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OUR TIMES

A SURE FAITH IN A SURE FUTURE



“BLOOD SWEAT and TEARS”

After the famous battle of Salamanca the nation clamoured for a statue of the Duke of Wellington. The sculptor appointed to fashion the model did his utmost to get His Grace to look warlike, but all his persuasion only brought out more clearly the Duke's natural expression which would have pleased the delegates at a peace conference.

Finally in despair the artist said: “Think about what you were doing toward the end of the battle—pose as you felt when you galloped across the battlefield gloriously leading your men to victory.”

“Bah!” replied Wellington in disgust. “If you want to model me as I really was when victory was assured, show me crawling through a muddy trench on my stomach with a telescope in my hand.”

“Lo, the Conquering Hero Comes,” is an inspiring tune, but the road to success and victory is through the grind and tedious details, disappointments, and the sweat of untiring toil.

R. S. JOYCE.



THE BIBLE and OUR TIMES



A family journal of Christian living dedicated to the proclamation of the everlasting Gospel. Presenting the Bible as the Word of God and Jesus Christ as our all-sufficient Saviour and coming King

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ZINJ

ZINJANTHROPUS! — African state? Electronic computer? Rare tropical disease? Ancient Greek general? Or what?

Certainly a breath-taking name, but hardly a household one. In fact, it's the name bestowed upon several hundred skull fragments found in Tanganyika by Dr. Louis Leakey and his wife Mary. It simply means: "East Man."

As with all such rare finds, it was publicized with the usual impressive claims concerning its "age" (100s of 1000s of years) and its hominid "connections" ("a veritable missing link"). It's always a gripping story. But what impressed us were the efforts made by anthropologists to "reconstruct" Zinjanthropus as he or she probably appeared in life. They ranged from repulsively beastlike to fairly human.

It makes one think!

Like many a scientist, we have no doubt Zinj was simply an ancient ape buried by Noah's Flood. That and nothing more. But we are reminded of Scientist W. Howells' admission that "on the very same skull a face can be reconstructed that is hairy and beastlike, or human and refined"! Theorists, of course, prefer the former.

In a way, this is a symbol of something vital for every one of us.

We are reminded of the possibilities for every human life. They range from the ugliness of sinful degradation to the beauty of godliness. The same basic material—you and I and all the others—can be moulded either way.

And unlike poor old Zinj we can choose which way—either uglified by evil, or beautified and ennobled by God.

The latter is vital for happiness here and in eternity. Submission to the "reconstructing" power of God is the one answer to the perennial problem of hatred and strife, crime and war. Transforming grace, it is called. Best of all, no case is too challenging for the divine Reconstructor.

E. G. White puts it this way: "Whatever may be the evil practice . . . which through long indulgence binds both body and soul, Christ is able and longs to deliver. . . . He will set free the captive that is held by weakness and misfortune and the chains of sin."—R.D.V.



Discerning the times...

CURRENT EVENTS IN THE LIGHT OF THE BIBLE • BY THE EDITOR

PYGMIES OR "GODS"?



The infamous "Iron Maiden" with its internal iron spikes, on sale at Sotheby's. This medieval instrument of torture and death symbolizes man's "ungodlike" instincts which are as evident today as they ever were.

Right: Chimpanzees at London Zoo. Evolution relates man to the apes, but there is no valid evidence for doing so.

SCIENTISTS," claims Dr. Edmund R. Leach, Provost of Kings College, Cambridge, "have the right to play God, for scientists, like God, have now become mediators between culture and nature."

Impressed by the titanic powers now at their disposal, Dr. Leach says that "scientists now have it in their power to redesign the face of the earth, and decide what kind of species shall survive to inherit it."

Aware of the terrible difficulties with which this situation is fraught, Dr. Leach says: "How they actually use this staggering potentiality must depend on moral judgments, not on reason. But who shall decide, and how shall we judge?"

Swept from the Christian faith by the theories of evolution, Dr. Leach has nothing constructive or hopeful to offer, no guiding principles whereby to direct the future, except to say: "But unless we teach those of the next generation that they can afford to be atheists only if they

assume the moral responsibility of God, the future of the human race is decidedly bleak." (Article in *The Times*, 16/11/68.)

He is not here arguing in favour of a return to that belief in God which is being abandoned today at an accelerating rate; he is merely emphasizing that having "dispensed" with all mystery by our improved knowledge, having relinquished worship and even the concept of God, "we must learn to play God in a moral as well as in a creative or destructive sense." "The scientist," he says, "must be the source of his own morality."

Views widely held

If Dr. Leach were not so influential a man, and if his views were not a fair example of those which are widely held, we would ignore them. In fact, they represent one of the greatest tragedies of our times: the tragedy of a lost faith not only in the trustworthiness of what the



Bible teaches, but in God Himself. For it is only as we honestly believe in the Fatherhood of God that we can accept as logical and feasible, the concept of the essential Brotherhood of man.

Dr. Leach reflects the trend of our times with reference to God and the Bible when he says: "In Christian *mythology*, as represented by the Bible, God is credited with a variety of functions. He is the Creator who first set the cosmological clock in motion; He is the Law-giver who establishes principles of the moral code; He is the Judge who punishes sinners even when human laws fail to do so . . . and finally, He is a Mediator between sinful man and his destiny." (Our italic.)

Notice the mortifying claim concerning all these cardinal Christian truths. All are debased to the level of myth. God the Creator, God the Law-giver, God the Saviour, God the Judge—these lofty truths are shrugged off as mythological irrelevancies, unable to stand against the objective scrutiny of science.

Basic reason

Now the reason for this deplorable loss of faith is very simple. It is due to acceptance of the belief that Evolution is true: the belief that all the material elements, the creatures, the organization, the symmetry, colour, and beauty, of this world and of the universe generally, just happened by an infinite series of fortuitous chances; the belief that no-one created everything out of nothing and that the mind and power of the God of the Bible had nothing to do with it.

The great imposture

We again affirm that this Evolution theory which supplants God by deifying man, is a complete and unadulterated myth from start to finish. Despite the protestations of its apostles, it is still, in fact, nothing but a theory; and so it will ever remain.

When Evolution's "founder," Charles Darwin, in chapter VI of the most influential non-Biblical book of modern times, wrote: "Long before the reader has arrived at this part of my work, a crowd of difficulties will have occurred to him. Some of them are so serious that to this day I can hardly reflect on them without being in some degree staggered . . .", he described a situation which has persisted till this day. (See *Origin of Species*, Ch. 6, par. 1.)

Evolution is the most stupendous

imposture of our times. When Dr. Julian Huxley told nearly 3,600 delegates at the Chicago Darwinian Centennial in 1959 that "We all accept the fact of evolution," and that "the Evolution of life is no longer a theory. It is a fact," he was expressing a delusion.

In the whole realm of geology, and the biological sciences, there is not a single fact which cannot more easily be used as proof of the Bible record of Creation and the Flood, than as evidence of Evolution.

In all honesty, this must be emphasized. True it is that "by faith" we accept the creation record. (Hebrews 11:3.) We cannot do otherwise than exercise faith because no human recorder was there when it happened. (Job 38:4.) But so great and numerous are the anomalies and "impossibilities" of the Evolution theory, that it almost takes an uncritical credulity to accept it.

Professor W. Le Gros Clark admits: "The interpretation of . . . Evolution which has been offered in the preceding chapters is a provisional interpretation. *Because of the incompleteness of the evidence, it could hardly be otherwise.*"—*The Fossil Evidence for Human Evolution*, page 188 (1964).

Disastrous effect

What we here would stress is the fact that Evolution is primarily responsible for robbing our present generation of belief in the Bible, and in God. This theory is responsible for dethroning God as the object of our worship, and of elevating man as the sole source of human advance, and betterment. It is the basis of humanism, and of modern neo-paganism. It is the cause of what some regretfully refer to as Christendom's twilight.

The only good thing about it is that it proves the truth of what Bible prophecy foresaw and described as a sure sign of "the last days." (e.g. 2 Peter 3.) The more vehemently and effectively it erodes faith in the Bible, the more emphatically does it prove the truthfulness of the Bible. And in this there is hope and assurance for those who are wise enough to do the unpopular thing by believing and following what the Bible says.

Limitations of science

Dr. Leach would elevate scientific man as God. Yet scientists themselves are first to admit the puniness of their knowledge and power. In terms of mere bigness, the only



A fireman placing a bouquet of white carnations on the arm of an image of Mary in Rome's Piazza di Spagna. Adoration of Mary, as widely practised, is completely at variance with the teachings of the Bible.

truly impressive thing is their destructive power. As the United Nations Secretary reported in 1967: "We already have sufficient weapons to destroy all life on this earth."

Power for world-wide betterment in terms of real personal happiness, freedom from disease, from warfare, and from death itself, is a power as far removed from scientific "demigods" as night from noon.

And the hope that man can make, as Dr. Leach suggests, the kind of moral boundaries that will assure peace and happiness is forlorn indeed. In fact, the U.N. report for 1968 noted with profound regret, the "decline in international ethics." "We're getting more beastly, not better, as time goes on."

As the Bible so rightly observes: "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jeremiah 10:23.

Wise are we if we let God fulfil the role of God; if we recognize the puniness of human power compared with His who made, sustains, and fills the limitless universe; if we accept the salvation He offers through Jesus Christ which alone can assure us of present and future happiness, and immortal life in a Utopia of His own creating in the imminent future.

R.D.V.

FLIGHT OF TIME

by A.S. MAXWELL



After one third of a century
are we on the

ROAD TO RUIN OR UTOPIA?

THAT'S how long it is, almost, since we journeyed from England to the United States to take over the editorship of the *Signs of the Times*. In those days people were worrying about Hitler and Mussolini and the possible outbreak of a second world war. They were concerned over the devaluation of money, having but recently come out of the Great Depression. They were troubled about growing crime and violence and the lowering of moral standards. But they hadn't seen anything yet!

International tensions finally reached the breaking point and World War II broke out, leaving millions

dead, Europe in ruins, and half the world's shipping at the bottom of the sea. Since then there have been minor wars in many places, from India to Korea and Palestine to Vietnam—like lesser tremors following a major earthquake, or possibly betokening the approach of a mightier catastrophe.

As for law and order, how peaceful the world of a quarter of a century ago seems now! Then a college riot was a scandal and a race riot unthinkable. Since then we have learned the hard way how fearful is the modern bent to lawlessness.

It has been the same with crime. In those far-off days we used to think the annual crime reports bad enough, but they were nothing to what they are now, with thefts, bank robberies, rapes and murders occurring with fearful frequency, and no one in the U.S.A. travelling city streets at night if they can avoid it.

Moral collapse

As for moral standards, they have disappeared. Even the movies which seemed so shocking in 1936 appear terribly tame today, so much has everybody been "conditioned" by a constantly growing barrage of immorality not only in moving pictures but in books, periodicals and the daily press. As in Israel long ago, every man does that which is "right in his own eyes." Judges 21:25. And as it was in the days of Noah, so now "every imagination of the thoughts" of men's hearts is "only evil continually." Genesis 6:5.

The past third of a century has seen almost total moral collapse, with a rapid descent toward anarchy. Respect for law—any law, any restraint of personal freedom—is vanishing fast.

Not many days ago we asked a policeman at San Francisco airport why so many cars were parked illegally. "We can't do anything about it," he said, adding almost prophetically, "pretty soon no law will mean anything any more."

That's the road to ruin, and mankind is rushing blindly along it. It is the road to anarchy, civil war, and tyranny. Down this road too lie international conflicts and the final nuclear war which will destroy the world.

Signs of the end

What we have been witnessing these past thirty-three years have been signs of the end—ever multiplying evidences that the last days of history, foreshadowed by the prophets of old, are upon us.

We would do well to remember that the final climax is fast approaching and that sooner than we think "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

In that epochal day the Lord of history will take over world affairs, bringing in His reign of righteousness and peace, which good men have ever longed for and so far never found.

NEWS and VIEWS



SINCE LAST NIGHT there have been 180,000 more people born into the world. At the present rate, the net increase in world population is 1,250,000 every week! Or far more than the total population of our nation in a single year! These and other startling facts are provided by the United Nations *Demographic Book* just published. By mid 1967 the world total was 3,420 million! This will be doubled in only 38 years! Three-quarters of the human race live in developing areas, more than half in Asia, 720 million in China.

Annual rates of population increase are: Central America 3.5 per cent; Latin America 2.9 per cent; Africa 2.5 per cent; Asia 2 per cent; North America 1.3 per cent; Russia 1.2 per cent; Europe 0.8 per cent. Trend of infant mortality continues downward, ranging from 12.6 deaths per 1,000 live births in Sweden, to 150 in developing countries.

Greatest life expectancy is for Irish female babies—76+ years; shortest expectancy is in Upper Volta, West Africa—31 years; but male babies in Gabon, West Africa, can expect to live only 25 years.

Extremely high birth-rates are in countries where the Roman Catholic faith predominates. The tormenting issue of birth control clouds with uncertainty any Catholic-Protestant-Orthodox ventures.

Comment.—Population expansion is but one of the many insoluble problems which (a) cry out for divine intervention; (b) are clear proofs that this promised intervention is upon us. It will take the form of the long promised Second Advent of Jesus Christ in glory.

WHEN PATIENCE IS A VICE.—"Patience is not a virtue when picnicking on Vesuvius." *Times* leader, 9/12/68.

VICTORY—NOT DEFEAT.—Jesus' cry on the cross: "It is finished!" did not imply: "I am finished!" It was not a cry of resignation or defeat. It was a cry of optimism and triumph: "It is consummated—completed." On the cross Jesus was not simply dying a martyr's death: He was paying the full and all-sufficient price for human redemption.

DRINK DEATHS.—Alcohol is the direct cause of over 25,000 road deaths every year in the United States. This is equal to the total population of towns like Grantham or Barnet. Apart from this, alcohol also causes 800,000 traffic crashes in the U.S.A. annually.

MATTER OF DEGREE.—Psychologists and psychiatrists tell us that mental illness is only a matter of degree; that each of us harbours traits, habits, and attitudes within us that if carried to extremes would produce all the symptoms of insanity.—*Listen*, Feb., 1969.

"I'VE NOT SEEN JESUS!"—Episcopal Bishop James A. Pike of U.S.A. recently caused a stir by resigning

as Bishop of California because he no longer accepts Bible teachings. Since his 22-year-old son, James Jr., committed suicide in New York in 1966, he has embraced Spiritualism because of its claim to break through the barrier of the tomb. The bereaved father asked: "Have you by now heard anything about Jesus?"

The "familiar spirit" of young Jim replied: "I haven't heard anything personally about Jesus. Nobody around me seems to talk about Him." (*Time*, 15/11/68).

Comment.—And no wonder, because in fact James Jr. is dead. The voice was certainly not his voice. On the contrary, it was that of a satanic mimic. The aim of these spirit agencies is to convey the impression that survival after death is universal and automatic; that death is not an enemy, an experience to be dreaded, but a portal to eternal spiritual progress for everyone; that continuation of "life" is totally unrelated to the Bible truth that positive intelligent acceptance of Christ as our personal Saviour is the one essential condition of eventually gaining life after death. Thus Spiritualism is one of the most powerful and convincing destroyers of belief in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

No wonder the Bible places an emphatic and unconditional ban on dabbling with spiritualistic phenomena. The genuineness of these phenomena is never questioned, but their source is shown to be satanic. (See Deuteronomy 18:9-12.)

DRUG CULTURE.—We live in a drug orientated culture. From aspirin to sleeping pills, from tranquillizers to "the pill," people of all ages are ingesting drugs in greater variety and numbers than ever before.—Dr. S. F. Yolles, in *Listen*, Feb., 1969.

LEARN TO LIVE (and to love) life, as it's too short to crab away. Learn to be an individual—aping is for monkeys. . . . Learn to laugh, to love, and to search for beauty even in the worst situations. Learn tolerance. Learn to listen to others. Learn to look inside, as well as outside, yourself. Above all, learn to like the you that you want to be, and do it now—before you grow too old to care.—Linda Kopp, in *Listen*, Sept. 1968.

SMOKERS BEWARE.—"Deaths from lung cancer among those who smoked half a pack per day are ten and a half times as great as for those who do not smoke."—*Smoke Signals*, August, 1968.

Comment: Of all cancers, that of the lungs claims most victims, and the incidence is steadily rising. Dr. W. H. Stewart wrote: "Cigarette smokers get sick more often and tend to die sooner than do non-smokers. Many sicknesses and early deaths could be avoided were it not for smoking."—*Listen*, August, 1968.

READERS WHO WOULD LIKE TO KNOW more about the great truths of the Bible, are earnestly invited to avail themselves of the special, free, HOME BIBLE STUDY GUIDES advertised on the back cover. Editor

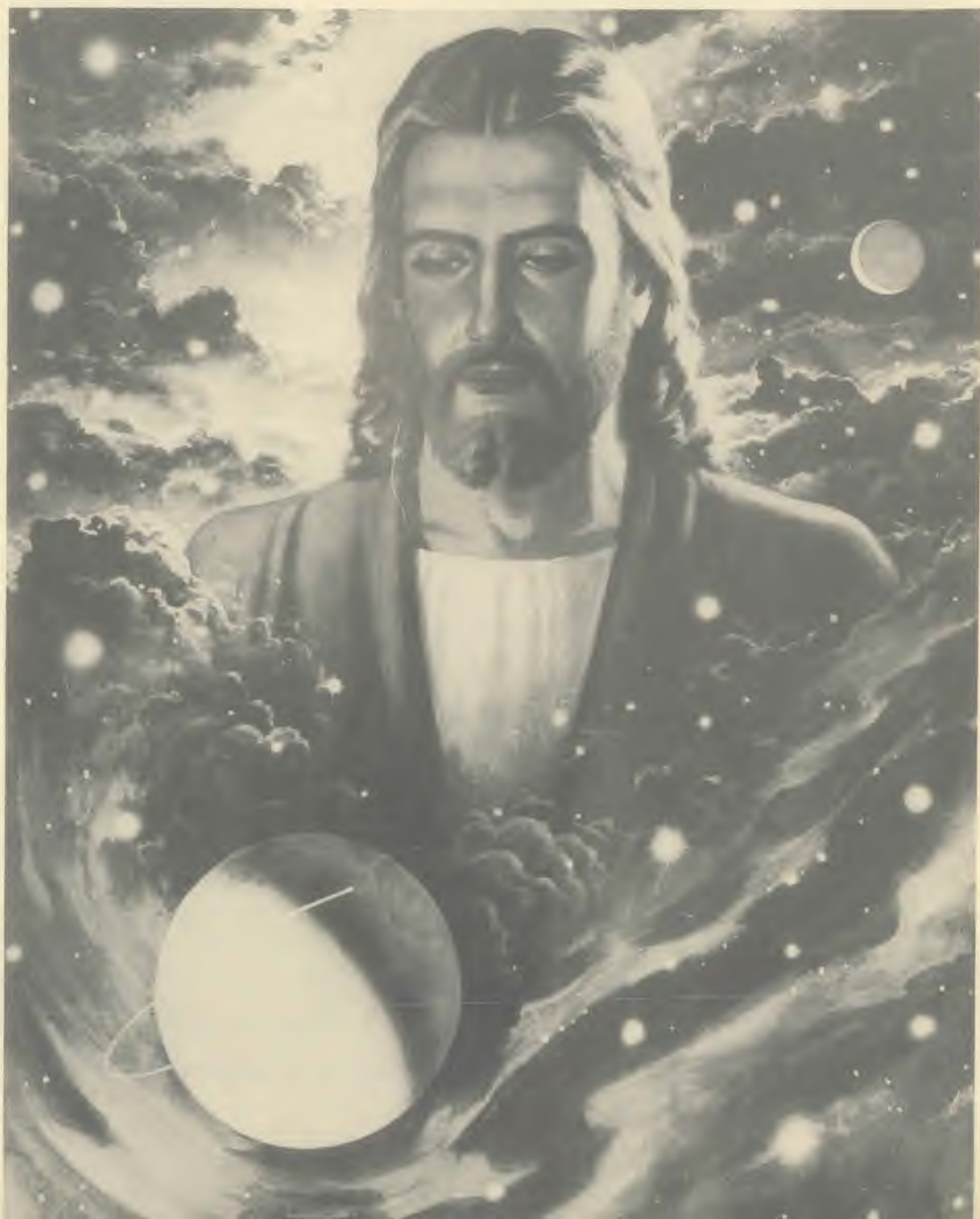
GOD'S BOOK— OR SIMPLY A GOOD BOOK?

by Roy T. Gee, M.A.

I'M going to share one of my day-dreams with you. One of the more impossible ones. But that needn't stop the fun. Perhaps you've had the same day-dream too. If so, you might be glad to know you're not alone.

What I would like to do is to take some famous person from long ago around our country today. Take him around and show him all the modern amazing things that we take so much for granted. I never will, of course, because the dead are very dead and still; but can you imagine the fun it would be?

Whom would you choose? Caesar, Shakespeare, Wellington, Nelson? There's no limit to the people you could choose for this dream. What would Nelson



think as you took him to the dockyard to show him an ocean liner? Or imagine explaining to him a nuclear submarine complete with missiles. Compared with him you would be an expert at such things: Or if you took him merely for a stroll in Trafalgar Square, he would be stunned by what he saw.

Can you see what my dream is now? We ourselves take modern technology for granted because we have grown up with it. But to someone out of past history it would be utterly astounding. What would Sir Isaac Newton say as you sped down the fast lane on the M1? And wouldn't Oliver Cromwell envy your motor mechanic skills even though they might be as limited as mine!

An article I recently read rather broke my dream though. Worse, it reversed it! Let me explain.

The article was about the new science-fantasy film: "2001: A space Odyssey." Stanley Kubrick who directed the film was reported in conversation with Arthur C. Clarke the noted scientist-author of the film's story.

Though what they were talking about is pure fiction, the thought, or call it philosophy, is fascinating. Here are some quotations from the article:

"... [Clarke] and Kubrick had decided that their confrontation between human and extra-terrestrial intelligence would have to be transcendental in nature. This was required by 'Clarke's Third Law' which says, 'Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.' Since the movie deals with beings that were capable of burying a monolith on the moon four million years ago [part of the fictional plot] their present capabilities would *seem* like magic. In fact, it would be utterly unscientific to imagine that such beings would be comprehensible on any human level."

Life (U.S. Edition), April 5, 1968.

In the Kubrick-Clarke daydream, then, things are reversed. They are not thinking about how amazed Cleopatra would be to see me using the telephone or turning on the TV. They are concerned with how amazed I would be if confronted with a civilization as scientifically advanced beyond ours, as ours is beyond that of Cleopatra.

I would be the one upset and made to feel an ignoramus. I would be the one to be puzzled and awestruck.

Which brings me to what I want to say about the Bible.

Let's first consider the Bible's claims for itself. It claims to be the Word of God to a fallen world. Though God has made man and His earth perfect, sin broke the contact between God and man, between heaven and earth. Knowledge of God has faded through the ages.

But God in His mercy has sought to re-establish contact with man for man's own good. The Bible claims that it is God's effort to re-establish this contact.

Try to imagine God's problem of addressing us. How does unfallen Heaven speak to a fallen earth? How does a sinless God reveal Himself to sinful man without destroying that man? Can two such different civilizations communicate on any common ground at all?

God in His wisdom and love has done it. He has done it through the Man Christ Jesus and through the Book that speaks about Him. God became Man in order to address us. And the Bible is the Book that tells about that Man and His mission of mercy.

But many people find the Book a bit of a puzzle. How can you expect me to believe all those miracles, they say. Well, how can I expect Cleopatra to believe

in colour TV, payloads on Venus, instant pudding? Any society in advance of ours will appear magical says Clarke.

Little wonder then that the Book has miracles in it. How false it would be if there were no miracles in it. The civilization of Heaven is surely far in advance of ours here on earth. Of course some of the things that Heaven can do will appear magical to us. And it is this that impresses me so much about the Bible. It rings true. It's just how you expect a book to be that has come from a place far in advance of this earth, far better, far purer, far more loving.

It's true that it is a Book about men, and for men, yet it has qualities above and beyond men. As you read it you sense that here is something elevated, different, something extra special. As though Someone greater than ourselves were trying to contact us, to communicate to us a story of unbelievable love.

Like Heaven trying to contact earth. Purity struggling to address impurity. Progress calling down to stagnation. God speaking to modern man.

Allow the fact that the Bible is what it claims to be, a message from beyond our earthly experience, and you will find the kind of Book you might have expected. Difficult in places, full of astonishing things, thrilling, unique, inexhaustible, trustworthy, and wonderfully transforming. *No surprise that it is the world's best known and best loved Book.* ♦

★ "The coward reckons himself cautious; the miser thinks himself frugal."—*Home*. (Such is the power of self-deception.)

★ "Those who cannot command themselves often seek to command others."

★ "The modern Christian differs from his grandparents, even from his parents, perhaps, in being a Christian from choice."—*Hanford Henderson*.

TEST YOUR "WORD" POWER

by Elizabeth Phillips

The miracles of the Bible are connected with specific people. Can you match the miracles with the persons involved?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Bones revive the dead. | |
| 2. Struck with leprosy. | |
| 3. Saved from den of lions. | |
| 4. Delivered from whale. | |
| 5. Ear healed. | |
| 6. Mother-in-law healed. | |
| 7. Daughter raised to life. | |
| 8. Raised from dead at Bethany. | |
| 9. Son raised to life at Nain. | |
| (a) High priest's servant. | |
| (b) Lazarus. | (f) Widow. |
| (c) Peter. | (g) Elisha. |
| (d) Uzziah. | (h) Daniel. |
| (e) Jonah. | (i) Jairus. |

Answers on page 28

BETTING, BINGO, and the BIBLE

by Edward P. Pettit, B.A.

Many today seek their "pot of gold" via Bingo halls, sports stadiums, betting shops and pools. Few succeed. But there is a way to permanent affluence that is assured to those who heed.

EVERY Wednesday evening my Cockney father would sit hunched up over his football pools by the fireside in our Battersea home. For us "kids" it was always a miserable time because we had to "be quiet." Mother would try to cheer us all up by saying: "Never mind ducks, perhaps it will be your father's turn this week to win £50,000 on the pools."

"Oh, Mum!" we would reply, "wouldn't it be smashin' if he did! . . . We could buy a new house, new clothes, a new bike—no not a *bike*, a new car. . . ." Our voices would trail away in breathless anticipation, our limited vocabulary quite inadequate to express our exploding thoughts.

I would stare, fascinated, at the complicated betting forms spread out on the kitchen table. With infinite care Dad would ponder every match, by his hand the infallible "bible" of the football addict, the *News of the World Football Annual*. In this book was a record of every match played by every team since the 1890s, furnishing a rather mechanical guide to form. There would be all of last Sunday's newspapers containing skilful prognostication of the forthcoming matches in the football jargon like "banker," "home and away," and "permutations."

"Chelsea versus Bristol Rovers," Dad would muse studiously. Unable to bear the tension any longer I would opinionatedly break into his reverie: "That's a certain win for Chelsea, they are in the first division and Bristol are in the second!" I would receive a cold and pitying look while Dad would solemnly reply: "Never trust the Pensioners, especially in a Cup game, Chelsea will always let you down when they look a 'banker' to win." He would then add darkly that Chelsea was an "unlucky team."

The form of unfamiliar northern teams would be meticulously studied in the handbook. "Accrington Stanley," "Huddersfield Town," "Bolton Wanderers," "Tranmere Rovers." We always thought they were "funny"-sounding names, and we naturally "stuck-up" for the London teams: Arsenal, Spurs, Fulham, and the irascible Chelsea.

Mum would then come bustling in with a steaming cup of cocoa and the question: "How's my team Walsall getting on then?" Ever since she had won a few shillings on a sweepstake with Walsall as her team

it had become her "lucky one." Dad had imbibed this bit of history with superstitious concern, and would never use this team in his betting because Mum had "put the mockers on it," i.e. it was unlucky! He would now fix upon her that look reserved for those totally beyond the football pale: "All right love," he would say lugubriously, "do you want a bet then?"

At last the precious forms were complete and lay on the mantel-shelf in their buff-coloured envelope. The cartoon joke of the pools-winner whose wife forgot to post the coupons never occurred in our home, for the posting of this vital document was never entrusted to my forgetful mother nor to our grubby hands. Father himself would resolutely post it first thing next morning. Our fate for that week would now lay "on the knees of the gods," or should I say at the toes of the footballers?

Saturday evening would arrive and the radio would be turned on while we listened in tense silence. Dad would sit with a toil-stained hand poised trembling over the copy sheet. The newscaster would begin to intone the results . . . Arsenal one, Nottingham Forest nil . . . Birmingham City two, Manchester City three. Breathlessly we would await our destiny, that country cottage would arise mirage-like before our starry eyes. We would not want to be too greedy, even a new bicycle would do. Pen and paper would go flying across the table, while Dad would explode: "Up the pictures!"—his exasperated way of accepting the defeat of a key team. Our dreams would collapse as dead as the football coupon on the floor. Dad would go off to drown his sorrows at "The Prince's Head," repentant of the follies of football pools, earnestly vowing he had "finished with it," . . . until the next Wednesday evening.

Sometimes we would get a consolation prize late that evening. Horny hands would tug us from our sleep and a plateful of greasy fish and chips would be thrust under our noses. It was Dad, a little tipsy, and while our cast iron stomachs digested our supper he would tell us he had "won on the dogs." On the other hand, if he had not won, he would be "skint" and in a bad mood next day, and borrowing my *old* bicycle to get to work on Monday!

How many dreams have likewise collapsed on a

Saturday evening? But still the crowds seek their pot of gold in the Bingo Halls, racing stadiums, and betting shops. The Home Secretary has suggested that the Government should cash in on this gambling craze, so apart from putting swinging levies on bookmakers, he has proposed a national lottery. "Oddities" such as Welsh Temperance Societies have vigorously opposed such measures. But to the general public it seems a good idea, and anyone who opposes a "flutter" is a crank!

Last Sunday evening on my way to a church service I passed a long queue waiting to get into the Bingo hall. Needless to say there were no queues to get into the pews. The words of Jesus: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven"—these words, we repeat, were never popular. (Matthew 6:19, 20.) They are even less popular today in our materialistic world. But how frighteningly significant they are in times of devaluation, theft, and disasters! When thieves audaciously make coffee and sandwiches while stealing thousands of pounds from strong-rooms; when "Gnomes in Zurich" monkey about with our currency values; and the best insurance cover cannot guard against irretrievable loss, we need to ask ourselves whether we have things the right way round.

What, after all, is wealth? To some it is little bits of metal and coloured paper.

To others, it is antique furniture and works of art, some of it triumphantly "found" in junk shops. After watching my poor old Dad trying to get rich quick the easy way, I decided this type of wealth was not so important after all. True, money is necessary within our present system, it oils the wheels of life, but it does not drive them. In the final analysis a man will not be judged by the amount he has in the bank. Jesus' words, though unfashionable, are still true: "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Luke 12:15. What we really need is something the Bible describes as "gold tried in the fire," "that we may be rich." Revelation 3:18. Bible students have defined this as "faith which works by love and purifies the soul."

The day I learned that lesson, I gathered up all my football coupons, betting slips, and Bingo cards, and put the lot in the dustbin. Then I took down my Bible and decided by God's help I would base my life upon its old-fashioned teachings. Thanking God for the necessities of life and whatever He has blessed us with, "therewith to be content." You know, Friend, when you take the words of Jesus, to "seek . . . first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness," therefore having the promise that the necessities of our physical life will be added, you are on to something that will be proved true over again. (Matthew 6:33.) As my old Dad would say, that *is* a certain "banker." ♦

"Saturday evening would arrive and the radio would be turned on while we listened in tense silence. Dad would sit with his toll-stained hand poised trembling over the copy sheet."



Uppsala to Lambeth

Last in a series of three reports by
contributing editor W. L. Emmerson

WILL ANGLICANS AND ROMANS UNITE ?

Students of Bible prophecy have, for decades, anticipated the very movements which are now so clearly seen in the religious world today: Rome's resurgence, a co-operating movement called "the image," and the emergence of the "Remnant Church."

THE last of the notable decisions of the 1968 Lambeth Conference were concerned with relations between the Anglican Communion and Rome, and with plans for the closer integration of the Anglican family of churches. These are very closely linked together.

It has often been supposed that the Catholic wing of the Anglican Church is just about ready to unite with Rome. But this is by no means so.

"Sometimes," Chairman Bishop de Mel asserted when he introduced the report on relations with Rome, "people ask if it is not better to do a deal with Rome with its vast population, and leave the other churches alone." "But," he continued, "we must not embarrass . . . churches now ready for unity . . . by failing to go on with our dialogue with them." "Let us unite," he suggested, and then "do some wholesale business."

Who shall be president?

Looking forward, however, to the time when unity with Rome might be considered, Dr. de Mel expressed his approval of the position taken in the report that "the Papacy is an historic reality whose claims must be carefully weighed in any scheme for the reunion of Christendom. Within the whole college of bishops, and in ecumenical circles, there must be a president whose office involves a personal concern for the affairs of the whole Church. This president might most fittingly be the occupant of the historic See of Rome."

He continued: "Although, as we understand this at present, we are unable to accept the claims of the Papacy to infallibility and immediate and universal jurisdiction, we believe that a considerable majority of Anglicans would be prepared to accept the Pope as having a primacy of love, implying both honour and service, in a renewed and reunited Church, as would seem right on both historical and pragmatic ground."

Too far, too fast

But Dr. Michael Ramsey, Archbishop of Canterbury, felt that this was going ahead too far and too fast,

and that these paragraphs should be eliminated or at least shortened. He was glad that the Conference had called for discussions with Rome on unity, to continue; but he felt that such advanced ideas as were outlined in the report were such a mixture of "prophecy and guess" that "a majority of Anglicans would find them difficult," and in some cases, "completely new."

Evidently in the mind of the Archbishop, thinking on unity should be concentrated at this stage on non-Roman unity, leaving any real unity with Rome to be considered when such a possibility arises, probably at a very distant date.

That this was very much the feeling of the Lambeth Fathers was evident when they gave their approval to proposals for setting up an "Anglican Consultative Council," to meet every two years, at the call of the See of Canterbury, to co-ordinate the internal developments of the Church and "to encourage and guide Anglican participation in the ecumenical movement."

"In Anglican relations with the Church of Rome or the Holy Orthodox Church," said Dr. Ramsey in his Convocation address in May, 1968, "it is inevitable that, while there are things which can be done by local churches and their hierarchies, there must be action in the name of the Anglican Church as a whole," and this is what is envisaged in the proposals now approved. If accepted by all the members of the Anglican family, this new Council will link them more firmly than ever with the See of Canterbury as the "mother church," and will enable them the better to fulfil their function as the "bridge" to link together the churches of non-Roman Christendom, and to negotiate on equal terms with Orthodoxy and the Church of Rome.

Anglican evangelicals worried

Needless to say, the Anglican Evangelicals are not a little worried by the developments at Lambeth 1968, confirming as they do the trends which they have been resolutely opposing in recent years.

They are very worried about the "faith" of the Anglican Church in the light of the Conference's action on assent to the Thirty-Nine Articles. They believe that the Articles are "agreeable" to the Word of God and that any attempt to push them into the background will pave the way for a departure from "the faith once delivered to the saints," either in a modernistic or a "Catholic" direction. And of the two they consider the latter to be the more serious, in view of the success the Anglo-Catholic wing has already had in modifying the canons of the church, and in



Bishops from Brazil and East Africa who attended the Lambeth Conference, in procession at Canterbury.

introducing new liturgical experiments to re-emphasize the Catholicity of the Anglican Church.

"Increasingly, Anglican officialdom is trying to make out that the Church of England is both Protestant and Catholic," writes Gervase Duffield in the *Christian*. "She is not, they argue, one of the Reformation churches, but a bridge church, neither Protestant nor Catholic, but a bit of both." "Certainly," he agrees, "The Church of England contains Anglo-Catholics . . . but the Church of England herself is not Anglo-Catholic, and all attempts to make her act as such . . . must be resisted."

Anglican Evangelicals are further worried by the increasing bureaucratic concentration of power in the hands of the largely Anglo-Catholic episcopacy, which is tending more and more to erode the Evangelical wing of the Church. "Recent years," Gervase Duffield continues, "have seen move after move to concentrate power in the hands of the central bureaucracy both in Church House and in diocesan headquarters. The Church Assembly's Advisory Council for Training the Ministry is steadily encroaching on theological colleges and on bishops. Stewardship tends to produce a list of approved societies to be supported, often with dire financial consequences to any not on the list. . . . Pastoral reform through the Pastoral Measure and the Paul and Fenton Morley proposals is eroding individual liberty and making the diocesan planners more powerful. . . . The coping stone of bureaucratic dictatorship is, in my view, the proposed Synodical Government Measure which is presented as giving the laity a greater opportunity, but which is likely to enthrone the bureaucrats as supreme."

Catholic elements strengthened

Now Lambeth 1968 has added to their worries by proposing to carry Anglican episcopal bureaucracy to an international level by the formation of an Anglican Consultative Council. This, they feel, will further strengthen the Catholic elements in the Church, and push the Church of England into "a world-wide episcopal sect."

"The evolution of the Church of England into a world-wide episcopal sect," declares Mr. Duffield, "is depressing and deplorable. . . . episcopal or any other variety." It would be even more so if it resulted in a steady "convergence" toward Catholic Orthodoxy and Rome.

Evangelicals outside the Church of England share the concern of those within it; and all who give study to the prophetic picture of the last days will be all the more apprehensive.

There is not space here to deal in detail with this aspect of the trends at Uppsala and Lambeth. It must suffice to say that, in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of the Revelation, it is indicated that the last days will be characterized by three religious movements: the resurgence of Rome, the development of a parallel and co-operating movement, designated as an "image" of Rome, which together will lead on to the final apostasy, and thirdly, a "remnant" which will steadfastly uphold the "Commandments of God and the faith of Jesus," and which will be found with Christ in the day of final triumph.

Seeing the trends which we have outlined in this review of Uppsala and Lambeth, the counsel of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians was surely never more appropriate to the Church: "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men." 1 Corinthians 16:13.

LOURDES

HEALING AND CREDULITY

Second of two reports by George W. Target

One of the world's most popular centres of so-called miracle healing is Lourdes in south west France. Though the town's population is only 16,000, so many Catholic pilgrims flock there for healing that an underground church large enough for a congregation of 20,000 was consecrated in 1958. The writer of this report was himself a Catholic before embracing the Protestant faith.

LAST month I described Lourdes as a place of great faith and bottomless ignorance, simple piety and rapacious commercialism, sweet love and priestly cynicism, deep emotions and shallow manipulations . . . and promised to answer the questions: "Did the Mother of Jesus Christ *really* appear there?" and "Are there miracles of healing to be seen in its waters?"

* * * *

The legend of "Our Lady of Lourdes" began in February, 1858, with two related events.

First, the claim made by a sickly, stunted, backward, illiterate, emotionally-starved little girl that the "Queen of Heaven" had appeared to her in the Grotto, and had commanded her to drink and then wash her hands and face in a spring of water which was supposed to have bubbled from the earth beneath the feet of the apparition.

And second, given the exploited credulity of any predominately Roman Catholic country, the almost inevitable announcement of a "miracle": a man who had lost the sight of an eye in an accident at the quarry where he worked claimed that, after rinsing his face in the water, his sight was immediately and fully restored.

* * * *

Let us consider the general background against which these events took place, and then the particular circumstances of Bernadette herself.

The whole period in Europe, and especially in France, was one of political unrest and intellectual ferment. There were "wars and rumours of wars," new ideas and old heresies, riots, revolutions, and all manner of social discontent and religious awakening. As part of it all there was a violent and bitter conflict going on between the Roman Catholic Church, as the last great stronghold of reaction and intolerance, and the largely anti-clerical Civil Authorities. And the Church, in an almost desperate attempt to restore waning faith in its un-Biblical assertions and traditions, was mounting an intensive propaganda campaign of dogma and devotion to Mary—known to historians and theologians as the "Marian Cult."

In the gospels and the Acts of the Apostles she is the honoured and respected mother of Jesus, truly "blessed among women," the "highly favoured hand-maiden of the Lord," chosen by Almighty God to bear the Gift of His "only begotten Son" to a world lost in the darkness of sin, to bring forth the Messiah, the Saviour, the Redeemer of all mankind . . . unique, remarkable, the most privileged "Mother in Israel," worthy of our gratitude and fond remembrance—but, despite all these blessings and wonders, remaining an otherwise ordinary woman, as much in need of salvation as every other humble daughter of Eve. She was born, she lived, and she died.

Yet, in this Europe at the time of Bernadette, Pope Pius IX had recently declared and enunciated the most solemn Dogma of the Immaculate Conception: that Mary, Blessed Virgin and Mother of God, had been conceived without sin, born without sin, lived without sin, and had died without sin.

The people were being encouraged to believe in her Assumption: that, in the hour of her death, she was taken bodily by angels into heaven, and there crowned by her Son as its Queen and Mother of the Church.

There were legends about her life embroidered around the very few facts recorded for us in the Bible . . . prophecies were wrenched out of context to lend spurious weight to these fanciful embroideries . . . the psychological frustrations of a celibate priesthood sought fulfilment in an evermore luxurious and sensual indulgence of these dreams and fancies . . .

In this pathetic and sentimental "religious" climate the blasphemous idea was rapidly flourishing that she was the "mediator" between man and Christ, that we could only approach the Son through the intercessions of His mother, that, ultimately, she was as much a Redeemer as He was . . . "miracles" were performed in her name . . . and, most significantly of all, she was supposed to be "appearing" on earth again, speaking to various priests and nuns and monks, giving them special prayers to say in her honour, which, if said at the moment of death, would "ensure" salvation . . . giving them special "holy medals" to wear, which, if



The "Breton Calvary" at Lourdes, which was erected in 1900.

worn in devotion to her, would guard against all disease and sudden death . . . and giving them special "messages" and "counsel from God," which, if followed and obeyed as she instructed, would bring about universal peace and happiness.

Such was the world into which Bernadette was born.

* * * *

She was the eldest child of a miller's labourer, a shiftless and bone-idle liar who had been arrested and imprisoned for theft a year before the first of his daughter's "visions."

Her mother was equally irresponsible, had a quick and savage temper, and her one idea of child-rearing was the use of what Bernadette herself called "the dreaded cudgel" in a "good flogging."

Both parents were drunkards, the family was understandably destitute and lived in the damp and rat-infested cellar of an abandoned prison, and all of their unfortunate children were shamefully neglected. For example, their five-year-old boy was once discovered in the parish church, so hungry that he was scraping candle-wax off the floor and eating it voraciously.

Bernadette was born in 1844, and, in the words of her contemporaries, was "weak and feeble at her birth," and always "ailing and sickly." At the age of five or six "asthma seized her in its iron grip . . . fits of coughing took her and she would be almost suffocated and fall into prolonged swoons." And she remained a chronic asthmatic all of her short life.

She was "thick-headed," and, in the opinion of the woman who tried to teach her to read even the simplest words and sentences, would "never be anything but an ignorant fool."

To quote another source, at the age of fourteen,

when she had the first of her "visions," she was a "stunted girl, both physically and mentally retarded, starved of both love and attention, tormented by delayed puberty . . . and a common enough type of religious hysteria."

Her deprived and emotionally-barren childhood was filled with the various legends and "visions" of the Blessed Virgin Mary "appearing" all over Europe . . . to Agnese de Sagazan at Garaison, to a convent of nuns at Pietat, to Catherine Laboure at Paris in 1830, to a congregation of nuns at Paris in 1836, to Alphonse-Tobie Ratisbonne at Rome in 1842, and most significantly of all, to Melanie Calvat and Maximin Giraud, two little ignorant and illiterate peasant children, at La Salette in 1846 . . .

Immediately before her own "visions" she came under the influence of a young and emotional priest who had a "special devotion" to the so-called "Virgin of La Salette," and who "often preached" of that apparition as a "redemptive wonder."

Such, then, was Bernadette.

* * * *

On February 2, 1858, with her younger sister and another small girl, she went to look on the village rubbish dump for firewood and bones and old iron to sell to the local scrap-merchant. This dump was at the bend of the River Gave where the bodies of animals drowned in the upper reaches would be swept to rest with driftwood and domestic sewage thrown in by the villagers. In her own words, as she was about to cross the river she "heard a noise. . . . I raised my head and looked at the Grotto, I saw a Lady dressed in white, she was wearing a white dress and a blue sash and a yellow Rose in each foot the colour of the chain of her Rosary. . . . The vision disappeared all of a sudden."

Such was the first apparition in a sequence of eighteen which continued on and off until the middle of July. Such was the beginning of the legend of "Our Lady of Lourdes."

* * * *

Bernadette was the only person to see this "Lady dressed in white." At the end of the sequence of "visions" their fame had spread far and wide, and thousands and thousands of simple people would assemble before the Grotto and wait for hours to watch the little girl kneeling entranced in the mud, but nobody else ever saw anything, nobody else ever heard anything, nobody else ever knew what the "Lady" was supposed to have said to her, nor what she was supposed to have said to the "Lady." Neither has the "Lady," in over a 100 years of ceaseless prayer and constant vigil, ever returned to "her" Grotto.

Yet there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of this poor little girl. She had very little to gain by deliberate deceit or pretence. Her claims to have seen and talked with "her Lady" brought her vicious and brutal beatings from her drunken mother, accusations of fraud and bad faith, suspicions of mental derangement and even madness, repeated ordeals of police interrogation, and hours and hours of relentless and unsympathetic examination by priests and bishops. True, it all brought her fame and ultimate canonization, and she was able to live out the few remaining years of her life in the comparative comfort of a nunnery—but she was hardly intelligent enough to have foreseen any of this. No, the "visions" were real for her, but for no one else. They have no objective reality, no external proof, and are quite obviously

projections of an abnormal mind in a highly emotional state, the climax of a prolonged hysterical crisis.

* * * *

What of the "miracles" of healing to be seen in the waters of the Grotto?

After the first (that of the quarryman who had lost the sight of one eye in an accident, and claimed the immediate and full restoration after rinsing his face in the water), there was a trickle, then a steady flow . . . and then a flood . . . thousands and thousands of "cures" were announced for every disease under the sun and moon, and hundreds of thousands of people surged every year through the valley and the growing town in search of health and physical restoration . . . vast fortunes were made from the innocent pilgrims, the whole "relic" and souvenir industry expanded and proliferated . . . the claims grew wilder and increasingly exaggerated . . . sceptics began to ask awkward questions, even sincere believers became embarrassed . . .

Until, eventually, the Roman Catholic Church had to call a halt to this blatant exploitation of human misery.

A Catholic Medical Bureau was established there to investigate the "cures," all its members being convinced Roman Catholics, priests and doctors, all fully persuaded that "miracles" occur as the direct result of the intercession of "Our Lady of Lourdes" . . . and, surprisingly, the flood faltered, slowed down . . . and very soon ceased to be so much as a trickle.

From the heady statistics of 3,962 "cures" for former years, only 98 were accepted as "remarkable" between 1925 and 1950, of which a mere 11 were pronounced as "genuine miracles"! In other words, ever since there has been even the most rudimentary investigation into the "cures," conducted by the very people who most want to demonstrate the "miraculous," there has been a shattering decline in their number from thousands every year to *less than one every two years!*

But even these are not quite what they seem!

* * * *

If the subject of Religious Visions is fraught with difficulty, then the whole subject of Miraculous Healing is even more difficult and complicated.

In the present state of our ignorance there is very little that can be said without virtual certainty of immediate contradiction by one or other of the various "Authorities," but Leslie Weatherhead has written what is probably the most balanced and spiritual account of the "practical relationship between medicine and religion"—and he is properly cautious.

For though his ministry has "deepened the conviction that many people are suffering from supposedly physical illnesses, who need not suffer," he admits that "we are only at the beginning" of the necessary knowledge. He knows the essential conditions for progress: we must learn "how to release and direct the resources of the spiritual world," and we must have ministers and doctors who will be "alert and trained to see and to understand the early signs of psychological disturbance." Moreover, they must then be able to "secure immediate treatment, ideally in some environment where physically, psychologically and spiritually the patient could be investigated and the whole personality integrated."

But, though Leslie Weatherhead is a masterly guide through the uneasy acres of this doubtful landscape, he sets very strict limits to the possible areas of

fruitful ground. The trouble is that his scientific and religious honesty is not always shared by some of those with a vested interest in the "proof" and "demonstration" of the allegedly "miraculous."

However, as he points out, "it is important . . . in all cases of healing by non-material methods, to get as accurate a scientific diagnosis as possible *before* and *after* treatment, and avoid even the appearance of exaggeration, or a careless use of words—'cure' is one of them—which have a scientific exactitude in other spheres."

And this, of course, is the soft centre at the heart of most such cases of "healing," it being, delightfully, only too easy to "cure" people of diseases they do not have!

* * * *

With those preliminary remarks we can now return to Lourdes, and see what this sympathetic but rigorous approach means to even the eleven apparently authenticated "miracles" occurring there over the twenty-five years from 1925 to 1950.

An independent investigation was carried out by Dr. D. J. West into these widely accepted claims. His credentials are beyond question, except by the desperate: he is Honorary Experimental Research Officer to the Society for Psychical Research, has had wide and unique experience of the whole subject, and carried out the investigation under a grant from the Parapsychology Foundation of New York, there being few medical men so well qualified for the purpose.

And one sentence from his already classic book, *Eleven Lourdes Miracles* (Duckworth, 1957), could serve as his general conclusion on all cases of "miraculous" cures: "Although a plethora of accounts of cures appear in popular books and magazines they hardly ever contain sufficiently precise medical details to enable a doctor to form a reasonable judgment."

* * * *

What were his findings at Lourdes?

"In spite of disappointing experiences in the past," he started out with high hopes, and welcomed the opportunity to "survey the evidence because this Roman Catholic shrine is uniquely favoured in possessing a Medical Bureau the function of which is to collect and sift the medical facts of any cures reported to have taken place at or in connection with the holy waters."

And yet, among the hundreds of thousands, indeed millions of sick people who have visited the shrine in hope of a cure, including all of the 98 "miracles" and "cures accepted as remarkable," he was only able to discover *one* instance "in which a cured patient has been examined . . . both *before* and *after* the event"! And even that one "was not confirmed, because no account of it has been published," and the President of the International Commission, which "has the last word in deciding whether a cure is inexplicable from the medical standpoint," did not know of the case!

However, even though this most elementary and necessary precaution had been conveniently neglected, Dr. West investigated "what were presumably the most impressive cures . . . the eleven modern cases that have been pronounced miraculous."

And, in view of the loud claims and general acceptance that *something* must happen at Lourdes, what follows is almost unbelievable.

In *none* of these eleven cases "was the evidence really satisfactory, and in certain of them suggested a perfectly natural alternative explanation," and in the "only one in which the events—if true—merit the



Representation of Calvary at Lourdes.

adjective miraculous . . . the medical evidence is conspicuously absent."

All of this, of course, is on the reasonable assumption that, given a choice between the allegedly "miraculous" explanation of an event and a perfectly normal one which still covers all the facts, we must, in harmony with the Divine Economy, choose the reasonable rather than the supernatural. God does not waste His miraculous power, nor use it lightly, and none of the miracles of Jesus Christ are susceptible of any other explanation than the intervention of the Divine into the human. Whereas a conjurer on the stage might well baffle us with his illusions, and defy us to say "how it was done," and yet we would be unwise to assume a "supernatural" explanation. Similarly, a cure which can be explained in purely medical terms is almost certainly not miraculous, as God very rarely does what man can do for himself.

* * * *

Dr. West's examination of the ninety-eight "cases accepted by the Lourdes Bureau as genuine instances of remarkable cures" revealed "some general trends" which apply to a very great deal of such "healing" in other circumstances and places than at such shrines.

"There are no self-evident miracles, such as the regeneration of lost eyes or amputated fingers." (This is rather odd, because, among the hundreds of crutches and sticks hanging on wires in the roof of the Grotto, and presumably placed there by the "cured" who no longer need them, there are dozens of artificial legs!)

"Over half of the cures were of some form of tuberculosis, and only three were cures of malignant cancers," and since "tuberculosis frequently recovers spontaneously, but malignant disease rarely does, these figures are in conformity with natural interpretations."

Again, "three-quarters" of these ninety-eight cases are women, and "since hysterical disorders of function are commoner in women than men this is in favour of there being a large functional element in these cases." And he suggests that "inadequate diagnostic criteria and the inclusion of cases with a large functional element lead to greatly exaggerated claims." (Which means, in non-medical terms, that as most of the diseases from which these cases were "cured" are of

hysterical or psychological origin, and as they very often "recover spontaneously" or as the result of just such a profoundly emotional experience as a visit to Lourdes, it is completely unnecessary to assume any supernatural explanation.)

With Leslie Weatherhead he insists on the great importance of "as accurate a scientific diagnosis as possible *before* and *after* treatment," and points out that a "certain carelessness in presentation, which would never be tolerated in a teaching hospital, pervades all medical material" at Lourdes, "incompleteness of data and lack of any consideration of alternative diagnosis being the worst faults," coupled with an "extreme bias in the matter of interpretation." (In other words, when faced with a choice between two possible explanations for a "cure," the perfectly natural medical one or the miraculous, the Lourdes Bureau not surprisingly chooses what will most help its own cause and the fame and profit of the shrine.)

And Dr. West regretfully cites voluminous evidence for "suppression" and "distortion" and "deliberate mis-statements" in the "Official Dossiers," and demonstrates "wide divergencies" between these and "various independent sources of information."

His final opinion is far-reaching: "Close examination . . . yields scant indication of any absolutely inexplicable recovery. Some cases are in fact readily explained in ordinary terms and only appear as evidence of the supernormal by virtue of over-enthusiastic interpretations and much special pleading on the part of those responsible for putting them forward."

So much, alas, for the "miracles of healing" at Lourdes.

* * * *

One last glimpse of the place and its pilgrims.

A mother pushing her adult son on a wheeled stretcher: he is completely paralyzed from the shoulders down, deaf, dumb, and a low-grade moron with the mental age of a child of six or seven . . . and she told me that he had been like it from birth.

"It's taken me eight years to save the money to bring him," she said, "it's the only hope there is, Our Lady smiling down in mercy upon him." And then she smiled herself, a smile more beautiful than that of any statue—slow, gentle, resigned . . . "Our Lady was a mother herself," she said, "so she must know what it's like, mustn't she? So I'm *sure* she's going to ask Our Lord to make my boy better. I mean, she *can't* refuse eight years of sacrifice, can she?"

I helped her push the stretcher toward the Grotto and the waters . . . but had to turn back as my tears were choking me.

She joined the queue with the hundreds of others . . .

* * * *

"O God, our Father in Heaven, You have promised us a time when you will wipe away all tears from our eyes, a time when there will be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain . . . a time when the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be unstopped, when the lame man will leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb will sing.

"O God, please make us worthy of that promise, please let us see that time, please let there be such a healing of the nations that our praises and thanksgiving will last for all eternity.

"We ask this mercy, and the forgiveness of our sins, in the Healing Name of Jesus Christ, Your Son and our Saviour. Amen." ◆

Man has been cut off from heaven by the gulf of sin. Man's greatest problem is—How can He be restored to God and have assurance of immortality as he faces the future? The sacrifice of Christ, plus His intercession before the Father in behalf of repentant sinners makes the worship of sinful beings acceptable to God.

BY BLOOD and by incense God was to be approached."

Such was the manner by which believers in Old Testament times obtained atonement in the "old dispensation." But have you considered how you are to approach God today? Do we, too, present blood and incense when we commune with Deity?

The Christian believes that since the fall of man as recorded in Genesis chapter 3, the world has been cut off from heaven by the gulf of sin. Since that time the only connection the race has had with God has been through the Mediator, Jesus Christ. The mechanics of this relationship were demonstrated in the patriarchal age by the family altar, the lamb, and the head of the household as priest. This programme can be called "the sanctuary indicated," for it foreshadowed the service which developed after Sinai. This dispensation or age lasted for twenty-five hundred years.

The sanctuary system given to Moses at Mount Sinai was a more elaborate plan and existed for another fifteen hundred years. Because Israel was just released from bondage, a more detailed system was needed to teach these former slaves the beautiful promises of God. This period is called the *Aaronic legal dispensation*.

The service in both these periods carried on in mystic types and symbols the process of atonement and prefigured the coming Saviour, the Priest of the *Gospel dispensation*. The sanctuary service demonstrated that God was to be approached by blood and incense—symbols pointing to the great Mediator. Never did the priest enter the tabernacle without the two vital components, for atonement could not be made without them.

Elaborate visual aid

The typical sanctuary as given to Moses was patterned after the sanctuary in heaven, or antitype, and can be likened to an elaborate visual aid to daily teach the people about the coming Messiah. The cleansing from sin through the merits of the sinless One was clearly demonstrated in this glorious service designed by God.

Because it was an educational programme, it is necessary to study this typical earthly service in order to understand the atonement in this, the Gospel dispensation, for the antitype follows the type.

Blood and incense

In the old dispensation the prime factors in approaching God were blood and incense. It logically follows then that the same factors are the means by which He is to be approached today. That the blood of the typical service pointed to the shed blood and death of Christ, there can be no doubt. Innumerable

HOW MUST WE

references attest to this fact, which is not questioned by any Christian religion. Many passages in the Old Testament point forward to the death of Christ. In the New Testament the Gospel writers reiterate specifically that the blood referred to is His. Jesus Himself stated that it was His blood that was to be shed, and that no man could approach God except through Him.

The other necessary factor in approaching God in the typical service was the incense. In the Bible the word *incense* is used many times, usually referring to the earthly tabernacle. The Greek verb *thumia* ["to burn incense"] of the noun *thumiama* ["incense"] is used in the New Testament five times. Just three of these instances pertain to the incense of the sanctuary in heaven. As would be fitting, these passages are found in the Book of Revelation, which contains pictures of the true Priest as He ministers in heaven.

"And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it *with* the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne." Revelation 8:3. "And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand." Verse 4.

In both of these references a "with" separates incense and prayers. Accordingly, it cannot be construed that the incense *is* the prayers of the saints, but rather, the incense is offered *with* the prayers of the saints.

"And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." Revelation 5:8.

It is evident that the incense of His merit is part of the method that we, as fallen beings, have to approach God. He puts His life, as sweet incense, in the censer in our hands in order to encourage our petitions. Such prayers then ascend to God in spotless perfection, for they are perfumed with the incense of Christ's propitiation. Your prayers are then accepted as if they had originated with the Lord Himself.

E. G. White has beautifully expressed this miracle of miracles as follows: "The cloud of incense, ascending with the prayers of Israel, represents the merits and intercession of Christ, His perfect righteousness, which through faith is imputed to His people, and which can alone make the worship of sinful beings acceptable to God. Before the veil of the most holy place was an altar of perpetual intercession, before the holy, an altar of continual atonement. By blood and by incense God was to be approached—symbols pointing to the great Mediator, through whom sinners may approach Jehovah, and through whom alone mercy and salvation can be granted to the repentant, believing soul."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 353.

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APPROACH GOD?

by Edwin W. Reiner



Access only through Christ

Since we are all hopeless and lost without Christ, no man can look to himself and find anything in his character that will recommend him to God or make his acceptance sure. It is only through Jesus, whom the Father gave for the life of the world, that the sinner may find access to God. He alone is our Redeemer, our Advocate, our Mediator. In Him is our only hope for pardon, peace, and righteousness.

As the priests morning and evening entered the holy place at the time of the offering of incense, the daily sacrifice was ready to be offered upon the altar in the outer court. Their petitions ascended with the cloud of incense, while faith laid hold upon the merits of the promised Saviour, prefigured by the atoning sacrifice.

So today, with the confession of every repentant, believing sinner, Christ mingles His own righteousness. Thus the prayers of fallen man may go before the Father as fragrant incense and the grace of God be imparted to the believing soul. "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." Isaiah 27:5.

It is by virtue of the blood of Christ that the sin-stricken soul can be restored to soundness. Christ is the fragrance, the holy incense, which makes your petition acceptable to the Father. All religious services, prayers, and penitent confessions of sin ascend from true believers as incense to God in His heavenly sanctuary. But these supplications have passed through the corrupt channels of humility and are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. They do not ascend in spotless purity, and unless the Mediator at God's right hand presents and purifies all by His righteousness, the prayers are not acceptable. He holds before the Father the incense of His merits, which has no taint of earthly corruption. He gathers the prayers and supplications of His people, and with these He puts His own spotless righteousness. Perfumed with the merits of Christ's propitiation, the prayers come up before God wholly and entirely acceptable. Then gracious answers are returned.

Clearer picture

With the conception of the incense representing the merits of Christ, a clearer picture of atonement is brought to view. Living a perfect, sin-less life as "the second Adam," not for Himself, but for every repentant sinner, Christ is our Substitute and Surety. In order to be Mediator, He must not only suffer and die, He must provide a holy life for the sinner. His death was a necessity in the great plan, but it would have been almost meaningless had He not lived a perfect life in our behalf. By His death we are reconciled to God because the penalty for sin has been paid. However, a perfect, sinless life and character must be demonstrated in order for one to gain entrance into heaven. (Romans 5:10.) *The saved must be declared not only sinless, but also that they have never sinned, in order to be faultless before the holy law.*

"Pardon" is recorded

Such a standard can be met only by the attributes of Christ. The righteous perfection of His character and life is presented in the repentant sinner's place on the judgment day. Faulty though your life may have been, through the wonders of the atonement pardon is written by your name and you are declared to be guiltless. Through the perfection of the sinless

Substitute and Surety you may run the race of humble obedience to all of God's commandments. Without Christ you are under condemnation of the law, always a sinner; but through faith in Christ you are made just, before God.

This is the only way the fallen race can approach God to be assured of acceptance and complete deliverance from sin. The garment of acceptance which all the redeemed will wear is woven without a thread of earthliness. Such is the incense of the antitypical service; it is His righteous character.

Today God is to be approached by the blood and incense of Christ. ♦

THE ATONEMENT

NOT of human origin is the doctrine of the atonement. It is a matter of pure revelation from God. Only God could devise it.

As a matter of revelation, it is clear that in forming our opinions and convictions about the atonement, we must be guided by the Scriptures alone. All our logic and metaphysics are useless here. Our appeal is directly to God's Word.

It is not likely that anyone who has read the Bible will be inclined to deny that in these sacred writings Jesus Christ is called a Saviour, a Redeemer, a Deliverer, a Horn of salvation, the Mediator between God and man. He is said to be the Bread of life, the Tree of life, the Water of life. Indeed, He is said to be Life itself. "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." John 14:6.

Just as clearly do the Scriptures credit our salvation to the death of Christ. They declare that He "died for the ungodly;" that "to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived;" that "Christ died for our sins;" that believers should live "unto Him which died for them;" that He "died for us, that we should live together with him."

There is a striking harmony between the Old and New Testament in their teachings on this subject. Isaiah declares of Christ, the "suffering Servant:" "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities." Isaiah 53:4.

There are two things in sin. One is its defilement or pollution. The other is that it merits punishment. Christ took that punishment. He "bare our sins in His own body on the tree [cross]." 1 Peter 2:24.

When the prophet said: "Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin," we know he did not refer to sins which Christ had committed, for He had committed none. He did no sin.

Nevertheless, His soul was an offering for sin. What sin can be meant but ours? Peter declares that "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust." 1 Peter 3:18. Whose sins? The sins of the unjust, even of those whom He would rescue from a righteous and eternal destruction.

Almost every form of language is used in the Scriptures to show that the sufferings of Christ were vicarious, that is, not for Himself but for others. Paul says: "He [God] hath made Him to be sin [a sin offering] for us." 2 Corinthians 5:21. In the same verse it is declared that Christ knew no sin. Surely He bore the wrath of God which others deserved, the wrath which belonged to us.

When Peter says that Christ "His own self bare our sins in His own body on that tree," what does he mean by such language?

The expression *bearing sin*, or *bearing iniquity*,

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MEN OF LIKE PASSIONS

Second in a series by

A. J. Woodfield, M.A., Ph.D.(Lond.)

THE MAN WHO WAS "GOD'S FRIEND"

I SUPPOSE everybody knows the standard stories about Abraham—his trek into the unknown, his unselfishness to Lot, his desperate pleading for Sodom, his life-long yearning for the child of promise, his agony on Mount Moriah, above all, his unswerving faith in God.

He has evoked some of the most moving utterances of the New Testament: "He staggered not at the promises of God through unbelief; he looked for a city that had foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God; he considered that God was able to raise men even from the dead"—and all the other glorious fanfares to his immortal fame. It will never die.

But outside the Bible, history knows nothing of Abraham, or of Isaac, and Jacob, however big the part

they play in Christian thinking. Even though their names have always blessed the tongue of every faithful Israelite and Christian, cold impersonal historians, pursuing their relentless course of objectivity, have tended to put them into the same fabulous realm as that which is occupied by the mythical Romulus and Remus, or the legendary Brutus thought up by medieval chroniclers to be the classical father of the British race. And many a Christian has likewise relegated them to the gallery of plaster saints.

Not legendary

But make no mistake about it; Abraham is no legendary fiction. You have only to read Genesis, especially in a modern version, to discover that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, may rub shoulders with you any ordinary day in (or preferably around) any of our great conglomerations of 20th-century men, women, and children. They lived, *mutatis mutandis*, very much on the same plane as any of the rest of us. They were men of the same puzzling mixture of saint and sinner, even the intrepid Abraham was guilty of what looks very much to us like "staggering."

Information from sources other than the Bible helps further to build up the credibility of the patriarchs as something more than heroes from mythology. History shows that various Semitic tribes—the people the Bible lumps together under the name of Amorites—were very much on the move in and around the lands traversed by Abraham and his company. Surviving records show too that these peoples knew the names at least of Abram and Jacob; they used them themselves. Abraham's migration was very much like the ones they engaged in, and the names of Abraham's ancestors—Peleg, Serug, Terah, and Nahor—are perpetuated in the names of towns in the area on the upper Euphrates where Abraham's Haran was located.

Egyptian records too tell how the Nile dwellers permitted nomadic wanderers in need of food and pasture

Abraham is revered equally by Christian, Jew and Moslem. Though known as "the friend of God" he was burdened as much as anyone with human passions and frailties.



to find refuge on the lands of their delta. So it needs no stretch of the imagination to picture the patriarchal clans roaming on the fringe of the great settled civilizations of Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia, moving here and there as their needs dictated, wandering from settlement to settlement much in the fashion of today's roving Romanies, and driven by failure of rain in Palestine or by localized famine to find corn in Egypt in more than proverbial fashion.

There is no need therefore, to apologize for the Bible as the teller of an irrelevant pastoral myth when it describes the mystical urge that drove Abram to abandon settled life in Mesopotamia taking his clan, his wife Sarah, and his nephew Lot with his clan, their slaves and herds, their goods and chattels, their bags and baggage on a puzzling, roaming quest for a new homeland in Palestine, encamping a while here and there, sometimes in the vicinity of some great fortress like the Shechem that guarded the pass between Ebal and Gerizim, sometimes near the corrupt cities in the southern plains, sometimes near Beth-el, but leaving behind them always an altar to testify to faith in their mysterious, invisible God, journeying ever southward, on toward the Negeb, until one of Palestine's rain failures dried up the pasture, and hurried their pace on to the fertile haven of the Egyptian delta.

Abram comes alive

Here it is especially that Abram comes very much alive—very much like our own poor timorous, self-regarding selves. He knew well enough what civilization is, how thin is the veneer of polite sophistication, how soon it breaks under the thrust of self-interest, how it shrivels up under the heat of amorous lust. As the Egyptian frontier posts began to loom up on the south-western horizon he began to wish again that Sarah were not such a princess for beauty. He knew what an attraction her creamy, olive complexion would be to the swarthy Egyptians. He could almost feel the knife in his ribs disposing of the inconvenient husband. He would pass Sarah off as his sister; he would have to take a chance on whether she would succeed in preserving her chastity against the accomplished advances of polished Egyptian gallants.

His fears were well-founded. Sarah, the foreign beauty with the light skin, made a mighty stir. In next to no time she was the talk of the court, the toast of Egyptian princes. Even the Pharaoh on his throne wanted to see this intriguing stranger; and having seen her, lost no time in adding her to his household. Nor did he forget her factitious brother. To lure Sarah into an accommodating mood he overwhelmed the anxious husband with gifts—sheep, oxen, asses, men-servants, maid-servants, she-asses, and camels. Perhaps this is how Abraham and Sarah came by the unhappy Hagar.

Moment of truth

Then came the moment of truth. Rightly indignant at being deceived by such chicken-hearted equivocation Pharaoh took summary action. Sarah was hustled out of the royal harem, peremptory orders brought Abraham quaking into the audience chamber, and before the whole court they were sent packing. If Abraham had crossed the Egyptian border earlier in fear and trembling, he now recrossed it covered with confusion, Pharaoh's deportation order and righteously indignant words perseverating with distressing insistence in his brain: "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? Why did you say 'She is my sister' so that I took her for my

wife?" The profligate Egyptians had turned out to have better principles than the "friend of God." What sort of religion would they think his was?

You would think he would never have forgotten the humiliation. But he was to fall in with more strange peoples, lawless and lustful too by repute. Once again, many years later, he found himself trekking about the southern deserts in the wild territory beloved of fierce, raiding tribes. So again the old trick tumbled out of the pack, and it was an old trick, for apart from that unhappy discomfiture in Egypt it had stood him in good stead. It appears, indeed, to have been a settled understanding agreed upon long years before when they had first abandoned the civilized world of Ur. Sarah was to describe Abraham as "my brother" whenever they settled in a new place, dropping the term possibly when they had reassured themselves about the character of their new neighbours.

So when this time they encamped in Gerar they gave out the same old half-truths to the tribesmen, and for a second time things went wrong—Sarah found herself seized again and destined to the embraces of an amorous king. But the king did not sleep well in the days that succeeded Sarah's establishment in her new quarters; nightmares troubled him; and soon the truth had to come out. Soon, too, Abraham was hanging his head for shame, guiltily praying to God to intermit the plagues that his own equivocation had brought upon this latest unwary lover.

There was too, that other unhappy episode in which Abraham's human fallibility injected bitter pangs into the faith for which he is so justly renowned. Year after year went by and still no child to gladden Sarah's tent. It had come even to be understood that Eliezer, one of Abraham's most trustworthy slaves, was to be his adopted heir. Yet had God not insisted that Abraham's son was to be of his own blood? So the unhappy, ageing Sarah, one sordid day, pushed her husband into unsanctified union with her maid, and in due course they all reaped the bitter fruits of extra-marital adventure. Sarah resented the woman who could obviously now mother her husband's child, the son, perhaps, that should have been hers. The Egyptian slave, mother-to-be of the sheikh's own child, put on the airs of a princess and lost no time in making the real princess realize that her slave was now more important than a barren, fading beauty. Tension built up swiftly to such intensity that Hagar finally had to flee the encampment, pregnant as she was. Finally, fifteen years later, during which the growing Ishmael must have increased Sarah's mortification almost past bounds, Abraham perplexed to distraction had to drive his own young son and the mother out from the camp into a dusty desert, there to fend for themselves as best they could. So the joy which greeted the birth and weaning of the child of promise, the joy that was to have crowned all joys, was for ever dimmed by a cloud of anguish and the hurt that Abraham must have carried in his soul to the day of his death.

Yet in spite of all this, this wandering chieftain has gone down in sacred memory as a synonym for unshaken faith. Let us take heart then and thank God that He accepts the general tenor of a man's character, his earnest desires after right, and lets that count in the final assessment of a career. If faith in God could take a patriarch like Abraham, a compound of so much human passion and weakness, and transfigure him into the father of the faithful, a man through whom all the nations of the earth have found blessing, can He not do something like that for us? ♦



THINK ON THESE THINGS

Man's monumental achievements naturally pander to human pride. Above is an artist's conception of a space house designed by U.S. engineers, being covered on the moon by a remote-controlled robot.

TOWERS OF WEAKNESS AND STRENGTH

by L. A. D. Lane

AFTER the Flood, the descendants of Noah eventually made their way to the plains of Mesopotamia, and, finding them fertile and hospitable, halted their migration and settled down. In course of time they decided to build a tower, "Lest," they said, "we be scattered abroad." Genesis 11:4.

This was actually in defiance of God's command that they disperse far and wide. Furthermore, it is clear that they feared another deluge, in spite of God's promise that there would never be a second universal flood. No doubt they felt more secure remaining together, and more so with the tower as a refuge. In this way they distrusted God, placing reliance on their own efforts, and started constructing probably the world's first sky-scraper—the notorious Tower of Babel.

The record tells us that the Lord came down to halt this work by causing their speech to be "confounded." With the resultant breakdown in communications, "they left off to build." So the people were divided into various linguistic groups, which separately sought other lands in which to settle.

The Tower of Babel is also a classic symbol of man's boastfulness and self-glory.

So, too, are the Egyptian pyramids—massive structures symbolizing the pride of the ancient Pharaohs. It has been estimated that for the largest pyramid about two million blocks were used—ostensibly to protect a mummified monarch—but the effort was somewhat in vain, for tomb-robbers were soon at work.

Years later, world-conquering King Nebuchadnezzar declared: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built . . . by the might of my power, and for the

honour of my majesty?" Daniel 4:30. Yet, even while the echoes of his boast sounded around his palace walls, God drove him into temporary forest exile.

The French Revolution was a movement that defied God. It built a "tower" of rebellion against religion, and elevated a "Goddess of Reason." Voltaire opposed Christ with the venomous words: "Crush the wretch!"

On a world-wide scale Communism denounces God. In 1924 a Russian leader, Zinoviev boasted: "We will grapple with the Lord God in due season; we shall vanquish Him in the highest heaven."—*World Christian Digest*, March, 1951.

Yes, in our day man has many "Babels"—monuments to his own "might." Hopes centre on the powers and skills of human genius. And so very many today want to be independent of God, and dislike being told of their wrongs. G. B. Shaw once said: "Modern man isn't worrying about his sins any more—why should he?" So man is busy constructing "towers" of social progress, of material gain, of the "New Morality," etc. "Towers which betray distrust of God, and which lead critics to question: 'Where is the promise of His [Christ's] coming?'" 2 Peter 3:4.

Yet even within Christendom itself there exists "towers." We think of such "towers" as Formalism, and Modernism. All are edifices of human traditions and theories, in opposition to the truth of God's Word.

Let us turn from the confusion and rebellion that surround us. Let us confide in His Word; let us hope in His promises; let us trust in His providence, and let us believe His Son can save us. Let us say with the Psalmist: "THE LORD IS MY HIGH TOWER."



IS it possible to trace the antiquity of man's civilization by using radio-activity?

Were it not for a number of fortuitous circumstances, radioactivity would be completely confined to inorganic materials such as rocks and minerals and thus would provide little or no insight into past civilizations.

Both plant and animal life reflect to some degree their physical environment, and it is through an unexpected atmospheric phenomenon that radioactivity infuses all living matter.

From the depths of outer space the earth is silently but continuously being bombarded by streams of high-energy particles known as cosmic rays. These cosmic rays impinge upon atmospheric atoms at high altitudes, causing disintegration of the atom and creating many smaller particles, which in turn sometimes initiate other disintegrations.

How carbon atoms are produced

It can be seen that this cascade process would produce large numbers of atomic fragments. The nitrogen of the atmosphere has an affinity to a certain type of neutral atomic fragment, the neutron. After a nitrogen atom captures a neutron, it then re-emits a charged particle, the proton, and an atom of carbon is the net result of the interaction.

However, the carbon formed by this cosmic-ray process is not quite the same as ordinary carbon, because it possesses radioactive properties having fourteen particles in the nucleus of the atom instead of twelve. Thus, due to cosmic rays, radioactive carbon (radiocarbon) is being continuously supplied to the atmosphere.

Qualitatively the reaction may be written:

Nitrogen + Neutron → Carbon-14 + Proton.

Now, if radiocarbon had been found to possess a very short half-life there would have been no accumulation of radiocarbon in the atmosphere—it would have been disintegrated almost as rapidly as it was formed. Fortunately, the half-life of about 5,700 years is ideally suited to radioactive age measurements, provided certain basic premises are valid. Before proceeding let us digress to consider the phenomenon of radioactivity in more detail.

Phenomenon of radioactivity

While certain elements are stable, others exhibit the property of spontaneous decay and thus are known as radioactive elements. Charged particles are usually emitted from the parent atom in the decay process, and with proper instruments the decay of a single atom may be recorded. The decay process transforms an atom of the original element into another atom having quite distinct chemical and radioactive properties, so that the amount of the original radioactive element diminishes with time.

A useful concept in dealing with radioactivity is the term *half-life*. If there exists a certain number of atoms N at time T , then after a certain time T has elapsed only half of the original atoms are present in the sample. This period of time T required for half the atoms to disintegrate is termed the half-life. At the end of two half-lives ($2T$), the number of remaining atoms is not zero, but one fourth of the original number ($N/4$), and at the end of three half-lives only $N/8$ remain. In other words, after the pas-

THE ANTIQUITY OF LIFE IS CARBON - 14 A RELIABLE TEST?

The Bible says no organic thing is older than Creation Week—just a few thousand years ago. Evolution disclaims so brief a period, and substitutes eras millions of years in length.

A method for dating ancient remains that has been much publicized is the radio-carbon method. It would assign to some things far greater ages than the Bible allows. But the writer of this article shows that the carbon dating method is unreliable.

by Robert V. Gentry, Ph.D.

sage of a time period T the number of atoms available at the beginning of that period is reduced by a factor of one-half.

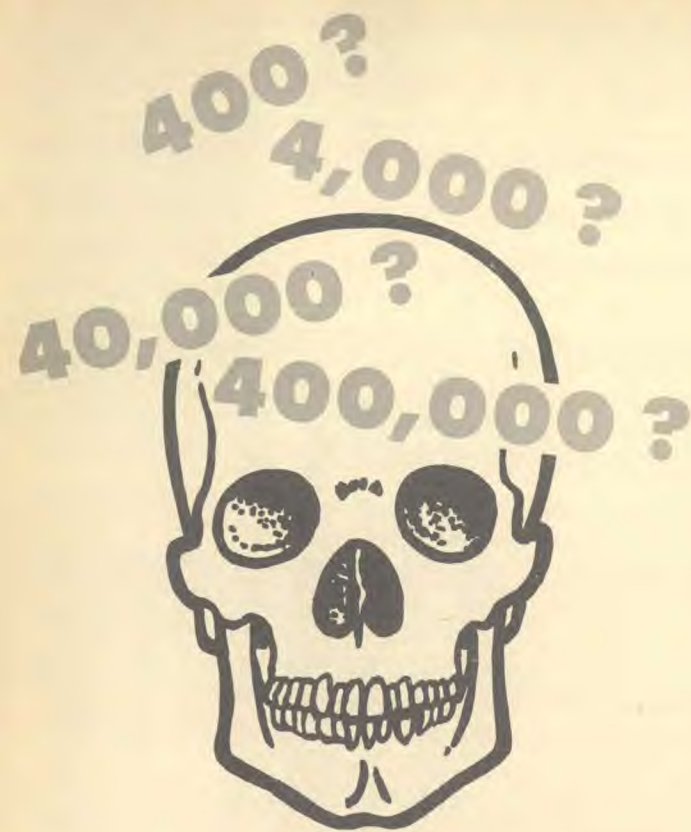
C-14 and living things

Now that we understand something about radioactivity and how radiocarbon or carbon-14 is produced in the atmosphere, the next question is: How does the C-14 [carbon-14] become associated with plant and animal life? The C-14 produced in the atmosphere soon unites with oxygen, thus forming the gas carbon dioxide. A small percentage of the atmosphere is stable carbon dioxide, and thus the radioactive carbon dioxide formed by cosmic ray processes gradually becomes mixed with the other atmospheric gases.

This radioactive carbon dioxide then begins to infuse all plant and animal life, since all life depends upon an exchange with the atmosphere for growth. During the life span of a plant or animal the uptake of radiocarbon reaches what is called the equilibrium value. At this point the organism is losing just as much radiocarbon by normal excretory processes as is being ingested; there is achieved then a state of balance between intake and loss.

Disintegration at death

Usually the life span of the organism is so short that little radiocarbon has time to disintegrate while the organism lives. However, when death occurs the organism ceases to gain or lose radiocarbon through normal life processes. The amount of radiocarbon in the organism at death then starts to decrease from radioactive decay. The next question is: *Can the rate at which the carbon-14 diminishes in a sample be*



determined, and if so, can this mechanism be utilized as a chronometer, or time clock?

Before attempting to answer this question, let us first consider the requirements of an accurate time clock. Any good clock, which keeps accurate time, must, as a prerequisite, possess some type of generating mechanism that runs at a constant rate. This generating mechanism may be actuated by a spring, as in a watch, or perhaps by an electric motor for an electric clock; or if one is using a sun dial the generating mechanism is simply the rotation of the earth upon its axis. *Needless to say, if the spring or motor becomes defective somehow, the clock will no longer keep accurate time.* In addition, it is necessary to agree on some point in time as the initial point. For example, the initial point in time for each new day is arbitrarily defined to begin after midnight on the preceding day.

Considerable confusion would result if various countries arbitrarily decided to have different initial points for the beginning of each day. Standardization allows one to be assured that everyone within his time zone agrees on a common point of origin for each day. No doubt your watch has stopped at one time or another and you were quickly able to make the proper adjustment by consulting another clock, which you felt had been keeping accurate time. This correction, a relatively simple one in this case, allows us to understand that once our clock has failed we must consult a new standard of time to make the proper adjustments.

Now there is an analogy between the generating mechanism of a clock and the rate at which the carbon-14 diminishes in a given sample. *A basic premise or assumption in the use of carbon-14 as a means for*

measuring time is that the rate of disintegration of carbon-14 has always remained constant.

Areas of uncertainty

But wait—our discussion has now come to the point where we must categorize the questions and problems associated with radiocarbon dating, for while in principle the method is not difficult to understand, there are several areas of uncertainty which in the overall picture make the application of the method somewhat complex.

Before analyzing the complexities of the method, however, let us detail a brief outline of the history of a particular specimen. A sample is collected—say a piece of charcoal from a cave, or a piece of wood from an archaeological site, or perhaps a bone from still another area. As far as possible the collector attempts to avoid contamination of the sample before sending it to the radiocarbon dating laboratory. Once in the laboratory the sample is thoroughly cleaned, and by various chemical procedures is finally reduced to a form (usually a gas) so that the carbon in the sample has been separated from most of the other constituents. The amount of carbon-14 in this reduced sample is then measured by an electronic counter—a fairly difficult task when the carbon-14 level in the sample is quite low. *The usual assumption is that the sample contained a certain amount of radiocarbon (at the time of death) equivalent to the amount it would contain if it had lived at present.*

It is also assumed that the carbon-14 in the sample diminished at a constant rate. It is then inferred that a certain time period has elapsed for the carbon-14 content to have decreased from what was assumed to have been the original carbon-14 content of the sample to the present value.

Now the question is whether this procedure does in fact relate elapsed time to the parameters in question—and to answer this question we must now categorize and examine more thoroughly all of the uncertainties involved.

1. The question of a constant transformation rate.

The assumption that the radioactive transformation rate has been constant is an inference or extrapolation of the knowledge that at present the transformation rate does not vary. There is no direct method for measuring the radioactive transformation rate in the past.

2. The problem of absorption and retention of radiocarbon in a particular specimen.

In other words, has there been any increase or decrease in carbon-14 within the sample due to environmental factors? It is known that in some cases samples are contaminated, and carbon-14 is introduced into the sample after death has occurred, so that the amount of carbon-14 in the sample gives no indication whatsoever of the original carbon-14 content at the time of death. For example, some specimens that actually contain very low amounts of radiocarbon can sometimes be contaminated with radiocarbon from modern sources either in the field or in the laboratory and thus reflect much higher radiocarbon concentration when analyzed in a radiocarbon counter. In many cases it is possible to trace the source of the contamination, but in some cases the nature of the contamination is quite obscure.

While on one hand it is possible for specimens to reflect higher concentrations of radiocarbon than actually exist, it is also possible to obtain specimens that contain much lower radiocarbon concentrations than



Third in a
series by
J. A. McMillan

We Worship - What?

Genuine worship is never a response to tyranny and coercion, but is free and spontaneous, springing from deep personal conviction and principle.

ONE of the pertinent religious questions of our age is that of worship. Shall we worship? Whom or what shall we worship?

It is not always appreciated as it should be that we must, in fact, worship! As a French philosopher once remarked: "Man is an incurably religious animal." It is instinctive for him to worship—as instinctive as for a bird to fly or a fish to swim. As Francis Thompson wrote:

"Does the fish soar to find the ocean,
The eagle plunge to find the air—
That we ask of the stars in motion
If they have rumour of Thee there?"

—In no Strange Land.

If modern man does not worship the living God, he will turn to the "shrine" of some false idolatry; and, whether he senses it or not, his soul will be debased before some "strange god."

Fervent Christians are naturally distressed by all the propaganda put out by the "God is dead" philosophers, and the faint-hearted among them fear that Christianity is going to "peter out" in a decade or two.

Such faint-hearts need to recall that the worship of the living God has always been the privilege of a "remnant" in every generation. That the strident claims and assertions of modern humanists are much akin to those of their ancient predecessors.

A royal challenge

Consider the lesson that Daniel offers us in this connection.

Some twenty years after Daniel had interpreted King Nebuchadnezzar's prophetic dream of the metallic man with feet of clay, Jerusalem, the capital of Judah, had been destroyed, its government eliminated, its people dispersed by captivity. The religion of Jehovah had been discredited. God Himself could rightly have been considered "dead and buried." Truly He had become "irrelevant and unnecessary."

At this time, Nebuchadnezzar, full of zeal and ambition, erected a great golden image in the plains of Dura. This he did in defiance of the prophetic image (see article in last issue of OUR TIMES), which assigned only the golden head to the period of

Babylonian power. So he issued a proclamation that at the sound of the cornet and other musical instruments, all men should bow down and offer worship to his "man-made image." The challenge was unmistakable. God's "image" of human empires ended in clay, crumbling into dust; Nebuchadnezzar's image was all of gold, imperishable, and everlasting. Like a recent dictator, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of a "reich lasting for a thousand years"—and more! It was the "sacred cow" of the State *versus* the individual, a situation not entirely unknown in our age.

It is interesting to note that Herodotus, the ancient historian, describes a temple in Babylon where there was "a sitting figure of Zeus, all of gold," and that over thirty tons of gold were used in this temple to garnish the false worship of Babylonian gods. (*Persian Wars*, 1.183.)

Mass psychology

One of the lessons of that experience recorded in Daniel chapter three, is that men in the mass are ever ready to "fall down and worship" before some "sacred cow." The desire to avoid persecution, the desire to be considered "with it," so often stifles personal scruples and the questionings of conscience.

An amusing, but also sinister illustration of this human failing occurred recently. A group of workmen arrived to start work, but pinned on the notice board was a note stating that an official strike was "on." Without question the men went on strike. Three hours later it was discovered that the whole thing was a "hoax" perpetrated by someone with a twisted sense of humour. But what a lesson on the "solidarity" of human rights!

Condemned to the ovens

No wonder King Nebuchadnezzar was livid with rage when it was reported to him that three of his civil servants had defied his decree, and had disobeyed his royal command to bow down and worship before his golden image. They refused to pay homage. Was this the way to repay his generosity! Had he not brought these "foreigners" to Babylon, educated them at public expense, and given them responsible positions in local government! His "remedy" for non-conformity was drastic, but effective. He commanded that the state incinerator be heated seven times more than normally, then that the executioners "bind Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego [the non-conformists], and cast them into the burning fiery furnace." (Daniel 3:20.)

Throughout history this has been the usual method resorted to by dictatorial leaders. When reasons are refuted, and persuasion fails, then the final resort



is coercion. The burning fiery furnace, the lions' den, the stake, the gas-chamber, etc., have ever been the brutal methods of silencing protest.

Jesus' warning

With prophetic insight, Jesus warned His disciples of the treatment that they might have to endure for His sake. "The disciple is not superior to his teacher any more than the servant is superior to his master, for what is good enough for the teacher is good enough for the disciple as well, and the servant will not fare better than his master. If men call the master of the household the 'Prince of Evil,' what sort of names will they give to his servants? But never let them frighten you." "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me first." Matt. 10:24, 26; John 15:18, Phillips.

It should be clearly understood that the Hebrew group recorded in the book of Daniel did not defy the king's command just to be awkward. Men who have stood against the multitude on a matter of conscience have always been treated as obstinate, obdurate creatures who caused "unnecessary friction" to the tidy bureaucratic mind, intent on getting a 100% unanimous vote. However, it has invariably been this "noble band of martyrs" who have brought real progress for mankind, buying with their blood, the priceless boon of liberty. Joseph in Egypt, Moses in Midian, Daniel in Babylon, Wyclif in England, Savonarola in Florence, Martin Luther and Martin Neimohler in Germany, were outstanding leaders of that noble army. They followed Him who witnessed a good confession before Herod and Pilate. Such are the men who ensured that "every private citizen must remain free in his religion."—Article XIII of the Union of Utrecht (1579).

No need for pessimism

Let those who bewail the secularism and unbelief of our present time take heart. True religion has always been regarded as "out-moded" by intellectuals and progressives. It has always had to pass through the burning fiery furnace of public criticism and State oppression. And it has ever cherished the promise: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." Isaiah 43:2, 3.

Non-conformity has always been subject to persecution as for instance the early Christians in Rome's Colosseum (left), and the Hebrews of Daniel's time in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace (below).



This does not imply complete immunity from persecution and pain for the worshipper of the true God. Genuine faith does not bargain with God. It does not demand freedom from hazard or hardship. Let Daniel speak, and show us the quality of true faith: "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Daniel 3:17, 18.

This is the lesson and the example for our generation. God calls for worship based on love and free will, the world demands worship based on fear or self-interest, and it is often coercive.

A last-day image

In the last days of human experience, these lessons will be repeated.

We read of another "image" that will be erected before men, actuated by the spirit of "BABYLON THE GREAT, MOTHER OF ALL HARLOTS AND OF THE EARTH'S ABOMINATIONS." "Then it compels all, small and great, rich and poor, freemen and slaves, to receive a mark on their right hands or in their foreheads. The purpose of this is that no one should be able to buy or sell unless he bears the mark of the name of the animal or the number of its name." Revelation 17:5; 13:16, 17, Phillips.

Stripped of its prophetic symbolism, this is a portrayal of a world-wide authoritarian power that compels worship to "an image." (Rev. 13, verses 12-14.) Two "beasts" of authoritarian tyranny are presented, one beginning with the end of the old Roman empire, the other ruling in the latter days. Both demand worship from "all kindreds, and tongues, and nations, and all that dwell upon the earth." Verses 7, 8.

These "beasts" are but a symbol of Paul's "law-

less man" who "himself takes his seat in the temple of God, to show that he really claims to be God." 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, Phillips. When such powers arise, demanding worship from all and sundry, then "when that happens the lawless man will be plainly seen." Verse 8.

At that time, millions will be in the valley of decision; but only those whose names are written in "the Lamb's book of life" will resist this false worship, and defy the boycott imposed by the nations of the world, rejecting, as did the three Hebrew martyrs, this blasphemous coercive call to worship a false god.

Decisive conflict

It will be a decisive conflict between the Commandments of God and the traditions of men. Then, as always, the multitude will follow, like blind sheep, the decrees of the totalitarian authority. Then, as in the days of Daniel,

"Truth for ever on the scaffold,
Wrong for ever on the throne,
Yet that scaffold sways the future
And behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God, amid the shadows,
Keeping watch upon His own."—LOWELL,
The Present Crisis.

When the prophet envisioned our day, with its terrible crisis and closing conflict between truth and error, true worship and false homage, he described the loyal ones who follow Jesus Christ "the lamb of God." "Here the fortitude of God's people has its place—in keeping God's commands and remaining loyal to Jesus." Revelation 14:12, N.E.B.

Worship, to be of any value, must be free, and offered in love. Such loving worship of the living God is the only kind that God can accept. It is this quality of love that Jesus inspires. "Such are the worshippers whom the Father wants. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth." John 4:23, 24, N.E.B.

As another with keen insight into the spiritual battle that must be waged has written: "When the religion of Christ is most in contempt, when His law is most despised, then should our zeal be the warmest and our courage and firmness the most unflinching. To stand in defence of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason."—E. G. WHITE.

Such was the spirit of the Hebrew witnesses, in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. Such will be the spirit of those who refuse to bow down and worship the "image of the beast." Such as these will be welcomed by Jesus into the fellowship of "the men who follow the Lamb wherever He may go; these men have been redeemed from among mankind as first-fruits to God and to the Lamb." Revelation 14:4, Phillips. ♦



BIBLE QUESTIONS

REPLENISH THE EARTH

"Please explain Genesis 1:28. When God said, 'replenish the earth,' did that mean that the earth was inhabited prior to the time of Adam and Eve's creation?"—N.D.

"Replenish" does mean "fill again," but in this text the thought is simply "fill." The Hebrew word in verse 28 is the same as in verse 22, "fill the waters"; and in Genesis 6:13, "the earth is filled with violence." It is a common word in the Old Testament, and the usual meaning is "fill" or "be full." The newer translations, including Moffatt's, Smith's American Translation, and the Revised Standard Version, all give "fill" instead of "replenish" in Genesis 1:28. Therefore this verse gives no support for the theory that the earth was inhabited before Adam's creation.

In Genesis 9:1, where the same word is used in the command, "Replenish the earth," we are justified in understanding "fill again," because we have the record of the race that was destroyed by the Flood.

THE TEMPLE OF GOD

"What is meant by the temple of God in 1 Corinthians 3:17?"—C.W.

Verses 16 and 17 read as follows: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

The temple referred to here is the Church, the body of Christian believers. (See verse 9.) The word "defile" in the original text is the same word that is translated "destroy" in the next clause. Modern translations consistently render the word "destroy" in both clauses.

It is a serious offence to destroy, that is, bring in envying, strife, and division into the Church (see verse 3) and thus hinder it in its mission of saving a lost world. So serious is it that the person who does it will himself be destroyed. The foundation of this building, or temple, is Christ. (Ephesians 2:20, 21.)

In the sixth chapter of 1 Corinthians Paul refers to individual Christians as temples of the Holy Ghost. Verses 19, 20. Because he belongs to God, the Christian will keep his body clean from all defilement.

"TEST YOUR 'WORD' POWER" (Answers)

(See page 9)

1. Elisha. 2 Kings 13:21; 2. Uzziah, 2 Chronicles 26:16-21; 3. Daniel. Daniel 6:16-23; 4. Jonah. Jonah 2:1-10; 5. High priest's servant. Luke 22:50, 51; 6. Peter. Matthew 8:14, 15; 7. Jairus. Luke 8:41-56; 8. Lazarus. John 11:38-44; 9. Widow. Luke 7:11-17.



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THE ANTIQUITY OF LIFE

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would ordinarily be expected. In certain places it has been found that water from underground sources does not have the usual proportion of radiocarbon as is found in larger volumes of water. Organisms that derive their water supply from such radiocarbon deficient sources reflect smaller radiocarbon concentrations. In addition, there are certain instances when the isotope carbon-14 is not ingested into an organism in the same proportion as it exists in the surrounding media, but this situation can usually be taken into account by various experimental techniques.

As an illustration of the problems that sometimes arise in radiocarbon dating, we might cite the illustration of the analysis of the top layer sediments that were taken from cores off the Pacific Coast and subsequently analyzed for radiocarbon content.* The top layer of the material had, of course, been deposited very recently; yet the radiocarbon content of the samples was quite a bit lower than one would expect. In fact, if the usual assumptions of the carbon-14 dating method are used, the average age of the surface of the top layer samples would be several thousand years old!

3. The problem of the amount of radiocarbon in the atmosphere.

As previously noted, it is usually assumed that the level of radiocarbon in the atmosphere has remained constant for at least the past few millennia. For example, under the evolutionary framework the world is considered to be millions of years old, and it is quite natural within this framework to consider that the level of carbon-14 in the atmosphere has been relatively constant. The point in question is, however, whether this framework or model is in fact a valid representation of the history of the earth and of life thereon. Suppose another model is considered . . .

Briefly, imagine the creation of the earth with its new atmosphere completely devoid of carbon-14 and also with all plant life (including trees much, much larger than those which now exist) completely devoid of carbon-14. By calculating the present-day influx of carbon-14 into such an atmosphere the amount of radiocarbon build-up from Creation to the time of the Flood may be approximated. When this approximation is done, it is observed that the level of carbon-14 in the antediluvian atmosphere was far less than the present-day level, in contradistinction to a basic premise (number 3) used in radiocarbon dating at present. *All animal and plant life that existed before the Flood would then have ingested a much smaller amount of carbon-14 than plant and animal life living today for the simple reason that the atmospheric level of carbon-14 was much less.* Thus the apparent absence of radiocarbon that is sometimes found in certain samples is in many cases simply a reflection of the extremely low carbon-14 level of the atmosphere in antediluvian time rather than an indication of great antiquity. *Thus it is not surprising that the coal and oil deposits contain very little, if any, carbon-14, since these deposits are derived from vegetation that existed prior to the Flood.*

As a second feature of our non-evolutionary-framework model, we imagine that during the upheaval at the time of the Flood a large cosmic ray storm may have occurred, rapidly increasing the radiocarbon content with a short period of time. If this were

the case, it would be unlikely that the newly formed radiocarbon would have achieved a state of equilibrium between the atmosphere and oceans for at least several hundred years after the Flood. Since the amount of carbon-14 in the atmosphere during this several-hundred-year period would have been in a state of turbulence, one could not expect to use radiocarbon as an indicator of time until after equilibrium conditions had been achieved.

In summary, to the question, When can radiocarbon be used for dating purposes? the answer is clear—When all the premises cited above have been verified and the uncertainties resolved. As a result, caution should be exercised before equating many of the "radiocarbon dates" or "ages" with elapsed time. In conclusion, we have considered only one catastrophe-related model of radiocarbon dating—a model that allows one to understand why certain radiocarbon analyses may be valid while others are questionable.

* K. O. Emery and E. E. Bray, Bull. Am. Assoc. Petrol Geologists, Vol. 46, page 1,839, Oct. 1962.



★ "Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid . . . for the Lord thy God, He it is that doth go with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."—*Joshua 1:6.*

★ "It's good to have money and the things money can buy; but it's good, too, to check up once in a while and make sure that you haven't lost the things money can't buy."—*George Lorimer.*

★ "Prosperity is only an instrument to be used, not a deity to be worshipped."—*Calvin Coolidge*

★ "A pessimist is a man who thinks everybody as nasty as himself, and hates them for it."—*George Bernard Shaw.*

★ "Minds are like parachutes—they only function when they are open."—*Lord Thomas Dewar.*

★ "'Taint no use to sit and whine
'Cause the fish ain't on your line;
Bait your hook an, keep on tryin',
Keep a-goin'!"—*Frank L. Stanton.*

★ "Every step of progress the world has ever made has been from scaffold to scaffold and from stake to stake."—*Wendell Phillips.*

★ "Broad-mindedness is the result of flattening high-mindedness out."—*George Saintsbury.*

★ "To be furious in religion is to be irreligiously religious."—*Penn.*

★ "It would do the world good if every man in it would compel himself occasionally to be absolutely alone. Most of the world's progress has come out of such loneliness."—*Bruce Barton.*



BIBLE STUDY

by W. L. Emmerson

WILL ALL THE WORLD BE CONVERTED?

DID Jesus expect that the people of the last days would be eagerly awaiting His return? "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8.

On the contrary, what would be the spiritual condition of the world in the last days?

"For men shall be . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." 2 Tim. 3:2-4.

Note.—"If Victorians of the seventies were to come back again they would be struck with the restlessness of the times, the disappearance of family worship, the lessened attendances at places of worship, . . . the neglect of the Bible, the waning influence of the Church on the community, the lowering of the sanctity of marriage and the lowering of the standards of morals." Dr. Chas. Brown (Baptist).

"The brutal fact is that in this Christian country not one person in a hundred has the faintest notion what the Church teaches about God or man or society or the person of Jesus Christ."—Miss Dorothy Sayers (Church of England).

What fatal apathy, even among professed Christians, did the apostle Paul predict?

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 Tim. 3:5.

Note.—"The arch-heresy today in the Christian Church is non-redemptive Christianity, though you cannot call it Christianity in these circumstances—Christianity from which the redemptive truths have dropped out." The Bishop of Chelmsford in the *Church Times*.

How will the last-day Church be deflected from its primitive faith?

(a) Scorn of divine revelation. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts." 2 Peter 3:3.

Note.—According to the dictionary definition, the term "scoffer" combines a "sense of superiority, resentment, and aversion," which manifests itself in "contemptuous ridicule." It is usually directed against "something deserving reverence or consideration,"

and commonly arises "in connection with an ungrounded arrogant sense of self-esteem."

Certainly no word could have been selected more perfectly to describe the modernist school of thought, whose most constantly reiterated claim is that it has on its side all the intellectual and thinking people, while those who disagree have "manifestly ignorant, prejudice, and superstitious minds."

(b) Acceptance of man-made fables. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; . . . they shall turn away their ear from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Timothy 4:3, 4.

Note.—Most prominent among the "fables" which have been offered before our generation in place of the "truths" of God's Word are the doctrines of evolution, illimitable and endless progress, humanism or the sufficiency of man, salvation by education, social reform, and the like.

The doctrine of evolution from one original form of life Wassman calls "a delightful dream without any scientific support."

Referring, among other things, to the doctrine of endless progress, Dr. W. R. Inge says: "To those who have been brought up in the unquestioning worship of nineteenth century fetishes . . . it must be a shock to see those venerable idols shaking on their pedestals or lying prostrate at the foot of them."—*The fall of Idols*, page 17.

By what other means will many be led astray?

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets." Matthew 24:24. (See also verses 4, 5, 11.)

Note.—"We are cursed today by too many bogus messiahs, who maintain that their creed is the divine revelation."—Lord Tweedsmuir at Edinburgh University.

From whence will these evil influences emanate?

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." 1 Timothy 4:1.

What effect will these teachings have upon the life of the Church?

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Matthew 24:12.

Does the prophetic Word hold out any possibility of a universal change of heart before the end?

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." 2 Timothy 3:13. "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." Luke 17:26. (See also verses 27-30.)

In this time of terrible apostasy, what final opportunity will be given to the world?

"And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14. (See also Revelation 14:6, 7.)

Note.—This age, which has seen the greatest apostasy in all time, has also seen the Gospel going as never before to the uttermost ends of the earth. The modern art of printing has enabled the Bible to be multiplied more rapidly than ever before. Modern means of communication have made it possible for the ambassadors of Jesus to speed to earth's remotest bounds. And the Spirit of God has raised up men with hearts aflame for God to preach the Gospel to every creature under heaven.

HOW MUST WE APPROACH GOD?

← page 20

occurs more than thirty times in the Bible. In every instance it means "to bear the sufferings or penalty or punishment of sin." In Leviticus 5:1 God declares that if a man hears swearing and is a witness and does not utter it, he shall "bear his iniquity." This means that guilt shall so rest on him that he shall be liable, or subject, to punishment.

We are all transgressors, so we are all under the curse. But Christ has redeemed us by enduring the penalty of the law, or by being made a curse for us, that is, being made a victim, one devoted or accursed for us.

The slain Lamb

In a number of passages in the Bible Christ is referred to as a Lamb, a Lamb slain, a Lamb that takes away sin, a Lamb that is worshipped, a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (See Isaiah 53:7; John 1:29; Acts 8:32; 1 Peter 1:19; Revelation 5:6-8, 12; 13:8.)

Christ resembled a lamb, of course, in His uncomplaining gentleness and innocence. But in no sense did a lamb ever take away sin but by dying, as a symbol of Christ, in the place of the one who offered it as his sacrifice. So Christ as a lamb, "the Lamb of God," takes away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

He was slain, not for Himself, but for us. All the lambs offered in sacrifice died, the innocent for the guilty, the spotless for the polluted. These things clearly teach that Christ endured the penalty of the law, that He died as a substitute for sinners. . . .

The blood

The doctrine of the atonement is also taught in the Scriptures in connection with the phrase "the blood of Christ." *This is an expression which has come to be most distasteful to some religious teachers today. They would have all reference to it stricken out of our hymns and sermons.*

Nevertheless, it is a wholly Scriptural expression and teaching, and it lies at the very heart of the work which Christ has accomplished in the salvation of men. No one who has been truly saved will ever be ashamed of the *blood* atonement.

The Bible expressly declares that Christ "made peace through the blood of His cross;" that "by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us;" that His blood shall purge our "conscience from dead works to serve the living God;" that "the blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth us from all sin;" that He has "redeemed us to God by" His blood; and that we "are made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Colossians 1:20; Hebrews 9:12, 14; 1 John 1:7; Revelation 5:9; Ephesians 2:13.)

There can be no doubt that the shedding of the blood of Christ, His crucifixion on the cross, was the greatest crime in history. It is impossible that the wickedness of evil men in murdering God's own Son could be pleasing to the Father. In what sense, then, does Christ's blood cleanse us from sin? In what sense can it be accepted by Him as the atonement?

It cannot be otherwise than that Christ offered Himself as a Lamb without spot to God, poured out His soul unto death, that we might live for ever.

The vicarious nature of Christ's death is made very clear in the statements of Scripture: "For the transgression of my people was He stricken." He "was delivered for our offences." He "died for our sins according to the Scriptures." He "gave Himself for our sins." (Isaiah 53:8; Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:3; Galatians 1:4.)

There is no explanation why Christ should have done and suffered these things for *sin*, when He was without sin, except it be as an atonement, and a *vicarious* atonement.

Moreover, the Scripture leaves us in no doubt that Christ's death was a death in behalf of guilty men. "This is My body which is given for you." "I lay down My life for the sheep." "In due time Christ died for the ungodly." "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Luke 22:19; John 10:15; Romans 5:6, 8.)

Such plain positive and solemn passages need no explanation. Indeed, there is danger of weakening their force by even attempting an explanation. They are plain enough. They may be emphasized, however, by the simple question: In what conceivable sense could Christ die in our place as the Scriptures say He did if it be not as a vicarious, atoning sacrifice?

Where is the fitness of connecting the remission of sins in so striking a manner with the person and the blood of Jesus Christ, unless He is indeed the substitute for His people, their Saviour in the highest sense ever claimed by the teachings of Christianity?

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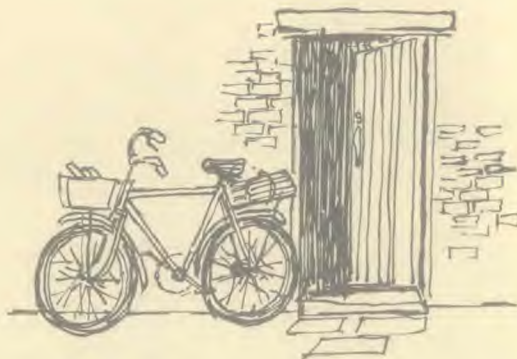
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THE CHILDREN'S PAGES



THE STOLEN BICYCLE



by Peggy Dawkins

MY bicycle has been stolen! It has gone! What am I to do now?" cried Ben Aseno.

This was a most distressing thing to have happened to him. He was an African man who sold Bibles in Kenya, East Africa. He used his bicycle every day to travel along the dusty roads and into the jungle to take his books to the people living in the villages away from the large cities. If he did not get his bicycle back, he would have to walk over those sandy tracks, up hill and down dale, and he would never be able to get so much work done.

"Did you see where the thief went?" asked his minister, when he heard this bad news.

"No," replied Ben mournfully. "I wish I had seen him take my bicycle. I would have been after him like a bullet from a gun. What am I going to do now?"

"I'll tell you what we will do," said the minister hopefully. "We can go to the prayer house and pray."

The minister got out his large drum made from a hollow tree trunk. It was about three feet long and over both ends was stretched pieces of zebra skin, very tight, so that when a tattoo was beaten on the taut skin, the sound rippled along the air waves and was carried away into the distance. The beating of a drum in the African jungle or bush, is like a telegraph system

for messages can be sent out into the valleys and mountains which the village people can understand.

"Rat-a-rat tat. Rum-m-m-m-m," beat the minister on his drum.

"Rat-tat-a-tat. Rum-m-m-m-m," and the sound echoed and re-echoed down into the valley and up the crevices to the villages perched on the side of the mountain.

"Come to the prayer house," ran the message. "There is a special need for prayer. Rat-a-rat tat. Rum-m-m-m-m."

You and I would never have understood the message of the drum, but the Christian people understood it, and soon many of them came. Dressed in their white flowing clothes they walked single-file down the steep mountain pathways and converged on the prayer house from all directions. The prayer house was made of mud and poles with a thatched roof. There were rough benches some of wood and some of mud and stones, on which the people now sat and a raised platform at one end of the prayer house was a simple pulpit. On the wall at the back of the pulpit hung a wooden cross. There was no fine church building with a large steeple and a peal of bells, in this part of the African bush. The people were poor, and could not afford to build a brick or stone church. But they were good people and loved Jesus and worshipped Him the best way they knew, in this mud-and-pole prayer house.

The minister told them that Ben's bicycle had been stolen, and asked

the waiting congregation to pray for its recovery. Many people nodded their heads in assent, and some clasped their hands together in an attitude of prayer. In these ways they let it be known that they would pray for Ben. Not only the minister, but many of the people prayed aloud. Ben also prayed, and in his simple way he reminded the Lord how much he needed his bicycle to carry on his work of taking the Gospel to the people who lived in that country.

When the prayer meeting was ended, the congregation quietly left the prayer house, and they could be seen walking slowly up the steep mountain pathways and disappearing among the huts in the villages.

Two day later, Ben was asked to make the trip into a nearby town to buy food and supplies at the market for the school children. Even though he was busy he willingly agreed to do this for the school teacher, and set off—on foot of course, because his bicycle had not yet been found.

At the first market he visited he was not able to find what he needed and so he went on to the next one. There he met a friend and they talked for a few minutes.

"Come to my house, Ben, for a cool drink. You must be very tired and you will feel better for your journey back to the school," invited his friend.

"I don't think I should stop for very long," explained Ben. "You see, they are waiting for me and the

supplies I am buying, so I must hurry back."

"Yes, Ben, I understand that," said his friend, "but it is on your way, and you needn't stay longer than to have a drink."

So Ben went with his friend and even though he wanted to hurry back before it got too dark, he was glad of a little rest, for the day was very hot. He sat outside leaning against the wall of a barn while his friend went inside his small hut to prepare the refreshments. Ben pulled a small Bible out of his pocket and began to read. He always carried this special Bible with him. It fitted into his pocket so nicely, and he loved to read it every spare moment he had. He read it faithfully morning and night, and he always felt strengthened and helped as he read and re-read some of the precious promises God had written in the Bible. He still believed with

all his heart that God would hear and answer the prayers of the people about his bicycle.

He heard footsteps approaching, and glanced up from his reading. Two men were approaching—one pushing a bicycle!

His bicycle!

The men came nearer and a young girl came out of a nearby hut and said to them: "Why didn't you sell the bicycle to that man who wanted it? Didn't you like his cattle?"

Before the man could answer, Ben jumped up. He ran toward them, crying out: "That is my bicycle. That man is a thief!"

When the man heard this he dropped the bicycle and ran away. Ben quickly recovered his bicycle. His heart was full of rejoicing as he related to his friend all that had happened—the theft of the bicycle, and the prayer meetings in the little prayer house. And now the prayers

had been answered. He had his bicycle again!

"Just think," said Ben excitedly. "God has moved ahead of me all the while. He knew that the thief was going to bring the bicycle to your village on this particular day at this particular time. So He spoke to my heart and told me to go to the town to buy some supplies for the school children. Then He arranged that I should not find what I needed at the first market, and so I went on to the next and there I met you."

"Yes, and I persuaded you to come to my house for a cool drink," said his friend. "It was all part of the way God was working for you to get your bicycle back."

When the believers heard of the wonderful way in which their prayers had been answered, they thanked and praised God; God who loves and answers all those who pray earnestly and reverently every day.

The Brown Hare

by Alan P. Major

NORMALLY the Brown Hare is seen on its own in large fields, grazing pastures, on downlands and moorlands. Although similar to a rabbit it has a bigger body, longer, more powerful hind legs, and the black-tipped ears are longer, too. Its total length is almost twenty-four inches. The hare's large eyes are prominently placed on the sides of its head, giving it a wide range of vision. On its back and upper-parts its fur is a russet-brown colour which helps it to merge into the countryside where it lives, so it is difficult to see. The undersides are pure white. The Brown Hare makes a kind of nest, called a "form," in the shape of its body, from fern and dry grass, usually in the open fields or among bracken or bramble bushes. Here it sleeps and rests. As well as eating wild plants, grasses, roots, and grain, the Brown Hare does a lot of damage when it feeds on young conifer trees in forestry plantations, and carrots, lettuce, cabbage, turnips, etc., in the fields.

If it is disturbed from its "form"

the hare relies on its fast speed to escape from enemies, such as foxes, stoats, and dogs. When being chased the hare will cleverly try to break its scent and alter its tracks, so it cannot be followed by leaping over hedges, ditches, and fences, or sometimes it will run along the edge of a stream or marshy ground, or it will easily swim a slow-moving river. In rocky places the hare will jump from stone to stone to slow down its pursuers.

There is a saying: "As mad as a March Hare." This refers to the strange antics they perform in March, running round and round in circles, leaping in the air, or rearing on hind legs like a horse, which is a courtship display to win a mate. Normally hares are shy, timid creatures, but as springtime approaches they become bold and aggressive, especially toward each other. If several males meet in a field they stand on their hind legs and punch each other with their forelegs just like boxers. Eventually one is the winner, who claims the field as his



"territory," and all the other hares are driven away to find places for themselves.

Unlike young rabbits, which are born blind and deaf, the young hares or leverets, are born in the "form" during the summer, with their eyes open, a furry coat and able to stand up and run, so that if they are seriously threatened, where they are hiding, can escape from danger. After about fourteen days they leave their mother, the doe, and go off to fend for themselves in new areas.



My dear Sunbeams,

If I were to ask you to tell me the number of apples you had eaten and how many apple pips, or seeds, you had thrown away, I wonder what your answer would be. You would probably say: "I couldn't possibly tell you. I've eaten more apples than I can count, and when I throw away the core, I never stop to see how many seeds are in it."

Some time ago, I read of a man to whom hundreds of people owe their gratitude. He had a habit of collecting all the apple seeds he could, and which he always carried in a bundle wherever he went. At each place he visited, where he saw any waste ground, he would plant these apple seeds. Today,

in many places there are flourishing orchards of fruit-bearing trees, thanks to this good man. He saw what possibilities lie in a little seed.

A gardener also sees such possibilities. As he plants tiny seeds, some no larger than the head of a pin, he looks ahead to the time when those seeds will have developed into healthy-looking plants covered with lovely flowers. When he puts in wrinkled little peas, he sees tall plants covered with long, full pods of sweet-tasting peas.

God looks ahead like the apple man and the gardener. One of His messengers once wrote of Him: "God looks into the tiny seed that He Himself has formed, and sees wrapped within it the beautiful flower, the shrub, or the lofty, wide-spreading tree." And then she goes on to say: "So does He see the possibility in every human being."

In every babe that is born God sees a future worker for Him. He may see in you a doctor, or a nurse, a teacher, a missionary, secretary, or an artist. He has a work for each one of you to do. You won't disappoint Him, will you, Sunbeams? Don't let yourself be cast away like the apple seed, and forgotten. Your willingness is all that is needed for God to make your life fruitful—for Him to take you as He does the little apple seed, and make you grow into a tree of usefulness in His service. When baby Moses was

born, God saw in Him a great leader who would bring the children of Israel out of bondage. When John the Baptist was born, God saw in him one who would prepare the way for the coming of Jesus, and who would also lead many souls to repentance. Moses and John were willing, and they became the mighty workers that God had planned. Let us pray that we too may be ready and willing to become what God has planned and so be fruitful in His service.

Help Me Find My Place

"There's a place for every worker
In the vineyard of the Lord,
Where with all our powers united
We can toil with one accord.
There are needy hearts now waiting
For the help which we can give
Let us guide them safely onward,
Let us show them how to live.

"There's a place, Oh! may I find it
Where my mission I may fill
Be it humble or exalted,
May I hold it with a will;
Help me serve my generation
With a heart of love and grace
Help me Lord, from this time onward,
Find and occupy my place."

Auntie Alice

FOR YOU TO COLOUR



See how nicely you can colour this picture and send it with your name, age, and address to Auntie Alice, The Stanborough Press Ltd., Alma Park, Grantham, Lincs., not later than April 5th.

RESULTS OF NOVEMBER COMPETITION

First Prize.—Sarah Sikes, Porthcurnick, Portscatho, Nr. Truro, Cornwall. Age 12.
Alison Smith, 321 Old Farm Avenue, Sidcup, Kent. Age 10.

Honourable Mention.—Charles McMorris (Londonderry); Anne Crawford (West Moors); Margaret Hobb (Perth); Michael Robinson (Oldham); Susan Slater (Melton Mowbray); Margaret Mackay (Grangemouth); Kevin Catto (Woodbridge); Elizabeth Goyder (Rawdon); Pamela Sheldrick (Carlisle); Teresa Connor (Battersea, S.W.11); Paula Reider (Leeds 8); Sylvia Wood (Cardiff); Paul King (Ipswich); Lynette Jenner (Hailsham); D. Johnson (Grantham); Joy Sherstead (Ipswich); Shirley Spear (Portscatho); Elizabeth Maybery (St. Albans); John Vesey (Chipperfield); M. Johnson (Grantham); Veronica Russell (Westcliff-on-Sea); Annette Pain (Lincoln); Susan Burgess (Portslade-by-Sea); Peter Goyder (Rawdon); Margaret King (Ipswich); David Spearing (Watford).

Those Who Tried Hard.—J. Blackett (London W.12); H. Campbell (Wembley); Sharon Parris (London, S.E.22); Beverley Davis (Gloucester); Kevin Weir (Irvine); Barbara Randall (High Wycombe); Lesley Ann Stevens (London, W.11); Julie Hun (Beckles); Elaine Allcock (Grantham); Julian Pearce (Bodmin); Peter Secker (Castle Bromwich); Vivine Gayle (Sheffield); Peter Marshall (Falkirk); John Secker (Castle Bromwich); Paul Greaves (Halesowen); Robert Foxton (London, E.17); John Kidd (Grantham); Gary Godbold (Lowestoft); Andrew Gallacher (Sheffield); Deborah Gibbs (Swansea); Yvette Reddall (Underwood); Dale Montague (Rickmansworth); Mavis Oliver (Goxhill); David Vesey (Chipperfield); Vivienne Sharp (Hornchurch); Tina Wilson (London, N.W.2); Helen Greaves (Halesowen); Paul Crowley (Leeds 6); Joy Oliver (Goxhill); Gary Jennet (Hailsham); Angela Parry (Burton-on-Trent); Winston Baptiste (West Bromwich).

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