

IT SEEMS TO ME

By Charles A. Spurgeon

Experts in ancient languages at the University of Pennsylvania have been translating the story on six clay tablets found about 50 years ago at Nippur, Iraq. They are inscribed in cuneiform characters in the Sumerian language, oldest of the known written languages. The story deals with one of the oldest moral problems which have confronted philosophers, theologians, and ordinary mortals: the problem of human suffering.

That of course is the central theme of the Book of Job which is really a great poetic drama; but this work was written a thousand years before Job, dating, according to the estimates of the specialists, at about 1700 B. C. The treatment of the problem seems to be quite similar. According to Dr. Samuel N. Kramer, curator of the museum and a translator of the ancient writing: "The main thesis of our poet is that in case of suffering and adversity, however unjustified they may seem, the victim has but one effective recourse."

"And that is to continually glorify his God and keep wailing and lamenting before him until he turns a favorable ear to the prayers." The Job drama evolves in like fashion: a prosperous shepherd at a time and place where wealth was measured by flocks and herds and sons and daughters, is deprived of his fortune as a challenge to his faith and loyalty to God. He laments his fate, refutes comforters who attribute his calamities to personal sin, displays not the patience commonly credited to Job but a bitter impatience. The solution in the book of Job is that there is no solution save only trust; and that is the conclusion of the seer and poet who preceded the author of that Bible book by 10 centuries. Nor have philosophers and theologians found any better solution in the centuries since Job was written. Suffering remains a great moral mystery even though it may readily yield to explanation in terms of natural law. The instruction of poets and philosophers and religious leaders remains the same: to cling to hope and never to yield to despair. The lapse of 34 centuries has not improved on the judgment of the ancient wise men.

MacFadden Asks for Loan To Avoid Jail

DANSVILLE, N.Y. (AP) — Bernarr MacFadden, 86, physical culture enthusiast who made and lost millions, asked for a loan Saturday — from just anybody — to keep him out of jail.

"New York courts refuse to believe that back taxes and alimony to two wives have depleted my finances," the dapper, white-haired man said in a statement distributed to newsmen. "I must rise \$10,000 in 10 days or go to jail," he added.

The jail reference was related to court actions brought by Bonnie Lee MacFadden, 48, an interior decorator who recently won a separation from him, and his second wife, Mary MacFadden. To help him raise the \$10,000 to satisfy the court actions, MacFadden said he had asked former heavyweight champion Jack Dempsey to act on his behalf.

"I have asked Jack Dempsey to act as custodian of funds from those who might want to help to keep me out of jail till I can repay them somehow," MacFadden's statement said, adding: "Please help me. This is my worst Christmas in 86 years."

MacFadden was not immediately available at his health center here for further comment on his statement but an associate described him as being "morose and in tears."

MacFadden is president of the Bernarr MacFadden Foundation which he started in 1931 with a grant of five million dollars. He once was reported worth 30 million dollars.

The foundation operates a number of properties, but is not authorized by its charter to loan money to individuals, even its founder.

MacFadden has been living on annuities and now gets only about \$2,000 a month and must pay alimony and owes \$28,000 or more to the government in back taxes.

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The Weather

FORECAST (from U. S. weather bureau, McNary field, Salem): Partly cloudy today and tonight, with scattered showers today. Increasing cloudiness Monday. Little change in temperatures, with the highest today near 40, lowest tonight near 26. Temperature at 12:01 a. m. today was 26. Willamette River 2.6 feet.

Snow, Ice Add Hazards to Holiday Travel

What to Authorize and How to Pay for It Will Keep Legislators Busy

By PAUL W. HARVEY JR. Associated Press Writer

The Oregon legislature, which meets here two weeks from Monday, already has enough bones of contention to remain in session for three or four months.

The financial problem, by itself, is vexing enough to keep the lawmakers sweating for many days and nights. On top of this, there are many other hot controversies shaping up. These include highway building, unemployment insurance, the power issue, Portland State College, rewriting the constitution, the proposed revenue department, new buildings, a fight between the railroads and the truckers, and state salaries.

Reserving the right to add other hot subjects that will develop, these look like the top 10 issues facing the 1955 legislature:

1. The legislature either will have to find at least 15 million dollars a year in new revenue, or cut drastically the public school or welfare appropriations, or both. There will be a hot battle over the proposed 2 per cent sales tax, which would raise 40 millions a year.

2. The highway commission wants the gasoline tax increased by 2 cents a gallon, so it can carry on needed road construction. There is strong pressure against boosting the tax, and the legislative highway interim committee refused to go for the idea.

Unemployment Pay Changes Loom

3. Employers and labor will tangle over unemployment compensation taxes and jobless payments. The unemployment commission is paying out more than twice as much money as it is taking in through taxes on employers, and this is causing a heavy drain on its reserve fund. There will be pressure to increase the tax on employers, and there also will be a strong move to get the benefits increased. President Eisenhower has asked for higher benefits. The maximum benefits in Oregon are \$25 a week for 26 weeks in any one year. The average tax is 1.1 per cent downward to 3 of 1 per cent.

4. The legislature will be asked to ratify the Columbia River compact, under which the northwest states would plan development of the basin. But some Democrats, who want federal development of the region, will oppose the compact.

5. Portland State College, now an extension center crammed with 2,000 students, wants to be a full-fledged state college. Portlanders like the idea, but friends of the private colleges and of the University of Oregon and Oregon State College oppose the idea strongly.

Constitutional Convention Proposed

6. Gov. Paul Patterson again will ask the legislature to set up a convention to write a new state constitution. Opponents argue that it would be better to rewrite it by submitting amendments to the voters.

7. There will be a fight over creating a new department of revenue. This department would be headed by a single tax commissioner, replacing the three-man tax commission; and it would take over the secretary of state's license plate division, and the state treasurer's inheritance and gift tax section. Naturally, the secretary of state and the treasurer will oppose the move.

8. Many new buildings are needed, but with the shortage of cash, it's doubtful if many can be built. The top priority projects are the new mental hospital in the Portland area, the new state reformatory, and a classroom building for Portland State College.

9. The truckers will try to convince the legislature that the state public utilities commissioner should be allowed to set minimum rates for railroads. The railroads oppose the move. The commissioner now can fix maximum rates for railroad shipments, and he sets all rates for truckers. The truckers argue that it's unfair competition when there's no floor under railroad rates. The railroads say that the interstate commerce commission regulates the railroads sufficiently.

State Salary Report on Schedule

10. The legislature will get a report, prepared by a New York business management firm, saying that salaries of state employees are out of line. It will take a lot of time to get these salaries straightened out.

There you have an agenda that should keep the lawmakers busy. But in addition, the legislature also has these items to consider:

Whether to fix milk prices at the producer level. The people wiped out all milk controls at the November election.

Should the distribution formula of the basic school law be changed so as to give more relief to distressed districts?

Whether to rewrite the corrupt practices law governing elections.

The question of whether Oregon needs a fixed speed limit to curb auto accidents.

Should Oregon have a state meat inspection system?

Whether to put teeth into the 1953 ragweed control law, or whether to remove the law from the books.

Fixing up the abortion laws, which are so contradictory that they can't be enforced.

Better regulation at race tracks, including a proposal to ban minors from betting areas.

Changes in the parole system.

Ex-King Peter, Wife Have Reconciliation

GSTAAD, Switzerland (AP) — Friends of ex-King Peter of Yugoslavia said he and his estranged wife, Princess Alexandra, had a "spontaneous reconciliation" here Saturday at a Christmas party for their 9-year-old son, Prince Alexander.

The 31-year-old ex-king arrived here early Saturday morning after spending all Christmas Eve in his snowbound car near the summit of the Alpine Col des Mosses Pass. Princess Alexandra and her mother, Princess Aspasia of Greece, came here several days ago to spend Christmas with the young prince, who is studying at a Swiss boarding school.

Alexandra apparently was unaware her husband intended to join her here until she received a phone call from him Friday afternoon.

The royal couple's friends said it was too early to tell whether the reconciliation meant that Peter and Alexandra would resume their married life together.

"They are both staying here till after New Year's," one friend said. "After that, we'll see. But it looks really hopeful. They seem quite happy together again."

Peter and Alexandra were married in London March 20, 1944. Prince Alexander was born in London July 17, 1945. Yugoslavia was proclaimed a republic in the post-war November of that year, and none of the royal family has been able to return here.

Peter filed a divorce suit in Paris, Oct. 9, 1953, alleging his wife deserted him and went to live in Italy.

They both appeared at a divorce court hearing in Paris two weeks later, Alexandra wearing a bandage on her left wrist. Her attorney said she had tried to slash her wrist the previous night because Peter had refused a reconciliation.

The divorce procedure is still in progress.

U.S. Toll Climbs To 259

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

With traffic deaths mounting through the Christmas holiday, a plea for safe, sober driving was made by the National Safety Council late Saturday night.

Since 6 p. m. Friday, at least 259 persons have met violent death. The toll included 201 killed in traffic mishaps, 33 in fires and 25 in miscellaneous accidents.

The Safety Council's somber timetable, predicting 370 traffic fatalities in the 54-hour holiday weekend, was progressing on schedule with more than six deaths an hour.

Before midnight, the toll as the nation observed the Nativity was more than three times greater than on Safe-Driving Day, Dec. 15. Deaths for that day were 51.

Sudden Death "It was a sobering thought to know that sudden death has ruined Christmas for so many homes with the holiday only half over," said Ned H. Dearborn, safety council president.

While traffic was the big killer, two fires took 15 lives. Flames also flashed through a plush Tulsa, Okla., apartment taking the life of Mrs. Marie Foster Kane Smith, 44-year-old oil heiress.

Most of the nation received a touch of sunshine Christmas Day. There were exceptions, particularly in the Northwest. But no heavy rain or snow.

Mercury Varies The air was sharp with cold in Northern New England. The no-day mercury reading at Caribou, Me., was 12 above zero. Midday temperature of 75 degrees was reported at Alice and Corpus Christi, Tex.

Thermometers in Southern Florida registered in the middle 70s but it was somewhat cooler than at the same time Friday. It was decidedly cooler along the Atlantic Seaboard from the mid-coastal region northward.

The bulk of the nation had daytime temperatures ranging between 40 and 60.

Twelve Dead, 4 Injured in Arkansas Fire

PARKIN, Ark. (AP) — A fire, which raced through a small tent house near here Christmas Eve claiming 11 lives, added a 12th victim to its list Saturday night with the death of Pete Santana.

The dead were all members of two Mexican farm families who were celebrating the holiday by cooking hot tamales over their wood-burning kitchen stove. Four others were injured in the blaze — two of them still reported in serious condition.

Hospital officials at nearby Wynne, Ark., said Santana died at 11 p. m. (EST) of burns and "chemical pneumonia" caused by smoke.

The blaze, which was apparently touched off when kerosene was thrown on a smouldering stove fire, took the lives of ten children and the life of Mrs. Santana.

Survivors said Mrs. Santana, 32, had escaped but that she ran back into the burning house in a futile attempt to save her 5-month-old son, Jimmy.

The other Santana children who died were Jolly (a girl) 9; Pete Jr. 5; Sophie, 4; and Mando, 2. One daughter, 14-year-old Mary Ann Santana, escaped with only minor injuries.

Five children of Mr. and Mrs. Kuel Montana also were killed in the blaze. They were Robert, 7; Elma, 6; Gloria, 5; Rosie, 3, and Rudy, 1.

Montana and one of his sons were taken to a Memphis hospital where their condition was reported Saturday night as serious and unchanged. Mrs. Montana was not burned seriously.

Scene of the tragedy was a small tent house on the Owen Cook cotton plantation about 10 miles south of here just off U.S. Highway 70. Parkin is about 30 miles west of Memphis, Tenn., in East Arkansas.

The families had lived at the plantation for about a year.

THE WEATHER

	Max.	Min.	Precip.
Salem	38	32	.37
Portland	38	34	.38
Baker	31	2	.08
Medford	32	30	.01
North Bend	46	36	.63
Roseburg	35	36	.63
San Francisco	49	36	.00
Los Angeles	62	44	.00
Chicago	45	31	.00
New York	40	29	.00

SALEM PRECIPITATION Since Start of Weather Year Sept. 1 This Year Last Year Normal 14.97 18.39 16.22

Youngsters Foresake New Toys for Snowman



Christmas snowman, one of many which appeared Saturday morning as the Salem area drew its first snow of the year, has his nose tweaked by 5-year-old Philip Isaacs, son of Mr. and Mrs. Len Isaacs of 4685 Sunnyside Rd. Philip's sister, Sally, 3, looks on admiringly. Rising temperatures melted most of the snow by afternoon. (Statesman Photo.)

Editors Scold French Solons For Pact Vote

PARIS (AP) — French editorial opinion criticized the National Assembly in general for voting against putting Germany into Western European Union. But the newspapers displayed irritation at allied attempts — particularly on the part of Britain — to influence the ultimate decision.

Friday the Assembly voted down the proposed seven-nation pact 280 to 259. The issue comes up again Monday on a test of confidence in the government of Premier Pierre Mendes-France. Then the Assembly will be voting on the whole complex of London-Paris accords for West German rearmament.

Several newspapers stressed the Assembly's inconsistency in approving the principle of Western European Union last October, 350 to 113, and then rejecting "union" itself Friday.

The non-Communist left wing "Franc-Tireur" declared it was also inconsistent for the Assembly to approve, as it did, the restoration of West German sovereignty and then to deny the West Germans an army, "an essential attribute of sovereignty."

The independent "Figaro," which has the largest circulation in the morning field, commented: "This was more than an absurd attitude. It was a flight and a betrayal."

Figaro was referring to the action of many advocates of European federation, particularly in the Popular Republican Movement (MRP), whose members voted against the Western European Union Friday.

(Stories also on page 9, sec. 3)

Gale-Whipped Freighter Safe

CUXHAVEN, Germany (AP) — Fearing lost two days ago in the gale-whipped North Sea, the 1,371-ton disabled Swedish freighter Petra anchored Christmas morning off the German Coast with all her 21 crewmen safe.

The Cuxhaven tugs and two coastal lifesaving boats reached the battered freighter, 35 miles north of here, in the afternoon.

She Wednesday, the Petra had drifted helplessly with broken-down engines in this winter's worst storm.

She was bound for Hull, England, from Kemi, Finland.

3-Foot Fall Fatal to Man

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — A 38-year-old man fell three feet from the top of a doghouse and was killed.

George Ayers fell asleep on the roof of the small house Friday while waiting for his paycheck to be passed out.

Doctors said he died of a broken neck.

The doghouse was on the grounds of a construction firm for which Ayers worked.

Only one person, a man who

Oregon Wrecks Kill Two

Icy roads slowed highway traffic in the Salem area Christmas night as the state recorded two fatal traffic accidents on the first day of the holiday weekend.

Loran M. Morgan, 68, was killed when a car struck him early Saturday as he crossed a street in Portland, the Associated Press reported. Dale Mitchell, 23, told police he saw Morgan too late to avoid hitting him.

Mrs. Grace Evans, 45, was presumed drowned Saturday night when her car skidded off a highway into the Siuslaw River near Florence. The Associated Press reported that the body had not been recovered late Saturday although the car was located by state police who dragged the swollen stream.

Minor Wrecks No serious accidents had been reported in the mid-Willamette Valley up to midnight. State police said there had been several minor accidents during the day, none of which resulted in injuries.

Reports of highway ice began coming into state police headquarters about 10 p. m. Police said the ice was forming in patches along highways throughout the valley.

Several trucks were stalled by ice on a long hill on the Pacific Highway several miles south of Salem. Highway Department crews were called to duty and sent out to spread sand on the hill.

The Weather Bureau forecast called for freezing temperatures and continuing snow or rain throughout the night in much of Oregon. Heavy snows were reported in mountain passes, making chains necessary.

In Salem, city police said a larger number of motorists than usual had come into the station to fill out accident reports. Police made investigations of two accidents during the day, neither of which involved injuries.

Weather forecast for the city called for an afternoon high of 40 degrees, with the temperature dropping to 26 degrees tonight. Lowest temperature registered in Salem on Christmas day was 32, exactly on the freezing point. Lower temperatures were recorded in nearby hilly areas.

The weatherman predicted cloudy skies and scattered showers for the day, with increasing cloudiness tomorrow.

Partly clear skies throughout the state will increase the probability of ice patches on the highways, forecasters said. Ground temperatures below cloudy sections tend to be slightly warmer than those below clear areas because of the clouds' insulating effects.

State police said scattered ice patches are considerably more hazardous to traffic than solid ice because motorists build up speed on clear stretches and are unable to slow when they hit icy sections.

icy roads seen

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800 Homes in Pusan Burn

PUSAN, Korea (AP) — Fire destroyed more than 800 homes in downtown Pusan early Sunday.

There was no report of casualties but police feared some might have perished in the blaze which broke out at 1:30 a. m.

Police estimated that at least 4,000 persons were made homeless.

A brisk north wind fanned the flames through the flimsy buildings on the southern slope of Yong Du Hill. American and Korean fire fighters succeeded in checking the fire just before it reached the business district.

Ex-Governor's Widow Dies In Portland

PORTLAND (AP) — Mrs. Loui Martin, widow of a former Oregon governor and congressman, died at a Portland hospital Christmas Eve at the age of 86. She had suffered a stroke Dec. 22.

Her late husband, Charles H. Martin, reached the rank of major general in the Army before retiring in 1927. He served as congressman from Oregon's third district, Multnomah County, from 1931 to 1935. He became governor in 1935 and served until 1939. He died in 1946.

The couple married in 1908 when Martin was an infantry lieutenant stationed at Vancouver, Wash.

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Today's Statesman SECTION 1 General news 2, 5, 9 Editorials, features 4 SECTION 2 Garden news 1 Crossword puzzle 2 Classified ads 2-3 Valley news 4 SECTION 3 Society, women's news 1-8 Sunday Radio, TV 5 General news 9, 11 Star Gazer 9 1954 Business Review 10 SECTION 4 Sports 1-2 SECTION 5 Full Color Comics