

NOVEMBER . . . TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

Our TIMES

SINCE 1891

A BIBLICAL INTERPRETER OF THE NEWS

**"When the Last
Day Dawns
Upon the Earth"**

(SEE PAGE 9)



LETTERS

From Our Readers

Sirs:

I am enclosing money for a one-year renewal to OUR TIMES. Oh, how I wish I were in good circumstances to send for this most wonderful magazine I have been a reader of, besides the *Signs of the Times*. I cannot afford both, so choose OUR TIMES.

Just received my July copy today, and I see in the news-letter column where some have ordered the discontinuance of the magazine. Not me! I think you surely point out the things of Truth which are Bible facts.

Tamarack, Minn.

C.F.P.

Sirs:

I note L.T.D. did not like OUR TIMES magazine. Now I have been "guilty" of sending it to several, hoping L.T.D. wasn't one of them.

Please, L.T.D., don't destroy them. Give them to someone who would like to read them, or send them to a veterans' hospital. You won't miss the postage and may do a world of good.

Madison, Mo.

C.M.

Sirs:

I sure have enjoyed OUR TIMES. I look forward each month for this wonderful message. I am glad to have this opportunity to renew. Inclosing a check. Will send a friend's name soon. Nashville, Tenn.

W.H.D.

Sirs:

A grand publication—glad to learn of it!

Cincinnati 10, Ohio

C.O.

Sirs:

I feel that I must congratulate you on the excellent July number of OUR TIMES. You surely have made a radical change, and all for the good. I like your new format.

Dallas Youngs, Editor,

Oshawa, Ontario, Canada

Canadian Signs of the Times

Sirs:

I think that there is too much condemnation of the comic and crime books. The article in the August OUR TIMES called "Those Uncomical Comics" would have been better left unpublished. After all, our children have to have some fun, and those who commit some crime or sex perversion because of the comics are in the minority.

Indianapolis, Ind.

J.R.

Editor's Note: Would you want your child to be one of the so-called minority that is influenced to commit crime through crime books? If we followed the same process of reasoning, we might say that since only a minority are enslaved by narcotics, it is wrong to condemn their use.

Sirs:

We read the magazine OUR TIMES and think it's really fine. Dakota, Minn.

J.G.L.

Sirs:

I just had the pleasure of opening the first issue of your enlarged and more attractive OUR TIMES journal. I want to say that I am impressed; that in my own judgment this magazine is one of the most worth-while and exhaustive magazines that is being produced.

Glendale, California

E.M.F.

Sirs:

Am enclosing check for subscription to OUR TIMES. Thanks for the copies sent me. I truly think it is a great magazine and hope you keep it so. So many things start out good, then add too much of the world about us and it smothers out the good. I'll be looking for my magazine.

San Antonio, Texas

O.H.

Our TIMES

SINCE 1891 A BIBLICAL INTERPRETER OF THE NEWS

NOVEMBER, 1949

VOL. 58

No. 12

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The Cover

Our cover picture this month is by Eva Luoma.



The greatest test of faith known to man was the experience of Abraham when asked of God to sacrifice his son Isaac. He proceeded without hesitancy to fulfill God's request, having faith to believe that God would not lead him in the wrong way.

Victorious Faith

"Faith Is the Victory That Overcomes the World."

By Dallas Youngs

"FAITH is the victory," says one. It is, indeed, provided it is accompanied by obedience. Obedience—works—is the thing that proves the character and quality of faith. Apart from demonstrating works, faith has no value. The Bible declares it to be "dead." "Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." James 2:17.

No less a personage than Abraham demonstrated his faith by the things he did. It came to pass when his only son and heir, Isaac, was about twenty years of age, that God, to test him, told him to offer up the boy as a burnt offering on Mount Moriah. The father's response was one of obedience—obedience which was motivated by faith. Had Abraham not believed God, he would not have been willing to offer up Isaac. The fact that he did so proves his faith and the quality of it.

The Bible writer supports this deduction: "Was OUR TIMES, NOVEMBER, 1949

not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? . . . Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." James 2:21, 22, 24. The patriarch might have made acclamation, alone, of his faith for a hundred years and have failed completely to convince any that he possessed this desirable attribute. On the other hand, his one act on Mount Moriah convinced God and all people of his belief.

Another thing about Abraham's obedience is that he carried out his instructions without question or quibble. He did not argue. He obeyed at once—immediately. W. G. Heslop tells of a teacher who explained "to her class the words concerning God's angels, 'ministers of His who do His pleasure,' and

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How to Win the Battle With Sin

Accepting the Superhuman Power Promised by God

A GREAT Assyrian army was poised, ready to strike at the city of Jerusalem. Emissaries had been sent by King Sennacherib to the city, offering the people a chance to surrender and live, or else to suffer the consequences of war. The city faced destruction; the people could expect captivity or death. The choice was a hard one to make, for the Jewish army was small, and making successful resistance was very doubtful.

In the face of such difficulties, Hezekiah, the king of Judah, addressed his followers. Speaking of their enemy, Sennacherib, the king declared, "With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles." 2 Chronicles 32:8.

Hezekiah did not trust in vain, for the record of this war in the book of Second Kings reveals that over 180,000 of the Assyrians were stricken by God, and

By John W. Boyd

died in their camp. Judah did not have to use arms for defense. The Lord delivered them.

The Christian today is just as dependent upon God for victory as was Hezekiah. Paul, the great apostle who had many trials and temptations to meet, exclaimed, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 15:57.

The Christian faces a battle as truly as did the men of Judah, and the odds are just as great against the one who tries to do right. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Ephesians 6:12. For victory over this enemy the individual must have help from God, and trust in Him is not misplaced. "When the enemy shall come in like



EVA LUOMA AND INTERNATIONAL

Prayer is a mighty weapon in the battle with sin. It is greater than any weapon used by man in modern warfare. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." 2 Corinthians 10:4.

a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall put him to flight." Isaiah 59:19, margin.

The person who may be fighting a losing battle with habits of sin can well notice Colossians 2:6, which reads, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." Ask yourself, "How was it that I received Jesus Christ?" The answer is: By faith—"By grace are ye saved through faith" (Ephesians 2:8), "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Since you received Him by faith, you are also to walk with Him by faith.

Paul had much more in mind than the experience of justification when he wrote, "The just shall live by faith." Romans 1:17. It is a wonderful thing to be justified by faith in Jesus Christ. This great truth should be magnified, not minimized. But the Christian is not only justified by faith in the Lord; he is to live by faith, to live day after day by faith in the risen Saviour.

That victory over sin comes from God, not from ourselves, is further revealed in Hebrews 13:20, 21. I quote only the first phrase of each verse, but this does no injustice to the text, as you will see if you read it completely: "Now the God of peace . . . make you perfect in every good work to do His will." What a wonderful truth! But how often neglected!

Many times individuals accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour and follow Him in baptism. But then they reason that they must do something. They start battling with their habits. They struggle with tempers, appetites, and other desires, but continue to lose. They become so busy fighting Satan that they do not take time to invite God into the struggle. But stop and notice: it is "the God of peace" that will "make you perfect." This is not an accomplishment of our own. *It is a divine act from above.*

Adam and Eve, after losing the covering of light with which their Creator had clothed them, tried to fashion garments of their own making. They substituted the work of their hands for what God had given them. Likewise any one who tries to be victorious in his own strength is substituting fig leaves for the righteousness of Christ.

It is well to note that God accomplishes this work of perfecting you through Jesus Christ and the blood He shed. These verses in Hebrews disclose that the God of peace who raised Jesus Christ will "through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will." The only way the Lord can make you perfect is for you to surrender to Him and let Him control your life.

In my mind I picture Abraham standing beside the altar of stones at the summit of Mount Moriah. Before him lies his son Isaac, the son he loves, the heir to his wealth and the promises of God. The aged

(Continued on page 16)

MASTER OR MASTERED?

By
Edna Atkin Pepper



HE STOOD before his empty lock box in the post office. The glow faded from his dull eyes, and the eager half smile from his expressionless face.

"Morning," he observed noncommittally, and shuffled out to the street.

A strong man, he had been; everyone said so. Hard working, too. He could go through a great lot of labor in a day's time. Powerful shoulders, hard muscles. Hard all the way through. Hard on his children. Got every ounce of work out of them that he could. Hard on his wife. His roaring passions had broken her heart, crushed her spirit, and sapped her strength until the day came when she could no longer rise from her bed. When the children called a physician, over his violent protest, it was too late. He read the contempt in each pair of blazing eyes turned in his direction.

But he was strong. He went on his headlong, tempestuous way, bending each child to his iron will, brooking no disagreement, until one by one they grew to the age where they could get away from him. They found themselves quickly, once the gentle mother had been laid away.

And they never went back. For all his boasted prowess and power, he had given them nothing, and he had nothing with which he could call them to him. It was the mother who had stamped their characters for all time, passed on the richness of her own spiritual wealth, the warmth and sweetness of her heart, and the fullness of her varied talents.

I walked home slowly, thoughtfully, and dropped into a chair with a volume from the library shelves.

"Many mistake strong passions for a strong character," I read, "but the truth is that he who is mastered by his passions is a weak man. The real greatness of the man is measured by the *power of the feelings that he controls*, not by those that control him."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 567, 568. (Italics mine.)

Who is the boss, I wonder, in your life? Will your heart, your home, and your post-office box be equally empty when you start going down the other side of the hill?

THE ISRAEL TO WHOM THE PROMISE

FOR SIXTY centuries the grace of God has been extended to a lost world. In the gift of Jesus the infinite love of God was manifested before men. God so loved the world that He gave the greatest gift heaven could bestow. In Him is our salvation. In Him is our righteousness. In Him is our hope. Multiplied millions of men have turned from death unto life through the miracle of the new birth which was made possible in the death and resurrection of Christ.

This present probationary period, extending from the fall to the judgment, is the day of grace. The dispensation of "grace" has been in existence for six thousand years. Today is the day of salvation—the only day of salvation. The close of this dispensation of grace is marked by the close of probation.

There are two primary evils in the dividing of the plan of salvation into seven dispensations. First, the arbitrary naming of one period as a dispensation of

*Do the Bible Promises to
Israel Pertain to the Jews?*

By Varner J. Johns

"law" and another as a dispensation of "grace" destroys both the majesty of law and the meaning of grace. To take away grace from any period of this world's sin-cursed history is to take away the only means of salvation from sin. To take away the Ten Commandments from any period of this world's history is to take away the standard of righteousness and the God-given means of pointing out sin. Second, the doctrine of a future "dispensation" wherein men find a future opportunity for salvation is a deception of the darkest kind. Any teaching from any source which leads men to look for a future golden age of opportunity, and a second chance for salvation, is a delusion and a snare.

Death closes the door of hope to a lost soul. "For the grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth." Isaiah 38:18. The light of truth shines forth from the throne of God and dispels the darkness from human hearts. Even those in the most darkened and degraded condition have a measure of responsibility, "their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." Romans 2:15. Even those who have never seen the written Word nor heard the direct appeal are without excuse, "for the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." Romans 1:20. The Lord, in His infinite mercy, takes into consideration every circumstance—the place of birth, the amount of light, the talents given—and notes, when He measures responsibility, every adverse influence. "The



CLYDE PROVONSHA, ARTIST

In Christ "there is neither Jew nor Greek." We all become one family in Him and heirs of the promises in the Bible that were made to Abraham and his descendants. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Galatians 3:29.

ARE MADE

Lord shall count, when He writeth up the people, that this man was born there." Psalm 87:6.

The new Dispensationalism makes mockery of the plan of salvation by teaching the hope of salvation after the second coming of Christ. It is then too late, for the judgment has been set and the books have been opened. The door of mercy is now open, wide open. "Whosoever will" may enter and find salvation. The door is open to the Gentile as well as to the Jew. "When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door" (Luke 13:25), the door of opportunity is forever closed. Dispensationalism dares to open that which God shall have forever closed. The Lord says: "Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." Hebrews 3:15. This modern heresy substitutes "tomorrow" in the place of "today."

Is there a "period" or "time" or "dispensation" which follows the second coming of Christ and precedes the giving of the "new earth" to man as his eternal homeland? Yes, there is such a period described in the Bible. It is called the millennium because it is of a thousand years' duration. (The word "millennium" does not appear in the Bible, but "one thousand years" is spoken of several times.) But the millennium is not a period of probation. The wicked do not have an opportunity for salvation during the millennium because they are *not alive* during that period. The wicked are dead. The earth is dark and desolate. The righteous are not on the earth but in heaven. The fact is: The millennium is a time of darkness and desolation for the earth, a time of death for the wicked. Such is the Bible teaching.

The millennium is bounded by two resurrections. The righteous are raised at its beginning, the wicked at its close. During the millennium, the righteous are alive in heaven, the wicked are dead on the earth. Let us read the scriptures which substantiate this fact.

The resurrection and translation of the righteous: "For 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.

The death of the wicked: "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8.

"The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Revelation 20:5.

OUR TIMES, NOVEMBER, 1949

Gratitude

For starry night and dawn of day,
For winds that in the willows play,
For every gift that comes my way,
I'm grateful.

For sunshine bright and silvery rain,
For harvest time and ripening grain,
For joy that ever follows pain,
I'm grateful.



For steeple bells that gaily ring,
For homing birds upon the wing,
And love that only worth can bring,
I'm grateful.

For furrowed fields and upturned sod,
For paths that I alone have trod,
For faith that lifts my soul to God,
I'm grateful.

—Alice Whitson-Norton in "The Uplift."

The desolation of the earth: "I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. . . . I beheld, and, lo, there was no man. . . . I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by His fierce anger." Jeremiah 4:23-26.

At the close of the millennium the New Jerusalem comes down to this earth; the wicked are raised and attempt to take the city of God; fire comes down and destroys the wicked; this same fire purifies the earth; this earth, renewed and restored to its Edenic beauty,

(Continued on page 24)



EVENTS *of Our Times*



U.S. ARMY LIFE—Military Washington was shocked at the "Christian Herald's" recent revelation of the "social events" planned for one week end at the officers' club and mess of an American Army post. The calendar was sent the Herald by an Army Officer's wife. We quote from the schedule:

"Sunday: Jukebox dancing. Monday: Bar is open. Come out and relax. Tuesday: Women's club. Meet the wife for cocktails and family dinner. Wednesday: Bingo tonight. Bring the kids to this one. Also Wednesday: Bar open from 7 to 11. Come on out, it's heaven. Thursday: Maid's night out. Bring your husband here. Friday: Pay-day night. Come out and drink it over. Also Friday: Bridge party, 25c per seat. Winner takes all. Whiskey for booby prize. Saturday: Monte Carlo free champagne, 8 to 9. Jukebox dance, 9. Also Saturday: Horses, beautiful girls for jockies. Regular pari-mutuels." (United Action.)—*Christian Victory*, March, 1949.

BEER BOOM BUST—The question whether beer may be losing caste and hitting the skids of public disfavor appears to be definitely posed in the light of three surprising current facts, declares the American Businessmen's Research Foundation in a statement released at Foundation headquarters today.

These three facts are:

First: A drop of 70,237,661 gallons,—some 906,-292,400 average glasses of beer in 1948 as compared with 1947 (January-December), say just released government figures.

Second: "Beer consumption over the bar has dropped 40 per cent to 60 per cent in the last three months," say market reports.

Third: Two smashing defeats of beer already in 1949, in representative local option elections: one in Mississippi, Chickasaw County, by more than a 2 to 1 vote; another in North Carolina, Rutherford County, a more than 14 to 1 defeat for beer in a 11,000 vote total. Several hundreds more local elections are already projected for 1949 in some twenty-five states.—American Businessmen's Research Foundation.

VIOLENT WORLD—Practically everywhere I went in a 33,000-mile trip around the world, there was violence of some kind going on.—*Ned Calmer*, CBS news analyst.—*Pathfinder*, June 29, 1949.

CHURCH BINGO GAMES—After trying oyster suppers, strawberry festivals, a donkey party, box socials, and a lawn fete to raise church funds, a congregation once went to Editor Horace Greeley for advice about what to try next "to keep the struggling church from disbanding."

Greeley's reply: "Try religion."

But, since the 1800's, church financing had often taken on more, not less, of the aspects of a carnival. Few churchmen had strongly criticized a system which produced badly needed dollars.

Last fortnight, however, a Lutheran clergyman separated need from cause to condemn "unscriptural giving."

Writing in the monthly bulletin of the United Lutheran Church's Stewardship office, Stewardship Secretary Dr. Clarence C. Stoughton described fund-raising efforts of the Bingo-game variety as "... not giving at all. They are selling, commerce, business, even gambling, but not giving.

"Often the business is shabby and shoddy business, asking 50c for 25c articles and using unsavory practices that the world has for the most part discarded. Sometimes the methods violate good taste, good morals, and the laws of the community, as when gambling is the device. Never are they Christian religion."—*Pathfinder*, May 18, 1949.

CHILL OF DREAD—The Air Force's breathtaking feat of sending a big plane around the world without a stop was the kind of achievement in which this technological age expects to find fulfillment and satisfaction. But it was not permitted to do so. General Le May of the Air Force quickly turned the thrill of achievement to a chill of dread by his statement that the purpose of the flight was to show that the Air Force is now able to drop an atomic bomb anywhere on earth. A secondary aim was to test security measures by carrying out the circumnavigation of the globe in secret. Both purposes were realized, he said. Even the Navy did not know what was happening. . . . The symbol of the new age is this instrument of mass destruction. Each new discovery brought by our advancing mastery of the laws of the physical world advances us one step closer to collective suicide.—*The Christian Century*, March 16, 1949.



ACME PHOTO

*From a Recent Sunday Radio Address by
Dr. Walter A. Maier, of the Lutheran Hour.*

Bible texts: 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18; 5:2, 3.

more loudly than usual? It had smoked and spit and spewed before. Besides, had not a group of the city's well-known citizens climbed up to the edge of the crater, peered into its depths, and returned to report: "Don't be alarmed! There is no need to worry"? . . .

Why, that very night some of the most brazen leaders were planning to repeat their challenge to Christ; they were going to crucify another pig and in sensual orgies prove their utter disdain for the Bible.

That night never arrived for the people of Saint Pierre. Suddenly the crater of Mt. Pelee became a blazing inferno. Flames shot hundreds of feet into the air and from within the mountain itself came a roar reverberating terror in every heart. Then, while fire and ashes fell on the city, the volcano erupted in its full, frightful force, pushing deadly lava,

WHEN THE LAST DAY DAWNS UPON THE EARTH

"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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. . . . The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them."

The morning of May 8, 1902, broke bright and promising over the island of Martinique. For the 40,000 people in the city of Saint Pierre, its capital, in the West Indies, with its hell-holes of blasphemy and vice, it was just another day to practice voodoo atrocities, devil-worship, and obscene ridicule of the redeeming Christ.

What if the crater of Mt. Pelee, the volcano in the close vicinity, was belching smoke and rumbling

millions of tons of molten stone and metal, down the mountain slopes.

Furiously those rivers of ruin, the floods of divine vengeance, rushed into the city, sweeping through the streets that leaped into flame at its approach, blistering, burning, baking to death its trapped victims. The tin roofs on the housetops, the iron and steel utensils in the kitchens melted and ran through the gutters like liquid wax—so close were these horrors to hell on earth!

Yes, I said hell. Before night-fall, Saint Pierre was no more, its 40,000 inhabitants—a hundred times more than those who perished in the United States' worst 1947 disaster—the Texas City fire—in which 481 people were destroyed. Yet one man in this Martinique city—and for some time he was thought to be the only one—escaped the fiery fate of his fellow citizens.

When the disaster struck, he was locked in the
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Man—Mortal or Immortal?

What Is the State of Man in Death?

By Herbert R. Thurber



ONCE THERE were two trees. They were not ordinary trees. They were very special trees. And this is not the beginning of a nursery story.

Cradled in the Bible account of two remarkable trees is a revelation of the wise and tender purpose God has for you. "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." Genesis 2:8, 9.

Not in the trees themselves, but in what their presence was to accomplish in giving life and character to Adam and Eve, is the prime reason for our interest in them. You might think of it this way: Scan a road map. Notice the directions which the road lines take from city to city. Some of the lines are straight, others are curved and twisted. The straight lines indicate that there are no obstructions to deviate the shortest course from place to place. On the other hand, although the map may not show any elevations, the crooked lines represent roads

winding through hills and mountains. Crooked or straight, the map's lines from city to city indicate roadways; construction, or other factors, determine the roadways.

Like the engineer who built the roads, the first people on earth were confronted with impedimenta. How they met these obstructions determined their future course. The two trees exemplify.

Concerning the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the Genesis words are few: "Ye shall not eat of it; . . . a tree to be desired; . . . she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; . . . her husband with her. . . . Hast thou eaten of the tree? . . . I will greatly multiply thy sorrow. . . . Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Genesis 3:3-19. So this tree was a test of right choice and obedience.

Even fewer are the words in the first record of the tree of life: "And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Genesis 3:22-24.

There was a wise and considerate reason for depriving Adam and Eve of the tree of life. Eternal happiness is not the result of living in eternal evil. Eternity and iniquity will not combine to make everlasting bliss. Had the first pair continued to eat of the life-giving tree, evil would have been ever with them. Unless they proved their worthiness in choosing good and not evil, it would not be safe to trust them with life eternal. God chose to have no eternal sinners in His universe.

Whatever else we can learn from the early record of man, we learn this first truth: In the beginning man's eternal existence was conditional. If he ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, his happy state would end. If he continued to eat of the tree



FRANKLIN BOOTH

God drove man out of Eden so that he would not eat "of the tree of life, . . . and live forever." Genesis 3:22. When the redeemed are taken to heaven they will again eat of this tree, which will sustain life for eternity.

of life, the life given him by the Creator would never end. Adam's life, to be continued forever, depended on two conditions: Obedience to God's word in not partaking of the forbidden tree; and the continual impartation to him of life from God through the tree of life. Upon no other grounds was his eternity secure.

These conditions pose two natural questions. The first one is: "After his failure, fall, and God's offer of another opportunity through Christ, was Adam then released from further test?" The obvious answer is, No. His failure was proof enough that he was not ready for immortality. The tree of life was removed from him because he must be tested again. He was not ready for eternity until tested. If he had been created immortal, the removal of the tree of life could not have denied him immortality.

The second question is: "Can we conclude that all

who have lived since Adam are to receive eternal life on the same basis Adam was promised it?" Why not? What reason have we for thinking we are more favored than Adam? Our opportunity and his are equal. The gospel was in effect in his day as in ours.

The same gospel is expressed for us in John 3:16. Our familiarity with these words should warn us to examine them closely. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should *not perish*, but *have everlasting life*." This precious gift would not be offered if man had it in himself.

What an immeasurable gift! This is not merely the extension of the life we now have. This is not additional time given to man during which he may attempt to better his surroundings. This is not a life with the chance that men will band together in the hope of establishing civic righteousness in all the world. This is a new creation! It is security against want, freedom from war, the fulfillment of perfect peace. These things have men fought for in this life, and lost. It is not in us to gain them, because we have not the power to give them. They accompany the gift of immortal life.

All exaltation is due our God, "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality." 1 Timothy 6:15, 16. How judicious He is in withholding the gift of eternal life until we are ready for it! He withholds it from the mortal who proposes slavery for the masses. He withholds it from the men who hold control of the world's riches but who cannot control themselves. He denies it to the church members who would make of goodness a cloak for evil. He would not give it to the student who sees immortality as inherent in his own will. And what ruin the churchman would do with it if by the same he would consider himself equal to God and hate those who disagree with him. Immortality is a reality, but not a reality without divinity. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:23.

God knows what is best for us. Eternal life is a dangerous gift without the proper preparation. Before we are prepared for it, we must learn the ways of the Lord in choosing only the good. We should also learn well the lesson of discrimination between good and evil before being intrusted with immortality. However, probationary time will end, and then the prepared ones will receive the gift.

"Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised

(Continued on page 31)



G. DORE

Angels hovered over the faithful saints who courageously died under the persecution of Diocletian rather than disobey God.

THE PERIOD OF *Suffering and Martyrdom*

The Second in a Series on the Seven Churches of Revelation

By Taylor G. Bunch

SMYRNA was located about forty miles north of Ephesus and was the second city and church of importance in the province of Asia. For this reason the church of Smyrna was the second to receive the Apocalypse. The seven churches are named in the exact order in which a messenger from Patmos or Ephesus would visit them. With Ephesus as the imperial gateway to the province, they formed a sort of circle. A great Roman highway ran up the coast of the Ægean Sea through Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamos, and an imperial post road eastward from Pergamos ran through Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, where it joined another post road direct from Ephesus. This was the recognized route of imperial, provincial, and commercial postmen, and was doubtless the order in which John had visited

these churches from his home in the city of Ephesus.

It is evident that each of these seven churches represented a center or group of other and smaller churches which doubtless also received the Revelation. Sir William Ramsey, in *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia*, says: "There are seven groups of Churches in Asia: each group is represented by one outstanding and conspicuous member: these representatives are the Seven Churches. These seven representative Churches stand for the Church of the Province; and the Church of the Province, in its turn, stands for the entire Church of Christ."—P. 177.

At the time of this writing there were three methods

KEEPING OUR HOUSE IN ORDER

By James Wallace

THE CHILDREN in a certain school had been told by their teacher that the members of the school board were coming to visit them, therefore they must be on their good behavior. Two of the small girls were discussing the matter, when one of them reminded the other, "They may come any time. You had better clean up your desk."

"Oh, I will do that tomorrow."

"But they may come tomorrow."

"I will clean it up before I go this afternoon."

"But what if they come this morning?"

"Maybe I had better clean it now and keep it clean all the time. Then I won't be ashamed."

Very good philosophy, wasn't it? It is still good reasoning. Our desks should be clean, our lives free of rubbish all the time.

A gentleman was visiting with a busy physician. As they sat chatting in the doctor's office at the close of a busy day, the doctor handed his guest a book and said, "Glance through this while I put my desk in order."

After a few minutes the physician turned to his visitor and said, "My house is now in order. I have a serious heart condition, you know, and I make it a point to get all my affairs in order every night. If I do not come back to my task again, everything will be all right. Right now I am at peace with God and my fellow men."

You and I may not have a serious heart

condition, but should we not all have our house in order all during the day and as we go to our beds at night?

A young girl, through accident, had broken her neck, and was on the way to the operating room. Her father, in a distant city, had been notified and was already on the way to his daughter. The girl's message to one of her attendants was, "If I don't come back from the operating room, tell father that 'my house is in order.'"

A radio operator on a large bomber in World War II, and who had been on a number of missions out over enemy territory, was preparing to leave on another dangerous journey. He lingered to talk to his pastor. "I am leaving on another mission tonight. I fear I won't come back. I wanted to talk to someone about eternal things. I have made everything right, 'my house is in order.'"

These are dangerous, uncertain days to which we have come. So many things happen, and so unexpectedly. Many go out in the morning who do not come back at night. We cannot, of course, spend our time and our energies worrying about the dangers, for we must play our part. There is work to do, responsibilities to be met, burdens to bear.

One thing we should all do—see that our house is kept in order.

of sending letters: by private messenger, by commercial postmen, by imperial or provincial postmen. The Apocalypse was doubtless sent from Patmos to Ephesus by imperial postmen and then delivered from church to church by the members themselves. Copies may have been made in each church for further study. We can imagine that after the original copy had been read to the church of Ephesus and perhaps copied, it was sent to the minister or elder of the church of Smyrna by one of the Ephesian Christians, and so on around the circle.

"And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the

devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." Revelation 2:8-11.

Smyrna has the meaning of "myrrh," which was an aromatic ointment used as a healing balm but more especially for embalming the dead. One of its chief ingredients was made by crushing and bleeding a plant by the same name. The plant was bitter to the taste, but when crushed, it produced a fragrant odor. It was the crushing that released the fragrance. The name Smyrna, therefore, symbolizes the fragrance of Christian character as the result of suffering and persecution. The anointing for death and burial

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The SERMON of the MONTH

THE TWO THIEVES ON THE CROSS

(Continued from last month)

By C. S. Longacre

NOW LET US consider the penitent thief on Calvary and, as sinners, learn some lessons on how to be saved. The steps he took to be saved are the steps every sinner must take to have salvation from sin and final deliverance. Go back to that prayer Christ offered for His murderers. (Luke 23:34.) That prayer broke the thief's stony heart, brought conviction of sin to his soul, and a revelation of the divinity of Jesus Christ. The moment conviction of sin flashed into his soul and he realized that Jesus was the divine Son of God, he rebuked his evil companion, saying: "Dost thou not fear God?" Verse 40. As the fear of God flashed into his soul, he immediately became a missionary for Christ. There is not much hope of a person's finding salvation until the fear of God comes into his soul. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom and the beginning of salvation. Working for Christ is the first sign that a new spiritual life has begun to spring up.

The next step this repentant thief took was to confess his sins. We, he said, suffer condemnation "indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds." Verse 41. He did not try to justify himself. God never forgives a sinner until he confesses his sins. The only sins that go unpardoned are the sins for which we never ask pardon. If our sins are known to the public, we must make a public confession. If they are committed in secret and are known only to God and to us, we confess them only to God. Our confession must be as broad as the influence of the sin.

The next step the repentant thief took was to justify and exalt Christ: "This Man hath done nothing amiss." Verse 41.

The next step the penitent thief took was to exercise implicit faith in Christ as his Saviour, and to exalt Him as his Lord, his Sovereign, his King. He recognized Jesus as the future Ruler of the promised kingdom of God on this earth. As far as I have been able to find by searching the Scriptures, this is the most remarkable and extraordinary case of the exercise of faith in the Bible. We speak of Abraham as "the father of the faithful," and so he is; but God

had Abraham in training for twenty-five years before Abraham ceased to quibble and falter in his faith at the promise of God that he should have a son by Sarah. We speak of Moses as having a wonderful faith, but think of all that Moses saw. He saw the burning bush. He saw all the mighty miracles God wrought in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and during the forty years of the wilderness wandering. No wonder he had faith! We speak of Elijah as a man of great faith; but is there any wonder that he had faith when God fed him miraculously for three and one-half years when the rest of the people were starving because of a famine? He had good reason to have faith in God.

But this penitent thief, what advantage had he who was lately associated with criminals, and whose friends were thieves, malefactors, and murderers? The multitude now surrounding him were maligning and mocking and reviling Christ; Christ's disciples had forsaken Him at His trial; Judas had betrayed Him for thirty pieces of silver; His most ardent disciple, Peter, had denied him three times and sworn that he never knew Him. There were no miracles wrought by Christ on this occasion; no glittering crown was resting on His bleeding brow, but a crown of thorns; there was no sign of His kingdom's being established now or in the future. Yet, in this dark and fateful hour, when all men everywhere gave up their faith in Him who they had hoped might be the promised Messiah, the thief cried out: "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." Verse 42. Let us thank God for the manifestation of such a triumphant faith in Christ at such an hour!

How refreshing it must have been to the Son of God to have a sinner own Him as His Lord, and believe in that dark hour that He would triumph over death and the grave, and that He would finally reign as Lord of lords and King of kings in God's everlasting kingdom in the world to come! Gladly would that thief have bowed his knees at the foot of the cross of Christ and worshiped Him as his Lord and Saviour. But he could not. His hands and feet were nailed fast to the cross, but there were a few things they could not nail to the cross. They

could not nail his heart, his love for Christ, nor his eyes and his tongue. He could turn his head and look with his eyes, and speak praise with his tongue, and believe with his heart, and confess his faith and his love for his dying Lord on the cross, and say: "Lord remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."

What a confession of faith in Christ that was in that crisis hour when all others had lost faith in His triumph over death and the grave! He called Him "Lord." What an unlikely Lord! Hands and feet nailed to a cross, dying and suffering the penalty deserved by the lowest criminals in the world! What a strange throne and crown! Blood trickled down his face, caused by the crown of thorns. "His visage was . . . marred more than any man." Yet, this thief called Him "Lord." And because of all this He was more than "Lord." No wonder doubting Thomas, when he put his fingers into the nail prints in His hands, and thrust his hand "into His side" after Christ's resurrection, exclaimed: "My Lord, and My God." But here is this thief who recognizes Him as his "Lord" before the resurrection. What a faith that was at that time! He recognized Him as his divine "Lord," his Saviour from sin, his Deliverer from sin, his Sovereign and King in the future and

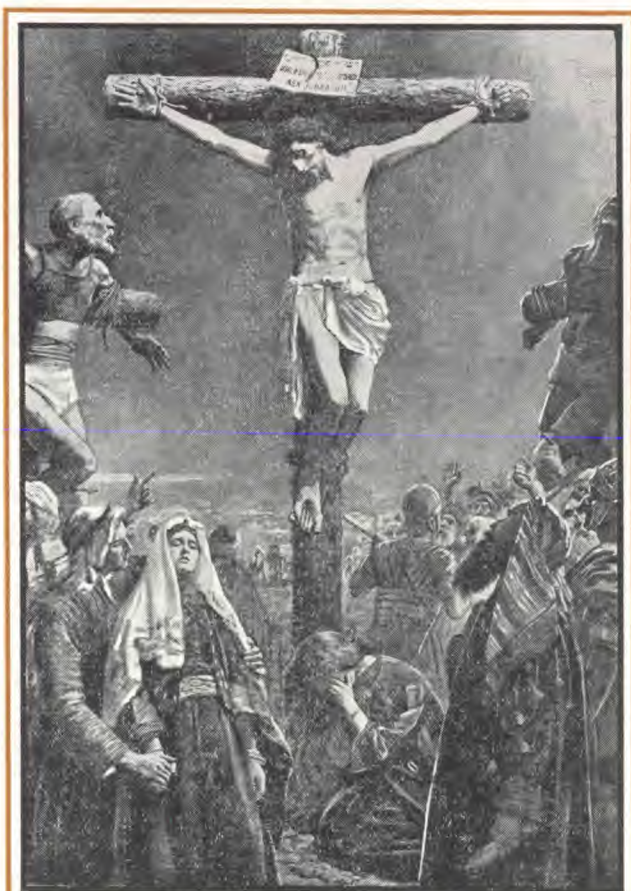
everlasting kingdom of God on the earth made new.

And what was Christ's response to that remarkable exercise of faith and that recognition of His lordship and deity? Jesus replied: "Verily I say unto thee, today." Verse 43. I say unto thee this day, when all men have lost faith in Me, this day when death and the grave await Me, this day when all looks so dark and all hope seems to have died out of the hearts of men, and I am counted as a deceiver, an impostor, the prince of devils and Beelzebub, yes, on this My day of doom, on this day that looks so dark and hopeless, when you alone have faith in My final triumph as Lord and King, I promise you, that "thou shalt be with Me in paradise," when I establish My kingdom.

Christ did not tell the thief that he would be with Him *that day* in paradise, but He gave Him the assurance and the promise on that unpromising day that he was *going to be* with Him in paradise. Christ did not go to paradise that day. He had not gone to paradise on the morning of His resurrection, because He told Mary Magdalene, who first met Him at the tomb on the resurrection morning, that He had not yet ascended to paradise, which Christ said is where "the tree of life" is "which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Revelation 2:7), and which Paul said was "the third heaven" (2 Corinthians 12:2, 4), or heaven itself. On the morning of Christ's resurrection He said to Mary Magdalene: "Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and to your Father; and to My God, and your God." John 20:17. According to the biblical record the thief did not die that day. At the end of the day the officers found Christ dead, but the thieves were still alive, and they broke their legs to prevent escape, because Jewish law required removal from the cross over the Sabbath. The victims frequently lived for days after being nailed to a cross. The thief knew that Christ would not come into His kingdom that day. He said: "Lord, remember me *when* Thou comest into Thy kingdom." That kingdom is still future. We still pray the prayer our Lord taught us to pray: "Thy kingdom come."

Some have said, "But that thief won't have any stars in his crown." That is what I once thought, but I have changed my mind. I know better now. That thief who had faith in Christ when all others lost faith in Him as being the promised Messiah, is going to have a rich reward of souls. That wonderful testimony he gave of Christ when he rebuked his evil companion, has been used by tens of thousands of gospel preachers who, as the result of that dying thief's confession, have been instrumental in leading multitudes to Christ. Jesus will not only save the thief, but will also give him part of the credit for every soul won by the preachers and evangelists who used his trium-

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Christ assured the repentant thief on the cross of eternal salvation, and gave him the greatest peace of heart that he experienced in all his life.



"Be Still, and Know"

By
M. L. Rice

"**B**E STILL, and know that I am God," Psalm 46:10. This sounds very much like a command. "Be still." How often we as children have heard this! Both as a command and a rebuke has it come to us. It may be that we talked too much or made too much noise. Perhaps our seniors wanted to talk or rest, so we were asked to "be still."

In our text God is not talking to children, but to men and women. He asks them to call a halt to everything, to find an easy chair or some quiet, secluded spot, and for a time "be still." He has a very great purpose in asking this. By doing this it may be possible for them to make the greatest discovery in all the world—to know, or get acquainted with, God.

It is next to impossible in this noisy, deafening, disturbing world to find a stopping place. Everything seems geared in terms of motion. If it does not move, there is something wrong with it, is the generally accepted theory. But in the midst of the confusion and bustle of modern life, Jesus says, "Be still."

You may find it almost impossible to spend thirty minutes just being still. But it is the best investment of your time that you can make. If you will sit down in some quiet place, and simply rest, meditate, and pray for half an hour, it will bring a physical and spiritual refreshment to you such as perhaps you have never known. This is why Jesus asks us to "be still."

Christ sets us a worthy example in this respect. He found it not only beneficial but necessary to spend some time in solitude with God. After toiling

all the day, He would retire from the multitudes to the mountains where He could be alone. There, in the stillness of the night, He met with God. Those who would meet with God will find Him in that quiet hour, when all the world is shut out and the cares of life have been laid aside.

No one needs to go to some far-off monastery to enjoy this quiet hour. You may have it in your home. The early morning, before the wheels of care begin to turn, is the best time. Half an hour spent this way is not lost, but spent wisely. The whole day, if started this way, will go better, and at its close much more will have been accomplished than if God had been forgotten.

It is in the stillness of the quiet hour that we deepen our acquaintance with God. It is here that the greatest resources of power are opened to us. Great men have long recognized this. When Martin Luther had a hard day's work ahead of him, he spent more time than usual in quietude with God. He knew the source of spiritual power.

The supreme need of every life is to know God. To know Him is eternal life. Every soul should eagerly grasp every possible opportunity to become better acquainted with Him. Surely there is nothing more important than this. It is worth every effort, every sacrifice—in fact, all that we have. "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Mark 8:36.

"If any man is willing, . . . he shall know." John 7:17, Weymouth. God is ready and anxious to reveal Himself. He wants you to know Him. Will you "be still" long enough to get acquainted? Try spending half an hour each day alone with God in some quiet place. If you will, you have an experience coming to you that only those who have tried it can appreciate.

How to Win the Battle

(Continued from page 5)

father, following the bidding of God, stands with upraised hand clutching the sacrificial knife that will take the life of his son. He is ready to give the thing most dear to him so that he may follow God. He has made the great surrender of self. He has yielded all to his Master. And today he is known as Abraham, the father of the faithful. The Christian of today also must make a full surrender.

Paul, the once proud and self-righteous Pharisee, came to realize that by himself he could not live a

victorious life, that he must have help; and he found that help when he made a complete surrender to his Saviour. Of this experience he says, "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ that lives in me; and the life which I now live in the body I live through faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself up to death on my behalf." Galatians 2:20, Weymouth.

The apostle had made the great surrender. His will was submerged in that of God's. As far as he was concerned, his old desires had been crucified; he no longer lived, but Christ lived in him. Paul speaks of such an experience in Colossians 1:27 as "Christ in

you, the hope of glory." Christ's life was his.

Here is the secret of living a victorious life. Every Christian can and will be a conqueror of sin if Jesus Christ is spiritually dwelling in his heart. There is no other way. The Lord says, "Without Me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. The marginal reading of this text is, "severed from Me ye can do nothing."

At my father's little farm in Colorado I saw an old apple tree that bore inferior fruit transformed by grafting into one bearing Delicious apples. The summer before my father made the grafts, he had selected some tips of fresh growth from a Delicious apple tree. These he cut and kept in damp sand all winter. Then in the spring he placed these apparently dead twigs in the cuts he had prepared in the old apple tree. The grafts were sealed with wax and there, connected with the life-giving root, these twigs were growing and would bear much fruit.

Similarly, we who are severed from Christ, apparently dead and worthless, take on new life when connected with Christ, the Living Vine. He has declared, "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." John 15:5. How much we need that union with divine power! Such union with the Saviour is not merely a desirable thing. It is a *must*! It is imperative, for without Him we can do nothing.

This truth, that a Christian must depend upon God for victory, is emphasized over and over again in the Scriptures. Jude 24 commends us "unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." We also read, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Philippians 2:13.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:23 Paul prays for fellow believers in this way: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." Similarly, the Lord, praying in Gethsemane for His disciples, asked the Father to "sanctify them through Thy truth." John 17:17. It is also the Son of God who proffers the invitation, "Come, . . . and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28.

A thousand years before the first advent of Christ, David realized that he must depend upon God for victory over sin. In Psalm 16:8 he affirms, "I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." The psalmist, like Paul, found that success lay in complete surrender to God, and he advises us, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." Psalm 37:5, 6.

All these scriptures drive home one truth: It is God through His Son who gives victory over sin. Every Christian can say, "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

OUR TIMES, NOVEMBER, 1949

The Last Great Moving Day

By Weldon Taylor Hammond

*When we move from earth to heaven,
What a glorious day 'twill be—
No more sickness, no more sorrow,
No more dread, uncertainty.
No more packing, no more shipping,
No more partings by the way!
How my heart is yearning, longing,
For the last great moving day!*

*Jesus, with His mighty vanguard,
Will descend from heaven above
With a crown of radiant glory
For the subjects of His love.
Sleeping saints will rise in triumph,
Living ones be caught on high;
All shall mount the fiery chariots,
Bidding earthly things good-by.*

*Oh, the glory of the journey
Human words cannot portray,
Passing suns, and moons, and systems
As we speed to realms of day.
When we've reached the central planet
In the deep recess of space,
There we'll view the Holy City,
There we'll see our Father's face.*

*Christian, do you catch the vision?
Should there longer be delay
In a speedy preparation
For the last great moving day?
Signs and wonders all about us
Warn of heaven's coming King;
Set thy soul to seek the Saviour.
Pilgrim, 'rouse thee, shout and sing!*

*Life is real, yea, life is earnest:
Fleeting fame is not its goal.
Jesus paid a precious ransom
To redeem the human soul.
Lift thine eyes above earth's tinsel,
Shun the things that pass away;
Move with saints from earth to heaven
On the last great moving day.*



INTERPRETI

In the Light

★ Is America Headed for Socialism?

THERE ARE a number of people who believe that America is heading unwittingly toward a socialistic state. A very significant thing occurred recently at the fortieth annual convention of Rotary International. After many years of usage, the Rotarians have changed their motto from, "He profits most who serves best," to "Service above self." We wonder what has happened to cause the Rotarians to change their familiar motto. Perhaps it uncovers a moral uncertainty at capitalism's heart. It may be that Rotary betrays embarrassment over being linked to the idea of profits. Whatever the answer is, the act was very significant.

Unquestionably America seems to be heading in the direction of socialism. The Hoover Commission in its recent report revealed that "federal funds for

education have skyrocketed to the record sum of three billion four hundred million this year, jumping from one hundred million in 1940." The report further states that "it is not unusual for a university to get 50 per cent or more of its income from federal sources." This is only one phase of the tendency for the government to support private enterprise. Although it is true that the universities and colleges have not been taken over by the government, it is also clear that if these institutions reach the point, as they seem to be doing, where they find it impossible to operate without government help, they may have to be directed and controlled by the state.

When we consider other categories, we see the same tendency toward government control. The United States is planning on over a million units in the housing program. In the field of agriculture there are numerous subsidies and controls. And now the socialized medicine program is being urged. The U. S. is also delving into the utilities business. Furthermore we are reaching out beyond the confines of our national borders and planning the economies of other nations. In the North Atlantic Military Alliance, in Article 3, we have promised "mutual aid" to develop the "capacity to resist armed attack" of our prospective allies. To arm these nations will involve us in an expenditure of at least one billion dollars a year, and this is just the start.

The Hoover Commission has rendered a very worthy report of recommendations for the trimming down of a top-heavy bureaucracy to the extent of four billion dollars a year, and yet it seems that this outstanding work of the Commission is being pigeon-holed.

With an ever-increasing national debt of over 252 billion dollars, and with the rising tendency of the government to assume private responsibilities and obligations of a financial nature, we shudder in fear when we consider what the outcome of all this may be. We have gone against the counsel of the fathers of our nation in assuming obligations and establishing entangling alliances that have loaded us down with overwhelming responsibilities.

We do not wish to go on record against America's giving aid where aid is needed in foreign countries and at home, but we do feel the need of raising a warning for greater caution in these matters, for we fear that we are drifting steadily toward socialism.

OUR TIMES, NOVEMBER, 1949

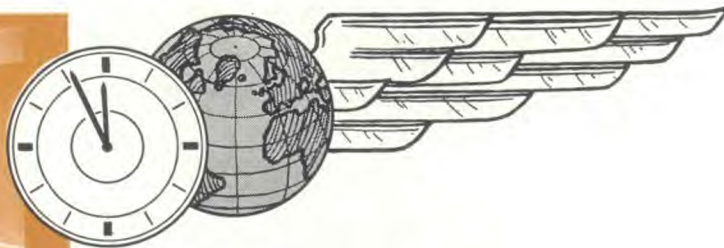


INTERNATIONAL NEWS
This white-robed man identifies himself only as "the voice," and says he is attempting to save America from the materialism of the world. "The voice" and his wife Ruth are shown en route to their home in Los Angeles. He travels all over the world preaching a "mind over matter" theology.

OUR TIMES

Bible Prophecy

tor



The American press should sound this warning everywhere.

We firmly believe that the world has arrived at the period referred to in Bible prophecy as "the end of time." Prophecy informs us that in this time there will 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. Economic and financial instability will add greatly to the fear and distress of earth's final hour.

★ Will the Bible Survive Atomic War?

AT THE ANNUAL meeting of the United Bible Societies, Gilbert Darlington, treasurer of the American Bible Society, reported that measures have been taken to preserve the translations of the Bible in the event that an atomic war takes place. According to Dr. Darlington, copies of all the important editions of the Bible published by his organization have been deposited in three places—the University of Colorado at Boulder, Dartmouth College at Hanover, New Hampshire, and in New York City. It is possible that one or two of these sanctuaries might be pulverized in the next war, but the Bible Society hopes that at least one will be spared.

A persistent question of our day is: If atomic war sweeps over the earth, can the Bible survive its hellish work of destruction? In answer to this question we quote God's own words of promise: "But the Word of the Lord endureth forever." 1 Peter 1:25. There ought not to be any question as to the continuance of the Inspired Word. It lived through the Dark Ages when every possible effort was made to destroy it. We do not believe an atomic war or anything short of God's own command can abolish His Word.

★ Marijuana—the Murderous Weed

"NOT LONG AGO, a young Virginian, sitting in an 18th-floor Manhattan apartment and comfortably adrift on the wings of a marijuana cigarette, glanced out the window. There, lying on the green carpet of Central Park, it seemed there was a string of pearls. He was just stepping out the window to pick up the street lights and stuff them into his pocket when someone pulled him back inside." This fantastic story describes the experience of a marijuana user as reported in *Collier's*, June 4,

1949, in an article entitled "The Crazy Dreamer."

Another experience was given concerning "a Temple University professor [who] in an effort to approach the drug scientifically, smoked a marijuana cigarette during a research experiment. The professor immediately leaped into an open ink bottle and flew around inside it on blue wings for 200 years."

This is the sort of crazy reaction with which the users of marijuana are familiar. Marijuana affects the brain with the same disrupting affect as a wrench tossed into a web of hot electric wires. The senses are pulled all askew.

Another case in point: "A seventeen-year-old boy in a Southern state smoked a marijuana cigarette handed him in a poolroom. When he arrived home,

(Continued on page 33)



Blazing a super-hot trail into the sky, this guided missile leaves the launching tower at Alamogordo, New Mexico. It travels at a supersonic speed and reaches a trajectory altitude of ten miles.



Babylon was the center of paganism in ancient times. The Tower of Babel built there has been copied by heathen people everywhere, and miniature likenesses of it appear in a number of places in the world.

IT WAS IN ancient Babylon, before the building of the Tower of Babel, that paganism first made its reappearance after the Flood. At the Tower of Babel dispersion, caused by the confusion of languages, this apostasy was carried to the different parts of the world, and the Babylonian gods were given new names in the different languages. But the worship was identical in all countries and the gods all had the same attributes as the Babylonian gods. History tells us about the origin of paganism as Babylonian:

"Bunsen concludes that 'the religious system of Egypt was derived from Asia and the primitive Empire of Babel.'"—*The Worship of the Dead*, p. 8.

"Layard also says, 'Of the great antiquity of this primitive worship, there is abundant evidence, and that it originated among the inhabitants of the Assyrian plains we have the united testimony of sacred and profane historians.'"—*Id.*, pp. 8, 9.

Serpent worship was "the earliest deviation from the true system."—*Encyclopædia of Freemasonry*, by Mackey, p. 708, article, "Serpent Worship."

It was Cush, the son of Ham, who first shows up in history as a leader in the apostasy. His son Nimrod carried on the apostasy to greater heresies. Semiramis, who in history is confused as the wife of Cush and wife and mother of Nimrod, makes up the trinity of all pagan religions. All paganism has a trinity of gods made up of a father, who is very much

PAGANISM

The Continuation of Eden's Apostasy

neglected, and a mother, and a son. No matter what the name of a pagan god is, it can always be reduced and traced back to the Babylonian trinity of Cush, Semiramis, and Nimrod.

"Cush, as the son of Ham, was Hermes or Mercury; for Hermes is just an Egyptian synonym for the 'son of Ham.' Now, Hermes was the great original prophet of idolatry; for he was recognized by the pagans as the author of their religious rites, and the interpreter of the gods."—Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, pp. 25, 26.

Nimrod, the son of the pagan trinity, propagated the worship of the heavenly bodies. Nimrod is the same as Tammuz, Osiris, or Adonis. (*Id.*, p. 67.)

"The following is the account of Tammuz, given by the celebrated Maimonides, deeply read in all the learning of the Chaldeans: 'When the false prophet named Thammuz preached to a certain king that he should worship the seven stars and the twelve signs of the Zodiac, that king ordered him to be put to a terrible death.'"—*Id.*, p. 62.

Alexander Hislop tells us that Shem, who lived 502 years after the Flood (Genesis 11:10, 11), was the king who put Nimrod, or Tammuz, to death for propagating the apostasy.

By George S. Belleau

"Now when Shem had so powerfully wrought upon the minds of men as to induce them to make a terrible example of the great Apostate, and when that Apostate's dismembered limbs were sent to the chief cities, where no doubt his system had been established, it will be readily perceived that, in these circumstances, if idolatry was to continue—if, above all, it was to take a step in advance, it was indispensable that it should operate in secret. The terror of an execution, inflicted on one so mighty as Nimrod, made it needful that, for some time to come at least, the extreme of caution should be used. In these circumstances, then, began, there can hardly be a doubt, that system

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of 'Mystery,' which, having Babylon for its center, has spread over the world."—*Id.*, pp. 66, 67.

The death of Nimrod became the central theme of the Mysteries and of all idolatry. (*Id.*, p. 56.) He had been a martyr to the cause of apostasy. He and his father were supposed to have come back to life and made their abode in the sun. So we find the sun in all paganism the center of worship as it and the serpent have become symbols of the apostasy from God in the worshipping of the fallen angel in his counterfeit religion.

The educated pagans have known that their gods were men who first lived in this world as men. Nebuchadnezzar calls the sun-god Belus "My Ancestor." (*The Worship of the Dead*, p. 19.) The Egyptians called Hermes (Cush), the Egyptian god, "Our Forefather." (*Ibid.*) The Assyrians worshiped Belus, or Cush, their first king. Castor says, "Belus was the first king of the Assyrians, and after his death was worshiped as a god."—*Ibid.*

"But the consentient evidence, showing that the originals of the great god and goddess were a human king and queen, is conclusive, and cannot be set aside, or explained away."—*The Worship of the Dead*, p. 64.

As Cush and Nimrod, the fathers and propagators of paganism, were worshiped as gods who had gone to live in the sun, the sun, with the serpent, became the symbol of the apostasy. It was natural for Lucifer to take the sun, the brightest object in the heavens, to represent himself.

Mr. Robert Leo Odom, former editor of Our

TIMES, in his book, *Sunday in Roman Paganism*, page 231, tells why Lucifer chose the sun as his symbol:

"The devil's name before his fall is said to be *Lucifer*, which means 'Light bearer.' The Hebrew term is *Helel*, which literally means 'shining one.' In the margin of the Authorized and the American Revised Version it is rendered 'day-star.' Webster's New International Dictionary defines *day-star* as meaning poetically 'the Sun, as the orb of day.' It is not to be wondered at that Satan should choose the shining solar orb—the most glorious object in the sky—to be the supreme symbol of paganism."

"All the Pagan gods were eventually identified with the Serpent, which was also regarded, like the Sun, as the Great Father, and was a symbol of the Sun."—*The Worship of the Dead*, p. 108.

Owen states: "The Serpent is universally the symbol of the Sun."—*Id.*, p. 232.

"The ancient mythologists of all nations are unanimous in asserting, that each of their chief masculine deities is equally the Sun."—Faber, *The Origin of Pagan Idolatry*, Vol. 2, p. 206.

The Book of Revelation tells us where all the apostasy this side of the Flood originated. It agrees with the history that I have presented. Rev. George Stanley Faber wrote the following in 1816: "The Jews have ever supposed that idolatry commenced at Babel."—*Id.*, Vol. 1, p. 76.

"We have however far better authority than Jewish tradition, though I see no reason why we should

(Continued on page 34)



The royal bull worshiped by the pagans is shown in a procession surrounded by pagan priests and vestal virgins. Many of the heathen practices of these pagans have found their way into the religious customs of our day.

For BETTER HOMES and HEALTH

HARMONY IN THE HOME IS MOST IMPORTANT

By Henry H. Graham

TO ME, one of the most beautiful things in life is a deep friendship between two brothers, two sisters, or brother and sister. Yet how regrettably seldom such a cordial relationship exists!

It is just as easy for such close relatives to get along harmoniously as to disagree with one another and be at swords' points. And how much better it is for all concerned—the principals themselves, their parents, everybody!

I am thinking of a family consisting of the parents and two sons in their early twenties who are still unmarried and at home. These young men do not get along very well; in fact, they do not get along at all. In the presence of the other each has a chip on his shoulder. They disagree about everything.

Why do such wretched relationships exist in a family? Why cannot people adjust their differences and learn to become true friends and companions?

In some cases the parents are to blame. They do not encourage brothers and sisters to play together in early childhood. They permit petty feuds to blossom into real antagonisms. The youngsters are not taught correct behavior. They do not know that normal life consists of give and take, that they must make allowances for one another. Dispositions, aptitudes, and attitudes vary markedly. These facts should be taken into consideration.

Sometimes a boy in a family, especially a younger one, feels, and may actually be, neglected by his brothers and sisters. The latter make fun of his every effort until he develops a serious inferiority complex which is difficult to throw off. There are cliques among members of the same family. Such a situation is distressing. Parents should do everything in their power to break up such cliques and prevent them from being reorganized. Harmony in the home forbids such conspiracies.

In numerous instances a certain brother or sister gets offended at another member of the family. If he has a sensitive disposition, the individual whose feelings are wounded nurses a grudge. From a small beginning he magnifies the incident out of all proportion to its true importance. As the months pass, he may go as far as to develop an intense dislike for the other party. And thus is born a situation that may

endure for years or even all through life. The Christian thing to do when feelings are hurt, is to put all thoughts of the incident out of one's mind forever, never harboring grudges or ever thinking of the affair again. The old adage, "Never let the sun set on a quarrel," is still a good one to follow.

Happy home life demands harmony. And harmony cannot exist in a home torn by dissension, unfairness, unforgiveness, and general incompatibility. There are, of course, bound to be differences of opinion. They are unavoidable in any household. But they should never be allowed to bring an open break, feuds, or lasting discontent and malice. If everyone is fair and reasonable, there will be no serious difficulties. People should be able to discuss subjects amicably without anyone's becoming unduly angry. Such discussions are really educational and helpful if conducted in a friendly fashion.

Two brothers, two sisters, or sisters and brothers can have such a happy childhood and adolescence together if they will just let themselves have them. It is helpful if they will only treat each other with the same courtesy and respect they so readily accord outsiders. So many family members have two sets of manners—one for their home and the other for use when associating with friends. They consider any sort of conduct good enough for their home, but display infinitely more tact, courtesy, and consideration when no relatives are around. This, obviously, is faulty reasoning. Nobody deserves better treatment than one's "home folks." Politeness and courtesy belong in one's home quite as much as any place else.

Parents can do much to steer adolescent conduct in the home along healthful, constructive lines. They should do everything possible to keep such conduct on a high plane. Such steps help to assure amicable relationships between the children and a happy home life, certainly a most worthy goal.

In order to get on in the world and find happiness, everyone must acquire the knack of getting along with other people. This is imperative for success in all fields of human endeavor. It is of utmost importance in both business and social life. The person who knows how to win friends and keep them has advanced far on the road to triumph. Such an individual

makes allowances for his associates' shortcomings. He tries to understand others. He gives them the benefit of the doubt. In short, he exhibits the fine qualities he admires and hopes to find in others.

Nowhere can these qualities be more effectively instilled into a child than in his own home. Home is a wonderful place to give youngsters a good start, to give them a solid foundation on which to build a life of usefulness and honor. Parents who fail in this vital duty are being unfair to their offspring. They are derelict in their duty toward the sons and daughters they have brought into the world.

The child who is trained to be respectful, co-operative, understanding, and fair to his parents, brothers, and sisters, and who shows a willingness toward companionship under his own roof, is pretty certain to find easier sledding in later life than the one who lacks these priceless advantages. Home is the place to start learning how to get along with other people—something every ambitious person desires.

The boy and girl who find home life difficult are almost sure to find life even more difficult when they leave the parental roof and establish homes of their own. Certainly this is a thought for every parent.



Co-Creators With God

*"The Lord hath done great things for us;
Whereof we are glad." Psalm 126:3.*

Isn't our dear Saviour so very good
To share His creative powers,
In granting the joy, a wee girl or boy
That is really and truly "ours"?

Ours to cherish, to love and protect,
To lead humbly, yet firmly each day,
With self crucified, e'er near Jesus' side,
Never, never ceasing to pray

For His true wisdom, His gentleness sweet,
And especially His own pure love.
Ah yes, God is good! Let's obey as we should.
Then may we all praise Him "in person" above.

By JESSIE ESTLE GILKESON

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By Caris Lauda

Hello there, Teen-agers!

Last week I heard a fine "saying" which I would like to suggest for us to use as our daily motto: "Talk with God before you talk to man."

Wouldn't it be wonderful if everybody would use such a motto every morning before he went about his work or play? It would make a different home, a different school, yes, and a different world, too, wouldn't it?

"Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse." Isn't it interesting to think of heaven being full of storehouses? There is a storehouse of courage, a storehouse of faith, the storehouses of health and prayer, and of joy and happiness. Oh, yes, so many, many storehouses! Have *you* used the key to open these storehouses for you every day? We need courage and faith, don't we? We need good health, happiness, and joy, and many other things, too, which go to make up a true Christian life. And, friend, all these come to us by using the key—"prayer." And don't you believe that it is very, very wise for us to use this key the first thing in the morning? Remember, "In the morning the Christian's first thoughts should be upon God." Our memory gem fits in nicely with this quotation, doesn't it?—"Talk with God before you talk to man."

Once there was a king who employed a number of people to weave for him. The silk and the patterns for the weaving were all provided by the king. He told the workers that whenever they had any difficulty in their weaving, they should send for him, and he would be very glad to help them. He told his workers never to hesitate about calling on him just as often as they needed his help in the weaving.

Now there was a little girl who worked among the many men and women at the looms. Sometimes she worked all alone, and yet through it all she was very cheerful and always very happy. One day the men and the women were very much troubled at the sight of their failures. They had made serious mistakes in their weaving; their silks were tangled and their weaving wasn't like the pattern at all. They went to the child weaver and said, "Tell us how it is that you are so happy in your work all the time. You never seem to have any trouble, but it seems we are always having difficulty."

The little girl then said, "Why don't you send for the king? He will help you. He told us he would come any time and help us and be glad to do it."

They replied, "Well, we do this night and morning."

"Oh," she said, "just sending for him night and morning isn't enough. I send for him real often. I call him whenever I have the least little tangle or have the least little bit of trouble, and he fixes it all up."

You know, Teen-agers, many of us are just like those men and women. We expect to be Christians just by praying night and morning, but God tells us to call on Him always. He says, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." We are to ask Him often to help us, and we are to make our wants and our troubles known to Him in prayer. Remember, "prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend." He invites us to visit Him often. His promises will never fail.

The other day a friend of mine was traveling through the mountains, and on a steep grade he noticed a man who had pulled over to the side of the road to place rocks behind the wheels of his stalled car in order to keep it from slipping. This friend of mine stopped and asked what the trouble was. "Oh, we are out of gas; the motor is nearly out of water. Most of the water boiled out as we climbed the steep grade."

My friend asked, "Didn't you think of the steep grades you must climb on this long trip? Didn't you think to get gas and water before starting?"

"No," he said. "We thought that probably we had enough gas, oil, and water to make the trip." And so, there they were, half-way up that steep grade, waiting, hoping that someone might be able to help them with gas and water.

Teen-agers, many of us are just like those people who were taking that trip. Every day we want to live a true Christian life, and yet we do not start out each day by filling our bodies with things a Christian should have—faith, courage, hope, true words, pure thoughts, kind attentions, and many other wonderful things. Oh, do we think we have just enough to make the trip without loading up? No, none of us has enough left over from one day to make the trip the next day, and so it is wise for us to pray and to open the storehouses of heaven the first thing in the morning, filling our lives with the things a Christian should have. Then we will not be stranded on the steep hills of daily problems.

It is about time for me to get some letters from you. This is my third letter to you. How about writing to me? Thanksgiving greetings to all, and may we be so very thankful for the greatest of all friends, Jesus, and for His wonderful blessings as they come to us through daily prayer. Let's follow the habit of talking with God before we talk to man.

As ever, your pen pal,
Caris

The Israel of the Promises

(Continued from page 7)

becomes the eternal home of the redeemed. Let us read these texts:

"And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Revelation 21:2.

"And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." Revelation 20:9.

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Matthew 5:5.

Where is there found any suggestion of a "second chance," either for Jews or Gentiles, in this Bible picture of the millennium? Where is found any suggestion of a return of Christ to old Jerusalem, a setting up of Christ's kingdom in Palestine, a wholesale salvation of the Jewish people? Such a teaching is a fiction, not a fact.

Where, then, do the teachers of Dispensationalism find "proof" for their teachings? Not in the New Testament. Absolutely not. All the teachings of Jesus and the apostles are against any such teaching. To the Old Testament the dispensationalist must needs go, to certain prophecies in regard to the Jewish nation and the gathering of Israel. What of these ancient prophecies? Do they give basis for the belief in the restoration and salvation of the Jewish nation? The very opposite is true. There are two distinct groups of prophecies in regard to Israel:

(1) The conditional prophecies.

These were conditioned upon obedience to God's commandments. "If ye will obey My voice," was repeated again and again by Jehovah to His chosen but disobedient people. A long list of blessings and curses are set forth in Deuteronomy 28, and each was conditioned entirely upon obedience or disobedience. Sad to say, Israel disobeyed and the curse came.

(2) The prophecies promised to spiritual Israel and fulfilled in Christ.

These prophecies are all concerned with the grace of God in the gift of Jesus and are marvelous in their fulfillment. Were promises given of an eternal inheritance to Israel in a land of illimitable beauty? These perfect promises were made to spiritual Israel and will all meet a glorious fulfillment. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29), is the key that unlocks the door of explanation to every Old Testament prophecy in regard to Israel.

Because of the fact that the new Dispensationalism, as taught by the Scofield Bible notes and by many modern Bible institutes, bases its predictions on the Old Testament prophecies about Israel, it is well to examine carefully these prophecies and their

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illumination and interpretation by Jesus and the apostles. The first fundamental question which must be answered authoritatively is this: Who are the Israel to whom the promises are made? "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter." Romans 2:28, 29.

"For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. . . . Even us, whom He hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? As He saith also in Osee, I will call them My people, which were not My people. . . . That the Gentiles . . . have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith." Romans 9:6-8, 24, 25, 30.

"Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. . . . If some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; . . . and they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again. . . . And so all Israel shall be saved." Romans 11:5, 17, 23, 26.

According to Inspiration, the Israel to whom the promises were made is spiritual Israel. The election is of grace, and not of race. Not the Jew by natural birth, but the Jew by spiritual birth, receives the inheritance. Spiritual Israel is made up of twice-born men gathered from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Israel by the new birth—and only Israel by the new birth—receives the inheritance that was promised to Abraham. "There is neither Jew nor Greek: . . . for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Galatians 3:28, 29.

Dispensationalism builds again the wall of partition which the Lord Jesus Christ effectively broke down. By placing the Jews in the kingdom and the Gentiles in the church, by taking away the kingdom teachings of our Lord from the church, by postponing the kingdom to a future hypothetical dispensation, this modern heresy has disrupted the beauty and harmony of the plainest of Bible texts. Again let the Scripture give answer to the divisive doctrine of the dispensationalist: "For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; . . . and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross. . . . Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the

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Sunset Meditation

(Note: Above picture shows a view of the Oregon coast, below Waldport, near Seal Rock.)

He traveled on, without a goal,
And reached the shining sea.
Its wondrous beauty fed his soul—
He viewed Eternity.

He stood as in God's presence there,
The inner man renewed,
And pledged his life to Him in prayer—
Because of solitude!

—FLORA E. BRECK.

household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone; . . . that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel." Ephesians 2:14, 16, 19, 20; 3:6.

The Ephesian letter gives answer in unmistakable words to the doctrine which would divide the way of God's dealing with men. And in the very midst of this message are the words: "If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward." Ephesians 3:2. This is heaven's "dispensational" truth: The message of God's grace which is given to all of us, Jews and Gentiles, without distinction of race, and without distinction of time.

The promises of God, according to the Scriptures, are made to spiritual Israel. Is this true, also, in regard to the prophecies which are applied to Israel? Assuredly so. The prophecies are in perfect accord with the promises. To spiritual Israel, the blood-bought of the ages, comes the inheritance in the kingdom of light and love. Even the least of the Old Testament promises and prophecies are fulfilled in their every detail through Christ Jesus our Lord and Saviour. We shall examine these in the next article.



Let's Ask the DOCTOR



The answers to health questions are supplied to the readers of OUR TIMES by Owen S. Parrett, M. D.
Address your queries to him in care of this magazine.

I am unable to drink milk, as it constipates me, or to eat ice cream, which acts as a laxative. So I am wondering how I can get my full amount of proteins by leaving milk and meat out of my diet?—P.M.H.

The standard amount of protein required is estimated to be somewhat less than thought to be essential some years ago, but it is necessary to secure adequate amounts of complete proteins. This can be done by using soy beans or soy milk, some of which has been flavored with malt to make it palatable; cottage cheese; wheat germ and a variety of whole cereals including all the grain of each; some nuts; and both green and dried beans and lentils. Eggs may also be used if they are from fowls that are well cared for and fed properly. Such a diet, which should also include fresh fruits and vegetables, is entirely adequate. Some foods do not contain all the amino acids, but if the foods are not processed and the germ of the cereals is eaten, they will supplement one another.

What is the reason for the feet being cold almost continually? Is there any way this condition can be cured?—L.R.

Although there are certain specific conditions, such as obliterating endarteritis, in which the blood vessels become clogged or closed, thus interfering with the flow of blood, most cases of cold extremities are due to more simple causes. Nervous tension, causing an uneven distribution of blood, is a common cause. A general lowering of the vitality may be responsible. Be sure that the blood pressure is up to normal. Specific treatment that should be helpful would be the use of contrast leg bathing, immersing the legs first in a hot-water bath, then followed in forty-five seconds by a short dip in cold water for approximately fifteen seconds, and repeat for about twenty minutes.

My neighbor tells me that my little boy has worms. How can we know that this is true? And if it is, what can be done about it?—E.P.G.

The only real reason to suspect worms is sight of the worm itself, or a microscopical study of the stool, or, in the case of pin worms, a specimen of

smear at the rectal margin examined under the microscope may show eggs of the worms.

Presuming that you mean pin worms, and not round worms or tapeworms, a simple home treatment that is safe is the use of an enema of Quassia chips infusion. Pour a quart of boiling water over four ounces of Quassia chips and allow to stand for twenty minutes, or until just lukewarm. Then give the entire amount as an enema, having the child lie on his right side or else take the knee-chest position. Have him retain the water for a few minutes, or as much as can be held, and then let it pass. Sometimes this may need to be repeated after two or three days.

Can a person live long after one kidney has been removed?—B.I.

So great are the adjustment powers of the body that after one kidney has been removed, the remaining kidney is soon capable of doing the work of two, for it enlarges to almost equal the size of both kidneys. However, if anything happens to the lone kidney, it becomes serious as there is no further possibility of falling back on a second kidney.

My blood pressure is high and I want to know if there is any medicine that will reduce it.—E.F.

Yes, there is, and if you take the medicine several times a day and keep it up indefinitely, you can lower your blood pressure somewhat. All such drugs are given to either dilate the blood vessels or to relax nervous tension, but none of these is expected to affect a cure. Although it is true that such medicines may sometimes serve a useful purpose in tiding one over an emergency, it is not usually wise to continue their use over an indefinite period. Light doses of sleeping medicines are most often used as a main ingredient in such medicines. The person who uses them even for a brief period or in very small doses should try every means to effect more permanent relief by avoiding all undue worry and nerve strain, by eating a diet high in fruits and vegetable salads, and avoiding all coffee, meat, and all stimulating foods and drugs. No matter what occurs, such a person should try to maintain a relaxed, even state of mind. The best way to accomplish this is through practical Christianity.

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When the Last Day Dawns

(Continued from page 9)

solitary confinement cell of the Saint Pierre prison.

He saw the roof of his cell split, and through the opening he could watch the clouds of fire and ashes sweep over the city. Two members of a mercy squad who had rushed into Saint Pierre after the fury of the volcano subsided heard his faint moaning, the only human sound that reached their ears.

They rescued Ludger and carefully carried him to a hospital in a near-by city. After eighty-one days' treatment he was pronounced healed and could go out into the world to tell his fellow men of his awful experiences when divine justice wrote this inscription over the charred city and its 40,000 graves: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked!"

I call your attention to the truth that this sin-saturated world faces a final fire, in comparison with which that Martinique misery will seem only a Fourth-of-July sparkler. This will be the end of our globe, when, the earth consumed by flames, on the day of Christ's second coming, and His judgment of "the quick and the dead," every man, both living and in the grave, will face either the most crushing of agonies or the most glorious of blessings.

What will actually happen on that last day, when this old crime-cursed world with everything in it passes away? You cannot hope to escape its judgment, for it is written with divine truth and unavoidable finality, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ."

When the last day dawns, may the Holy Spirit help us to learn and to believe that the Judgment day brings sin's destruction to an unbelieving world, but Christ's eternal deliverance to all the faithful.

This world will not go on forever; it must end. A date, unknown to men, is marked on God's calendar when the Almighty will decree: This is the earth's last day. Even in their limited mental powers, men of themselves have come to the definite conclusion that this globe, far from being eternal, grown weak and feeble, robbed of its resources, resembles an old, decrepit man.

With a frequency not previously known, scientists, authors, and leaders in human affairs speak and write of the world's end. Yet for absolute assurance on this question you need the Bible, not biology; faith, not physics; theology, not geology. Our Saviour, whose word is always sure, three times in one chapter mentions the final moments of human history.

No matter how frantically proud unbelievers, afraid of God's judgment, claim that the human race will never stop, "the end of all things" must come. Sin cannot continue forever; and because this sphere is sin-soaked and sin-cursed, it will be wiped out.

—*The Civic Bulletin*, January 28, 1949.



By D. A. Delafield

The Sign of the Gospel

HAVE YOU ever seen a rainbow arching the sky at night? These beautiful phenomena of the heavens are not uncommon in the tropics. If you have lived in the Hawaiian Islands and happened to be out of doors at night, while the moon was shining brightly and the mist was in the air, you may have seen one of these delightful lunar rainbows.

One night while driving down from the mountains, I gazed for the first time upon this sky wonder. The colors in the bow are very dim, of course, but the arch was plainly visible as it appeared in a soft semicircle. I shall never forget it—a rainbow in the sky at night! What a grand and inspiring sight! We catch our breath when we see a rainbow in the daytime, but a rainbow at night is a rare thing to behold!

God's promises are like that, Juniors. In this world of darkness they circle us with light like lunar rainbows. You will find that the Bible is arched with the promises of God. When sin first entered the world, God gave to man the precious promise that Christ would come and destroy the work of Satan. (Genesis 3:15.) This promise Christ will keep fully.

At the time of His first advent to this world He engaged the devil in a great moral battle in which He won every struggle. Even by His death on the cross our dear Saviour won a mighty victory. He refused even in death to consent to sin against God or man. The devil and sin are now conquered foes, and the reign of evil is just about over after thousands of long years. Soon Christ will come the second time and claim the fruits of His victory. He will take to heaven with Him all who love God and keep His commandments. (Revelation 22:14.) He will give immortality and eternal life to all who are saved. He will destroy Satan and sin. Do you want to be saved and have a part in the coming kingdom of glory? The apostle John assures us that "the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 3:8. And Paul gives us the promise that "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." Romans 16:20.

Now Juniors, let me make it clear that God's promises of salvation are made upon certain conditions. Christ will save us from sin and reward us with eternal life only if we will let Him. We must look to

Jesus and accept Him as our Saviour. His promise is clear to 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. "There is no God else beside Me; a just God and a Saviour." Verse 21.

After we have accepted Jesus as our Saviour, we are to follow Him, and by His grace and power to stop sinning and to keep His commandments. "Obey My voice," He bids us, "and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you." Jeremiah 7:23. Remember, Christ is mighty to save. There is no sin so great that He cannot deliver us from it. He will "save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him." Hebrews 7:25.

Now let me mention a very important sign of the gospel. Throughout the long centuries of time the followers of Jesus have shown their confidence in Him as their Lord and Leader by a certain sign that they have kept, a sign of their salvation from sin through Christ. This was commanded by God from the very beginning of the world to separate the true followers of Jesus from those who did not love Him. "Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep," God said, "for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your

generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. . . . Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holiness to the Lord." Exodus 31:13, 15, margin.

As the long centuries of time have passed, this sign has served to show the faith that God's children have had in Jesus as the Saviour who sanctifies them, that is, the One who makes them holy and good. But the Sabbath sign is still with us today. It has not been taken away. Every seventh day is still the rest day of God. A glance at the calendar will make plain which day is God's Sabbath. Are you keeping it as a sign of your faith in Jesus? He who is your God is your Saviour, too. It is He who bids you keep His day in loving memory of His work of grace and mercy in calling you to be a Christian.

We are now living in the last days of time. God has promised a special blessing to all who keep the Sabbath now. "Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it: that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil." Isaiah 56:2. This promise shines brightly in the Bible firmament of promises. It is God's rainbow to brighten our skies and a special sign of our loyalty to Christ and His saving gospel.

Victorious Faith

(Continued from page 3)

asked: 'How do the angels carry out God's will?' Many answers followed. One said: 'They do it directly.' Another: 'They do it with all their heart.' A third: 'They do it well.' And after a pause a quiet little girl added: 'They do it without asking any questions.'

That is evidently the way the Israelites crossed the Jordan on dry ground, and the way, too, they took the city of Jericho. "It came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people; and as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, . . . that the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap." Joshua 3:14-16.

Without question, God could, had He so desired, have opened the Jordan while the priests bearing the ark were approaching it, a half or a quarter mile distant, but He did not do so. It was not until the feet of the priests stepped into the water that the Jordan "stood and rose up upon an heap." Likewise it was not until Abraham raised his hand to begin the death stroke that God intervened. It was not until the people shouted, following seven days' marching around Jericho, that the walls fell.

Why, you ask, does God do it this way? It is for

the purpose of testing and strengthening faith. Those who, like Abraham, Joshua, Daniel, and a host of others, endured the test are said to have "victorious faith." This is the kind of faith that caused the sun to stand still, the dead to be raised to life, and the waters of the sea and the river to part.

But although works are an essential evidence proving genuine faith, it must be remembered, and never forgotten, that no man is saved by his works. Christ alone is the Saviour. Could God have saved sinful man by works of the law, He would not have allowed His only, well-beloved Son to endure the cross. Saints keep the law because they are saved through faith in Christ, not to be saved. In that simple statement lies the difference between salvation by faith and attempted salvation by works.

Although obedience and good works are necessary in the sight of both God and man to demonstrate the genuineness of our religious faith, still "good deeds" may be performed and there be an absence of real faith, of nondefective character.

This fact is well illustrated by the experience of a five-dollar bill, which appears in the *Baptist Record*: "I handled a queer five-dollar bill the other day. It had done a heap of good—paid the widow's rent, bought food for the hungry, squared up three or four accounts, made a church treasurer happy when he found it on the plate, and made the sexton happier when his back salary was paid by it—but in due

course of time it came back to the bank whose name it bore, and, lo, the teller threw it out. 'What's wrong?' asked the depositor. 'Counterfeit,' said the teller. All its good deeds had not made it pass the bank where its real character was discovered."

There have been many in history who, like the legendary Robin Hood, have robbed the rich and given to the poor. Many with corrupt characters have been generous, even kind. Even the most debased may have some praiseworthy traits of character. An occasional good deed, however, performed by a person wholly devoted to evil, fails utterly of proving a righteous character or Christian faith. It is the sanctified trend of the life that counts. With whom are the thoughts? Who has the affections?

Faith does not, cannot, reach the victorious state if the individual is bogged down with worldliness. Worldly practices—drinking, smoking, dancing, pool-room associations, theater and night-club attendance, betting, card playing and gambling—cast a deadly blight over the tender plant of faith. To have victorious faith it is necessary to "cut loose" from the world. Two drunk men got into a boat one night with the purpose of rowing across the lake. They pulled hard at the oars all night, but did not succeed in reaching their destination. With the break of dawn they discovered that they had not raised the anchor.

It is thus in running the race of life. If sinful habits and practices are not cast off, progress cannot be made. "Let us lay aside every weight," says the writer of Hebrews, "and the sin which doth so easily beset us." Hebrews 12:1. No athlete would aspire to win the marathon or the high jump bearing a fifty- or one-hundred-pound weight. Neither can the Christian aspire to the winning of the eternal heritage under the handicap of sin and worldly practices. Said Paul: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." 2 Tim. 4:7, 8.

There has been no age of the world's history, of this we are certain, when the power of faith has not been illustrated. From the Garden of Eden to this present time heroes of faith have demonstrated this admirable attribute. But at the head of this six-thousand-year line stands Jesus. The following is written in Hebrews 12:2: "Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher [perfecter, in one translation] of our faith." What is the meaning of the word "author" as used here? Evidently not originator. This is the way a literal English rendering has it: "Looking unto Jesus the File-Leader." Jesus stands at the head of the long line of those who through the ages have had illustrious faith. He stands at the head of the procession.

Christ is worthy to be leader. He is worthy to be looked up to as the exemplar of faith. He alone possessed the "perfect" faith. All others, even those who are chronicled among the heroes of faith, admit to

imperfections. Although no error is recorded against Abel, he declared his imperfections in the fact of the substitutionary sacrifice. Enoch did not walk with God until after the birth of his son. Noah sinned grievously after his marvelous preservation. Abraham failed of following God in every respect. Isaac and Jacob left no perfect record. Moses, noted for meekness, failed at the border of the promised land. David was guilty of sins of the first magnitude.

Who of the long line of notables was perfect? Not one. Not one until we come to Jesus, the File-Leader. We receive no advice in the Bible to keep our eyes upon Abel, Noah, Abraham, or Moses, but only to "look unto Jesus." Why? Because we "are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses." All heaven is interested in the progress we are making, the success we are having, in the race of life.

Gabriel, coming to give Daniel skill and understanding, told him that he was "greatly beloved" in heaven. This points up the fact that each person not only has a record kept in heaven of his acts and deeds, but also has a specific status. Daniel enjoyed the coveted position of being "greatly beloved." Conceivably, however, no person's position is static—it may be altered. Any person who today is not "greatly beloved," may, through a wholehearted devotion of himself to Christ and to His cause, obtain that desired standing.

One translator words the thought, "Looking unto Jesus," as "Looking off unto Jesus." What is the significance of this adverb? We are not to look to the saints of old, neither to saints of the present, but we are to look off (away) from all of them to the head of the line where is the File-Leader, the Perfect One in faith. From the time Jesus offered Himself to the Father as man's substitute, His faith never wavered. It carried Him triumphantly to Bethlehem's manger, through His youth and young manhood. It motivated Him to take up His ministry at the age of thirty, to speak as never man spake, to heal the sick, and to raise the dead. It fortified Him to endure the abuses of His mock trial, and the agonies of the cross. It brought Him forth triumphant from the tomb.

"Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame." What joy? The joy of seeing the accepters of His grace in the kingdom throughout the unending days of eternity. This thought is comparable to the one expressed in Isaiah 53:11: "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied."

In view of these considerations we feel constrained to recommend to our readers, Jesus—Jesus, the Line-Leader, the Vindicator of the faith, "who is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God." And again may I remind you: Look not to man, whether it be an Abraham ancient or modern. Look "off" unto Jesus. He, the faithful One, will see you through. He will give you "victory through faith."



What Says the BIBLE?

The Mystery of Lawlessness

From its first chapter to its last, the Bible pictures the earth and its living freight as a realm of law and order and divine design. Creation was accomplished by obedience. "God said, . . . and there was." Genesis 1:3. The finale of Revelation is the promulgation of a law and its penalty. (Verses 18, 19.) Obey, and live; disobey, and die—this is the framework of the universe. Within this framework lies the whole plan of salvation.

1. *God offered the newly created race, in the person of its first parents, the opportunity to live by offering the choice between obedience and disobedience.*

"And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Genesis 2:16, 17.

2. *Man chose disobedience, and death followed.*

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Romans 5:12.

3. *But the Lawgiver Himself so loved the disobedient race that He took upon Himself their penalty, which He did not deserve, in order to give them His life, which they did not deserve.*

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

4. *This restores the original opportunity for choice. We may choose to believe and accept the life offered us in Christ, thereby blotting out our disobedience and receiving life. Or we may choose to go on in the path of disobedience leading to death.*

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey His voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him: for He is thy life, and the length of thy days." Deuteronomy 30:19, 20.

5. *Next to the unfathomable mystery of how God could love us enough to die for us ("the mystery of godliness," 1 Timothy 3:16) is the mystery of how men can think that Christ's death to pay the penalty for disobedience to God's law relieves us of the ob-*

ligation to obey that law, and frees men to sin.

"The mystery of iniquity doth already work." 2 Thessalonians 2:7.

"Iniquity" in this verse is from Greek roots meaning "not" and "law"—no law. "The mystery of iniquity" is, therefore, "the mystery of lawlessness."

6. *This "mystery of lawlessness" is the spirit of the present age.*

Paul speaks of "the course of this world [margin, age], according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Ephesians 2:2.

7. *This lawlessness reveals itself in the teachings of present-day philosophy, psychology, modernism, and the doctrines of the majority of modern churches.*

Philosophy (based on evolution) teaches that the universe is purposeless and controlled by blind chance. This evolutionary negation of any law but force is the cause of the two world wars and the present menace of communism.

Psychology teaches that self-control—which is really obedience to law—is harmful, and that we must not repress any impulse.

Modernism teaches that all the divinity there is is in ourselves, and our own self-expression is all the law there is.

Widespread among the churches is the doctrine of antinomianism, or the doctrine that the law of God was destroyed by Christ and that those who love Him are freed from the obligation of obedience.

All of these are manifestations of the mystery of lawlessness.

8. *This lawlessness brings down the doom of this present age.*

"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." Ephesians 5:6.

"For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience." Colossians 3:6.

9. *When by the combined treason toward God of the world and the antinomians, the majority of the human race have accepted what has been called "the lie of universal lawlessness," what time will have arrived?*

"It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law." Psalm 119:126.

Man - Mortal or Immortal?

(Continued from page 11)

incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. . . . Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Corinthians 15:51-54.

Some may reason that since God did not create man immortal, He must have created him mortal. If He created man mortal, He created him to die, and thus created death. To find that this is untrue, study further God's truth in the two trees. The tree of knowledge of good and evil provided a test to prove the first man's fitness for immortality. The tree of life prohibited his degeneration while he was in this probationary period. Had Adam never fallen he never would have died. If he had never died, he would have lived forever. God never intended man should die so long as he passed his probationary time without sinning. This was not impossible. Because man was not created immortal, it does not hold that he was created mortal. Being mortal is being subject to death. Death is the wages of sin. (Romans 6:23.) God did not create sin or anything about sin. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." John 1:4. Life does not create death. "In Him is no sin." 1 John 3:5. In the beginning man was created a *candidate* for immortality. If he were mortal from the beginning, removing him from the tree of life would not be necessary to make him so.

The Bible account of man's creation and fall is short but distinct. The Creator's plan for the earth's intelligences was laid deep and broad. No wonder Paul's desire was "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." Ephesians 3:17-19.

On a chilly day long ago our first parents were driven from Eden. Guilt had shattered their happiness. Eve's sorrow was multiplied. Then Adam not only battled the thorn and thistle, but found his life filled with sorrow, temptation, and death. Without help in a dying world, their experiences and contemplations would have overwhelmed them. Hope came in the promise of a Saviour. Through Christ the tree of life in Eden was to be restored. (Revelation 22:14.) The second Adam was to conquer where the first Adam failed. Thus all the world of every generation can find hope in immortality to come. (1 Corinthians 15:45-47.)

It is best to follow directions; certainly it is best when God gives them. The way may seem crooked, long, and dusty. It may be that that is the preparation you need. The glory will come.

OUR TIMES, NOVEMBER, 1949



FIRE EXTINGUISHER PRICED LOW.—A handy canned fire extinguisher that meets Underwriters' Laboratories and U. S. Government Of-380 specifications is now available for about \$1.30. Hero is hermetically sealed. Simply pull trigger and aim; carbon dioxide under pressure shoots stream of carbon tetrachloride and other chemicals eighteen feet. Puts out small gasoline, fuel oil, grease, paper, electrical fires in three to ten seconds. Does not injure persons, animals, or materials. Easy to carry or store. Hero requires no refilling or inspections. Bostwick Laboratories, Bridgeport 5, Conn.—*Science Illustrated*, March, 1949.



ACME

N. Steiman, Signal Corps engineer, demonstrates an electric eye for the blind. As he approaches an obstacle in his path, the user hears a pulsating sound through an ear attachment or gets vibration in the handles.

MEN HAVE SHORTER LIFESPAN.—Being a male carries with it the penalty of greater vulnerability to some diseases and a shorter lifespan, Dr. James B. Hamilton of Long Island College of Medicine reported to the meeting of the Gerontological Society in New York.

For the average American man, this means a five-years shorter lifespan than the average American woman has, he said, citing mortality statistics.—*Science News Letter*, January 22, 1949.

Suffering and Martyrdom

(Continued from page 13)

would end in a resurrection to new spiritual life. The persecution would be bitter to the victim, but it would result in releasing to the world the perfume of heaven.

To the church of persecution and martyrdom the introduction was especially appropriate. The divine Author Himself had been bitterly persecuted and slain, but had triumphed over death and the grave. He had robbed death of its sting and the grave of its victory. A crown of life awaited all those who remained "faithful unto death." The church would be crushed but not permanently destroyed. Just as persecution and suffering had made manifest the beauty of the character of Christ, the sufferings of the church of Smyrna would prove to be a blessing in disguise that would redound to their good and to God's glory.

The Smyrna period of the church universal covered about two hundred years, or during the second and third centuries. This was the age of martyrdom when the pagan Roman emperors attempted to destroy Christianity as a form of treason and millions sealed their faith with their blood. But the bitter persecutions broke the alabaster box of Christian fragrance which filled the world through succeeding centuries. Not since apostolic days was the church so pure and its testimony so clear. The confiscation of their goods brought material poverty, but never were Christians so rich in spiritual things. They laid up "treasure in heaven."

The church of that period was characterized by material poverty and spiritual power, in contrast with the present-day church of material riches and spiritual weakness. In the estimation of Christ there are poor rich-men and rich poor-men. Many who are rich in material things are poverty-stricken and bankrupt spiritually. They boast of being rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing, whereas in God's sight they are paupers. To the church of the Laodiceans Jesus says, "I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich." Revelation 3:18. There is no other source of spiritual wealth, and He is no respecter of persons. The cost of the Pearl of great price is "all that a man hath."

Of this period one writer said: "The forge, the anvil, the crucible, the mortar and pestle, the potter's wheel, the burning fiery furnace heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated, are the friendly and appropriate instruments of grace, rather than the obnoxious instruments of torture."—W. C. Stevens, *Revelation, the Crown-Jewel of Biblical Prophecy*, Vol. 2, p. 76. Persecution for the sake of righteousness has always been a blessing in disguise.

It is evident that the reference to "Jews" has to do with false disciples who are said to belong to "the

synagogue of Satan." In the New Testament the term "Jew" is sometimes used to represent Christians in contrast with Gentiles or the unconverted. See Romans 2:28, 29; Revelation 3:9. The usual term is "Israel," which is synonymous with the word "Christian." Paul declared that all children of faith are the children of Abraham and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. An Israelite, or a true Jew, is one who has victory over sin and prevails with God and man. See Genesis 32:24-28.

"Synagogue" and "church" are virtually synonymous terms and mean the same as "assembly" and "congregation." The false disciples were members of the church or "synagogue of Satan" rather than of Christ. There are only two churches in the world, and all are members of one or the other. During the Smyrna period the apostasy which had begun to work in the latter part of the apostolic days was continuing to develop so that "the mystery of iniquity" was permeating "the congregation of the Lord." This "falling away" reached maturity during the next period of the history of the Christian church.

In the Smyrnan letter the persecution is attributed to the devil, who would cast some into prison that they "may be tried," or tempted. Persecution is always the last resort of the enemy in his efforts to persuade Christians to give up the struggle. Although the Lord may permit them to come for our own good, trials have their source with the devil, who "as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour." The "ten days" are probably symbolic of as many years according to the rule of prophecy, and some believe them to represent the last and most severe of the persecutions by the ten persecuting Roman emperors, that under Diocletian which took place from A. D. 302 till 312. It was a period that would test God's people to the limit of their endurance. They would pass through a baptism of suffering and martyrdom with the divine assurance of the love and sympathy of Christ and the promise of "a crown of life" as the reward for loyalty and steadfastness.

"Be faithful to the End, even if you have to die, and then I will give you the victor's Wreath of Life" (Weymouth), was the promise of Jesus. Even though the enemy should inflict his worst, and death should be the price of faithfulness, the reward was certain. In other scriptures the promised reward for loyalty is "a crown of glory," "a crown of righteousness," and "a crown of rejoicing." Smyrna was a place of athletic contests where garlands or wreaths of victory were given to the successful candidates. During this period of persecution ten million martyrs watered the seeds of gospel truth with their blood.

To the church of suffering unto death Jesus presented Himself as a martyr permanently restored to life. In fact His death was a triumph over death

and the grave, for He brought from the tomb the key that turns its awful reality into a mere shadow. Those who maintain their loyalty unto the first and temporary death, will escape the second and permanent death from which there will be no resurrection. The first death comes to all alike as the result of Adam's transgression. Because of its temporary nature it is called "sleep" throughout the Scriptures. There will be an awakening when "all that are in their graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28, 29.

The candlestick of the church of Smyrna was not removed. It is the only church of the seven that still exists and whose light is still shining. No reproof was given to the church of this period because they needed encouragement. There were things needing to be corrected, but because of the fires of persecution Christians had about all they could stand. Much of the lost love and works of the Ephesian period had been regained. In the furnace of suffering the dross had been separated from the pure metal. In that sense the church of Smyrna was typical of those who pass through the final crisis and come "out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Revelation 7:14.

Marijuana - the Murderous Weed

(Continued from page 19)

he imagined that his family had been conspiring to dismember him. To forestall this, he hacked his father, mother, sister, and two brothers to death with an axe while they slept."

Colonel Garland H. Williams, head of the New York office of the U.S. Narcotic Bureau, says that "even sex does not satisfy the abnormal urges induced by marijuana. There is still the necessity for further excitement, more emotional release. That is when the guns are grabbed, the knives waved, and the razors swung."

A person under the influence of marijuana is dangerous when driving on the highway, for he may rush head-on into an oncoming car.

Marijuana users are also guilty of unusual sex perversions. Quite often individuals who innocently smoke the first "reefer" become habitual users and later desire even greater thrills. Generally they become users of morphine, cocaine, or heroin, and eventually they may reach a state of dementia. When the state of addiction is reached, it is almost impossible to accomplish a cure.

Perhaps to most readers it will seem that we have nothing to fear on this score, but in reality the use of marijuana is increasing. We are told that its consumption has increased a thousandfold in the past

ten years; and for every smoker who gets caught, the police estimate that one hundred get away. It is a pity that they are not all caught.

It is possible to get marijuana cigarettes at some newsstands, and there are peddlers who slyly sell their product around high schools. There is hardly a city where these cigarettes are not sold.

Some time ago the newspapers reported a party in Hollywood in which a group of nationally known movie stars were caught using marijuana. Robert Mitchum, who is an idol of the bobbysoxers, was one of those caught. Millions of Americans took up the familiar cry of persecution with utterly no idea of what marijuana is or what it does. One would think that Robert Mitchum was involved in nothing more serious than playing truant from school. Little do most people realize the seriousness of such matters. The influence on youth alone is a major problem.

Not long ago it was revealed that certain outstanding orchestra leaders and their band members were using marijuana cigarettes to get a lift, so that they could play the wild swing music with even greater fervor. *Down Beat*, a popular musical journal read by the swingsters and their followers, added to the problem with a headline which said, "Light Up, Gates! Report Finds 'Tea' a Good Kick." Marijuana smokers are sometimes referred to as "tea" smokers; hence the use of this term in the *Down Beat* headline.

There is cause for real concern in the fact that thousands are being added to the list of smokers of marijuana every year. Many of these are boys and girls in their teens. They do not know what it is all about until they have had their first experience.

Police authorities find that marijuana is a serious inducement to crime. No doubt this is the reason why crimes of every type and description are increasing, and why the most brutal and horrible things are performed. It is no wonder that God says, "In the last days perilous times shall come," and "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." 2 Timothy 3:1, 13.

COMING NEXT MONTH

"I Believe Jesus Christ Is Very God," by Fenton E. Froom

"Prophecies of the Kingdom," by Varner J. Johns
"The Epoch of State Religion," by Taylor G. Bunch

"Fellowship With Christ in Our Atomic Age," by John W. Halliday

"What Happens to Man When He Dies?" by Herbert R. Thurber

"The Glorious Rapture," by H. M. S. Richards

"The World's Biggest Lie," by George S. Belleau

"Proposed Calendar Changes Analyzed," by J. C. Kidwiler

GOD'S TWO BOOKS

By Mary Hunter Moore

November Woods—and Memories

I was delighted when my hostess at Kingfield, Tennessee, suggested a Sabbath afternoon walk. As we passed along the woodsy paths, suddenly I stopped and sniffed the air intently. "What is it?" asked my friend, noting my excitement.

"Nothing yet," I said, "but a memory—the memory of a fragrance, the breath of the November woods, something I haven't smelled since I was a child. There must be witch hazel growing close by."

Soon we found it. Nothing else is like it. Once its fragrance has filled the nostrils of a child who lives in the woods, it is never forgotten. Such an elusive, thin, light sweetness would be lost among the airs of spring or the more robust aromas of the hot season. But in the autumn woods there are two fragrances that are the soul (the "breath") of the season: the fragrance of falling leaves and the scent of witch-hazel blossoms.

Let us pay a loving tribute over the graves of the goodly leaves. They are the banners of unselfish service all summer; they are shining and fragrant in their dying; they enrich the world in their death. They are like godly personalities, lovely and pleasant in life, not divided from beauty in death.

But there is nothing dying about the witch hazel. It seems exuberant with life the year around. Too large to be a shrub, it is too small to be a tree. It can't stand still long enough to be a tree. It must send up multiple stems instead of one trunk. And these strong, flexible stems bend vibrantly before storms (but more so when children ride them for "horses"). It must be a little different in everything. Its leaves cannot be folded into equal halves; they are irregular at their bases and sometimes wider than long.

But it is in its flowering and seeding that witch hazel is most alive. When even the leaves lie in sodden graves under fall rains, witch hazel lights its candles. Its long wands are crowded with tiny flowers set three or four to a cluster, each with four strap-shaped petals. The petals are not sedate, but are as curled and wavy as though perpetually dancing in miniature breezes. And lest the eye miss its pale gold sunshine, it sends forth the sweetest flower breath I know to ravish the attention to its loveliness.



Then when its lover bends to enjoy its sweet savor, it may shoot him square on the cheek with a shiny black seed fired with an audible pop from last year's seedpods, ripening beneath this year's flower clusters. No dropping its seeds for witch hazel! No idle waiting for wind or animal to carry them! It fires them off. Witch hazel shots have been measured as much as forty-five feet.

So there is something thrillingly alive about the witch hazel around the calendar. God is a lover of life and beauty, or He would never have set the golden witch hazel blossoms under November's black skies.

Paganism

(Continued from page 21)

slight it as altogether nugatory, for asserting, that the first systematic apostasy from pure religion was consummated at Babel, and that from that center it spread itself over the whole world. The prophet of the Apocalypse styles Babylon or Babel *the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth*: (Rev. 17:5) by which, it need scarcely be observed, is meant, in the figurative language of Scripture, that all the abominations of apostate idolatry originated from that city as from a common parent."—*Id.*, Vol. 1, pp. 76, 77.

Summing up the historical evidences on the origin of paganism after the Flood, we found that it originated before the building of the Tower of Babel. Cush and Nimrod his son originated and propagated the apostasy in ancient Babylon, and this false worship was spread among all peoples from the confusion of languages at Babel. Cush and Nimrod were the gods of paganism and, having fostered the belief in immortality, were held after their death to have taken their abode in the sun. It was natural for their worshipers to worship the sun, as their ancestor-god lived there. So today we find that all paganism worships the sun in one way or another. We can trace these different forms of worship, as found in paganism, back to the original, ancient Babylon. Both the Bible and history agree as to the origin of the counterfeit worship as introduced in Babylon. The true god of paganism is Lucifer. Cush and Nimrod were only the visible gods and the agents of the fallen angel.

Our next step will be to find how the biggest lie ever told became the foundation of all paganism. Paul well understood heathenism, for he stated: "When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." Romans 1:21-23.

? PLEASE EXPLAIN ?

Address your questions to Editor, OUR TIMES, Box 59, Nashville 2, Tennessee.

Please explain Ecclesiastes 7:16. Is it possible to be too good?—R.T.

Ecclesiastes 7:16 reads: "Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldst thou destroy thyself?" It is not possible to be too good. But it is possible to have a counterfeit goodness which is not goodness at all, and which will cause the one who trusts in it to be lost.

The second clause interprets the first. The secret is that the counterfeit righteousness and this foolish wisdom are what we try to achieve by our own efforts. We try to make ourselves righteous and wise, and succeed only in destroying ourselves. Wisdom is the gift of God (James 1:5), and it is received by faith, prayer, a diligent study of God's revelation—the Bible—and the right attitude toward the trials and discipline of life (Romans 5:1-5). Righteousness also is the gift of God, received by faith. (Revelation 19:8; Romans 3:22-26.) Such true wisdom and righteousness always produce a humble mind and a modest demeanor. Self-righteousness and human wisdom make the possessor proud, boastful, and contemptuous of others. God protects the humble who accept His righteousness; and He leaves the self-righteous and proud to the fruit of their own efforts—destruction.

Who is the Sodom referred to in Ezekiel 16:46?—N.M.

This verse reads: "Thine elder sister is Samaria, she and her daughters that dwell at thy left hand: and thy younger sister, that dwelleth at thy right hand, is Sodom and her daughters." Adam Clarke says on this verse: "It is supposed that the prophet by *Sodom* in this place means the Israelites that dwelt beyond Jordan, in the land of the Moabites and Ammonites; or rather, of the Moabites and Ammonites themselves. Literally, Sodom could not be called the *younger sister* of Jerusalem, as it existed before Jerusalem had a name. In looking *east* from Jerusalem Samaria was on the *left*, and Sodom on the *right hand*, that is, the *first* was on the *north*, the *second* on the *south* of Jerusalem."

It is obvious that the name Sodom here is figurative, for the language of the whole chapter is filled with the figure of personification. Under these figures God rebuked the apostate Israelites in the kingdoms of Israel and Judah for their idolatry and their pride. Judah was especially rebuked for self-righteous pride. She considered herself superior to the kingdom of

Israel, to the tribes beyond Jordan, and to the heathen Moabites and Ammonites. She considered these others as wicked as Sodom and Gomorrah, which God had destroyed. Yet Judah was doing things worse than literal Sodom had done.

In your opinion and belief, how was Christ baptized? Please give proof.—F.M.D.

By immersion. We find in the Scriptures that He was baptized in the river Jordan, and "when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." Matthew 3:16. If it had been only a matter of being sprinkled, He need not have gone into the water. This could have been done out of the water just anywhere. When Christ went down into the river Jordan and was immersed, He gave "us an example, that [we] should follow His steps." 1 Peter 2:21. We are told that John the Baptist did his "baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there." John 3:23. If he had been only sprinkling people, he would not have had to go where there was much water. He could have carried a gallon jug with him and it would have served the purpose. A gallon of water would have sprinkled many people.

Colossians 2:12 refers to the Christian baptism as a burial. We die to sin and are buried. We come forth from the watery grave to live in the newness of life. We are "buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him." By no manner of means can we stretch our imaginations to the point where we can conceive of sprinkling or pouring as a burial. We are to be "buried *with Him* in baptism."

The Two Thieves

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phant faith in their earnest appeals to sinners.

What the Lord looks at when He looks at us who have put our trust in Christ, and who depend upon His righteousness for our salvation, is not our sins but Christ's righteousness. He does not look at us as we are but as we will appear when we are finally transformed by His grace through faith in Christ. Our destiny is not so much determined by how we start our lives, as by how we end them. What counts with God is the estimate we as sinners put upon His beloved Son, and not the estimate He puts upon our present sinful condition. He does not see our present sins and shortcomings; He sees us as we shall finally appear triumphant in faith, like the thief on the cross, owning Him as our Lord, our Saviour, and our coming King.



THE NATURE world harbors startling transformations that are seldom observed. The development of the Luna moth, a lovely, pale-green creature with a wing span of five inches, is one of these.

Hatching from a tiny egg in the spring, the Luna larva grows rapidly as it feeds on hickory and walnut leaves, relinquishing its old coat for a new one whenever the coat becomes too tight, until it is a fat caterpillar about three inches long. There is nothing prepossessing about this hairy, warted creature as it humps along the ground among the leaves. And at the next stage it is even less attractive. After this larva has stuffed itself for several weeks to gain its full size, it makes for itself a thin, leaflike covering and lies, brown and still, upon the ground. It is scarcely noticeable among leaves or grass.

During the winter, what takes place within the cocoon is one of nature's own secrets. But when spring and warm weather call it from its prison, an entirely new creature responds. Escape from its bonds is a difficult matter, fraught with danger for the moth about to emerge. To aid in its escape, it releases a saliva which dissolves the confining fibers.

Slowly, after hours of struggle, the onetime larva creeps out, and more slowly it moves its crumpled wings. At this point the creature looks like a large, fragile leaf which has been dipped in water and carelessly wrung out by hand. With a quivering movement it patiently raises and lowers its wings. As they take shape, their delicate beauty is breath-taking. A purple band marks the front edge of its wings, and a richly colored ocellus

decorates each of two pairs of wings. The long, curved tails of the wings give a graceful appearance.

As soon as these jeweled wings are strong enough, the adult Luna flutters high into the air. It is no longer a fettered, earth-bound thing, but one of nature's sought-after treasures.

It takes a wise man to see this lovely creature in the ugly worm or the dry cocoon; but, just so, Jesus Christ sees a beautiful person in every sinner. It is fortunate that Christ sees us in this way, because sin has made us as ugly as the worm and as dull as the cocoon. Sin ties us to the low levels of life and action, and sin is repulsive to the pure heart of God.

But Christ can change the fettered one into a life both charming and useful. The change from a sinful life to a Christian life is wholly as great as that from the worm into the Luna moth. Then, like the moth, a Christian seeks the high places of cleanness and light.

When the warmth of spring calls to the imprisoned moth, he must bestir himself and respond with his instinctive powers to shake loose his bonds. Only a comparatively few of the cocoons formed in the fall become moths in the spring. Many do not make the effort to free themselves. As with the moth, so it is with us, whether we will choose to be transformed.

Sin binds its victim and degrades him. Its power is stronger than the silken strands of the cocoon. The victim cannot break them himself as does the moth, but he can appeal to Christ. The power of God transforms into a beauty, like unto that of the Luna moth, the life that was as drab as the cocoon.

By Marjorie Koenig

