

THE BIBLE AND



OUR TIMES

Magnificent Illusion!

By Arthur S. Maxwell

When the Dove of Peace fluttered over San Francisco's Opera House in 1945, everybody was so full of joy and hope that they were willing to provide it with a gilded cage anywhere on earth, regardless of expense. In the years that have elapsed since then, millions of pounds have been poured into the enterprise, until to-day there stands on Manhattan Island a unique and splendid structure of glass, marble, steel, and aluminium, nobly conceived and grandly executed. No pains have been spared to make it in every respect worthy of the beautiful dream that inspired it.

Believing that "the first objective of the human beings who work in the United Nations is to obtain peace in the world," the architect planned that all the rooms should be "as open and as filled with sunlight" as possible. Abundant provision for television, radio, motion pictures, and the press has made all the walls in effect as transparent as the glass of the lofty secretariat building.

Confusion in a Gilded Cage

But alas, as the dove entered its gilded cage it entered not alone. Through the wide-open doors came birds of another colour and another temperament. And from that moment there has been strife in this earthly paradise.

Already it is apparent to all that there are irreconcilable differences between important member nations—divisions as wide and deep as those which finally brought the League of Nations to its unhappy end when World War II broke out.

At the recent General Assembly, M. Schuman of France spoke solemnly of the "disturbing symptoms of disintegration" in a "structure conceived in an immense hope." In the same



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Members of the forces of eighteen nations visit the United Nations headquarters in New York.

★ THOSE who have not as yet visited the beautiful buildings on the East River in New York City which form the headquarters of the United Nations should do so soon, before they are taken over by some Government department, a hotel like the Waldorf Astoria, or possibly the Ford Motor Company.

For it is a sad fact that all is not well at the United Nations. Its most loyal and devoted friends are filled with anxiety concerning its future. Responsible United States senators have even expressed the view that it was a mistake to invite the organization to make its home in that country, and that it had better start thinking about moving elsewhere. On second thoughts they don't like the idea that a little bit of America is no longer America. Too late they realize that the granting of extra-territorial rights to an international body can be fraught with grave peril.

meeting, the representative of the Netherlands, recalling that seven years ago the organization had no home "save in the hearts of the people," questioned if "in its present magnificent headquarters it retains its place in the hearts of men."

Constant wrangles between representatives of Eastern and Western powers, the use of the podium by some as a sounding board for hate-filled propaganda, and the inability to find a solution to some of the most vital and urgent problems referred to the Assembly, have raised serious doubts in many minds as to how long the organization can continue to go through the motions of peace-making without showing some tangible progress toward its goal.

"No wonder the beauties and conveniences of the Assembly's new home do not allay the profound worries of the delegates," wrote Anne O'Hare McCormick in the *New York Times* recently. "A permanent meeting place, they sigh, does not ensure permanence."

Doubts have been multiplied by the findings of a Federal Grand Jury of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York—a jury empanelled to investigate violations of U.S. laws directed against subversive activities and espionage. As this Grand Jury pursued its inquiries it was led more and more directly to the United Nations as a hot-bed of anti-American sympathizers.

According to *United States News*, "an informed estimate suggests that as many as one-half of the 1,350 administrative executives of the United Nations" are actually members of an international organization that is violently antagonistic to the United States, or who are people who willingly do what that

organization wants. Even several American citizens employed at the United Nations have been proved to be more loyal to this foreign power than to their own country.

Such a situation, in the very heart of America's greatest metropolis, is obviously intolerable. No nation could permit it to continue. When an organization of any kind—however noble its purpose, however beautiful the phraseology of its charter—becomes a centre of espionage, a hide-out for subversives, it becomes a menace to the nation that harbours it.

Reform or Perish

Therefore, the United Nations must reform or perish. As the Jesuit *Civiltà Cattolica* said recently: "Either the United Nations reforms itself to live or, remaining what is it, will pass from paralysis to the quiet of the tomb."

Can it reform? We do not think so. It may fire some of the most prominent subversives, but others, by devious means, will infiltrate to take their places. This is a problem of the heart, and mere hiring and firing will not settle it. It is as complex as sin, and as hard to eliminate. And like the problem of sin, it is beyond human solution.

This is why we say, Visit the United Nations now, while it is still open to the public. Stare
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Mr. Vishinski bangs upon his desk as he tirades against the representatives of the West.

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SAVED BY FAITH

By J. A. McMillan

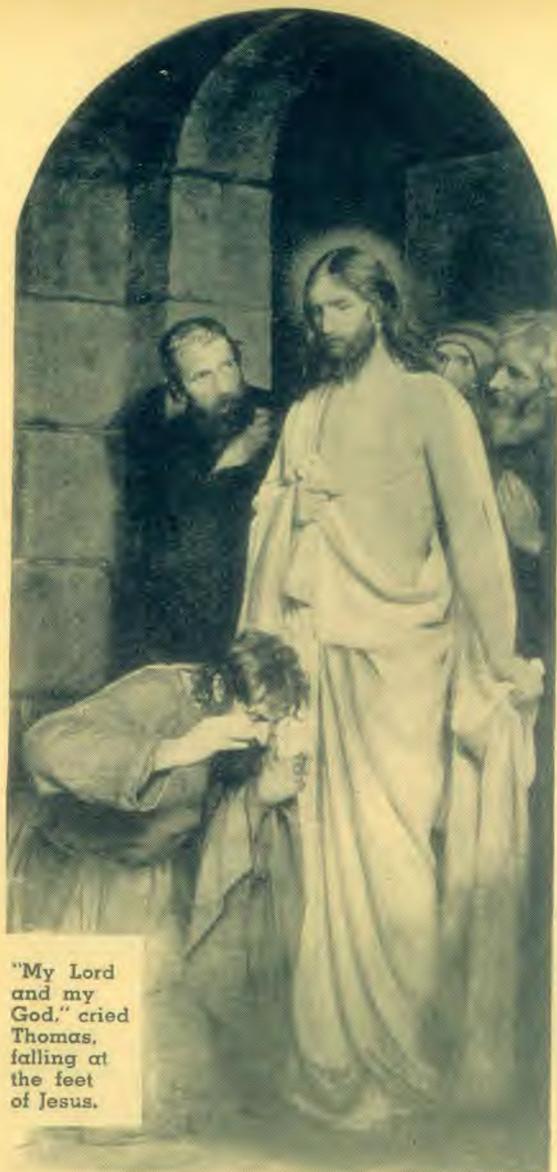
works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." John 6:28, 29.

At every point of contact the Scriptures insist that the only way for sinners to be reconciled to God is by way of faith. Abraham "believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness." Gen. 15:6. So reads the ancient record of this remarkable man. He believed and God reckoned it to him for righteousness. Various glimpses of this mighty truth were revealed through patriarchs and prophets until the fullness of the time had come.

Trust in God

It is in the Gospel of Jesus that the glory of salvation by faith is seen in its fullness. The teaching of our Lord makes it clear that faith, as He expressed it, is a personal trust in God's love and watchcare. When the centurion manifested his trust in the power of Christ's word to heal, Jesus commended him and said: "I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." Luke 7:9. Jesus also drew a lesson of trustfulness from the birds and plants which are sustained by Providence. "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" Matt. 6:30. Again, when the disciples were terrified because of a sudden storm that threatened to engulf their boat, Jesus "rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And He said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that you have no faith?" Mark 4:39, 40.

In all these incidents the word "trust" could be substituted for the word "faith." Faith then may be defined as a personal trust in the grace



"My Lord and my God," cried Thomas, falling at the feet of Jesus.

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★ "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth. . . ." In our last article we saw that the salvation of God was provided for everyone. This study centres on the terms of salvation, that "whosoever believeth" may be saved.

The great difference between the true Christian teaching and all other religious philosophies lies right here. It presents salvation by faith; the others provide salvation by works. In every generation the carnal heart has asked: "What shall we do, that we might work the

and goodness of God. Abraham trusted God's promise and the Lord reckoned such trust as equivalent to righteousness. It is by accepting in all good faith the promises of God's Word that we are changed from the children of disobedience to the children of God. The new birth takes place when we receive "with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls." James 1:21. We become "partakers of the divine nature" through accepting by faith God's "exceeding great and precious promises." 2 Peter 1:4. Amid the perils and problems of our Christian pilgrimage, we "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Peter 1:5.

In all these experiences trust and the Word of God play their vital parts. The life of faith is possible only when we realize that man does "not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matt. 4:4. This truth is expressed by Jeremiah thus: "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." Jer. 17:7, 8.

"Through this Man"

The Acts of the Apostles continues this theme, emphasizing the need of the individual to exercise personal trust in the saving power of Jesus. Of the converts baptized on the day of Pentecost, it is recorded that they "gladly received" the Word of God "and all that believed were together." Acts 2:41, 44. When the paralytic was healed, Peter explained that "His name [Jesus] through faith in His name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by Him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." Acts 3:16. The full implication of this personal trust in Jesus is proclaimed by Paul: "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts 13:38, 39.

This last scripture brings to us one of the great words of the Bible, justification. The

epistle of Paul to the Romans was written to set forth the doctrine that we are justified by faith and not by the deeds of the law. Note the principles laid down by Paul on this subject. The Gospel of good news he preached was God's power and grace to save sinners. (Rom. 1:16, 17.) The sinner was any human being, whether Jew or Gentile, who had inherited the Adamic strain. (Rom. 3:9-20.) It follows that the only way back to God was by vicarious justification. Jesus took our nature, our sins, and in our stead died for our sins. (Rom. 5:8.) When we accept this divine provision we are "justified by faith," and "have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:1.

Paul then proceeds to answer an objection that has often arisen. If we are justified by faith only, and not by works, does that not leave us free to continue the old life of sin? (Rom. 6:1.) His answer is that faith, by its very nature, produces obedience to the will of God in a way that morality and legality never can do. Faith, according to Paul, is not an opinion nor a belief; it is a confiding trust in the power of God and the atoning grace of Christ by which the soul becomes a conqueror. Whether it be the law of sin which operates in our bodily members or whether it be a formidable array of forces and circumstances outside ourselves, we can by faith "thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord," for the sure and certain victory. (Rom. 7:25; 8:1, 37-39.)

Power to Obey

Paul then advances the argument that saving faith is a power enabling us to obey the will of God. "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise. . . . The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom. 10:6-9.

There is but one further link in Paul's chain of evidence to bind the sinner to God. This is, that the faith created by the Spirit of God in the human heart both justifies and leads to obedience. It should be noticed that in Romans eleven, the word for "faith" in verses thirty and thirty-one, is rendered in the margin "obeyed." And Paul writes of the failures of the past: "But they have not all obeyed the Gospel."

(Continued on back page.)



By R. Leinweber

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Moses the lawgiver of Israel, talks with Jesus and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Returning to God's Standard

By Victor Hall

★ THE executive committee of the World Council of Churches has truly stated: "Man's rebellion against his Creator has reached such a point that, unless stayed, it will bring self-destruction upon him. All this is a perversion; it is against the moral order by which man is bound; it is a sin against God. . . . This is the hour to listen afresh to the Word of the God who is the Lord of history."

Yes, indeed, it is high time that man returned to God's only rule of right conduct. What says this Word? "Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the duty of all men." Eccles. 12:13, R.V. (marg.) Said Jesus also: "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." John 14:15.

Two Attacks on God's Law

Two major attacks are being made upon the law of God to-day. The first is direct and open. Those who deny the existence of God naturally deny also the existence of absolute moral

standards. For this reason, Communists have no scruples about using lies, murder, and oppression as weapons. One criterion only determines whether an action is right or wrong in their eyes: Does it advance Communism?

The second attack is indirect, subtle. Many are taught to believe that we are under no obligation to keep God's law on the grounds that it was abolished at the cross. The sacrifice of Christ is thus made a licence for sin. Familiarity with grace has bred contempt of the law which grace upholds. Those who glibly declare: "You are not under law but under grace" forget the words that follow: "Shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace? God forbid. . . . Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Rom. 6:14-16.

Both these attacks challenge God's expressed authority—His law.

Man Cannot Obey

The fundamental reason for man's attempts to set aside God's law is thus expressed by the apostle Paul: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7. Jesus, however, clearly pointed out in His teaching that although "with men it is impossible; . . . with God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26), and what we call the "grace" of God is His power freely given to do the impossible and to make possible obedience to His will.

The Law Is a Mirror of Sin

"Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" eagerly asked a certain rich young ruler. (Mark 10:17.) "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," replied Jesus. He did not begin by saying, "Believe on Me," because first the young man must know he was a sinner. Paul declared, "I had not known sin but for the law." Rom. 7:7. So Jesus held up the mirror of the law before the young man to reveal the ugly sores of sin still there. (James 2:25; Isa. 1:5, 6.)

The humiliating revelation of sinfulness makes men cry out, "What shall we do?" Peter in response to this cry declared: "Repent, and be baptized." Paul at first tried repenting and turning from sin in his own strength. But like every other one who has tried this way, he discovered: "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. . . . O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7:18-24. He was under the law, condemned by it, and enslaved by it.

Jesus Satisfied the Law's Demands

But Jesus can and will deliver. He "gave Himself for our sins that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God our Father." Gal. 1:4.

Because He "loved righteousness and hated lawlessness" His first act was to "magnify the law, and make it honourable." Isa. 42:21; Heb. 1:9. He showed, for example, that the command, "Thou shalt not kill" forbade the murderous thought as much as the murderous act. (Matt. 5:21.) This He taught in order that sin "by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." Rom. 7:13. He jolted men from their smug satisfaction with their own lives.

Secondly, He left us "an example, that [we] should follow His steps: who did no sin; neither was guile found in His mouth." 1 Peter 2:21, 22. He could say: "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psa. 40:8. He demonstrated that perfect obedience is possible, and He is our pattern.

Thirdly, He was "delivered for our offences, and was raised for our justification." Rom. 4:25. God sacrificed His own Son rather than abolish His holy law. "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Isa. 53:6. "He died that we might be forgiven."

So as soon as we ask for pardon, the record of our guilty past is covered by the perfect life of Jesus. God no longer sees us, but Jesus. We stand before God as though we had never broken any of His commandments. This forgiveness is free, and we receive it merely by believing the promise of God. We are saved by grace through faith.

Power to Obey

But Jesus provided more than merely a legal arrangement whereby we may be acquitted from the guilt of sin every time we transgress God's law. He provided the power of a new life.

We are reborn of the Holy Spirit (John 3:3), and this spiritual life is governed by a spiritual law "written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." 2 Cor. 3:3. Speaking of this new covenant God says: "I will put My law into their mind, and write them on their hearts." Heb. 8:10. Thus the Christian's heart, with which he loves God supremely, becomes an obedient heart, like the heart of Jesus.

Says Paul: "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." Rom. 8:3, 4. And again: "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. 2:15.

We cannot by ourselves obey God, for in our flesh is nothing good. But God can empower our feeble desires to serve Him if we will allow Him. "The just shall live by faith." Rom. 1:17.

Thus the Christian may declare with Paul: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil. 4:13.

WHAT DOES THE RESURRECTION of the Body Mean?

By W. L. EMMERSON

★ WHEN the doctrine of the resurrection was set forth by Jesus—Himself “the Resurrection, and the Life” (John 11:25)—and when by inspiration the implications of the resurrection were developed by the apostles, particularly Paul, it met with violent opposition.

To the orthodox but bigoted Jews the resurrection was acceptable, but the recognition of Jesus was a “stumbling-block.” 1 Cor. 1:23.

To the adherents of the philosophic doctrine of natural immortality, whether among the Greeks or among the Hellenized Jews, the resurrection was “foolishness,” 1 Cor. 1:23.

The materialistic Epicureans, whose ideas had evidently also influenced the sect of Sadducees (Acts 23:8), denied any reconstitution of man after his dissolution in death. To them, therefore, the idea of the resurrection was untenable.

The Stoics, at the other extreme, believed in the soul's joyful release from the body at death. Consequently, to suggest to them that the soul died with the body was a slur on its immortality, and to further suggest reconfinement by resurrection in another carnal “prison” instead of its reascending to higher realms, was quite scandalous.

This was the background against which the apostles preached, and against these rival doctrines believers in the Bible truth of resurrection life only through Christ have had to struggle all down the years to our time.

To-day Christ is still a “stumbling-block” to the Jews. There are likewise plenty of modern Epicureans, like Lord Bertrand Russell and

Sir Arthur Keith, who accept with resignation the prospect of eternal oblivion for all.

Equally numerous are modern Stoics, like the Theosophists and the Spiritualists, who subscribe to such teachings as are expressed in this quotation:

“Death is a dying into a new life. . . . We find ourselves in a new world—the world of the etheric, in which spirit, freed from flesh, finds new perspectives . . . a world yielding in its turn to others; with the probability that we, so to speak, ‘die from life to life,’ in what is a never-ending perfecting.”

Undermining the Faith from Within

But though Satan, by his devilish ingenuity, might persuade many to embrace ideas in complete contradiction to Bible teaching, he knew that real success would not crown his efforts unless he got among the people of God and undermined their faith by compromise from within.

In Jewish thought in the centuries immediately preceding the beginning of our era, he succeeded in getting sects like the Pharisees to adopt a hybrid teaching on the after-life in which they combined the pagan teaching on the immortality of the soul with the Bible teaching of an ultimate resurrection of the body, and strange as it may seem he soon secured also for this strange hybrid a wide acceptance in the Christian church.

Like every other compromise with error it arose from a desire on the part of half-converted Christians to lessen the distance between the world and the church, and then to cover up this unworthy motive, a theological basis for the compromise was sought.

The “proof text” was found in the phrase, “the resurrection of the body,” from which it

Life Only Through Christ.—7



By C. S. Dixon

The gathering of the saints at the return of Jesus.

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began to be argued that the resurrection is concerned only with the "body" and not with the "soul." This latter, it was alleged, cannot die and, therefore, cannot be described as returning to life.

At death, therefore, according to this teaching, the individual enters upon a period of "disembodied" existence which continues until the resurrection, when the disembodied "spirit" is united to its "body" again.

Rome Fosters the Error

It is, of course, impossible to say just where and when this idea came into the church. Doubtless it arose simultaneously in many places among Hellenized Jews and Greeks who sought to assimilate the ideas with which they had grown up with teachings of the Christian faith which they had embraced.

But while it is glimpsed only occasionally in the writings of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, it became more and more common in the post-Nicene period and, as might be expected,

reached its full development when it was embodied in the corpus of teaching of the apostate Roman Catholic Church.

Typical of that church's wresting of the Bible phrase "the resurrection of the body" is this statement from Gibson's *Catechism Made Easy*:

"By the resurrection of the body we mean that we shall all rise again with the same bodies at the day of general judgment. Until that day our bodies will be buried in the earth, and our souls only will, for the time, receive the reward or punishment of their good or evil deeds; but at the last day the body will be again united to the soul, and share for all eternity its reward or punishment."—Quoted by G. D. Rosenthal in "Survival," page 98.

At the Reformation this hybrid teaching, like some others, was not expunged by all the Protestant churches and, as a result, we find such a statement as this in the Report of the Biblical Commission on *Doctrine in the Church of England*:

"The main tradition of the church, as it came to be systemized in patristic and mediæval times has postulated a period of disembodied existence as intervening between the death of the individual and the final consummation. Not only were the souls in purgatory regarded as disembodied, but those also who were classed as 'saints' in the distinctive sense of the word, and who were regarded as being already 'in heaven' and as having already in some measure attained to the 'beatific vision' of God, were nevertheless thought of as having entered into the resurrected life, but as being destined still to 'rise' upon the last great day."—Pages 210, 211.

A "Bodily" Resurrection

That this hybrid doctrine is utterly false to the intent of the apostle Paul and out of harmony with the rest of Scripture must be evident from the briefest investigation.

Paul's inspired phrase was, in fact, couched to exclude every view except the one true doctrine that in the resurrection there would be a simultaneous resuscitation of the whole man.

Against the Platonic notion that the destiny of man is to enter a purely bodiless form of existence, Paul asserts that man will live again in bodily form as really and tangibly, and in as real and tangible a world, as he did in his former existence. The after-life is not a state of being "unclothed" he explains to the Corinthian believers, but of being "clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." 2 Cor. 5:4, 2.

Against the equally pagan idea of transmigration of souls, that, in other words, souls are capable of living in the body for a "lifetime," then in a disembodied state for a period and then entering the old body or another body and living another life, Paul's expression "the resurrection of the body" or "bodily resurrection" emphasizes the fact that the after-life will be inaugurated by a resuscitation of the whole individual from a non-living state to a living state and that this will occur at one and the same point of time for all believers.

"The idea of an *interim* body," asserts Dr. S. D. F. Salmond, "with qualities intermediate between the earthly body and the glorified body is, as Meyer justly observes, something entirely strange to the New Testament. . . . It says nothing of a special order of body for the intermediate state."—*The Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, page 567.

This hybrid teaching is not only utterly alien to the faith "once delivered unto the saints," but it is completely illogical and fantastic in itself.

If the premise be accepted that there is nothing in the universe except matter, then it is logical to conclude that death is eternal as did the ancient Epicureans, and as the modern rationalists do.

Similarly, if one starts from the premise that the soul is a spiritual entity which somehow has come to be imprisoned in the flesh, it is reasonable to conclude that it could return on the death of the body to its former state.

But if the spirit is released at death to its "larger life" and then after a certain period is compelled to return to the confines of a material body, this would be a retrogression quite impossible of comprehension.

Furthermore, the Greek philosophers accepted the logical position that when the soul shed its carnal envelope it shed also the feelings and passions associated with the senses, but this hybrid conception makes the discarnate soul experience pleasure or pain which can only be conceived as sensory impressions and yet without any body to experience these feelings with!

The fact is that it is impossible to credit the experiences of the after-life postulated by those who hold this view without giving to the "spirits" some kind of body. How could the "spirit" see without eyes, hear without ears, feel either pleasure or pain without organs of sense to arouse these mental impressions?

But this makes the confusion worse confounded. The after-life, on this basis, becomes not two periods, one of "bodiless" and the other of "bodily" existence, but two periods of "bodily" existence with two different kinds of body, exchanged at the resurrection for no imaginable reason at all!

Thus the more one thinks about the after-death state the more one realizes that either one must accept the premise of materialism and believe in no after-life at all, the platonic position that death is a release for ever from the flesh, or the biblical position that death is a state of complete dissolution, recovery from which is possible only by the resurrection of the "whole man" at God's appointed time.

(Next Time: "With What Body?")

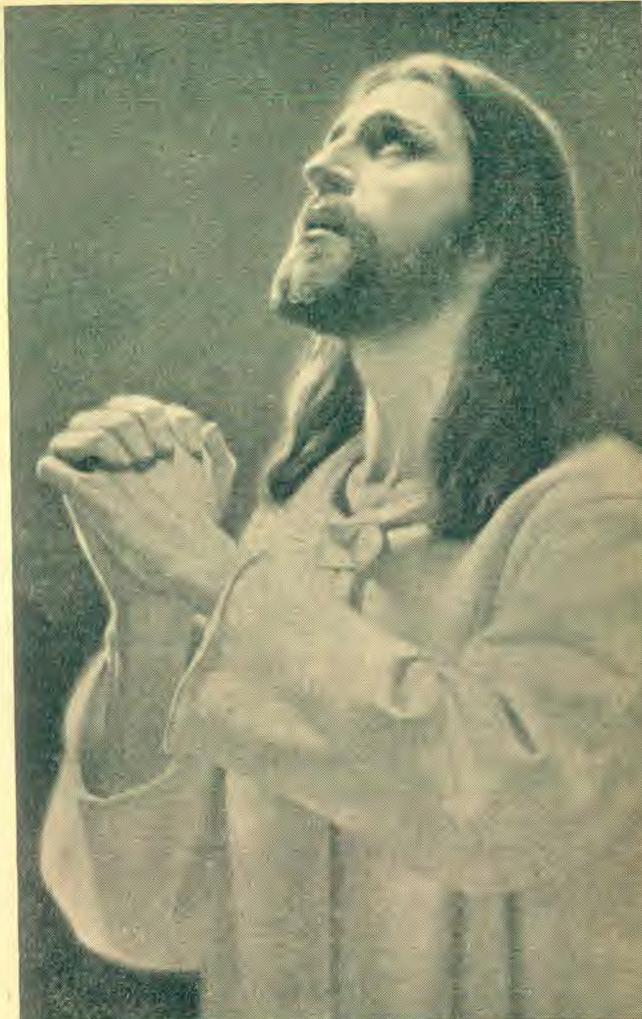
TEACH US TO PRAY!

By T. J. Bradley

★ WITHIN the brief span of our own lives, we have plainly observed the quickening pace of events. I don't mean so much nationally or internationally, though it would be quite true to say that things happen so fast and situations become so rapidly complicated that many of us feel lost in the dust and whirl of events that passed us overnight. I mean that in our daily and personal lives, at work and in our homes, everything has to be speeded up to keep abreast of this power-producing, jet-propelled age. And the end is not yet! Even into the world of sport and pleasure there is projected the influence of our uneasy, restless era. Few have much time for leisure, and for those who have the time, leisure seems to have no time to wait for them!

But our twentieth-century civilization is paying a heavy price for this unholy bustle. It is written on the bodies and in the souls of countless thousands. It is revealed in the distracted minds of millions and has scorched a path across the aching heart of the world! And deaf ears are turned too often to the simple remedies taught in the Scriptures. It is, therefore, significant to note the injunction of a great authority on mental sicknesses, Dr. Hyslop of Bethlem Mental Hospital, London: "As one whose whole life has been concerned with the suffering of the human mind," he writes, "I believe that of all the hygienic measures to counteract depression of spirit, and all the miserable results of a distracted mind, I would undoubtedly give first place to the simple habit of prayer."

Perhaps that sufficiently pinpoints the problem to allow us to turn to the Bible for further enlightenment. The hustle of activity is considered by many to be the sum of religion and the seal of success. But as activity increases,



By L. Heupel

Jesus prays.

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there is danger of overlooking some of the great Christian privileges, chief among which is the blessing of prayer. Christ's life was "crowded with labour and responsibility, yet how often was He found in prayer." His ability to live a life wholly devoted to the good of others was preserved and strengthened by the hours of quiet retirement wherein He made contact with the source of divine strength and was braced for further duties or further trials.

That the disciples were deeply impressed by Jesus' prayer life becomes evident when we read that after one such period of prayer the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Lord, teach us to pray." Luke 11:1. Had not these men grown up in a nation where prayer was a daily duty?

Had not they reached manhood with prayer formulas easily falling from their lips? All this was true, but still they longed to be taught *how* to pray. Perhaps they had not even realized what prayer was, since praying is more than repeating set phrases and sentences. "Lord, teach us to pray" will be formed on every lip and in every heart conscious of a divine purpose for the life.

What Is Prayer?

What is prayer? The word comes from a Hebrew word which signifies appeal or intercession. Prayer has often been analyzed into seven or eight aspects such as: invocation, adoration, confession, petition, pleading, dedication, thanksgiving, and blessing. But nowhere in the Bible has inspiration specifically defined what prayer is. We have examples of prayer and praying. We have counsel on the value of prayer in the life, but it has been left to men and women who have accepted the challenge and opportunity of prayer to define their experiences. Here are some of their observations:

"Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend."

"Prayer is the creator as well as the channel of devotion."

"Prayer opens the door to the upper room."

"Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence."

"Prayer is humbling work."

"Prayer is not a little habit pinned on to us while we were tied to our mother's apron strings; it is a most serious work of our most serious years."

"Prayer is the key of the morning and the bolt of the evening."

"Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him."

All these different authors agree that prayer does something, but perhaps the two-way blessing of prayer is best summed up by Dr. Alexis Carrel who writes: "When we pray, we link ourselves with the inexhaustible motive power that spins the universe. We ask that part of this power be apportioned to our needs. Even in asking, our human deficiencies are filled and we arise strengthened and repaired."

Then why is prayer to-day almost among the forgotten arts? Why, if it has such hidden potentialities, is prayer so little practised? Per-

haps because it is part of the more personal, secret side of life, that people feel they can dispense with it unnoticed and unrebuked. But in the last analysis many neglect or disregard prayer because they feel that in a given set of circumstances, prayer did not produce the desired results. Such an attitude, however, reveals that prayer is thought of as an opportunity for demanding that Heaven grant us our wishes. But prayer is not a weapon in the hands of mortals for defying God, nor for bending His best plans for our good to our own desires. Prayer is often the channel of our own resignation to wiser plans and ultimately happier results. It is always wise to ask ourselves whether it is His will we are seeking, or merely seeking His help to carry out some project of our own.

Prayer Changes Us

"Prayer changes things," but just as often it changes us. It integrates out attitudes, clarifies our thinking, and clears our vision. Elisha prayed, "Lord, . . . open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man," and he saw a vitally different situation from the one that had depressed him only a few moments before. The young man's physical fears had overthrown his courage and caused him to forget that from Heaven's storehouse every need could be supplied. Elisha's prayer did not increase God's power, nor strengthen His willingness to aid His servants, but it did give to blinded eyes a vision of the might of Heaven, and make clear the weakness of what men call strength. Only then did the challenging problem vanish as a morning mist. It buoyed up the confidence of a fearful heart and nothing appeared to be impossible, as indeed it isn't to God. Prayer taps the reservoirs of power and floods the weakened, enervated soul with revivifying grace. It *makes* men like Paul, Peter, and Stephen of the New Testament, and Daniel, Joseph, and Elijah of the Old Testament. It takes men like Hudson Taylor and Livingstone into the darkest corners of the world's great need and makes their lives and influence a sacred memory surrounded by the very breath of Heaven.

Prayer need not be expected to make us all Livingstones or Taylors, yet it does have an important relationship to our daily lives, which must not be lightly overlooked. Take the suggestion of Matthew 26:41: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Linking together

the two words "watch" and "pray" would indicate a combination for Christian alertness. Paul tells us much about the snares of the devil. In a thousand ways can temptation overthrow our best desires. On every emotion of life can a shadow of shame be caused to fall. Yet to the one who will "watch and pray" is promised the joy of seeing the tempter overthrown. "Being on one's toes helps, but not as much as being on one's knees." God "would sooner send every angel out of heaven to protect His people than leave one soul that trusts in Him to be overcome by Satan." Prayer not only alerts us to dangers, but prepares us for and assures us of victory. "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." Luke 18:1.

And finally, when we sincerely pray "Thy kingdom come," the miracle of a changed life objective is complete. From the soiled thoroughfares of earth to the streets of gold in the coming eternal kingdom, the gaze is directed. From the palaces of earth to the promised mansions above, all the hopes now centre. In one thrilling, transcendent joy the child of God is transported by faith from earth to heaven. The chains which bound him as an earth-dweller have dropped off and on the wings of his prayers he has ascended higher than the mountains, higher than the visible stars, to stand by faith before God's throne in the very presence of the Almighty.

What soul satisfaction, what treasured communion, what sequence of victories, what realms of service, what unending peace of heart and mind await the one who will say with the disciples of old, "Lord, teach us to pray."

* * *

Magnificent Illusion!

(Continued from page 3.)

and wonder at its unique architecture; exclaim at the marvel of its modernistic use of glass,

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marble, steel, and aluminium. And remember as you gaze that you are looking at a monument to a magnificent illusion.

For this is not the hope of the world.

It may be man's way to peace. But it is not God's way.

God's Way Out

Not for one moment would we question the goodness, the virtue, the nobility of the men and women who dreamed this lovely dream. Nor would we think of scorning the labour of their devoted hands. Yet we would be recreant to our trust if we did not declare that this, too, shall pass. Like every effort man has made to save himself in years gone by, so this latest of his magnificent illusions will dissolve into a sad and poignant memory.

Salvation is of the Lord, not of man. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." Psa. 127:1.

Only Christ can bring peace to this world. And He brings it by a process of individual conversion. He builds from the bottom up, not from the top down. He puts the love of God in men's hearts so that they will love one another. This is the basic purpose of His Gospel and the long-forgotten objective of Christianity.

And when the Gospel of His love has been preached in all the world "for a witness unto all nations; *then shall the end come.*" Matt. 24:14. And this end will not be such as supporters of the United Nations envisage, but rather the return in glory and power of Jesus Christ—coming back to this earth to fulfil the promise made to His disciples long ago: "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself." John 14:1-5.

This is the true hope of the world, the one hope of peace and happiness everlasting. And it is no illusion, but a magnificent reality.

THE CHILDREN'S



Pages

Tom's Birthday Present

By Margaret Honey

It was Tom's eighth birthday, and he thought it the saddest he had ever had. He was lying in his camp bed, listening to the rain pattering on the tent roof above him. How he had looked forward to this camping holiday! It was such fun to live in a boat and sleep in a tent by himself. Each day they were going a little farther up the river—Daddy and Mummy, and his little brother and sister.

They had also brought their cat, Jerry, with them. They felt sure he would enjoy it, too. Jerry had been happy when they went to bed last night and settled on a cushion by Daddy's bed, purring, but in the morning he had gone.

"We won't go on up the river to-day," Daddy said at breakfast time, "but we'll wait here till Jerry comes back. He won't be far away. He'll come when he wants something to eat."

"But supposing he's lost, Daddy?" Tom said. "He doesn't know his way about here."

"We'll go and look for him after we have had breakfast and washed up," Mummy said.

So all day long they had tramped round the fields, calling, calling, and searching. They went to the farm and asked the farmer if he had seen a strange cat.

"I though I saw one going across that field this morning,"

he said. "What colour is it?"

"He is a tabby," said Tom.

"Yes, the one I saw looked like a tabby," said the farmer. "He went across that way."

So they set off again. But they couldn't find Jerry. They pushed in the hedges with sticks, and scraped a knife on a plate. Jerry always came for this noise when he was hungry. But he didn't come this time. They began to think

The Cheerful Rooster

The rooster on my barnyard fence
Begins to crow at dawn,
And tells me that I must get up—
Not stay in bed and yawn.

Now how erect and proud he
stands,
And crows as if to say,
"How happy all of us should be
To welcome each new day!"

Adelia Ramey.

that perhaps he had been caught in a trap.

After dinner it started to rain. Mummy sat in the tent and read stories to Tom's brother and sister, while Tom went off once more with Daddy to look for Jerry. When they got back it was raining heavily and still no Jerry.

They had tea in the boat. It was Tom's birthday tea, and there was a pretty cake which Mummy had packed and brought with them. After tea they played games in the boat—ludo and snap—and still the rain poured down.

At last it was bedtime. They all felt a little sad, and Tom most of all. He loved Jerry, and could not bear to think of his pet frightened and lost, or perhaps hurt and unable to get back to them. Mummy came to tuck him in his camp bed.



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 April 30th. (If OUR TIMES is delivered late, still send in your picture. All attempts will be considered.)



Here is Jerry, thankful and happy to be back again in the tent after his adventures.

"Let's say a prayer about Jerry," she said.

"Oh heavenly Father, You know when even a sparrow falls to the ground. Please take care of Jerry, and bring him safely back."

When Mummy and Daddy had gone, Tom still could not go to sleep. It was raining harder than ever now. Cats do not like getting wet, so Tom felt sure Jerry would not come back that night. Besides, he thought, God must be so busy, that He couldn't bother about a cat. There were all sorts of people who needed His help more.

There was a soft movement at the tent door.

"I suppose the wind is blowing it," thought Tom. "I hope the rain won't come in."

Then a soft purring noise, and Tom put out his hand and felt a warm, furry body.

"Mummy! Daddy!" he shouted happily. "Jerry has come back! He's quite all right and hardly wet at all. God has answered our prayer!"

Tom and Jerry were soon asleep, but not before Tom had said a "Thank You" prayer to his heavenly Father. He thought it was the nicest birthday present he had ever had.

My Dear Sunbeams,

PERHAPS some of you who read this are not members of our large Sunbeam family. Although over five thousand boys and girls have joined, there is still plenty of room for you. I have lots of bright badges and membership cards that I am anxious to send out. And so I invite you to join. Here are the simple rules that Sunbeams promise to keep:

1. I will read a portion of the Bible every day.
2. I will not forget my morning and evening prayer.
3. I will help someone every day.
4. I will defend all animals I see unkindly treated.
5. I will write to the Sunbeam Corner at least once in three months.

Just send sixpence in stamps, your name, age, and address, to:

Auntie Margaret,
The Stanborough Press Ltd.,
Watford, Herts.

Yours affectionately,

AUNTIE MARGARET.

Results of Competition No. 2

Prize-winners.—Karen Howard, 67 Supple Close, Plumstead Estate, Norwich. Age 11; James Sparkes, 165 West Side, Clapham Common, London, S. W. 4. Age 6.

Honourable Mention.—Trevor Goddard (Iver); John Plant (Stoke-on-Trent); George Mayers (Skewen); Stewart Payne (Woodmancote); Gwendolyn Coon (Mevagissey); Heather Payne (Woodmancote); Gillian Plant (Stoke-on-Trent); Marilyn Hartland (Barry Dock); Malcolm Pimm (Newport); Carol Heirne (Newport); Sandra Young (Newport); Anthony Peart (Bishops Cleeve); Christine Richards (Newport); Jane Porter (Plymouth); Mary Porter (Plymouth); Patricia Neale (Bristol); Adrienne

Edwards (Torquay); Patsy Pollock (Southampton); Elizabeth Petrie (Dundee); Brenda Plant (Stoke-on-Trent); Daphne Rice (Newport); Valerie Leete (Reading); Amy Randlesome (Stockton); Ann MacFarlane (Insch); Miriam Harris (Cambridge); Josephine Dunstan (Bodmin); Margaret Peart (Bishops Cleeve); David Hollister (Bristol); Colin Doggett (Norwich).

Those who tried hard.—Myrtle Green (Salisbury); Mary Adams (Portishead); Colin Thomas (Newport); Jean Franklin (Newport); Henry Scott (Dundee); Lydia Harris (Cambridge); George Newman (London, N. W. 10); Esther Dunstan (Bodmin); Richard Payne (Woodmancote); Barbara Mace (Norwich); Ruth Campion (Torquay); Patricia Dowdon (Newport); Ronald Birch (Coventry); Nigel Payne (Woodmancote); John Gunthorpe (Northampton); Mary Gardner (Birmingham); Douglas Okey (Bishops Cleeve); Janet Bishop (Bristol); Brian Wright (Hemel Hempstead); Hazel Harris (Cambridge); Jean Sparkes (London); Phyllis Freeman (Raynes Park); Harwood Lockton (Belper); Alan Bownds (Chalfont); Christine Bird (Birmingham); Christine Davies (Birmingham); No Name (Leith); J. T. Grovestock (Kilmington).

Results of Competition No. 3

Prize-winners.—Shirley Stocking, "Helensdeane," Lower Street, Buckland Denham, Frome, Somerset. Age 13; Ann Metcalfe, 16 North Gardens, Colliers Wood, London, S. W. 19. Age 9.

Honourable Mention.—Jean Myers (Newcastle-on-Tyne); Neal Holmgum (Hayes); Howard Coomb (Mevagissey); Jelda Sleeman (Torquay); Myrtle Green (Salisbury); Miriam Harris (Cambridge); Margaret Graham (Ballymoney); Ann Culbert (Merton Abbey); Graham Plant (Stoke-on-Trent); Nancy Hazelwood (Kings Langley); Lydia Harris (Cambridge); Mary Strowger (Lowestoft); Olive Swift (Pennington); Rita Moss (Southampton); Sylvia Hesketh (Birmingham); Jean Simmons (Torquay); Vivienne Ellis (Chelmsford); Marilyn Hartland (Barry Dock); Gillian Plant (Stoke-on-Trent); Stewart Payne (Woodmancote); Gwendolyn Coomb (Mevagissey).

Those who tried hard.—Amy Randlesome (Stockton); Valerie Leete (Reading); Michael Langford (Cardiff); Adrienne Edwards (Torquay); Richard Payne (Woodmancote); Carolyn Pepper (Folkestone); Colin Dingley (Coventry); Helena Parker (Camberley); Ruth Campion (Torquay); Eunice Pitcher (Lowestoft); Anthony Peart (Bishops Cleeve); John Plant (Stoke-on-Trent); David Simmons (Torquay); Thomas Bailey (Binfield); Myrtle Metcalfe (Colliers Wood); John Nathan (Kessingland); Hazel Harris (Cambridge); Margaret Lacy (London); Nigel Payne (Woodmancote); Helen Davidson (Liverpool); Margaret Peart (Bishops Cleeve); Heather Payne (Woodmancote).

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Straws in the Wind

When Peace Is War

"PEACE now seems to be spelled W-A-R," said Prime Minister Nehru in the Indian Parliament. "We are becoming enveloped by the military mentality. Statesmanship is being more and more governed by military factors."

Changes in Coronation Oath

AS, in view of the autonomy of the other countries of the Commonwealth, Parliament will have to amend the Coronation Oath to limit its anti-Catholic bias to the United Kingdom, it is being urged that the word "Protestant" should also be expunged as offensive to many Anglicans who claim to be Catholic and Reformed, not Protestant and Reformed.

Electronic Telescope

A FRENCH scientist, Professor André Lallemand, claims to have invented two instruments, an electronic device and an image converter for picking up rays invisible to the naked eye, which, when attached to an ordinary telescope, will increase its power by ten times. With them a twenty-inch telescope will do the work of the 200-inch telescope on Mount Palomar.

Gambling Turnover

THE total amount spent on gambling in Britain in 1952 decreased by £25 million to £575 million, states the Rev. J. Clark Gibson, Secretary of the Churches' Committee on Gambling. The drop of £30,000,000 on horse racing and £3,000,000 on greyhound rac-

ing was, however lessened by an increase of £9,000,000 on football and other pools.

Saved By Faith

(Continued from page 5.)

Rom. 10:16. He concludes his great epistle by declaring the Gospel commission entrusted to him. "Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my Gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the *obedience of faith.*" Rom. 16:25, 26.

"We are justified by faith alone, but the faith that justifies is never alone."

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." 1 John 5:1. You may ask, How can I believe? The Scriptures reply: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Rom. 10:17. If you would enter into faith and peace, study prayerfully the inspired Word of God. Did not John testify: "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou has believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. . . . But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." John 20:29-31.

