



OUR TIMES



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The Bible is a sure Guide and Guard from youth to old age.

★ Nor if I do not wish to. God never compels anyone to believe it. But although it is fundamentally true that God leaves the reader free to choose for himself, it is equally true that the penalty for refusing to heed the warnings that God sends us through this Book is a very heavy one. It is so heavy that it deserves from the reader the deepest and most careful consideration. In Deuteronomy 30:19 it says: "I have set before you life and death, . . . therefore choose life." So it is as serious as that!

Moreover if we do not believe the Bible, what else is there to believe? The Bible claims to be an inspired book. Indeed it states, in the most emphatic language, that it is the revealed Word and will of God. (2 Peter 1:20, 21.)

The history of the Bible should convince the sceptic of its divine origin, for it is composed of no less than sixty-six books written by some forty different writers covering a period of nearly 1,600 years. Moses, the first writer, wrote about 1,500 years before Christ and John the last about A.D. 97. There would be nothing remarkable about this, but for the astonishing fact that they all agree absolutely in the presentation of the plan of human redemption.

Must I Believe The Bible?

By Robert Wilson

The theme of the Bible can be summarized in two terse phrases—fallen man's hopeless condition and God's magnanimous remedy. The whole Bible is written around this simple yet vital theme.

The very first chapter of the Book tells in direct and unassuming language that God is the Creator, that He made the world, including man. The second chapter reveals the origin of the Sabbath, intended to be a universal and enduring safeguard against apostasy. Chapter three shows man on probation, having the freedom to obey God or disobey Him. The fatal step taken by our first parents is next revealed, while the remedy is brought immediately to our notice, for we read in verses eight to fifteen of this chapter that God came and sought them out, and gave blessed comfort, for He said to the betrayer, in the hearing of the woman: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." Here is the first promise of Christ, the true Seed.

Probably one of the difficulties in accepting the proffered mercy of God is its very simplicity. If belief in the Bible meant physical prowess or severe mental exercise, many more would join the ranks of those who believe, but it is almost too good to be true that we who have rebelled against the authority of high Heaven can return to favour with God by the simple expedient of believing what God says. Notice a few of the appeals that He makes. In Deuteronomy 11:13: "If ye shall hearken diligently unto My commandments . . . to love the Lord thy God, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul. . . ." Then follow the blessings that God will send. In Ephesians 1:19 we learn of the "exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe."



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Our late beloved King, to whose memory we pay our humble respects, built his life and experience upon the precepts of the divine Word.

faith in the Bible. The result of this attack is seen in the rising tide of evil in the world to-day. This attack from within the church is the most subtle and successful of all, but even this confirms us in belief of the Bible, for the Book itself has warned the believer that this would be so. (Read 2 Timothy 3:5 and 2 Peter 3:3, 4.) The Bible remains supreme through all because it is a living Book. It claims to be the living Word of the living God and its history abundantly bears out this claim.

What the Bible can do for one person it can do for whole nations. Was it not Queen Victoria who was once asked by the visiting Indian ruler what was the secret of England's greatness, and the fine old queen took up an open Bible and handed it to the surprised ruler? Oh, that this dear country of ours could make that proud boast to-day. On another occasion two men were travelling in a strange country with a large sum of money. Being forced to seek rest for the night in a rude log cabin, they arranged to keep an all night vigil in case of attack from the only occupant. After a short time of watching the suspected man through a chink in

(Continued on back page.)

The Bible is the only book in the world that tells fallen man what to do and then gives him power to do it. This surely makes the Bible unique above all other books.

While salvation in Christ is the major theme of the Bible, there is a secondary "plot," if one may use the term. The Bible alone gives the true account of the cause of the great rebellion of Lucifer against the law and government of God, not only of its beginning, but of its destined ultimate failure and overthrow at the hand of Christ. For this reason, if for no other, Satan has sought repeatedly to destroy this incriminating record from off the earth.

In the play and counter-play of men and nations throughout the world's history there has ever been this subtle influence at work. At times Satan has worked through individuals, such as the infamous Nero or Diocletian, and at others he has succeeded in using some spurious system that pretends to speak the mind of God. The tyranny that characterized the long papal rule of the Dark Ages is typical of the latter, for it was a crime to possess the Bible during this unhappy period, quite apart from reading it. Renewed efforts to destroy it were made during the social upheaval of the French Revolution, but the result made the Bible more popular than ever.

During our own lifetime, constant attempts have been made to undermine and discredit the Bible by modernists and higher critics. They have not succeeded in destroying the Bible, but have gone a long way to destroying

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Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, to whom we offer our loyalty and devotion, has on more than one public occasion testified to her faith in the Book of God.



JESUS and the TREASURY

By J. A. McMillan

★ AN unusual aspect of the character of Christ is seen in the gospel according to Mark. The evangelist records that "Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury." Mark 12:41. This is unusual because so many people regard Jesus as an impractical visionary.

But the Gospel picture of Jesus presents our Lord as an acute observer of human behaviour. It also reveals Him as possessing a keen sense of business principle. Far from being impractical, Jesus gives clear directions as to the moral value of industry, honesty, and thrift. He speaks of the folly of attempting to build a project without first sitting down and counting the cost.

"Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury." In the court of the women of the Jewish temple there were "thirteen chests with trumpet-shaped openings into which the people, and especially the Pharisees, used to cast their gifts," says Dean Farrar. These chests were actually called "trumpets" in the Jewish Talmud and Dr. Edersheim suggests that it was to this that Jesus made reference when He spoke of the hypocrite sounding a trumpet before him to call attention to his almsgiving. (Matt. 6:2.)

Jesus called attention to the gift of a poor widow. She placed two mites in the treasury. This was equivalent to a farthing in our currency. With amazement the disciples heard Jesus say "that this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living." Mark 12:43, 44.

Amount or Motive?

Two important lessons emerge from this statement. The first is that it is the *motive* and not the *amount* that is considered by God. The second is that God considers not how much we *give*, but how much we *keep*

as the true measure of our sacrifice. These two inspired principles should guide us in all our contributions to the cause of Christ.

Not what we give, but what we share,
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three,
Himself, his hungering neighbour, and Me.

—Lowell.

It is perfectly understandable, therefore, that the Bible should have much to say about our money and what we do with it. It is significant that of the twenty-nine parables spoken by Jesus, sixteen of them concern money and our relationship to it. There is the parable of the unjust steward who endeavoured to make friends by means of "the mammon of unrighteousness." Luke 16:1-9. There is the parable of the pounds where Jesus teaches the necessity of trading to produce a legitimate profit. (Luke 19:12-26.) Without a doubt, there is a deep spiritual truth embodied in each of these parables, but the spiritual truth rests on the practical and business-like principles revealed in the parable.

The Scriptures teach that in our relationships with the Lord we should be honest and liberal. "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thy increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." Prov. 3:9, 10. The truly converted heart gives God the first-fruits, not the dregs of the means entrusted to us.

Recognizing God's Ownership

That is why the biblical principle of tithing appeals to an increasing number of Christians. The practice of paying tithe as a recognition of God's ownership of all is of ancient lineage. The Bible introduces it in connection with Abraham (Gen. 14:18-25), but it goes back far beyond the time of the patriarch. As Dr. A. H. Sayce tells us: "This offering of tithes was no new thing. In his Babylonian home, Abram must have been familiar with the prac-

tice. The cuneiform inscriptions of Babylonia contain frequent references to it. It went back to the pre-Semitic age of Chaldea, and the great temples of Babylonia were largely supported by the *erea* or tithe which was levied upon prince and peasant alike."

The Bible tells us that the tithe is a tenth. (Lev. 27:32.) Some may feel that this is a lot of money to return to the Lord, but think of what people spend each week on cigarettes and alcohol. Shall the Christian give less to sustain the kingdom of Christ than the worldling spends on smoking and drinking? This same scripture tells us that the tithe "is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord." Lev. 27:30. This is the principle enjoined in Proverbs 3:9. When we return the tithe to the Lord, we are honouring the Lord with the first-fruits of our increase.

The Lord promises that a faithful performance of tithing brings divine blessings. "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty." This same blessing is contained in the last book of the Old Testament. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for

your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. 3:10, 11.

Thousands of believers can testify in this twentieth century that this divine blessing still accompanies a faithful discharge of Christian stewardship. Even famous men of business have testified to the veracity of this promise in the prosperity attending their tithing.

Moffatt translates Malachi 3:7-10 as follows: "Come back to Me, says the Lord of hosts, and I will come back to you. 'How do we need to come back?' you ask. Well, can a man cheat God? And yet you are cheating Me. 'How have we cheated Thee?' you ask. By your tithes and offerings. You lie under My curse for cheating Me, the whole of your nation. If you would enjoy ample rations in My house, then pay all your tithes into the treasury, and see what I will do, says the Lord of hosts; see if I will not then open the very sluices of heaven to pour a blessing down for you, a harvest more than enough."

What Shall I Render?

This does not mean that everyone who is faithful in paying tithe will increase in wealth. But spiritual wealth is promised to the faithful steward. All who appreciate the gift of God's

Son to be our Saviour will gladly honour God with the first-fruits of their increase. The language of their heart is that composed by the psalmist: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now
(Continued on page 15.)



The widow casts in her mites.



"I have touched thy lips."

By F. Shields

The Sacred Name

By Kenneth A. Elias

★ WHEN we come to the third command of the Decalogue we come to a subject that is too superficially understood by laity and theologians alike. Vaguely it is taken for granted that here is a prohibition condemning blasphemy and foul language in general, and it is left at that. Actually this is but incidental to the spirit of the command, the principle behind it going far deeper than that.

First of all, notice the seriousness of the crime. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in

vain." Exod. 20:7. Not to be held guiltless may on the face of it appear mild, and not very terrible; but a moment's reflection will reveal that, not to be held guiltless is in fact to be held guilty. Now, there is but one penalty for the guilty, the loss of life eternal. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezek. 18:4. Clearly then, no one taking the name of the Lord in vain will enter the kingdom of God.

But what does taking "the name of the Lord in vain" mean? A clue is found in Leviticus 19:12, where we are told, "Ye shall not swear by My name falsely." That is, we break the

spirit of the commandment, when in God's name, we make a promise and fail to keep that promise. In fact it is not even necessary for us specifically to mention God's name. As Christians we are identified publicly with Jesus, and any false promise has the effect, in consequence, of taking His name in vain. Clearly then the command demands honesty in word and purpose as well as in deed. "Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? . . . He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not." Psa. 15:1, 4.

But much more than this is involved. Our verse in Leviticus continues: "Neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God." Now to profane anything is to make it common. Obviously then we are guilty of breaking this commandment when we use God's name thoughtlessly, or in a common way. All too often to-day His name is used, not in loving reverence and awe, but as a ready expletive, or as an exclamation of horror, surprise, or indignation. What a tragedy it is that in all too many cases, the only use many make of the blessed names of our God and His Christ is in just this way.

Doubtless, though, it is true that as Christians we rarely commit this sin. We have too deep and real a regard for both Father and Son who have done so much for us. But even here, at times, we unwittingly slip by referring indirectly to God, His character, and His attributes. How often do we hear the term "goodness" used in a loose and thoughtless way? "Goodness," after all is a description of God and is merely a "milder" form of direct blasphemy. "Heavens" is another of these misused terms, for we must not forget that the heavens are God's dwelling place. Similarly, "hell" and "damnation" have a very definite, if tragic, place in spiritual nomenclature. We make the things of God and His warnings of little effect, when we use these terms lightly in everyday speech, thus endangering our salvation. No wonder then that Jesus declares: "But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Matt. 12:36, 37.

But the command is yet wider still. Surely we take the name of God when we accept Jesus as our Saviour. When a child is born it

takes its father's name because it is literally a part of him. Similarly, when we are born again we take Jesus' name because, by faith, we become part of Him. This union with Christ is most clearly taught in Scripture. Paul refers to "this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." Col. 1:27. John furthers the thought by declaring: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 3:1. It is certain then that when we come to God we take His name.

Right here this third command has a primary application. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless, that taketh His name in vain." We take the name of the Lord in vain when we call ourselves Christians, and yet go only part of the way with Him.

Here is the basic reason for the disappointment of those "Christians" referred to in Matthew 7:21-23. "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? . . . and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." That working of iniquity is a denial of our sonship of God and causes us to take His name in vain. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light . . . the blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:6, 7. "Hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in Him. . . . He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." 1 John 2:3, 4, 6.

Thus God's objective for man is that he should be an imitator of Christ. Only as he achieves this object is he entitled to take God's name. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48.

The third commandment then demands honesty of purpose, purity of speech, together with a complete and willing surrender to God.

Desert Trails Beyond Jordan.—5

★ As we bumped along down the Haj road southward we thought of the fine paved "Royal Road" of Trajan and how much smoother and more comfortable our journey would have been if it had still been there. It was probably a better road than this even in that still earlier day when it was the "King's Highway" through Moab and Edom. (Num. 20:17.)

To-day there is no road across the desert in the accepted sense of the term. It is simply a trail made by camel caravans, cars, and travelers on foot who are constantly journeying north or south along the desert edge. Sometimes the tracks in the sand are a hundred yards wide. At other times, through stony sections, it may narrow to but a few yards.

In all directions the brown sandy plain extends, with here and there a little hill and scattered patches of scrub. Nowhere could there be found a better illustration of what the Bible calls a "dry thirsty land, where no water is." Apart from a few wells there is little water in the dry season between the great Roman reservoir at Ziza and the next at El Katrani, thirty-five miles to the south.

Almost the whole way the track runs a short distance from the Hedjaz railway and soon after we passed Khanez Zebib, about halfway to Katrani, the weekly train to Maan chugged by.

We Reach the Border of Moab

Just beyond Sauka station we crossed the upper reaches of the Wady Mojib, which is the Arnon of the Bible and the northern boundary of Moab when the children of Israel came up out of Egypt. All the highlands to the north were held by Sihon, the Amorite, who dwelt at Heshbon. (Num. 21:13.)

It was just about here that the Israelites, who had come round the borders of Edom and Moab, realized that they would now have to fight their way through to the Jordan and began to prepare themselves for the ordeal.

The stopping places listed in the Scriptures indicate that when Israel reached this river, they left the desert highway and followed the northern lip of the valley past Aroer to Beer (Num. 33:45), and then turned north across

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Photos by the Author
Above. — Maan station on the Hedjaz Railway from Damascus to Mecca.

Right. — A typical scene in the dusty desert city of Maan.



Tracing the

By W. L.

country to Mattanah, Nahaliel, and Bamoth to Nebo.

It was at Jahaz somewhere north of Aroer that the battle was fought which resulted in the defeat of Sihon and the triumphant march of Israel to the Jordan. (Num. 21:25; Deut. 2:32.)

Tentative identifications place Beer east of Daibon, Nahaliel as corresponding with the gorge of Zerka Main, in which are the hot springs of Callirhoe, and Bamoth to the south of Pisgah.

All the way north from the Arnon, however, are scattered remains of scores of cities whose high walls, "fortified up to heaven" at first

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Above.—The ancient city of Kerak, called Kir of Moab in the Bible. At the highest point on the ridge are the ruins of the castle of Crusader times.

Advance of Israel

EMERSON

put fear into the hearts of Israel as they prepared to force their way forward, but which must have quickly capitulated after Sihon's defeat at Jahaz.

What Attracted Reuben and Gad

When this land was conquered it seems first to have been occupied by Gad, for this tribe rebuilt Dibon; but afterward it was assigned to Reuben, the Gadites moving north between Heshbon and the Jabbok, while the half tribe of Manasseh settled still farther north in Upper Gilead and Bashan.

After the terrible desert there is little wonder that Reuben and Gad were tempted to ask for

this land, for it is well watered by streams which cascade down deep wadies into the Dead Sea, and where the ground is not cultivated, a green sward provides ample herbage for the flocks of sheep, goats, and camels which roam the hillsides. (Judges 5:16.)

This is indeed the greenest and most luxuriant region in all southern Transjordan, and more than once after its re-occupation by Moab, it provided spoil and tribute of sheep and wool to the Israelite overlords. (2 Kings 3:4.)

The expression Dan to Beersheba marking the extreme limits of the cultivated land on the west side of Jordan finds its corresponding limits on the other side between Hermon and the River Arnon. (Deut. 3:8, 16; 4:48; Joshua 12:1.)

Moab's Mightiest City

Continuing our journey southward across the upper reaches of the Arnon we reached in about fifteen miles, the station at Katrani, where Suleiman the Magnificent built a fort in the sixteenth century to protect the pilgrims going down to Mecca, and which before that was a military post on the Roman road down through Arabia Petrea to the Gulf of Akaba.

Whether it had any still earlier associations we do not know, but twenty miles or so to the west across the Wady Sultane, lay the ancient fortress town of Kir Moab, or Kir-haraseth, now Kerak, so we made another detour from the Haj road to see it.

The track westward ran along the side of a deep wady with here a few cultivated fields and there scattered flocks grazing on the hillsides. It then descended more steeply to cross the Wady Sultane, which is actually one of four tributaries which eventually run into the Arnon gorge; hence the Bible expression the "brooks" and not the brook of Arnon. (Num. 21:19, 15.) Beyond the wady the road climbed again over the watershed of Moab before dropping down to Kerak.

At last, after travelling some twenty miles, we saw the great rock from which the castle of Kerak rises, and around which the houses of the present town are clustered.

The top of the great triangular platform is 3,720 feet above sea level, and on two sides precipitous cliffs drop a thousand feet to the wadies below. Massive fortifications prevented access from the neck of land which connects the promontory with the main ridge and anciently the only entrance to the citadel was

by a tunnel which ran up from one of the wadies through the solid rock.

This was the strongest fortress of the Moabite kings. In their advance, the Israelites never came near it as, of course, they went round Moab along the desert edge, not attempting to cross the cultivated uplands until they were north of Moab's border at the Arnon.

Kir was, however, assaulted in the days of the Israelite monarchy and was the last of the cities to fall when Jehoshaphat of Judah, Jehoram of Israel, and the king of Edom combined against Mesha of Moab. "They beat down the cities," says the record, "and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they stopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees: only in Kir-haraseth left they the stones therefor; howbeit the slingers went about it, and smote it." 2 Kings 3:25.

To-day hardly any of the stones even of this Moabite city are left, the entrance tunnel and fragments of potsherds which have been found, being about the only reminders of the city of that early day.

In Greek and Roman times, Kerak became again one of the most prosperous cities of Arabia Petraea, and in 1136 it was selected by the Crusader king of Jerusalem, as one of the strong points from which to defend the kingdom from the Saracens. Even so, it was eventually lost to Saladin in 1188 after a siege of five years.

Most of the present remains date from the time of the Crusaders, especially the massive ramparts and the huge vaults of the citadel.

By the Brook Zered

Returning to the Haj road at Katrani we registered at the police post and there learned that the police were beginning to wonder what had become of us. We were long overdue if we had taken the direct road from Ziza, but satisfactorily explained our movements by telling them of our detour to Kerak.

In the late afternoon we pressed on to El Hesa. This station is so named because just here the road and railway cross the upper reaches of the Wady Hesa Kerahi, dry at this point but lower down a sizeable stream in a deep valley with scattered fields of barley and wheat and cattle pastures on the higher slopes. Eventually the stream pours its sweet waters into the southern tip of the salty Dead Sea.

This river is none other than the Brook Zered which formed the border between Moab in the north and Edom to the south (Num. 21:12), so that at El Hesa station we were standing at the point where these two ancient kingdoms met.

More than that, we could not have been far from where the hosts of Israel camped after coming up the Brook Zered from the Arabah valley south of the Dead Sea.

So far as we can gather from the record, when the Israelites were refused permission to come up the King's Highway from Ezion-geber on the Gulf of Akaba, they marched up the rift valley of the Arabah between the wilderness of Zin and Edom nearly as far as the Dead Sea. Then they turned up into the mountains along the valley of the Brook Zered which formed a sort of no-man's land between Moab and Edom. In this way they avoided contact with both the northern and southern nations and reached the King's Highway just about where we were.

Here they turned north again, following the route we had traversed by car as far as the Arnon when they struck straight across the territory occupied by Sihon the Amorite.

It was springtime when Israel came up along the desert edge, so they were doubtless able to feed their flocks upon the grass that springs up after the winter rains, and to water them by the pools that collected in the wady beds. The bedouin to-day do the same, moving out into the desert in the spring and then gradually leading their flocks back toward the Jordan Valley as the herbage is exhausted.

Halted in the Desert

We almost wondered if we had been accosted by an Edomite frontier guard when we went into the police post at El Hesa and were told that he could not allow anyone to pass. We soon discovered, however, that his motives were entirely benevolent. His orders were to halt all travellers at nightfall because of the possibility of attack by the wild bedouin who roamed the southern desert, and who could easily rob passing travellers and slip away into the Arabian wastes before anyone could pursue them. But we were anxious to reach Maan that night and so, when our Armenian driver declared himself quite ready to go on in the night, the police officer washed his hands of us

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THE TELL-TALE TRAIL

★ THERE was chocolate spread on her apron. There was chocolate spread on her hands. There was chocolate spread all round her mouth, even on the tip of her nose. Where there was not any chocolate spread was in the jar where it had been—quite a lot of it—just a very little while before.

"And what have you been doing?" said I. She looked up at me archly.

"I haven't been eating chocolate spread," she said.

"Not been eating chocolate spread," said I, "then what's this—and this—and this? Evidence is all against you this time, my scallywag. Go and bring me the jar."

The Home Corner

By Mary J. Vine

It was, of course, smearily empty.

Her revulsion since at chocolate spread has probably served as a sufficiently salutary reminder—perhaps not, we shall see.

How often it happens!

"No, Mummy, I didn't do this; no, I didn't do that," but with the second sight especially given to mothers, it isn't hard to see the symptoms, and always there is something that testifies against them. Maybe we have even chuckled afterward over their poor attempts to cover up the traces. It isn't really a chuckling matter. It is, unfortunately, a weakness that we tend to keep. It can even be said that it grows on us because now, we flatter ourselves, we're not quite so obvious as we were when we were little. We wouldn't, for instance, plaster the chocolate spread all over our faces when we took a spoonful. We're cleverer than that now.

But are we?

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It seems as if little boys sometimes get into Mother's pantry too.

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There's a wonderful picture depicted in just a part of a verse in the second chapter of Jeremiah. The children of Israel had sunk into so sinful a condition that the prophet calls even upon the heavens, that have seen so much, to be astonished. Again and again he breaks out: "Thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, . . . it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God." And yet, despite their backslidings and their idolatry, Israel still dared to say, "I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim."

How utterly foolish they were! God stooped to reason with them, however. Patiently He



pointed out their traces, so that they might see how completely they had given themselves away.

"How canst thou say I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim? *see thy way* in the valley, know what thou hast done."

There was no answer to that. From every homestead—save perhaps from a few, for there is, thanks be, always a remnant—there lay a well-trodden path, and each tending, as do little streams to join at last the main flow, to the well-worn path that led up the hill-side to the altar of Baal at its summit. It needed not to be Jehovah to detect the meaning of that. There was no room for argument while such an irrefutable piece of evidence stood against them. It was a flagrantly tell-tale trail.

We also leave a trail. What kind of a trail is it? Through the long years behind us, what is the sum of the impression we have made—upon our school-mates, our work-mates, our college associates, our employers, our families, our neighbours?

I am so thankful that when the good Lord sets apart His saints He picks them out, not for their brilliancy of mind or their skill of hand, but for their qualities of heart. The virtues that bespeak a place in the eternal kingdom, the beauteous and kindly graces of the spirit, are within reach of us all. What kind of people have we been heretofore?

Among my presents last Christmas I received a very beautiful book, *Plant Hunters in the Andes*. The first paragraph I have underlined, however, has nothing to do with plants. It is about the author's wife. Mr. Goodspeed writes of her: "From my point of view the most important member of our two South American expeditions was my wife. . . . Her amiability is without limit, and her confidence in the ultimate triumph of the good, the true, and the beautiful, is unshakable. She is a joyful traveller, anticipating only pleasure, entertainment, and profit, and therefore finding them always awaiting her."

Isn't that a lovely testimony, and yet they endured all manner of hardship and discomfort on their journeyings.

Another beautiful tribute comes to my mind, this time from the pen of Arnold Lunn. He writes of his wife as "the beloved companion who has shared all my interests, whose acute mind has solved many difficulties, whose

humour has lightened many of my troubles, who has never irritated a most irritable person, or failed to interest a husband who is easily bored, or lost courage when things looked black, and who has ever been prodigal of love when I was most tiresome."

I wonder if Mrs. Lunn is proud of that. She might well be. It is the description of a woman who has left a wonderful trail of blessed association behind her.

She was —

But words are wanting to say what!
Think what a wife should be,
And she was that!

It is a sweet and very lovely thing to hold such a record as that, and maybe there are some of us who feel just a little wistful about it. It couldn't bear such scrutiny, the trail we have laid. We have been impatient, irritable, we have often put the emphasis on the wrong things; not the least of our failures, we have often neglected to be neighbourly.

Well, if we have, let us bravely face up to it, and recognize it, and henceforth let the grass grow over the old trail until it no longer puts us out of countenance. If there was one message above all others the prophet Jeremiah wanted God's people to understand, it was this, that God was only waiting to help them to begin again, and that His hand was outstretched for their aid.

It is outstretched still. Let us grasp it, you and I. To-day, every day, brings a clean, white page and a new beginning. Let's make to-day a deeply implanted step in the right direction, shall we? Let's live as if we really did have "but a day."

We should fill the hours with the sweetest things,
If we had but a day;
We should drink alone at the purest springs
On our upward way;
We should love with a lifetime's love in an hour,
If the hours were few;
We should sleep, not for dreams, but for fresher
power,
To be and to do.

We should waste no moment in weak regret,
If the days were but one,
If what we remember and what we forget
Went out with the sun;
We should be from our clamorous selves set free,
To work and to pray;
To be what the Father would have us be,
If we had but a day.

Jesus and the Treasury

(Continued from page 5.)

in the presence of all His people." Psa. 116: 12-14. The poet has expressed this thought in these suggestive lines:

God's love hath in us wealth unheaped,
Only by giving is it reaped;
The body withers and the mind
Is pent up by a selfish rind.
Give strength, give thoughts, give deeds, give self.

Give love, give tears, and give thyself.
Give, give, be always giving—
Who gives not is not living,
The more you give,
The more you live.

One inspiring commentator has contrasted the warmth of Christ's love with the coldness of our practical response in unforgettable language:

"I speak of the tithing system: yet how meagre it looks to my mind! How small the estimate! How vain the endeavour to measure with mathematical rules, time, money, and love against a love and sacrifice that is measureless and incomputable! Tithes for Christ! Oh, meagre pittance, shameful recompense for that which cost so much! From the cross of Calvary, Christ calls for an unconditional surrender. He promised the young ruler that if he sold all that he had and gave it to the poor, and lifted his cross and followed Him, he should have treasure in heaven. All we have should be consecrated to God. The Majesty of heaven came to the world to die a sacrifice for the sins of man. And how cold and selfish is the human heart that can turn away from such incomparable love, and set itself upon the vain things of this world.

"When selfishness is striving for the victory over you, bear in mind One who left the glorious courts of heaven, and laid aside the robes of royalty for your sakes, becoming poor that through His poverty you might be made rich. Will you then disregard this great love

and boundless mercy, by refusing to be inconvenienced and to deny yourselves for His dear sake?"

Tracing the Advance of Israel

(Continued from page 10.)

and told us that we went on our own responsibility.

Undaunted, we started the car up again and continued on our way down the King's Highway, following the tracks of previous cars, illuminated for fifty yards or so ahead by our headlights.

There was no pillar of fire to dissipate the inky blackness as when Israel passed this way long ago, but looking up at the star-spangled sky with the belt and sword of Orion pointed down toward the desert we knew that the God of the pillar of fire still lived to guide the destinies of the universe and of our individual lives.

We bumped along between hummocks of sand which cast weird shadows as we passed. A bedouin appeared and disappeared as the headlights shone upon him as we passed. Armenian John accelerated and we were nearly stunned as our heads hit the roof of the car, but no shot rang out and we breathed freely again.

Next Stop—the Capital of Edom!

At last the welcome lights of Maan began to twinkle in the distance and before long we were running between the mud houses of Maan's one street to the police post where we registered before parking in the courtyard of the Petra Hotel.

There was nothing very exciting about the accommodation, but the name itself gave us a thrill. To-night we would eat and sleep. Tomorrow we would be on our way to Petra, the ancient capital of Edom, or as Dean Burgon romantically called it, "The rose red city, half as old as time."

(Next Time: "Through Edom's Lone Gorge.")

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VOICE OF PROPHECY PROGRAMME

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THE CHILDREN'S



Pages

Did It Pay to be Honest?

By Kermitt Parker

"I WONDER what Jack is thinking about," said Bob to himself as he looked across the garden and saw Jack sitting on the fence. "I'll call over and ask him."

"Oh, Jack!"

Jack looked round to see who was calling.

"What do you want, Bob?" he replied.

"What are you thinking about?" Bob asked, inquisitively.

"Who said I was thinking about anything?"

"Oh, it looked as if you were," said Bob.

"Well, come on over and I will tell you," answered Jack.

Bob was not long in going

over to where Jack sat. He and Jack were good friends. One always told the other his troubles, and together they generally found a way out.

"Well, Jack, what's the matter now? Did that big fellow try to take your knife away from you again?"

"No," said Jack, "it is something worse."

"How, what do you mean?" said Bob surprised.

"Well, it is this way," Jack went on. "Yesterday I bought some apples from a man, and he handed me the change. It was sixpence—I mean the right change was. But instead of handing me a sixpence he handed me a shilling. I

noticed his mistake, but said nothing. I took the shilling and put it in my pocket. Later I went to the shop and I—I reached for the shilling but found my pocket empty. I came on home but said nothing to anyone about my dishonesty and loss. I have been thinking about it this morning and have decided to get another sixpence and go and make my wrong right. That's what I've been thinking about."

A lie saves trouble
For a minute,
And then there's nought
But trouble in it.
Say only what
You know is true.
You'll not be sorry
If you do.

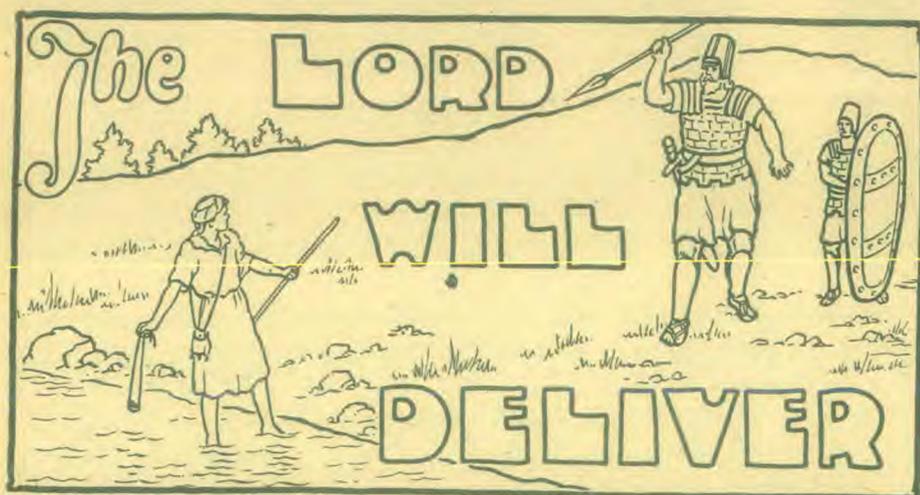
—Alfred I. Tooke.

Jack was silent, and as for Bob, he was too deep in thought to speak, so both sat still and quiet for some time.

"Well, let's get to work," said Bob, jumping to his feet as he spoke.

"What shall we do?" questioned Jack.

"Well, let's go over and see if Mrs. Brown wants her lawn mowed."



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 March 20th.

The boys walked over to Mrs. Brown's but she did not need any help. They went on from place to place, but found no work.

Finally Bob said: "It looks as though we will have to go and tell the man that we will get the money for him as soon as possible."

So the boys started down the street to the man's home. One, two, three—only one more road and they would be there. What were they going to say?

Keeping House

My heart is a happy little home,
I shall try to keep it so,
For God has trusted it to me,
And in this way I know
His loving-kindness mirrored there
For other folks will glow!

I'll try to keep my heart-home
clean,

All shiny, bright, and fair,
By planting flowers of hope and
faith

To send out perfume rare,
And I'll invite both joy and love
To come and visit there!

Edythe Ree Jerls.

"Oh, look here, Jack," Bob shouted in great surprise. Jack looked, and there in the middle of the path was a sixpence. Now their troubles were over. They were soon at the door, and Jack knocked.

The man came to the door, and Jack told him of his mistake. When Jack finished, the man said, "You have been honest so I will give you the money; you can share it with your friend."

The boys thanked him heartily and started home. After walking a little way Bob said, "It surely pays to be honest, doesn't it?"

MARCH 6, 1952

THE Sunbeams' CORNER



Your Letter

My Dear Sunbeams,

THIS time I would like to remind you of the last of the Sunbeam promises. If my Sunbeam nephews and nieces remember this one, and keep it, it makes me very happy. You know what it is, don't you? — "I will write a letter to your corner at least once in three months."

This isn't the most important of our five promises, but no Sunbeam would dream of forgetting it. When you promise to write to me once every three months, I in turn, promise that you shall receive a reply before it is your turn to write again.

As we are talking about letters, perhaps I could do nothing better than mention some of them here and now. Ann Metcalfe from Colliers Wood tells me she visited the Zoo recently. What was so exciting was that she actually went into the cage with a baby cheetah, and into another cage with a black bear. That must have been a thrill, Ann! I think you must be braver than I.

Avril Baker writes from Newport. She enjoys studying cookery and biology, and would like to become a nurse. Nursing is certainly a fine profession, Avril, and just the sort of work where a real Sunbeam could shine. God bless you in your ambition.

I think that girls enjoy writing letters more than boys, but to-day I had a fine letter from Richard Payne of Bishops Cleeve. He tells me that his favourite lessons are reading and writing. From his very neat hand-writing I can see he takes a pride in doing his best.

We are so glad that Heather Payne who is only five, has joined her brothers, Nigel and Richard, in entering for the painting competitions.

I am afraid I haven't room to answer more letters now. Perhaps next time I shall be able

"LETTERS are those winged messengers that can fly from east to west on embassies of love."—Howell.

to let you know more about your Sunbeam cousins. Till then God bless you all.

Yours affectionately,

AUNTIE MARGARET.

Results of Competition No. 1.

Prize-winners.—Margaret Cutler, 30 Ashes Road, Causeway Green, Langley, Birmingham; Brenda Plant, "Gail," Uttoxeter Road, Blythe Bridge, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs.

Honourable Mention.—Sheila Scragg (Bristol); Siegfried Baron (Church); Kathleen Weatherall (Coventry); Kathleen Tickner (Birmingham); Lydia Harris (Maxey); Valerie Westwood (Watford); Winifred Herbert (Manchester); Pearl Rich (Launceston); David Balderstone (Watford); Ruth Campion (Torquay); Robert Smith (Bishops Cleeve); Ron Burton (Norwich); Barbara Birch (Rickmansworth); Eleonora Baron (Church); Vernetta Handysides (Cardiff); Heather Payne (Bishops Cleeve).

Those who tried hard.—Ruth Balderstone (Watford); Paul Martine (Beccles); Peter Stirrup (Liverpool); Mazine Somers (London); Christine Nunn (Southampton); Carole Westwood (Watford); Marion Paget (Wokingham); Michael Metcalfe (London); Nigel Payne (Bishops Cleeve); David Davies (Llanfyllid); Esther Hunt (Nottingham); Maureen Boyle (Walthamstow); Alan Peers (Stockton); Douglas Woodwards (Rickmansworth); Maureen Mitchell (Carlton Colville); Michael Lusher (Birmingham); Richard Payne (Bishops Cleeve); Alite Bowman (Liverpool); Roy Sutton (Lowestoft); Mary Rose Pinnick (Caerphilly); Rosemary Watts (Hayes); Ethel McColl (Kippen); Pauline Manwaring (Hastings); Susan Eve (West Close); Jean Solomon (Barnby); Gillian Bennett (Oldbury); Catherine Fletcher (Liverpool); Albert Wagstaff (Rickmansworth); Jennifer Chaulke (London); Mary Lambourne (Weymouth); Ruth Price (Wokingham); Colleen Winney (Lowestoft); Amy Randlesome (Stockton); Molly Rich (Launceston); John Rich (Launceston); Gerald Moore (Norwich); Ronald Amos (Bargoed).

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Straws in the Wind

"MIGHTY AMERICA"

DESCRIBING the rearmament achievements of America during the past year, Defence director Charles E. Wilson declares in his latest report: "We have come a long way along the road toward the mighty America which is also the road to peace."

FIRST JET BOMBER SQUADRON

THE first jet bomber squadron in the Western world was recently put into operation by Britain. It is equipped with twin-jet Canberra bombers capable of flying at 500 miles per hour and of climbing to a height of nine miles.

TOWARD "CONFEDERATION"

"As 'federation,' in the European context, is being abandoned by every honest European politician, a new concept is in the ascendant," comments the *Economist*: "'confederation' — or, according to the dictionary, 'a permanent union of sovereign states for common external action.'"

DANGER IN THE MIDDLE EAST

WHILE Soviet expansion has been halted in Europe and in the Far East, comments Stewart Alsop in the *New*

York Herald Tribune, "the central danger is an internal crumbling away of the West-

WHAT MEANETH THESE THINGS?

What meaneth the march of millions
As storm-clouds gather o'er-head?

What meaneth distress of nations,
Perplexity, peril, dread?

What meaneth this time of trouble
With men's hearts failing for fear?

God's Word has the certain answer—

The Master's coming is near!

The final battle is pending
Betwixt the wrong and the right;

The age-old conflict is closing,
The trial 'tween darkness and light;

With triumphant power and glory
The Victor is on His way;

Then lift up thy head to the heavens

'Tis the dawn of eternal day.

Mrs. M. H. Cooper.

ern position on the flanks, and above all in the Middle East."

MAY REVOLUTIONIZE AGRICULTURE

A NEWLY developed chemical

known as krlidium has been found by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to be 100 to 1,000 times more powerful than humus, compost, or manure in stimulating plant growth. When it is commercially available, probably in 1953, it is believed it may revolutionize agriculture.

MAJORITY IN HALF A CENTURY

IN 1900 there were thirty-four Catholics in Urundi, in the Belgian Congo. To-day there are 914,000, which is fifty-three per cent of the total population. The rest comprise 800,000 pagans, 11,500 Moslems, and 39,000 Protestants.

Must I Believe the Bible?

(Continued from page 3.)

the logs of the rough room, the watcher crept into the bed beside his companion. "It is all right," he said, "he is reading the Bible." It is this that really convinces the honest in heart. It is not alone what the Book says, but what it does that is so convincing.

So if I must answer the question that is set at the head of this article, "Must I believe the Bible?" I simply say, "I must."

