

THE BIBLE AND

OUR TIMES



GOD, YOU, *and the* HEREAFTER

By Harry W. Lowe

★ It was night in a little African town—a polyglot place carved out of the primeval forest by the outposts of civilization. We walked past the inevitable taverns where bored Europeans killed their evenings in drink and gossip, while gaping natives loafed around the doors. Then we met a European trader well known to my missionary colleague.

"Well," said the trader, with a smile, "how many thieves have you reformed to-day?" This was intended to be humorous, but it launched us into a discussion on religion. It was soon evident that our trader friend was typical of the human flotsam and jetsam to be found among white settlers in many tropical outposts. Hard drinking, loose living, a mercenary and materialist outlook, and a general attitude of "devil-may-care" made up this man's life. I could scarcely believe that he was but thirty-eight years of age, for he looked nearer fifty, so well had "the inaudible and noiseless foot of time" caught up on him.

"Well, George," said my missionary friend to the trader as we were leaving, "you know it's time you thought of God and the future."

"Look!" said George, with bravado, "when I rub my boot across a line of ants, that's the end of them. Men don't mean any more than ants. When they die, that's the end!"

"I wouldn't be too sure about that," replied the missionary. "The old Book says, 'It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.'" Heb. 9:27. George's only answer was a careless shrug of the shoulders and a casual wave of the hand.

A few days later we were travelling along a

Said the Psalmist, "O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou . . . art acquainted with all my ways."

bush trail between lonely mission stations. Suddenly we came upon a group of natives huddled together under a tree. Approaching them, we heard an old man intoning something as they bowed before a miniature grass house. We stood still, not wishing to disturb what we knew was a religious ceremony. They were dedicating this little house to the worship of some spirit and ended by placing food on a dish for their god.

When the ceremony was over, we talked to them, and my friend questioned them about their religious beliefs.

"What spirit do you worship here?"

"We worship the great spirit," said an old man.

"What is his name?"

"The Great One."

Turning to me, the missionary said, "These people, like many African tribes, can tell you their fathers' names for four or five generations, but after that they all give the same answer. In this case, they use the name, 'The Great Spirit.' And if you ask them where they go when they die, it is 'to the Great One.'"

The Trader and the Native

That night I fell to thinking of our godless young white trader in contrast with these simple natives. The trader did not know where he came from, cared nothing about how he lived nor where he was going. The simple native came from, and was going to, the Great Spirit. The one in his materialism mocked God, the other in his simple ignorance worshipped the Great Spirit.

It seemed to me that there was something more profound in the groping, uncultured simplicity of the native than in the blasé, bombastic godlessness of the trader. I could not help thinking of the words: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." "For the Father seeketh such to worship Him." John 4:24, 25. A little later I worshipped with thousands of natives who had progressed beyond the worship of the great spirit of the forest and were rejoicing in the light of Christian truth.

If any of them were asked where man came from, he would quote the Book: "In the beginning God created—." Asked where he expected to go after this life, he would answer with a confident smile, "To be with Jesus, who said, 'I will come again, and receive you unto Myself.'"

John 14:5. Life has a new meaning to him because his life and his future are in God's hands.

Our miserable trader was merely killing time, little realizing the meaning of Thoreau's words, "As if you could kill time without injuring eternity."

Seed and Harvest

When men rule God out of their lives, they fool themselves into thinking that this life has nothing to do with eternity. We have a higher destiny than earth, and our use of this thing called time, of which our lives are largely made up, determines how we shall meet, and how we shall spend, eternity. It was Addison who wrote: "This is the world of seeds, of causes, and of tendencies; the other is the world of harvests and results and of perfected and eternal consequences."

Almost the last words in the Bible are these: "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12. There is no escaping the facts that there is a future life to be faced, and that we shall then reap the harvest of the seeds we sow here and now.

These two worlds, represented by time and eternity, are so intertwined that Thoreau's words can be thought of in reverse:

A truth it is few doubt, but fewer trust:
He sins against this life who slights the next.

True religion, represented in Christianity, asserts that there is a God whom men are capable of knowing in this life, if they will. "If any man will do His will, He shall know of the doctrine," said Jesus. (John 7:17.) And any man who comes to know God in this life is not left in doubt about what the future life holds in store.

In the deepest sense, religion is a relationship between one man and the Deity. This is represented beautifully in the story of the exiled Hagar, lost and distressed in the wilderness. When the angel of God found her, he asked where she came from and where she was going. These were tantalizing questions. After the angel had directed the pitiable wanderer, "she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me." Gen. 16:13.

King David, who tasted life's bitterest remorse caused by his sins, as well as life's sweetest satisfactions because he felt God's

(Continued on page 12.)



© Fox Photos

In the creation story God declared that He would use the starry heavens for seasons and for "signs."

Sky Signs of His Coming

By C. Denys Baildam

★ THE greatest event to which we can look forward is the soon return of Jesus. How wonderful it is to review continually Jesus' own promise, "I will come again." John 14:1-3. The apostle Paul said: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2:13.

How long shall we look? When will the "blessed hope" be realized? The Bible does not give us any definite date when Jesus is to return. We are told: "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only." Matt. 24:36. Then, how are we to recognize that His coming is near? Jesus said: "When ye shall see all these things, know that He [margin] is near." Matt. 24:33. What things? Signs that would

take place on and around this planet just before Jesus would come. Again, Jesus said: "There shall be signs." Luke 21:25. The disciples also asked: "What shall be the sign of Thy coming?" Matt. 24:3. By recognizing these signs we, too, may know when His coming is near.

Has it ever occurred to you that everything in nature demonstrates system and order, and that all the events that affect this earth are run to schedule? God, the Great Master behind the controls which guide the celestial bodies through space, has pre-determined their movements, and with equal precision has outlined for us in His Word, the future of our planet and its peoples. Nothing will God do, however, without first warning mankind, for He promised to reveal His secrets through His servants the

prophets. (Amos 3:7.) So Jesus declared: "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring." Luke 21:25. It is as though God has placed milestones to guide His people as they journey through life to the kingdom of God.

"There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon; and in the stars." What strange places! But man cannot counterfeit these heavenly bodies. We may ask: "What shall be the nature of these signs?" The answer comes to us very definitely: "The sun [shall] be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven" Matt. 24:29. When would these things take place? "Immediately after the tribulation of those days." Which days? Jesus was telling His disciples of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the persecution which would fall upon the church, and that if this period of persecution were not shortened, all Christians would be destroyed, but for the "elect's sake" that period of persecution would be shortened. (Matt. 24:4-20.) This period began in A.D. 538 when the Papacy came to power and lasted till A.D. 1798 when her power was finally taken away in that the Pope was taken prisoner by one of Napoleon's leaders, General Berthier. This period is mentioned no fewer than seven times in Bible prophecy. A conservative estimate gives the number of Christians killed during this period as 50,000,000.

Jesus said, "Except those days should be shortened," and true to prophecy the period was shortened. In the Middle Ages, the Reformers were springing up. By the early eighteenth century the persecution had ceased. Describing this time, the prophecy of Revelation declared: "There was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth." And history records the greatest earthquake of all time—that of Lisbon on November 1, 1755. *Nelson's Encyclopædia* describes it as: "The most notable earthquake of history." We are told that four million square miles of the earth's surface shuddered under the shock, and that 90,000 lives were lost. Thus, we have our first sign, commencing "immediately after the tribulation of those days," and between those days and the coming of Jesus.

That the sun was also to be darkened, and

the moon would not give her light, is the prophecy of Jesus Himself, recorded in Matthew 24:29. And history again records the "dark day" of May 19, 1780. Just as the hour of history struck, so the prophecy was fulfilled. Listen to a Harvard professor: "The time of this extraordinary darkness was 19th May, 1780. It came between the hours of ten and eleven a.m., and continued until the middle of the next night."

Webster's Dictionary says of this phenomenon: "In some places persons could not see to read common print; . . . birds sang their evening songs; . . . the true cause of the phenomenon is not known."

Notice the historical record says: "This extraordinary darkness," and "the true cause of the phenomenon is not known." Why? Because it was a special sign which God had sent to warn the world of the coming of Jesus.

"And the stars shall fall from heaven." Here we come to our third sign. On November 13, 1833, there was a great meteoric storm. Professor Olmstead of Yale College, celebrated astronomer and meteorologist, wrote concerning it: "The extent of the shower of 1833 was such as to cover no inconsiderable part of the earth's surface. This is no longer to be regarded as a terrestrial, but as a celestial phenomenon."

Edward Dunkin of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, makes a similar statement. A. M. Clarke endorses these statements also in his *History of Astronomy in the Nineteenth Century*. Why were these things regarded as "phenomena" of which "the true cause" was "not known"? If men had read their Bibles, they would have had the true explanation. At this time many thought that the end of the world had really come, but the falling of the stars was yet another sign of the nearness of the advent of Jesus.

So one by one we see the signs—we pass the milestones. Jesus said that these events would be followed by unprecedented wars, famines, pestilences. In our day there has been witnessed the greatest war—that of 1939-1945; the greatest pestilence—the influenza epidemic of 1918 when 20,000,000 people perished; the greatest famines—China 1919, 1928, Russia, 1921, 1933, when fifty millions starved to death.

The prophet Daniel said that in the last

(Continued on page 10.)

JESUS and the Sanctuary Service

By E. W. H. Vick

★ In the days of ancient Israel there was a sanctuary on earth. It was the centre of their worship while they were in the wilderness. Moses was commanded to build it after he had been shown its pattern while in the mountain with God.

In the book of Hebrews we are plainly told that the blue-print was the sanctuary in heaven, for the earthly sanctuary and its services served "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." Heb. 8:5. This heavenly sanctuary is further called "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Heb. 8:2.

The sanctuary on earth was built for various reasons, chief among these were: that God might live with His people (Exod. 25:8), to make plain the meaning of sin and show its consequences, and to reveal truth about the plan of salvation and the coming Messiah. So by studying the sanctuary on earth, we may learn great and far-reaching truths concerning the present ministry of Jesus in heaven on our behalf.

As Jesus expired on the cross He said: "It is finished." John 19:30. "The Son of man," He said, "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." Matt. 20:28. And on the cross He paid the perfect sacrifice.

But this was by no means the end of Jesus' work for human redemption. One phase of His work was completed on Calvary. When He returns in power and great glory it will be to sit upon a throne (Matt. 25:31) as "King of kings, and Lord of lords." Rev. 19:16. But what is Christ doing in the intervening time?



By Wm. Hole

© Eyre & Spottiswoode

The services of the tabernacle and temple symbolized the ministry of Jesus in earth and heaven.

The Scriptures plainly tell us that when Christ ascended into heaven He sat down at God's right hand (Heb. 1:5), beginning by this act His work as "Minister . . . of the true tabernacle." Heb. 8:2. We may thus study His present work in the light of the parallel in the earthly tabernacle.

The Symbolism of the Sanctuary

There were two separate apartments in the sanctuary: the holy place and the most holy place. In them, two different services were conducted—the daily and the yearly service.

Carrying out these services were two distinct ranks of ministers, the priests and the high priest. The priests conducted the daily service in connection with the holy place. The high priest officiated at the yearly service in the most holy place.

Salvation concerns sin, and sin is the transgression of God's law. (1 John 3:4.) The earthly sanctuary provided an object lesson in the forgiveness of sins. To-day we kneel in prayer, confess our sins in faith, and are forgiven. (1 John 1:9.) It was different in Old Testament times. The sinner then took a living offering to the sanctuary, and putting his hand on its head, confessed his sin. The sacrificial animal was then killed and with its blood the priest made an atonement for him. (Lev. 4:31.) This ceremony completed, the sinner went away forgiven, but the blood of his sacrifice which the priest had taken into the sanctuary remained as a silent witness to the fact that he had sinned, although now he was forgiven. Thus, day after day, the records of sin accumulated in the sanctuary, awaiting the time when a special service would remove these records. This was done in the yearly service on the "Day of Atonement."

This annual service took place on the tenth day of the seventh month; in the most holy place, the inner sanctum. Again both priest and sinner were concerned. The sinners, already forgiven during the year, were called to come once again to the sanctuary and search their hearts—"afflict" their souls, as the Authorized Version forcefully renders it. (Lev. 23:27-32.) After the service was over the high priest came forth from the most holy place and blessed the people; who left the ceremony both forgiven and cleansed. This yearly ceremony was consequently called the "cleansing of the sanctuary." Those, however, who had not afflicted their souls were "cut off" from Israel. Thus on that day Israel was divided into two groups, and the Day of Atonement came to be known as the Day of Judgment in Israel.

Christ is shadowed in all these earthly services. The sacrifices represented Jesus as a sacrifice; the priest represented Jesus as a mediator; the ministry of the high priest represented Jesus as Judge; the blessing of the high priest prefigured Jesus as King.

When Jesus expired on Calvary the veil of the temple was torn from top to bottom. (Matt. 27:50, 51.) The true Sacrifice had been made.

No longer was it necessary for the blood of lambs, or goats, or bullocks to be brought as an offering for sin. Henceforth the ritual of the earthly sanctuary was meaningless. To-day therefore we must focus our interest on the heavenly sanctuary, where Jesus is the Minister.

Having paid the penalty of sin by His own sacrifice Jesus could mediate for sin by virtue of that blood. "For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this Man have somewhat also to offer." Heb. 8:3. He began this ministry of mediation after His resurrection, upon His ascension into heaven. Before He returns as King He must also perform a work of judgment prefigured in the Day of Atonement service and in accordance with His own words: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." John 5:22.

That this work of judgment is completed before Jesus returns is indicated in Revelation 22:11, 12. After the work of judgment is complete there can be no change of status. Following immediately are the words, "And, behold, I come quickly."

Just as both sinner and priest were concerned in the earthly service, so it is likewise in the heavenly service. We confess our sins and thus place them on Jesus. His sacrifice atones for them; and as He ministers His blood, which we have accepted, before the Father we obtain forgiveness. That is what the daily service in the earthly sanctuary represented.

But for us as for Israel that is not the end. The sinner's case must appear before God again, so that the records of his sin may be completely removed in the universal Day of Atonement or the heavenly "cleansing of the sanctuary." Those who are not prepared for this judgment do not receive cleansing but are reserved for punishment. So Paul states: "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after." 1 Tim. 5:24.

We know by the signs of our times that the second advent is very near. We know also that when Jesus comes the judgment will be irrevocably over. It therefore follows that we must even now be living in the great day of Judgment.

Let us then make sure, by grace, that the decision Jesus will soon bring may be of acceptance "in the beloved," and with it, the prospect of eternal bliss.

THE NINE COMMAND

How does it Differ from the Deca

★ SOMEHOW the title of this article does not sound right. It does not sound biblical, yet I have some good friends who assure me that this title is all right: that now we are living under the nine-commandment law. They tell me that the Old Testament law that God wrote is gone, that we are no longer subject to it. They assure me that in the New Testament, under the new covenant, the new dispensation, those of us who are living under grace have been freed from the old Ten Commandment law, and are living under the new nine-commandment law.

Where do we read about the giving of this new nine-commandment law? Who gave it? When? In what respect does it differ from the Ten Commandment law that God wrote?

When my friends assure me that the Ten Commandments have been nailed to the cross and are no longer binding, I quite naturally inquire if it is proper to steal, commit adultery, worship idols, and so forth. They assure me that such acts must still be regarded as sin. The Ten Commandment law and the nine-commandment law are identical in both letter and spirit with the exception that the new nine-commandment law permits me to worship God on any day I choose. For some reason they hasten to assure me that the first day is most acceptable to Him, the seventh, the least acceptable. In fact, the seventh day seems to be so unacceptable that its observance, they say, is a just reason for dropping a person from church membership.

But if it was only the seventh-day Sabbath from which God wished to set man free, why nail all ten to the cross? Why not nail the Sabbath and let the rest go? Still this seems to be a strange and awkward way to get rid of the Sabbath. Let's get the facts straight on this nine and Ten Commandment law, this Old and New Testament law, before we get confused. What are the facts? Let us see.

God gave a moral law to this world. He wrote it on tables of stone and declared that it would stand fast for ever and ever; that it

would be easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of it to fail. (Read Exodus 20:3-17; Psalm 111:7, 8; Luke 16:17.) Since this is true, then God's law, the Ten Commandment law, stands all the way through the Old and the New Testament. This being true, why should we expect to find a new law?

In the New Testament only the Ten Commandment law is referred to. No part of it is left out, and no part is given as a new law. Jesus referred His hearers to the law that had been written. Note His answer to the lawyer as recorded in Luke 10:26. He said to him: "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" To the rich young ruler He said: "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother." Luke 18:20. The same words are used in Mark 10:19. Jesus was not giving them a New Testament law. He was referring them to His Father's Ten Commandment law.

The same is true of the apostles. Note the language of Paul. (Rom. 7:7.) Note also the twelfth verse of the same chapter: "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Paul is here referring to the law that says, "Thou shalt not covet." Paul knew of no New Testament nine-commandment law. Neither did the apostle James. "If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well." James 2:8. Note also the eleventh verse. "For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou dost not commit adultery, but killest, thou art become a transgressor of the law." James 2:11, R.V. James is referring Christians to the Old Testament Ten Commandment law.

Fourth Commandment as Prominent as Any

While my friends admit that this is true, they still insist that all the commandments are referred to in the New Testament except the fourth. Let us see if that is correct. Here are

MENT LAW

ogue?

the words of Christ: "Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." Matt. 12:12. To which commandment does Christ refer? Unquestionably to the fourth. Let us turn to Luke 23:56: "And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment." Which commandment did these women keep after the death of Christ? The fourth. They certainly rested on the Sabbath. There is no truth in the statement that the fourth commandment is not referred to in the New Testament. It is. When Christ instructed His followers to pray that they would not have to flee on the Sab-

bath, which commandment did He have in mind? The fourth, of course.

My friends say: "Oh, well, we will not accept the law of God on the Sabbath, and we will not accept what Christ says. Give us a commandment from Paul, and we will keep it." In the first place, it is going quite a long way when they will not accept the authority of Christ on the Sabbath question. If they will

By Marenus H. Jensen

not accept His authority, there is some doubt if they will accept the teaching of Paul on the subject.

It is true that Paul did not give a Sabbath commandment. He did not give a commandment for the first or the seventh day. Paul did not give any law. That was not his preroga-



By R. M. Eldridge

© P.P.P.A.

God warns in His Word that an apostate power would seek to mutilate His unchangeable law.

tive. Note the declaration of the apostle James. "There is one Law-giver." James 4:12. That law-giver was not Paul. It was God, and in the law which He wrote He said, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." We would hardly expect the apostle Paul to go contrary to this command.

If Paul Kept It, We Should

While Paul did not give a Sabbath commandment, he did realize the binding obligation of the fourth commandment. He kept it. Note the record: "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures." Acts 17:2. (Read also Acts 13:14, 42, 44; 16:13; 18:4.) Here we find that Paul preached to the Jews and Gentiles in the synagogue and out of the synagogue on the Sabbath day. Paul obeyed the fourth commandment. He kept the seventh-day Sabbath.

Let us turn to another New Testament text and note how the writer of the book of Hebrews reasoned on this subject. "For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works." Heb. 4:4. Note also verses 8, 9: "For if Jesus had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest [or keeping of a Sabbath, margin] to the people of God." How can anyone say that the fourth commandment is not referred to in the New Testament? The fact is, it is referred to more than all the rest of the ten. Isaiah's prophecy of Christ says: "The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness' sake; He will magnify the law, and make it honourable." Isa. 42:21. That is exactly what He did. (Read Matthew 5:17-48.)

What, then, is the New Testament law? It is the Old Testament law, the law of God, the Ten Commandments, with not so much as a jot or a tittle changed—but magnified.

Sky Signs of His Coming

(Continued from page 5.)

days, knowledge would be increased. (Dan. 12:4.) Do you realize that one hundred and fifty years ago there were no trains, steamships, telephones, aeroplanes, and a thousand other things which are taken for granted to-day?

Until 150 years ago—around 1800—men had been content to go on living in almost the same way as they had done for hundreds of years. Why this sudden age of invention, all concentrated into one comparatively small space of 150 years? God had declared that it would be so in the "last days"!

There were to be signs also in the financial world. Strikes and industrial disputes are among the distinguishing features of our modern world. To-day there is constant trouble between capital and labour. Do you know that in England before this last war, two per cent of the population held eighty-five per cent of the country's wealth? In America the situation was even worse. One per cent of the population held eighty-four per cent of the country's wealth. The apostle James tells us that when such conditions shall prevail, "the coming of Jesus draweth nigh." James 5:1-4, 8.

In the religious world, too, there were to be signs. Why are our churches so empty to-day? It is because men have turned from truth to fables. (2 Tim. 4:3, 4.) Men are lovers of pleasures and self more than they are lovers of God. (2 Tim. 5:4, 5.) Our Christianity ought to, and must be real!

We come to the last sign. Jesus declared that "this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14. To-day, almost the whole world has been reached by the Word of God. Last year the British and Foreign Bible Society distributed more Bibles throughout the world than ever before. The radio is quickly carrying God's Word into the corners of the earth that are unable to be reached by man as yet. Friend, the Scriptures are being fulfilled in our ears at this very moment!

We are living in the time of the *last sign*. We are facing the near return of our Saviour. What are you going to do about it? The milestones have been passed one by one. Soon we shall be at the end of the journey. Soon Jesus will appear in the clouds of heaven. Will you reconsecrate your life that He may accept you and give you a place in His kingdom—so that you can face the future without fear? He waits for you to do it.

"When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28.

Should a Christian Gamble?

By R. Bolton

★ "GAMBLING for the Christian is impermissible." So says the Rev. Donald Soper, the president-designate of the Methodist Conference as reported recently in the press.

As to the evils of gambling there are divided opinions both in the church and outside. It is often remarked: "What harm is there in a man having a little flutter now and then? It does him no harm; indeed it helps to relieve the boredom of life for many, and besides, life is a gamble anyway."

This latter statement is not true. For the non-Christian, life is not a gamble unless he makes it so. As the poet says, "Life is real, life is earnest, and the grave is not its goal." But for the Christian, life is never a gamble. It never can be. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." Psa. 37:25. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Rom. 8:28.

Let us return to the statement of the Rev. Donald Soper that "gambling for the Christian is impermissible," and discuss it particularly in reference to the Christian. The Christian does not set his own standards by which he may live. They are laid down for him in the Scriptures, so to the Scriptures we must turn for any examination of the matter.

The Christian Is Other-worldly

A cursory reading of the New Testament will reveal that the Christian has his citizenship in heaven. J. B. Phillips puts it finely in his introduction to his *Letters to Young Churches*. He writes:

"To the writers of these letters this present life was only an incident. . . . To these men this world was only a part, and because of the cumulative result of human sin a highly infected and infectious part, of God's vast created universe, seen and unseen. They trained themselves, therefore, and attempted to train others, not to be 'taken in' by this world, not to give their hearts to it, not to conform to its values,

but to remember constantly that they were only temporary residents, and that their rights of citizenship were in the unseen world of Reality."—Page 15.

This true appraisal has strong support from the Letters themselves. The apostle John says: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." 1 John 2:15. Peter writes: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11. This principle of other-worldliness would therefore rule out gambling as worldly and so make it "impermissible" for the Christian.

The Christian Is Warned Against the Deceptions of the Devil

The Scriptures frequently utter warnings against what it calls "the snares of the devil." So subtle is this archdeceiver that the Christian is warned that he will come as an "angel of light" and that "if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." 2 Cor. 11:14; Matt. 24:24. That gambling is a snare of the devil goes without saying; it has ruined countless numbers and prison and death are in its train. Here again, obviously, for the Christian, it is shown to be "impermissible."

The Christian Is Called to a Life of Self-denial

The dominant note of the New Testament is the note of sacrifice and self-denial. Beginning with Christ, whose life of self-denial and whose supreme sacrifice sets the pattern for all Christians, and the example and writings of the apostles and saints, the norm of the Christian's life is set. Surely it ill becomes those who are called to emulate this example to gamble away precious money which could be used for the spreading of the Gospel or to help a neighbour in need. The spirit of the gambler is not the spirit of Christ who "pleased not Himself" and who became poor for our sakes. (Rom. 15:3; 2 Cor. 8:9.)

Gambling Violates Christian Moral Principles

Let us now consider the moral aspect of gambling. Is gambling morally wrong? The Scriptures do not say, "thou shalt not gamble." They do not need to. The Bible lays down great principles by which we may live, and if any practice in any age, violates one or more of these principles then it is to be shunned by the Christian. Now these principles, when obeyed, build a high moral character; indeed they are intended to restore in man the lost image of God that he may be pure and holy in the sight of his Maker. Through the merits and intercessions of Christ this is made possible. We must therefore ask, does gambling help a man to build a high moral character? There is no neutral ground here. Gambling either makes a man better or it does not; if it does not then it must be concluded that he is the worse for his indulgence.

The answer is clear and unequivocal. Gambling does not make better men. It does nothing to restore the image of God in man but rather panders to that side of his nature which is animal and evil. Yes, one may say, this is probably true of the inveterate gambler, but surely an occasional bet is harmless for most of us? Yes, to an unbeliever maybe, if he stops at an occasional bet, little harm is done. However, I am speaking to Christians: How can you run the risk to yourself, or to some member of your family, of becoming inveterate gamblers? How can you jeopardize your hope of eternal life obtained for you at such an infinite price, by even one indulgence in a practice which has ruined so many? Are you so strong that you do not need to heed the words: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall"? 1 Cor. 10:12. And have you forgotten the divine diagnosis of the human heart which declares that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Jer. 17:9. Can you play with fire and not be burnt?

Finally, is it nothing to you that your Saviour suffered and died upon the cruel cross to deliver you from such snares of the devil? Unbelievers and some nominal Christians may say that gambling is a comparatively harmless pastime, but by no stretch of the imagination can gambling be said to be holy, yet, the Christian is called to be holy and without holiness "no man shall see the Lord." Heb.

12:14. And further, if the writings of holy men of all ages be never so carefully studied, gambling will not be found among the holy exercises recommended for the edification of the soul. We must therefore conclude that the Rev. Donald Soper is right when he said that "Gambling for the Christian is impermissible" and we wish him Godspeed as he gives the trumpet a certain sound.



God, You, and the Hereafter

(Continued from page 3.)

presence, exclaimed, "O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou . . . art acquainted with all my ways. . . . Such knowledge is too wonderful for me." Psa. 139: 1-6.

In the New Testament, God's awareness of man as an individual is stated in several ways. Peter said, "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers." 1 Peter 3:12. Jesus, in one of His most famous teachings, went so far as to use this figure of God's care over the individual: "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered." And again: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. . . . Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." Matt. 10:29-31.

If a man believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, he must of necessity believe in a future life. That was the mainspring of all Christ's teaching. In His resurrection He stepped across from this life to eternity, and thereby broke open the portals of the tomb that every believer in Him might follow in God's time and way. If this is not true, then Christianity collapses in all its claims and teachings. "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. . . . And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain," says Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:14-17.

God's To-Morrow

Every intelligent person who has any belief in God must of necessity think of the end of his earthly life and of what awaits him beyond.

This is not fear of the future, but the natural, God-given desire to enter into that larger life and destiny which Jesus came to reveal. "And this is life eternal," He said, "that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent," John 17:5.

We live on an earthly level and we are not satisfied; we want a larger and better life. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." 1 Cor. 15:22. The apostle Paul was the great exponent of the doctrine of the resurrection, and he it was who went beyond the actual resurrection and declared: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." 2 Cor. 5:1.

In matters of religion, to quote Carlyle, "It is one of the illusions, that the present hour is not the critical, decisive hour." In truth, "Now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. 6:2. For while the present is ours, to-morrow is in God's hands. That is why Congreve wrote:

Defer not till to-morrow to be wise,
To-morrow's sun on thee may never rise.

The tragedy of delay is stressed in other words by Martial, the first-century Latin poet:

To-morrow I will live, the fool doth say:
To-day itself's too late, the wise lived yesterday.

The transcendental now is dramatically illustrated in the incident of the man crowded out from seeing Jesus pass by; so he perched himself in a tree. When the Master walked slowly beneath, "He looked up, . . . and said unto him, Zacchæus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." Luke 19:5. Small wonder that Zacchæus almost fell out of that tree "joyfully." And when Zacchæus did something about to-day, God took charge of his to-morrow. "This day is salvation come to this house," said Jesus.

If you and I can capture the joy of entertaining Christ to-day, we can say with Christina Rossetti:

To-morrow shall be like
To-day, but much more sweet.



The Open Bible

Do You Want to Know? ★

POST THIS FORM TO-DAY
and receive our lessons on
Bible Prophecy

The Bible Will Become a New and Living Book

★ **YOU** can discover the answers to the following and many other questions.

- Will Christ come in our day?
- Is there life beyond the grave?
- Why does God permit sin and suffering?
- How will Christ come?

All sent to you **FREE** for the asking.

Name Mr. Mrs. Miss Age if under 21

(Please write clearly)

Address

(O.T.)

● **OUR ACHIEVEMENT**—
A world-wide broadcast
from 709 stations.

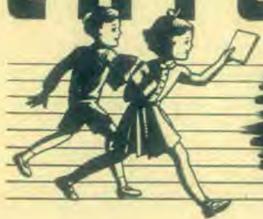
● **OUR TASK**—
Opening the Bible to the
world.

**Voice of Prophecy
Bible School**
Stanborough Park,
Watford, Herts.

The facilities of the World's Largest
Bible School are at your disposal.

Listen to our Programme
Radio Luxembourg
Tuesday 4.15 p.m. (G.M.T.)
1,295 metres
Friday 11 p.m. 208 metres

THE CHILDREN'S



Pages

What Changed "Cross" Willy?

By Margaret Locke

"CROSS" Willy stood by the open window watching the boys playing ball. His lips stuck out in a very unbecoming way, and his eyes had a look in them that was not pleasant to see.

"Mean! Mean!" he growled under his breath, "mean as can be, that's what!"

A noise at the front door attracted his attention, and his face changed a wee bit as he took a few steps in that direction. Mother had strictly forbidden him to leave the room until he had recovered from his crossness and apologized for his hasty words of the morning.

Mother was greeting someone. There seemed to be a little commotion. It surely was not Aunt Beth and Jackie. Why, they weren't expected for a week. Mother had received a telegram, but she wouldn't tell Willy what was in it because he had been cross yesterday morning, too. My, did it really pay to be cross? Willy wondered. He went over to the long mirror and looked at himself. He didn't like the reflection very well. He tried smiling. What

a change! Really, now he was quite a good-looking boy when he wasn't pouting. He smiled. That was fine. He pouted, sticking his lips out and scowling. That was awful. But what could a boy do but pout when he didn't like the way things went?

The bedroom door clicked and came open just a little way. "Bring him in here—brave little man." It was Mother's voice. He itched with curiosity. Oh, if only he had not been naughty that morning. He had never seen cousin Jackie nor Aunt Beth.

"I will give him some warm broth, and we will put him in this nice little bed. The journey has been hard for him." Bed? Why, he had been up a long time, and what little boy wanted to go to bed this time of day? He just *must* know—but he couldn't apologize yet. But he might as well have it over with—it had to come sometime, and besides, right deep down in his heart Willy wanted to be good.

"Mother! Mother!" She was right there. Mother was always there when he needed her. Tears came, and Willy said,

"I'm sorry and I want to be good."

There was a quick hug and a kiss and a hurrying off to the bathroom to wash away the traces of tears. It was so good of Mother to forgive him.

"Come now, dear, and meet your little cousin." There on the bed, his face almost as white as the pillow, lay a frail little fellow about Willy's own age.

Willy approached the bed on tip-toe, just as he was taught to do when Sister Jane was so ill. "Hello," he said softly.

Guess Who?

"I was no prophet, neither," said he,

"Was I a prophet's son,
But only a herdsman of the field—
A poor, despised one.
But He above who made us all,
Counts none of low degree,
And when the Lord wanted a man,

'Twas me, He took, just me."

Answer:

1:4 L sorry 'sowry

He thought that God would
change His mind,

This prophet singularly blind.

As though the Lord could ever
bless,

A cause so full of wickedness.
So, through his good, obedient
ass,

The evil never came to pass.
Who was this prophet, tell me
pray,

Who good for ill was made to
say?

Answer:

22 Balaam, Numbers

No, it wasn't any magic

When the water turned to oil,
And the heavy axe-head floated
Without any seeming toil.

When the bitter water sweetened,
And the dead op'd wide his
eyes.

'Twas the work of this good
prophet,

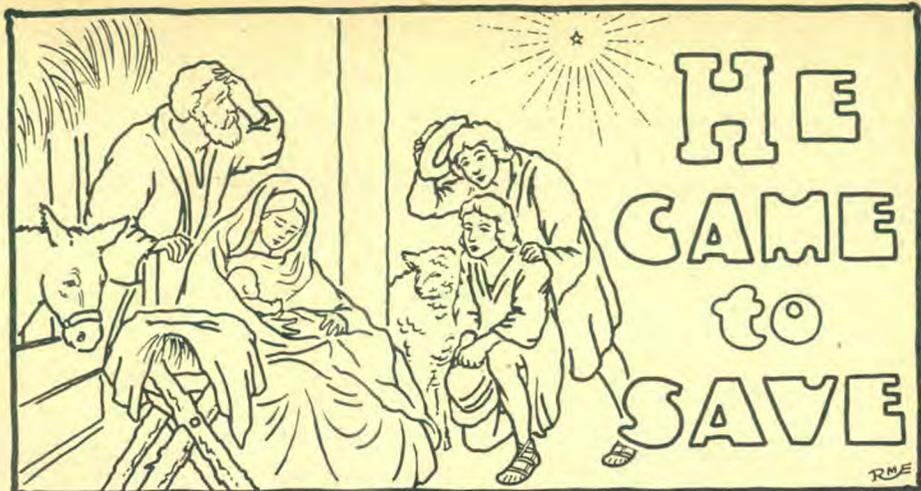
His name? 'Tis easy to surmise.

Answer:

4 Kings 2 and Elisha,

Mary J. Vine.

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 December 11th.



"Hello," came a weak voice from the bed, and a smile spread over Jackie's thin face.

"Can you get up and play with me after a while?"

"My legs are no good; I never get up," replied Jackie.

"You never get up," exclaimed Willy, "and you never run and play or walk?"

"No," replied Jackie, "never—unless the big doctor can make me well again."

Willy looked sympathetically at Jackie. "Ooh," he half whispered, "how awful! Do you hurt, Jackie?"

"Yes, I hurt a lot."

"Like when I cut my finger?"

"Yes, like that, only it covers a bigger place all at once."

Willy looked at his own sturdy legs and grew thoughtful.

Every day Willy sat beside Jackie's bed and told him about his romps with Bingo, the big collie; about the big red ball he had been kicking about on the lawn; and sometimes he would talk to Jackie about his former playmates and the things they used to make and the long hikes he took with his father. Jackie's pale face would light up as they talked together.

A month passed quickly.

One day Willy sat out in the living room with his mother.

"Son," said she as she drew him gently to her side, "you've been such a good boy lately—you seem changed. You have behaved like a little gentleman. How does it happen?"

"Well," said Willy, rubbing his chubby hands together, "I thought lots about it. I can run and play and eat lots of good things and don't hurt anywhere like Jackie. I think I ought to be good. He hurts all the time so that he has to cry sometimes. He never is cross—never, so I ought to be good, I think."

Aunt Beth entered the room to find the two in a loving embrace. She stepped right out again and left them to themselves to talk it over.

Your Letter

My Dear Sunbeams,

It's quite a thrill to realize Christmas is getting nearer. Already we see many signs, telling us to do our Christmas shopping early. But I would like to remind you that some unfortunate children may not have the joy of doing very much shopping, and their stockings won't be very "bulgy" on Christmas morning. Would you like to send me some of your used toys or books or perhaps a few stamps, so that I can pass them on to those less fortunate?

Just do it right away if you can, and I know God will bless you and make your own Christmas happier.

Yours affectionately,

AUNTIE MARGARET.

Results of Competition No. 19

Prize-winners. — Margaret Peart, Livorno, Two Hedges Road, Bishops Cleeve, Gloucestershire. Age 6; Myrtle Green, Stock Lane, Langford, Near Salisbury, Wilts.

Honourable Mention. — Susan Grout (Southampton); Richard Payne (Bishops Cleeve); Leslie Price (Coventry); Heather Payne (Bishops Cleeve); John Plant (Stockton); Trevor Goddard (Iver); Pearl Rich (Launceston); Lydia Harris (Cambridge); Jilda Steeman (Torquay); Maureen Woodman (Southampton); Molly Rich (Launceston).

Those who tried hard.—Amy Randlesome (Stockton); John Hatcher (London, N. 10); Barry Sage (Colchester); Muriel Porder (Norwich); Miriam Harris (Cambridge); Esther Dunstan (Bodmin); Ena Wainwright (Burnopfield); Jean Barlow (York); Antony Peart (Bishops Cleeve); Pauline Betts (York); Gordon Davey (Watford); Hazel Harris (Cambridge); Nigel Payne (Bishops Cleeve); Lesley Hardy (Derby); John Rabin (Birmingham, 23); Gillian Plant (Stoke-on-Trent); Graham Hardy (Derby); Stuart Payne (Bishops Cleeve).

The Bible and OUR TIMES

(Formerly "Present Truth")

Vol. 68. No. 24. Price 3d.
Printed and published in Great Britain fortnightly on Thursday by

THE STANBOROUGH PRESS LTD.,
WATFORD, HERTS.

EDITOR: W. L. EMMERSON
Twelve months 9/9 post free
Six months 5/- post free

Straws in the Wind

Will Open Gravest Era

THE publicity naturally given to the explosion of the first British atomic bomb in the Monte Bello Islands has pushed into the background an ominous statement by the chairman of the Atomic Energy Committee of the United Nations that the forthcoming test planned at Eniwetok Atoll will "open the gravest era in the history of the world."

First Bible By Air

THE first copy of the new Union Swahili Bible, just published by the British and Foreign Bible Society, was flown out to Africa by Comet air liner for presentation to St. Stephen's Church, Nairobi.

Canada Says "No" to Vatican Representation

A RECENT Church of England Synod in London, Ontario, vigorously opposed the suggestion of Canadian diplomatic representation at the Vatican. Protestants were urged to be on their guard against "attempts by the Catholic hierarchy to gain political control."

Pope and United Europe

THE interest of the Vatican in the developing organization

of United Europe is clearly indicated by his references to the urgency of union in his Pax Christi address, in the presence of Cardinal Tisserant at the opening meeting of the

latest session, and by the latter's subsequent broadcast from Strasbourg.

Do We Become Angels?

MR. MACMORRAN, the Chichester Chancellor, was biblically entirely correct when, refusing permission for the erection of a marble cherub over a child's grave, he stated: "The one thing you don't become when you die is an angel." Men and angels are different orders of the creation of God and they will always be separate and distinct.

Balance Sheet of History

IN his last book, *The Balance Sheet of History*, M. René Grousset, who died a week or two ago, said: "If the world is nothing but what it seems to be—as science and current scientific philosophy have pictured it—then the world is absurd to reason, and revolting to the heart. Christianity to-day represents, against this background of monstrous emptiness, the revolt of reason and of the heart and the defence of the spirit. Hence its mission in the shipwreck of all hope—which would be complete but for the presence of Christianity—is more than ever one of salvation."

I'll Be There

When dark clouds are hovering
o'er you,
And the world seems bleak and
bare,
Don't lose faith, let naught de-
press you;
Look for Me, and I'll be there.

When you're feeling lost and
lonely,
And you know not how or where
You can find a friend to guide
you,
Look for Me, and I'll be there.

When you're stepping gaily on-
ward,
When you've happiness to spare;
Find someone to share it with
you;
Look for Me, and I'll be there.

Let Me share your joy and sorrow;
I would keep you from despair;
When you need someone to help
you;
Look for Me, I'm always there.

J. Boon.

