource is not developed, the lease is sold to another party.

A billion buck bungle (or rather, \$915 million)

During the late 1980s, much appeared to happen in the oilsands, but in reality little was accomplished. One thing that really did happen, was the building of the Husky upgrader at Lloydminster, Saskatchewan. In 1988 the Conservative governments of Canada and Alberta, with

great fanfare, jointly announced (as part of a regional economic development policy) that a plant to upgrade bitumen to light crude oil would be built at Lloydminster. (Part of this city is in Alberta and part is in Saskatchewan.) The four partners were Husky Oil Ltd (owned by a businessman from Hong Kong), and the Governments of Canada, Alberta and Saskatchewan. The plant opened in 1992, having cost \$1.6 billion to build. However, the economic climate was not favourable for the plant. In June 1994, the federal government declared that the Husky upgrader was a deep money pit. They wanted out of the partnership. Saskatchewan had, several months previously, already stopped contributing to the operating costs, but Saskatchewan did not formally exit the consortium. In 1995 Canada and Alberta sold their shares at a fraction of their cost, to the other two partners. Thus Husky and Saskatchewan became the co-owners. Federal losses were \$515 million and Alberta's were almost \$400 million. So a province which had stopped support at a critical time, and a foreign businessman, now own the facility which today is perfectly profitable. There are other sad but amusing stories about the oilsands too.

Big and really small, all involved

Meanwhile Shell, in 1999, decided to try once more to develop their Muskeg River Lease 13. A small consortium with Shell the 60% partner, applied to build an extremely ambitious pit mine development. It would include the whole package from bitumen extraction, to production of light crude, and further refining to gasoline. The plan called for the pit mine, an upgrader near Edmonton, two pipelines, renovation of Shell's Scotford Refinery near Edmonton, and power plants at each end of the pipelines. The project was supposed to cost \$4.9 billion, but during its five-year construction phase, costs escalated by 50%. This Albion Oilsands plant opened in 2003. Its expected yield was 155,000 bpd or 10% of Canadian consumption. During construction, this was the largest mining project in the world. Its opening in 2003 was the first fully integrated oilsands project actually built in 25 years (since Syncrude). This was the good news, but the bad news

was that the cost overruns cast a pall over numerous other projects, mostly approved, which were seeking financing.

One of the plans adversely affected by Shell's cost overruns was the nearby TrueNorth proposal, which was abandoned in 2003. The story of this lease is the most comic of the period. A small American company based in Albuquerque, New Mexico had built a pilot plant in their home state to work the local oilsands there. This company was called Solv-Ex, after their process of using solvents to extract bitumen from the sand. Having obtained a similar lease in Alberta, the company promised to produce cheap oil from the bitumen as well as other minerals and even a paper coating product. Best of all, there would be no tailings pond to store huge amounts of polluted water. It was by no means certain however, that what worked for New Mexico deposits, would also work in Alberta. The provincial government contributed \$3.6

million so that Solv-Ex, the first minor company in the oilsands business, could carry out some research. By 1996, the company had only one year to go in its second and final lease. In August, the company announced that they would try a much smaller plant than had initially been planned. By February 1997, the company had a building which featured some creative second hand equipment. The agitation component for the bitumen was a log washer once used in a paper mill! Several small temporary boilers were installed to inject steam into the log washer. Soon the company claimed to have produced some bitumen, but others said it had merely been trucked to the plant. In 1998, another small American company, this time from Wichita, Kansas and a Canadian partner purchased the lease. They called their new company TrueNorth Petroleum. Ambitious plans for a \$1.1 billion plant were abandoned in 2003 for lack of further partners with money.

Environmental Issues

Bitumen is the heaviest and thickest form of petroleum. Reserves of this thicker than molasses product are found in three major areas in Alberta: Athabasca, Cold Lake and Peace River. The hydrocarbons occur mixed with sand, water, small amounts of heavy metals and up to 5% sulphur. The largest deposit and closest to the surface is in the region surrounding Fort McMurray. The Athabasca River cuts through this region. The shallow deposits vary from 30 to 70 m thick, buried under 15-35 m of clay, pebbles and rocks. In the ground, oilsand exhibits the consistency of cement, not a promising material for use in gasoline. The easiest method to extract the bitumen is surface mining. The overburden is scooped away and the oilsand is removed in large trucks. Back at the plant, the oilsand is dumped into massive rotating drums to be agitated with hot water and steam. The hydrocarbons then float and are skimmed off. This is just the beginning of the processing of bitumen. It then requires further chemical work in an "upgrader" to turn it into the kind of light crude oil which can be pumped to refineries. Thus these first steps are additional to those required for conventional light crude which can be pumped directly to refineries.

The coarse sand which remains is then used to build dikes around monstrous tailings ponds which store water contaminated with clay, heavy metals and trace hydrocarbons. Into the air go large amounts of sulphur dioxide and ozone, although the most modern plants are designed to scrub 99% of sulphur from the emissions. In the past, the amount released was much more.

Deeper deposits, from 300-600 meters down, must be rendered less viscous while still in the ground. Various methods have been attempted, some work on commercial scales and some have yet to demonstrate their reliability. Imperial Oil uses a "huff and puff" method. This involves injecting high pressure steam into a well for a couple of months, waiting several more for the thinned material to collect in pools, and then pumping it out. Most of these methods consume massive amounts of energy and massive amounts of water. Much of the water is lost permanently underground. Obviously this is not good for the environment.

Israel, Japan, and China

Despite the difficulties, many foreign companies are currently seeking a part of the oilsands action. Among the projects awaiting development is the Long Lake Project. This is for a \$3.2 billion *in situ* plant to be built southeast of Fort McMurray. The firms involved are Nexen Canada and OPTI Canada. The latter's parent company is Ormat Industries of Israel. This company has built a pilot plant in the Cold Lake area and a pilot plant upgrader in Israel, for Canadian bitumen. Also near Long Lake, Japan Canada Oil Sands Ltd. owns an *in situ* pilot plant on the Hangingstone property. This company has plans to build a \$250 million plant producing 35,000 bpd by 2008. Even the Chinese government has expressed interest in the Canadian oilsands. In January 2005, news of PetroChina's interest in another property southeast of Fort McMurray, was reported in the media.

Conclusion

The list of potential developments is surprisingly long. At a time of astronomical prices for a barrel of crude oil (from any source), the prognosis for oilsands development is very good. It is expected that as of this year, oilsands produced crude oil will supply half of Canadian consumption. With little exploration risk and an estimated 315 billion barrels of reserves recoverable using current technology, plus much more not currently accessible, interest continues high in the region. Some experts predict that by 2015, Canada will rank sixth among the world's largest oil producers. Eventually, some people suggest, Canada may rank second only to Saudi Arabia and Iran, as exporters of oil. So far, however, these are just dreams.

The question then arises as to whether the future of the oilsands is a good dream or a nightmare. It is indeed good that Canada can produce so much petroleum at a time when conventional sources are in decline.

The bad news is that the cost to the environment is many times more devastating than with the production of conventional crude. Furthermore the high demands for energy contribute further still to environmental degradation. It is to be hoped that the new sources of petroleum will provide time and economic resources to develop other sources of energy. The consumer must remember however that there are no environmentally inexpensive options. The best course is to mitigate the damage as much as possible, and currently Canada is doing quite a good job in this regard.



This scoop is normally used to move dirt in open pit oilsands projects.

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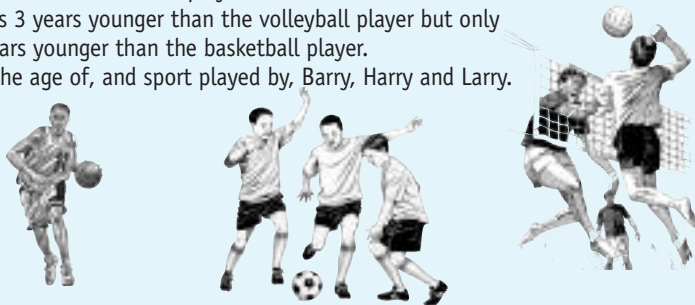
NEW PUZZLES

Riddle for Punsters #108 – “Things are looking rosey!”

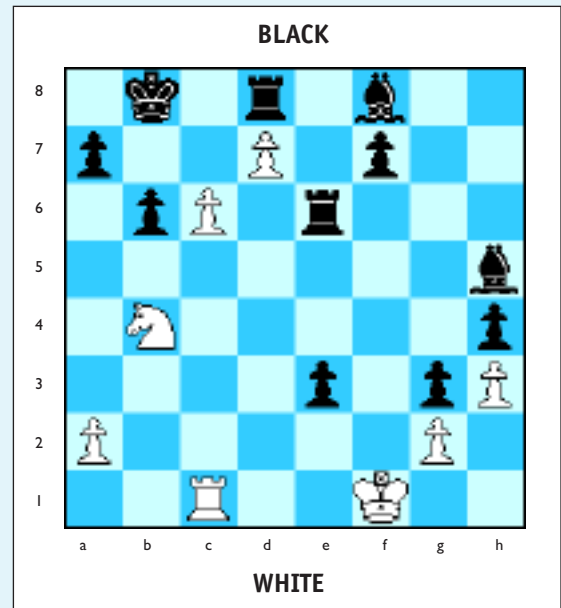
Why did Hoe-mer the gardener apply for a high-paying job at a big mansion? He hoped to be able to r_____ in lots of money that, after paying for daily expenses, would l_____ him with enough money to pay off old debts that were at the r_____ of his financial woes. Only then would he be able to c_____v_____e a positive attitude toward his finances and so s_____ the fear of poverty that had become i m _____ d in his mind.

Problem to Ponder #108 – “Good Ages for Sports”

Barry, Harry and Larry like different sports. One plays volleyball, one basketball and the third plays soccer. The sum of their ages is 41 years. Harry is older than the one who plays basketball. Barry is 3 years younger than the volleyball player but only two years younger than the basketball player. State the age of, and sport played by, Barry, Harry and Larry.



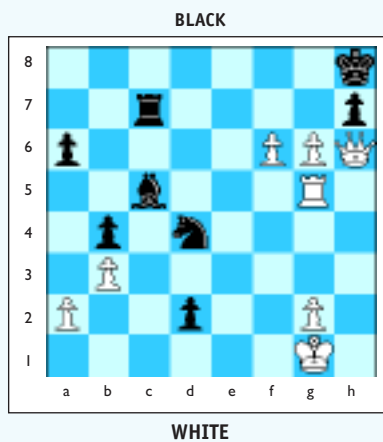
CHESS PUZZLE # 108



WHITE to Mate in 3 [3 solutions possible]
Or, If it is BLACK's Move,
BLACK to Mate in 3 [2 solutions possible]

SOLUTIONS TO THE PREVIOUS (JANUARY) PUZZLE PAGE

SOLUTION TO CHESS PUZZLE # 107



WHITE to Mate in 4

- Descriptive Notation**
1. P-N7 ch K-N1
 2. QxP ch KxQ
 3. P-N8=Q ch K-R3
 4. Q-N6 mate

Algebraic Notation

1. g6-g7 + Kh8-g8
2. Qh6xh7 + Kg8xh7
3. g7-g8=Q + Kh7-h6
4. Qg8-g6 ++

Or, If it is BLACK's Move,

BLACK to Mate in 2

Descriptive Notation

1. _____ N-B6 ch
2. K-R1 P-Q8=Q mate

Algebraic Notation

1. _____ Nd4-f3 +
2. Kg1-h1 d2-d1=Q ++

Answer to Riddle for Punsters #107 – “Carpet Care”

What kind of pastry did the Scandinavian secretary like to have for breakfast? A **danish**.

What kind of pastry did the British secretary like to have for a snack? An **English muffin**.

What did the secretary from mainland Europe like to have for lunch?

French fries and **Polish sausage** and **Brussels sprouts**.

Answer to Problem to Ponder #107 – “Each Cougar Went How Far?”

Two cougars met together at a pond that has good drinking water. They set off in opposite directions looking for food. The grey cougar on average travels 3 km/h faster than the brown cougar. After 6 hours they are 78 km apart. What was the average speed of each cougar and how far did each travel in that time?

Let x km/h be the speed of the brown cougar, so x+3 km/h is the speed of the grey cougar. Distance = (time)(speed) for each cougar and brown distance + grey distance = total distance so $6x + 6(x+3) = 78$
 $6x + 6x + 18 = 78$
 $12x = 60$
 $x = 5$ so $x+3 = 8$

Thus the brown cougar's average speed was 5 km/h and the grey cougar's average speed was 8 km/h.

Distance = (time)(speed) so the brown cougar travelled $6(5) = 30$ km whereas the grey cougar travelled $6(8) = 48$ km.

(Their total distance was thus $30 + 48 = 78$ km, as required.)

Crossword Puzzle

Series 12, No. 9

Last month's solution
Series 12, no. 8

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