

# Contents

Preface		
S. No.	Articles	Page No.
1.	Albert Schweitzer Eleve	4
2.	A Visit to Albert Schweitzer John Gunther	7
3.	Albert Schweitzer Joyce Lambert	16
4.	Short Life History: Albert Schweitzer	22
5.	Reverence for Life	25
6.	The Quest of the Historical Jesus <i>Albert Schweitzer Quotes</i>	32
7.	Out of My Life and Thought Autobiography of Albert Schweitzer	33
8.	Pingalwara Diary	35

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*“Whatever you have received more than others in health, in talents, in ability, in success, in a pleasant childhood, in harmonious conditions of home life, all this you must not take to yourself as a matter of course. You must pay a price for it. You must render in return an unusually great sacrifice of your life for other life.”*

*Albert Schweitzer*

# Preface

Albert Schweitzer was a modern world famous saint, who had exhibited in his life extraordinary qualities of head combined with those of heart.

A distinguished thinker has said “there have been many who were good and many who were great, but there have been very few who were both good and great as Albert Schweitzer surely was. He was a very great intellectual, and a highly religious man but his intellect, and his religion were not confined merely to thinking and talking. He lived life in accordance with that he thought or believed. Many years ago the late Shri Sampornananda, Chief Minister U.P. had said in an article on “Yoga and its practice in every day life” that in India all the thought and the talk on yoga were merely intellectual alcoholism. In fact, Sadhus here have gained added respect on account of their aloofness from the world, divorced from active life of service. The conscience of the people of this land was so dulled that the sufferings of humanity, in various forms, remained unheeded, not only before the eyes of laymen but also before the eyes of the so-called religious men. We should remember that the deepest need of the human soul is altruistic activity, which consists in doing good to others, relieving distress and serving in other ways, not merely lecturing and talking. Albert Schweitzer had left the comfortable and charming life of Paris which he could well enjoy, through the gift of his intellectual and musical attainments, but he preferred the life of service in a far off place, 40 miles into the interior of Africa. And, we in India see the dignity of man crushed even in religious

places. The old, the infirm, and the sick die unattended like dogs and yet we go on merrily priding on our so called religious pretensions. If the conception of our religious tradition that the same God permeates all living beings is correct, as it surely is, then for a truly religious man the sufferings of others should be his own suffering.

These articles throw enough light on Schweitzer's life of self-denial. But what fascinated me most in this life was the view of Schweitzer that earning for human living merely by dint of intellectual labour was sinful, unless one made full use of all other organs of one's body, the first place being always given to the heart, from which should flow sympathy and heart-felt understanding of the misery of the suffering people.

*Bhagat Puran Singh*

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There is work for all of us. And there is special work for each, work which cannot do in a crowd, or as one of a mass, but as one man, acting singly according to my own gifts, and under a sense of my personal responsibilities.....I have a special work to do, as one individual, who, by God's plan and appointment have a separate position, separate responsibilities, and a separate work: a work which if I do not do it must be left undone.

*Ruskin.*

## ALBERT SCHWEITZER

### ELEVE

What the world lacks most today are men who occupy themselves with the needs of other man. But Dr. Schweitzer is one of those who has devoted his life for others for the last 81 years in a tiny French Protestant missionary settlement in the midst of a lake and river system known as Lambarene, a day and a half by boat from the port of Cape Lopez on Africa's west coast. On January 14, this year throughout the civilized world Albert Schweitzer, a medical missionary, a theologian; an organist, an interpreter of Bach's music and one of the world's great humanitarians, was honored for what he is on his 81st birthday. Dr. Albert Schweitzer is one of the most extraordinary men of modern times and most eminent. Few are honored in their life-time like Dr. Schweitzer.

Dr. Schweitzer has many outstanding qualities: As an organist he once played before jammed audiences in churches and concert halls of Europe; his recordings are still ranked at the top of their field. He is a musicologist whose edition of Bach's organ works is a standard text; his biography of Bach has never been surpassed. He is a doctor of medicine whose 40 years of selfless pioneering as a missionary to the natives of French Equatorial Africa are bright highlight in the relations between the white race and the black. He is a philosopher who, like Spengler and Toynbee, has thought deeply about the crisis of Western culture. He is a protestant minister and biblical scholar whose historical criticism of the New Testament, early in this century raised a good many eyebrows. *Above all, he is a man who decided to turn his back on the dazzling rewards the*

*world wanted to give him in order to serve his fellow men. He has polarized his talents in the service of humanity.*

Schweitzer, a parson's son, and the grandson of a minister and a schoolmaster, was not good at school. His mother used to weep over his report cards. Reading and writing came hard to him. *Yet to anyone with eyes to see, all the shining threads which were to make up the fabric of an exceptional life were already present in the sensitive schoolboy.* Schweitzer passed creditably in his studies at the preparatory school and at 18 entered the University of Strasbourg to major in philosophy and theology. While he was working for this licentiate in theology his first philosophical book, ***"The Religious philosophy of Kant"*** was published. As a Principal of Strasbourg's Theological College, he compiled his lectures and produced a history of research into the life of Jesus called, ***"The Quest of the Historical Jesus"***—it was first to make his reputation international.

To make his philosophy a reality, Dr. Schweitzer decided to study medicine and serve humanity as a doctor. And he planned to spend the rest of his life in Equatorial Africa. Why Africa? *Because, says Schweitzer, there in the entire world the need was the greatest, and the hands that were stretched out to help, the fewest. He studied for his M.D. at Strasbourg University. Many nights he worked at his desk without going to bed at all, his feet soaking in a bucket of cold water to keep himself awake.*

In June 1912, Schweitzer married Helene Bresslau. Schweitzer spent their first months of married life compiling lists and carefully purchasing and packing medical supplies. And then in 1913, they set out for Africa. Since that day Schweitzer, in a climate notoriously hard on Europeans, labored heavily in

constructing new buildings—in which the doctor himself worked as woodcutter, carpenter, foreman and architect in conducting morning and evening prayers, in distributing medicine and in treating backward African patients. The evenings were devoted to complete his multiple-volume work, *"The Philosophy of Civilization."*

While celebrating every year his birthday should we not remember what he wrote of man and civilization? To the anguished world his message is:

"We are living today under the sign of collapse of civilization and should shore up the swaying creaking structure before it is too late."

*Man must acquire a positive, optimistic ethic in a universe about which nothing positive or optimistic may be said. Man must start within himself, he believes, and build his ethic from the inside out.*

How this humanity can be saved from the danger of being annihilated by the modern Hydrogen bombs? It can be if the individuals, nations and governments remember the phrase 'Reverence for life, Schweitzer felt all along that he must "show to all will-to-live the same reverence as I do to my own." It is good to maintain and to encourage life; it is bad to destroy life or to obstruct it. That is the basic principle Schweitzer says about himself: ***"I am life which wills to live in the midst of life which wills to live."***

*Reproduced from Modern Review*

# A VISIT TO ALBERT SCHWEITZER

JOHN GUNTHER

The village of Lambarene lies on the river Ogowé 40 miles south of the equator, in French Equatorial Africa. The area resembles the beginning of the world—clouds, river and forest melt into a landscape that seems literally antediluvian, as Schweitzer himself has described it. Most of the year the air is like steam coming out of a green mist.

This is the setting of one of the most famous missionary enterprises of the world—the *Bush hospital, of Dr. Schweitzer*.

Incontestably Schweitzer is a great man—one of the greatest of this or any time. He is too lofty, too manifold to grasp easily—a “universal man” as Leonardo da Vinci and Goethe were universal men.

He has had four different careers—in philosophy, medicine, theology and music. He has written learned books on Bach, Jesus and the history of civilization, and is one of the most renowned living organists as well as the world’s foremost authority on the architecture of organs. Also Dr. Schweitzer knows a great deal—more than many men who have devoted their lives to these fields—about aesthetics, tropical zoology, anthropology and agriculture, and he is an expert carpenter, mason, veterinary surgeon, boat builder, dentist, draughtsman, mechanic, pharmacist and gardener.

To make Schweitzer’s career at Lambarene comprehensible we must go back to the roots. Born in Upper Alsace in 1875, Albert Schweitzer was a sickly child, in contrast to his subsequent phenomenal robustness. Also—more strangely—he was slow to read and write, and was poor scholar. Because of this, as he grew up, he made

himself master subjects that were particularly difficult for him, like Hebrew. He had a stern, glowing sense of duty.

In music he was an authentic prodigy. He composed a hymn when he was seven, began to play the organ at eight, when his legs were scarcely long enough to reach the pedals, and at nine substituted for the regular organist in a church service.

In early manhood three of his four professional lives proceeded concurrently. He studied philosophy at the University of Strasbourg, and a thesis on Kant brought him his first doctorate. He studied theology, and in 1900, when he was 25, became curate of St. Nicholas Church in Strasbourg. He studied the theory of music, and began his career as a concert organist. By the time he was 26, he had graduated as a doctor of philosophy, theology and music. Mean—while a stream of books began to come from him, and has never stopped.

Why medicine? Because, he records, he was tired of talk and wanted action. Why Lambarene? Because it was one of the most inaccessible and primitive spots in all Africa, one of the most dangerous and one without a doctor.

Relatives and friends expostulated with him, but he told them that he felt that he had to “*give something in return*” for the happiness he enjoyed. He was obeying literally the command of Jesus, “*Whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake.....shall it.*” Because he always demanded that “*idealists should be sober in their views,*” Schweitzer was fully conscious of the difficulties that would confront him.

He worked at his medical studies from 1905 to 1912, and finally, aged 38, became an M.D. These years were the most difficult and fatiguing he ever

spent. A medical education is a grueling enough process; yet he managed to continue teaching philosophy, kept on with his activity as curate to St. Nicholas and started work on a definitive edition of Bach's organ music, while giving organ concerts all the time!

He married in 1912. His wife, a Jewess, daughter of a noted historian, learned nursing in order to be able to help him in Africa. When they arrived in Lambarene in 1913 they found conditions formidable—as indeed they still are. Every inch of habitable land in the area have to be scraped out of the giant forest, which is populated thickly with beasts like pythons and gorillas. The rivers are heavy with crocodiles.



Albert Schweitzer built his hospital from scratch, practically with his bare hands. Once he had to rebuild the entire establishment because the old huts were too small to contain his increasing practice. African patients, suffering from anything from leprosy to elephantiasis,

were not always easy to handle. One of Schweitzer's biographies reports that they sometimes ate the ointment prescribed for skin affliction, swallowed at one gulp a bottle of medicine supposed to last for weeks or tried to poison other inmates. Despite everything, Schweitzer loved Lambarene and loves it still.

Nowadays, it is easy enough to get to Schweitzer; Air France (Air Chance, nick name of Air France) has a "milk run" that touches on Lambarene several times a week. My wife and I landed at the airport and were met by Miss Emma Hausknecht, an Alsatian nurse who has been with Schweitzer since 1925. She is a sort of general manager of the establishment and serves as the Doctor's interpreter from French or German into English.

After we had been shown our sleeping quarters Miss Hausknecht led us up the path of beaten earth, through bush and fruit trees, towards the new leper village that Schweitzer is building. Finally, near a clearing, the doctor himself came forth. He has a powerful aquiline nose, drooping grey moustache and eyes that really fix you. He is strongly built, and that day he was wearing a sun helmet, an open white shirt, tattered and heavy black shoes. Force; repose, command sensitiveness—all these characteristics are reflected in his proud, grizzled, piercing face. It is a wonderful face, and he is a magnificent-long man.

Schweitzer led us forward to the leper village, where the worst lepers live. Here the old doctor immediately got to work, directing a labour gang. Schweitzer begins and ends each day with this occupation. Somebody has to do it. The lepers were not too ill to work, but just plain lazy, as well as numb with boredom and indifference.

Schweitzer strode among them with explosive and hortatory grunts. He argued, threatened, cajoled.

The hospital startles some visitors because *they expect an aseptic harbor of tranquility, spirituality and out-of-worldness*. Actually it looks like what it is a—native village. Patients come from miles round, often with their families.

The encampment lies on a low, bluff and has 45 or more buildings, all simply made and serviceable. The hospital has between 350 to 400, African patients and 75 paid African helpers, some of them lepers. (Leprosy is probably less contagious than tuberculosis.). There are no paved walks or roads. There is no running water, no electricity except for the operating room, X-ray unit.

What appears to be the main hospital ward is a long one-story structure, cut into narrow, dark rooms, each of which opens on a court. The patients lie on wooden bunks covered with matting. Outside each door a small, smoky fire is burning, here the patient's family does the cooking. It is good to have these fires; they keep the mosquitoes down and so lessen the incidence of malaria and sleeping sickness. If a man has no family and is too ill to cook for himself, he becomes a problem. Most patients will not accept food from anybody not in their own tribe, for fear of being poisoned.

Schweitzer has saved thousands of lives, which is the more extraordinary, considering the primitiveness and paucity of his equipment. There is, so far as I could see, no mechanism at all for sterilizing bandages under pressure; water has to be boiled in kettles over open wood fires. For years drugs and bandages were in short supply. Every safety pin is precious. Things that we take for granted in a hospital are objects of wonder, if they exist at all.

Life at the hospital centers in a crowded open

space near the dining hall. Africans come and go, carrying produce in rude barrows. Women squat on the ground, binding palm fronds together for roofing; others are busy on sewing machines on a veranda above, and still others iron the laundry, with primitive irons containing embers. The doctor strides back and forth amid this orderly animation, seeing that everybody works.

At times Schweitzer can be dictatorial, pedantic in a peculiarly Teutonic manner, and irascible. And why not? if he did not have defects he would be intolerable. On the other hand he can be magically charming on occasions and is literally worshipped by his old associates. His laughter—when he laughs—is a striking indication of his inner sweetness. It is a shining laugh, a silvery laugh.

The Chief Doctor at Lambarene (Schweitzer himself at 79, is not so active in medical work nowadays) is Hungarian; another is one of the old man's nephews. The nurses, all Europeans, seemed as shy as devout and as removed from external life as nuns.

Schweitzer's attitude towards the Africans is a mixture of benevolence, perplexity, irritation, hope and despair. So many are shiftless; so many lack any sense of responsibility or joy in achievement. He says that they have nothing whatever to do after work is finished each afternoon, but it never occurs to them to fish in the river—yet they need more protein. If they get any education at all they promptly trek into the towns and try to become typists. Yet he, Schweitzer, cannot find a good carpenter, or even a man to tend the orchard. "I am the only peasant"! He told us, smiting his breast.

Schweitzer grows almost every kind of fruit.

But, because of a deep-seated native superstition which holds that a man planting a fruit tree will die before it bears the first crop, he has had to plant and tend most of the trees with his own hands. One of his proudest achievements is the way he has made Lambarene practically self-supporting as to food.

At meals Schweitzer sits at the middle of a long table, with guests of honour opposite. Immediately before each meal he says a brief grace in French; immediately after dinner (or meal takes more than half an hour) he announces a hymn in a stentorian voice, and hymnbooks are passed round. He marches to a tinny piano at one end of the room and plays briefly but with great vigour and precision as the company sings. Then he returns to his place at the table, inspects a list of Bible passages, snaps a Bible open and reads a few lines.

After dinner, doctors and nurses gather at one end of the long room and have cinnamon tea. One evening, Schweitzer sat with us until after nine. On leaving the dining hall he fills his pockets with bits of food, which he gives to his pet antelopes. Then – after curfew has descended on the rest of the camp—he will work till midnight or beyond, writing or answering his letters. He once startled the customs officers at Bordeaux when he went on board ship carrying some unanswered letters. They filled four potato sacks.

When he set out for Africa, Schweitzer thought he was giving up forever what was dearest to him—art and teaching. But he has always had a piano with him in Africa, and so since the Second World War his organ recordings of Bach, made when he was on holiday in Europe, have been a profound artistic success. He lectures widely whenever he returns to civilization, and he has been honored by universities without member;

moreover, by working at night he has managed to keep up a steady literary output. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 1952.

On our last night at the hospital we were invited after the dinner to accompany Schweitzer to his quarters. He has a small bedroom and an adjoining office. Here is a tatterdemalion assortment of books, papers, stores, tools—a saw was lying across a sheaf of manuscript—empty tins, piles of music and bits of carpentry.



Schweitzer led us to his celebrated piano, which has organ-like pedals. It is lined with zinc to protect it against incessant damp and against termites; it weights three tons, and was presented to him by Paris Bach Society. It seemed magnificently out of tune. Schweitzer, my wife and I all sat on the small bench—indeed there was no other place to sit and he played some Bach. He saw us off next day, but this brief nocturnal recital was the last touch, the authentic Schweitzer ceremony of farewell. He was not playing for us particularly. He plays every night, especially when his eyes are tired. He

said to one recent visitor, “I play for my antelopes.”

But it was a fascinating privilege to hear him play, and it is this picture of him, sitting at that battered old wreck of a piano in the middle of the silent, creeping jungle, that I shall remember best—this crusty old Bismarck of the spirit, this tyrant with a heart of gold.

Dr. Albert Schweitzer was recently described by the music critic of *The Times* as “the only man in the 20th century to be a musician and several other things besides, as Sir George Grove was in the nineteenth.”



Long-playing recordings of Bach’s organ music played by Dr. Schweitzer were issued at the end of 1953 by Columbia. They were played on the organ of the parish church of Gunsbach,

*Author of “Inside Europe,” “Inside Asia,” etc*

## ALBERT SCHWETIZER

Joyce Lambert

Albert Schweitzer and his brother were brought up in the country, towards the end of the last century, in a part of France called Alsace, which had been taken by the Germans in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. When you live in the country, you see lots of animals and you soon get a friendly feeling towards them. Albert was very fond of watching horses and cows, goats, sheep, pigs and sometimes in the forest he saw deer and wolves and even wild pigs. His first ambition was to be a shepherd and guard the farmyard animals.

But Albert had a very human quality he liked to be popular. Therefore he sometimes didn’t stand up for what he believed in and did what other boys suggested, even though he knew it was wrong.

Once he saw a poor horse being driven along the street, one man pulling its head while another beat it from behind. Why? He asked himself why beat it so? He was miserable for weeks, remembering that horse, but he did not dare say anything to anybody about it.

Now Albert was clever and thoughtful: he observed everything that went on about him and tried to understand it. But he could not understand why his parents taught him to pray at night for people only: why not for animals also? Not liking to speak up to anybody about it, he used to wait till his mother had put the light out and then he would get hurriedly out of bed and add to his prayer these words: ***“O, Heavenly Father, protect and bless all things that have breath; guard them from all evil and let them sleep in peace, Amen.”***

When he was eight years old, he was asked by

another boy slightly older than himself to go out one Sunday, shooting birds with a home-made sling. A sling is a sort of catapult; an elastic loop on a stick, which throws a stone quite a distance and with some force.

#### **HE SHOOED THE BIRDS AWAY**

Albert agreed. He didn't want to go, yet he daren't refuse the older the boy. They went up the hill behind village and there were lots of song-birds sitting the trees, warbling and singing and paying the boys no attention at all. "Here we go" whispered Albert's friend, placing a stone in his catapult. "Wait till I give you the signal—then pick one out and let him have it!" Albert felt his fingers trembling as he placed a pebble in his sling-shot and there was a sad feeling in his heart as he thought about the innocent birds in the trees above, which were now in such danger. It was a nice fine spring morning why shouldn't the birds sing and fly about? "Hurry up!" whispered the older boy and nervously Albert took aim. Just then, while he was standing with his sling in the "ready" position, something happened something quite simple and even expected: the church bells in the village began to peal out, calling people to church. Suddenly Albert felt that God was watching him and he knew that what he was doing was quite wrong. The birds belonged to God and he was going to break the Commandment "Thou shall not kill." So he threw his catapult down and "shooed" the birds away from the tree with all his might then ran all the way back to the village. And later on, when he was sixty years old, he wrote in his book: *"From that day on, I have had the courage to free myself from all fear of men."* Another time he wrote: *"Out of many heartbreaking experiences, there has arisen in me the unshakable conviction that we have the right to bring pain and death to animals only in*

*case of absolute necessity. All of us must feel the horror that lies in thoughtless killing."*

*That man's name is Albert Schweitzer and today he is known all over the world, because he has learnt to stand up for what he believes in and has made a career of helping animals.*



When he was through school, Albert Schweitzer went to the University and grew up into a very clever young man good at writing, playing and composing music. He wrote books which were published and his music was published too and this brought him some money. He used it to travel and see the world. Then he studied medicine and trained to be a doctor.

## HE ALWAYS WENT TO THE BIBLE

But one of the most important things that Albert Schweitzer ever learnt was how to think for himself and decide what is right and wrong. *He always went to the Bible to find out God's wishes and he was always urging other people to do the same.* In France and Germany, when he was traveling around giving lectures and playing at concerts, he noticed what a gay, pleasant, happy and healthy life people could lead what splendid education their children could have and how they could travel and visit art galleries and museums, attend lectures and concerts, go to plays and attend sporting events and play games themselves. Then they could marry and have a comfortable home and bring up children to enjoy all the same sort of things.

He had heard there were other places in the world where it was not at all the same. In Africa, for example, there were large areas which were called "dark", because the people living there did not enjoy this sort of life at all: they had hardly any hospitals or doctors and hardly any schools and no universities and very few churches and no art galleries or museums or libraries or plays or concerts or chances to travel and see the world. What about these people? Albert Schweitzer asked himself. We have so much here in Europe and they have so little; if you come to think of it is that fair?

Albert Schweitzer decided that it was not fair any more than the cruel treatment of innocent animals was fair and he made up his mind to go to Africa and share with the people there some of his knowledge and skills learning to help them have a happier, healthier life.

## WENT TO AFRICA

So when he was 38 years old, Albert Schweitzer gave up his writing, teaching organ playing and all his

other studies and went to Africa, determined to start his own hospital and put into practice what he felt in his heart about the *urgent need for God's people to share with others their gifts and blessings.*

Dr. Schweitzer built his hospital in a place called Lambarene, near Gabon, in what was then French Equatorial Africa; that is a very hot and jungly part of Africa where very few white men had seen before and hardly any white people lived. The Africans living there had very few of what we call the blessings of civilization and Albert Schweitzer decided to spend the rest of his life in helping them. And of course he would also put into practice what he felt about animals and especially God's Commandment, "Thou shall not kill". He called this **"Reverence for all Life"**. All the animals there would be his friends and he, in God's name, would be their protector and there should be no thoughtless torturing or killing cruel hunting or merciless starving of animals.



Well, Albert Schweitzer is still in Lambarene and by now his hospital is known all over the world; many people go to visit him there. And there they find the good old Doctor (now aged 86), surrounded by his grateful human patients and also by his friends dogs and cats, hens, chickens, geese, goats, sheep, antelopes, monkeys, chimpanzees, owls, pelicans, storks, porcupines and occasionally wild pig! He loves them all and at Lambarene can you guess? Yes, that's right! There is no killing! There is even a notice on the wall which says: "Do not cut the flowers!" and another which reads: "Do not trample on the grass!" a friend who visited him there wrote in his book: He is full of concern for the well-being of all creatures, ready to sacrifice himself in every way possible that they may be helped.

And Dr. Schweitzer himself said "We need a boundless religion, which will include the animals also". He calls it "*Reverence for all Life*" animals as well as people. You know what "reverence" means? It means recognizing that God is the Creator of something and if it belongs to God, what rights have we to harm or hurt it?

*Animal Citizen. Apr., May, June, 1964.*

## **SHORT LIFE HISTORY: ALBERT SCHWEITZER**

*"Hardly ever have I known another man in whom mercy and desire for beauty are connected that ideal as in Albert Schweitzer."*

Albert Schweitzer was born as the second child of a priest's family in Kaisersberg. Some months after his birth the family moved to Guensbach where Albert's father worked as a priest until his death. Albert attended elementary school there, followed by secondary school in Muenster and college in Muehlhausen. On June 18, 1893 he made his A-levels there. As a child he received a very good musical education which became the basis for his later magnificent organ playing.

From 1893 to 1898 he studied theology and philosophy in Strasbourg, Paris and Berlin. His time of study was interrupted for a year in 1894, as he had to do his military service. From October 1898 on he had music lessons (organ, piano) with Charles Marie Widor (1844–1937) in Paris. It was also Widor who made Schweitzer newly interpret Bach's organ work. In 1899, he graduated from university in philosophy and in 1900 in theology. In 1902, he qualified as university lecturer in theology in Strasbourg where he afterwards worked as a private teacher. From 1903 to 1906, he was head of the monastery St. Thomas in Strasbourg.

In 1905, at the age of 30, he decided to study medicine; he wanted to become a mission doctor. In November 1911, he finished his studies successfully and in June 1912, he married Helene Bresslau. In February 1913, he graduated from university in medicine. Shortly after that he went to Africa with his wife to the small jungle

place called Lambaréné and built there a tropical hospital with a station for Hansen's disease which he paid for on his own. It was his aim to alleviate the illness and misery of the people living there. The hospital was financed by donations and Schweitzer's publications, speeches and organ concerts in Europe. During one of his journeys he was interned by the French in 1917 due to World War I. In January 1919, his daughter Rhenia was born. Only in 1924 was he able to return to Lambaréné. Schweitzer decided to build a new, bigger hospital because the old one was too small. The new one was commissioned in January 1927, near the old one. It is still there today. In this hospital Schweitzer worked, except for a few interruptions, until his death.

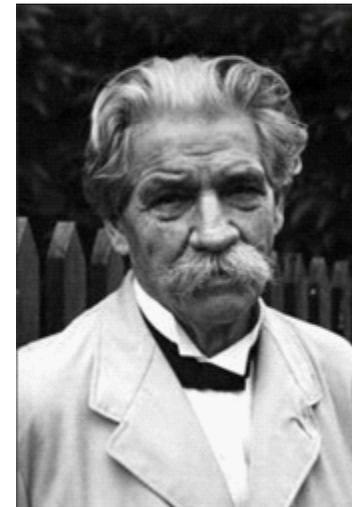
Albert Schweitzer published basic works concerning theology, religious philosophy and history of music. He was an excellent organ player and a magnificent expert and interpreter of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750).



In the course of his life he received numerous awards, prizes and honorary promotions worldwide, e.g in 1928, the Goethepreis of the city Frankfurt on the Main, in 1951, the Friedenspreis des Deutschen Buchhandels, the Nobel Prize for Peace for the year 1952 and he was bearer of the Ordens Pour le mérite.

*Albert Schweitzer continuously reached for truth, peace, freedom and humanity. He fought for persecuted and threatened people and again and again spoke out loudly against the lunacy of arms race and against the danger of atomic wars.*

Albert Schweitzer died at the age of 90 on September 4, 1965. He was buried in Lambaréné, directly next to his wife, who had died in June 1957.



*Excerpt from Albert Einstein's contribution to the birthday anthology to the 80th birthday of Albert Schweitzer, 1954*

*With thanks from:- [www.einstein-website.de/biographies/schweitzer-content.html](http://www.einstein-website.de/biographies/schweitzer-content.html)*

## REVERENCE FOR LIFE

The phrase Reverence for Life is a translation of the German phrase: “*Ehrfurcht vor dem Leben*”. These words came to Albert Schweitzer on a boat trip on the Ogooué River in French Equatorial Africa (now Gabon), while searching for a universal concept of ethics for our time.

Schweitzer made the phrase the basic tenet of an ethical philosophy, which he developed and put into practice. He gave expression to its development in numerous books and publications during his life and also in manuscripts which have recently been published; the main work being his unfinished four-part “*Philosophy of culture*” (German: Kulturphilosophie) subtitled: “The World-view of Reverence for Life”. He also used his hospital in Lambaréné in Gabon (Central Africa) to demonstrate this philosophy in practice. He believed that Reverence for Life is a concept that develops from observation of the world around us. In ‘*Civilization and Ethics*’ he expressed this in these words:

“Ethics is nothing other than Reverence for Life. Reverence for Life affords me my fundamental principle of morality, namely, that good consists in maintaining, assisting and enhancing life, and to destroy, to harm or to hinder life is evil.”

**James Brabazon** (*Author of the Biography of Albert Schweitzer*) defined Reverence for Life with the following statement:

“Reverence for Life says that the only thing we are really sure of is that we live and want to go on living. This is something that we share with everything else that lives, from elephants to blades of grass—and, of course, every

human being. *So we are brothers and sisters to all living things, and owe to all of them the same care and respect, that we wish for ourselves.*”

Albert Schweitzer hoped that the ethic of Reverence for Life would make its way in the world on the basis of his explanation of it in his books and talks, the example of his life and the force of its own argument based on the depth of fundamental thought. To some extent this is taking place as is evidenced by the growth of the environmental movement. (The book *Silent Spring*, by Rachael Carson, which is widely credited with helping launch the environmental movement, was dedicated to Albert Schweitzer).

### **Origin of Albert Schweitzer’s “Reverence for Life”**

Albert Schweitzer believed that ethical values which could underpin the ideal of true civilization had to have their foundation in deep thought and be world- and life-affirming. He therefore embarked on a search for ethical values in the various major religions and world-views accessible to him, but could not find any that were able, unequivocally, to combine ethics with life-affirmation. It was not until two years after moving out to Gabon to establish the Albert Schweitzer Hospital that he finally found the simple statement which answered his quest.

In his autobiography “*Out of My Life and Thought*,” Dr. Schweitzer explains this process.

“*Having described how at the beginning of the summer of 1915 he awoke from some kind of mental daze, asking himself why he was only criticizing civilization and not working on something constructive.*” He relates how he asked himself the question:

***But what is civilization?***

The essential element in civilization is the ethical perfecting of the individual as well as society. At the same time, every spiritual and every material step forward has significance for civilization. The will to civilization is, then, the universal will to progress that is conscious of the ethics as the highest value. In spite of the great importance we attach to the achievements of science and human prowess, it is obvious that only a humanity that is striving for ethical ends can benefit in full measure from material progress and can overcome the dangers that accompany it.....

The only possible way out of chaos is for us to adopt a concept of the world based on the ideal of true civilization.

***But what is the nature of that concept of the world in which the will to the general progress and the will to the ethical progress join and are linked?***

It consists in an ethical affirmation of the world and of life.

***What is affirmation of the world and of life?...***

For months on end, I lived in a continual state of mental agitation. Without the least success I concentrated—even during my daily work at the hospital on the real nature of the affirmation of life and of ethics, and on the question of what they have in common. I was wandering about in a thicket where no path was to be found. I was pushing against an iron door that would not yield...

In that mental state, I had to take a long journey up the river . . . Lost in thought, I sat on deck of the barge, struggling to find the elementary and universal concept of the ethical that I had not discovered in any philosophy. I covered sheet after sheet with disconnected sentences merely to concentrate on the problem. Two days passed.

Late on the third day, at the very moment when, at sunset, we were making our way through a herd of hippopotamuses, there flashed upon my mind, unforeseen and unsought, the phrase : “*Reverence for Life*”. [*lang|de| Ehrfurcht vor dem Leben*] The iron door had yielded. The path in the thicket had become visible. Now I had found my way to the principle in which affirmation of the world and ethics are joined together!

According to some authors, Schweitzer’s thought, and specifically his development for reverence for life, was influenced by Indian religious thought and in particular Jain principle of ahimsa (non-violence) Albert Schweitzer has noted the contribution of Indian influence in his book Indian Thought and Its Development.

The laying down of the commandment to not kill and to not damage is one of the greatest events in the spiritual history of mankind. Starting from its principle, founded on world and life denial, of abstention from action, ancient Indian thought and this is a period when in other respects ethics have not progressed very far—reaches the tremendous discovery that ethics know no bounds. So far as we know, this is for the first time clearly expressed by Jainism.

It should not be overlooked, however, that as a child he felt deeply for the suffering of all the creatures around him. It beat upon him. He wrote, “As far back as I can remember I was saddened by the amount of misery I saw in the world around me. Youth’s unqualified joie de vivre I never really knew...One thing especially saddened me was that the unfortunate animals had to suffer so much pain and misery....It was quite incomprehensible to me—this was before I began going to school—why in my evening prayers I should pray for human beings only. So

when my mother had prayed with me and had kissed me good-night, I used to add silently a prayer that I composed myself for all living creatures. It ran thus: "O heavenly Father, protect and bless all things that have breath guard them from all evil, and let them sleep in peace..."

Schweitzer twice went fishing with some boys "because they asked [him] to" and "this sports was soon made impossible for me by the treatment of the worms that were put on the hook...and the wrenching of the mouths of the fishes that were caught. I gave it up...From experiences like these, which moved my heart...there slowly grew up in me an unshakeable conviction that we have no right to inflict suffering and death on another living creature, and that we ought all of us to feel what a horrible thing it is to cause suffering and death..." The concept of Reverence for Life was incipient in Schweitzer almost from birth.

This awareness affected him throughout his life, as when he would carefully, gently scoop a spider out of a hole it had fallen into before planting a crop there, to feed his patients and their families who also worked on the hospital farm. He wrote that, just as our own existence is significance to each of us, "[a creature's] existence is significant to it." He wrote that "...my relation to my own being and to the objective world is determined by reverence for life. This reverence for life is given as an element of my will-to-live..." and this will-to-live existed in all creatures and was to be respected.

As a child he was taught, and later as an adult taught his congregations, the "fundamental truths of the religion of Jesus as something not hostile to reason, but, on the contrary, as strengthening them." Many later thanked him, saying that this teaching had "helped them to keep their religion in later life." A great mind, he went through

"heaps of books" which were piled so high he had to make aisles to get through them. He studied the life of Jesus in a depth few have ever achieved. His own philosophy, which came to be encapsulated in the phrase Reverence for Life, had this bedrock in the Four Gospels of the New Testament.

In his book *The Philosophy of Civilization*, Schweitzer wrote, "Ethics are responsibility without limit toward all that lives...Love means more, since it includes fellowship in suffering, in joy, and in effort... The contents of this book show just how well-read Schweitzer was, having studied both ancient and more modern philosophers.

### **The Will to Live**

The word 'will' in the sense of determination or firmness of purpose is rarely used today and therefore Schweitzer's use of the word as translated from the German word 'Wille' may appear unfamiliar. However, it is a significant part of Schweitzer's message. He held the view in the 1920s that people had largely lost touch with their own will, having subjugated it to outside authority and sacrificed it to external circumstances.

He therefore pointed back to that elemental part of ourselves that can be in touch with our 'will' and can exercise it for the good of all.

In *Out of My Life and Thought* Schweitzer wrote:

The most immediate fact of man's consciousness is the assertion "I am life that wills to live in the midst of life that wills to live"

Affirmation of life is the spiritual act by which man ceases to live thoughtlessly and begins to devote himself to his life with reverence in order to give it true value. To affirm life is to deepen, to make more inward, and to exalt the will to live. At the same time the man who has become

a thinking being feels a compulsion to give to every will to live the same reverence for life that he gives to his own. [...] This is the absolute, fundamental principle of ethics, and is a fundamental postulate of thought.

In his search for an answer to the problems posed by what was to him the obvious decline of western civilization, Albert Schweitzer was not prepared to give up the belief in progress which is so much taken for granted by people of European descent. Rather, he sought to identify why this 'will to progress' was seemingly going off the rails and causing the disintegration of European civilization.

He came to the following conclusion: (*Out of my Life and Thought*)

By itself, the affirmation of life can only produce a partial and imperfect civilization. Only if it turns inward and becomes ethical can the will to progress attain the ability to distinguish the valuable from the worthless. We must therefore strive for a civilization that is not based on the accretion of science and power alone, but which cares most of all for the spiritual and ethical development of the individual and of humankind.

Standing, as all living beings are, before this dilemma of the will to live, a person is constantly forced to preserve his own life and life in general only at the cost of other life. If he has been touched by the ethic of reverence for life, he injures and destroys life only under a necessity he cannot avoid, and never from thoughtlessness.

*With regards from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*

## **The Quest of the Historical Jesus**

*Albert Schweitzer Quotes*

\* The demands of Jesus are difficult because they require us to do something extraordinary. At the same time He asks us to regard these [acts of goodness] as something usual, ordinary.

\*He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lakeside, He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same words: "Follow thou me!" and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfill for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience Who He is.

\* The study of the Life of Jesus has had a curious history. It set out in quest of the historical Jesus, believing that when it had found Him it could bring Him straight into our time as a Teacher and Saviour. ... But He does not stay; He passes by our time and returns to His own... He returned to His own time, not owing to the application of any historical ingenuity, but by the same inevitable necessity by which the liberated pendulum returns to its original position.

*With thanks from : <https://www.goodreads.com/.../quotes>  
[www.azquotes.com/quotes/topics/historical-jesus.html](http://www.azquotes.com/quotes/topics/historical-jesus.html)*

## **Out of My Life and Thought**

### **Autobiography of Albert Schweitzer**

\* By respect for life we become religious in a way that is elementary, profound and alive.

\* Impart as much as you can of your spiritual being to those who are on the road with you, and accept as something precious what comes back to you from them.

\* In everyone's life, at some time, our inner fire goes out. It is then burst into flame by an encounter with another human being. We should all be thankful for those people who rekindle the inner spirit.

\* Doctors must go out to the colonies as a humane duty mandated by the conscience of society. Whoever among us has learned through personal experience what pain and anxiety really are, must help to ensure that those out there who are in physical need obtain the same help that once came to him. He no longer belongs to himself alone; he has become the brother of all who suffer. It is this "brotherhood of those who bear the mark of pain" that demands humane medical services for the colonies. Commissioned by their representatives, medical people must do for the suffering in far-off lands what cries out to be done in the name of true civilization. It was because I relied on the elementary truth embodied in this idea, the "brotherhood of those who bear the mark of pain," that I ventured to found the forest hospital at Lambaréné, finally.

*With thanks from : <https://goodreads.com/work/quotes>*

## **Thoughts Of Albert Schweitzer**

\* Man has lost his capacity to foresee and for stall. He will end by destroying the earth. and with it of course himself. Pollute and perish.

\* Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful.

\* One who gains strength by over coming obstacles possesses the only strength which can overcome adversity.

\* The willow which bends to the tempest, often escapes better than the oak which resists it; and so in great calamities, it sometimes happens that light and frivolous spirits recover their elasticity and presence of mind sooner than those of a loftier character.

\* Compassion, in which all ethics must take root, can only attain its full breadth and depth if it embraces all living creatures and does not limit itself to mankind.

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# PINGALWARA DIARY

(UPTO APRIL, 2017)

Services rendered by Pingalwara Institution for the service of the suffering humanity are:-

## 1. Homes for the Homeless

There are 1764 patients in different branches of Pingalwara now a days:-

(a) Head Office, Mata Mehtab Kaur Ward, Bhai Piara Singh Ward	374 Patients
(e) Manawala Complex	854 Patients
(b) Pandori Warraich Branch, Amritsar	82 Patients
(c) Jalandhar Branch	39 Patients
(d) Sangrur Branch	228 Patients
(f) Chandigarh (Palsora ) Branch	94 Patients
(g) Goindwal Branch	<u>93 Patients</u>
Total 1764 Patients	

## 2. Treatment facilities

- (a) **Dispensary & Laboratory:-** Pingalwara has a dispensary and a laboratory for the treatment of patients. It has an annual expenditure of about Rs.90 lakhs. Medicines are also distributed free of cost to the poor and needy people.
- (b) **Medical Care Staff:-** Experienced medical staff like Nurses, Pharmacists and Laboratory Technicians are available for the care of the Pingalwara residents.
- (c) **Blood-Donation Camps:-** A Blood Donation Camp is organized on Bhagat Ji's Death Anniversary every year. The blood is used for Pingalwara residents and road accident victims.

- (d) **Ambulances:-** Ambulances with basic Medical aid are available for victims of road accidents on G.T. Road, round the clock and provide facilities for taking Pingalwara patients to the hospital.
- (e) **Artificial Limb Centre:-** There is an Artificial Limb Centre at Manawala Complex, dedicated to the memory of Bhagat Ji which provides free of cost Artificial Limbs to amputee cases and calipers to paraplegic ,hemiplegic or polio affected people. 8137 needy people have benefitted till April 2016.
- (f) **Physiotherapy Centre:-** A Physiotherapy Centre equipped with State-of-the-art equipment is functioning in the Manawala Complex since June 2005. On an average 80 patients are treated everyday.
- (g) **Operation Theatres:-** There is a well equipped Operation Theatre in Bhai Piara Singh Ward Amritsar for general surgery and A Micro Surgery Operation Theatre in Manawala Complex where Cochlear Implants and major operations are carried out.
- (h) **Dental, Eye, Ear & Ultrasound Centres:-** These Centres have been set up to provide these services to Pingalwara residents, sewadars and their families.

## 3. Education

Pingalwara Society is running five Educational Institutions for the poor and needy children.

- (a) **Bhagat Puran Singh Adarsh School, Manawala Complex:-** This school provides free education to 723 students from the poor and deprived sections of the society. They are provided with free books and

uniforms. Children being brought up by Pingalwara Society are also studying in this school.

- (b) **Bhagat Puran Singh Adarsh School, Buttar Kalan (Qadian):-** This school is dedicated to the sweet memory of Bhagatji. 452 students are getting free education under the able guidance of well qualified teachers. The school also provides financial help to students who have finished their school studies and are aspiring for higher studies.
- (c) **Bhagat Puran Singh School for Special Education, Manawala Complex:-** This school is providing Special Education to 205 Special children.
- (d) **Bhagat Puran Singh School for the Deaf:-** Bhagat Puran Singh School for Deaf Children is functional at the Manawala Complex since May 2005. The school is equipped with state-of-the-art training aid and has 150 children on its rolls.
- (e) **Bhagat Puran Singh School for Special Education, Chandigarh (Palsora):-**This school caters to the needs of Special adults of the branch.
- (f) **Vocational Centre:-** This Centre is providing free training in embroidery, stitching, craft work, making washing powder, candle making, painting, etc. Young girls from the villages of surroundings areas are the main beneficiaries.
- (g) **Computer Training:-** Computers are available in all the schools for academic and vocational training.
- (h) **Hostel facilities:-** There are separate hostels for boys and girls in Manawala Complex. Many girls are

pursuing higher studies in different colleges.

#### 4. **Rehabilitation**

- (a) **Marriages:-** After being educated, boys and girls at Pingalwara are married to suitable partners. 40 girls and 4 boys have been married off till date.

#### 5. **Environment Related Activities**

- (a) **Tree Plantation:-** Bhagat Puran Singh Ji was deeply concerned about the degradation of the environment. A vigorous campaign of tree plantation is started every year on Bhagat Ji's Death Anniversary. Each year 15,000 to 22,000 trees are planted in various schools, colleges, hospitals, cremation grounds and other public places. These include Amaltas, Kachnar, Behra, Champa, Arjun, Sukhchain, Chandni, Zetropa, Kari-patta were distributed to different institutions.
- (b) **Nursery:-** Pingalwara has its own Nursery where saplings of various plants and trees are prepared. Every year, the aim of nursery is to grow more than 54 different kinds of saplings every year.

#### 6. **Social Improvement Related Activities**

- (a) **Awareness:-** Pingalwara has played an important role in spreading awareness about the evils in the society. This has been done by printing literature on religious, social and environmental issues at the Puran Printing Press Amritsar and is being distributed free of cost. It has an annual expenditure of printing and publicity is about 1 crores 50 lakhs rupees.
- (b) **Puran Printing Press:-** The Printing Press has been updated with an Offset Press.

(c) **Museum and Documentaries:-** A Museum, and a number of documentaries have been prepared on Pingalwara activities as well as on zero budget natural farming. The C.D.s are freely available from Pingalwara.

A feature film produced by Pingalwara Society Amritsar EH JANAM TUMHARE LEKHE (Punjabi) on Rev. Bhagat Puran Singh Ji, founder Pingalwara and his struggle not only for selfless services of wounded humanity but for Environment Crisis also, will prove a beacon for the generations yet to come after us.

#### **7. Help to the victims of Natural Calamities**

Pingalwara makes an effort to provide succour to the victims of natural calamities like floods, earthquakes and famines. Aid was sent for the earth-quake victims in Iran, Tsunami disaster victims, Leh landslide and flood affected areas.

#### **8. Cremation of unclaimed dead-bodies**

Pingalwara cremates unclaimed dead bodies with full honour.

#### **9. Dairy Farm**

120 cows and buffalos at Manawala Complex provide fresh milk to the Pingalwara residents.

#### **10. Old Age Homes**

Old age homes at Sangrur and Manawala Complex of Pingalwara caters to the needs of elderly people.

#### **11. Projects Completed and Under Construction**

Since 1997 ambitious projects of Sangrur, Palsora at Chandigarh and Manawala Complex have been completed. In the year 2009 new buildings—

Administrative Block, Puran Printing Press, Deaf School, T.B. Ward at Manawala Complex and at Head Office and a New Administrative Block have also been completed.

In the year 2013, a new modern Bhagat Puran Singh School for Special Education in Manawala Complex of Pingalwara and a new Block for Pingalwara patients in Pandori Warraich Branch and at Sangrur is under construction and is fast coming up.

#### **Other Details:**

- a) All India Pingalwara Charitable Society is a Registered Society, registered by Registrar of Companies vide letter No. 130 of 1956-1957 as amended vide No. A-28/4540 dated 07-07-1998.
- b) All donations to Pingalwara are exempted under Section 80 G of Income Tax-II Amritsar letter No. CIT-II/ASR/ ITO (Tech.)/2011-12/4730 dated 11/12 January, 2012.
- c) PAN Number of the All India Pingalwara Charitable Society is AAATA 2237R
- d) FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act) 1976 Registration No. of Pingalwara is 115210002

Wahe Guru Ji Ka Khalsa

Wahe Guru Ji Ki Fateh

***Dr. Inderjit Kaur,***

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