



THE BIBLE and CURRENT TIMES



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"Ring out the Old; ring in the New."

As another New Year's day dawns upon our troubled world, millions stand gazing into the future, wondering what it holds in store for them of joy or sorrow.

"Happy New Year!" they say to each other mechanically, the while questioning how much real happiness there can be in a universe threatened with atomic destruction.

The fact is that, deep down in all our hearts, there is a growing fear that time is running out; that the present era of fictitious prosperity, improvident living, and unethical conduct cannot last much longer; that the hour of judgment approaches for a careless, godless, and adulterous generation.

Are such fears justified? What lies hidden in the womb of time? What may we expect in the days and months ahead?

New Year's Dawn

By Arthur S. Maxwell

One thing is certain: Only God knows the future. Of himself man cannot tell what even the weather will be like a few days hence; and as to the direction of history, so dependent upon a multitude of conflicting forces, he knows nothing at all. But God in His infinite wisdom knows the end from the beginning. As He Himself has said, "Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them." Isa. 42:9.

Through His prophets He has spoken of things to come with great clarity and certainty. The apostle Peter refers to the "sure word" of prophecy, and describes it as "a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the Day Star arise," 2 Peter 1:19.

Has prophecy light for our time? For 1952? It has.

Prophecy Speaks

Concerning international affairs, the greatest Prophet of all predicts: "And there shall be . . . upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." Luke 21:25, 26.

This is Christ's picture of the condition of the world in the closing years of human history. Therefore we are not to expect any lasting improvement in the relationship of one nation and another, or one group of powers and another. Mistrust and misunderstanding will never be eliminated this side of the kingdom of God. Wars and rumours of wars will be man's lot till the end of time.

Furthermore we are told that "there shall be

a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time." Dan. 12:1. So we are not to anticipate an era of universal prosperity and world brotherhood as a result of the activities of the United Nations or of any other similar organization. Heaven upon earth will never come about by human devising.

Concerning the current decay of moral standards and the corruption in social life and political affairs, we are told clearly that "in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." 2 Tim. 3:1-4. Hence, while it is proper to contend for the maintenance of right principles, we are here forewarned that the processes of degeneracy will not be arrested. Rather will they become "worse and worse" until the end. (Verse 13.)

Concerning religious liberty, prophecy informs us that, instead of the area of human freedom expanding with the passing of time, it will recede until at last, in history's tremendous climax, reactionary forces will seize control of the very citadels of civil and religious liberty and there decree that all, "both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond," shall "receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." Rev. 13: 16, 17.

Someone may say, If such are the revelations of prophecy, why trouble our minds with them? Why permit such a gloomy view of the future to oppress our spirits? If the coming days are to be so filled with tragedy, why not enjoy the bliss of ignorance while we may?

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Not only on the Suez Canal but in many parts of the world the new year's dawn will find men watching and waiting—for what?

Light in the Darkness

Thank God, this is not all that prophecy has to say. As the apostle Peter says, it is not darkness, but *light*. It is designed to illumine the path of the child of God "until the day dawn." It is designed not to discourage, but to cheer; not to crush, but to build; not to lead men to despair, but to fill their hearts with a great new hope.

So it is that when Christ tells of the conflicts and agonies of time's last hour He adds: "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28.

When we read in the book of Daniel of the coming of "a time of trouble such as never was," we read also that "at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Dan. 12:1.

Therefore, as we look into the future we are not to be unduly alarmed by the scenes of trouble and distress which prophecy indicates are to be our lot in the day's immediately ahead, but rather turn with courage and high hope toward the distant scene where its light glows upon the face of our divine Redeemer coming back in majesty and glory to bring earth's sorrows and trials to an end.

With this prospect before us, and the certainty of the final triumph of truth and righteousness, a happy new year may indeed be a reality for each one of us. Trouble may surround us, but within our hearts shall be the peace of God that passeth all understanding—a happiness divine which shall abide and abound through all eternity.





"Come Unto Me."

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Make 1952 a **YEAR OF LIBERTY**

By F. A. Spearing

THIS man might have been set at liberty!" The words are found in the twenty-sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, verse thirty-two, and they were spoken by a king—by King Agrippa.

The narrative is well known. Paul had been arrested through the malignity of the Jews because he, being a Jew, had become a Christian. So great was the hatred of the Jewish leaders that they would have murdered the apostle had they been able, but he was taken into protective custody by a Roman chief captain. The prisoner was given a hearing by Claudius Lysias, the chief captain, then by Felix, then by Festus, and now he stands in the presence of the highest authority in the land, King Agrippa, to answer for his faith.

As he listened to the proclamation of the Gospel, Agrippa was greatly moved. "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian!" he said. Paul's response would never be forgotten by his judge: "And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."

The king and those who were with him left the court of justice, and talked among themselves. They decided that the prisoner had done nothing worthy of death, or even of bonds. "This man might have been set at liberty," said Agrippa, "if he had not appealed unto Cæsar."

Free in Christ

Paul the prisoner was in bonds; yet, para-

doxical as it may seem, he was as free as a bird; he enjoyed a liberty that was unknown to his judges and his persecutors. It was probably while he was in custody that he wrote about this liberty to his friends in Galatia: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Gal. 5:1.

The yoke of bondage, of course, is the chain which binds men and women to Satan; whereas the freedom which Christ gives is that which comes to the man who has given up his evil ways and has surrendered to the Lord Jesus, the Saviour of the world. The apostle had experienced this liberty, so could write about it. What mattered the bonds of iron so long as he was assured that Christ had made him *truly* free?

Paul was on his way to Rome, to appear before the Emperor himself. To his brethren in the faith who lived in the imperial city he was able to write of "the glorious liberty of the children of God." Rom. 8:21.

There is no evidence to support the view that Satan has ceased his activities as an angel of darkness; or that he has been less busy during the year which is now drawing to a close than before. On the contrary we know that it is still his policy to use all the means in his power to make bond-servants of men and women. We could say of each one of these: "This man [or this woman] *might have been set at liberty!*" We say this on the authority of the Word of God. (John 5:16.) But why are all these men and women *not* enjoying the liberty of the Gospel?

The reason why men and women who might have been set at liberty remain in the thralldom of Satan, is because they are unwilling to give up their sins, unwilling to accept the gracious assurance of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Are You a "Might Have Been"?

Perchance some who read this magazine are conscious that they have not as yet taken advantage of God's offers of mercy. Perhaps they feel that God has spoken to their hearts during the present year, and yet they have not yielded to Him. Has the Lord ceased to take any interest in them? No, for He is "longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9. He is longsuffering to us-ward, toward us. So He has not ceased to be inter-

ested in our spiritual welfare. The words written by the Gospel prophet ages ago are in full force to-day, and they never were more appropriate than now: "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear." Isa. 59:1.

What are your plans for the New Year about to begin? Some folk are already planning to take part in a "jolly spree" on New Year's Eve; they are determined to have a "rattling good time" with thousands of other like-minded people. Shouting and singing, drinking and dancing will be the order of the day. But what are your plans for the New Year? Why not make 1952 your year of liberty?

Let us read once again the beautiful words with which our Lord and Master began His ministry:

"And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Luke 4:16-19.

How wonderfully up-to-date is this Scripture! The work that Jesus was anointed to do, He did, and through His disciples He is doing it still. How many have been captives of Satan during the present year, and are his captives still? How many have been bruised, or broken, or crushed by the onslaughts of the enemy, and have longed for deliverance? But would it not be right to speak of the New Year as being an acceptable year of the Lord if it brought to each one of us complete deliverance from the power of Satan?

Can we make 1952 the year of liberty? How glorious it would be if we could remove this question mark, and be able to say, truthfully, that the New Year finds us with a strong determination to turn our back on all evil things, and to follow in the steps of Jesus, day by day, and hour by hour, all the way through the year.

We Can Keep the Sabbath

asserts

Herman F. DeAth

urge the keeping of the original seventh day, while most people who keep any day at all observe the first day of the week.

Keeping Sabbath on a Round Earth

His chief argument against a strict observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is that the same one day in seven cannot be kept by all people on this earth at the same time, owing to the revolution of the earth on its axis.

It is from this fact, recognized, of course, by Seventh-Day Adventists, that he draws the conclusion that "the particular day of the week kept as the Sabbath is of minor consequence."

Then why on earth is he backing an organization called the "Lord's Day Observance Society," which most emphatically urges the observance of one particular day which they call the "Lord's Day?"

Because Seventh-Day Adventists are strict about the Sabbath being kept from sunset to sunset, he charges them with Judaism. But what shall be said of those who are so obsessed with the idea that people should observe a definite day called Sunday, that they are prepared to invoke an obsolete and disgracefully undemocratic state law, in order that other people, who have no religious convictions, should conform outwardly to their notions of what is right?

Mr. Brunning makes much of the fact that as men travel over the globe, their reckoning of time is disturbed. If they travel west with the sun, the day naturally lengthens. If they travel east away from the sun, the day corres-



From torrid lands to the icy north the true people of God are obedient to the divine command.

THE second main point of Mr. Brunning's criticism of Sabbath observance, as understood by Seventh-Day Adventists, is that it is "geographically impossible."

He admits the moral obligation of the Sabbath command, as an integral part of God's law. He also allows that the Sabbath institution is indispensable to man's physical, mental, and moral well-being. He even holds that it is best that all men should keep the same day of the week in order to prevent confusion and chaos. But he appears to take this view, only in regard to the first day of the week. For when he discusses the seventh-day Sabbath, he discovers somehow that the definite day is not important; that the commandment calls merely for a seventh part—any seventh part—of our time. Yet he complains of the confusion occasioned by Seventh-Day Adventists who

pondingly shortens. This means that at certain points travellers need to adjust their reckoning of time. Of course, no actual time is lost or gained. That would be impossible. But the reckoning of time is disturbed, and must therefore be adjusted.

What God Asks

Mr. Brunning quite pertinently asks:

"When God by His creative power and wisdom appointed our solar system—'the sun to rule the day and the moon by night'—when He 'hanged the earth on nothing,' set it on its course around the sun to create seasons, and caused it to revolve on its axis to produce day and night, was He not aware of these geographical circumstances?"

Indeed He was. And for this reason, it is sacrilege to suggest that the observance of the Sabbath "according to the commandment," is "geographically impossible."

In whatever part of the world the orthodox Jew has travelled or settled, he has found no difficulty in carrying out the obligation of the fourth commandment. Nor has any practising Mohammedan failed to observe the Friday of each week. Certainly, no Sunday-keeper who has travelled round the world has, to our knowledge, ever been put to confusion over the day. And no Seventh-Day Adventist missionary in any part of the world has ever reported himself in trouble about the identity of the seventh day.

God does not ask His people in America to keep the Sabbath at the same time as those in India; nor those in Australia to observe it just when those in California are keeping it. He doesn't even ask the Sabbath-keeper in Maine to keep precisely the same hours as the people in California. He knows that this would be impossible. But He does ask His children to keep holy the seventh day, wherever and whenever the sun marks off that day.

We have no right to make this a stumbling-block in the path of obedience. The same God who made the earth still says through His universal law: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Exod. 20:8-11.

When God blessed and hallowed the seventh day, after He had rested upon it, He placed His special universal blessing on that

particular day. Hence whenever and wherever that day recurs, that is holy time, "according to the commandment."

A Vital Principle

The very wording of the commandment brings out the vital significance of the day and the institution. It is a perpetual memorial of God's creative power. It serves to keep man in mind of the fundamental fact that the whole human family belongs to God by right of creation, yes, and by right of redemption.

The Sabbath is fundamental because the fact of God is fundamental. It gives the lie to the now widely accepted theory of biological evolution. It witnesses against the revolting idea that man has evolved from the lowest forms of animal life; and proclaims that man, for whom the Sabbath was made, was fashioned in the image of God. Moreover, the Sabbath is designed to save man from drifting hopelessly on a sea of soul-destroying theories about the origin and destiny of mankind, and links him up with a personal Creator and with His Son Jesus Christ, who is the Father's agent in both creation and re-creation or redemption.

Creation came first, redemption after. It was the fall of man from the image of God in which he was made that necessitated redemption. And the Sabbath, which was instituted before the fall, became for all time a weekly reminder of that perfection which man forfeited through sin, and of his final restoration, through God's Son, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

So far from being typical of temporary institutions, the Sabbath will be carried over into the eternal kingdom, where the saints shall keep it with vastly added joy as they remember the infinite goodness of God in compassing their eternal redemption from sin, suffering, and death.

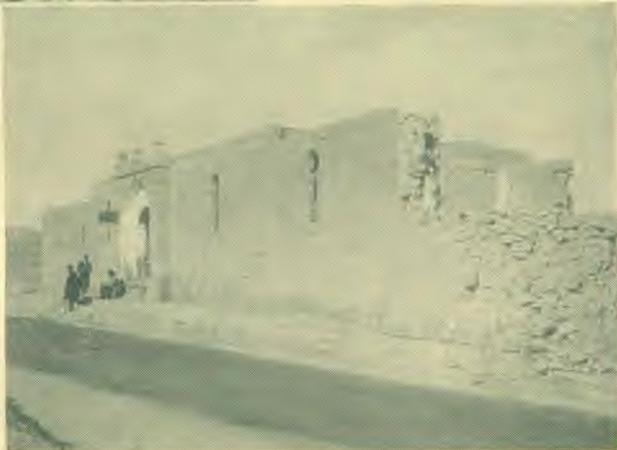
The Sabbath is an eternal reminder of God's *finished* work of creation and re-creation through Christ. When God rested on the seventh day of the first week of time, "the heavens and the earth were *finished*, and all the host of them." When Christ rose from the dead and ascended to His Father, He did so as God's royal representative of that finished work of redemption which He seeks to bring about in His humble followers who "keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,"



Above.—The Apostles' Fountain on the Jericho Road.

Right.—The Inn of the Good Samaritan.

Photos by the Author
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plateaux of Edom and Moab and Gilead, the scene of so many momentous events in the history of the chosen people of God.

So it came about that one December morning, before the outbreak of the tragic Jewish-Arab war in Palestine, I set off with two companions—an American and an Australian—and our Armenian driver on what was to be one of the most thrilling journeys I had ever made in Bible lands.

The air was chilly as we climbed into our big Plymouth car at the Swiss Hospice beneath

OVE

the north wall of Jerusalem and turned into the road that led down into the Kidron valley between Mount Zion and the Mount of Olives.

WHO that has ever travelled in Palestine," wrote Dean Stanley many years ago, "has not longed to cross the Jordan Valley to those mysterious hills which close every eastward view with their long horizontal outline, their overshadowing heights, their deep purple shade."

Certainly, I was no exception. I had looked across the great rift of Jordan from the Mount of Olives, I had stood upon the towering mound of ancient Bethshan blocking the western end of the Vale of Jezreel and gazed across the green valley to the buttresses of Mount Gilead, I had come down the steep road from the hills of Galilee to the "Bridge of the Daughters of Jacob" which spans the upper gorge of Jordan, and looked across to the plateau of Jaulan, the Gaulanitis which was once a part of the tetrarchy of Philip. And on each occasion the desire was irresistible to go over "the world's most storied river," as Dr. Nelson Glueck calls it, and explore the high

We passed the reputed spot where Stephen gave his life as the first Christian martyr, and at the bottom of the now arid valley we skirted the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus prayed before His great act of self-sacrifice for our eternal redemption.

Our road then wound up the slopes of Olivet, dotted with the whitened Jewish sepulchres which provided Jesus with so striking an illustration of the evil hearts of the Pharisees plotting His destruction. Reaching, in about a mile, the crest of the ridge of Olivet, the vast panorama of the Jordan Valley suddenly spread out before and below us.

Nestling immediately under the eastern side of the summit ridge lay the tiny village of Bethany where Jesus so often retired from the clamour of the Jewish capital to the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. I could clearly see the little brown tower of a mosque which marks the traditional tomb of the friend and devoted follower of Jesus.

Beyond Bethany, the hills dropped away yellow and barren as they merged into the "howling" wilderness of Judea, appropriately called Yeshimon or "devastation." From where we stood, however, the nearer hills hid the sea of peaks and precipitous gorges which fall in a distance of some ten to fifteen miles from 2,500 feet above sea level to 1,500 feet below the surface of the Mediterranean.

Thirty miles away as the crow flies, on the farther side of the invisible depths of the great rift of Jordan, the mountains of Moab rose in

ance and his wife just ten years before had spent several weeks in hospital as a result of a bandit attack at one of the wildest spots on the road.

Fortunately, no predatory bands accosted us on our way down that day and we travelled as safely as a solitary traveller who passed us on a fine Arab horse on his way up the steep track to Jerusalem.

We stopped for a few moments at the Apostles' Fountain. This name only goes back to medieval times, but it is appropriate, for

R JORDAN

W. L. EMMERSON

the morning light like a dark wall filling the eastern horizon.

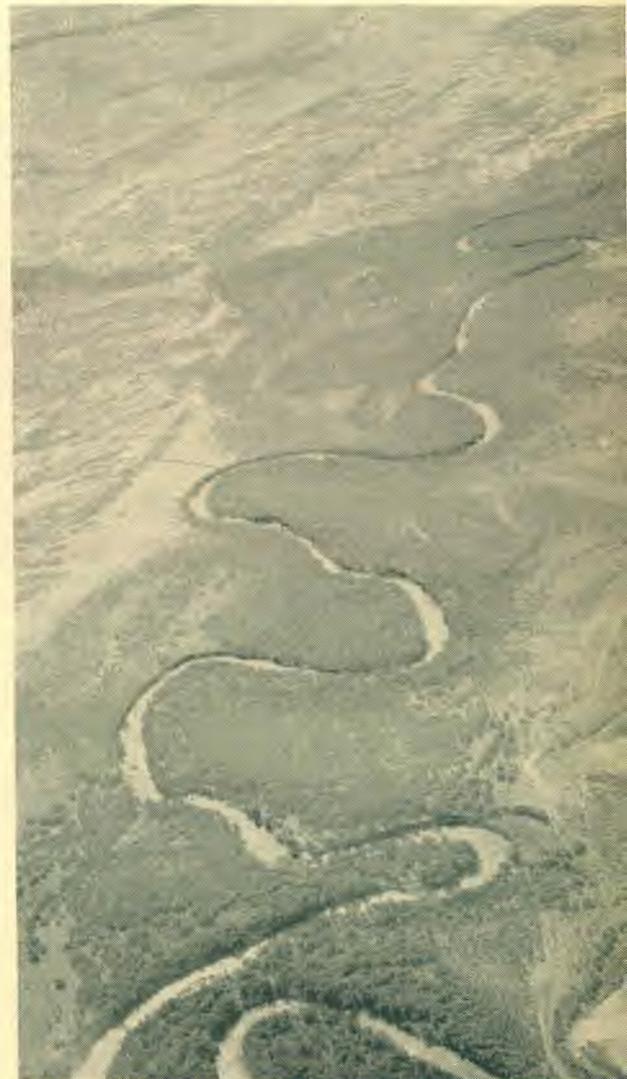
What memories crowded into our minds as the car began to descend in steep zig-zags into the wilderness. Down into that valley long ages ago Lot had gone to dwell in the wicked cities of the fertile plain, from which later he was plucked literally as a brand from the burning by the good hand of God. Over those far-off hills the hosts of Israel had once poured to possess the land of Canaan.

Many a prophet had emerged from this wilderness with messages from God to a rebellious people and more than one king had fled this way to find shelter amid the fastnesses on the other side of the river.

This way, on more than one occasion, came Jesus, this very road being the scene of at least one of His miracles and the setting of the vivid parable of the man who fell among thieves.

Once a Dangerous Road

That story, based upon facts familiar enough to the Jews of Christ's day, must have been re-enacted on countless subsequent occasions on the old road through the "wilderness," and there was just a little perturbation in my own mind as I remembered that a missionary acquaint-



© American Colony, Jerusalem
The tortuous path of the River Jordan through the "jungle" of the lower valley.

being the only spring on this upper stretch of the road, countless travellers, including the disciples and Jesus, must have stopped there to quench their thirst.

"Inn of the Good Samaritan"

About half-way to Jericho we came to the "Inn of the Good Samaritan," where we stopped, not for oil to mollify the wounds of some unfortunate modern wayfarer, but to buy petrol!

Looking around the dilapidated Turkish buildings we could see the remains of ancient cisterns, clearly indicating that on this spot earlier inns had stood as far back as, and even earlier than, the days of Christ. The architecture might have changed, but here without doubt was the very inn of which Christ spoke, and in which as likely as not He had Himself more than once rested on the long hard trail up through the wilderness. (Luke 10:34.)

Just a little farther down the road a fork divided the old track which followed the brink of the deep gorge of the Wady Kelt from the newer motor road which swept southward by an easier gradient past the entirely fictitious tomb of the prophet Moses.

It is strange that tradition should have led to the erection of a very elaborate Moslem mosque here when the Bible clearly states that Moses died and was buried not far from Nebo in the hills of Moab on the other side of the Jordan. (Deut. 34:6.) But there it is and every year it attracts multitudes of Moslems, who equally with Jews and Christians revere Moses, to the annual festival of Nebi Musa.

In the Valley of Achor

For ourselves we preferred to take the old road, getting out at one point to look down into the jagged depths of the wady, which is, in fact, the Valley of Achor where Achan was stoned for his greed and disobedience after the taking of Jericho. (Joshua 7:26.)

Clinging like a limpet to the farther side of the gorge we glimpsed the little convent of St. George which, perhaps appropriately, is still a sort of detention camp for wayward priests of the Orthodox persuasion. Some have connected this lonely gorge with the place where Elijah found refuge during the famine in Israel. But the Brook Cherith (1 Kings 17:3) is now known to be over on the other

side of Jordan where we were to find it later in our travels.

A Delightful Contrast

At last the track emerged from the hills onto the broad Jericho plain, green with cornfields, vegetable gardens, and groves of banana trees and date palms.

Even now, after centuries of neglect, the lush plain makes a delightful picture after the barren Judean wilderness, while in the time of Jesus and earlier, judging by the existing descriptions of it, the valley must have been one of the most desirable spots in the whole of Palestine.

Little wonder then that the ease-loving Lot, looking down from the bare Judean hills, should be attracted to this semi-tropical plain with its then populous and prosperous cities.

In the Bible Jericho is called the "city of palm trees" (Deut. 34:3; Judges 1:16), and Josephus declared that one of its palm groves covered an area of twenty-four square miles. He pronounced it "the most fruitful country of Judea," and averred, in fact, that "he would not be mistaken who should pronounce the place to be divine."

Memories of Cleopatra and Herod

That such laudatory words were no exaggeration is further evident from the fact that Mark Antony made a present of the Jericho region to Queen Cleopatra of Egypt, who no doubt made full use of the perfumes of its balsam trees. In later days it was redeemed by Herod the Great that he might make it his winter residence, for Jericho was tropical while Jerusalem froze.

It was while relaxing in Herodian Jericho that he gave the tragic order for the execution of John the Baptist who was being held a prisoner in the fortress of Machærus not many miles away on the other side of Jordan.

In Jericho, Herod spent the last years of his life, interspersed with futile visits in search of healing to the hot springs of Callirhoë by the Dead Sea, and there his tragic end at last came while Jesus was yet a child. On a golden bier the king's lifeless body made its last journey up the road to Jerusalem.

Not much now remains of Herod's Jericho. Scattered remains of aqueducts and buildings, however, reveal that the motor road goes right
(Continued on page 12.)



A happy home.

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God Bless Thy Year!

By Mary J. Vine

FROM somewhere they had each procured a little calendar—the pretty, page-for-a-month variety in which children delight.

"What day's your birthday on, Malcolm?"

"I don't know; when's yours?"

"Oh, mine is on a Sabbath. Oh dear! I'll have to have my tea-party on another day."

"When's Mummy's?"

"Why, Mummy's is on a Sabbath, too. Mummy—Mummy—where are you?"

"Here I am."

"Mummy, your birthday's on a Sabbath."

"Is it? Good!"

"When's Daddy's, Lilibet?"

"Daddy's is on a Tuesday. Oh, goody, mine's on a Thursday. Thursday's a nice day for a birthday. Who'll I have to my party this year? Anna won't be able to come, she's too far away—"

And so they go on—listing the bright days to come and recalling bright days past, anni-

versaries, going-away days, happy arrivals, the days they stayed up late, the day they climbed the big tower at Windsor, the late night they went to London to see the lights, the day Esther-Lou was lost—what a frantically miserable, ecstatically happy day that was, the day—

"Oh, Mummy, of course you remember, that day in the Zoo when that lady was feeding chocolate eclairs to the bears, and we wished we could have them instead. Now do you remember? Oh, and you bought rice crispies on the way home—the first since the war."

"Oh yes, I remember."

Oddly enough they seem to remember not at all the grey and gloomy days, the day when their sneezles developed into measles and bade fair, like Christopher Robin's, even to attain unto "theezles," and they felt pretty uncomfortable. They remembered only that the doctor was very kind and

The
HOME CORNER

that even though he was very busy, he still found time to sit on their beds and talk to them. The irritation was forgotten in the beautiful memory of oranges *ad lib*. One would never have judged that there were days when nothing satisfied, when they were irritable with one another and indeed with everything and everybody. The bright, glad days had been sufficiently happy and frequent to obliterate the other impressions and now, with their new little calendars in their hands, they could turn the pages joyfully and look forward. Life was full of promise, lovely Tuesdays, exciting Thursdays, and happy Sabbaths, with definitely other cheerful happenings between.

How about us? Is it the same with us?

From further consultation with their calendars I am informed that January 1 falls on a Tuesday. In many parts of the world it will be a day of merrymaking, so far as one can make merry in this year of our Lord 1952. But to us, just ordinary English housewives, maybe it will rain on Monday and so perforce we shall be ploughing through the family washing. Can't you see the heaps already, the scullery floor covered, whites, coloureds, odds and ends? January 1, or any other day, we say to ourselves, the work must go on, and we drop a sock here and a very grimy small shirt there. That is the point, however. Shall we not this year, more than ever before, try to make even the ordinary days, the monotonous days, the wash days if you will, just a little brighter with the help of a little of the dear Father's divine perception?

Maybe I have said it before, but I am always deeply thankful that the one woman whom the sacred Word calls great was just a common housewife such as you and I, a woman who baked bread and swept and cleaned and scrubbed, and so greatly did the good prophet Elisha esteem her care that there was scarcely anything for which she could have hoped for which he would not have supplicated heaven. Except, though, for that longed-for boy she was happy to bake and sweep and scrub. "I dwell among mine own people," she said, content. Her quiet life was not to her something to be regretted, and God loved her for it and pronounced her great. Envious woman!

Says the poet,

Forenoon and afternoon and night—Forenoon,
And afternoon, and night—Forenoon, and—what?
The empty song repeats itself. No more?
Yea, that is Life: make this forenoon sublime,
This afternoon a psalm, this night a prayer,
And Time is conquered, and thy crown is won.

What then if January 1 does come after a wet Monday? Whatever day it is it will scarcely be a holiday for most of us. But it can be a blessed day, as can every other of the three hundred and sixty-five days that follow, for we have even an extra day in 1952 in which to live praiseworthily. Let's do our best, shall we? Let's always lay the board as though He were our Guest, as indeed He is, wanted or unwanted. Let's keep a song in our heart and a word of praise upon our lips. By all the means we can let's be good neighbours. Above all, from morning till eventide, let's put first things first, the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Then we can be assured that all else, every last thing that we require, will be abundantly added unto us. God bless you every one.

God bless thy year,
Thy coming in,
Thy going out.
Thy rest,
Thy travelling about,
The rough, the smooth,
The bright, the drear,
God bless, God bless thy year.

Over Jordan

(Continued from page 10.)

across the site of the once magnificent city. On its streets Jesus often mingled with the pleasure-seeking throngs and somewhere along the very road we had come Jesus healed blind Bartimæus and talked with Zacchæus, the converted publican.

All these associations we remembered as we followed a stream across the green valley to the modern village of Eriha, which corresponds with the Jericho in medieval times.

The City Joshua Took

Finding nothing to detain us in this village of poor adobe houses with a few modern dwellings and an hotel or two, we sped quickly toward a high mound standing up out of the plain about a mile to the north, for we knew that here, hard by the spring of Ain es Sultan, once stood the most historic Jericho of them all, the city which Joshua took.

We had hoped to meet Professor John Gar-

stang on the site which he had excavated with such startling results, but he had been called away to Haifa on other business. We were happy, however, to be conducted over the ruined tell by one of his staff, and to have pointed out to us the details of the fortress town which fell to the children of Israel as they launched out upon their divinely-given task of conquering the land of promise.

Professor Garstang's discoveries on this historic mound, which so remarkably confirm the Bible account of the coming of Israel, we will not attempt to detail here. They will be reserved for a later article when we shall deal at length with the historic fords and fortresses of the Jordan.

Suffice it here, therefore, to say that we saw parts of the double wall surrounding the city on which stood Rahab's house. We saw that the walls had fallen "flat" just as the Bible declared, and we saw evidences of the fires that had destroyed the city after its capture by Joshua. And away in the distance we could see Jebel Kuruntel, one of whose many caves in all probability provided the spies with safe shelter until it was possible for them to escape back across the Jordan.

Thrilling indeed was it to stand there upon the site of the ancient city and reconstruct the whole Bible story of the Israelites' entry into the land of promise.

Returning along the modern road to Eriha we turned east again past a clump of cypresses marking the site of Gilgal, from whence the attack on Jericho was launched, and on down the remaining five miles to the waters of the Jordan. As we descended, the green plain gave place to a no-man's land of grey marly hills.

This is the so-called Ghor of Jordan, barren by reason of the salt soil and scored into deep gullies by wind and winter rain, making it for all the world like the "bad lands" of South Dakota.

A few hundred yards from the river, the marl hills ended in precipitous cliffs which drop down into the tangled vegetation of the

"jungle of Jordan" (Jer. 12:5; 49:19; 50:44), through which the yellow, turgid river, a hundred or so feet wide, scours its winding way to the Dead Sea a few miles to the south.

In a wide sweep our road took a gentler gradient down this last incline and we halted at what was then the customs post between the mandated territories of Palestine and Transjordan. Now the Kingdom of the Jordan extends on both sides of the Allenby Bridge spanning the river and up through the wilderness of Judæa to take in the Old City of Jerusalem itself.

World's Strangest Valley

Not until now had I realized that the Jordan Valley is the strangest, as well as the most historic valley in all the world, for standing there by the river's edge we were 1,300 feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea. Since we set out from Jerusalem that morning we had descended nearly four thousand feet to the lowest spot on the surface of the earth.

Geologists tell us that this valley, which begins far north in Syria and runs right down to the Red Sea, is part of a vast fault produced by the slipping of the rocks of a mountain range in the dim and distant past to produce this eerie depression in the earth's surface, down which the Jordan flows to lose itself in the salt waters of the Dead Sea.

And to think that here, in these strange depths, the miracle of the parting of the waters bore God's ancient people forward to the establishment of what might have been, if they had been faithful, the kingdom of God on earth!

No miracle happened as we gazed across the muddy waters that eddied past on the last lap of their journey. So, climbing back up the bank onto the bridge named after General Allenby, the hero of the Palestine campaign, we crossed over to the "other side" of Jordan!
(Next Time: "Where Were the Cities of the Plain?")

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THE CHILDREN'S



Pages

When Sammy Was Lost

By Vera Woodman Bristow

It was eight o'clock in the evening, and Mrs. Steffis went to the railway station in Richmond, U.S.A., to buy a ticket for a trip she was soon to take.

Boohoo! Boohoo! Sniff-sniff. The sound came from a corner of the railway station.

"Why, that sounds like someone crying," she said.

She stopped and listened. The pitiful sound of crying reminded her of her own little boy. As she looked in the corner, she saw a small negro boy about ten years old, crying as if his heart would break. She walked over to him.

"What's your name, sonny?" she asked.

Boohoo. Sniff-sniff. "Mah name's Sammy, ma'am."

"Sammy who?"

"Ah don't know."

"What is your mother's name?"

"Mandy Lee."

"Mandy Lee what?"

"Ah don't know." Boohoo!

"How long have you been here?"

Sniff-sniff. "Since 'dis mornin'."

"Where is your home?"

"In Kentucky."

"How did you get away out here in California?"

"Gran'ma send me."

"Where is your mother?"

"Gran'ma say she in San Pablo."

"Well, that is close here.

Do you know where she lives in San Pablo?"

"No ma'am."

"Tell me her name again."

"Mandy Lee."

"Mandy Lee." That was small information, but that and the fact that she lived in San Pablo was enough to make Mrs. Steffis make up her mind to help the boy find his mother.

Now there are lots of negro people in San Pablo, because many had come there during the war to work on the big ships that were made in the great shipyards near by. Sammy's mother was no doubt among these, and Mrs. Steffis breathed a prayer asking Jesus to help her as she tried to think of what to do to find Mandy Lee. Just then she remembered a negro friend of hers—a nurse, Sally—who worked in the same hospital where she did. She decided to call Sally. Perhaps Sally would know Mandy Lee. She took Sammy and went to the phone box to talk to Sally. She told Sally all about Sammy, Mandy Lee, and the railway station. Sally told Mrs. Steffis to bring the boy to her house.

When they arrived at Sally's home, over in the negro section of the city, Sally took Sammy in her arms, dried his tears, and said: "Now, don't you cry. We're going to find your mamma. Jesus knows



See how nicely you can paint this picture and send it with your name, age, and address to Auntie Margaret, The Stanborough Press Ltd., Watford, Herts., not later than January 24th.

where she is. Let's all ask Jesus to help us."

So they all knelt there in Sally's home and asked Jesus to help them find Mandy Lee.

It was prayer meeting night. As Mrs. Steffis left Sally and Sammy, Sally decided that she would go to one of the negro churches and ask there if anyone knew a woman named Mandy Lee.

At the church Sally talked to the negro minister, told him the story of Sammy, and asked him to help find Mandy Lee. He said he would ask the people.

"Does anyone here have the name Mandy Lee?" he asked.

No one answered. Not a hand was raised. Sally's heart sank. Surely, she thought, someone in this group would know Mandy Lee. As she was leaving the service, however, a small negro boy about Sammy's age came up to Sally, and said: "Did you all ask about a lady you don't know named Mandy Lee?"

"Yes, we did, sonny. Do you know a lady by that name?"

"No'm, Ah don't, but Ah heard some of the boys Ah plays with talk about a lady named Mandy Lee."

"Where do you play, sonny?"

"Down in the park."

"Thank you, sonny, we'll go down near the park and see if we can find Mandy Lee."

It was late now, and almost everyone had gone to bed. Sally didn't know where to turn, except to go "down to the park." She walked down one street, praying as she walked, and asking Jesus what to do. Presently she saw a woman come out of one of the houses on that street, walk down the steps, and come onto the pavement. Sally decided to ask her if

she knew a lady named Mandy Lee.

"Pardon me," she said, "but do you know a woman by the name of Mandy Lee?"

"Ah sure does. My name is Mandy Lee. Why do you ask?"

"Are you from Kentucky?"

"Yes, ma'am. How'd you know?"

"Do you have a boy named Sammy, about ten years old?"

THIS NEW YEAR

This New Year beginning,

Make it truly new;

Change into some new ways,

Old ways may not do.

New thoughts, new kindnesses,

A new outlook, too,

Helping others gladly,

Making dreams come true.

M. G. Belleine.

"Ah sure do, but he's in Kentucky."

"No, he isn't. He's right here in San Pablo—at my house."

"Oh, my! Why, they told me they would wire me when they sent Sammy way out here. Ah wrote Mother last month to send him, but Ah haven't heard a word. Is he at your house?"

"Yes, he is, and you can thank God for directing us here to you. Out of all these thousands of people, He led me to you. You come with me; Sammy is waiting for us."

Together they went to Sally's home; and when Sammy saw his mother, he stopped crying and ran to her. They all gave thanks to Jesus for helping Sammy find his mother. Jesus watches over all boys and girls. When they are lost, or need help, He is the One who can hear and help.

Results of Competition No. 23

Prize-winners.—Greta Crocker, Newbold College, Binfield, Berks.; Lorna

Conroy, 103 Marina, St. Leonards, Sussex.

Honourable Mention.—Maureen Woodman (Southampton); Margaret Johnson (Rochester); Amy Randlesome (Beccles); Selwyn Hodgson (Middlesbrough); Leslie Price (Coventry); Evelyn Potter (Bristol); Pamela Dunning (Plaistow); Molly Rich (Launceston); Ruth Price (Wokingham); Josephine Haseldine (Clacton); Kathleen Tickner (Birmingham); Megan Rose (London); John Rich (Launceston); Siegfried Baron (Church); Olive King (Chelmsford); Brenda Herridge (Rickmansworth); Ruth Johnson (Rochester); Jacqueline Nurse (Holt); Pearl Rich (Launceston); Barbara Birch (Rickmansworth); Ann Metcalf (Colliers Wood); Carole Westwood (Watford); Gillian Whitefield (Burton); Sonia Lynes (Birmingham); David Balderstone (Watford); Carol Lark (Norwich); Avril Baker (Newport); Albert Wagstaff (Rickmansworth).

Those who tried hard.—D. Butler (Storrington); Michael Parish (Norwich); Cynthia (Burton); Barbara Ferguson (Blackburn); Gillian Jones (Mountain Ash); Marie Lee (Belfast); Eleonora Baron (Church); Raymond Lock (London); Frank Dickinson (Middlesbrough); Glen Goodall (Shrewsbury); Cynthia Baxendale (Manchester); Brenda Plant (Stoke-on-Trent); John Baker (Newport); Leslie Sitton (Plymouth); Marjorie Shearing (Norwich); Frances McCartney (Godmchester); Miss Isa Hutchinson (Larne); Peter Scott (Norwich); Ann Culbert (Merton Abbey); Paul Martine (Beccles); Geoffrey Trigg (Churcham); Ann Trimble (Norwich); Janet Macdonald (High Wycombe); Elizabeth (Huntingdon); Christopher Rich (Bristol); Ethel McColl (Kippen); Jeanette Duffill (Birmingham); Maureen Fisher (Hayes); Delys Waterhouse (Oldbury); Lydia Harris (Maxey); Robert Kennett (Portslade); June Gower (Romford); Brenda Goodman (Birmingham); Tony Barton (Birdlip); Robert Smith (Bishop's Cleeve); Audrey Callaghan (Wakefield); Michael Wright (Cheltenham); David Bruce (Birmingham); Hendy Ashworth (Billericay); Kathleen Croft (Nottingham); Hugh Champion (Street); David Millett (Bristol); Barrie Sage (Colchester); Ann Aldred (Lowestoft); Rita Moss (Southampton); Ralph Woodward (North Harrow); Victor Mitchell (Cardiff); Jennifer Haug (Colchester); Beverley Smart (Leicester); David (Wisbech); Patricia Hocking (Redruth); Hazel Harris (Cambridge); Ian Watson (Birmingham); Christine Sanders (St. Austell); Christina Jurgensen (Cardiff); Barry Fawcus (Coventry); Vivienne Ellis (Chelmsford); Christine Goodman (Birmingham); Ruth Balderstone (Watford); Michael Metcalf (Colliers Wood); Linda Turner (Birmingham); Margaret Cutler (Birmingham); Susan Floate (Felixstowe).

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At the Door of the Year

*The old year has ended, and all things are new,
New hope for the many, new faith for the few;
Fresh pathways to travel, clean pages to turn,
New joys and new sorrows, new lessons to learn.*

*And yet, in the heart that still clings to the year
That has gone with its memories, there lingers a fear
Like that of a child who has lost in the press
The sight of his mother and touch of her dress.*

*The paths of the old year were worn by our feet,
And the sense of possession has rendered it sweet.
And the thorns that we gathered are softened to-day
By the memory of flowers that we found by the way.*

*But the year with its joys and its sorrows has gone,
And the heart, though it questions, must ever
press on.*

*Step bravely, and live, as it were, day by day!
God has promised you courage and strength for
the way.*

*He will lighten your burdens with help from above;
For weakness, His power; for sorrow, His love;
And through any trial you are called on to face
He has promised to you an abundance of grace.*

*So if to your lot falls but sadness and care,
Remember, He's promised your burdens to bear.
If love and rejoicing the new year shall send,
The blessing will double if shared with your Friend.*

*So step forth with courage the pathway untrod,
And keep your hand clasped in the hand of your
God.*

*With heart free from doubting, and mind free from
fear,*

May God bless and give you a Happy New Year.



By

NORMA NORRIS

