

The Bible and **OUR TIMES**



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Facing the Future Confidently

By R. D. Vine

MANY people to-day, in their bewilderment, have lost all hope for the future. Humanity, they believe, is hastening with increasing momentum toward the deadeast of all dead ends. As one well-known professor recently expressed it in his book: "No one has the slightest reason for supposing that human affairs are going to improve." He, like a good many others, can see nothing but a progressive worsening of world conditions, until some atomic doomsday carries everyone off into utter oblivion.

A condition of hopelessness and anxiety just before His glorious second coming to this world, is precisely what our Lord foresaw and described. "Men's hearts," He said, "would be dried up with fear, as they await the troubles that are overtaking the whole world." He further said: "The nations will be in distress, bewildered." Luke 21:25, 26. (Knox's translation.)

"Look Up"

But while the student of the Bible surveys the perplexing political, economic, and social scenes of the world with equal disrelish, he nevertheless sees something in them which gives him hope and fortifies his faith. For he recognizes that all these things—wars, treaty-breaking, social troubles, religious decline, growing scepticism, and a host of other unsavoury conditions, are a proof that the Bible is true, and that the final day of God, when Christ will intervene, is almost here. "When these things . . . come to pass," said our Saviour, "then look up, . . . for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28.

For over a century, preachers of the second advent of Christ have been condemned as



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The Word of God has a message of hope for all who seek to pierce the mists of the troubled future.

prophets of doom and misery-mongers for portraying verbal pictures of worsening conditions for which there was no human remedy. But to-day it is recognized that they were right after all.

We should remember, of course, that the great reason why prophecy describes our age in such detail, is to convince us that the Bible is true, and that God is overruling in world affairs. Also that God, having given men ample opportunity to demonstrate their inability to prevent increasing chaos, will Himself intervene in human affairs at last.

Having faith then in Him, we may face the future with confidence. We know that He has not lost control, but that He is patiently waiting till the scheduled hour arrives for Him to step right in. This is surely a very blessed realization. The Bible calls it "the blessed hope." The great Creator has things well in hand. As the prophet Daniel assures us: God "doeth according to His will . . . among the

inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?" Dan. 4:35. Nothing that ever happens in this world takes the Lord by surprise and nothing can possibly happen unless He permits it. It brings an all-pervading sense of relief to know this.

God's Plan Will Go On

There will always be the sceptical ones of course, who say they don't believe in an overruling God. They are somewhat like an old lady, who, when seeing a great railway engine for the first time in her life, was so impressed with its size that she said, "It will never go." The driver turned on the steam, released the brake, and that huge steel monster immediately began to move, rapidly gathering speed. Amazed now by its speed the old lady said, "It will never stop." The driver thereupon turned off the steam, applied the brakes, and soon the engine was brought to a standstill. The starting and stopping of that engine were incredible to that old lady, but her sceptical statements made no difference whatever.

It is just that way with the claims of those who are sceptical about God's plans. Whatever they say or do has not the slightest effect on God's benevolent purpose for this old world.

Confident then, that we are rapidly approaching the day of our Lord's appearing, what are our feelings as we face the prospect of standing before the great Judge? Are we confident that a favourable judgment will be passed in our case? There is no reason why we should be troubled with doubt. "If you would enter into life," said the Lord "keep the commandments." Now the first, and perhaps the greatest, of those commandments, is that we "have no other gods" except the God of heaven. (Exod. 20:3.) He desires—and will be given—the very first place in the hearts and minds of all those who will at last receive eternal redemption. Many of us fail right here. Instead of giving Him the first place, we often confine Him to a very minor place in the life. Sometimes, in fact, God is the very last consideration. He may even be crowded out entirely.

Now God loves us too ardently to be content

with such a relationship. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; I am jealous . . . for Zion with a great jealousy." Zech. 1:14. As a husband naturally desires the love of his wife, so the good Lord desires the love of His bride—the church. And that means you, friend, if you are anxious to qualify at last for a place in His kingdom. "My son—My daughter," He says, "give Me thine heart." That sinful, ugly heart—He wants it. No gift of ours can please Him more. He wants to reign within it, and thus to bring joy and gladness into our present life, and a feeling of confidence that all will be well as we face the momentous events of the future.

Secret of Strength

"I CANNOT recollect the time when I did not privately read, morning and evening, some verses of the Bible and pray to God. This habit I have maintained throughout my life. In this way I have read the Bible through many times. . . . Nations are strong and prosperous in exact proportion as the fear of God and Bible standards of right and wrong are in the hearts of the people."—*The late Sir Arthur Wingate.*



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The world, as this inn sign suggests, may be turned upside down, but God has His plans well in hand.



By Axel Helstead

The Nativity.

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A Son is Given

By Dallas Youngs

WE have no idea how many sons have been born into the world since the advent of that first son, Cain. Billions, no doubt. To have a son seems to be an innate longing of almost every man. This has grown to be so strong in Oriental countries, that if a man has no son he is considered to be disgraced.

We are sure that many fathers as they look into the faces of their infant sons have wondered, "What of his future? How will he turn out? Will he become a great and good man, or will he fail of that in some degree, or even utterly?"

Who can know? Who but God has the ability to trace the acts, the deeds, the character of a man from the cradle to the grave? Some, being born under the most disadvantageous

circumstances, have lived to become great and good. Others, born under more favourable conditions, have wasted their lives and their substance in riotous living. Some have risen to positions of high trust and responsibility. Others have betrayed their trust—have become traitors to God and their country.

Truly, it is a solemn thing to be born a son. Most parents rejoice when a son is born. But were they able to trace the events of his life, their rejoicing might indeed change to bitter lamentation. Fortunately for parents, God in His mercy has withheld that ability.

However, in the case of God's own Son, the Father delineated the details of His life from the manger to the cross. Said Isaiah: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is

given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isa. 9:6, 7.

What God Gave

A "Son is given"—God gave His Son, His only-begotten Son. Obviously, no son of this kind had ever before been given. The "gift" of a human son is a more or less commonplace matter; the "gift" of a divine Son is an extraordinary event. Prior to the birth of Prince Charles all England, the whole Empire awaited the event with eager, joyous anticipation. But in the birth of God's Son only a few wise men and shepherds were on hand to celebrate it.

Yet no birth since the beginning of the human race held such import for lost humanity. *That* Son was Christ the Lord, from heaven, who was destined to become the Saviour of the world. In *that* Son resided the hope of sinners. In *that* Son, as Mary cradled Him in her arms, reposed divinity. He was God come down in human flesh—no less divine as an infant than He was as an adult.

God had given His Son. This is the more remarkable because God had but *one* Son. If a rich man loses a part of his fortune he still has enough to sustain him in comfort, perhaps in luxury. If a man with many children loses one in death, he still has others to comfort his heart. But God, who was "rich in houses and lands" had but one Son—His "only-begotten Son."

In the incarnation the Father gave His best, His all. Jesus, it is true, appeared as a Child born of a woman, born under very ordinary and impoverished circumstances. But His birth was not after the ordinary generation of mankind. Having no earthly father, but an earthly mother, He combined divinity with humanity. He was both God and man.

The angel, on the occasion of his visit to the virgin, announced: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Luke 1:35.

Later, as Joseph hesitated to consummate his marriage with Mary, the angel appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." Matt. 1:20.

The Sign to Ahaz

Jesus' divine-human nature constituted a miracle, a sign of which was given in Old Testament times. It came to pass after the **division of the nation** into the northern and southern kingdoms, that Ahaz was king of Judah. In his days, Pekah, king of Israel, and Rezin, king of Syria, confederated against the southern kingdom. Ahaz was afraid, in the light of the success they had already had, that they would take Jerusalem and destroy the Davidic lineage.

At this time Isaiah, the prophet, was sent to meet Ahaz with a message of courage. The Judean king was invited to ask the Lord for a "sign." But with commendable humility he refused. Said Ahaz: "I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord." Isa. 7:12.

God was pleased by Ahaz's attitude and declared that He Himself would give the king a sign. "Behold," said the Lord, "a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall He eat, that He may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the Child shall know how to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings." Isa. 7:14-16.

A Prophecy in Eden

It came to pass even as God had said. The kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah fell long before the advent of this wonderful Child. Actually, however, Isaiah's prophecy of the virgin birth was antedated by more than three thousand years. The first intimation given of that miraculous event was on the occasion of the fall into sin in the Garden of Eden. There, as recorded in Genesis 3:15, God said that the Seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent. There is no intimation here of the concurrence of the masculine. The direct suggestion is that the serpent's head shall be bruised by the Seed of the woman alone. Thus we have a prophecy of the "virgin birth" dating from the gateway of time. As the

(Continued on page 12.)



The Street called Straight, Damascus.

ONE of the most amazing incidents recorded in the Acts of the Apostles is the conversion of Saul, the Pharisee. The arrogant unbeliever had become a lowly, humble, self-effacing disciple of the Christ whom he had formerly despised. The relentless persecutor of the Christians was himself to be the most tried, the most persecuted of all the followers of Jesus of Nazareth.

After the momentous meeting of the Lord with Saul of Tarsus, the new convert, yet withal deprived temporarily of his physical sight, was told to continue his journey to Damascus, and wait there until he received further word. So Saul, greatly wondering, was led into the city, to the house of one, Judas,

The Street *Called* **STRAIGHT**

By F. A. Spearing

who lived in "the street which is called Straight." There Ananias found him, and he received his sight once more. (Acts 9.)

A street answering exactly to the description given in this narrative still exists in the city of Damascus, though it is now known as the Street of Bazaars. Perhaps the former name had a special significance for Saul, who was to become the mighty apostle of the Lord. He began his pilgrimage in the Street called Straight, and never once did he swerve from the straight road which leads from earth to heaven, in spite of obstacles innumerable, sufferings the most intense, and trials the most severe.

Crooked Things and Crooked Lives

There is very much that is crooked in this world; it is not surprising, therefore, that reference to the crooked things of life is to be found in the Bible. The Wise Man never uttered a wiser or truer word than when he said: "That which is crooked cannot be made straight." Eccles. 1:15. This is a fact that many cannot grasp. Yet how true it is that the thing which is morally or spiritually wrong, can *never* be made morally or spiritually right. That which is sin, will *always* be sin, no matter what fanciful name may be invented to make it appear something else.

We are exhorted in Philippians 2:15 to be "blameless and harmless, the sons of God, . . . in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation." So the fact that one lives in a perverse nation or in a perverse generation, is no excuse for

being perverse, or crooked oneself. The glory of the Gospel is that it can change men's hearts and lives so that they will remain uncontaminated by even the vilest surroundings. Such men will go straight, in face of all the crooked influences with which they have to contend.

The Gospel Straightens Out

In the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, God speaks comforting words to a perplexed and troubled race. The message applies not so much to the days in which the prophet lived as to the days of John the Baptist, and to the latter days of the history of the world. "Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God!" this truly remarkable chapter begins. Among the gracious promises appearing in the first few verses of this chapter is this one: "And the crooked shall be made straight!"

Unhampered by time and space, we may take a leap through the ages from Isaiah's day to the advent of the forerunner of the Messiah. What does this man of God say of himself? "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias." John 1:23.

Great crowds gathered to listen to the message which John had to deliver, and among them a large sprinkling of Pharisees and Sadducees, but these latter had no wish, for the most part, to listen to the truth; they were there to oppose the work of God. John knew that, and did not hesitate to call them a "generation of vipers." Matt. 3:7. They were rightly named for with their subtleties and their sophistries and their worldly wisdom, they were the descendants of the "crooked serpent" of whom we read in the Old Testament. (Isa. 27:1.)

For these hypocrites the Baptist had a word: If you would be true leaders in the cause of God, you must cease to follow the wriggling, twisting, devious path of the serpent. Confess your sins to the God of heaven, and give His message to the people: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight!"

There is a great deal of crooked thinking and crooked teaching in these days, just as there was in the days of the prophet Isaiah, and in the days of John the Baptist. These crooked thinkers and teachers are quite often well known in the realm of science, and in the realm of theology; they are men who are highly

respected by their fellows; but, eminent men though they are, they have missed their way, they have taken the wrong turning, they have failed to follow the only guide that is trustworthy.

Not so long ago we paid a visit to the Hampton Court Palace which is situated just outside London. In the grounds of the Palace one sees the famous Maze. Like tens of thousands before us, we entered the Maze, and very soon contrived to lose ourselves. But someone had a plan, and we found that by following the plan, it was as easy to pass through the Maze as it was to pass up and down the main street of the town in which we live.

God's Master Plan

God has a plan; it is the plan of the road which leads to heaven. The Plan of God is the Word of God. It brings into bold relief the snares, the pitfalls, the by-ways of deception and rebellion. Like the master key which opens every door of a mansion, it is the Master Plan which reveals and lights up every step of the way we have to travel, so that any poor sinner, lost in the maze of doubt and uncertainty and wrong, is enabled to find, and to keep to, the Straight Road.

"We came with a straight course," says

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The gate
of the
"House of
Ananias"
in
Damascus.



America and Pa

By W. L.



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Bishop Knox Sherrill puts his signature to the document constituting the National Council of Churches of America.

SPECTACULAR as has been the growth of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States during the past century and a half, it is hardly conceivable that America, and through it the Old World, could be brought back into complete obedience to the See of Rome within any measurable period. The most optimistic Roman Catholics are not sanguine enough to cherish such a hope, and the prophetic Word nowhere suggests that the whole world is ever to be shepherded back into the papal fold.

The Revelator does, however, make the startling declaration that multitudes who may never re-enter the church of Rome will actually become subservient to it by giving their allegiance and worship to an "image of the

beast." And in the erection of this "image," John further reveals that the United States will play a decisive part.

Here are his inspired words: "And he . . . [that is the lamb-power which we have conclusively identified as the United States] deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by the sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the 'image of the beast should be killed.'" Rev. 13:14, 15.

An "Image" to the Beast

Discussing the nature and purpose of this "image" in the *Pulpit Commentary*, the Rev. A. Plummer, M.A., D.D., past principal of University College, Durham, suggests that a proposal will be made:

"That men should set up an image of the first beast, not in order to pay greater honour to the first beast, but that an apparent alternative might be offered to men, so that those who have hesitated to pay direct allegiance to the first beast might overcome their scruples and worship something that resembled him, while allowing them to, as it were, cheat their own consciences by persuading themselves that they were not worshipping the beast himself."—*Revelation*, page 335.

"These two classes of men are, of course," he adds, "essentially one; they are, in reality, all followers of the one beast. . . . All are included in the same condemnation."—*Idem*.

Now if, as we have seen, the "beast" is the apostate ecclesiastical system of Rome, the "image to the beast" must be some other ecclesiastical system, ostensibly independent of

Protestantism

EMERSON

Rome, but, in reality, a replica of the essential features of that apostate church. In other words, a Protestantism which has abandoned its "protest" and become an echo of the church from which it separated in the great Reformation movement.

Are there then, we ask, any signs of the erection of such an "image" among the Protestant churches, and especially among the American Protestant churches, of to-day?

Indeed there are, in the ecumenical or reunion movement which has grown up among the non-Roman churches in both the Old and New Worlds. And, as in the case of all the other signs we have considered, this "sign" has begun to manifest itself only since the beginning of the "time of the end."

Reversal of Protestant Thinking

Speaking recently of the modern reunion movement, an editorial in the *Church Times* remarked:

"Fundamentally, the movement springs from the reversal of thinking that took place in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Before that time, group consciousness was the outstanding feature of the Christian communions. There was even a tendency to point to the large number of Christian bodies as an exhibition of the rich variety of the religion they all, in their different ways, professed."—*Church Times*, August 11, 1950.

"The great new fact of our time," however, is a "desire for the fulfilment of Christ's high priestly prayer that they all may be one, unparalleled in the history of a thousand years."—*Church Times*, November 24, 1950.

The principal reasons for this reversal of thinking are first, that, in an increasingly divided world, the church cannot bear its witness for harmony and peace if it is itself grievously divided. And secondly, the growing secularism of our time has brought home to the separated Protestant churches the necessity of union to ensure their very survival. With the rise of militant Communist atheism, even those who have hitherto been apathetic, have been stabbed into awareness of this latter danger. Christianity is now recognized to be fighting for its existence, and a united Christian front is regarded as imperative if the tide of paganism is to be thrown back and the post-war world rebuilt on a Christian basis.

America Leads the Way

Americans, who have always had a zest for organization on a vast scale, have enthusiastically led in this Pan-Protestant programme and notable results have been achieved there in the past few years. The Northern and Southern Methodists combined to form one united church in 1939. Five Lutheran groups united in 1930 in the American Lutheran Conference. The Congregational Christian Churches resulted in 1931 from the merging of



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Celebrating the federation of
churches in a Wisconsin town.

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two closely related denominations, and in 1934 two other groups merged into the Evangelical and Reformed church.

The Northern and Southern Presbyterians are at present studying reunion proposals, as also are the Disciples of Christ, the Northern Baptists, and the Presbyterian Church of America. Other discussions are proceeding for union between the Protestant Episcopal and Northern Presbyterian churches.

In 1949 a conference convened in America to consider a United Church of Christ in America and this year a second conference will continue the discussions. In Canada, union efforts have already brought the Methodists, Congregationalists, and a section of the Presbyterians together as the United Church of Canada.

On this side of the Atlantic similar reunion movements have produced a United Methodist Church and discussions are taking place between the Congregationalists and Presbyterians and between the Baptists and the Disciples of Christ. Even more far-reaching are the discussions instituted in the past few years between the Anglicans and the Free Churches which have just produced a report now being seriously considered by both the Anglican and Free Church leaders.

In mission lands the South India Church has been formed by the union of the Methodist, Anglican, Congregational, and Presbyterian churches. In North India the Methodists and Presbyterians are united, and in Ceylon a plan for the union of Anglicans, Methodists, and Presbyterians is being studied.

Organic or Federal Union?

Naturally, because some problems of doctrine and church order between the separated communions of the non-Roman churches cannot easily be ironed out, the task of actual organic union has been very slow, and so parallel efforts have been going on during the past few decades with a view to the formation of interim federal groupings designed to promote immediate common action along lines in which all the participants are agreed, and provide a forum for the exploration of closer organic association. And in this programme the American temperament, with its genius for federal organization, has similarly led the way.

As early as 1908, the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America was organized,

and by 1940 embraced no fewer than twenty-two denominations with a membership of nearly 25,000,000. At the close of last year an even larger merger was effected when the Federal Council, with seven other bodies, joined to form the National Council of Churches of Christ in America, representing twenty-nine denominations and over thirty-one million non-Roman Christians.

Not without reason, therefore, some fundamentalist Christian groups in America have characterized the merger as "another milestone on the road to a super-church."—*Economist*, December 30, 1950.

In Britain a Federal Council of the Free Churches has functioned for many years. More recently the British Council of Churches has been formed, corresponding with the new National Council in America.

Finally, during the past two or three years, ecumenical links on both sides of the Atlantic have been forged into the organization of the World Council of Churches which held its first Assembly in Amsterdam in 1948. At that time representatives of no fewer than 147 communions in forty-four countries legally adopted the constitution of this world-embracing ecclesiastical organization.

Once again it is significant that the idea of the World Council was born in the mind of an American Protestant Episcopal minister, Bishop Brent, as far back as 1909, and at the First Assembly by far the largest number of delegates and of churches represented were from the New World.

Where the Peril Lies

Now if this drawing together of the non-Roman churches throughout the world were for the strengthening of their Protestant witness, the ecumenical movement would, of course, be wholly desirable, for none can but regret their divisions. But the movement is rendered ominous rather than hopeful by the fact that influential sections of the National Councils and the World Council of Churches are anxious to lessen the gap between Protestantism and Catholicism in preparation, they hope, for eventual union with Rome itself.

At the last Lambeth Conference, for example, at which all the bishops of the Anglican Church throughout the world gathered for deliberation, it was made quite clear that the

(Continued on back page.)



Moses takes a last look at the promised land from the summit of Nebo.

A BITTER wind was blowing, and six inches of snow lay on the ground as we stood around the graveside of an aged member of the church. As I read the words of committal: "We do tenderly commit her body to the ground," I thought of the utter simplicity and beauty of the funeral service. I contrasted our simple service with the pomp and ceremony attached to the interment of the great men of earth. Nobility and distinguished leaders follow the cortège; the streets are lined with solemn crowds. There is a final fanfare of trumpets. Yet the form of committal is the same whether the deceased is a beggar or of royal blood, whether the service is conducted by an archbishop or some obscure country curate.

The Burial of Moses

Indeed ceremonial does not make any funeral more distinguished in the sight of God. According to one poet, the funeral of Moses was the grandest funeral. Yet of him, he says:

That was the grandest funeral,
That ever passed on earth,
But no man heard the tramping
Or saw the train go forth.

For without the sound of music,
Or voice of them that wept,
Silently down the mountain crown
The great procession went.

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"The Grandest Funeral"

By E. A. Butters

The Bible records it: "So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And He buried him . . . in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor." Deut. 34:5, 6. The grand old man, one hundred and twenty years old, his eye undimmed, his natural force unabated, climbed up the mountainside to view the promised land, to die, and to be buried by the hand of God. That surely was the grandest funeral with God Himself as grave-digger and Minister, and the angels as mourners.

Perhaps the most notable feature of the death of Moses lies in the fact that although he died and was buried, he appeared with Elijah at the transfiguration of Jesus. The Scriptures teach that the dead sleep in their graves until the final resurrection morning. (Job 14:13, 14.) Elijah was there because he did not die; he was taken to heaven without passing through the tomb. (2 Kings 2:11.) But how did Moses get there? We must conclude that he had a special resurrection.

The little book of Jude (verse 9) tells us of a contention between Michael (who is Christ) and Satan, over the body of Moses. Satan claims all who pass through the portals of the tomb as his legitimate prey. He "opened not the house of his prisoners." Isa. 14:17. "But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him," he will divide "his spoils." Luke 11:22. From these verses we conclude that Moses was wrested from Satan, raised from the dead, and taken to heaven.

Miniature of the Second Advent

Besides being an encouragement to the disciples to prepare them for the final sad scenes of the life of Jesus, the transfiguration was a miniature second advent. In the last verse of

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Matthew chapter sixteen Jesus informed His disciples that some of them would not taste of death till they saw the Son of Man coming in His kingdom. Immediately following this pronouncement the seventeenth chapter opens with the account of the transfiguration. Jesus was glorified, and Moses and Elijah appeared talking with Him. Elijah represented those who would be translated without seeing death, and Moses those who will be resurrected at the return of the Saviour.

We may derive much comfort from the Scriptures concerning "them that are asleep." Paul tells the Christian brethren not to sorrow as those "that have no hope" because "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." 1 Thess. 4:16. "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible." 1 Cor. 15:52.

"We shall not all sleep," declares Paul, "but we shall all be changed, . . . at the last trump." 1 Cor. 15:51. He further explains this: "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them [the raised saints] in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." 1 Thess. 4:17. Some men and women will not die, but will be translated to heaven when He comes. A further text includes the two classes. "Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him." 1 Thess. 5:10.

Moses, that great leader, the great man of God who spoke with his Master face to face, might have entered the Promised Land and might have been taken straight to heaven like Elijah but for one sin, an unwise word. God forgave his sin, but he missed a blessed experience. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." One unconfessed sin will keep us out of the heavenly Canaan. God forbid that it should be so.

A Son is Given

(Continued from page 5.)

future miraculous conception was used of God to bring faith and hope to the despairing Ahaz, so was the Garden of Eden promise designed to inspire hope in the hearts of the sinful pair.

Adam and Eve failed to understand that four thousand years must elapse before the fulfilment of that promise. Without doubt, as Dr. Loraine Boettner says, they looked for the fulfilment of the promise in their lifetime: "It is quite possible that Adam and Eve, like the people of every later generation, looked for, or at least hoped for, the fulfilment of that promise within their lifetime. When their first son Cain was born Eve said, 'I have gotten a man with the help of Jehovah' (Gen. 4:1); and when Cain turned out bad and a later son in which they had great hope was born Eve called his name Seth, 'for God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel,' Gen. 4:25."—*The Person of Christ*, page 139.

The Lamb Slain

However, it is certain that Adam and Eve understood that it would require a divine sacrifice to redeem them from the condemnation of the law which they had broken. While they did not sense the gravity of sin before they transgressed God's holy law, they did later. This was particularly true as they took the life of the innocent lamb, the type of the Lamb of God. In that unoffending victim they saw Jesus, the Son of God, dying for their sins. They realized they could recover their lost estate only through the life and sacrifice of the sinless One.

Thus, Jesus was the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." That is to say, while He was not actually put to death at the foundation of the world, God's promise is such that it cannot fail; therefore it was accounted that when the promise was made the deed was an accomplished fact. Every Old Testament sinner could repose as much confidence in the promise that God's Son would come and give His life, as New Testament sinners can in the fact that He did come.

It would be well for Christians and non-Christians alike to reflect upon the fact that Christ was a "Son given." "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. While it is true that Christ freely gave Himself, it must not be forgotten that He was God's only-begotten Son, and as such He was the Father's gift to this world of sinful, sorrowing, suffering humanity.

God has provided in His Son a wonderful

salvation to those who will believe. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3:36.

Is it to be thought that the "wrath of God" will rest upon the one who scorns His great gift? How can it be otherwise! How can God receive those who will not receive His Son! How can His grace be extended to the despisers of His grace! Surely, this could not be. Therefore, the appeal from heaven is to "come now." Now is the accepted time. To-day is the day of salvation.

Satan is well pleased when those for whom Christ died put off the matter of their salvation. Will you not, dear reader, be among that great army that stands with Him who was the "Child born," and "Son given," and who counted not His life dear, but gave it freely for you?

The Street Called Straight

(Continued from page 7.)

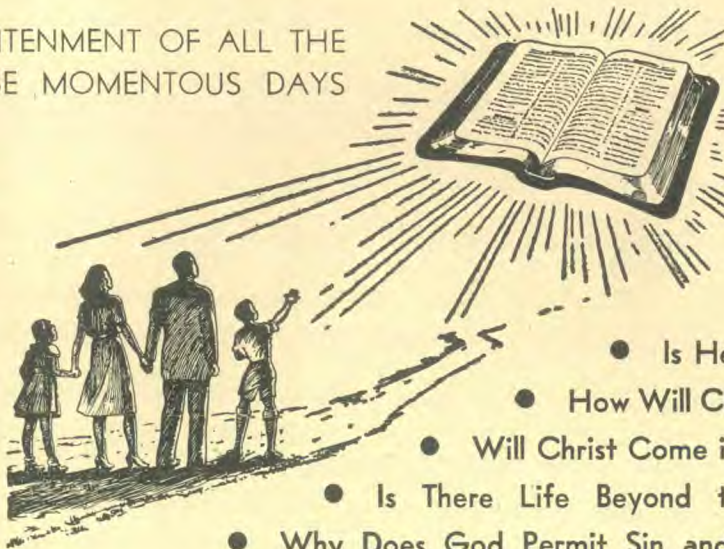
Luke when describing Paul's journey to Macedonia. (Acts 16:11.) Paul had followed the straight course ever since he began the Gospel journey at "the street called Straight." There were no deviations with Paul. He recognized the side-tracking manoeuvres of Satan, but kept clear of them.

Paul taught the Master Plan, the Plan of the Master; he made no innovations. And at the close of his life he was able to say: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." He kept to the Straight Road, and so could claim the promised crown of righteousness. (2 Tim. 4:7, 8.) That gracious promise is for all who follow the Master as did the great apostle. God wrote it in His Book for you!

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THE CHILDREN'S *Pages*



Tommy Believes in Prayer

TOMMY's mother believed in prayer. Many a time, he had seen her with the Bible in her hand and down on her knees in the daytime after tucking the baby for a nap in his little bed. This Tommy never forgot. . . . And when circumstances carried him and the two smaller children to an orphan home, his faith revived.

Tommy's father had died quite suddenly. The mother was advised by friends to place her children in the orphan home for a time. The days seemed like years to Tommy. He became restless as each night would come and no one had come to take them back to Mother.

Mother came out on Sunday, but no plan had been made as yet. Two Sundays

passed. Tommy began to cry after little Laurie and Marshall had fallen asleep each night. He cried himself to sleep. He had been happy in his home with Mother and Dad. How could he get used to being away from Mother and Aunt Nan!

Tommy thought of an idea. He would ask God to help him! Hadn't Mother read to him about how God saved Daniel from lions because he had prayed? God could open the big gate. He could open it and they could pass out early in the morning. With this hope Tommy slid from the iron bedstead down on his knees. Long he knelt there, while his little sister and brother slept soundly.

Tommy shook the children

and had them dressed before daylight the next morning, took Marshall in his arms, and led Laurie to the big gate at the south entrance, but the big iron gate was locked securely. It wouldn't give an inch to his pushing.

Tommy took the children back as silently as possible down the long corridor.

Again he prayed in the silence that night, again they went to the big iron gate, but it was the same. He put his back against it but it didn't budge with its heavy weight. The watchman kept it locked except when heavy traffic needed to pass through. Oh, how his little heart sank! How disappointed he was! It just wasn't any use, they might as well give up that hope—the gate was always locked. But that night Tommy prayed again, down on his knees. They'd try it one more time. He dressed the children, praying under his breath and took them to the big gate as usual. He stood Marshall on his feet, took a deep breath, backed himself, and closed his eyes, almost falling as the big gate swung open!

What became of Tommy then? He walked eight miles carrying first one child and then the other until he arrived at his aunt's home, where his mother was. Very soon provision was made for all. Their family doctor heard the story and knew of a large timber company that wanted a good woman to board some of the men workers. Tommy's mother accepted the work, and they were all happy together in their new home, and no one can tell Tommy it wasn't prayer that caused the watchman to leave the gate unlocked that morning.

MAYBELLE COLEMAN.



See how nicely you can paint this picture and send it with your name, age, and address to Auntie Margaret, The Stanborough Press Ltd., Watford, Herts., not later than August 23rd.

Is My Name Written There?

Do you ever stop to think of some of the places where your name has been written? I suppose you will find it on the covers of your schoolbooks; or maybe you have cut it, or your initials, into a tree. I have seen many cut into trees, some of which have been in very remote places. I have seen a tree where a famous explorer cut his initials, and he afterward perished from thirst.

I heard some years ago of some boys who were on a visit to a large seaside resort where there was a cliff more than five hundred feet high. Numbers of people had carved their names into this rock, among them being the famous George Washington. His name was placed higher than any other.

One day a boy came who said he would cut his name higher than George Washington. He did this, and then climbed up higher still, and cut his name again. His friends shouted to him again and again, but he took no notice. By and by, when he started to descend, he found that it was impossible. In certain places where he had been able to climb up, he could not climb down. He was trembling with fear.

Then his father called out, "William, hold on. We are praying for you. Keep your eyes on the top." So William started climbing up again, and when he got high enough, a rope was thrown to him, and he was saved.

William's ambition was to have his name higher than anyone else's and for this purpose he risked his life. But you and I must have our names written much higher than William's if we desire to be saved. We must have them written in heaven.

You will read in your Bible of a boy named Clement. When he grew up he was converted, and became a worker for Jesus. Paul, who was a friend of his, speaks of him as one whose name is in the book of life. That is God's book in which the names of all who are truly His followers are written. Is your name there? I hope it is!

Sunbeams' Letter

My dear Sunbeams,

You really did splendidly with the competition this time, and will be most excited to see the results, I know. Did you enjoy working out the puzzles? Certainly nearly every one of you got them perfectly correct. I received one excellent painting, but sad to say there was a little mistake in the puzzle part.

Lorna Conroy, who is only six, sent me a very pretty painting, but unfortunately it arrived too late to be judged. I shall look forward to more of your paintings, Lorna, which I am sure will come on time. Jean Sparkes also sent in too late. Thank you, Jean, for the interesting letter which came with your painting. You really did do well in your exams. Your mother must be very proud of you. I do hope she will soon be stronger. Jean, who will be seven in December, would like a little girl living near Clapham to be her pen-pal. Here is Jean's address: 165 West Side, Clapham Common, S.W.4.

Marianne Wilson of Larne, in Ireland, gets her holidays at the end of June. That is a little earlier than most of the schools in England. Don't you all wish you could be free from lessons as soon as Marianne? Never mind, when the holidays do come I can just imagine every one of you making up for lost time by having the best holiday ever. Do you know how to make it the happiest yet? I'll tell you. Don't try to please just yourself, think of what your playmates would like, too. Above all don't forget to give Mother a helping hand, and then she will have time for some fun with you, too.

If the precious name of Jesus is written in your heart, then you can be sure that your name is written in God's book of life.

"Lord, I care not for riches,
Neither silver nor gold;
I would make sure of heaven,
I would enter the fold;
In the book of Thy kingdom,
With its pages so fair,
Tell me, Jesus, my Saviour,
Is my name written
there?"

MRS. NETA GOODING.

Carol Keath from Folkestone sends her love to all the Sunbeams. Thank you, Carol. I am so glad you are proud of your badge. Look at your badges often, Sunbeams, and they will remind you of your determination to shine each day for Jesus.

Yours affectionately,

AUNTIE MARGARET.

Results of Competition No. 12

Prize-winners.—Margaret Head, 33 Womersley Road, Plumstead Estate, Norwich. Age 13; Jean Fuller, 103 Mallow Road, Stroud, Bournemouth.

Honourable Mention.—Michael Fussell (Bristol); David Phillips (Eastleigh); Richard Payne (Bishops Cleeve); Janice West (Birmingham); Josephine Aldridge (Bishops Cleeve); Ann Trimble (Norwich); Jennifer Sharpe (March); Olive King (Chelmsford); Crystal Hamblin (Watford); Pat Hill (Birmingham); Ronald Willson (Norden); Margaret Burruck (Igham); Malcolm Morris (Wrexham).

Those who tried hard.—Neville Kerry (Norwich); Pamela Baker (Hayes); Amy Randlesome (Beccles); Ivan Chettleburgh (Norwich); Valerie Howard (Hayes); Barbara Sanders (Newquay); Irene Millett (Bristol); Miriam Harris (Cambridge); Connie Freeman (Rengnes Park); Carol Keath (Folkestone); Esther Dunstan (Bodmin); Hazel Harris (Cambridge); Eileen Smith (Cardiff); Josephine Dunstan (Bodmin); Geoffrey Trigg (Churcham); Kenneth Williams (Newcastle); Dilys Waterhouse (Oldbury); Irene Almond (Islington); Margaret Morris (Wrexham); Alan Morris (Wrexham).

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STRAWS in the WIND

NEW NERVE GAS

ACCORDING to Representative Robert Sikes of Florida, in a recent issue of *Saga*, a new nerve gas has been developed, a drop of which "the size of a dime" on the skin will cause death in a few minutes. It is the more insidious because it is without colour, odour, or taste, and leaves no trace after death.

DRUNKENNESS ON INCREASE

FIGURES given by the Home Secretary recently in the House of Commons showed that convictions for drunkenness in the London metropolitan area have risen from 9,107 in 1946 to 16,760 in 1950.

America and Pan-Protestantism

(Continued from page 10.)

Anglican Church is a "Catholic" rather than a Protestant church and that it is not prepared to give up its "Catholic" principles in order to achieve union with the Protestant Free Churches. Consequently, if the Protestant churches want reunion with the Anglican communion, they will have in effect to become "Catholic." This, of course, is in line with the appeal of the Archbishop of Canterbury in his now famous Cambridge University sermon in 1936, in which he suggested that the Free Churches should introduce "episcopacy" into their organizations as a preparation for closer union.

The Lambeth Fathers, in fact, have the idea that even if reunion with Rome is impossible, or at least a very distant goal, the churches which are willing should go ahead to form a "Catholic" and yet non-Roman church which would be world-wide in extent.

The readiness with which the Anglican

church joined the World Council of Churches may suggest that they believe this new world organization of the non-Roman churches will provide the stage upon which this world-wide "Catholic" church may come into being.

Are the Outlines of the "Image" Emerging?

So while there are those at present in the World Council of Churches who would certainly have no part in erecting an "image" or replica of Roman Christendom, from which they have very definitely "come out" (Rev. 18: 4), there are many others within this new world organization who wish to give the World Council as close a resemblance as possible to Rome, in the hope that the time will come when the two will no longer be able to maintain a separate existence.

If then the character of these federated Christian organizations should steadily move away from the old Protestant witness to a "Catholic" position, it is easy to see how through its influence Protestant America and other erstwhile Protestant countries also, may be caused to do obeisance to an "image of the beast," and so in effect to the beast itself.

Those, therefore, who have "eyes to see" cannot but sense the dangers of the growing ecumenical movement among the erstwhile Protestant churches of the New and Old Worlds which shows distinct signs of a return to a "Catholic" theology and a disposition to secure its ends by legislative coercion rather than persuasion.

In these things they cannot fail to discern the shadow of that "image to the beast" which the unwary are destined to discover, only when it is too late, will involve them, with the "beast," in opposition to the truth of God.

(Next Time: "Dragon's Teeth.")

