

DISCOVERED

CRISIS

ATOMIC

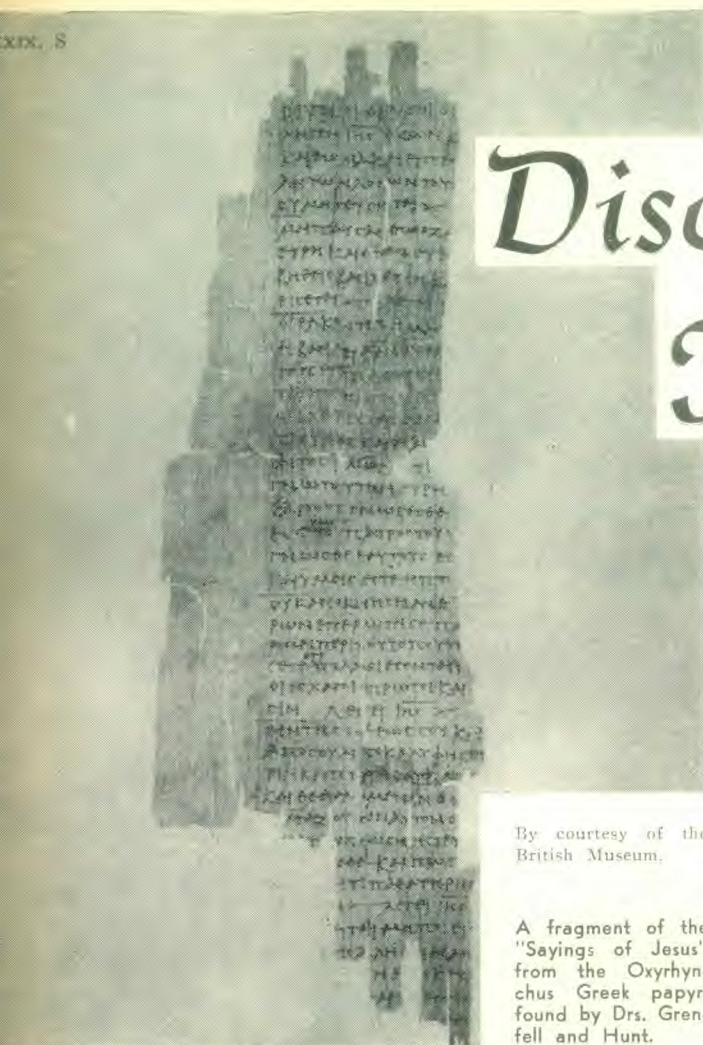


PEACE OR WAR

EASTER

The Bible and

Our Times



Discerning The Times



Current Events in the Light of the Bible

By THE EDITOR

By courtesy of the
British Museum.

A fragment of the
"Sayings of Jesus"
from the Oxyrhynchus
Greek papyri
found by Drs. Gren-
fell and Hunt.

HOW MANY GOSPELS?

☪ AFTER holding the spotlight for eleven or twelve years the Dead Sea Scrolls have recently been displaced as a focus of archaeological and biblical interest by another manuscript discovery made in Egypt actually before the unearthing of the Dead Sea Scrolls but long held back from scholars by the Egyptian government.

The extensive collection of papyri comprise thirteen leather-bound codices containing over 1,000 pages of manuscript written in the Coptic language and dating from the third or fourth century. They were found by peasants digging in a pagan burial ground near Nag Hamadi about sixty miles from Luxor in Southern Egypt. When one or two leaves found their way into the Cairo antiquities market, their value was recognized and a search was made which brought to

light all of the papyri which had not been destroyed.

Most valuable of the documents were twenty pages containing the alleged "Sayings of Jesus," which began with the words, "These are the secret words which Jesus the living spoke, which Didymus Judas Thomas wrote down." Immediately this document was designated "The Gospel of Thomas," though it is not a narrative but only disconnected "sayings," and the idea has become current that perhaps we have a "fifth gospel" which must be placed alongside the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in our Bibles. Indeed a series of articles in the *Evening News* by Professor Gilles Quispel, one of the translators of the papyri, is subtitled, "A New Source of Christianity Besides our Bibles."

What, then, are we to say about this far-reaching claim? Is it conceivable that the basic Protestant belief that the New Testament as we have it comprises the whole corpus of inspired writings handed down to us by the first apostles is mistaken, and that a "fifth gospel" must now be added?

In answer to this question it should be pointed out at once that this is not the first time that new alleged "gospel" material has turned up in the form of collections of "sayings" of Jesus and new

"gospel" fragments. Many such have been found, but when examined they have invariably been so alien in form and content to the New Testament gospels as to prove them to be perversions of the life and teachings of Jesus. Some are fantastic miracle stories of the boyhood of Jesus, which can be quickly dismissed. Others are more subtle "sayings" put out as authentic in order to support early corruptions of the true Gospel of Christ.

Most prolific of these latter are the writings of the Gnostic Christians who flourished particularly in Egypt. These Gnostics were a group which attempted to assimilate the teachings of Christ with the philosophic ideas of the Gnostic philosophers of Greece. According to the Gnostic Christians Jesus was not the divine Son of God but an "angel" or a "wise man" who received secret revelations concerning salvation from God and communicated them to His circle of disciples. The Gnostics despised the body and exalted the spirit of man. They rejected the teaching of the Old Testament and the divine law in favour of the inner spiritual knowledge which Christ had revealed to them, and instead of the future kingdom so prominent in biblical revelation they proclaimed a spiritual kingdom into which man entered through the special "gnosis" or knowledge to which they had the only key. Without doubt Paul recognized the beginnings of this serious deviation from true Christianity when he warned the young apostle Timothy to beware of "science [gnosis] falsely so called" (1 Tim. 6:20), and counselled the Christian believers to reject any other "gospel" than the authentic Gospel he and his fellow apostles preached, even though it purported to come from an "angel" from heaven. (Gal. 1:6-9.)

Now when this new collection of papyri from Southern Egypt was examined by scholars it was quickly realized that it also was the product of Gnostic activity and when attention was concentrated upon the so-called "Gospel of Thomas" it was recognized not as a true gospel but as a series of forged "sayings" intended to foster Gnostic ideas.

Actually a part of this collection has been known for many years in second-century Greek manuscripts, from which this third or fourth century Coptic translation was probably made. As long ago as 1896 Drs. Grenfell and Hunt dug out of rubbish heaps in the Fayum in Central Egypt some Greek papyri dating from about A.D. 140 containing a number of "sayings of Jesus" different from anything in our Bibles and which now prove to be identical with these Coptic "sayings" recovered some years ago.

The opening words of the "gospel": "These are the secret words which Jesus spoke" bring to mind at once the Gnostic teaching of the hidden "gnosis" known only to an inner circle of disciples, and which provides the secret key to salvation and immortality.

Another "saying" which reads, "Cleave the wood and I am there; lift up the stone and you will find me," suggests the mystical teaching of the immanent god of the Gnostics rather than "God manifest in the flesh" of the true Gospel.

According to the "gospel" of Thomas, Jesus poured scorn on the kingdom of God being a real future kingdom. "If those who lead you say to you, Behold the kingdom is in heaven, then the birds will precede you. . . . The kingdom is within you and outside of you."

Among the "sayings" are the parables of the sower, the Gospel net, and the rich fool, but each is modified here and there to stress Gnostic ideas. Other "sayings" seem to discourage marriage while Jesus of the Bible was ever ready to place His blessing on it.

From all this we can hardly accept Professor Quispel's assertion that in the "gospel of Thomas"

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Keystone
Visitors to the Moscow Planetarium listen to a lecture on the Soviet moon rocket, Lunik III.



Studio Lisa

Many today profess themselves too "wise" to accept the plain teaching of the Word of God.

✚ FAMILY life in Grandfather's comparatively carefree days was in striking contrast to today. In a way that many now fail to recognize, home was rightly looked upon as the very heart of society, and positive efforts were made to keep it pulsating strongly and healthily. Popular opinion agreed that by far the most important factor in making happy and contented homes was the power of God.

In nearly every home the Bible had an honoured place—not merely as a pious ornament, but as the inspired treasure-house of truth that was daily studied. It was the rule, not the exception, to have family worship. Parents faithfully followed the ancient advice concerning the truths of the Bible, "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy chil-

The LIGHT that is DARKNESS

dren, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house." Deut. 6:7.

In 1889, Cambridge University's Provost sent a circular to the undergraduates appealing for faithfulness in attending morning chapel. In it he wrote: "You, most of you, come from homes where family prayers are the custom."

And of course, almost everybody went to church. Habitual failure to do so was frowned upon. They took seriously the apostle Paul's appeal: "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." Heb. 10:24, 25. Worship at home nurtured and strengthened the true family spirit; while worship at

church promoted the true community spirit.



A CHANGED PATTERN

Today, life's pattern has changed. The Bible, no longer regarded as inspired, is still respected but seldom read. Prayers at home, if there is any prayer at all, are generally limited to tiny tots at bedtime. While church-going as a regular practice

is followed in Britain by a meagre five per cent.

The Bible itself diagnoses the trouble as "black light." This anomalous term is justified in the light of Jesus' sombre reminder, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness" (Matt. 6:23); and also in view of Isaiah's lament, "Woe unto them that . . . put darkness for light, and light for darkness." Isa. 5:20. Paul the apostle thus envisages the malevolent author of "black light": "Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light." 2 Cor. 11:14 (Moffatt). He continues, "It is no wonder if his ministers also masquerade as ministers of righteousness. Their doom will answer to their deeds." Verse 15.

Today's great and basic trouble, in the home and in society generally, is the acceptance of darkness for light. Much that is regarded as moral and spiritual truth, and which is widely cherished, taught, and followed, is declared by God to be darkness. It is "black light." It emerges from the author of darkness who piously masquerades as the exponent of truth, and it is largely responsible not only for religious declension but for the unique and deadly perils of our day. It is black, because it stands in contrast and opposition to God's Word, the Bible, which alone is declared to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. (Psa. 119:105.)

PRINCIPAL ELEMENT OF "BLACK LIGHT"

Without question, the theory of evolution heads the list as the principal element of the "black light" which has eclipsed, in the minds of the majority, the true light of the Bible.

The eclipse began with Charles Darwin who

By R. D. Vine

taught the blood-and-plunder doctrine of "the survival of the fittest." In 1864 Britain's famous Prime Minister, Disraeli, publicly confessed at Oxford: "The question is this—Is man an ape or an angel? My Lord, I am on the side of the angels." But the dawn of modern materialism had really begun, and even the faith of such men as Prime Ministers Disraeli and Gladstone could not arrest it. Backed by "science falsely so-called" (1 Tim. 6:20), the theory gained ground that man is definitely not "an inferior angel, but a superior ape." It was more popular to believe

that man's trend, both biologically and spiritually, was upward and not downward as the Bible declares.

The "black light" of the doctrine of "inevitable progress" had set in, and its baleful fruits were borne abundantly and speedily in men's minds and hearts.

"BLACK LIGHT'S" BALEFUL FRUITAGE

First to suffer was the general conviction that the Bible was God's inspired Word. The scriptural record of Creation, of man's Fall in the Garden of Eden, and of the Flood, told a story so vastly different from the popular theory, that the Bible account was rejected as a myth. Yet this very record is the one thing that reveals the point and purpose of the Bible's main message—that of salvation through the Saviour Jesus Christ.

The theory that man's trend is automatically upward, destroys the need for God's merciful plan of human redemption. Man's sins are re-interpreted as merely regrettable traces of our animal nature for which we are no more responsible than we are for the colour of our eyes or the shape of our nose. "Whereas our forefathers regarded sin as disobedience to God, and penitence as necessary for forgiveness, the psychologist finds its roots in the subconscious, and claims to remove it by psychoanalysis."—*In An Age of Revolution*, page 47.

Satirizing this new view of sin, Samuel Butler in *Erewhon* envisaged the carefully tended patient—cared for at public expense, and visited by sympathizing relatives and friends—who was suffering from a "severe attack of immorality."

Thus has the "black light" of modern theories obliterated the truth about sin, man's accountability to God, the meaning of the cross of Christ, the final judgment, and the doctrine of eternal rewards and punishment.

GOD IS EXPLAINED AWAY

Worse still, the "black light" of "progressive thinking" explains that all deities men worship have no existence outside of human thought. The true God is thereby debased to that of a mere mental projection; while our Saviour Jesus Christ is respected not as the divine Son of God, but merely as "a premature example of a spiritually perfect man."—*Prof. du Nouy*.

It is natural therefore that the wholesome practice of family worship has declined, that prayer has largely lost its meaning, that heaven is re-

(Continued on page 12.)



The prophet Elijah reproves King Ahab for coveting his neighbour's vineyard.

COVETOUSNESS

☪ COVETOUSNESS is one of the chief causes of widespread misery. "I want that," is one of the earliest phrases we learn to speak. This is numbered among the sins that lurk within the human heart and that "defile the man," Mark 7:21-23. To covet is to desire something or someone belonging to another. The medieval theologians spoke of it as "Avarice, a lecherous desire for earthly things."

The law of God contains two tables: the first outlines our relationship to God; the second sets forth our duty to our parents, and our fellow-men. The commandments of the first table cover our thoughts, words, and deeds Godward in that order. The second table begins with deeds, then words, and finishes with thoughts. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's." Exod. 20:17.

By J. A. McMillan

This sevenfold enumeration of our neighbour's possessions lays down the inherent right of each individual to private property and possessions. There is much loose thinking these days about the evil of private profit and property, as though it were essentially evil to own things. Yet everyone is born into the world with the acquisitive instinct. "That's mine" springs spontaneously from the lips as soon as we learn to speak and express our thoughts. It is a natural law for each of us to want to own things. It is only unnatural when our greedy eyes covet everything we see.

KING AHAB'S GREED

Greed is one of the causes of coveting, and greed can possess the heart of the poor man as fully as that of the rich. In point of experience

there is more temptation for the poor to be covetous than for the rich, for the latter often have more than they can appreciate. But covetousness is not circumscribed by environment or possessions. It is a state of mind. King Ahab had many broad acres and much possessions, but he coveted the vineyard of his lowly neighbour Naboth. Queen Jezebel conspired the death of Naboth in order to add this small plot of ground to her husband's estates. Elijah confronted Ahab with the double crime and charged him, "Thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord." 1 Kings 21:20. He who allows his mind to become a prey to covetous thoughts is indeed selling himself in a cheap market.

Our Lord was once approached by a man anxious to have Him settle a disputed inheritance. He replied, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." He then gave point to this by telling the story of a prosperous farmer who enjoyed a bumper harvest. Instead of sharing his good fortune with less fortunate neighbours, he decided to enlarge his barns in order selfishly to indulge himself. "But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Luke 12:15-21.

Covetousness made this farmer a miser, and the Bible calls him a fool. He was a fool because of three blunders he made. First, he mistook his body for his soul (verse 19); he thought that the spirit of man could be satisfied with "things." Secondly, he mistook himself for God. (Verse 18.) He spoke of "my barns," "my fruits," as though all these were at his disposal alone. Like so many today, he left God out of the picture. And thirdly, he mistook time for eternity. Confronted with death, he had to leave everything. (Verse 20). He thought he was a prudent man, but he had not made any provision for eternity, therefore Jesus called him a "fool." This brief parable, more luminous than voluminous, stresses the baleful consequences of covetousness.

HOW PAUL DISCOVERED HIMSELF

It is not only the worldly mind that is besieged by covetousness. It attacks the religious mind as readily as the secular mind. Saul of Tarsus was a deeply religious man. He described himself to the Philippians: "Circumcised the eighth

day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; as touching zeal, persecuting the church; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless." Phil. 3:5, 6, R.V.

All this adds up to an impeccable religious character. Such a one might well regard himself as irreproachable. And, indeed, Saul of Tarsus so regarded himself until the law of God pierced through the crust of his self-righteousness and he came face to face with the real Saul, the sinner whose heart and mind were at variance with the will of God. "Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Rom. 7:7, R.V. (margin).

Saul, like so many before and since, had a pretty conceit about himself until he looked into the mirror of God's law, and saw "his natural face." James 1:23. The margin of the Revised Version gives the Greek of this passage as "the face of his birth." Our natural propensity is to covet that which belongs to another. That is the heritage of our fallen nature. And "that which is born of the flesh is flesh." John 3:6. Hence the need for spiritual enlightenment and regeneration in order that our "natural face" may be altered.

WHO SHALL DELIVER ME?

Paul discovered through the commandment, "Thou shalt not covet," that man's nature is sinful and his desires depraved. By seeing his covetousness for what it truly was, he saw his natural face in the mirror and was shocked into sensing his deep need of God's grace for a lost sinner. So he cried out in fear and distress, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" And while he confronted his sin and his need, immediately he was presented with the saving grace of the Gospel. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 7:24, 25, R.V.

In the school of Christ, Paul had "learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound: in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want. I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me." Phil. 4:11-13, R.V.

If this spirit were to prevail in our economic and industrial world, what a vast amount of misery and unrest would be avoided! Because of greed

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The Seven Deadly Sins.—5



Baptism



Through the Centuries

By E. B. Phillips, B.D., M.Th.

about A.D. 140, somewhat later than Barnabas, says: "We descend into the water and receive the forgiveness of sins." Justin Martyr, about the middle of the second century, in his *Apology*, tells how those who are persuaded and believe the truth, and are determined so to live, are led into the water, "and, according to the manner of the new birth through which we ourselves were born again, they are born again." In the supposedly second letter of Clement of Rome, baptism is represented as the means of the forgiveness of sins; those baptized must preserve their baptism unstained, that by this they may earn the eternal reward.

R. & H.

The Emperor Theodosius II enacted a law to pass the sentence of death upon any denying the efficacy of infant baptism.

✠ THROUGHOUT Christendom, there has been an almost universal departure from the Bible teaching and practice about baptism. We may well ask: How did this apostasy come about? Like every error which is now established in the professed church of Christ, this change took place gradually. Johannes Werns in his book, *Baptism*, points out that there were two chief factors working to this end: superstition and the establishment of the State Church.

Soon after the days of the apostles, it began to be taught that baptism possessed some supernatural power as a means of the new birth and forgiveness of sins, and the church Fathers of the early second century show this tendency to magnify its efficacy. A letter of Barnabas (not the Barnabas who was Paul's companion on the first missionary journey) states: "We go into the water full of sins and filth and come forth fruitful." Hermas, who wrote

BAPTISMAL REGENERATION

This conception of the magical effect of baptism led the way to the doctrine of infant baptism. We can see here also the influence of ancient heathen ideas, such as the Germanic practice of dipping children when they were given their name; and the "aqua lustris" of the Romans, by which boys, on the ninth day after birth, were sprinkled and received their "proenomen." In some of the "Mystery" cults, such as Mithraism, there was immersion as an initiatory act.

The *Didache* or *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* contains the first reference to the permission of baptism by pouring, and then only when sufficient water was not available for the orthodox bath, but the early Fathers make no mention of such a practice, nor of the baptism of infants. However, about the close of the second century we find that the latter custom was gradually being introduced. It naturally followed from the exaggerated teaching about the efficacy of baptism and marked the increasing departure from the

New Testament truth of salvation by faith alone. At the same time there is to be seen the development of the monarchical form of church government and the supreme authority of the bishop (which was advocated as early as the letters of Ignatius). This prepared the way for the setting up of the Papacy.

So common had become the custom of receiving babies into the church, that Cyprian in A.D. 253 held a synod in North Africa over the question as to whether infants were to be baptized on the third or on the eighth day. This was called spiritual circumcision. It was there resolved that no one might be refused divine grace (which was imparted at baptism), least of all little children, "who deserve our help and the divine mercy all the more," seeing they have sinned in nothing more than the sin inherited from Adam.

When Constantine came into power, and the inhuman persecutions of Diocletian and Galerius ceased, there was a sharp decline in Christian faith and practice. Infant baptism was known and increasingly practised at that time, but not until two centuries later had it become generally recognized.

The profession of Christianity had now become popular and it was taught that it was necessary to become a member of this church in order to secure salvation. One became a member by baptism; hence, it was imperative that infants should be able to enter into this community and thus be assured of eternal life, even should they die a few days after birth. Yet there were still many Christian parents who did not have their children baptized. Among outstanding examples for whom baptism was delayed until adult age are Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine.

The false teaching about baptism, both as to its purpose, and the age at which it should be administered, was not the only error that had crept into the church in the first few centuries. Johannes Warns says: "This apostasy consummated itself, step by step, in almost all matters of doctrine. One will be alarmed to perceive that scarcely one biblical truth remained unfalsified, unabbreviated, or without heathenish or Jewish admixture." (Strangely enough Warns makes no mention of the chief of these departures from truth, the substitution of Sunday for the Bible Sabbath, which was first legalized by Constantine in A.D. 321.)

PENALTIES FOR REBAPTISM

When the church united with the State, the doctrines held by the former came to be upheld by the civil law, and it was made a crime to

deviate from those doctrines. If anyone dared to express an opinion differing from that of the recognized church, he was persecuted. Augustine and Ambrose taught that the salvation of the individual depended upon his being a member of the "Catholic" church and Augustine quoted Luke 14:23 as authority for asking help from the government to "compel" the heretics (in this case the Donatists) to enter the one fold. The only entrance door was baptism and there could be only one baptism. Any who repeated this initiatory rite (thereby denying its original saving power) were proceeded against by law. The first instance of such a statute was in A.D. 377, by which the person who rebaptized someone was declared unworthy to be a priest. A few years later an Imperial command was issued to the effect that "whoever desecrated the holy baptism through heretical superstition, shall be excluded from human society, may give no judicial evidence, make no will, take no possession of an inheritance, and be appointed heir to no man." An even more severe law was enacted in A.D. 413 by Honorius and Theodosius II, declaring that any person who rebaptized a member of the Catholic church, together with the one who allowed himself to be persuaded thereto, should be punished with death without mercy.

In the "corpus juris civilis" of Justinian, in the sixth century, an entire section dealt with rebaptism, against the perpetrators of which the extreme penalties of the law were invoked. Numerous synods throughout the Middle Ages passed increasingly stringent laws against heretics, including Anabaptists—people who denied the validity of infant baptism, and declared that the only true form of baptism was by immersion. It is sad to realize that the Reformers in Germany and Switzerland mistakenly joined with Rome in denouncing and harrying these upholders of Bible truth.

BAPTISM TODAY

It is acknowledged by all that for many centuries the primitive practice of immersion prevailed, although sprinkling or pouring water was also allowed. In fact, the authoritative *Catholic Dictionary* admits that such was the case. St. Thomas, in the thirteenth century, speaks of baptism by immersion as the common practice. Since that time, however, it has given place more and more to sprinkling, or "christening." Today most denominations urge that without delay infants be brought to the font and solemnly initiated with due ceremony. The sign of the cross is commonly made by the priest over the child. Where a baby

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❖ ELEVEN years ago the first public announcement was made about the sensational discovery of ancient Hebrew Bible manuscripts in a cave near the Dead Sea. Perhaps no other discovery made during this generation has caught the imagination of the Western world like that of the Dead Sea scrolls in the Qumran caves.

Recently a scholar suggested that the era of biblical studies be divided into B.Q. and A.Q., meaning "Before Qumran" and "After Qumran." Although this suggestion may go too far, it certainly is true that all biblical studies have either been revolutionized or at least been influenced by these discoveries. Many views formerly held have been antiquated, and a completely new science has been established. It is generally recognized that today no biblical scholar can do up-to-date work in his field without taking notice of the information provided by the Dead Sea scrolls, and practically all theological schools of higher learning offer courses in the Dead Sea scrolls.

A bibliography, recently published in book form by C. Burchard, which lists only the scientific publications that appeared on the Dead Sea scrolls during the first eight years after their discovery, mentions 1,556 independent publications and 352 reviews written by 616 authors in twenty-two languages. A constant stream of books and articles dealing with the Dead Sea scrolls is pouring from the presses of many lands. This stream has become so wide that no-one can keep up with it any more, much less be in command of all the information provided. Theological periodicals treat it now as a special discipline, and recently even a new journal, *Revue de Qumran*, has been founded which deals exclusively with these scrolls.

The amount of material discovered during the past eleven years is simply overwhelming. No scholar would ever have expected anything like it. So far not much more has been published than the scrolls and fragments found in Qumran Cave I, which contained also, among others, two scrolls of Isaiah and a commentary on two chapters of Habakkuk. Of the 35,000 fragments extracted from the Qumran Caves II to X, the caves in the *Wadi Muraba'at*, and from the ruins of a monastery named *Khirbet Mird*, only samples have so far been published. Years of study have already been spent on these documents, and although their publication is in sight, many more years will pass before all this material will be available to scholars in published form.

The last Qumran cave found to contain manuscripts has been labelled No. XI. Like Cave I it contained complete scrolls, not just fragments

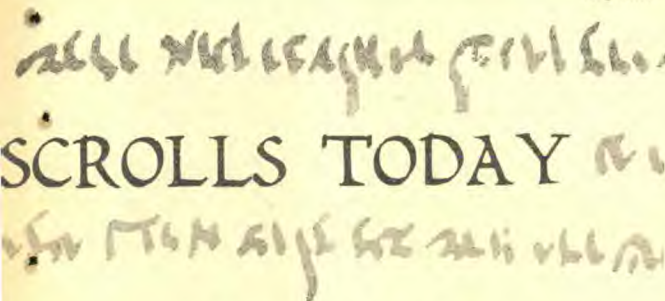


THE DEAD SEA

as the others. So far only preliminary announcements have been made, but we know that among the scrolls of Cave XI there is a magnificent manuscript of the biblical psalms, with some of the psalms missing. Another somewhat fragmentary manuscript containing Leviticus is written in Paleo-Hebrew, the Hebrew script used before the exile. This Leviticus manuscript was written later by a scribe who imitated the venerated ancient script, perhaps from a pre-exilic copy used by him. Of great interest is an Aramaic translation of Job, a so-called Targum. Its discovery disproves the formerly held opinion that Aramaic versions of Old Testament books did not exist in written form until Christian times. Among several non-biblical manuscripts from this last discovered cave is one entitled, "The Celestial Jerusalem."



Keystone



OLDEST COPY OF THE DECALOGUE

Recently a scroll fragment has been acquired from the Bedouins, who originally discovered it in Cave IV. It was purchased with money provided by the Unitarian Church of All Souls in New York, and is now being studied in the Palestine Archaeological Museum. It consists of five-and-a-half columns and is of special interest since its text contains a complete copy of the Ten Commandments. The preliminary publication of this interesting document by Profs. F. M. Cross and P. W. Skehan is due very soon.

Hand in hand with the study of the texts discovered, explorations of the caves and excavations of the ruins of the Dead Sea area have been carried out. The excavation of the ruins of Qumran, the community centre of the sect who left us the

scrolls, has been completed in five campaigns (1951-56). It has provided much information concerning the life, beliefs, and customs of this Jewish sect, which in the time of Christ lived in the wilderness of Judea. In 1958 the ruins at the neighbouring spring of 'Ain Feshkâh were excavated. They seem to be the remains of the farm buildings of this sect.

BATTLES OVER THE SCROLLS

In a brief article like this it is impossible to say much about the result of these discoveries. During the first years of the study of the scrolls a hot battle was waged among scholars concerning their age. This question has long been settled by means of the excavations and other scientific investigations, and it is now almost universally recognized that the Qumran scrolls came from the last two centuries of the pre-Christian era and the first century of the Christian era, and that manuscripts from the *Wadi Murabba'at* and from *Khirbet Mird* originated in the second and succeeding centuries of the Christian era.

The second battle about the scrolls has been waged about their importance for New Testament studies. It is now certain that these scrolls provide us with much information concerning the thinking of the Jews in the time of Christ and the apostles. They have shown that some expressions formerly thought to be of Christian origin were commonly used theological idioms of the apostolic age. However, the uniqueness of Christ's ministry, of His teachings, and of His work of redemption is in no way impaired by anything which the scrolls have brought to light. They simply reveal that the message and work of Christ met the challenge of that time.

Most scholars now believe that the sect which occupied the Qumran area and left us the cave scrolls were the Essenes, a monastic sect, which according to the statements of Philo, Josephus, and Pliny the Elder, had its seat near the Dead Sea in Christ's time. However, some scholars identify the members of this sect—in my opinion without justification—with other known groups of the Jewish nation, as the Pharisees or Zealots.

THE SCROLLS CONFIRM THE OLD TESTAMENT

The student of the Bible is especially grateful that the scroll caves have preserved many samples of the Hebrew Bible of Christ's time. Among

them is one complete book (Isaiah) and several nearly complete ones (Leviticus, Samuel, Psalms, Habakkuk, etc.). The study of these Bible manuscripts, a thousand years older than any Hebrew Bible texts known before the scrolls were discovered, has shown that the text was transmitted with far more accuracy than critical scholars wanted to believe. The scrolls disprove the claim made by all critical scholars of the past that the Old Testament text is corrupt and must be emended on the basis of conjectures and internal evidence, in order to become intelligible. This was ably expressed by Prof. W. E. Albright after the publication of the first Isaiah scroll. He said that this manuscript "proves the great antiquity of the text of the Masoretic Book, warning us against the light-hearted emendation in which we used to indulge."—*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, 118 (April, 1950), page 6.

Most Christian commentaries dealing with Old Testament books are now obsolete and must be rewritten in the light of the information obtained from the study of the scrolls. Some of these manuscripts show a close relationship to the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament made during the second and third centuries B.C. They reveal that of some Bible books there were at least two recensions in circulation, one being represented by the Hebrew Masoretic text, which underlies our English Bibles, while another one formed the basis of the Septuagint, from which most Old Testament quotations were taken by the authors of the New Testament. The study of the scrolls is extremely fascinating and will engage scholars for many years.

No discovery in the Old Testament field has done more to increase confidence in the Hebrew Bible than the finding of the Dead Sea scrolls. That these Bible manuscripts have been preserved for this last generation can certainly be considered an act of Providence for which every Christian should be grateful.

The Light That Is Darkness

(Continued from page 5.)

garded simply as the product of wishful thinking, and that man's moral sense is so blunted as to rationalize even the greatest sins.

One of the greatest perils of the "black light" of human theories is its effect in unfitting men and women for the future life in God's eternal kingdom. Like a powerful narcotic it lulls its victims into the pleasing but deadly oblivion of spiritual smugness and unconcern.

But having denied God, and therefore the Fatherhood of God, it strikes at the Christian concept of the Brotherhood of man. It breaks down the binding ties of mutual respect and love, while uprearing the evil spectres of selfishness, suspicion, and hatred.

Evolution's "black light" was the real basis of Nazism and Fascism. It was the inspiration of the famous German philosopher who was Hitler's guiding star. He wrote of Christian teachings as "slave virtues" unworthy of free men. He applied Darwin's doctrine of "the survival of the fittest." He condemned self-control as an obstacle to the realization of self. "The church," he wrote, "ruined man and made him weak. . . . Christianity is called the religion of pity. . . . Pity thwarts the law of development which is the law of selection."—*The Twilight of the Idols*, page 45.

Such "black light" philosophy directly precipitated the Second World War; and it is almost wholly responsible for the anxieties and hatreds which plague and imperil our present world.

MODERN ERROR PROVES BIBLE TRUTH

The one uplifting feature of popular error is that it provides a most emphatic proof that Bible prophecy, which foresaw and predicted it, is true. (2 Peter 3:3-7; 1 Tim. 4:1, 2; etc.)

True wisdom will lead us back to God's inspired Word. The Bible which claims itself to be the only true revelation of the light is a Book that should be especially studied and followed today. We urge a return to its sacred pages:

Because not a single fact in the whole realm of science disproves it;

Because its prophetic word, which pin-points our days as the "perilous times" of earth's final chapter just before Christ intervenes at His second advent, has thus far been fulfilled with amazing accuracy;

Because it offers the one sure basis of hope for the future;

Because it reveals the One who described Himself as "the light of the World"—even Jesus Christ, through whose sacrifice we may be freed from our sins, reconciled to God, and at last enjoy the priceless gift of immortality in the bliss of heaven.

NATURE testifies that One infinite in power, great in goodness, mercy, and love, created the earth and filled it with life and gladness. . . . Wherever we turn, we may hear the voice of God.

—E. G. White.

God's Words and Ours

By A. B. Cheesbrough

✻ I ALWAYS like to hear Sir Winston Churchill begin his speeches. At first the words come very slowly and deliberately, and one gets the feeling that he is anxious to use just the right word. He is a master of words. In the story of his early life he writes:

"I had picked up a wide vocabulary and had a liking for words and for *the feel of words*, fitting and falling into their places like pennies in the slot. I caught myself using a great many words, the meaning of which I could not define precisely."

The right word, at the right time, in the right place—who can measure the power thereof?

We use words to express our thoughts, and if we use the wrong word, misunderstanding is sure to arise and who knows the end of that? Many of us, when we were young, were taught to sing, "Kind words can never die!" Yes, there are kind words and bitter words, hard words and pleasant words, hasty words and loving words, words of blessing and words of cursing, true words and false words, wise words and foolish words, forceful words and useless words, plain words and mysterious words, smooth words and rough words, courteous words and insulting words, gentlemanly words and sarcastic words, words of praise and words of criticism, and we could multiply further. The Bible says, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver," and "a word spoken in due season how good is it?"

John begins his gospel by calling Christ, "the Word." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Verse 14. Why is He called "the Word"? Is it not because in Christ God has given us the greatest and most revealing expres-



"Take with you words, and turn to the Lord," urges the prophet Hosea.

sion of Himself? The whole of God's thoughts to us and about us are contained in the one Word, "Jesus." "Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins." Matt. 1:21. The Word that has come to us from heaven spells salvation. It sets forth the wisdom of God; it reveals the righteousness of God, and shows how through Christ the sinner may attain to it.

When Jesus cast out the unclean spirit from the man in the synagogue the people said, "What word is this!" They might well ask. It was the same word that was spoken at creation. "He spake and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast." In that word is power. "All power," He declared, "is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." Power to save you and me. Power to save the vilest man on earth. Scientists have discovered and released the power there is in the atom, but Christians have access to the infinitely greater power there is in the Man Christ Jesus. God has released that power to us. There is power in the written Word, the Bible, because it is the vehicle through which the mighty power in Christ is revealed. "And I,

if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me."

But what of our answer to God's Word? "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord," writes Hosea. What words shall we take to Him? "The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." Rom. 2:4. Has He not been patient and forbearing with you? Then take with you words of confession, for "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. And again, "Whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Prov. 28:13.

Take with you words of contrition, for the Lord "saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." Psalms 34:18. "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." Psalms 51:17. "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit." Isaiah 66:2.

Finally note the wonderful words found in Isaiah 57:15: "For thus saith the High and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." When this revival takes place in your heart then you can indeed take with you words of praise and thankfulness for so wonderful a salvation.

How Many Gospels?

(Continued from page 3.)

we have an earlier tradition of the words of Jesus than that contained in the four gospels of our Bibles. Rather is it very clear that these third or fourth century "sayings" are a translation of second century "sayings" put into the mouth of Jesus for the purpose of Gnostic propaganda. Nor can we share Professor Quispel's belief that these new texts "will dominate the study of the New Testament for the next thirty years" and "influence the minds of millions."

It also seems rather an exaggeration for Dr. Oscar Cullman to assert that this document is "comparable in importance to the Dead Sea Scrolls and of even greater significance to the student of the New Testament."

The Dead Sea Scrolls contain genuine Old Testament writings far more ancient than any we have hitherto possessed, and have confirmed in a remarkable way the accuracy with which the Bible text has been transmitted through the centuries. The non-biblical documents have also provided valuable information as to the religious

conditions prevailing among the Jews to whom Jesus came.

The new Coptic texts, being the largest Gnostic library which has yet come into our possession, are important for the new light they will throw on one of the most serious deviations in the early Christian church, but from the point of view of our Bible text the "gospel of Thomas" is not likely to modify in the slightest degree the authority of the four inspired gospels handed down to us from the earliest apostles.

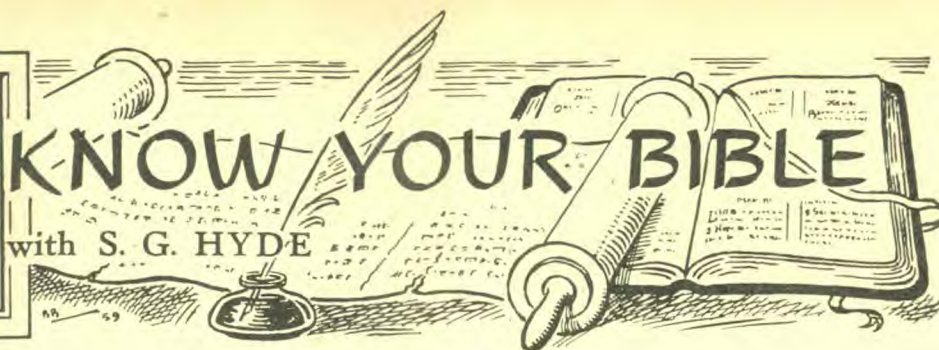
Covetousness

(Continued from page 7.)

and selfishness, strikes abound and distrust increases. On every hand the relations between management and men, between capital and labour, resemble a war that must be carried on to the bitter end, instead of a partnership in which both sides work together for the good of all. The Christian ideal, seen for a brief moment in the apostolic church, when "all that believed were together, and had all things common," when "they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need," will become the actual and ordinary standard of social conduct in the kingdom of God. (Acts 2:44, 45, R.V.) In that day, "a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. . . . The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful. . . . But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and in liberal things shall he continue." Isaiah 32:1, 5, 8, R.V.

The covetous Achan brought defeat and disaster to ancient Israel by coveting a "goodly Babylonish mantle, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold." Joshua 7:21, R.V. The covetous Ananias and Sapphira brought greed into the early church and suffered the consequences. (Acts 5:1-11.) These examples are recorded to warn us all against this insidious disease of the spirit which, if cherished, grows like a deadly cancer until every generous impulse is stifled and the soul perishes.

Jesus places this before us in two unforgettable statements: "Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth," and the probing question, "What shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Luke 12:15; Matt. 16:26, R.V.



GOD'S FINAL APPEAL

Part 2.

The dire forebodings which characterize the third angel's message are couched in language perhaps without parallel among all the divine pronouncements. For that reason it should command our careful consideration.

"If any man worship the beast, . . . the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God; . . . he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb." Rev. 14:9, 10.

Like the first angel's message, its urgency and importance is reflected in the symbol used to describe the angel's vocal proclamation.

"The third angel followed them, saying, with a loud voice." Verse 9.

God, the Father, has always been associated with the qualities of mercy and compassion.

"The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting." Psa. 103:17. "God, who is rich in mercy." Eph. 2:4.

But in this third message we notice that the wrath of God is "poured out without mixture"—that is, without the mollification which the mercy of the Lord usually provides.

"The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, . . . poured out without mixture." Rev. 14:10.

In view, then, of the nature of the threatened retribution, we would do well to note very carefully to whom it will be applied.

"If any man worship the beast." Rev. 14:9.

The "beast" has previously been described in the thirteenth chapter of Revelation.

"There was given him [the leopard beast, verse 2] a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; . . . and . . . to make war with the saints." Rev. 13:5-7.

The language used of the "little horn" symbol in the parallel prophecy of the seventh chapter of Daniel is identical with that used of the "leopard" symbol in Revelation thirteen. In fact both symbols are used to depict the mysterious institution of the Papacy.

"There came up . . . a little horn . . . [who] made war with the saints . . . [had] a mouth . . . speaking great words against the most High, . . . and think [himself able] to change times and laws." Dan. 7:8, 21, 25. (See also Daniel 8:11, 12.)

It is of the Papacy also that Paul speaks in his epistle to the Thessalonians.

Using the symbols of the "man of sin" and the "mystery of iniquity," he declared: "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." 2 Thess. 2:4.

Clearly then, the warning of the third angel's message is directed against the worship of the Papacy or allowing the Papacy (or its Pope) to assume the place that God alone should occupy.

"If any man worship the beast [the Papacy] . . . the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God." Rev. 14:9, 10.

Note.—The claim to have divine status is actually made by Rome as evinced by the following sample excerpts:

(a) "We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty."—Pope Leo XIII.

(b) "He can pronounce . . . in contradiction . . . to the law of God."—*Decretalia*.

(c) "The Pope has power to change times, to abrogate laws, and dispense with all things, even the precepts of Christ."—*Decretalia*.

This warning of Revelation 14:9-11 is also directed against acceptance of or a continuance in the false practices and theories which emanate from Rome and have, either in part or in whole, been adopted by Protestant denominations.

The following are some of the Rome-sponsored

teachings and practices found within the Protestant church:

1. Rejection of the prime authority of the Bible and the acceptance, instead, of humanly devised tradition.

Note.—Dr. J. Dowling, Roman Catholic author of the *History of Romanism* makes the following pointed statement:

"He who receives a single doctrine upon the mere authority of tradition . . . steps down from the Protestant rock, passes over the line which separates Protestantism from Popery, . . . and can give no valid reason why he should not [accept] all . . . the doctrines and ceremonies of Romanism upon the same authority."

2. Belief in "life after death" and the fictitious place of purgatory, a theory sponsored by Rome to gain the minds as well as the material riches of its adherents. Protestants generally, have rejected "Purgatory" in favour of "Paradise"—but the Roman idea of "life after death" has long been an established belief even though the Bible says, "The dead know not anything."

3. The Roman Mass has for a long time been celebrated by many ostensibly Protestant clergy.

4. Confession and prayers for the dead are also commonly practised.

Acceptance of any or all of these papal-inspired theories and practices, brings one within the category of those that "worship the beast."

Of all the papal acts, the deliberate rejection of the Sabbath of Jehovah and the substitution of the false Sunday-sabbath of heathen origin, has a special mention and a specific warning in this third angel's message.

"If any man worship the beast . . . and receive his mark," Rev. 14:9.

Note.—The Sabbath of the fourth commandment, the seventh day of the week constitutes God's mark. (See Ezekiel 20:12, 20; Mark 2:27, 28.) The true Sabbath is the sign (or mark) of creation and the Creator. (See the Fourth Commandment.)

The "Beast" or papal power "who opposeth and exalteth himself above . . . God" (2 Thess. 2:4) has made his own "mark"—also a "sabbath" but a false one. And Rome does not hesitate to declare to all the world that the Sunday-sabbath is of her making and a mark of her power. Here we append the evidence of her claim:

(a) "Of course the Catholic church claims that the change [of the Sabbath day] was her act, . . .

and the act is a MARK of her ecclesiastical power and authority."—Cardinal Gibbons.

(b) "The Catholic church for over a thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, . . . changed the day from Saturday to Sunday,"—*Catholic Mirror*.

(c) "That the Catholic church has instituted the Sunday as the Lord's day instead of the Sabbath . . . shows forth her great power which she solemnly received from Christ."—*Manual of the Catholic Religion*.

The Creator, very rightly, is jealous of His Sabbath. The theory that Sunday is observed instead of Saturday to honour the day of resurrection seems plausible enough. But as the Bible gives no support to such a theory while, on the other hand, both history and the Papacy admit the papal guilt, the true children of God will heed the divine warning and return to the observance of the only Sabbath ever given by God to man.

"Blessed is the man that . . . keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it." Isa. 56:2. "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, . . . then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord." Isa. 58:13, 14.

The first angel's message (Rev. 14:6, 7) calls for us to accept the creatorship of God and, therefore, accept the sign of creation and obey the fourth commandment. The third message which warns against receiving the MARK of the Papacy is also tantamount to a call to re-establish the observance of the fourth commandment as a Christian duty. That this reform is carried out is shown in the climactical passage.

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12.

In describing the saints of God and their victory, specific mention is made of the fact that they are ready to discard, even at great cost, all the papal theories and practices, including that of the false Sunday-sabbath, the admitted MARK of the Papal power.

"I saw . . . them that had gotten the victory over the beast, . . . and over his mark." Rev. 15:2. "I saw thrones . . . I saw . . . them which had not worshipped the beast, neither had received his mark." Rev. 20:4. (See also Revelation 16:2; 19:20.)

There are well over a million Christian men and women in the world today who have accepted the three angels' messages and had the courage to walk in the light of the divine revelation. Dear reader, will you not join them? Will you not follow the counsel of that great servant of God, John Milton:

"If we under the Gospel are to regulate the time of our worship by the prescriptions of the Decalogue, it will surely be far safer to observe the seventh day, according to the express commandment of God, than on the authority of mere human conjecture to adopt the first."

Note.—For information regarding the churches whose congregations gather for worship on the true Sabbath of the Lord, please write to the Editor.

Baptism Through the Centuries

(Continued from page 9.)

is weak, and likely to die, the christening may be carried out by anyone present if there is no time to fetch an ordained priest. It seems strange that intelligent people can be so deluded as to imagine that by spilling a few drops of water upon

a newly-born child the eternal destiny of that little one can be affected. It all goes back to the inherent craving of mankind to do something to assist toward his own salvation. It is too easy and simple to believe that redemption is a free gift, which is to be accepted by faith in the crucified Redeemer. "Without money and without price." Paul's grand doctrine, "justification by faith," which was the watchword of the Reformation, rules out such superstitious notions as "holy" water, the crossing of oneself as protection against calamity, the counting of beads, and the sprinkling of a little water over an infant. We are saved by grace alone, "not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Salvation is a gift, not a prize which can be earned by obeying some prescribed rules. Baptism is not the new birth, neither is it the washing away of inherited or wilful sin. It is unscriptural and invalid for any to receive baptism if they have not personally accepted Christ and had their sins forgiven through His shed blood.

THE DAYS AHEAD...

HAS GOD A PLAN?

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED:

Will God permit suffering to continue?

Will the dead live again?

What is the meaning of world unrest?

Can we expect our Lord's return?

Can we know whether we are saved?

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NOVEMBER 19, 1959

SEVENTEEN

THE CHILDREN'S PAGES

A Grateful Snake

By Brian Pilmoor

"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." Gen. 3:1.

There is a strange imaginary story told of a poor man who, like Paul, went to gather sticks for his fire. Suddenly, one day, he heard the voice of a man who was in trouble. Running as fast as he could, he came to the place in the forest from where he had heard the cry. There he found his neighbour, a rich man,

who had fallen down into a pit.

As he gazed into the deep hole, he was horrified to find that this man had company. There was with him a lion, an ape, and a serpent! The poor man must do something. And it must be done quickly. Pity, duty, and love stirred the poor man to help his rich friend.

He lowered his rope, that he usually carried with him to bind up the bundles of sticks. He called to the man to catch it.

But the serpent was more subtle than any of the beasts of the field; he sensed what was happening. The great snake glided quickly forward and bit the rope, and at the same time coiled itself around it. The poor man pulled and pulled and to his surprise discovered that he had



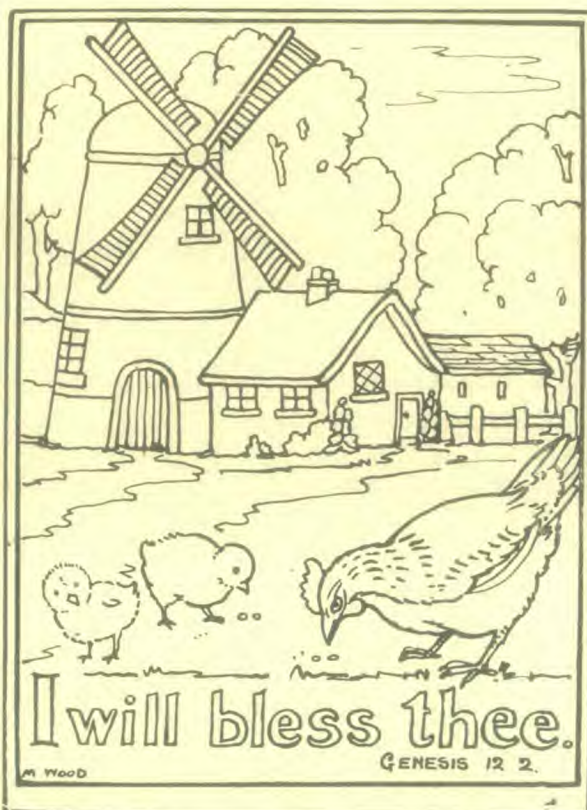
saved the serpent instead of the man. The snake flicked its tail and wiggled away into the tall grass.

The man threw down the rope again. By this time the lion, being the king of the forest, attracted by the man's call, crept forward and suddenly pounced upon the rope. The poor man felt the tug, so he again pulled with all his strength. He was amazed to find that he had rescued the lion and not the man. The lion roared and sprang into the jungle.

For the third time the rope was lowered near to the desperate man. But the ape having heard the lion's roar was attracted to the same spot. He saw the rope. He made it his means of escape.

At last the poor man knew that this time he would definitely save the rich man from the pit. Freed from instant death, the man promised that if the poor man called the next day at his large house, he would amply reward him for saving his life. The next day came. But now the rich man had forgotten what he had promised. He refused to give the poor man his due reward. Sadly disappointed, the poor man wandered back through the forest.

He came across the ape who had heard him coming. It left a great pile of sticks for the



See how nicely you can paint this picture and send it with your name, age, and address to Auntie Pam, The Stanborough Press Ltd., Watford, Herts., not later than December 3rd. [Please do not paste your pictures on stiff card as the best entries are mounted in our special collection of paintings which you can see if you visit us!]

man which it had broken down from the trees and gathered together. Later he found the lion in his pathway. It carried in its mouth an axe which the poor man had once lost a long time ago. With a roar of gratitude it dropped the man's prize possession in the pathway and disappeared again into the dense bush.

Finally as he reached his humble wooden hut, the serpent slid out of the grass. It had a large piece of glittering gold in its mouth. This it dropped at its rescuer's feet before slipping out of sight once again.

This story illustrates the unthankfulness of man. David says of Jesus our Saviour, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." *Psa. 40:2*. Let us always be thankful for all that Jesus has done for us. And remember also: "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." *1 Thess. 5:18*.

That the beasts set us an example in thankfulness as well as in other ways, was recognized in the Bible, where the advice is given: "Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee." *Job 12:7*.

Cherry Tree Farm

By Ronald James

FROM the direction of the old shed in the Hilly-meadow, came the buzz of a saw. Lijah was doing necessary repairs.

Always interested in carpentry, Tim ran to the shed, in the faint hope of being asked to help.

"I liked to use tools time I were a little old boy," said Lijah understandingly. "Now do you give me a hand with this crowbar."

Eagerly Tim added his efforts

to Lijah's, and presently, amid much puffing and grunting, there came a splintering of wood and the floor board was raised.

An astonishing sight met their eyes.

Five big rats, six mice, and several eggs were laid in neat rows on the earth beneath the shed floor. Away raced Tim to fetch his sister Kay, that she, too, might witness this amazing sight.

"Lijah says it's a 'Stoat's Larder,'" he exclaimed in great excitement.

"And, of course, Lijah is right as usual," commented Farmer Jones, joining his children. "Stoats are much disliked be-

cause of their fondness for eggs and poultry; but as you can see, they take a heavy toll of rats and mice which more than pays for their crimes."

"They are jolly good house-keepers, too," laughed Kay. "Fancy laying everything in rows."

"I think they are only responsible for the rats and mice," suggested Tim gravely.

"What about the eggs?" asked Kay, in surprise.

"The chickens laid them!" shouted Tim in a burst of laughter, and promptly took to his heels, well knowing the indignation with which Kay would receive his joke.

THE Sunbeams' CORNER



— Your Letter —

My dear Sunbeams,

BECAUSE OUR TIMES goes to press early, I am writing my letter to you on a nice sunny October afternoon, when winter still seems a long way off after the glorious weather we enjoyed last summer.

I know you must have spent every moment out of doors, that you could spare from lessons. And one way I know this, is because of the fewer entrants for the painting competitions during the summer months.

However, now that the colder days and long dark evenings are here once more, many of you will be bringing out your paint boxes again, so I am looking forward to the postman bringing me a bumper number of entries each time, to the Sunbeam office.

Why not begin right now, with the painting on the opposite page? If you try very hard you may win a prize outright, or achieve an Honourable Mention. And, in case you don't already know this, six Honourable Mentions entitle you to a prize!

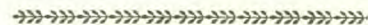
So, get out your paints, and see how attractive you can make our picture.

Yours affectionately,
AUNTIE PAM.

A CHILD'S PRAYER

By Dorothy V. Hicklin

Dear Jesus, look upon Thy little child;
Keep me pure and meek and mild.
Help me to obey my parents dear.
And please, dear Jesus, stay Thou near.
AMEN.



Results of Competition No. 20.

Prize-winner.—Jean Winter, 30 Allens Road, Enfield, Middx. Age 11.

Honourable Mention.—Joyce Hopper (Taunton); Shirley Newton (Stamford Bridge); Stuart Martin (South Yardley); Colin Hole (Looe); Robin Clee (Goonbell); Philip Morley (Stratford); Doreen Floate (Felixstowe); Sylvia Floate (Felixstowe); Margaret Gravenell (Norwich); Michael Crates (Derrington); Melvin Lee (Kilburn); Lorena Greenard (Worlingworth); Susan Stone (Llanrumney).

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J. Scheerboom

✠ THE night! Have you ever thought of its profound significance in the sacred Scriptures?

The well known words, "What of the night?" are a question put many centuries ago to a watchman as he kept guard on the rampart round the town wherein he dwelt. During the hours of night he would be vigilant, ever ready to raise the alarm should he notice any suspicious occurrence. The very lives within the walls were dependent upon the faithful discharge of his duty. Laxity could be fatal not only to himself but for all. Hence the "night" suggests spiritual dangers and the need of vigilance.

If we turn to the Gospel story we shall find that "night" also has a deep significance. It was night when, in a cave, the Word was made flesh and came to dwell among us; it was night when the preventive action of God removed His Son to safety from Herod's fury by flight into Egypt. It was night in Gethsemane when

Out of the Night

By Leonard Shortt, F.P.H.S.

our Saviour agonized for our salvation. We are told that His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood. There was no blazing sun to induce the sweat; bathed in the cold light of the moon He agonized for us. Lastly, in the early night of Calvary, while He hung on the cross, He won His greatest victory. Satan and the powers of darkness received a death blow. Jesus came down into earth's "night" to seek and to save.

Nicodemus came to Jesus "by night." The faithful women came to the sepulchre while it was "still night." There they greeted the eternal dawn. In the night of this world's darkness a glorious light had risen. The crucified Saviour was now the risen Lord, the Light, the Hope of the world.

We have been told to "walk as children of light," the light of the world. Do we? When Judas Iscariot left the upper room to go forth on his work of infamy the evangelist tells us, "It was night." What a tragic commentary. Judas had been offered a place in the light, but he chose darkness. His is the greatest tragedy in Holy Writ. Our Lord had chosen him to live in the light, but he went out "into the night."

Our way is dark until we come to the light. Then let us realize our utter darkness until we come to the Light of the World. "He seeks" us each one. He came that we may have life and light. Let us then choose the light and not darkness.