

An abstract graphic composed of thick orange lines. It features a series of nested, stepped rectangular shapes on the left side, resembling a staircase or a stylized 'E'. On the right side, there are several vertical lines of varying heights, some of which are connected by horizontal lines at the top, forming a structure that looks like a stylized 'F' or a series of connected arches. At the bottom, a large, wide, V-shaped or Y-shaped structure opens upwards, with several thin lines radiating from its center point towards the upper right, resembling a fountain or a stylized plant.

# the fountain

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THE FOUNTAIN is published once every six weeks. It is supported by free-will offering from Christian friends who have the burden to see the Word of God reach as many as possible. We depend on the all sufficient grace and providence of the Lord to meet our every need. The magazine is free of charge and is sent upon request.

OUR AIM is to unite all Christian brothers and sisters who have the same burden to preach the Gospel unto all nations. We preach none other than Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

WHAT WE BELIEVE The Bible is the basis of our faith. We believe that the whole Bible, every chapter, every verse as originally given is inspired by God.

"You (Jesus) are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

(Matthew 16:16)

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (I Timothy 1:15)

"And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God -- not because of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8,9)

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"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts."

(Zechariah 4:6)

"When He saw the crowds, He had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.'"

(Matthew 9:36-38)

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**ANNOUNCEMENT: Financial Report,**

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We welcome Christians to send in written contributions, especially evangelistic articles. Articles may include testimonies, short reflective prose, stories, biographies, book reviews, Bible studies, topical discussions, poems and translated works. Please avoid adopting a didactic approach. Articles' length should be kept under 2,000 words.

Please write prayerfully, and pray before God for both Christian and non-Christian readers and for the co-workers of The Fountain.

All articles are considered prayerfully by the editors for publication, modification, reprint, circulation in the form of booklets and tracts, or translation.

There will be no financial reward for published articles.

Unpublished articles will not be returned.

The name and address of the author must accompany all contributions. Pseudonyms may be used, but anonymous articles will not be published.

# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF CAROL

- Lina -

She looked through her proud collection of records and tapes. It was about time she re-evaluated her "obsession" with contemporary music, as she had promised Marie to do a long time ago. She had heard those records a hundred times before. But she was not tired of them as yet. She thought, "if there's anything that grew up with me, it must be pop music."

Indeed it was! Carol recalled how music became her "friend" when she was a lonely child, motherless and dependent on a hot-tempered father. She remembered the day she bought her first Beatles record, after saving up her allowance for over two months. She was not yet ten at that time. She also remembered her adolescent years, when she was a "teenybopper", inseparable from her invaluable portable radio. It was a time when she was chiefly engaged in silly love songs made up of "catchy" tunes and sweet utterings about puppy love. It had been easy for her to identify her feelings with the rhythmic patterns of the so-called hits -- they served as a vent for her fluctuating moods and emotions that

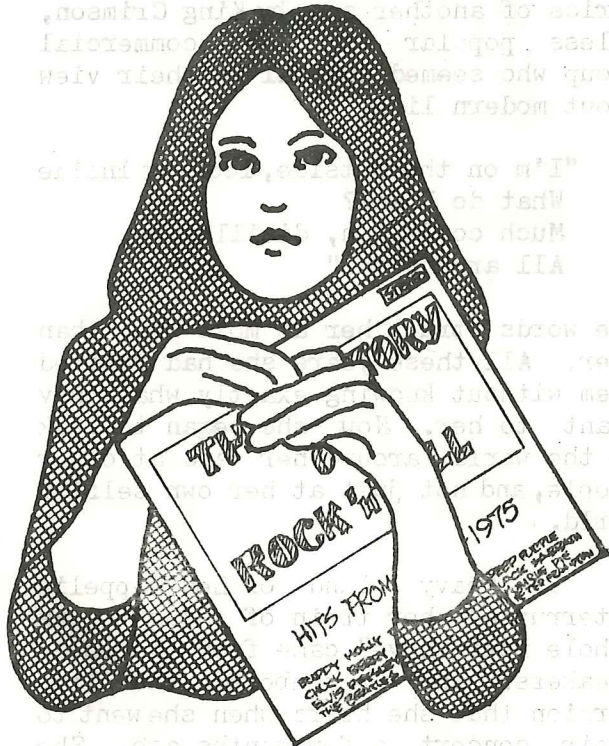
most adolescents would experience.

Carol played around with the stacks of cassette tapes that she had been collecting for a few years. She thought more about her personal life as she heard Elton John's "Love Song" coming out from the loudspeakers. She recalled what the lyrics had meant to her as she heard it for the first few times,

"Love is the opening door  
Love is what we came here for  
No one could offer you more  
Do you know what I mean?  
Have your eyes really seen?"

The song seemed to have been written for herself when she was in love. The writer had been able to capture that tender, romantic feeling throughout the song. But to Carol, love proved to be an opening door that was closed once again. Jeff left her before long, leaving her with headaches and heartaches to haunt her sleepless nights. Then, her injured pride and the feeling of losing her love could no longer be expressed by "Love Song". The months spent with Jeff had been nice. But





they came to an end anyhow.

Her mind drifted back to the present as she heard the all-so-familiar "American Pie" played once again. Once again she asked,

"Do you believe in rock and roll?  
Can music save your mortal soul?"

She would never have thought seriously about this kind of questions had Marie not spoken to her a month ago, about Jesus. Is one's soul "mortal"? She asked herself. Did the singer mean that one's soul would sooner or later die, just like the physical body? Carol could not believe that one's soul would die with one's body. She felt that it could go on being itself, though she did not know what it would be like. Nor did she dwell too much on that thought. She remembered Marie's saying that people who accepted Jesus as their Saviour would live eternally. Marie's face rose before her eyes as she recalled her words. She had spoken with such candour, such faith, such confidence. Yet Marie had not been able to convince her. All

that Carol was seriously concerned about was that she could feel something that would immediately and directly make her life colourful and fulfilling. When she listened to Marie talking, the idea of Jesus and salvation had sounded too remote. Even as she recalled Marie's words now, she still could not feel any reality in them.

"Let's face it," she thought, "I may not be the luckiest girl in town, but I am not as pessimistic as many other people. I don't need to worry about salvation, afterlife and things like that!"

She accordingly accepted the fact that she only wanted to live for the present, to feel what was immediately in front of her, to see what she could see with her physical eyes, and to accept only what her rational mind chose to accept. She did not want to reconsider her life style and to think of problems that had hitherto played little part in her life -- they would create abstract hangups that would hover over her, spoiling her young life with worries and fears. Why should she think about heaven and hell when she was living in this place called earth? Nor did she have to think about death... Somehow the word "death" haunted her a little. She no longer cried when she thought about her mother's death. Yet somehow she had a fear and dread for that word. Where was mother now? If she could, would she come back and let her daughter know something about death and what came after that?

But her stubbornness was once again in control. She thought, "If I am an escapist, so what? I live only for the years I have on earth. I still have a long way to go before I die." The song "And When I Die" came to her mind,

"All I ask of living is to have  
No chains on me  
And all I ask of dying is to  
Go naturally."

Knowing that she was young and healthy,



she should have no fears for death. As she had lived in a carefree sort of way, she would probably die a happy death. Right now, she was too young to think about death at all. She was too busy enjoying her youth to think about this.

However, the next song that she heard made her question her optimism. The transience of life was expressed in Joni Mitchell's poetry. In "The Circle Game", the composer was describing how soon a small child would grow up and anticipate death, as he spent his time spinning beautiful dreams in his head, dreams about his present fulfilment, and dreams about promises and hopes in the future.

"So the years spin by and  
Now the boy is twenty,  
Though his dreams have lost  
Some grandeur coming true.  
There'll be new dreams,  
Maybe better dreams, and plenty,  
Before the last revolving year  
Is through."

The song was short. Was it analogous to the short life of the child? The repetition of the chorus seemed to echo the song's message that people were all "captives" of time, going round and round without knowing how to go back to the past. Why did the song sound so much sadder to her this time she heard it? Somehow Carol felt that she was really growing up now. The years seemed to have passed by in the way described by those words. She wondered what would happen to her ten years from now. And was there any meaning in life? The child in the song kept making dreams that did not come true. Carol thought about her own past and realized that her years had gone by so quickly. Yet she had not accomplished much. Now as she looked back, she saw that she never had had any direction in her life. Surely she had made plans; surely she had had goals, yet she had never been sure about their feasibility. Although she had told herself to live only for the present, could she rely on the

present?

She shivered as she thought of the lyrics of another song by King Crimson, a less popular and less commercial group who seemed cynical in their view about modern life,

"I'm on the outside, looking inside  
What do I see?  
Much confusion, disillusion  
All around me."

The words struck her as more real than ever. All these years she had recited them without knowing exactly what they meant to her. Now she began to look at the world around her and at other people, and not just at her own selfish world.

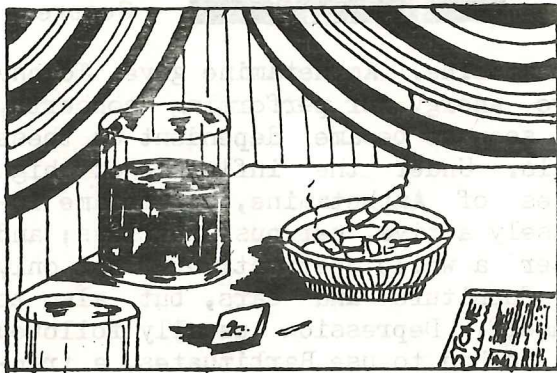
The heavy sound of Led Zeppelin interrupted her train of thoughts as "Whole Lotta Love" came from the loudspeakers. She remembered the live version that she heard when she went to their concert a few months ago. She also recalled other concerts that she had gone to with eagerness and enthusiasm. Perhaps no two concerts were the same as far as the performance of the musicians was concerned. Yet she could not deny that the wild audience had always been a similar crowd, yelling and shouting, some of them smoking dope. Those kids reminded her of her own friends, most of whom she had got to know in the parties.

"But if I am honest to myself," she suddenly thought, "those parties aren't all that exciting after all."

In her mind, she recaptured those party scenes where she talked to strangers in the dark who smoked and drank continuously, while the loud and heavy sound from the loudspeakers seemed to be tearing down the whole house in the background. Of course she had met many new friends, some of whom shared her taste in music. Yet, did she not get a slight twinge of emptiness after the last party she went to? As usual, she had gone to that party with the hope that she could forget about school,



about her father, and that she could simply have fun and a good time. She did enjoy dancing, but as the noise and laughter faded in her mind, she could feel nothing. It seemed as though the whole party had given her no lasting satisfaction.



She turned off the amplifier and lay back in the armchair, raising her arms to the back of her head. She thought about some words that Joni Mitchell had written for "Both Sides Now",

"I've looked at life  
From both sides now  
From win and lose,  
And still somehow  
It's life illusions I recall  
I really don't know life at all."

Was her life an illusion to her? Had she tried to find out if living was worthwhile? She never realized that her music, heard so many times before, could stimulate her so much in thinking about life this time. It was true that all along, pop music had expressed her innermost feelings about things that directly concerned her. All along, the very beat of the music she loved was a reflexion of her youthful vitality. Popular music had spoken her thoughts for her, to a certain extent. She had been able to identify with the music and words of those young artists. They had raised many questions and problems that she, too, was concerned

about. But she could not find a solution in what they sang. As The Who had sung,

"I asked Bobby Dylan,  
I asked the Beatles,  
I asked Timothy Leary,  
But he couldn't help me either  
They call me the seeker  
I've been searching low and high  
I won't get to get what I'm after  
Till the day I die."

She found herself playing the role of the seeker, hungering for that something that was missing in her life. She knew that she needed a direction so that she did not have to live from day to day, not knowing whether or not her life was an illusion. She did not believe that she could not find it till the day she died. She seemed to hear Bob Dylan say, "the answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind." But was it as unreachable as it sounded?

For all these years she had been drowned in the music that she loved without considering if it was worthwhile. She still appreciated the talent of the musicians. But when it came to looking for an answer in life, Carol knew that she had to find another alternative. Suddenly what Marie had said came back to her. Marie had not only told her theoretically about the Creator's promise of a plan and guidance for each individual who trusted in Him. She had also talked about her own life experience. She had said that once she had submitted her will to God, she could be sure that God would give her a direction in life. Not only was she certain of God's promise of eternal life, but she could also find fulfilment in her everyday living. Having such a direction seemed to have given Marie an answer for both the present and the future.

Quietly Carol asked herself, "Could this be the answer I am looking for?" □



# AT THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF



- George -

"The change that came was a healing change, spiritually and physically and with the change came peace, trust, confidence, and understanding."

Johnny Cash, the American country music singer and composer, was raised in the small farming community of Dyess, Arkansas. His parents were Christians and he had attended church with them ever since he was a young boy. He became a Christian at the age of twelve. Johnny worked with his father in the farm and did a lot of singing in his spare time, especially gospel songs. He lived an involved, simple life with his parents until he was eighteen. Then he joined the Air Force and was stationed in Germany.

In Germany, he began to regress step by step in his Christian way of living. He developed the habit of drinking beer since everybody did so. From beer he graduated to more heavy drinking and had more wild times. In the first year, Johnny went for Sunday worship in the Chapel quite regularly. As his drinking habit increased, he began to find excuses from attending church. In the third year, Johnny broke away from church totally because he usually got drunk in the weekends.

When Johnny returned to the States, he got married and became more involved in his singing career. In summer 1955, he performed his first concert and became more and more popular. His life was totally absorbed and wrapped up in his busy schedule of concerts, traveling and recording. He was attracted to all that the entertainment world had to offer. He became addicted to

Amphetamine. Amphetamine gave Johnny more energy for performing concerts, but soon he became dependent on these pills. Under the influence of high doses of Amphetamine, he became intensely active, nervous, restless; and after a while destructive -- not only to furniture and cars, but also to himself. Depression usually followed and he had to use Barbituates, a tranquillizer, to calm himself down. Sometimes, he became unpredictably violent, wrecking up cars and ending up in the hospital.

The pills also affected his performance. Amphetamine had a drying effect on his throat which induced laryngitis and his concerts had to be cancelled at the expense of his manager. His wife could not stand him any more and went for a divorce. His family was wrecked too. The potent mixture of Amphetamine and alcohol caused him to hear strange voices when no one was speaking. He was arrested by the police seven times in seven years. His reputation was ruined. His friends thought that Johnny was hopeless. One night after taking Amphetamine, Johnny got into his tractor and drove along the cliff overlooking the lake to see how close he could get to the edge without going over. He fell into the lake and was saved later.

Johnny turned to a group of Christian friends for help. He needed some advice on how to resist the terror of the pills. One of them, a psychiatrist, told Johnny frankly about his condition.

"...I've seen a lot of people in the shape you're in. And frankly I



don't think there is much chance for you...It would be a lot easier if you let God help you."

Johnny knew that his friend was right. He began to realize that God had been waiting all this time for him to come back and that God had sent friends to help him. He decided to turn back to God and to rely on His strength to change the life style according to the way God wanted him to, and to flee from Amphetamine addiction. With the help of his friends, he shut himself up in his room and cut himself off from the pills. For the first few days, Johnny suffered from all the terror and torturing in withdrawing from Amphetamine and Barbituates. He had sleepless nights and nightmares. With hallucination, restlessness and tremor from the withdrawal effects, Johnny prayed to God. He was not going to give up because he had handed it over to God. Everyday was like a brand new mountain for him to climb, but with the help of God, he could climb to the top of them all. After three weeks, Johnny was able to go on without the pills and recuperate slowly from the withdrawal symptoms. He surprised many in the music world who thought that he would be hopeless. They were even more so when Johnny testified that it was God who had helped him.

After coming back to God, Johnny thought about the trouble and loss that he had inflicted on other people during his addiction. For many times, promoters had arranged concerts for Johnny but were abandoned by him at the last minute because he was knocked out physically due to effect of Amphetamine. Sometimes he could not sing because of laryngitis caused by the drying effect of Amphetamine and alcohol. Johnny decided to perform for some promoters who had gone broke because of those last-minute cancellations. He wanted to pay any legitimate debt he owed to other people and make amends to some whom he had offended. Reconciliation with God would make one feel the urge to reconcile and be harmonious with

one's fellowmen.

Johnny made a trip to Vietnam to perform for the soldiers there. During the trip, Johnny got a cold and asked the doctor to give him some Amphetamine to help him pull through the coming concerts. Thus he slipped back into the old trap again. Restlessness, dry throat and laryngitis came along as he took the pills secretly. He could not perform the concerts well. At night in the hotel, he needed sleeping pills to put himself to sleep. He struggled on for a few days on the pills and when he was performing a concert in Japan, he was in such a bad shape that he had to whisper his songs and finally walked off with an apology to the two thousand servicemen in the concert.

Back in the hotel that night, he regretted having taken the Amphetamine pills again. He repented to God and prayed for His strength and healing power to help him resist the temptation of Amphetamine pills. God helped him. In the morning, he threw the pills away. Johnny was aware that God's hand was on him.

In his Far East tour, Johnny learned that God was loving and forgiving. God was long-suffering, patient, compassionate, and understood his problems and weakness even before he tried to explain them to Him.

Ever since he was engaged in his singing career, he had gone away from God, ending up as a drug addict and a failure. God had shown his mercy by helping him to recover from the devastating effect of drugs and by giving him a new outlook of life. Even though he was fully aware of what God had done for him, Johnny had still yielded to the temptation of Amphetamine. Yet when he repented, God still helped him.

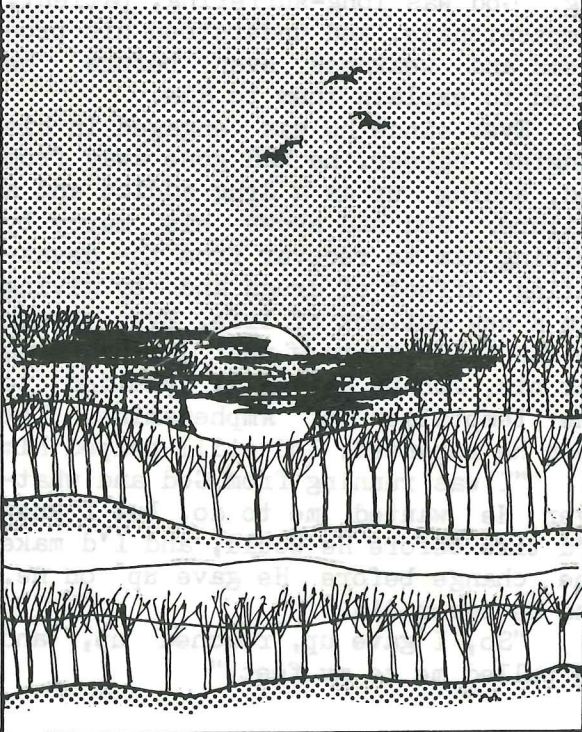
"I was running from God and whatever He wanted me to do, but I knew I'd tire before He would, and I'd make the change before He gave up on me. And He never did.

"So, I gave up, reached up, and He pulled me to my feet."



# INTO THE DAYBREAK

-ANN-



As I walked into the Greyhound bus terminal, carrying my luggage, I was surprised to see just a handful of people. The old clock on the wall read eleven-thirty. "Still half an hour to go. There is plenty of time," I said to myself.

There was just one bus outside. So I walked up to it and handed my luggage to the bus driver, who stacked it with the others under the bus. He seemed to be a happy fellow with a big smile on his face. I forced a smile in return but was too tired to say anything. I hated taking long bus trips because I could not sleep, and I tended to get sick sometimes. Turning away, I started to board the bus.

I looked around for a window seat. It was not hard to find one because the bus was only half full. With a sigh of relief I sat down, kicking the bag under the seat. I glanced at my watch; there was still fifteen minutes to go. It was to be a long twenty-hour ride back to Winnipeg.

A few other people boarded the bus after me. Every time I really dreaded that they would sit beside me. I wanted to be alone. It had been a busy time at my sister's place. I wanted to have a quiet trip. How I longed to be back in residence, back to the daily routine of university and residence life!

Finally the bus started, I sat there with my head thrown back, my legs stretched out under the seat in front. It was so dark outside. As we passed through the town towards the trans-Canada highway, dots of light slashed across the window as luminous streaks. Very soon, all that I could see were snow-covered wheat fields and a fearful darkness beyond.

As I sat there, I could not help recalling the time I had with my sister. I had not seen her for over a year and it was really a treat for us to be able to spend Christmas together. Studying for both winter and summer terms was really tough. But what else was there to do when we could not work?



Besides, we wanted to save a year's money. She was in the final year whereas I still had two years to go.

I could still remember the first couple of nights we spent taking down my only two pairs of corduroy jeans. She could not understand how I could walk around in those "short farmer's pants", as she called them. To come to think of it, I must look kind of funny wearing jeans way above my ankles. "It's not my fault...it's the dryer's," I remembered telling her. I chuckled to myself, trying to visualize how I had looked before.

During those two nights, my sister reminded me so much of home. She asked me about my studies, my daily life and whether I had enough rest. She wanted me to tell her frankly whether I found it hard to take three courses in the summer. She had rather I took the summer off than strained myself. I told her that it was all right. But deep in my heart, I wanted to ask about her plans after her graduation next May. Remembering how worried she had sounded in her letters, I did not have the courage to ask. Since summer, her way of looking at her future seemed to have changed. I did not know what the reason was, but I did not want to make her unhappy by bringing this matter up.

Then at the start of the second week, while we were reading the newspapers, she broke the silence by saying, "Pat, I accepted Christ as my Lord and Saviour this summer." I looked up and saw a kind of serenity on her face.

Even as I was sitting on the bus, her words still came back loud and clear. What struck me most was how she had placed the whole matter of her future into God's hands. I remembered her saying that she had come to the realization of the need for Christ. This really set a question mark in my head. To me, my sister was really good enough already. But she told me that deep inside her there were sinful desires which only God and she herself

knew. She had pride, jealousy towards others, and even hate. She also said that doing her own thing and simply not offending others were not enough. Her one desire now was to be like Christ and to live a new life in Him. So one summer night five months ago, she asked for God's forgiveness and handed her life and future to Him. That was the cause of her change. Then she invited me to take this step too. "I have to think about it," I remembered answering her.

It was already two in the morning. Trying to push these thoughts aside, I tried to go to sleep. But I could not. I tried counting numbers but it did not help at all. The different sitting positions did not contribute much either. So I turned on the light and reached under the seat for my diary. Flipping the pages, I read over what I had written these couple of weeks. Two days ago, I had not written much besides the paragraph entitled, "The Muslim's Choice". The words which I had scribbled underneath read, "Choose! If you follow us, you can go to Europe, you can study in the university there and we promise to give you a car. If you follow Christ, forget us!"

I had read this in a magazine at my sister's place. These words came from an Indonesian ambassador to his son. Being a diplomat stationed in Rumania, he was able to give his son a lot of privileges that few young men in their homeland would ever dream of having.. All that the son was required to do was to give up Christianity and to go back to the Muslim belief. The questions that this seventeen-year-old Indonesian had to face were, "What would I do now if my parents disowned me? How would I even live? Is it worth such a price to follow Christ?"

I did not know why these things kept coming back to me. Once again I tried to push these thoughts to the back of my mind. Turning off the



lights, I tried to go to sleep again. Somehow, I could not. Instead, I found myself trying to reason out why this young Muslim gave up his faith and material things to follow Christ. A car? Going back to study? How could he give these up? I tried to reason out what made him take this stand. He had been brought up as a Muslim, but his god seemed very far away. He tried to obey the Muslim laws and requirements for fear of judgement. But from the bottom of his heart, he knew that he could not make it. Life was rigid and joyless. He was always required to strive for a virtue which was greater than what he could attain.

Then this young Indonesian met a friend who was somehow different. He possessed a kind of joy which showed on his face. Impressed, he lay awake for nights, thinking about the great contrast between the two of them. Finally he asked his friend for the secret and the reply was, "Jesus Christ is my Saviour." Through his friend, he gradually came to know that the God recorded in the Bible was a loving God. For the first time, this Indonesian heard that one did not have to work in order to gain acceptance. Instead, Jesus Christ had died on the cross to provide complete forgiveness of sins for everyone who accepted Him. Slowly, he realized that this God of love gave love and peace to every believer. Though facing the threat of being disowned by his parents and having his future put at stake, he had but one choice -- to become a Christian and leave his Muslim faith.

As I thought about myself, I had no such struggles because I did not believe in any religion. For many years I had known Christianity through Religious Knowledge classes and morning assemblies in school. I was so used to it that I had never given much thought to it. Actually my sister had been right in saying that I never really thought about my need. Up to the time when I left her, I was still not convinced that God had a plan for me and

that He would take care of me if I was willing to accept Him as my Saviour. As I thought about it, all of a sudden I seemed so much alone. Before, my sister and I shared each other's worries. Now I was really left on my own. Just the thought of my future made my heart sink. Going home? Will I be able to adjust to my old life style? What can I do with an Arts degree in psychology?

All of a sudden, this Indonesian's and my sister's decision really set my mind going. Did I really have to consider my stand before God? These words kept repeating on my mind until they seemed to yell out in full blast. I shook my head angrily, as if by so doing I could rid myself of them. Why couldn't I sleep? I was really over-exhausted.

I had fallen asleep and I awoke with a jolt as the bus came to a halt. Faintly I heard the bus driver say, "We're stopping for gas. You can go down and stretch your legs if you want."

People started getting up. Putting on their coats, they left the bus. A few others were still sleeping soundly. I glanced around and found that my diary had slipped to the seat beside me. Half-way sticking out was the book mark which my sister had given me this Christmas. My drowsy eyes caught these words, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him."

I could see a streak of light at the far horizon outside. It was a sign of early morning and the start of another day. □

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Please refer to p. 8 of the Chinese section for the Financial Report of The Fountain.

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# APPRECIATING THE MASTERPIECE

## - HANDLE'S 'MESSIAH'



## - LENG -

It was 1742. A small note was seen in the corner of the Dublin paper, pronouncing the first performance of Handel's composition of the "Messiah". Only a few knew that the oratorio was about the prophecy of Jesus Christ as the Messiah of the world, His birth, the fulfilment of the prophecies and His resurrection from the dead.

At noon, when the audience of seven hundred at the Neal's Concert Hall listened to the performance, they were captivated. It seemed that the small concert hall was not able to confine the music; the notes escaped through the windows, the words penetrated through the doors so that even the several hundred waiting on the street were enchanted by the notes and moved by the words. Their hearts seemed to echo with the music.

It was in a small attic room in London that the warm summer sun found George Handel laboring on this master-

piece. He was so absorbed in his work that he hardly noticed the entrance of the servant who brought his afternoon tea. Quietly leaving the room, the servant noticed that the composer was not in his usual self. He seemed to be drawn out of contact with the things of the world.

Hours passed. In the dimly lit attic sat the same figure, George Handel, deep in thought. His servant entered quietly. He found the pot of tea cold and untouched, the afternoon snack likewise neglected. It had been seven days since Handel started to compose the music for the "Messiah" and for seven days Handel had not been eating his meals.

"Master," the servant tried to ask about the menu for supper. He hesitated. Seeing that Handel seemed to be swept by some influence not of the world, the servant quietly retreated.

That first Sunday of September in 1741 was not different from any other Sunday to the ordinary Londoners. The church chimed out its usual hymns. On



the streets were people in their best suits. But in that little room in the attic, it was no ordinary day. The fifty-six-year old composer stooped his head down over the old wooden table, his eyes streaming with tears. His hand, still holding his pen, was shaking. He had just completed the "Hallelujah" chorus of the "Messiah". "I did think I see all Heaven before me, and the great God Himself!" To Handel, this was the greatest moment of his life. He was overflowed with joy and awe.

The crowd that attended the performance of the "Messiah" in the London concert hall in 1743, was especially well dressed for the occasion. King George I, the King of England, was among the audience. As they listened to the glamorous music, many were impressed. They had not heard such a nice piece of music for a long time, not even in London. But they seemed to notice that the "Messiah" was different from the other masterpieces by this famous composer. The theme was centered around the story of Jesus. The oratorio seemed to reach a climax when the choir sang the "Hallelujah" chorus, a chorus of praise to God. The music was magnificent, yet harmonious. The atmosphere was peaking to solemnity as the choir sang, "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." The King and the audience rose to their feet. Some were indeed moved by both the music and the meaning of the words. They stood in recognition of the sovereignty of God. But undoubtedly some others were moved only by the overwhelming music. Still others stood on their feet because King George I led them to.

Twelve years ago I first listened to the "Messiah". Being a choir member of the school for several years, I appreciated the harmony of the choral pieces. The "Hallelujah" chorus thrilled me as the voices of the choir climaxed to the forte notes of "King of kings and Lords of lords". I was moved

by the greatness of the composer Handel, his genius, and the superb singing of the choir.

I accepted Jesus as my Saviour after I had come to Canada. As I studied the Bible I learnt more about Him. Now, I still admire the singing of the choir and the singers in the "Messiah". But above all, the words of the arias, which are excerpts from the Bible, give me a new dimension of appreciating the masterpiece. The words stimulate me in thinking about God's love for me. In the songs, "He Was Despised" and "Surely He Hath Borne Our Grief", I was reminded of Jesus, being smitten by the soldiers, spitted upon and jeered at, not because of any crimes He had committed, but because He wanted to save us from our sins. He quietly bore the bruising, the scolding and the disgrace of carrying the cross of shame to the hill at Calvary. He was crucified as described in an aria from the "Messiah". "He was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of Thy people was He stricken." When I understand the price Jesus paid in order that I may have a renewed relationship with God, I can then appreciate the real meaning of the word "hallelujah", a word of praise and thanksgiving to Jesus, for He has given His life for me.

The "Messiah" has very high entertaining values. Many are touched by the greatness of the music. The "Hallelujah" chorus stands out to be the most popular tune among the songs. For years it has been sung at Christmas time in concert halls, broadcasted over the radio and the television. Whenever it is sung in concerts, the audience still keep the tradition of rising to their feet, a tradition which can be traced back to that concert when King George I and the audience stood up. To many, they are moved by the solemnity of the music, but to the Christians, they stand in joy and gratitude because they know that the ultimate composer of the song is the God who loves and cares for them. □



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# MY DECISION 我的決志

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I am not a Christian, but I want to know more about Jesus Christ.
- ☐ 讀此刊後, 心受感動。我願意信耶穌, 接受祂為我救主。  
My heart is moved after reading this magazine and I would like to receive Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour.
- ☐ 我是基督徒, 讀此刊後, 心中受主愛的激勵, 願將自己完全奉獻給主, 求主帶領我一生。  
I am a Christian. I would like to dedicate my life to Jesus Christ and trust that He has a plan for my future.
- ☐ 我是基督徒, 但曾冷淡, 願將自己重新奉獻給主。  
I am a Christian, but I have turned away from God. After reading this magazine I would like to rededicate myself to the Lord.

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