

The Bible and



OUR TIMES

IN THIS ISSUE

- Who Is Responsible?
- "I Will Come"
- Will You Accept God's Offer?
- When Will the Dead Rise?
- Doing God's Will
- Children's Pages



Who Is Responsible

For Flood, Disaster, and Catastrophe?

By The Editor

Not since the days of Queen Anne in the seventeenth century had so widespread an inundation been experienced by the population of these North Sea coastal lands.

Tragedy at Midnight

It was around midnight that tragedy suddenly struck. Most folk had gone to bed to the sound of the howling gale, but with no

premonition of the tragedy which was to befall in a few short hours. Some were still sitting around their firesides when water began to pour under their doors and they knew that the dykes had burst. War-time sirens wailed where they were available and the occupants of seashore houses, rushing to their windows, beheld raging waters advancing upon or already surging around their homes.

Some escaped in their night attire to higher ground before the overwhelming floods were too deep to wade through. Others found themselves trapped in upstairs rooms where they had to wait until rescuers arrived.

Across the water in Holland the tragedy reached even more terrible proportions as through the breached dykes solid walls of water flattened and swept away villages in their path.

Many were the heroes of that terrible night and the stories of individual gallantry which have been acclaimed by press and radio are typical of many more of which we shall never hear.

Yet, despite the efforts of fathers and mothers



© International News

A helpful constable carries a little girl to safety from her flooded home in Lowestoft.



© Keystone
Bungalows at Jaywick overwhelmed by the flood.

★ DURING recent months a succession of terrible disasters in Britain and Western Europe have shocked all hearts by their suddenness and magnitude and have evoked deep sympathy for the victims and their families.

In one place it was a fearful railway disaster, in another a disastrous air crash. Then in one wild winter week-end in February came the news of disaster by tempest to a crowded ferry steamer which went down with 128 souls in raging seas in the narrow channel between Scotland and Northern Ireland, and then the infinitely greater devastation and loss of life through the almost unprecedented floods which wrecked the sea walls along two hundred miles of Eastern England, from the Humber to south of the Thames, and across the North Sea, along the south-western coast of Holland and Belgium. Large towns and little holiday villages were catastrophically overwhelmed, over a quarter of a million acres of rich farm land and pasture were submerged in Eastern England, and a sixth of the total area of Holland lay beneath a swirling waste of waters.

for their families and the selfless labours of the rescuers, and notwithstanding the promptitude with which food and clothing were rushed to the inundated regions, and homes were opened to receive the stream of refugees, the death roll soared to nearly three hundred along the English coast and to over four times that number in the significantly named "Low Countries."

Besides the hundreds of dead, many thousands were rendered homeless, millions of acres of farm land with their livestock were devastated, and the total damage when fully assessed will run into millions of pounds.

Was it an "Act of God"?

Naturally, in face of such disasters, the questions tremble upon the tongues of multitudes, "Why do these things happen?" and "Who is responsible?"

The legal records, of course, used the conventional phrase, "Act of God," but if this disaster were interpreted as the work of a callous or indifferent God, how blasphemous an indictment of a loving Creator it would be.

Would God have beautified the earth as He has, would He have made such provision for His creatures from the lowest forms to the crown of His creation, man, would He have sent His own Son to reveal His love by a matchless life and a self-sacrificing death on Calvary, and yet deliberately turn the forces of nature upon His creatures to sweep them out of existence? No, wind and wave and tide may be of the Creator's ordering, but it would be base and utterly wrong to lay the blame for these tragedies upon God.

Is the Devil Responsible?

Well then, some will reply, it must be the work of the devil. Certainly Satan is capable of any maliciousness against God or man and we can quote scriptural

authority for the assertion that he is temporarily "prince of this world" (John 12:31), for he once offered to present all "the kingdoms of this world" to Christ at a price! (Matt. 4:8, 9.)

Without question, he is ultimately responsible for all earth's woe, but we would be evading the real issue if we were simply to attribute these catastrophes sadly to the arch-enemy of God and man and just leave it at that.

From the reports which came to us from the disaster areas we learned of the inadequacy of warning equipment, of the too small margin of safety in the sea wall construction, and of the absence of any sea defences in some areas.

In one English coastal district the flood waters in 1897 rose 14.9 feet above sea level and so a wall had been built to a height of sixteen feet above the sea. But on that tragic Sunday night "an hour after midnight, the water smashed over it as fast as a millrace" and within half an hour of the break most of the town behind the wall was flooded to a depth of five feet.

In some places the sea defences had hardly been touched since the low-lying lands were reclaimed in the seventeenth century.

We even heard of contemplated sea defence construction being over-ridden by what was considered even more urgent war defence expenditures.

After disaster had struck, the cry began to go up for the expenditure of hundreds of millions of pounds to make sure that such peace-time catastrophes would not occur again.

(Continued on page 12.)



© Keystone

Building up the dyke at Ridderkerk, in the Netherlands, to hold back the floods.

APRIL 2, 1953

"I Will Come"

By T. J. Bradley

★ It always has been God's purpose, and always will be His gracious desire, to lighten the path of man's journey with a clear revelation of His truth, and to encourage him with His imperishable promises. From the thousands of promises in the Bible, two will serve to illustrate this fact, for into these two are enfolded all the others, and from these two can be extracted hope and courage, peace and patience, watching and waiting, longing and loving, grace and godliness.

"Lo, I Come" (Psa. 40:8)

When David penned those words the iron monarchy of Rome that would hold the world shackled in a steel-like grip at the time of the appearance of the Messiah was not thought of, nor even foreseen. But the disasters of national defeats could not overthrow the promises of God. The Scriptures said of Jesus, "Lo, I come," and just after the middle of the first century A.D., the apostle Paul wrote this striking confirmation of the fulfilment of the promise: "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son."

It is one of the divine qualities of the promises of the Bible, that when circumstances seem most forbidding, and fulfilment seems most unlikely, that the fullest realization is nigh at hand. With upturned faces, men have often gazed toward what must have appeared a grey inverted tomb of the skies, but when their hopes have well-nigh deserted them, divine intervention has flashed forth, the silent heavens have been transformed into marshalling spaces for angelic forces, and down the blue ethereal corridors of the universe have sped "angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word." Psa. 105:20.

It was thus toward the close of the last pre-Christian decades. Rome sat proudly on the banks of the Tiber and surveyed her far-flung empire won on battlefields as wide apart as



By Biermann

© Hanfstaengl

"I will come again," Jesus promised.

Britain and Egypt, yet the soul of the Roman world was intoxicated by its power and polluted by its philosophies.

Paul said of the Greeks: "I perceive that in all things, ye are deity-fearing" (Dr. Ullhorn), or as Weymouth has it "remarkably religious," and of the Romans, Petronius observed: "Our country is so peopled with gods that it is easier to find a god there than a man." The Romans had a god for every situation, from Lucina

who watched over the birth of a child, to the sacrifice of the harvest pig, to Ceres or to the unknown gods who might inhabit the forest which was about to be felled.

The religious life of the Roman empire at the time of Christ's first advent was not dead or in complete decay, but was being practised with an abortive formality which goes hand in hand with unashamed hypocrisy. Lucretius speaks of those who "so long as it went well with them, mocked at the gods, but at the first reverse of fortune hastened to the temples for the sake of sacrificing." Plutarch describes the man who "through fear of the multitude feigns prayers without feeling any need, and utters words which contradict his philosophy." And as if to sum up the religious drift just before the time of Christ, Seneca wrote: "All that ignoble crowd of gods which the superstition of the ages has collected, we will adore in such a way as to remember that its worship belongs rather to usage than to reality."

Here then was the empty formality of the Roman religions! Here was the challenge of a spiritual vacuum! Here was the threat of scepticism and the despair of gross darkness! Into such a time as this Jesus declared prophetically, "Lo, I come!"

He was coming to replace formality with genuineness!

He was coming to destroy the vacuum and fill lives with the fullness of the true God!

He was coming to destroy darkness, for He was the "Light of the world."

The promise of His coming echoed from century to century. "Lo, I come," was the promise. "I am come" (John 10:10) was the glorious soul-cheering fulfilment.

Yes, Jesus came and lived a life of exemplary virtues for us to pattern after. Jesus came and died the substitute's death, that we, by faith, laying hold of His great salvation, may be numbered among the redeemed of all ages. Jesus came from wealth unmeasured and took on Him our estate of poverty that we "might be rich." 2 Cor. 8:9. And when He was contemplating the need for returning to His Father with the trophy of victory, He made the second great promise, about which we should reflect.

"I Will Come Again" (John 14:3)

Eleven lonely but still loyal men heard with dismay and almost despair that Jesus, their beloved Leader, was shortly to leave them. Said

the Lord: "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek Me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come: so now I say to you." John 13:33.

The dark forebodings of their hearts were not cleared away by the smallest fraction as Jesus continued: "Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now." Verse 36.

Did this mean separation?

Did this mean irrevocable, eternal separation? Judas had already slipped out of the upper room, where the sweet fellowship of humility had been led by the Saviour's divine example (John 13:1-17), into the blackest night of human failure. Was Jesus leaving them now because He sensed the meaning of the shadow that was falling across His pathway? No! It could not have been that, for He said, "Let not your heart be troubled." John 14:1. There was no sense of failure or frustration in His going away; there was only the outworking of the plan and purpose of God. "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again." Verse 3.

The ascension of Jesus into the heavens was linked with other great promises of eternal importance, not least among which are those found in John 14:16-18 and John 16:7-14. Jesus ascended on the wings of divine promises and He will return on their wings again.

How long the church has waited for her returning Lord!

How long have saints kept their faith in His promise!

How often has the quiet of the tomb beckoned to sinking souls to wait "yet a little while"!

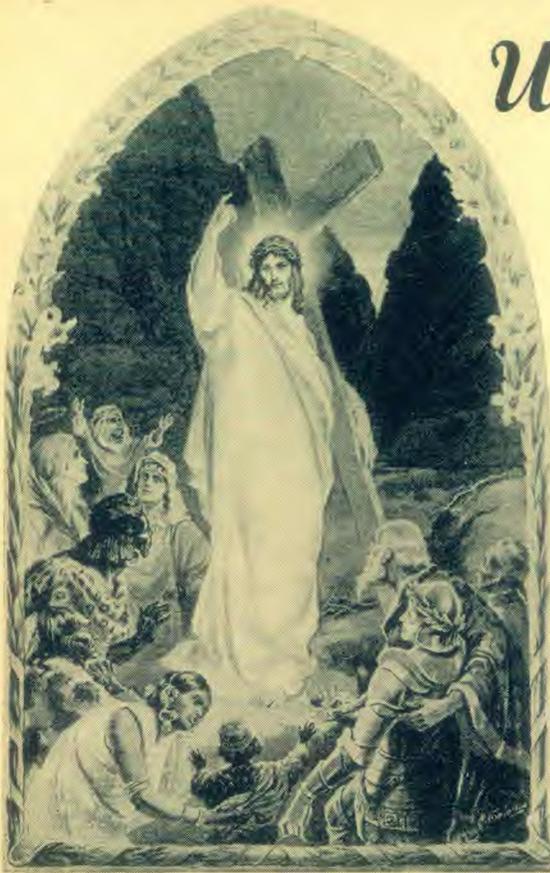
How long has reigned the night of sin despite the divine pledge of a coming dawn!

The trusting child of God joins earnestly in the entreaty of Revelation 6:10: "How long, O Lord?" and then kneels in simple faith and believing resignation saying, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22:20.

But while, to our feeble view, the return of Christ may seem delayed beyond necessity, we must remember that God and His plans partake of the eternal years, whereas we live among and are familiar only with the things of time. The apostle Peter reminds us that "the Lord is not slack concerning His promise" (2 Peter 3: 8, 9), and that though the fulfilment of a given promise be delayed in our view for a thousand years, yet in God's sight it would appear as but
(Continued on page 15.)

Will You Accept God's Offer?

By J. A. McMillan



© Home Words

"Whosoever will may come."

★ "FOR God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that *whosoever*. . . ." So far in our consideration of John 3:16 we have been dealing with the character and conduct of God in giving His only-begotten Son to save the world. Now we come to the consideration of the objects of God's love and we find the word used is the most comprehensive in the English language.

It was John Bunyan who commented on this word in the following simple but touching way, "Had God said in His Word that He loved the world and gave His Son that John Bunyan might be saved, my poor heart would have argued, it must be a John Bunyan who lived long ago, or maybe it is a John Bunyan who has not yet been born! But when God says 'whosoever' that includes all the John Bunyans who have lived before, all who will yet be born and, praise the Lord, it includes this

John Bunyan." How true this reasoning is; it includes you and me.

Centuries ago the Lord's servant Moses proclaimed this great truth before the assembled hosts of Israel. "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil. . . . I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

There will be no conscripts among the redeemed. Down through the ages men and women have faced torture and death for truth's sake, "not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection." Heb. 11:35. Their choice was dictated by their desire to please God and follow the Master to whom they owed allegiance. Jesus calls to each of us, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For *whosoever* will save his life shall lose it: and *whosoever* will lose his life for My sake shall find it." Matt. 16:24-26. Here is the same universal "whosoever." Each individual is free to follow Christ or to deny Him.

To the Israelites who were adopting a fatalistic attitude to life, the Lord spoke through Ezekiel, "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? . . . When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it. Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin,

and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die." Ezek. 33:11, 15-16.

This is a vital statement of divine principles and is worthy of our most careful consideration. It most emphatically places our eternal welfare on our own choice of conduct. We can see the operation of this principle in the life of Zacchaeus. He said to Jesus: "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham." Luke 19:8, 9. We become sons of Abraham by doing the works of Abraham. (John 8:59.) We are enabled to do these works of righteousness if we "walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham." Rom. 4:12.

It may be thought by some that this is all very well, but many a poor sinner lacks the power to do righteousness. The Scriptures teach us that everyone is powerless to do right. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jer. 13:23. It is imperative that if we are to be saved, we must lay hold on Someone outside of and above our poor, frail humanity. That is why God sent His only-begotten Son. "For what was impossible to the law, powerless as it was because it acted through frail humanity, God effected. Sending His own Son in a body like that of sinful human nature and as a sacrifice for sin, He pronounced sentence upon sin in human nature; in order that in our case the requirements of the law might be fully met, for our lives are regulated not by our earthly, but by our spiritual natures." Rom. 8:3, 4. (Weymouth.)

Accepting the Divine Offer

Here then is the crux of the plan of salvation. We are powerless to change our natures, powerless to obey the divine will, powerless to do good. But we can choose to accept the divine nature offered through Christ; we can will to do right and God promises to supply the power. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." Isa. 1:19. "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." John 1:17.

A deeply spiritual writer has written on this

score: "The only hope for us if we would overcome is to unite our will to God's will, and work in co-operation with Him, hour by hour, and day by day. . . . Are we willing to have our will brought into perfect conformity to the will of God? Until we are willing, the transforming grace of God cannot be manifest upon us."—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pages 205, 206.

Note the universal sweep of the Gospel provision. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved." Rom. 10:13. The writer already quoted has said: "What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can *choose* to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you both to will and to do according to His good pleasure. . . . Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, you ally yourself with the power that is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from above to hold you steadfast, and thus through constant surrender to God, you will be enabled to live the new life, even the life of faith."—*Steps to Christ*, page 37.

This choice must be made at the outset of the Christian life. This is positively stated in the last appeal of the holy Scriptures, "And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17. Then the will must be deliberately surrendered to God daily. "Wherefor (as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.) . . . Take heed, brethren, . . . but exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." Heb. 3:7, 12-14.

Can you still think that you are excluded from the Gospel call? The invitation is addressed to the whole world of humanity. Therefore it includes you. "Whosoever" means each one who is willing to come. "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. Therefore come! and come now.

WHEN WILL THE D

★ THE basic facts concerning the hope of resurrection life were, as we have seen, asserted in the Old Testament scriptures and explained by Jesus Himself. They were still further expanded by the apostle Paul, in whose inspired

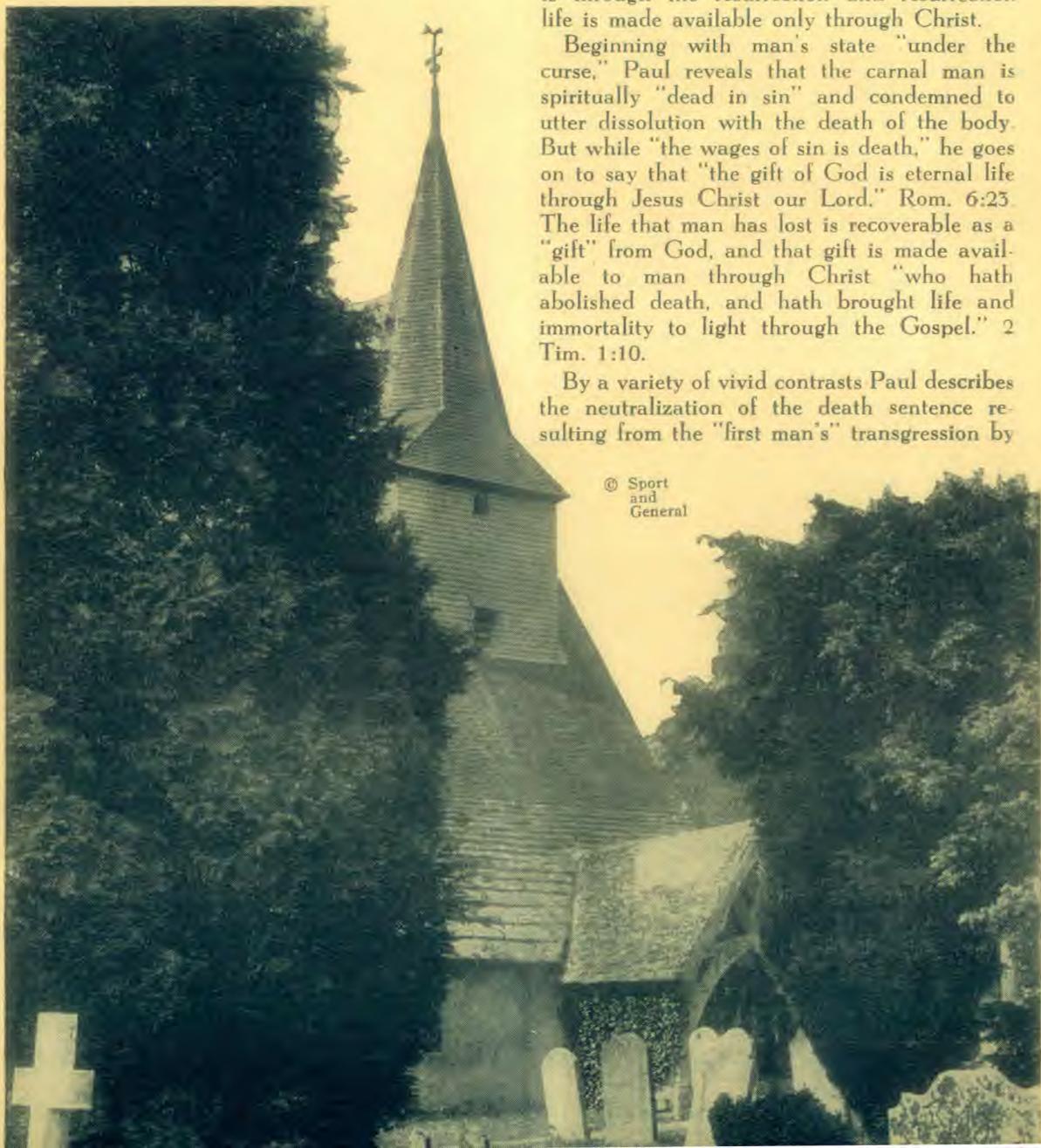
epistles the doctrine of the resurrection finds its full and final expression.

The twin theme of Paul's evangel was, in fact, "Jesus, and the resurrection." Acts 17:18. Man's hope of eternal life, the apostle taught, is through the resurrection and resurrection life is made available only through Christ.

Beginning with man's state "under the curse," Paul reveals that the carnal man is spiritually "dead in sin" and condemned to utter dissolution with the death of the body. But while "the wages of sin is death," he goes on to say that "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6:23. The life that man has lost is recoverable as a "gift" from God, and that gift is made available to man through Christ "who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." 2 Tim. 1:10.

By a variety of vivid contrasts Paul describes the neutralization of the death sentence resulting from the "first man's" transgression by

© Sport
and
General



DEAD RISE?

the "last Adam," Christ. (1 Cor. 15:45.)

As "by one man's offence death reigned by one," he says; "much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:17.

And again: "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Verse 18.

And still again: "As sin hath reigned unto

By W. L. EMMERSON

death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Verse 21.

In his epistle to the Philippians, Paul explains how the life of God was made available to man in Christ. He who was "in the form of God" and "equal with God," Paul explains, agreed with the Father to be made "in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Thus Jesus "emptied Himself" of the life that was in Him that it might be given to man who had lost the precious gift.

The Power of His Resurrection

But for the power of God, Christ's death would have been as eternal as the death man deserved. By the quickening power of the Spirit, however, Jesus was raised to new life, His resurrection becoming the ground and basis of man's resurrection to life in and through Him.

Says the apostle: "God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by His own power." 1 Cor. 6:14. And again: "He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus." 2 Cor. 4:14.

Finally, if the resurrection of Christ is the guarantee of the resurrection of those who "sleep in Jesus," the ascension and enthronement

of Christ at the right hand of the Father are the assurance that we now potentially sit in "heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6) and, that in His due time, we will actually be "for ever with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:17.

Present Quickening Through the Spirit

Now, just as death began to operate in Adam from the moment he sinned so that ever since sinners have been "dead" even while they "lived" (1 Tim. 5:6), so that impartation of the life of Christ to a sinner "dead in trespasses and sins" likewise brings an immediate "quickening" of resurrection life. (Eph. 2:1.) "If Christ be in you," he says, "the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Verse 10.

This present passing from death unto life by association with Christ in His death and resurrection is symbolized, according to him, by the ordinance of the believer's baptism. "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Rom. 6:4.

When the Dead Shall Rise

Having thus revealed how the sinner "dead in trespasses and sins" is "quickened" to new life in Christ through the Spirit, Paul goes on to show how this "taste" of the powers of the world to come will culminate in its bestowal in all its fullness through the resurrection from the dead.

"The future quickening of the mortal body," Dr. S. D. F. Salmond says, "is the consequence of the present quickening of the living spirit. This is one of the chief notes in Paul's doctrine."—*The Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, page 551.

"Christ became one flesh with us," similarly comments E. G. White, "in order that we might become one spirit with Him. It is by virtue of this union that we are to come forth from the grave—not merely as a manifestation of the power of Christ, but because, through faith, His life has become ours. . . . It is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us, and the Spirit of God, received into the heart by faith, is the

beginning of the life eternal."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 388.

The Time of the Resurrection

The time of this resurrection which Jesus designated "the last day" is more specifically described by Paul as the "day of the Lord" when Jesus returns the second time in glory, and in his first epistle to the Thessalonians he provides the most detailed account of this dramatic event.

"I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

"For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [go before] them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:15-17.

And if we need any further assurance that the gates of death will swing back at His command, we have it in His words to John the Revelator after His return to His Father in heaven: "I . . . have the keys of hell [the grave] and of death." Rev. 1:18.

How much more beautiful is this teaching of the Bible than the doctrine of the survival of ethereal spirits. We do not have the impossible conception of a husband enjoying the bliss of heaven while his poor wife struggles alone to maintain her growing family upon the earth, nor of a wife entering into her heavenly reward while her bereaved husband plods alone his weary way through life. The little babe does not precede its mother to the arms of Jesus.

Instead, we understand that our loved ones sleep while we live out our probationary time, that we shall sleep while our children are tested and tried, and that if faithful we all at last will be reunited, on the glorious resurrection morning, to each other and to the Saviour of us all.

What a beautiful thought, too, that whether

the waiting period be a year or a millennium, to the dead it will seem as nothing. Their last conscious moment upon earth will be followed immediately by the moment of their return to consciousness as they see Jesus coming in His kingdom.

As the righteous Abel died, he beheld the face of his treacherous brother gazing fearfully upon him. The next moment in his experience a shining angel will be raising him up to be with Jesus. And he will not know that any interval has elapsed until the tragic story of sin and death is recounted to him.

Stephen, in his last moment, lifted up his eyes to heaven to behold Jesus "standing on the right hand of God." Acts 7:56. When he looks again he will see Jesus coming for him. Nor will he know that more than a moment has passed until he is told.

Comforting, indeed, is the Bible view of the sleep of death. And beautiful, too, the blessed hope of the resurrection day.

The Second Resurrection and the "Second Death"

The apostle Paul did not have much to say concerning that other resurrection to which Jesus referred, in which the wicked will rise for final judgment, but the fact that he invariably refers to the resurrection of the saints as a selective resurrection out "from among" the dead, indicates his recognition that at some later time "the rest of the dead" not privileged to have a part in the "resurrection of the just," would be raised to appear before the judgment bar of God.

It was left to John the Revelator in the last book of the Bible to set forth the precise chronological relationship between these two resurrections.

In the twentieth chapter of his prophecy he reveals that the "resurrection of the just," which he calls the "first resurrection" will take place at the second coming of Christ and immediately before the thousand-year period known as the "millennium." (Rev. 20:4, 5.) The subsequent resurrection of the unjust, he explains, will take place at the close of this period. (Rev. 20:5, 6.)

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God," John goes on, "and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the Book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." "And

(Continued on back page.)

DOING GOD'S WILL

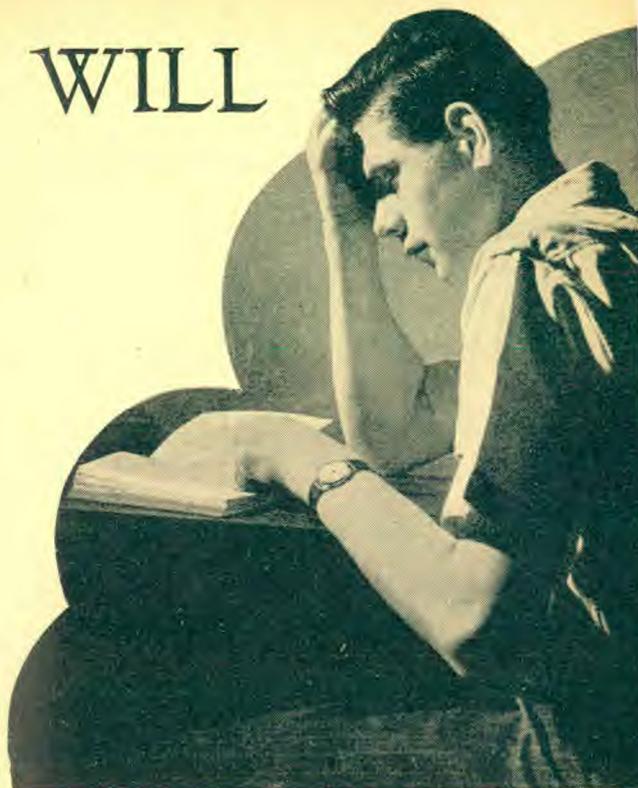
By Denys Baildam

★ Did you ever stop to think what kind of a relationship you have with God? You do believe in God, of course, don't you? The Bible ever appeals to the visible creation as evidence that He exists. (Isa. 40:26.) Only the fool says, "There is no God." God has revealed Himself through nature, through His Word, the Bible, and through Christ, His Son. Christ spoke to His Father, and taught us to pray to "our Father." "He is our God; and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand." Psa. 95:7.

Because then, we are the children of God, then naturally we should be learning constantly from Him. He shows us His will for us, His way, and His righteousness. As child to Father, we are expected, naturally, to obey Him—to do His will. This is our true relationship with God. If we are to have good characters which will fit us for His kingdom, we must be willing to submit ourselves.

What then is God's will, and how can we allow His will to be done in our lives. Pause for a moment and listen to Christ's Sermon on the Mount. You can read it in Matthew, the seventh chapter. Toward the end of the sermon, you can hear Jesus saying: "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." Verse 21. What did Jesus mean? The Psalmist explains: "I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psa. 40:8. You will notice that "law" and "will" are used here interchangeably, as you will find also in Romans 2:17, 18 and elsewhere. We can do God's will then, by keeping His "law" or the "Ten Commandments." And of fundamental necessity, God's will must embrace man's whole duty. "Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Eccles. 12:13.

The law of God, or the Ten Commandments, is older than the earth, in fact as old as eternity. It existed long before Sinai; long before creation; it existed in heaven from eternity. How



© Studio Lisa

do we know? Here is the answer. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. Did Lucifer sin? Yes, that is why he was cast out of heaven with his angel-followers. Satan, then, broke the law of God, because sin is transgression of the law. "Sin is not imputed when there is no law," says the apostle Paul. (Rom. 5:12-14; 6:23).

God's government in heaven has law and order, otherwise there would be anarchy. God also desired law and order in Eden, for He told Adam that if he were disobedient, he would die. "The wages of sin is death." If sin is present, then the law must also be present in order to show what sin is. Through transgression, the world became so vile that God had to cleanse it by flood.

The commandments were preserved by Noah and handed down. At Sinai, God again reminded the children of Israel of His will, and this time wrote it with His own finger on two tables of stone to remind them constantly. The law was handed down through generations till Christ came. He embraced it and preserved it by His own life in observing those things

which savoured of eternal life. "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me"; "I have kept My Father's commandments." John 4:34; 15:10.

Thirty years after the cross, the law of God declared all (Jew and Gentile) to be guilty of sin, for "all have sinned." Rom. 3:19, 23. The commandments were given to mankind for all time. They compose man's greatest moral standard and if men would only live by them, we would see a different world.

"The law of the Lord is perfect." Psa. 19:7, 8. "The law is holy . . . just, and good." Rom. 7:12. The commandments are divine and perfect. Charles Haddon Spurgeon once said: "There is not a command too many; there is not a command too few; but it is so incomparable that its perfection is a proof of its divinity."—*Sermons*, page 280.

The commandments are based on love. God's nature is love. "God is love." 1 John 4:8. His law is love. (Matt. 22:35-40.) Hence the commandments are an expression of God's character. The prohibitions are for man's good. Taking a course contrary to God's "don'ts" is taking the way of death. Following the line of His "do's" is marking out for ourselves eternal life. The law is the standard by which we know right from wrong, by which we can measure ourselves to see if we come up to the stature of Christ. "If we offend in one point we are guilty of all." James 2:10. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3:20. Through the law we know the will of God. (Rom. 2:18.)

"To obey is better than sacrifice." 1 Sam. 15:22. "If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love." John 15:10. "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." John 14:15. We have discovered that man's whole duty is love to God and love to man. Friend, you love Jesus, don't you? Then, automatically, you will keep His commandments. Of course, you will not hesitate to do His will. You will do anything for someone you love. "Whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him." 1 John 2:5.

Here then is your opportunity, friend. Write the words of the Psalmist on your heart. "I delight to do Thy will, O my God." We cannot do it in our own strength, for "the law" is "weak through the flesh." Rom. 8:3. Remember that Christ is the only one who ever kept the law perfectly—that is why He had to die for us.

He alone could be the sacrifice for sinful humanity. Through the Holy Spirit He will abide in us "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." Rom. 8:4. We are promised that Jesus Christ will write the law in our hearts—indelibly impressing it—under the new covenant. Jesus invites us to open the door of our heart to let Him in. (Rev. 3:20.) If we will allow Him to enter, He has promised to "sup" with us, and thus by abiding, will transfer that which was written on tables of stone, to fleshly tables of the heart. (2 Cor. 3:3.) "I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes." Ezek. 36:27.

Who Is Responsible?

(Continued from page 3.)

Right here we are getting to the heart of the matter. Think of the vast, and still mounting, sums that all the nations are spending year by year on weapons of war, for atom bombs, guided missiles and rifles, for super-bombers, battleships, and submarines, for tanks and guns.

And think also of the equally vast sums that are expended by the peoples of these nations on drink, tobacco, gambling, and all the machinery of amusement.

The sombre fact is that a great proportion of the wealth which human ingenuity is producing in all the civilized lands is being expended to satisfy man's insatiable craving for pleasure or to secure him from robbery, enslavement, or death at the hands of his fellow-men. And so there is not enough left to spend on the proper protection of the millions who travel by train and air, or the millions more who are exposed to danger in their various vocations and trades, or who precariously occupy the lowlands along our coasts.

If only all the multiplied millions which are spent on the harmful pursuits falsely called pleasure and on man's war upon his fellow-man were applied to the housing, clothing, feeding, and protection of mankind, the world could be a paradise indeed! Only recently Mr. George H. T. Kimble of the American Geographical Society told in the *New York Herald Tribune* what he could do in Europe, in the Middle East, in Africa and in the cold regions of the north if he had a fund of three thousand million pounds at his disposal!

The fact is that many of the so-called natural

catastrophes which are so often attributed to God or to Satan are the outworking and responsibility of human sin! They stem back and are ultimately consequences of the Fall.

Ever since the first act of disloyalty to a beneficent Creator in Eden, mankind has been caught in the toils, and has been reaping, in calamity and tragedy, the fruits of his rebellion.

If God were to protect man from the results of his sinful folly He would merely confirm him in his sinful ways.

If He had arrested the course of evil before it had spread from the courts of heaven to our earth Satan would have perished with the unanswered indictment of God as an arbitrary Dictator upon his lips.

No, there was no other way open to God but to permit the rebels against His universal rule to work out their rebellion and bear its consequences until the vileness of Satan's insinuations were manifest and the character of God was fully vindicated before the universe.

"And how long will that be?" the agonized question quickly comes. Not long now, is the assuring answer of the Word. Indeed, these multiplying calamities are evidence that the "last days" are here. (Matt. 24:7, 8; Luke 21: 25, 26.)

Satan has almost shot his bolt. Mankind, as H. G. Wells had to admit just before his death, is almost "at the end of its tether." Soon God will step in to cope with a situation from which, for unaided man, there is "no way out" (Luke 21:25, literal translation of "perplexity"), to cause wars to cease, to banish hunger and thirst, pain and sickness and death, and to restore the earth to its Edenic glory by the destruction of the author of sin and all who continue with him in rebellion against the government of God.

In a world which has almost filled up the cup of its iniquity, faith and hope in God do not confer any immunity from the consequences of the age-long rebellion of sin. Saint and sinner may be equally involved in the multiplying catastrophes of peace and war in these

last hours of time. But the child of God knows, amid all the tragedy of a lost world, that none of His faithful ones suffers and dies forgotten or overlooked by a loving Father on high. And with the dawn of God's to-morrow, the sorrows of this present darkness will be abundantly compensated in the glory and joy of the new world of eternal peace.

◆ ◆ ◆

"I Will Come"

(Continued from page 5.)

a day! Every page of the New Testament is studded with jewelled promises that Jesus will return. More than a score of whole chapters in the New Testament record history-making events which lead to the second advent, so that we may know the exact location of our generation in the stream of time. And yet, how nearly parallel is the religious life of the present-day world to that prevailing at the time of Jesus' first appearance.

But then another of those buoyant scriptures rings in our ears and knocks at our hearts. We listen: "And when ye see these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28.

We need not expect much encouragement for our faith from the sayings of men, or the events of our day, except as these fulfil other promises of the Word. We must "look up." We must "lift up our heads," for the answer to our faith will come from above where the assembled hosts of heaven await eagerly the divine pronouncement, "It is done." Rev. 16:17. Then will be released the pent-up eagerness of millenniums as "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" (Rev. 5:11) of angels man the ramparts of the eternal heavens ready to take over the "first dominion" lost through sin, but won back again through Calvary. (Micah 4:8; Rom. 5:14-17.)

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus," says every believing heart in this last generation.

- 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

Tommy's Echo

By P. Burnell, F.Ph.S.

TOMMY was a very fortunate little boy, although he did not realize it. He had one of the kindest of mothers, and his father spent a lot of money on toys and sweets to make him happy. But the fact was, Tommy often grumbled, and stamped his foot, and showed his temper by saying rude words, when his mother asked him to go to the shop or clean his shoes or chop the sticks.

One Monday when there was no school, Tommy got up and had a nice breakfast, put on his shoes, took his jacket from the peg, and without a single word to his mother, went off into the wood near to his home.

He was in one of his sulky moods, so his poor mother thought it best not to say anything to him, and just left him to his miserable self. She hoped he would soon cheer up.

In the wood, Tommy imagined he heard another boy, not far away, so he shouted, "Hallo!" in a very nasty voice.

Straightway, to his amazement, there came back an answer, "Hallo!" just as horrid. "Who is that?" thought Tommy, very much offended.

He never stopped to think that what he heard was the echo of his own voice.

So he shouted, "Come 'ere!"

—forgetting his "h" in his temper.

The voice replied just as nastily, "Come 'ere!"

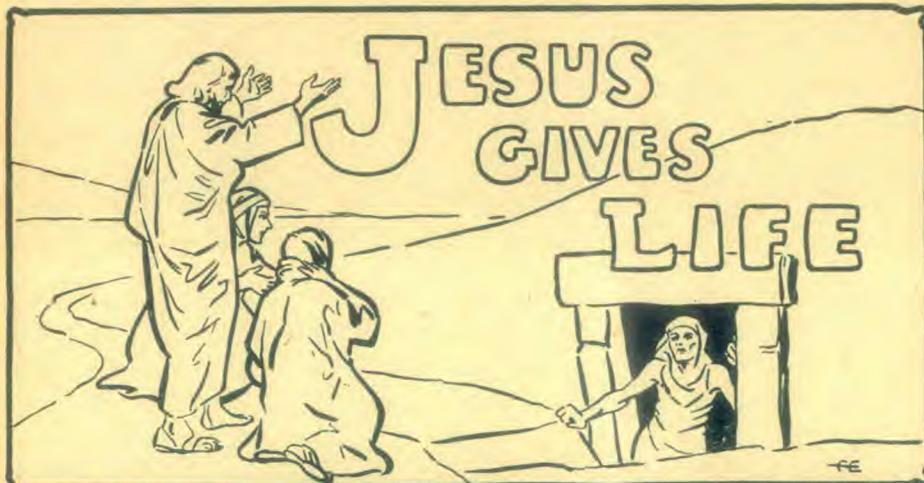
Tommy became very angry, because he didn't like to be spoken to in that ill-mannered way, so he shouted back angrily, "Shan't!" and the reply came back every bit as bad tempered.

At last he got so heated that he told the horrid little boy to "Shut up!" and the rude boy answered back in exactly the same rude way.

Sulkily Tommy continued to call to the boy in the wood, and he searched everywhere for him, behind all the trees, in the bushes, in the long grass—but no, he wasn't to be found!

"Well!" he murmured to himself, "That's a mystery. I'd just like to find that boy and tell him to his face not to be so rude to me."

Thoroughly annoyed, Tommy went home and told his mother that there was a bad boy in the wood who was shouting the most horrible things to him. Tommy's mother seemed to understand—as most mothers do, and as your mother does. So she told him to go back and find the boy and speak kindly to him and see what happened. At first he



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 April 16th. (If Our Times is delivered late, still send in your picture. All attempts will be considered.)

decided not to go, but then he changed his mind and went back to the wood.

"Hallo there!" called Tommy cheerily. The answer came back in a cheery voice, "Hallo there!"

"Come and have some fun," invited Tommy. And again the reply came in the same happy tones, "Come and have some fun."

He searched for a long time for this happy boy just as he had looked for the rude boy, but he had to give it up. The boy just wasn't to be found, but his mother told Tommy it was his echo, the echo of his own voice, and he never forgot it. He understood, perhaps for the first time, the truth of the words he sang in his Sabbath school:

"Kind words can never die,
Nol never die."

Jean Learns the Hard Way

By Ellaruth Wren

"But, Mamma! I won't do it again. I promise."

"Now Jean, I have told you before that you must not climb around on that old fence. It may fall over some day with you on it. You had better go into the house now."

Jean thought Mother was old-fashioned in her idea that the fence would fall. Why! She wasn't heavy.

One day while Mother was away, Jean thought she would hurry with her work, then skip out and try walking on the fence. This she did. As she was nearing the end, she glanced up to see if Mother was coming down the road. She was! But at the same time the fence gave way, spilling Jean into a mass of brambles.

She didn't dare call for help, as Mother would hear her. She must work fast to get her clothes untangled before Mother saw her, but the faster she hurried, the more tears she got in her dress. Just as she freed herself, Mother came into the garden. Jean felt ashamed of herself as they entered the house together. Mother didn't say a word. She merely looked at Jean, then began to wash her cuts.

Needless to say, Jean learned her lesson the hard way.

Your Letter

My Dear Sunbeams,

I AM sure you all enjoy hearing about your Sunbeam friends, so to-day, I will tell you about one or two who are well known to us.

For many weeks, I wondered why no paintings came from Siegfried Baron of Church. Siegfried had always entered so regularly for the competitions. Now I have a letter from his sister Eleonora, who tells me that unfortunately he has fractured his wrist.

We all sympathize with you Siegfried, and pray that you will have a speedy recovery. Siegfried and Eleonora have moved into a new house. And so have Richard, Nigel, Heather, and Stuart Payne of Cheltenham. How excited you all must have been.

I am sure your mothers were able to find lots of jobs for willing Sunbeams. Jean Sparkes of London has also been a willing Sunbeam, helping to nurse her mother, and amuse her brother James, too. Well done, Jean.

Yours affectionately,
AUNTIE MARGARET.

Results of Competition No. 26

Price-winners.—Susan Clew, 17 Rochester Terrace, Headingley, Leeds, 6. Age 12; Colin Doggett, 58 Wellesley Avenue, Norwich. Age 8.

Honourable Mention.—Josephine Dunstan (Bodmin); Myrtle Green (Salisbury); Brenda Plant (Stoke-on-Trent); Esther Dunstan (Bodmin); Richard Payne (Woodmancote); Greta Crocker (Binfield); Ruth Campion (Torquay); Pearl Rich (Launceston); Rita Moss (Southampton); Shirley Simpson (Coventry); Margaret Peart (Bishops Cleeve); Sigrid Rutishauser (Wembley); Stuart Payne (Woodmancote); Amy Randlesome (Stockton); C. Annett

(Annalong, N. I.); Connie Brown (Kelso); Robert Johnson (Croxley Green).

Those who tried hard.—Ruth Price (Wokingham); Miriam Harris (Cambridge); Jean Walker (Nottingham); E. Phillips (Yate); Sandra Brown (Liverpool); Marina Nepean (New Malden); John Plant (Stoke-on-Trent); Joyce Hobbs (Swindon); John Roberts (Bishops Cleeve); E. Eaglen (Norwich); Mary Callaghan (Tadworth); Anthony Peart (Bishops Cleeve); Lesley Edwards (Norwich); Roger Smith (Southampton); Nigel Payne (Woodmancote); Rodney Capes (Norwich); Christine Champman (York); David Godden (Folkestone); Jean Weatherstone (Raynes Park); Marilyn Sach (Colchester); Martin Cooper (York); Heather Payne (Woodmancote).

Results of Competition No. 1

Price-winners.—Pamela Walker, 24 Utting Avenue, Anfield, Liverpool, 4. Age 14; Ruth Campion, Fern Tor, 8 Haslam Road, Upton, Torquay, Age 10.

Honourable Mention.—Miriam Harris (Cambridge); Myrtle Green (Salisbury); Margaret Graham (Ballymoney); Ethel McColl (Dumbartonshire); L. Ester Lunstan (Bodmin); Eric Huggins (Nottingham); Adrienne Edwards (Torquay); Richard Payne (Woodmancote); Alice Strowger (Lowestoft); Ena Darroch (Belfast); Pamela McAvoy (Belfast); Mary Bailey (Stoke-on-Trent); Margaret Bailey (Stoke-on-Trent); Edwin Barnett (Watford); Trevor Goddard (Iver); David Birch (Coventry); Nigel Payne (Woodmancote); Martine Cooper (York); Margaret Peart (Bishops Cleeve); Roger Brooker (Rainham); Clyde Phillips (Merthyr Tydfil); Gillian Plant (Stoke-on-Trent).

Those who tried hard.—Josephine Dunstan (Bodmin); Brenda Plant (Stoke-on-Trent); Alec McColl (Dumbartonshire); Thomas Carrock (Clacton-on-Sea); John Dale (Middlesbrough); Amy Randlesome (Stockton); David Hollister (Bristol); Janet Brooker (Rainham); Elsie Stormonth (Angus); Colin Glennister (Leicester); Joan Foat (Hayes); Raymond Steele (Birmingham); Margaret Sapsford (London); Christine Knickerson (Norwich); Doreen Pearce (London); Anthony Peart (Bishops Cleeve); Patricia Brown (York); Marilyn Hartland (Barry Dock); David Simmons (Torquay); John Plant (Stoke-on-Trent); Yvonne Brooker (Rainham); Colin Doggett (Norwich); Margaret Roberts (Stoke-on-Trent); Christine Horne (Bristol); Jean Simmons (Torquay); Linda Cracknell (Coventry); Frank Bell (Badminton); Jill Plummer (Coventry); Hazel Harris (Cambridge); Anne Mills (Chelmsford); Stewart Payne (Woodmancote); Heather Payne (Woodmancote); Miss Bartlett (Thorpe); Roy Lowe (Great Barr).

The Bible and OUR TIMES

(Formerly "Present Truth")

Vol. 69. No. 7. 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

Joad and Second Coming

"CAN God," asks Dr. C. E. M. Joad in his latest book, *The Recovery of Belief*, "permit man to come to so lamentable an end and to destroy himself through the misuse of that very gift of intelligence with which God endowed him? . . . And if not, will He once again intervene with one of His mighty acts to arrest the drift of mankind to self-destruction? May there perhaps be a Second Coming? Certainly the stage seems set for it."

Only Logical Position

"FROM the point of view of the Christian religion," declared Compton Mackenzie in an article on Sunday observance in the *Sunday Graphic*, "there is no kind of valid argument for Sunday, rather than Saturday, worship: the only Christians with any logic in this matter are the Seventh-Day Adventists who have gone back to worshipping on Saturday."

When Will The Dead Rise?

(Continued from page 10.)

whosoever was not found written in the Book of life was cast into the lake of fire." "This is the second death." Rev. 20:12, 15, 14.

"Blessed and holy," John appropriately comments, are they that have part in the first resurrection, and conversely unblessed and unholy are those who come forth in the second. Eternal fellowship with God will be the portion of the former "for on such the second death hath

no power." Rev. 20:6. Eternal alienation from God will be the fate of the latter upon the execution of the just sentence of God.

Faced with these alternatives of eternal life and eternal death we may well ponder the vital factor which determines who will have a part in the first resurrection and who will remain in the grave until the second.

The blessed company of those who, in the first resurrection, are clothed with the glorious body of immortality will be the ones who here and now are "quickened" into new life through the operation of the Spirit of God. Transfiguration will clothe these new men and women in Christ with incorruptible, immortal bodies and complete Christ's work of re-creation. Then, indeed, will the saints be ready to enter into their everlasting inheritance. Those, however, who fail to avail themselves of this inward transformation which Jesus now offers to all, prove themselves unworthy of an immortal body. So they must sleep on until the resurrection of damnation, when they will be raised to hear the just sentence upon their neglect of the salvation of God.

Surely then, while mercy waits, we will listen to the touching appeal of the apostle Paul: "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" in order that in a measure here and now, and hereafter in all its fullness, we "may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Rom. 12:2.

