

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

THE WORLD'S PROPHETIC WEEKLY

FOUNDED 1874





the flight of TIME

INTERNATIONAL
Twenty-five years ago, following early successes in the first World War, Germany staged this victory demonstration in Berlin. Time proved it premature.

A Survey of World Events

by the EDITOR

wondering what significance to place upon the moving cloud formations, what new shapes of destiny will emerge from the roaring furnace.

Fire breaks out over Asia, over Africa, and the same questions leap to our minds. Again and again we search for pictures in the fire, trying to understand what they mean, trying to piece this and that together to form the framework of some

Designed for better conquests than those of war, this huge snow cruiser is to accompany Admiral Byrd's next expedition to the antarctic.



INTERNATIONAL
 SIGNS of the TIMES



PICTURES IN THE FIRE

IN DAYS gone by, before the busy rush of modern times spoiled so many of life's most beautiful things, it was the custom of families gathered for Christmastide reunions to linger in the late evening watching the "pictures in the fire."

From the curling smoke and darting flames came memories of faces and incidents long forgotten, while within the rosy hue of red-hot coals some thought they saw the shape of things to come.

Those days are gone. Life is so full nowadays there is but little time to dream, and less to pray. What is more, there are few coal fires left in which the pictures could be seen. Steam pipes and radiators afford no opportunity for romance.

Yet the hunger to know the future is still with us, all unsatisfied. How we would like to know what lies ahead, to peer into the unknown and see what is coming next!

Fire blazes over Europe, and we gaze long and eagerly into its glowing heart,

satisfying outcome, trying to wrest the secrets of the future from the unwilling hands of tomorrow.

Yet all our strivings are in vain, for the pictures form only to dissolve again. There is nothing durable, nothing lasting, about our imaginings. The brightest smoke dreams are carried away by a puff of wind.

Where, then, shall we look for certainty and a sure hope? Where can we find some picture of the future that will not fade?

There is but one place. Such "strong consolation" is to be found only in the Bible, the word of the living God.

This Book is a fire too. Jeremiah tells us so. God's word, says the prophet Jeremiah, "was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones." Jeremiah 20:9. And the psalmist adds: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalm 119:105.

Here is a fire into which we may peer with expectancy for clear, definite pictures of things past, things present, and things to come. And what pictures! What beautiful pictures! Pictures of the plan of salvation all aglow with the glory of God. Pictures of pardon and deliverance radiant with divine love. Pictures of the future too—of strife and turmoil, of war and bloodshed, of terror and persecution, of faith and final victory. Pictures of the coming of the Lord in majesty and power, pictures of the resurrection and reunion of the saints of God, pictures of heaven and our everlasting home.

Into this glowing crucible of glory let us look with added eagerness as the deepening shadows of these last days gather about us. Out of its burning depths will come the answers to all our questionings, the calming of all our fears, the assuaging of all our sorrows, and the stirring of a great new hope in the promises and plans of God.



SINISTER SILENCE

AS WE write, a strange and sinister silence still broods over the western front. For weeks it has been broken only by occasional bursts of gunfire.

Despite the fact that the greatest armies ever assembled are facing each other but a few miles apart, both supported by tremendous air armadas and fleets of gigantic tanks, major hostilities so far have been most mysteriously restrained.

Not only America but all the European countries have been commenting upon this extraordinary phenomenon. Everywhere the question is being raised, "What sort of war is this?"

Letters from England bring information that conditions are still practically the same as before the war broke out. But for the nightly black-outs, which are a great nuisance, friends say that "you wouldn't know that there is a war going on at all."

People who were suddenly evacuated from danger zones when war was declared are streaming back to their homes, to the consternation of the officials concerned. Even the children are being taken back to their city dwellings by thoughtless parents who have grown weary of waiting for the threatened air raids that have not materialized, and who are suggesting that the war won't amount to anything after all.

Wiser heads, however, are urging caution. This strange silence, they say, is but a calm before the storm.

"Let us not deceive ourselves," writes veteran editor J. L. Garvin in the London *Observer* of October 22. "To talk of boredom about all this, or to suppose that it means any kind of inaction, is absurd fatuity. There is no dull enigma. The slow-motion effect of the visible picture only masks the preparatory play of tremendous forces.

"The Allies desired the postponement of full grapple for good reasons. . . .

"The Germans needed the delay for their own reasons. First, it corresponds to what we may call their mechanical necessities connected with the definite readjustment of their whole organization for the future purposes of the war. . . .

Prolonged study and thorough preparation go before the promptitude or violence of the action designed. It is like the quiet and orderly compounding of high explosives. . . .

"It is quite certain that these last seven weeks which have seemed to some sluggish and uneventful by comparison with the thunderous apocalypse they supposed, have been a period of vivid and intense consideration on the part of all the German Higher Commands. . . . There will be a speedy end of all these present suggestions of suspended issues and limited liability. The apparent dullness will be exploded soon enough, like a volcano bursting from quiescence into eruption."

Time will prove the correctness or otherwise of Mr. Garvin's intuitions. Through the years, his careful estimates of international developments have been

OUR COVER PICTURE

At the Christmas season there will be many a happy family sitting at home watching the "pictures in the fire:" but this year, with world troubles multiplying, the strange figures seen above the glowing coals are perplexing and fearsome in the extreme.



INTERNATIONAL

Neutral countries nowadays are as badly affected by war as are the belligerents. A scene in the heart of Stockholm, Sweden, where authorities are preparing a huge air-raid shelter for the civilian population.

almost invariably correct. If he is right in this matter, then we are now on the eve of an outburst of frightfulness such as the world has never seen in all its history—when all the pent-up forces of destruction in the mightiest nations of earth will be released in one stupendous struggle for supremacy.

We would all do well not to be deceived by the seeming inaction, the sluggish movement of events, and "the slow-motion effect of the visible picture." All this is but a temporary lull, soon to be blasted by upheavals of volcanic proportions. There is to be no quiet slipping back into days of normalcy. We are living in "the time of the end," the crowded climax of human history, and we must be on the alert to behold and understand the final rapid movements in the drama of Time.



MOVING IN CIRCLES

WHILE man has sometimes prided himself on his multiplied inventions, his increased knowledge, and his speed of travel, circumstances may force him to the humble admission that in many things he has been moving in circles through the years. "History repeats itself," he says pontifically, to cover his sense of failure.

In one aspect of military science the wheel has indeed "come full circle," and

(Continued on page 7)



CHRIST COMING AGAIN

A Christmas Message

by

DONALD W. MCKAY

AT THIS holiday season, especially in the large cities, everyone seems to be rushing to and fro in preparation for the great day of Christmas.

Busses, streetcars, automobiles, and all types of conveyances are crowded with passengers, all eager to get home with their cumbersome bundles. Crowds jostle one another good-naturedly. Everywhere a carnival spirit reigns.

Streets are gaily decorated in red and green, while in the parks trees scintillate with dazzling ornaments.

In many homes parents are making hurried preparations for the arrival of sons and daughters from school or business; in others, sons and daughters are awaiting the coming of fathers and mothers. Christmas is home-coming day. Surely in all the year no other day causes so much excitement and joy.

Too many, however, welcome the holiday solely as an opportunity for mercenary gain, and others use it as an excuse further to indulge in the senseless and unbecoming pleasures of the world. For them it is merely a time of revelry and carousing.

Christians, most certainly, cannot unite in such objectionable features of this universal holiday; yet they may welcome its emphasis upon kindness and charity, especially toward the poor and unfortunate.

Today the true followers of Christ will be not only thinking back to the first advent of their Lord, but, even more definitely, forward to His coming.

Those who have not studied the Scriptures may be surprised to learn that Jesus is to return to this world—and in this generation. The Babe of Bethlehem is coming back as King of kings, and Lord of lords. The apostle John has recorded the very words Jesus uttered: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, *I will come again*, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3.

Jesus' first advent was literal; He came as a real being among men. Even after His resurrection He said to His disciples: "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me, and see." Luke 24:39. As He came literally the first time, so will He come literally the second time. The Bible gives specific evidence to support this natural conclusion. After Christ ascended, two heavenly messengers proclaimed to the disciples: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11); and the apostle John, from his confinement on the dismal Isle of Patmos, wrote: "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him." Revelation 1:7.

Paul, in describing the second coming of Christ, said: "The Lord Himself shall

descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17.

"But," someone may ask, "how do you know Jesus will come soon?"

The Bible tells us so.

As Jesus was sitting one day on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him with the question, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matthew 24:3.

They listened in rapt silence to the reply: "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; . . . men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Luke 21:25, 26. "False prophets shall rise," He continued, "and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. But take ye heed." Mark 13:22, 23.

Jesus said that His followers would suffer a long period of persecution; then would begin to appear the signs preceding the second advent—the darkening of the sun and the moon, and the falling of the stars of heaven. Mark 13:24, 25.

John the revelator was given in vision a picture of these events. He wrote: "The sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." Revelation 6:12, 13.

As prophesied, about the middle of the eighteenth century religious persecution markedly decreased. Then, on May 19, 1780, a mysterious darkness enveloped a large section of the Western Hemisphere. On that memorable day people were filled with fear at this unexplained phenomenon. "Birds sang their evening song, disappeared, and became silent; fowls went to roost; cattle sought the barnyard; and candles were lighted in



Because the first advent of our Lord is so closely linked with the second, Christmas turns our thoughts to His return.

the houses."—*Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, edition 1883, page 1604, in article, "The Dark Day."*

The world-famous astronomer Herschel has said: "The dark day in Northern America was one of those wonderful phenomena of nature which will always be read with interest, but which philosophy is at a loss to explain."

"The darkness was such as to occasion farmers to leave their work in the field, and retire to their dwellings. Lights became necessary to the transaction of business within doors. The darkness continued through the day."—*Gage's "History of Rowley, Massachusetts."*

Many well-known authorities agree that this unusual phenomenon cannot be explained. R. M. Devens, on pages 89 and 90 of his book, "Our First Century," writes: "Almost, if not altogether alone, as the most mysterious and yet unexplained phenomenon of its kind in nature's diversified range of events, during the last century, stands the *Dark Day* of May 19th, 1780,—a most unaccountable darkening of the whole visible heavens and atmosphere in New England. . . . Indeed, thousands of the good people of that day became fully convinced that the end of all things terrestrial had come. . . . The extent of this darkness was also very remarkable."

Although the moon was nearly full the night following this dark day, it gave no light for several hours, and, when finally it did appear, it had a reddish appearance "as blood."

The Greatest Meteoric Shower

And the next prophecy, that of the falling of the stars, was fulfilled on November 13, 1833, over the Eastern States of America, from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico and as far west as the Mississippi.

Famous British astronomers commented upon this meteoric shower as surpassing any previously seen.

Prof. Denison Olmsted of Yale wrote an article to the *American Journal of Science and Arts*, vol. 25 (1834), in which he stated that this wondrous display "was the principal topic of conversation in every circle."

The *New York Journal of Commerce* on November 14, 1833, quoted the words of prophecy: "Truly 'the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.' Revelation 6:13. This language of the prophet has always been received as metaphorical. Yesterday it was literally fulfilled. . . . Here is the exactness of the prophet. The falling stars did not come as if from several trees shaken, but from *one*. Those which appeared in the east fell toward the east; those which appeared in the north fell toward the north; those which appeared in the west fell toward the

west; and those which appeared in the south . . . fell toward the south; . . . they flew, they were cast, like the unripe fig."

These prophecies of striking celestial signs have been fulfilled. Likewise Christ's description of conditions on the earth are coming to pass before our eyes. We are therefore driven to the conclusion that Christ will soon appear in the clouds of heaven with power and glory; "and every eye shall see Him."

Those of every nation who are not prepared in heart and life for the kingdom of heaven will be destroyed by the brightness of His presence. But those who are

ready to meet their Lord will rejoice. They will exclaim: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us." Isaiah 25:9. May we be among that number!

This season of the year is a most appropriate time to rededicate yourself anew to Christ. Give Him the key to your heart, and He will abide with you. Let Him come in to stay. Then you will have nothing to fear in the day of His glorious appearing.

"THE secret of being a saint is being a saint in secret."



One Way to Peace

by B. M. HEALD

THIS is the most Christless Christmas in all history. At this very moment thundering cannon and bursting bombs drown out the chimes of Christmas bells. What strange inconsistency that we should celebrate the coming of the Prince of Peace while a great part of our civilized world is ruled by hate!

There is something fundamentally wrong with our civilization. It has lost its way, and, as a prominent preacher remarked recently, it is prepared for "a fresh descent into hell."

What is the trouble?

Henry Kittredge Norton has said in his book, "Back of War": "It is impossible to eradicate war without remaking the character of man."

The late Arthur Brisbane once wrote: "We may sweep the world clean of militarism. We may scrub the earth white of autocracy. We may carpet it with democracy, and drape it with the flags of republicanism. We may hang on the walls the thrilling pictures of freedom, —here the signing of America's independence, there the thrilling portrait of Joan of Arc, yonder the Magna Charta, and on this side the inspiring picture of Garibaldi. We may spend effort and energy to make the world Paradise itself, where the lion of capitalism can lie down with the proletariat lamb. But if we turn into that splendid room mankind with the same old heart, 'deceitful' and 'desperately wicked,' we may expect to clean house again not many days hence."

What we need is a peace conference with the Prince of Peace. We need to

gather about His peace table. We need to become "Christ-centric," Christ-conscious. He alone has successfully conquered the overmastering propensities of the human heart. He alone can bring that peace that passes all understanding —the peace that the world cannot give or take away. It is no time now for secret diplomatic relations with evil, or for any kind of arbitration with human nature. What we need is the regenerating, remodeling power of God applied to our sinful, stubborn, warring hearts. We need to enter into an everlasting peace pact with the Prince of Peace. Leaving God out is humanity's supreme mistake.

Christ, the Prince of Peace, the Son of God, is the only solution to our racial ills. He alone can transform men of every nation, and make them one in Him. I have seen the spirit of the Christ unite the hearts of Christian Arabs and Christian Jews. In Christ, Christian Germans love Jews, Christian Turks love Armenians, Christian Japanese love Christian Chinese. I have seen the barriers of color, caste, and class melt away in the warm, sympathetic love of Christ. I have seen wild, naked savage tribes in the jungles of the Congo turn to Him. I have seen peoples of the white, black, red, yellow, and brown races become bound together in one common bond of love and sympathetic brotherhood.

We need to get back to religion, back to Christ, back to God. Democracy cannot survive without God, nor can you or I. Only He can bring us into a better world.

A PEOPLE Waiting for the Lord

by

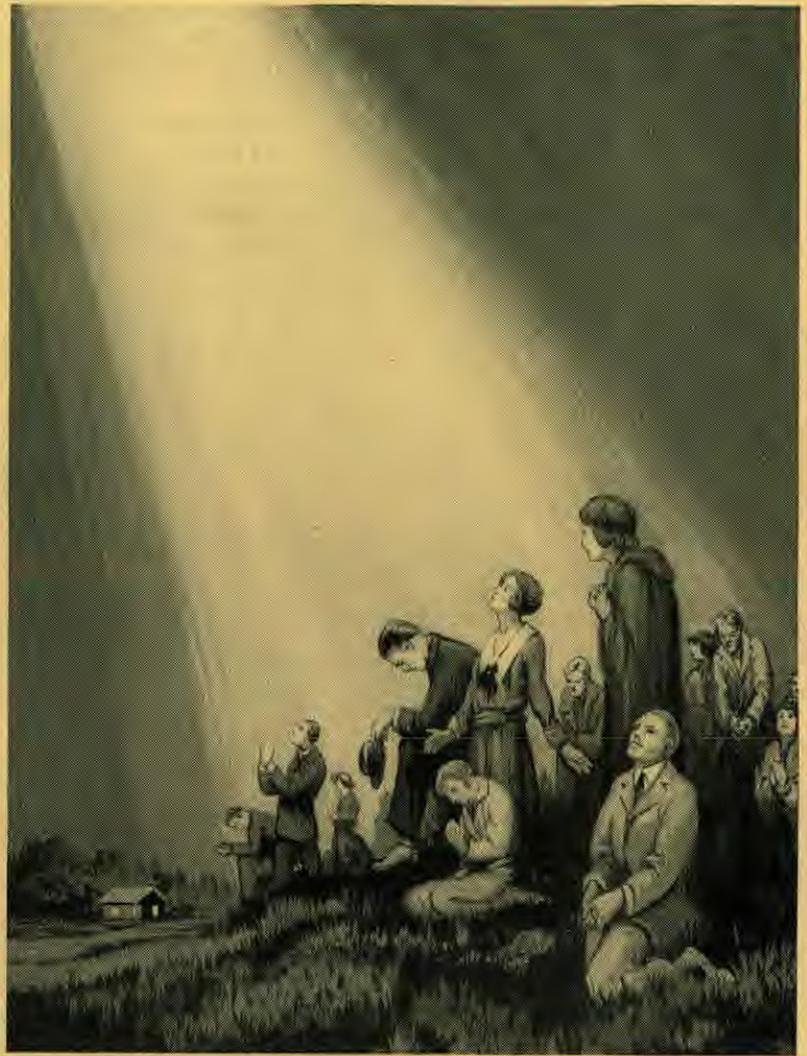
CARLYLE B.
HAYNES

I HAVE already pointed out that the beliefs and teachings of Seventh-day Adventists center in the person of Jesus Christ. These people look upon Jesus as the focal point of human history. It is because they love the Saviour so devotedly that they rejoice in the outstanding doctrinal teaching of the Scriptures that He is coming back to this world. They believe that His second coming will mark the passing of man's disastrous agelong rebellion against God, the overthrow of the revolt of this planet against the divine government, and the end of the long reign of sin and death.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that we stand at the crisis point of the world. They are not pessimists. They believe that we are soon to enter the most glorious age the world has ever seen. The second advent is at hand. With Christ will come the kingdom and the glory. He will bring the cure for all the ills of this stricken world. He will rebuke disease and sorrow. And on His righteous, peaceful throne He will reign forever.

In the second coming of Christ Seventh-day Adventists see the one great hope of the whole creation. It is the hope of the church, which shall then be one with the Lord in all His glory and power and fullness of blessing. It is the hope of the world, which shall then know the blessedness of righteous rule. And it is the hope of the Lord Himself, whose heart yearns over His church, purchased with His own blood, and yet remaining amid the defilements of this present evil world.

This wonderful event will take place soon and will be a literal, personal, visi-



Those who love their Lord look forward to that day when once again He will visit this world. Then His voice will reverberate from hill to valley.

ble, and actual return of Jesus Christ in person to this earth. Many important events will be associated with His return, such as the resurrection of the dead, the destruction of the wicked, the purifying of the earth, the reward of the righteous, and the establishment of Christ's everlasting kingdom.

Nearly all the great lines of Bible prophecy, particularly those found in the books of Daniel and the Revelation, have been or are being fulfilled in our day. The existing conditions in the physical, social, industrial, political, and religious worlds give clear evidence that Christ's second coming is "near, even at the doors."

Seventh-day Adventists have never been time setters. They do not believe that the exact time of the second coming of Christ has been foretold. They do believe, though, that all the followers of Christ should be ready at all times, because "in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matthew 24:44.

This body of Christians also believes in

spiritual gifts. They look upon the church of Christ as His own body (1 Corinthians 12:27), established in this world for the purpose of bearing witness to the truth and carrying the gospel to all the world. In accordance with the teaching of the Bible, they believe that God has clothed His servants with special qualifications, and placed in His church special gifts, such as are enumerated in 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4.

Among these gifts they particularly believe in the operation of the gift of prophecy and its restoration to the church for the purpose of completing God's work among men. They believe that this gift operates in harmony with the Bible, and that all the gifts are given "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Ephesians 4:12.

I have already taken pains to indicate that Seventh-day Adventists believe that the millennial reign of Christ covers the period between the first and the second resurrection, and that during this one-

thousand-year period the church is not on earth but in heaven, and that the earth is desolate and uninhabited. When Jesus comes the second time, He will receive His people unto Himself, taking them out of this earth altogether; and the Scriptures declare that then they will live and reign with Christ a thousand years. This living and reigning with Christ is in heaven, not on earth.

A World Purified of All Evil

At the end of the thousand years of the millennium, the holy city, the New Jerusalem, with all the people of God, will descend to this earth, as described in the book of Revelation. Then the wicked, who have just been raised in the second resurrection, will go up on the breadth of the earth with Satan at their head to surround the New Jerusalem in a great final effort to take the city. At that time fire will come down from God out of heaven and destroy them. The conflagration that destroys Satan and his hosts will also purify the earth and cleanse it from the effects of the curse of sin.

Following the destruction of the wicked, God will make all things in this world new. The earth is to be restored to its original beauty, and will become forever the abiding place of the people of God. Seventh-day Adventists consequently believe that the reward promised to the righteous is not a permanent home in heaven, but an eternal existence upon this earth. The promise to Abraham that through Christ he and his seed should possess the earth throughout the endless ages of eternity will be carried out. "The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." Daniel 7:27.

Christ is the eternal king. He will reign supreme, and "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea," will ascribe "blessing, and honor, and glory, and power," "unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." Revelation 5:13.

And so Seventh-day Adventists look forward to that day when once again the Lord Jesus will visit this earth. We strain to catch the first sound of His voice, that voice which will reverberate from hillside and mountaintop, echo through the silent valleys, sweep across the wide treeless plains, and pierce even to the remotest caves of old ocean. We wait to see the shackles struck from death, the tombs of the saints opened. We yearn to behold the sleeping ones, awakened by that commanding voice, and feeling

the thrill of life once more, raise their heads from their moldy pillows and spring joyfully into glorious life again. A vast congregation they will make, coming from east and west, from north and south, from land and sea, as they gather to greet their Redeemer in answer to His call. They will come guided by angels; and, sweeping upward together, they will take their stand on the glorious sea of glass before the great white throne of God.

And then, after the millennium, back they come to this earth, where, with the curse finally removed, and under new heavens, clear and bright, all the righteous, with Jesus, the Son of God and Son of man, their blessed King and Redeemer, will make their eternal home.

Far out over the plains of the new earth will flash wave after wave of glory. Fulfilled is the oath of God, "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." Numbers 14:21. No



The REST of the WAY

O fathomless mercy!
O infinite grace!
With humble thanksgiving
The road I retrace.
Thou never hast failed me,
My strength and my stay;
To whom would I turn
For the rest of the way?

Through dangers, through darkness
By day and by night,
Thou ever hast guided
And guided aright.
In Thee have I trusted,
And peacefully lay
My hand in Thy hand
For the rest of the way.

Thy cross all my refuge,
Thy blood all my plea;
None other I need,
Blessed Jesus, but Thee.
I fear not the shadows
At close of life's day,
For Thou wilt go with me
The rest of the way.

—Selected.

freezing cold. No burning heat. No gloomy clouds. No darkness of night. No wasting sickness. No cruel pain. No tears. No death. No graveyards. No temptations. No sin. No partings. Only victory. Only praise, rest, and glory, forevermore, world without end. Surely "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed." Romans 8:18.

The Flight of Time

(Continued from page 3)

we are witnessing today a type of warfare invented in the earliest days of human history.

Recently the French general Clement-Grandcour published a study on fortification, in which he sustains the view that the medieval keep, standing high out of the ground, gives the best protection against surprise attack, or being carried by scaling parties, on condition that it is surrounded by an outer line of fortifications—as the medieval keeps always were—and that these fortifications are well defended. He believes that thick masonry of heavy blocks of stone, preferably granite, can resist bombardment better than anything else, and provides the additional advantage of forming a difficult obstacle even after the enemy has expended sufficient shells to break it up.

Much has been said of the impregnability of the Maginot and Siegfried lines; but these fortifications, after all, are only adaptations of the ancient type of fortress so common all over Europe centuries ago. In those days defense was in most cases stronger than all possible forms of attack, and at long last, after centuries of progress, we seem to have arrived back at the same position!

It is but another illustration of how our vaunted civilization, golden but godless, has brought us nowhere on our way to the realization of man's age-old hope of a "brave new world" of enlightenment, peace, and concord.

Nor will any mechanical devices, nor any progress in material things, ever achieve this purpose. Only God can do that. And only the Christian gospel can tell us how.

THE Christian always has a strong helper in the Lord. The way of the Lord's helping we may not know; but this we do know: He will never fail those who put their trust in Him. Could Christians realize how many times the Lord has ordered their way, that the purposes of the enemy concerning them might not be accomplished, they would not stumble along complainingly. Their faith would be stayed on God, and no trial would have power to move them.

—E. G. White.

*Why Have All Peace
Plans Failed?*

The

WORLD *Looks to*

BETHLEHEM

and MARCHES *to*

ARMAGEDDON!

by F. CHESTER CARRIER



Bethlehem

IT IS but sixty miles from Bethlehem to Armageddon, according to the map; but how wide apart are the ideas suggested by these two places of historical interest!

The word Bethlehem represents all that is pure, noble, and Christlike. From her gates flow streams of peace, power, and plenty. Her homes echo the words of love and joy.

But Armageddon is diametrically opposed to all that Bethlehem represents. It is the name and the place of the final world war pictured in vivid colors in Revelation 16:14-16. At Armageddon all the bitterness and hatred of the centuries will be focused.

Yes, according to the map, there is but a short distance from Bethlehem to Armageddon; but in principle these two places are as far apart as heaven and earth. The one represents Christ, the other chaos; love and lust; peace and war; mercy and hatred; tolerance and intolerance. From the one came the

Prince of Peace; the other will be inspired by the prince of darkness.

At this season of the year millions are supposedly looking toward Bethlehem. The world is marching toward Armageddon. Indeed, the angels, the shepherds, the wise men, and the Christ-child receive only a contemptuous glance; and the message, "On earth peace, good will toward men," falls upon deaf ears.

Ample proof of this is blazoned across the front pages of our daily papers, and drummed into our ears through the medium of the news broadcasts. Our civilization is a sad commentary on the story of the Babe in a manger.

On this Christmas Day we look upon a world that is a seething caldron of hate, a volcano already in eruption. At this very moment there are millions of men under arms. Mighty empires are locked in a death struggle. The spirit of nationalism has given birth to dictators, who are stamping their footprints upon the pages of history. Religion and freedom

of conscience have already been trampled underfoot in many places.

Godless doctrines are being poured into the minds of millions of young people. The gospel of hate is being widely disseminated, preparatory to a world revolution.

Europe is a maelstrom of diverse doctrines. Asia is aflame. China is pillaged and raped. More than a million men, women, and children of that nation have been slaughtered in recent months.

On this Christmas Day the world is far from Bethlehem. We hear the tramp of great armies marching toward Armageddon.

For a thousand years multitudes have looked toward Bethlehem and heard the message, "On earth peace, good will toward men;" but still peace is as illusive as the traditional pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

INTERNATIONAL



Why is it impossible for man to bring in everlasting peace? Why is it that a league of nations, a world court, a federation of churches, a social gospel, can never bring peace? The apostle James answers the question: "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" James 4:1.

War comes from sin in the heart of individuals. Sin can never be eradicated from the human heart by a world court, a social gospel, a church federation, or a thousand peace treaties. Only Jesus, the Prince of Peace, can remove sin from the heart of man. True peace can come only as men accept Him personally and individually.

Sinful, rebellious, unregenerate man has for centuries paid lip service to Bethlehem, but prepared for Armageddon. This fact is true of individuals and of nations. This fact is evident in our day.

The apostle Paul wrote: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be . . . truce-breakers, . . . traitors; . . . having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." 2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13.

And Jesus, speaking of events to happen in our day said that there would be "upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; . . . men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Luke 21:25, 26.

There Is Hope

Though our civilization is heading toward chaos, there is hope for the individual—for you and for me. Bethlehem's light is still shining in the dark night. Peace—the "peace of God, which passeth all understanding," is still available to man. The message of the manger is still being proclaimed to all who will accept it.

Let us turn to the Saviour with all our hearts. Let us gaze more earnestly upon the face of the Christ-child. Regardless of what the future may hold—poverty, persecution, humiliation, war, bloodshed, hatred, and horror, as followers of the Christ let us keep our eyes fixed steadfastly upon Him.

Better far to be a humble follower of the Child of Bethlehem than a commanding general in the battle of Armageddon.

In which direction are you looking? Toward the manger, the cross, the victory? or in the direction of the world at large—toward Armageddon?

Remember, Bethlehem and Armageddon are only a short distance apart; but

their principles are as different as heaven and earth.

The Prince of Peace speaks to an indifferent, contemptuous world. He calls to the marching millions as they tramp to battle. He pleads with all: "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." Isaiah 45:22.

"UNTO US A CHILD—"

The Glorious Mystery of the Incarnation

by H. F. DE'ATH

THE conception and birth of a new life is always fascinating and wonderful; and, under proper conditions, it may be very beautiful. But the most wonderful and the most beautiful happening of all time was the conception and the birth of Jesus; for God was in it from first to last, all the time, as Luke, the Gospel writer, makes so clear.

The story is linked with the conception and the birth of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus. And the way these two women, Elisabeth, the mother of John, and Mary, her cousin, the mother of Jesus, compared notes of their experiences is both reverent and touching. Both became mothers apart from the ordinary course of nature, although in Mary's case the miracle was much more marked, as it was fraught with much greater consequences to the world.

Three months before Elisabeth was due to give birth to John, "the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel . . . said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." Luke 1:26-28.

This gracious but apparently vague salutation puzzled Mary, until the angel came to the heart of the message: "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus." Verses 30, 31.

The inexpressible thrill of Mary's womanly heart as the angel tenderly pronounced her name and told her of God's great favor must have been great indeed. This simple, trusting maiden was to be the mother of the Son of God; through the transcendent operation of the Holy Spirit within her, she, a woman of lowly birth,

was to be the envied mother of the long-cherished Hope of Israel. Wonder of wonders! How could it be? That was not for her, nor for us, to know or to understand. It was to be, "for," as the angel truly said, "with God nothing shall be impossible." So Mary believed the angel's message, and expressed that belief by these simple, trustful words, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." Verses 37, 38.

And it came about that "the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." Luke 2:6, 7.

Yes, the promise of the angel had come true; but here again was apparent cause for misgiving—"no room for them in the inn"! There was only a stable, where the breathing of cattle was felt and heard. When a king is born, it is usually in luxurious surroundings and under ideal conditions. Heralds announce it publicly, and crowds rejoice over the event. But the Son of God, the King of kings, attracted less notice than did the most obscure babe in Bethlehem!

But that is just God's way. Mary, so far, had believed the impossible. So far her faith had been rewarded. But she must go on believing the impossible in spite of forbidding appearances. At every turn, her Son, Jesus, was to be the living reminder that "with God nothing shall be impossible." He was the Son of God—the Almighty had said so through the angel Gabriel. Yet every human circumstance of His birth and His life seemingly denied that declaration. In nothing was He to be like the kings of earth. His birth, His upbringing, His demeanor, His home, His message, His death, were

(Continued on page 14)

*Are We to
Expect a
Secret Advent?*

Will CHRIST Come



*What can there be secret about His coming when
"every eye shall see Him"?*

INCOGNITO?

by LUCRETIA L. HARMON

MANY are telling us that Christ has come in secret; that He is now upon earth. Others tell us that He is coming secretly to take away His saints; that not even the members of their families who are left will know that Christ has taken the absent ones to heaven. Again, others say that He comes only when Christians die, to carry them through the valley and over the dark river of death, into the city of God.

All secret comings! But why should Christ come in secret? There is nothing He should fear, nor is there anything that could prevent His coming in glory.

Sometimes it may be necessary or more convenient for royalty to travel incognito; but we cannot understand why anyone should believe that the second coming of the King of kings should occur under such conditions. He, for many reasons, chose for His first advent a humble birth, in a lowly manger, in the little town of Bethlehem. He lived a quiet life in the village of Nazareth, and walked over the roads of Judea. He was the Man who said: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." Matthew 8:20. He was the Man who was "despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." Isaiah 53:3.

But He has chosen to come in glory

when He comes again. We like best the way Christ has planned His second coming, and how He has told us all about it. We would rather believe what He has said than what many people are saying, and our heavenly Father declared: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; *hear ye Him.*" Matthew 17:5.

Many centuries before Christ's first coming prophets of God told of this first advent. Psalms 22; 89:20-28; Isaiah 7:14-16; 11:1-5; 42:1-7; 49:1-8; 52:1-7, 14. Of His second coming we read in numerous passages. Isaiah 2:19-21; 11:10-12; 40:3-11; 52:7; Jeremiah 23:5-8; Daniel 12:1.

It is because the Jews did not understand, or rightly divide, the word of truth contained in these Old Testament prophecies of the two advents of the Messiah that so many of them did not receive Him when He came in humility. They were expecting Him to come in glory at that time.

Today, after all the light He has given upon this blessed truth, many are making an even greater mistake than did the Jews. When Christ is to appear in glory, they are expecting Him to come secretly.

"Hear ye Him."

"Then said Jesus unto His disciples, . . . The Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man

according to his works." Matthew 16:24-27.

At another time He said to them, when He was telling them of the last days, "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:27. There is nothing secret about a flash of lightning going across the heavens, is there?

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Verses 30, 31.

"When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." Matthew 25:31, 32. "Then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Luke 21:27. See also Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26.

Glory, glory, glory—great glory! Glory of the Father, glory of the Son, glory of the angels—all of them! A great sound of His trumpet; all the nations of the earth gathered at Armageddon. Nothing secret about any of this!

On that last night, during His trial before Caiaphas, Jesus said to the high priest, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Matthew 26:64.

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SIGNS of the TIMES

HEALING

Humanity's HURT

The Curative Power of Divine Love

by GEORGE W. WELLS

HUMANITY'S heart is hurt with the sharp arrows of sin; it is wounded unto death, and only the infinite God can effect a cure. Today there are millions of men who are walking the broad, dark road to utter ruin. They travel this pathway because they fail to evaluate the curative qualities in God's love; neither will they consider the mighty achievements of this divine attribute as revealed in the lives of other millions who, down through the years, have accepted the enriching grace and healing balm of God's great love.

There is no language known to man that can ever fully describe the marvels of God's love. It is inexpressible; it is inconceivable. In its height and depth, its length and breadth, it "passeth knowledge." Ephesians 3:19. God's love is free and undeserving. He says: "I will love them freely." Hosea 14:4. It is immutable, for we read: "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." John 13:1. His love is likewise complacent: "My delights were with the sons of men." Proverbs 8:31. The wondrous, loving Christ found inward satisfaction and delight in coming to this world to rescue the fallen, to heal the brokenhearted, to live an exemplary life before those He loved.

John Henry Jowett taught that "love is not feeling, but fealty; love is not emotion, but devotion; love is not ecstasy, but chivalry; love is not luscious sensation, but faithfulness, even unto death."

Another has said: "Love has nine ingredients—courtesy, unselfishness, kindness, generosity, humility, good temper, guilelessness, patience, sincerity."

John, the beloved disciple, writing under the inspiration of the Spirit, could find no language that adequately defined the wonders of God's love; therefore he exclaimed: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 3:1. Christ's love for His children

is as tender as it is strong. So strong is His love that it controls all His powers, and employs the vast resources of heaven in doing His people good.

The infinite God, the wonderful Saviour and Christ, the blessed Holy Spirit and Guide, are united in Their supreme purpose and plan to save fallen humanity. The angelic hosts cheerfully cooperate in ministering to man. They are the divine messengers who delight to carry out the mandates of Heaven; "are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Hebrews 1:14. And the promise of God is: "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Psalm 34:7.

It is the choice, the purpose, and the plan of God that we should be "blessed . . . with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." Ephesians 1:3, 4. God is "not willing that any should perish, but that



OUR HOPE

MAY COLE KUHN

O God of life eternal,
Healer of grief and pain,
Be Thou our hope and comfort
Till shadows pass again.
Be Thou the consummation
Of every great desire,
The heart of every purpose
Our flaming, living fire.

all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9); therefore, He "gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). And it is "to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Ephesians 1:6, 7.

Yes, our God, "who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Ephesians 2:4-7.

This great and mighty God, who so loved that He gave up the richest treasure of heaven, is very definite and specific in His word to all His children. He says: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee" (Jeremiah 31:3); "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love" (Hosea 11:4). Those of us who follow the Christ today do so because He made love to us. Those strong cords and bands of love draw and hold us to Him. "We love Him, because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19. Jesus Christ was and is the world's greatest lover. He came to love man away from sin, and thus to be the world's Saviour. That was His mission. He came to give us an example of true love. O that we would open our hearts and bid Him enter! Someone has said: "If a man has not made room for God in his heart, his fellow men will find themselves in a tight place in such a heart."

To love one another as Christ loved us, and to meet the high commands of God, lie at the very foundation of a helpful and beautiful Christian life. Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another constitutes the highest evidence of true godliness. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it; only in the heart where Christ reigns is it found. It takes more than an imaginary religion to meet the demands of God. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." 1 John 3:18. It is only when the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, and the impulse to help and bless others springs up from within that we can hope to meet the divine standard for our lives, and attain to the completeness of Christian character required by Christ and exemplified in His life. The admonition is, "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that

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Civilization's TRAGIC FAILURE

One Last Hope for the World

by

MURL
VANCE



WE HAVE been told by our educators these many years that the human race has been steadily progressing up out of chaos and barbarism to a high plane of civilization.

It isn't so! True, we have many inventions that have done much to increase the comfort of the body; but modern civilization has done nothing to help the soul, to make this world a happier place in which to live.

Someone has said that the olden days were days of iron men and wooden ships, while today we have iron ships and wooden men. Certain it is that there is just as much cruelty and barbarism in the human heart today as there was when Attila, "the scourge of God," led forth his hordes to slaughter his enemies. The only difference is that today the work of destruction is done largely by some mechanical means directed by man rather than by arms swinging swords.

Civilization stores a man's mind with facts, it gives him powerful weapons to destroy his fellow men; but it does not give him the slightest means of controlling his conduct along humane lines. We can never boast of advances in civilization as a race of people on this earth until we can maintain law and order among ourselves. Today individual, national, and international lawlessness is as rampant as it ever was. Our boasted civilization, much as we may hate to admit it, does not furnish the slightest brake upon human selfishness, with its accompanying crime and war.

Our vaunted learning, our knowledge of "what makes the wheels go round," has done nothing to make our world safe for democracy. The rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are probably as far from being guaranteed at the present moment as they ever were in the history of the world. Our right to live, according to the present way of thinking, can be maintained only by going forth and depriving the other half of the world of their lives. The other half of the world seems to feel exactly the same way about

us. Therefore fear of death now rules in the human heart, with everyone believing that he can maintain his own rights only by destroying his fellow men.

The right to own property, to secure by toil enough of the necessities of life to carry one through old age, has well-nigh disappeared. Even the desire to secure by honest labor what one needs in order to live has almost disappeared before the lust of getting something for nothing. To avoid revolution, governments often institute some kind of dole, which soon produces a class of parasites, who live on those who work and who daily increase their demands. The state is forced to increase taxes and thus take from those who have in order to satisfy those who have not, and, to a degree, in certain countries that amounts to confiscation. With these conditions prevailing, certainly civilization has done little to secure safety for present-day man.

Subjects of the State

The right of liberty is also disappearing under the demands of our modern civilization. Civilization claims to hate slavery, yet there are probably as many slaves eking out their lives today as there ever were at any time since the dawn of history. Instead of being owned by individuals, they are owned by the state. Where such conditions obtain, they are forced to work for the state in return for barely enough food and clothing to keep them alive—and slaves have always had that. True, they do not have a chain around their necks; but they work from dawn to dusk, with the definite knowledge that a firing squad awaits them if they do not produce as much as demanded. They dare not revolt or criticize their government—they have seen the fate of too many who did. They are not permitted to leave their country, to go and come when they please, or to make any suggestions as to how conditions might be improved. Concentration camps, with slavery of the cruelest and most inhumane sort, await those who ex-

press their own thoughts or show any signs of revolt against their slave masters. Civilization does not treat its slaves any better than did the barbarians.

The right to pursue happiness, at least in some nations, may still be with us; but, in many cases, the pursuit is in vain, in so far as what civilization has to offer is concerned. Happiness is not to be found in money, for many of the wealthiest people commit suicide in their misery. Along with its luxuries, money brings worry and fear and sleepless nights. Happiness is not to be found in the theater, for the passions, hatreds, intrigues, and murders depicted there only serve to injure the nervous system and to arouse fears that cannot be assuaged, and abnormal desires that cannot legitimately be satisfied.

Happiness cannot be found in the saloon, for its wares serve but to bring, on the day following, a throbbing head or a troubled conscience. Happiness is a lasting state, not a bitter pill with a sugar coating.

When we look at our world today, we are forced to confess that our civilization has done nothing to improve the human soul. The prophecy of Daniel 12:4 that in the last days, "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased," has been fulfilled; but in this very running to and fro we have been rushed out of the very things that make for lasting happiness. And although we would not think of trading our modern conveniences for the crude contrivances of our forefathers, we must admit that they lived a happier and a more secure life than most of us do. They took time to live, to be neighborly, to maintain their faith in God and in the future—the very essentials of happiness. We today, who have permitted our civilization to speed us past these worth-while things of life, can find no such anchors for the soul when trouble comes.

It is true that modern medical science has increased the average life span several years by saving babies and their mothers at childbirth. Epidemics have been largely checked, and surgery has worked wonders; but our civilization has done nothing to strengthen the human body. The average individual today stands less chance of reaching eighty than did our forefathers. Medical science has made it possible for more people to reach forty, giving us the idea that we are becoming longer-lived; but the conclusion is based upon a false interpreta-

tion of the figures. We are becoming weaker, not stronger. The nervous system is unable to stand up under the punishment of fast living and an insecure future; the heart is going to pieces under the same punishment, with the additional handicap of various and sundry habit-forming drugs that are constantly being used by the majority of people today.

Of What Is There to Boast?

Look at it any way we will, we are forced to admit that it is not true that our civilization is carrying us from chaos into Utopia. With our bodies becoming weaker, our nervous systems breaking down, our hearts going dead just as we reach the prime of life, our property (if we are fortunate enough to have any) in jeopardy, our liberties at stake, and even our lives in the hands of those who use gas and flame and shell to get what they want—with all this accompanying our vaunted civilization, of what have we to boast?

Fortunate indeed is the man who can look past the present and maintain a quiet and sustaining trust in the future. Fortunate is he who, knowing that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Timothy 3:13), can see in this very increase of evil a sign of better days to come. Fortunate is he who, hearing of wars and rumors of wars, with nation rising against nation and kingdom against kingdom, still has such a strong faith in the God of heaven that he can "be not troubled," but rather "endure unto the end."

Civilization has failed us; it is going downhill. Our only hope is to return to the God of our fathers, and to look forward to the time of "a new heaven and a new earth," described in Revelation 21, where "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." This is the sustaining hope of every true Christian—the happiest man upon the face of the earth today; and it can become the hope and happiness of anyone else who cares enough about his soul's salvation to search the Scriptures and to follow God's ways and plans. Such a faith in God is worth working for and holding on to, not only for the benefits to be secured from it in the world to come, but also for the comfort and happiness it brings to us today.

If we do not commend the gospel to people by our holy walk and conversation, we shall not win them to Christ. Some little act of kindness will perhaps do more to influence them than any number of long sermons.—D. L. Moody.

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

by WESLEY AMUNDSEN

APEALS for a return to the religion of Christ are sounding everywhere; in one state, even, the governor suggested that every church put on a revival and that all people attend church. We appreciate this indication on the part of national leaders; but at the same time we wonder if there is not a failure to understand what is meant by the religion of Christ.

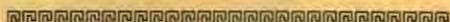
Religion in itself may be attributed to any body of worshipers; and, whether they worship idols of wood or of stone, whether they worship nature or legendary heroes, whether they are ancestor worshipers or what they are, all have religion. But the Christian religion is something else. It is higher than human thought can comprehend, and yet simple enough so that the most ordinary man may have it and understand it.

Back in the early centuries, when the first blush of purity and sacredness was becoming besmirched with the jealousies of the bishops, and apostasy was steadily creeping into the church, the great climax came when Constantine and his pagan followers accepted nominal Christianity. There was little genuine con-

version, as such, for the pagans continued to worship their idols as they had done previously. In some instances names were changed, those of Bible characters being given to the images that were worshiped by these new "Christians." The world walked into the church when Constantine accepted Christianity, and from that day to this the world has been in the church. True, there have been revivals from time to time, and there have been reformations. God has raised up men of His choosing to champion His cause as failure after failure came to His people, even as He raised up men in Old Testament times to bring His people back into the way.

Today the question of being a Christian is very much as it was in Constantine's day. You may go to almost any church on a Sunday, and, after the minister has preached his sermon, he makes a call to those who desire to unite with the church either by letter or upon profession of faith, and you may answer that call. You give him your name and address, you are asked a few questions, and then, as soon as possible, you are baptized either by sprinkling or immersion, according to the order of the church. Very, very few ministers ever stop to determine whether you understand what it means to be a Christian. Very, very few endeavor to discover whether or not you are converted. You are asked no questions as to your habits or general manner of living; it is sufficient that you want to join the church.

But, my friend, you may join every church in Christendom, and yet not be a Christian, and thus never be saved. You may be baptized a thousand times, and yet not know the Lord Jesus. You may even agree to certain rules of conduct advocated by the church, and accept certain creeds, and yet be lost when Jesus comes. Christianity is more than joining a church; it is joining a Person. In the drift of Protestantism toward easy access to church fellowship in order to bolster up the preacher's salary and to provide a good audience for him, there has come a decided departure from the pure and holy principles of the teachings of Jesus. It is not considered necessary that you know your Lord and Saviour today in order to be a professed "Christian." You just join the church of your choice, just as you would join a lodge or a secret organization. Many businessmen join large churches in order to secure business, and to have it known in the community that they are church members. But of what value is it to have



When God Is Glad

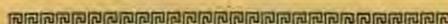
GENE FARRELL

How glad must be the father heart of God
To see the petaled beauty of a child
Unfolding in the sunlight of a home
Where truth is loved and hearts are undefiled:

To watch, amid the vanities of men,
The weakest thing His glory ever made
Responding to the tender, hallowed touch
Of lives who caught the vision and obeyed:

To see the helpless body sheltered there
From all the world would do to mar and stain—
Encircled by a ring of golden prayer,
Enshrined to live and follow in His train!

God looks, but seldom finds a home like this:
And surely it must fill His heart with joy
To place within such walls of holy bliss
A lovely little baby girl or boy!



Advocating a return to the simple gospel of Christ, and a preparation for His imminent second appearing

EDITOR . . . ARTHUR S. MAXWELL

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life that Jesus lived everyone can live through His help, for we may have all the help that He had. Be like Jesus, Christian; do not cheapen His faith by taking His name in vain.

"Unto Us a Child—"

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to be as unlike those of an earthly king as the kingdom of heaven is unlike the kingdoms of this world.

Many, many times Mary was perplexed in her mind about the destiny of her Son, but she "pondered" the word of God, and gained thereby faith and assurance at each stage of His career; and, only as we ponder the record of His birth and life and teaching are we able to apprehend and appropriate the power of God that is in and through Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus was born of comparatively poor parents, and brought up in a modest working-class home, that He might appreciate the struggles of the masses of mankind. He learned, by the very things He experienced, to be a true representative of God and of all mankind.

He went about everywhere, moved freely among all classes of people, high and low, rich and poor, educated and ignorant, that He might familiarize Himself with the manifold needs of mankind. He was, and is, our true exemplar. No wholesome joy of life did He attempt to kill; but He sought with all His soul to teach man to put first things first, and so to make sure above all things of possessing that life which is eternal.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS

This number closes another volume of the *Signs of the Times*. In harmony with our policy of issuing only fifty numbers a year, no paper will appear next week.

Those who have preserved all the 1939 issues, and wish to have an index to same, may obtain one by sending a three-cent stamp to the Circulation Department, *Signs of the Times*, Mountain View, California.

A limited number of bound volumes of the 1939 issues may be secured at \$3.50. A few of the earlier volumes are also available, concerning which we shall gladly send information.

"a form of godliness" when the "power thereof" is denied? Christianity has been cheapened today by the very men who profess to be its followers. They have cheapened it by not upholding the standards of Bible religion and true Christianity, for they have let the Constantine of today enter into the sacred precincts of the Lord God, in order that they may have influence with the world. But in thus reaching out for worldly favor they have separated themselves from God, for "the friendship of the world is enmity with God." James 4:4.

I repeat: It takes more than joining a church to make you a Christian. You must join yourself to Jesus, accepting Him as your Lord of all. If He is not Lord of all, He will not be Lord at all. You must willingly lay aside every defilement and every wrong habit. To become a Christian means to become a "temple" of God. To become God's dwelling place means that you must be holy, sanctified, for God will not dwell in a place of sin and corruption, nor will He sanctify any man who clings to wrong habits of life, filthiness of character. He cannot tolerate hypocrisy; and yet the churches are leavened with it.

"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His," says Paul (Romans 8:9); and the Spirit of Jesus will certainly lead a Christian to follow in the steps of the Man of Calvary. To have Jesus as a living reality in your life day by day is to be a Christian. To be willing to forsake all and follow Him, taking up your cross morning by morning and walking up the hill to the Place of the Skull, where you crucify yourself to the world and the world becomes crucified to you, to feel an intense hatred for all the sins of the flesh and of the mind, so that when, through failure on your part to withstand temptation, sin brings its evil effects into your life, and you "loathe" yourself—this is having the Saviour with you.

How can men professing to be Christians go on hating one another; cursing, swearing, drinking intoxicating liquors; stealing, gambling, committing adultery; using tobacco, reading illicit fiction; attending the theaters, the gambling dens, the horse races; giving themselves over to the pleasures of the world while Jesus the Saviour calls them to a holy life? Jesus does not accept the pleasure lover as His disciple. No, no, if you would be Christ's, then you must follow Him. Your profession of words means nothing unless your acts reveal the graces of the Christ life.

Paul discovered the experience of the Christian, and left on record the words: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who

loved me, and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:20.

Dead to the world, but alive to Jesus Christ; recognizing your inability to do anything of yourself, and His ability to do all things for you and through you; thus day by day you live the Christ life, and are accounted in heaven as a Christian.

Baptism, the burial of the old nature, becomes the marriage ceremony whereby you publicly join yourself to Jesus, confess Him as your Saviour, and agree to walk with Him in the "newness of life." Romans 6:4. The Christian life is a *new* life. It is not the old life made over, but a new experience, or new birth, through the ministry of God's gracious Holy Spirit, the selfsame Spirit that caused the birth of Jesus to become so miraculously a fact. Yes, Christ wants to be born in you when you accept Him, and then to help you to grow up day by day as He grew up back there in Judea.

To be a Christian means that the will of God is to be done in you here upon earth as His will is done in heaven among the angels. Surely if you anticipate joining the angelic throng someday, you must be preparing now to be as they are. Even Jesus said: "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40:8. Can the disciple be anything different than was his Master? Can we expect to be followers of Jesus, and yet deny our need of being like Him? "Every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." 1 John 3:3.

"We shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." Verse 2. To be like Him should be the goal of every Christian; not to be like some poor, weak mortal being, whose years are but few upon the earth, and whose life is filled with failures and mistakes, but to be *like Jesus*.

"Be like Jesus, this my song,
 In the home and in the throng;
 Be like Jesus, all day long!
 I would be like Jesus."

Yes, that is the life that God desires for every one of His children, and the

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Secret Second Advent?

(Continued from page 10)

Then, after His ascension into heaven, He sent word back to His servants, "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." Revelation 1:7.

When every eye shall see Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail, what can there be secret about His coming?

Peter and Paul also wrote of Christ's second coming. 1 Peter 4:13; Colossians 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; 2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8.

Yes, Jesus is coming in great glory, and He tells us not to be sleeping, but to "watch." Mark 13:36, 37.

We should all be "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2:13.

Humanity's Hurt

(Continued from page 11)

which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another." Rom. 12:9, 10.

The church may need money, logic, sound doctrine, and demonstration; but each of these avails nothing in building up the membership unless it is linked up with an unselfish love for an abiding interest in all the brethren. Love for Christ produces love in the heart for others. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" 1 John 4:20.

He whose heart is aglow with love for Jesus Christ and his fellow men will not have a dwarfed and unhappy experience. A religion that makes a man look sad and lacking in love will never cure the world or make hearts glad. The entrance of the love of Christ into the heart brings the very fullness of God into humanity—all that we need; "for in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him." Colossians 2:9, 10. In Christ and His love are found the grace that forgives, the power that regenerates, the truth that makes free, the fellowship that makes glad, inspires, transfigures, builds up, and satisfies the soul. This blessed experience is not found in a mere system of truth, in a code of law, or in a form of religion; it comes through faith and a loving acquaintance with Jesus Christ, an ever-living person, the One who in love gave His life on Calvary that we in the ages to come might "sit together in heavenly places in Christ." Ephesians 2:7. Let us ever rejoice together in the unspeakable love of God.

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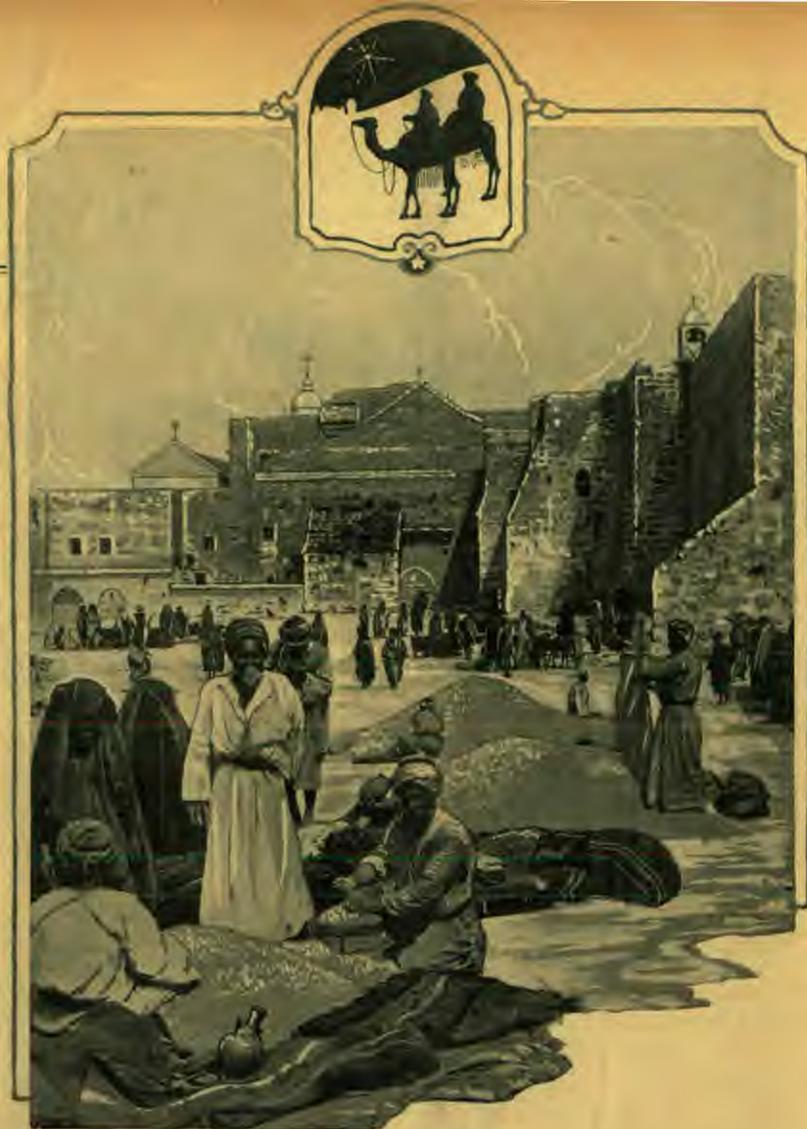
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TWO-MINUTE
MESSAGE



BETHLEHEM

by ERNEST LLOYD

HOW poor this world would be today if there had been no Christ-child in Bethlehem, no cross on Calvary, and no risen Lord! Who can resist the ennobling and regenerating power that had its birth in the little town of Bethlehem? Who does not feel the magnetic influence of Him who said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me"? John 12:32. The masters of brush and chisel, the makers of song and story, have given their best to tell all men of the deathless power of Bethlehem's Saviour. Libraries groan with the weight of books telling how Bethlehem has divinely influenced literature, laws, education, and the moral and physical uplift of mankind.

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been given hundreds of times for the Man of Galilee.

On the backs of horses and camels, elephants and llamas, goes His message of redeeming love. Hauled by dogs, reindeer, and men, loaded into canoes, roped on arctic sleds, balanced on the heads of African porters, travels this same living word. It is read in the huts of the head-hunters of Borneo, and by the heart hunters of Bolivia; in the igloo of the Eskimo by the light of his blubber lamp, and in the palatial homes of the rulers of earth.

As we meditate on the wonderful birth of Jesus, and its beautiful and eternal meaning, the heart is fired with a consecrated passion for the redemption of men, women, and children whom He came into the world to seek and to save.

We remember, too, the angel's message at the ascension—"This same Jesus" will come again. He calls upon His disciples everywhere today to prepare the way for His imminent return. His commission comes ringing down the centuries to us: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:20.

With His promised presence and power to accompany them, nothing will stop His messengers in their glorious work for the establishment of His kingdom.