



SPECIAL SPRING NUMBER
of *“Present Truth”*



This group of Chinese men and women are earnestly studying the Christian Bible.

The Bible is Different!

By R. D. Vine

Is the Bible really the Word of God to man? Are we justified in regarding the Bible as something quite different from, and wholly superior to, all the other writings which abound in the world?

Millions of Christians, with calm assurance, will readily supply an affirmative answer to these questions. They are quite sure that their holy Book is the work, not of man, but of God.

But some may object that such confidence is surely a result of being born in a Christian community. It would be different, they say, if we were born, for instance, in a Mohammedan community. The young Moslem has never heard of the Christian Bible. He is instructed in the teachings of the Koran which he is taught to regard as God's special message to mankind.

Next to the Bible the Koran is, without doubt, the most widely read book in the world. It is a record of the many revelations Mohammed was supposed to have had during his trance-visions. Although it seems to us to be merely an incoherent jumble of legends and laws, it governs the lives of millions of Mos-

lems who regard it as highly as Christians regard their Bible.

Oriental Scriptures

Our search for truth is further complicated as we journey eastward, by the discovery of other so-called holy books.

The millions of Buddhists have their scriptures, known as the Tripitaka. It is by far the largest book of scripture in the world, containing sermons, doctrines, and laws. The bulk of it has been described as a "dreary maze of metaphysics," to be respected, "like the Sahara desert," for its very immensity.

Buddhists, however, respect it not for its immensity, but because of their conviction that it is a divine revelation.

If a Parsee were asked what great religious leader should, according to his scriptures, be born of a virgin, tempted of the devil, persecuted by enemies, teach the way of salvation, and demonstrate his calling by miracles, he would answer: "Zoroaster, for that is just what the Zend Avesta teaches."

Thus the Avesta of the Parsees helps to swell



Tibetans examine a Bible portion printed at Tatsienlu on the borders of the "forbidden land."

the number of so-called holy scriptures in the world.

The Taoist and the Confucianist add further to the complication with their Tao-Teh-King, and several other "holy" books which have been penned by the "inspired" religious leaders, Lao-Tsze and Confucius.

In all these religious writings there is much that is good, and each enjoys the dignity of being regarded by its millions of devotees as God's word to man. Each is variously looked upon therefore, as "different" from all the rest.

Some resort to the easy belief that all "holy" books are essentially equal, and that the Bible has no claim to greater reverence or elevation than the Koran, Avesta, Tripitaka, or any of the others.

An Infallible Guide Essential

This, however, can never satisfy those who are truly concerned about their relationship to God. The so-called books of God constitute conflicting ways of salvation, and we know that God is not divided against Himself. He is not the author of confusion. (1 Cor. 14:33.)

It is said that Marcus Varro, greatest writer of ancient Rome, recorded the fact that philosophers had counted three hundred and twenty answers to the question: "What is the supreme good?" The answers were conflicting, contradictory, and confusing.

Obviously divine revelation is essential. An infallible guide is indispensable. Is the Christian conviction justifiable, that they have such a guide in their Holy Bible? We believe it is. We believe the Bible's own declaration that it was wholly written "by inspiration of God." 2 Tim. 3:16.

We have every reason for believing, as Peter declared, that the Bible came into existence not merely "by the will of men," but

that it was written by "holy men of God" who were inspired by "the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:21. Millions through the ages have willingly laid down their lives, rather than violate the teachings of this Book which they were sure was the special revelation of God Himself.

The fact that so many have died for cherishing such convictions does not, of course, prove that the Bible is true. Multitudes have been persecuted and martyred for other causes and other faiths which were each regarded by their adherents as the way of salvation for man.

The Supreme Test of Divine Inspiration

What supreme test therefore, can be applied, in order to verify which of the world's so-called holy books is, indeed, different and supreme? Have we any means of determining which book, if any, can truly be regarded as the message from God to man?

Fortunately we have. If there is a compassionate God who is anxious to declare His way to man, it is reasonable to believe that He

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South Sea Islanders before and after the coming of the Gospel.





By Dietrich

Jesus still calms the storms in the lives of those who put their trust in Him.

THE character of our Creator and Redeemer is beautifully portrayed in the Book of divine revelation. His character is also revealed in His creation. The massive mountains, the boundless ocean, the mirror lakes and winding rivers, the lofty trees and delicately tinted flowers, all speak of His infinite power, wisdom, and love. Of His foreknowledge He declares through the prophet, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure." Isa. 46:9, 10.

We would naturally expect God to take account of nations, but He also takes account of the individuals who make up the nations, men and women like you and me. Declares the psalmist, "O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted

JESUS

Knows and Cares



By Francis M. Wilcox

with all my ways." "How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with Thee." Psa. 139:1-3, 17, 18.

He Knows All About Us

God knows us by name, and knows where we live and what we do. This is strikingly revealed in His instructions to a devout Roman soldier who was longing for greater spiritual enlightenment. This centurion was instructed to "send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." Acts 10:5, 6. As the Lord not only knew these details about Peter, but made use of them, so He takes account of the details of our lives.

God knows His children. The Saviour says, "I . . . know My sheep." He knows the characteristics, the peculiar temperament, of every individual member of His flock.

He knows the strength and the weaknesses of each. His discerning eye can trace the secret, underlying motives and purposes of every action.

It is natural for the heart of any person to long for that sympathy which springs from someone else's knowledge of his human needs. This knowledge Christ possesses, and this sympathy He can bestow. His knowledge is not that of theory, but of realization, a result of His own experience as a man. Says the apostle, "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities: but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Sympathy in Life's Trials

He knows how heavy are life's burdens, how hard to lift and bear are life's crosses, how difficult the upward way. He knows how stinging is the rude taunt, how hard to stand the base insult. He was a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He knew the loss of friends, and the poignancy of human woe. He wept at the grave of Lazarus and His heart is touched to-day by scenes of sickness and suffering. He was born of lowly parentage, and therefore can feel for the humble toilers in life's conflicts. In all His public work He stood alone, though surrounded by a multitude, finding communion only with His own heart and with God, misunderstood and misrepresented. He can feel for those who stand alone to-day. He understands their heartaches and longings, and can satisfy every desire for communion and companionship.

In view of this human experience of our divine Helper, the apostle concludes, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

God knows how weak we are, and yet, knowing this, He blesses still. Says the psalmist, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." He blesses, knowing when He does so, that His blessings will often be unappreciated. Our failures never surprise God. His great heart of love is grieved, but He knew it all before. This consideration, instead of inclining to forgetfulness and thoughtlessness, should lead us to exercise greater care. He sheds abroad His love to win us.

The relationship existing between God and His children is a close one. God knows His child, and the child may come to know God. Our Saviour says, in the beautiful lesson of the shepherd: I "know My sheep, and am known of Mine." The knowledge of the One is infinite, absolute; the knowledge of the other is a growing revelation and experience, beginning here and continuing throughout eternity.

Do You Know Him?

Knowing God is a deeper experience than knowing of God or knowing *about* God. We may know of some man, we may know *about* him; but this does not necessarily embrace our really and truly *knowing* the man. Job illustrates this difference: "I have heard of Thee

by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee."

There are many professed children of God who are without any real knowledge of Him. They are content to hear of God merely, to glean a sort of superficial, second-hand knowledge of Him through the experiences of others. They have not seen Him with their own eyes, nor felt the magnetic touch of His divine hand and the inspiration of His quickening Spirit in their lives. For this class, the Christian life holds but little pleasure. Christian duties become a dull and irksome round of formal ceremonies.

It is possible to approach nearer to the divine, to find a closer union which makes of service a song and of sacrifice an abiding joy. Such communion is found as one seeks to know God and to learn what He desires to become to every one of His children.

We arrive at this knowledge through con-

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An Indian Maharajah weighs himself with bars of solid gold!

THE first half of the twentieth century has been outstanding for the intensifying of hostilities between capital and labour. This class warfare has taken various forms in different countries, but the fundamental trouble has been rivalry between the "haves" and the "have-nots." Even when capital is replaced by nationalization, hostility between labour and management has scarcely diminished.

In a thoughtful article in the *Sunday Express* recently, John Gordon speaks of the perils lying in the spread of what he calls "wildcat strikes." In 1948 no fewer than 1,944,000 working days were lost to the producing capacity of the nation by unofficial strikes over one dispute or another. A similar situation was repeated in 1949. This writer feels that men are losing confidence in their trade union leaders because these officials are playing politics with their labour colleagues. Whatever the explanation, the situation is one that bodes ill for the welfare of the nation.

I am going back to a scripture written some nineteen hundred years ago for light on this capital-labour problem. Our world to-day is dividing geographically, politically, and even religiously over this question. On the one

RUSTED RICHES

By J. A. McMillan

hand are the capitalist nations, led by the U.S.A. On the other are the Communist states, led by Russia. Is the world to be dominated by the U.S.A. or the U.S.S.R.? Do the Scriptures throw any light on this pressing question?

Let us read James' epistle, chapter five, verses 1-8. "Come, you men of riches, bemoan yourselves and cry aloud over the miseries that are to overtake you. Corruption has fallen on your riches: all the fine clothes are left moth-eaten, and the gold and silver have long lain rusting. That rust will bear witness against you, will bite into your flesh like flame. These are the last days given you, and you have spent them in heaping up a store of retribution. You have kept back the pay of the workmen who reaped your lands, and it is there to cry out against you; the Lord of hosts has listened to their complaint. You have feasted here on earth, you have comforted your hearts with luxuries on this day that dooms you to slaughter. You have condemned and murdered the innocent man, while he offered no resistance.

"Wait, then, brethren, in patience for the Lord's coming. See how the farmer looks forward to the coveted returns of his lands, yet waits patiently for the early and the late rains to fall before they can be brought in. You too, must wait patiently, and take courage; the Lord's coming is close at hand." (Knox's translation.)

This important passage is worthy of our prayerful consideration. There is in it a message to the rich, an appeal to the poor, and the only solution to the economic and all other ills of the world.

A Message to the Rich

Let us consider the message to the rich. They are convicted of several grievous faults. They have lived luxuriously while their fellow-men were starving. They have deprived their

workmen of the just wages due to them. They have used the poor as "cannon-fodder," mere pawns in their games of political skill. All these crimes are easily proved over the centuries. The poor have been ground down to the dust, and now retribution is overtaking the oppressor.

How often it is stated in our times that Communism breeds where men are hungry or socially, economically, or religiously destitute. Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam declared recently in *Look*:

"It is a striking and significant fact that Communism has been unable to take root in Protestant countries. No Protestant land is seriously infiltrated by Communism. Why? The answer is found in soil and atmosphere. The soil is enriched by liberty and the atmosphere cleansed by truth wherever Protestantism prevails."

On the other hand, there are many lands to-day where conditions prevail such as Isaiah described:

"They shall roam through the land,
hard pressed and hungry,
Hunger driving them to rage,
Till they curse their King and God;
They shall look up to heaven,
and look round upon the earth,
Only to see distress and darkness,
anguish and utter gloom,
Poor waifs of men!"—Isaiah 8:21,
22. (Moffatt's translation.)

Rusted riches, says the apostle — unused wealth stored up while the sores of society fester unheeded and unhealed. A man has just died who was reputed to be receiving £4,000,000 a year. Sheikh Sir Ahmad al-Jabir as-Subah came into this fabulous wealth because of the rich oil deposits found on his land in Kuwait. In the U.S.A. there are 8,000 millionaires, scores of multimillionaires, and a few billionaires.

Gold may serve many useful purposes, apart from being used as a filling for teeth, but a large percentage of the gold of the world is stored at Fort Texas. Before the 1939 war £300,000,000 worth of gold was disgorged by the oriental nations. This found its way into the

western banks and is being hoarded by men fearful of social security.

It is significant that James speaks of "rusted riches." He says: "The rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire." James 5:3. Is it not amazing how often we have heard the expression "in the midst of abundance, the world is multiplying poverty. Fear of the future haunts every land." Between the two world wars, millions of men queued for doles, while gold was hoarded away. Only in time of war is money poured out like water, and then not for constructive purposes, but for destructive ends.

An Appeal to the Poor

In his appeal to the righteous poor, James displays a fundamental contrast to the political agitators of our materialistic age. He urges no violent action, he incites no class hatred, he leads no crusade for labour domination. He has no sympathy with the doctrinaire who masks a deep hatred of his more fortunate fellows under the cloak of sharing all things in common. He would feel the pathetic irony of a situation where the brotherhood of the common man was used to engender hatred, envy, greed, and covetousness.

"Be patient therefore, brethren." "Stablish your hearts." "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned." Here are the hall-marks of the true brotherhood of man. Brotherhood between men can only be inspired and sustained under the Fatherhood of God. Deny this fundamental principle and your brotherhood degenerates into a mutual benefit society of vested interests. It is easy to ignore the fact that greed is not the monopoly of any one class. Paul recognizes that "men shall

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United States soldiers protect workers going to their jobs during a strike.





When Jesus Comes Back

A Voice of Prophecy Broadcast

THE work of a Christian minister is to preach the Gospel of Christ. His whole theme is Jesus, from Genesis to Revelation. We read of Jesus as the Babe in the manger of Bethlehem; we read of Him as He went about doing good—how He healed the sick and cast out devils and raised the dead; how He was crucified and rose again from the dead and ascended into heaven, where as our Intercessor He pleads with God for man. But it is Christ's second coming that puts the capstone on His work.

O friends, the world is not through with Jesus! It has not seen the last of Him. He's coming back again. There are 1,189 chapters in the Bible, and hundreds of those chapters deal with the second coming of Christ. Yes, He promised to come back again.

Some people say: "Oh, yes, He will come back spiritually—in fact, He is already here in that sense—but we do not expect Him to come literally."

As Literal as His First Coming

Since Christ's first advent was literal, why should His return not be literal also? Isaiah 7:14 was literally fulfilled, for Jesus was born into this world as a babe. Micah 5:2 was literally fulfilled when Jesus was born in the little town of Bethlehem, just as the prophecy had declared. The slaughter of the little children by Herod was a fulfillment of the prophecy in Jeremiah 31:15. This was literally fulfilled. The prophecy that God would call His Son out of Egypt (Hosea 11:1) was literally fulfilled. That was written hundreds of years before John wrote about Him. The triumphal entry into Jerusalem as pro-

phesied in Zechariah 9:9 was literally fulfilled. David tells of His betrayal by a friend. (Psa. 41:9.) This was literally fulfilled. We might go on with many other prophecies of Christ that were literally fulfilled in His life.

So also the prophecies of His second coming are to be literally fulfilled. We read in John 14:28: "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you."

To the unbelieving scribes who were condemning Him to death, He said: "Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt. 23:39.

Jesus taught His disciples that they would "see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Matt. 24:30. And in the very last chapter of the Bible (Rev. 22:7) He said: "Behold, I come quickly." In the twelfth verse, we read: "And, behold, I come quickly." In the twentieth verse: "Surely I come quickly." Then, in the last prayer of the Bible, we read: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." May that be our prayer!

The angels believe that He is coming back to earth again. When Christ was about to leave this earth and go back to His Father, He gathered His disciples together on the Mount of Olives to witness His ascension; and, after a cloud hid Him from their view, two angels appeared to them and declared:

"This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.

Testimony of Patriarchs and Prophets

The patriarchs of old believed that He

would come again. Jude fourteen and fifteen says that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of His second coming. Many centuries before Christ was born, the psalmist wrote: "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory." Psa. 102:16.

The prophet Isaiah believed it, for he declared: "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us." Isa. 25:9.

In fact, we find that practically all the prophets spoke of the second coming of Christ.

The disciples asked Jesus: "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matt. 24:3. They knew that He expected to return.

Paul proclaimed the second coming. Listen to this: "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thess. 4:16.

Notice—"the Lord Himself." I like that statement. "This same Jesus" is coming again. Not some spirit, but Christ Himself. The Lord Himself is coming back to gather His people. Yes, the Lord Himself!

The apostle Peter loved and taught the doctrine of the second advent. He tells us in Acts 3:20: "And He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you." And in 2 Peter 1:11: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty."

Here the apostle refers to the great scene of the transfiguration, which was a little moving picture, as it were, of the second coming of Christ.

What the Lord's Supper Teaches

Every true Christian believes in the second coming, yet many professed followers of Christ partake of the Lord's supper and deny His second advent. Unless the Christian believes that

Christ is coming literally, and not figuratively; unless he believes that He is coming again physically, and not spiritually; he should not partake of the communion—he should not eat of the bread and drink of the wine. Why? Many may think that is a strong statement, but listen to this. When we celebrate the Lord's supper, we proclaim our belief in the second coming of Christ. I read 1 Corinthians 11:26:

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come."

Many people say that Christ has already come. Well, if He has, they have no right to partake of the Lord's supper, for they are to keep it only "till He come."

How He Will Come

The Holy Scriptures declare that the second coming of Christ will be preceded by the appearance of a false christ. Jesus warned us against him; and the fact that He warned us against a false christ is direct evidence that there is a true Christ. Satan will manifest himself as a being of majestic brightness, and will impersonate Christ's second coming. Friends, we ought to know how Christ will come so as not to be deceived by Satan. Christ



By C. S. Dixon

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From the courts of heaven
Jesus will return to consummate
His purposes in the earth.

will appear so that all the world will see Him and know Him. For—"unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28.

Christ will come in an open, public manner, and will be seen by all the people on this earth. We read in Titus 2:13: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

So you see, the second coming will be an "appearing." It will be a fact, not a figure. It will be a real coming. He "shall appear."

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory," Col. 3:4.

"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." 1 Peter 5:4.

When Christ ascended into heaven, He ascended up physically, and the people saw Him with their eyes. When He went up, He ascended personally. And so to-day, remember this: When He shall come, it will be "this same Jesus," in like manner as He went away. "He shall come in His own glory," we read in Luke 9:26. "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him." Rev. 1:7.

What He is Coming to Do

Why is He coming? Matthew 24:31 tells us that He is coming to gather together His elect. Revelation 22:12 says: "And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

And here is something to remember: Unless Jesus comes, the dead will never be raised.

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. . . . For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:13, 16, 17.

We shall all be with the Lord when He comes. That's one reason why I love the second coming. He comes to raise the dead and to translate the living. We read in 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, . . . for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." May that day come soon!

What effect will our Lord's return have upon the wicked? Let us read 2 Thessalonians 2:8: "And then shall that Wicked be revealed,

whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." The wicked will not be able to endure the glory of Christ's return.

Radio friend, are you ready to meet Him?

Jesus will return to this world just as He departed—a real, living, glorious Person! And He will come with a reward. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works." Matt. 16:27. What reward will He give you, friend? Be diligent. Give yourself to God and strive to serve Him by serving those about you here on earth.

Do you belong to Christ? Have you believed in the Lord Jesus Christ? Are you saved by grace? Are you born again? If not, to-day is the day of salvation. Believe in Christ as your Saviour. Begin to obey Him and follow His Word of truth in all things that you may be ready to meet Him when He comes. That day is near at hand. We may dispute, but we shall be compelled to meet it. Can you meet it with composure? Or do you tremble when you think of it? Have you heard the great final message of the Gospel that has been sent to us through the Bible? Is your life in harmony with the divine will as given in this Book? Have you been reconciled to God? Will you be able to meet Christ in peace? His kingdom will soon be established and, friends, we want to be ready for it.

D. L. Moody once said, "I feel like working three times as hard since I know my Lord is coming back again."

What a Meeting!

Well, that will be a great meeting when Jesus comes; when all the holy angels, the redeemed of earth, meet the Lord in the air. That will be the greatest meeting that has ever taken place, the greatest meeting the Bible has told us about.

Yes, that was a great meeting when Pharaoh and his hosts were overwhelmed and drowned in the Red Sea, when the children of Israel were delivered, and Miriam shouted for joy and played on the timbrel. That was a great meeting on Mount Sinai when God spoke the Ten Commandments to a whole nation assembled on the plains below. That was a great meeting on Mount Carmel when Elijah stood for the truth of the omnipotent God. That was a great meeting at Pentecost when the Spirit was poured out and three thousand

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Pillars of the Bridge of Life



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An impressive night view of Sydney Harbour Bridge, Australia.

By
B. R. Spear

CHRIST is the only bridge over the river of death. In the incarnation of Jesus, God linked Himself with lost humanity. When He left heaven and came to earth as a helpless Babe, He came into our flesh, and called Himself the "Son of man." This revealing title of Christ is recorded in the gospels more than eighty times.

Human on His mother's side, and divine on His Father's (Luke 1:30-35), Christ grasped humanity with one hand, while with the other He laid hold of heaven. He linked heaven and earth as by a bridge. Under this life-giving span are six supporting pillars. First, His perfect life. Paul says that God made Jesus "to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Cor. 5:21. Elsewhere the same apostle wrote: "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." Rom. 8:3, 4. Here we see that the righteousness of God appears in humanity, and in

humanity God accepts Christ as our righteousness.

The second pillar is the sacrifice of that perfect life in the place of sinful man. Peter says that Christ bore "our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." 1 Peter 2:24. Christ accepted our death that we might receive His life, and with His stripes we are healed. Our sins merit eternal death; consequently His death was substitutionary. The death stroke that we deserve, the Father allowed to fall upon His beloved Son. He died in your place and mine.

The life and death of Christ could not bring our salvation unless He was raised from the dead, for a dead Christ could not be a divine Saviour. Therefore "God . . . loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it." Acts 2:24. Hence the resurrection of Christ opened the grave for every man, and became the third support in the bridge of salvation. Paul said, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in
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The Repentant Thief's Question

By Donald McKay

HAVE you ever had the experience, when scanning through your morning newspaper of noticing an advertisement where the opposite meaning than the one intended resulted, merely because of the inadvertent insertion, or deletion, of a punctuation mark? Quite often periodicals reprint these mistakes in their joke columns.

I recall having read some time ago in the *Wall Street Journal* that in the winter of 1847-48, potatoes formed the sole food of the Irish peasantry.

A pupil thus transcribed it: "In the winter of 1847, 48 potatoes formed the sole food of the Irish peasantry."

We smile when we read such items. In Russia, however, many years ago, a prisoner's life was saved by a punctuation mark.

The czarina, wife of Alexander III, happened to notice a document on her husband's desk regarding a political prisoner. On the margin the emperor had written, "Pardon impossible, to be sent to Siberia."

The czarina took the pen and, striking out the comma and putting in another, made the endorsement to read: "Pardon, impossible to be sent to Siberia." The czar allowed it to remain.

The teaching of the Bible can be changed by putting the punctuation in the wrong place. And in at least one instance a serious misunderstanding has resulted in many minds.

In Luke 23:43 we read in our Authorized Version: "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise." In this text Christ was speaking to the penitent thief on the cross who had faith in the saving power of Jesus and believed in the resurrection of the dead.

What Jesus Did Not Say

When Christ uttered these words He knew that the thief would not die that day. Indeed, a man sentenced to death by crucifixion seldom died the day he was crucified.

Moreover Jesus would not have contradicted the whole teaching of the Scriptures and also His own word on other occasions by promising the repentant thief that he would go to Para-

dise either that day or any subsequent one, before the appointed day of resurrection of all the saints.

Although many churches teach that at the moment of their death good people go directly to heaven, the Bible teaches that death is but a sleep until the great resurrection day, when Christ will call His children from their dusty graves. He said to His disciples, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28, 29.

The dead are not yet in heaven, nor are they in hell. "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest," states the Scripture. (Eccles. 9:10.)

But Jesus has also given us the glorious promise, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3.

As Christ came literally the first time, so will He come literally the second time. The Bible gives specific evidence to support this natural conclusion. After Christ ascended, two heavenly messengers proclaimed to the disciples, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.

"Every eye shall see Him," proclaimed the apostle John some nineteen hundred years ago.

Paul said, "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess 4:16, 17.

These and many other texts in the Bible show that Christ, as He hung on Calvary's cross, understood that the myriads of this earth's population since the creation, living and dead, would not receive their eternal sentence until the great day of judgment. If everyone went directly either to heaven or to hell at death, then there would be no need for a resurrection.

Scripture evidence indicates that Jesus did not go to heaven that day, therefore He could not have promised to meet the thief in paradise that crucifixion day. On the Sunday following His death, Jesus informed Mary, at the sepulchre, "Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God." John 20:17.

Although some have inferred, from their interpretation of Christ's words to the thief, that He would be in heaven that day, this text plainly tells us that such an event did not occur. Christ's divine foreknowledge would preclude His making such an incorrect statement.

Before promising salvation to the thief, Jesus had been mocked; His enemies vented their

rage upon Him as He hung upon the cross. He must have felt that all earthly friends had forsaken Him.

Suddenly to Jesus in His agony, as He hung bleeding on Calvary's cross, there came one gleam of comfort. It was the prayer of the penitent thief. Hope was mingled with anguish in the voice of the thief as he made his plea to the dying Saviour. "Lord, remember me," he cried, "when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."

The Assurance Jesus Gave

In a voice soft and melodious and full of compassion, Jesus answered, *Verily I say unto you to-day, Thou shalt be with Me in paradise.*

The thief did not die that day. John describes the event thus: "The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was *dead* already, they brake not His legs." John 19:31-33.

It was against the law of the Jews to keep a criminal on the cross on the Sabbath day. Since the Sabbath would begin at sunset, it was necessary to break the legs of the two thieves, who had not yet died, in order to prevent their escape when they were removed from the cross.

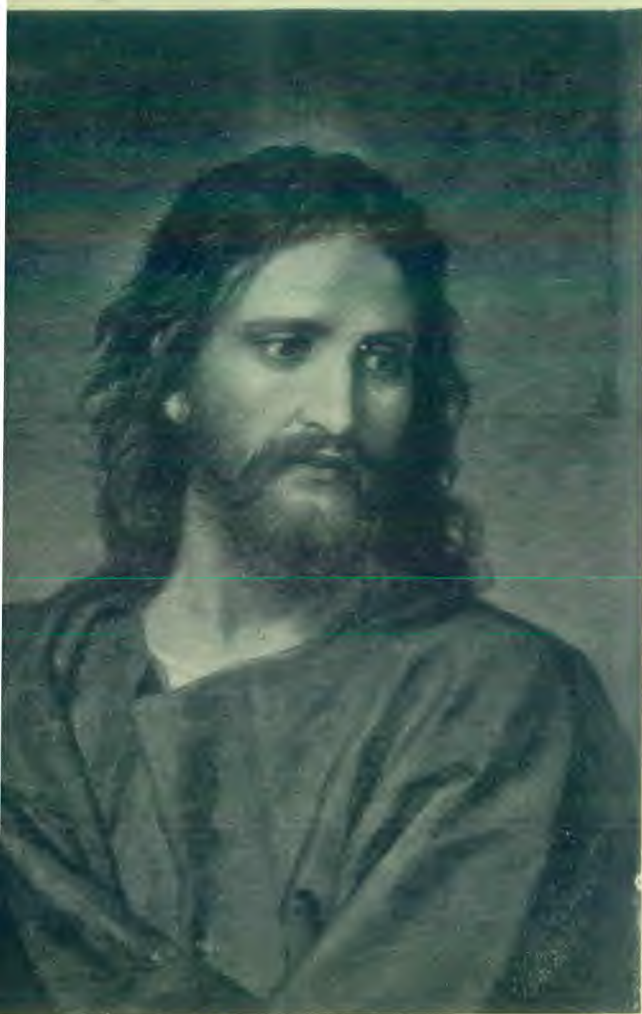
One commentator explains: "According to the custom, they broke the legs of the criminals after they had taken them down from the cross, and let them lie upon the ground until the Sabbath was past. After the Sabbath was past, undoubtedly these two thieves were again tied on their crosses, and left for several days, before death came."

How, then, should the text, *Verily I say unto thee to-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise*, be punctuated? The comma should follow the word "to-day" instead of preceding it, as the translators punctuated it. The sentence then reads, *Verily I say unto thee to-day, Shalt thou be with Me in paradise*. Jesus meant that on that very day, as the thief hung on the cross, the assurance of salvation was given him.

May we all, like the thief on the cross, come to-day, this very day, to the humble Nazarene and accept His promise of salvation. He will not fail us. Let us open wide our hearts to Him daily.



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"Thou shalt be with Me in Paradise," Jesus promised.



By F. Hoffmann

So long as we love, we serve; so long as we are loved by others we are not a disappointment; and no man is worthless while he has a friend."

Robert Louis Stevenson has here described in a few simple words the elevating nature of true fidelity, and the unselfish nature of sincere friendship. While an individual has a true friend he feels that he is wanted, and the very sense of being wanted stirs a desire to achieve success, even in the humblest sphere.

Perhaps the deepest human craving is for understanding, friendship, and companionship. God did not intend that man should be alone. In Genesis 2:18 we read that "God said, It is not good that the man should be alone," and He made him a help meet for him. The need of friendship is no less great to-day, though we so often find that the need finds expression

The GREATEST FRIEND

By Joyce Hulbert

in various ways that are perverted from God's first high and ennobling ideals.

Friends of the Bible

When we think of the friends of Bible days, I suppose our first thoughts turn to David and Jonathan, the two young men whose friendship was so strong that their names are now synonymous with friendship. When these two friends made a covenant, as David was about to flee for his life, we read that "Jonathan caused David to swear again," not because he doubted his first promise, but "because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul."

David's love for Jonathan was expressed in equally strong terms in his lament at Jonathan's death: "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant thou hast been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women."

The very simplicity of David's cry at this time expresses more vividly the pathos of this friendship so untimely ended. We are told that "we cannot estimate the extent of the truths of fidelity and unselfish love that God revealed to David through the friendship of Jonathan."

For another classic example of friendship we turn to Naomi and Ruth. Ruth had come to the home of her mother-in-law in times of comparative prosperity, but her love for Naomi grew so strong that when the biggest tragedy that could face an Eastern woman came into their lives, Ruth clung to the woman who had become her dearest friend, saying, "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God." Ruth's friendship was surely treasured by Naomi in the dark experiences of those months of privation.

We call to mind Elijah and Elisha. Elijah would have spared Elisha as much pain as possible as they parted for the last time on this earth. "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee," said Elisha, and surely such sincere friendship was appreciated by the prophet of God.

One of the greatest trials of a man's life is when he considers himself to be alone and friendless. Remember how discouraged Elijah became when he considered himself to be alone in the work of Jehovah. "Behold, I only am left." One of the most pathetic cries that we hear to-day comes from the lips of those who have had the hardiness to outlive their contemporaries. "All my friends have gone. I only am left." How empty, how aimless, such a life can be.

Where Jesus Was Always Welcome

Christ Himself had the same craving for friendship that all humanity bears. Of all the places that He loved to visit, the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus was the place where He was most happy to be. Alone with these friends, He could rest, assured that He had their full love and sympathy. He knew that there His words and actions would not be twisted and distorted.

Jesus loved all of His disciples, but the three who received His closest friendship were Peter,

Beauty Everywhere

GIVE us eyes to see O Lord, beauty everywhere, not just during summer days, but when things are bare.

Beauty in the steel-grey clouds, scurrying o'er the sky, bearing rain to bless the earth when the land is dry. Beauty in the driving rain, pouring precious drops—sinking deeply in the earth, raising priceless crops. Beauty in the cart-wheel track rain-filled ere the dawn, reflecting as a mirror the crimson-flush of morn. Beauty in the dark brown soil kissed by mother sun—furrowed, wrinkled by the plough, bringing benison.

Beauty in the falling leaves scattering far and wide; floating silently to earth therein to abide. Beauty in the hurrying wind fluting through the reeds, sweeping clean the musty air o'er decaying weeds. Beauty in the mists that wrap silent trees at night—clothed as in their sleeping garb, hidden from the sight. Beauty in the hedgerow bare, leaf-stripped, cold and dry; casting shadowy tracery on the snow piled high. . . .

Everything that meets our sight doth Thy works declare—give us therefore eyes to see beauty everywhere.

STANLEY COMBRIDGE.

James, and John. When in the garden of Gethsemane, it was these three who accompanied the Son of God to the spot where He prayed for the bitter cup to pass from Him. Alone, yes alone! with His three most faithful friends sleepily unheeding of the sympathy that they could have offered at this time to the best of friends. The thoughtful sympathy of a friend in times of distress does much to ease the load, and Christ's burden of the sins of the world was intensified at this climax of His life by the lack of that sympathetic understanding which His friends could have given Him that fateful night.

Among those who are prominent among Bible characters as good friends, stands Paul. From His life-story, as recorded for us, we can discern Paul's craving for friendship. We can read between the lines of his letters and see what a faithful friend he was to those he met and grew to love in the course of his ministry.

Priscilla and Aquila were friends of Paul. Together they worked as tentmakers, and were bound together not only by the ties of profession, but also by the strongest of all ties, those of the love of Christ. Of these two Paul wrote, they "have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles." It is friendship indeed that makes a man willing to lay down his own life for another.

Remember Onesimus, the slave whom Paul befriended, and for whom he pleaded; Timothy, whom he regarded with the affection of a father for a son. There was Luke, of whom that pathetic sentence cries down the ages, "Only Luke is with me." Friends of Paul were they all, with many, many more. A man who would have friends must show himself friendly, and surely, in the spirit of Jesus Christ, Paul did just that. It was the love of his Saviour in his heart, overflowing in its fullness, that attracted men and women to Paul.

The Greatest Friend

Of Christ it is said, "And having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." That is the supreme friendship. And that promise is as much for us to-day as it was in the days of Jesus of Nazareth. No matter how much we crave for human companionship, however much "alone" we may feel, we have the assurance that we have "a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother," a Friend who says to each one of us, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come again."

May He come quickly to each waiting heart.

THE awakening of the Orient is no doubt one of the ominous events in modern history. Once politicians had little concern over the restless peoples of Asia. They could hardly sense that one day their position would be challenged by the drowsy East.

By the turn of the century it had become more evident that the unnumbered millions of Asia were arousing. Statesmen began to feel the importance of this new political phenomenon. Theodore Roosevelt declared: "The age of the Mediterranean is past, the age of the Pacific is upon us." Lord Frazier said: "The event most fraught with meaning for the rest of the world is the awakening of the East." More recent years have shown the truthfulness of these predictions.

Little did men realize in 1853, when Commodore Perry was sent to Japan to open its tightly shut doors to trade and communication with the West, with what vigour and speed that ancient land would learn Occidental ways, especially the ways of war. From the day when Perry's small gunboats steamed into the harbour of Yokohama to impress the mikado, to the morning Japan's bombers raided Pearl Harbour, was only eighty-eight years. But what supreme effort had to be summoned on the part of America to crush that rapidly expanding empire!

Then there is China with its 450,000,000 people, once a mythical and slumbering dragon. The British, intent on trade, demanded a hearing. But the Chinese officials turned a deaf ear. They wanted nothing to do with these strange outside-countrymen. The British were insistent, and the first important trade treaties were forced upon China in 1844. From then on, relations between China and the West went from bad to worse. There was a time when that age-old empire was about to be divided among the imperial powers of Europe, but China survived every pressure and encroachment made upon her. In 1911 she was able to throw off the Manchu yoke, after having borne it for 260 years. To-day every concession of territory and privileged status made to Western powers has been renounced, and those nations which once dictated terms to China are being dictated to by that country, so far as political and commercial relations are concerned. This sudden shift of position is one of the most significant events of modern times.

In India we find much to surprise us. For nearly two hundred years Britain ruled that teeming subcontinent. There was little challenge to her power until a frail Hindu began a campaign of protest. Without material aid of any kind he was able, through persistent pro-



To-day the East has cities as great as those in the West, a

ASIA AI

The Meaning of the Tremendous

By FRED

motion of passive resistance, to obtain one concession after another and finally gain India's complete independence. To-day, without having resorted to war, India is free.

Effect of Two World Wars

The first world war had some effect upon the Oriental nations. They were shocked, of course, to see the great empires of the West in deadly conflict, and they took advantage of their opportunity to throw off some of the restraints that had been put upon them by Western powers. Then Japan leaped into the breach and expanded her influence throughout Asia. This marked the first approach to the



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as peoples are preparing to play their part in the last drama.

HOUSE ID!

Events Shaping in the Orient

RICK LEE

second world war. Then it was that Russia came forth as a professed disinterested deliverer of the suppressed masses of the world. Her propaganda won millions of converts. The ferment of her doctrines was felt throughout Asia. It was this that brought the somnolent East quickly to its feet.

When World War II broke out, Japan rode roughshod over the whole area once dominated by Western powers, even to the doors of India. This was the last blow to Western white prestige, and it gave a new surge to the revolutionary spirit throughout all Asia.

In the midst of the war, Wendell Willkie,

returning from a quick trip to China, observed: "One of the most significant facts of the world to-day is the renaissance of the East."

In the autumn of 1941, Hallett Abend, a noted correspondent, made a tour of the Orient. He reported a conversation he had held with a native of Java. This native leader asked Abend to tell the white men of the West: "Count us up and think it over. There are 450,000,000 Chinese; 340,000,000 natives of India; in Thailand and Indo-China there are 32,000,000 people; Burma and Malaya have 20,000,000; we in the Indies are 70,000,000, and the Koreans have 25,000,000 more. . . . If we are betrayed by the eventual peace, then some Asiatic nation will arise as a genuine and unselfish emancipator, and the ensuing conflict will make the present one seem like an amateurish rehearsal."

Five years have passed since the end of the war. Millions in the Orient feel that they have been betrayed, and to-day Russia is posing as the "genuine and unselfish emancipator."

Louis Fischer, another journalist, wrote in his book *The Great Challenge*, published in 1946: "The East is in revolt against Western power and Western civilization. . . . Asia has moved to the footlight of history."

Leslie B. Moss, director of Church World Service, writing in *The Christian Century* in 1947 on "Typhoon Weather in Asia" after a trip to that part of the world, declared: "When you live in any place in the western Pacific you soon become aware of the weather phenomenon known as the typhoon. . . . Like these storms are the forces of great potential destruction now brewing in this part of the world."

In a speech in New York, Dr. Moss pointed out: "The ferment in the Orient to-day could be the most potentially destructive force in the universe unless it is harnessed with a new sense of community, morality, and responsibility, which will tie these people into a new world-wide framework. . . . This turmoil represents the unbridled license of new ideas fermenting in the bottles of an age-old civilization. It is electrifying, challenging of the best aid we can give. The alternative is more terrifying to contemplate than any atom bomb. It would mean a people—one third of the people of the world—in explosion."

A London correspondent in Singapore cabled to the *Times* in 1947: "The masses all over Asia are on the move."

Foreseen in Bible Prophecy

Little more need be said to show the re-

PAGE SEVENTEEN

markable fulfilment of Bible prophecy in our day. The prophet Joel said more than two millenniums ago:

"Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about." Joel 3:9-12.

This is a picture of the last days, for Joel is referring to "the day of the Lord." Here we are told that "all" the nations will be called to war, the weak as well as the strong. It will be "total" war, too, for even the implements used in pursuits of peace will be turned into weapons for war. "Let the heathen be wakened," he prophetically declared.

Daniel the prophet, in reference to this same era, "the time of the end," was told, "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Dan. 12:4. It has been the spread of political and scientific enlightenment that has effected such a quickening of the Oriental pulse. The grave crisis in our day has been brought about by the rapid spread of revolutionary ideas among the uncounted masses of Asia. In a brief generation the invention of the aeroplane and the radio has shortened the long lines of separation between the peoples of the East and the West. That which we once thought was remote and no business of our own is now next door, and we cannot remain aloof.

Kings of the East Will Have a Part

The enemy of mankind is taking advantage of this situation. The devil, we are told, knowing that he has but a short time, has come down to the world with great wrath. Therefore, we are warned, "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea!" Rev. 12:12.

And what is he doing? In another chapter in this revelation of the world's last crisis we are told, "I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Rev. 16: 13, 14. Verse 12 tells us that "the kings of the East" will participate in this great battle.

Satan is using every agency in these days to carry out his purpose to destroy man from the earth, and thus frustrate God's purpose to populate the world with happy beings. We now are living in the last days of the great conflict between good and evil, between Christ and Satan. No one can predict the exact course of coming events. We do know that they are ominous ones, in which the kings of the East are to play a prominent part immediately preceding the second coming of Christ. Surely that day is not far distant, and every soul who still has any reasoning powers within him should ask: "Am I ready to meet the events soon to take place, and to stand before my Redeemer?" That is the greater question, and not, "Who is to win in the great struggles among the nations to-day?" One thing we do know is that Christ will be the final Victor. Let us be sure to be on His side.



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The women, as this picture shows, are coming out of their seclusion and are helping to shape the destinies of the new East.

The Leaven of the Kingdom



Photo by W.L.E.

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Filling water pots at a village well in southern Palestine.

By

F. A. Spearing



The leaven in this Gospel story is symbolic, and represents the quiet, constant "working" of the Holy Spirit upon the human heart. Many a man's heart, many a woman's heart has been changed under the warm, genial influence of the Spirit of God; and the fact that the change has taken place is clearly seen

IN the thirteenth chapter of the gospel of Matthew are recorded for our instruction eight parables of our Lord: the first four were spoken to the multitudes who followed Jesus; and the last four were addressed to the disciples, after the multitudes had been sent away. The parable of the leaven is the fourth of the series. The evangelist writes:

"Another parable spake He unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

Of course everyone knows what leaven is. In the days of our youth we were sent, now and then, to the brewer's establishment near our home, for a jug of barm which was used as yeast for a big batch of bread. That barm was leaven! It produced fermentation in the dough before the dough was placed in the oven. Without it the loaves would come out of the oven dull and heavy and unfit for food, instead of being light and sweet and airy. We can still see with the mind's eye the large earthenware pan which was used continually. In it was placed the kneaded dough. The pan, with the dough, was carried to a spot near the stove, to be kept warm, until the leaven had done its work, and "the whole was leavened."

in the new life the man or woman lives. In this way, the kingdom of heaven is built up, for what God does for one He is ready to do for another, and another and another, until the small group becomes a great company, and the company expands to a multitude of men and women and children who have come under this blessed influence.

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they [the disciples of Jesus] were all with one accord in one place. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

What effect did this in-filling of the Holy Spirit have? The followers of our Lord "began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven." These strangers were amazed because they heard the Gospel for the first time in the language of their adopted country, from the lips of unlettered Galileans! This, Peter explained, was the work of the Holy Spirit. But the gift of tongues was only a means to an end. Before Peter's sermon was ended, his great audience came under conviction, "and the same day there were added unto them three thousand souls." Acts 2:1, 4, 37, 41. In this wonderful chapter we see the leaven of the Holy Spirit at work.

Like Peter, Paul was mightily used by the Lord. As he travelled from city to city, from country to country, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, his words, the leaven of truth, coupled with his godly life, led to changes of heart wherever he went.

In like manner the Lord of glory works to-day. Who has not read of the heroes and heroines of the faith who have been content to live amid squalor, and dirt, and ignorance, and vice, at home or abroad, in order that their influence might be like the leaven of the parable? And these same heroes and heroines have considered themselves amply rewarded, so far as this world is concerned, when they saw a man here or a woman there give up an unworthy life to become a humble follower of Jesus of Nazareth, who knew no sin.

The Leaven of Wickedness

Sad to say, however, there is a leaven of wickedness as well as a leaven of goodness. When, following the last of the plagues poured out upon Egypt, the Lord instituted the Passover, He strictly forbade His people to eat leavened bread, or even to have leaven in their homes. (Exod. 12:15.) Why? Because thereafter leaven was to be regarded as a type of sin. Bread made with leaven was permitted, and could be freely eaten, except at prohibited times; but every time a Hebrew woman took leaven and mixed it in with the flour in the making and baking of bread, and every time her husband partook of that bread, they were reminded of the existence of sin.

This symbolism was quite well understood even in the days of Christ, fifteen hundred years from the time of Moses, when the Passover was instituted. When the Pharisees and Sadducees came to the Saviour on one occasion, to tempt Him, our Lord took occasion to warn His disciples: "Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Matt. 16:6.

Hungry, and without food, they at first thought of their physical needs rather than their spiritual needs. But they understood Christ's allusion when He explained His meaning: "Then understood they how that He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Verse 12.

The leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees which the disciples were to avoid was their teaching. This teaching must be avoided because it was contrary to the teaching of Christ Himself. If they were to be His disciples they must follow Him, and accept His word; they must not follow His enemies,

or accept their teaching. That would be disloyalty. By their attitude to Christ, the Son of God, these religious leaders demonstrated that they were children of Satan. And Jesus had already laid down the principle that no one can serve God and Satan at the same time.

The words: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees," have their meaning to-day. We must all take heed to these words, in their present-day application, for they are the words of Christ our Lord. His words, alone, must be our guide in all things spiritual. We must have nothing to do with the doctrines of devils.

Paul, inspired by that Spirit with which Christ Himself was anointed, used language similar to His Lord: "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." 1 Cor. 5:7, 8.

When the Jews came to God at the feast of Passover, they came without leaven. When we come to God, at any time, we must come without the leaven of malice and wickedness. That means without the leaven of hypocrisy. Malice, hypocrisy, and all kinds of wickedness belong to the kingdom of darkness; they have no place in the kingdom of light. Whatever the sin may be, it must be dealt with; we must purge out the old leaven.

How good God is to us all! He wants our life and our teaching to be like the leaven of godliness, and He does all in His power to bring this about. May we not disappoint Him!

A Morning Prayer

Dear Father, hear my humble prayer,
I thank Thee for Thy loving care;
Now through the day that has begun,
May Thy blest will alone be done.
Walk Thou with me along the way,
And guide my feet, lest I should stray;
And when I'm tempted, strengthen me,
That I may gain the victory.
Help me in all I say or do
To copy Thee, my Pattern true;
Bless all Thy people everywhere,
Our hearts for heaven's home prepare.
Cleanse every soul from all its sin,
And put Thine own pure love within;
O keep us faithful till that day
When we shall live with Thee alway. Amen.

E. E. PRATT.

BEYOND THE TOMB

IF a man die, shall he live again?"

This question, asked by Job, is a natural longing of the heart of man, and one that deserves an answer. The Word of God supplies the answer. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at that latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold." Job 14:14; 19:25-27.

The Redeemer, of whom the patriarch spoke with such conviction, confirmed the truth of that revelation, when He declared, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28, 29.

Jesus gave the assurance of the resurrection to Martha and Mary when their brother Lazarus died. In the course of His conversation Jesus declared, "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha replied, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." John 11:23, 24. Jesus then said to her, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Verse 25.

Beyond the tomb, there is resurrection— resurrection for all, one "of life," for those who choose it, and one "of damnation" for others. John reveals the fact that the millennium, or thousand years, will separate the two resurrections. The righteous are raised at the second advent of our Lord (1 Cor. 15:52); for of those raised at that time it says, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." The resurrection of the wicked takes place a thousand years later: "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Rev. 20:6, 5.

Beyond the tomb, there is reunion. The resurrection will unite the family of God on earth for the first time. All the children of God who have

By S. G. Hyde

died since the beginning of human history, will share in the first resurrection. "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.

What comfort it is to know that we shall be reunited with loved ones who have been taken from us. How thrilling to look to the day when "death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Cor. 15:54.

Beyond the tomb there is restoration. Yes, nothing less than restoration of our earth, with the curse which has so long rested upon it removed. Says the revelator, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth." Rev. 21:1. While the saints of God will be "caught up," to reign with Christ a thousand years, their ultimate and rightful destiny is to live upon the restored earth under ideal conditions, with no sickness, no pain, no sorrow, through all eternity.

Is the coming of Jesus your hope? Is He your Saviour, your Redeemer? Has His love touched your heart and changed your life? Soon He will arise "with healing in His wings." May we be ready for that wonderful day.



The holy women mourn at the tomb of Jesus. Shortly after they saw Him in glorious resurrection life.



A friendly chat over the garden fence.

© Studio Lisa

TALKING ABOUT IT

By Mary J. Vine

LIKE most other children they don't want to go to bed. They suddenly become consumingly interested in something that is always terribly important. One story isn't enough. They want another, if only a little one. They dawdle. It takes them an incredible time just to remove one garment, and they set each other giggling and become difficult to control. They try to involve me in some weighty discussion, anything—just so long as they can put off the moment for climbing Wooden Hill. And even that may not be the end. They will hide round corners. They will disappear under beds. They will insist on long and turbulent "Good-nights." It is usually a tired woman who finally comes downstairs.

Why They Hurried to Bed

There were, however, several weeks when they did want to go to bed. It was wonderful. They didn't ask for stories, nor yet for a game. They competed with each other as to who should be first undressed. Cheerfully and obediently they trooped upstairs and snuggled down in their several beds. For a little while

we were perplexed. Obviously they weren't "sickening for something," they were too bright-eyed and happy for that. Moreover, they had a secret, which of course, having eyes and ears, we finally discovered. They had gone to bed early "to talk about Christmas," and until that happy season ultimately arrived, so they continued to do. Every night they kept themselves awake "talking about Christmas." We became almost pathetically anxious that their dear, childish anticipations should all be realized. We hope they were. It was a very delightful Christmas.

But what fun they had, talking about it.

One of our family is going to the Continent this summer. It might very well be that we were all going. For those of us who can't go, still explore bookshops and look for guides and maps. For the first time in our lives perhaps we know exactly where Val-Louise is situated and that vast, inaccessible cavern where three thousand panic-stricken Vaudois perished. He alone will go to Rome, but we shall all enjoy it, for every day we gather some new scrap of information. Every day we ask some question

and do our best to find the answer. Every day we talk about it and we shall know exactly what we want to know when he comes back.

Others of us are going elsewhere, and how eagerly plans are being laid and maps studied. By proxy I shall board that strange little train in Llanberis away over in Carnarvonshire, a queer little train with its engine all behind, and finally I shall reach Snowdon's misty height. I shall enjoy myself immensely hearing all about it, but I am enjoying myself immensely even now as we talk about it.

"Let's talk about it"—it's a short step, isn't it?

Talking About God

Some of us are going to one place, maybe an exciting, thrilling place, and we're full of it and can't stop talking about it. Some of us maybe are bound for somewhere where we just don't want to go. In that case, maybe, the less we talk about it the better, except to the dear Lord who will doubtless convince us that it's the best place for us after all. But we're all, ultimately, looking forward to an unspeakably desired haven, the same one for all of us, and yet—and yet—most of us scarcely mention it, neither the Friend we shall meet there, nor what He has done for us to make it possible for us to go there. It surely can't be that we're not looking forward to it. I remember once getting some sort of comfort out of the following lines:

"I think about God,
Yet I talk of small matters.
Now isn't it odd
How my idle tongue chatters!
Of quarrelsome neighbours,
Fine weather and rain,
Indifferent labours,
Indifferent pain,
Some trivial style
Fashion shifts with a nod.
And yet all the while
I am thinking of God."

I don't get comfort out of it any more. It isn't enough just to think about God. We must talk about Him, too, and about His kingdom to which we are bound. "We often think people shallow, think them incapable of anything serious or profound, because their work is humdrum and their speech trivial," once wrote St. Clair Adams, commenting in fact on this same verse. "Such a judgment is unfair," he continues, "since that part of our own life which shows itself to others is superficial likewise, though we are conscious that within is much that it does not reveal."

Such a judgment may be unfair, but can a girl hide it when she is gloriously happy in the joy of requited love? The trees are greener, the birds sing more sweetly, her heart goes out to

everyone she meets. She can't contain herself. Her happiness has to overflow. Likewise all the other important things in our lives. Continually we talk about them. All except this, the most important of all. On this we are silent—our tongues tied.

Anticipations of Heaven

Friend o' mine, if we are looking forward to the Eternal City with all the longing that there should be in our hearts, and if we are tongue-tied, then we're failing ourselves, our families, our friends, and the Lord.

How God loved Israel! They were the apple of His eye. Again and again He implored them to do this or that, "that it may go well with thee." Like a chime of silver bells those lovely words occur and recur again and again in the story of His fond dealings with them. "That it may go well with thee."

"And these words," He commanded them, "shall be in thine heart." Enshrined. Held sacred. But not hidden. Oh, no!

"And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children," He further exhorted them, "and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

There is no career like Christianity. There is no finer future than that prepared for the Christian. No speech day will ever have been celebrated with such honour and pageantry as that in which His saints will receive their final "Well done," nor is any other goal so desirable. But as no good thing comes except through striving, so the kingdom of heaven will not be lightly won, and if the gardener needs to talk gardens, the seamstress needlework, the electrician electricity, the scientist molecules, how much more do we Christians need to talk of the means, the hope, the end, and the all-supplying, never-failing Source of our Christianity.

As in the Days of Noah

It is true that not many do talk of God and heaven these days, but so it was once before, in those fateful days in the time of Noah. "God was not in all their thoughts," the Word says. But those in whose thoughts He did dwell never ceased to give expression to them, and we know the result. There was no room found in the earth for the godless millions: only the "few" were saved. So it will be again; the good Word says so.

Looking back longingly on the happy, godly home of her childhood, one young bride once wrote:

"I had not realized how blessed, how real.

and how helpful is the 'communion of saints.' Indeed, I fancy I had not thought of that at all until the tacklings were loosed, the anchors taken up, and the little ship of my soul found herself for the first time voyaging.

"Sabbath, for instance, was now such a different day from the quiet, restful season it had been in the old home. There, more often than not, we had with us for the week-end an ambassador from the highest Court of all. And—this was so ordinary a thing, I had no idea I was laying up a memory—we went leisurely down country lanes and over fields to a tiny meeting-house.

"My father and the preacher were usually in front. They discoursed about certain old and precious themes. Pausing on the brow of the hill, with umbrellas pointing upward, they reminded one another that as the heavens were high above the earth, so great was God's mercy!"

What a blessed memory! God grant that our children too may grow up so invested.

They "Spoke Often"

Did you know that there is a book of remembrance in heaven just for the names of those who have not only thought, but talked also? They were in the minority, of course, the saints always are, but Malachi wrote of them: "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon His name."

What does the Lord hear when He "hearkens" to us?

"Christ talked of grass and wind and rain,
And fig trees and fair weather,
And made it His delight to bring
Heaven and earth together."

Let us also try to bring heaven and earth together in our conversation, shall we? The heavenly things are so much the more worth talking about.

The Bible is Different!

(Continued from page 3.)

will provide a means of distinguishing the true revelation from the false. This He has done. He knew that the dilemma of the holy books would arise, and therefore provided the means of solving it.

The great test is not beauty of language or perfection of teaching. It is the test of prophecy. In Isaiah forty-one, God throws out a challenge to the so-called gods of the other holy books of the world: "Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the

King of Jacob. Let them . . . show us what shall happen: let them . . . declare us things for to come. *Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods.*" Verses 21-25. And again the challenge is repeated in the forty-fourth chapter: "*The things that are coming, and shall come, let them show unto them.*" Verse 7.

Anyone can claim to have had a vision. None would seek or desire to deny that Mohammed, Zoroaster, Buddha, Lao Tsze, and the prophets of the Bible as well, had trances-visions. But the very fact that their respective revelations differ so radically from each other, is a certain proof that they did not all emanate from the true Source of wisdom. If the Bible prophets are right, then Mohammed, and the others are wrong. Whoever, indeed, is right, is right to the exclusion of all the rest.

Surer than Visions

The apostle Peter knew this. He also knew of God's remarkable challenge. Peter himself had a vision. He was satisfied of its genuineness. But he knew that a mere expression of his own conviction was not enough to convince those who should follow him. He therefore declared: "*We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed.*" 2 Peter 1:19.

It is this Word of prophecy which other books lack. The true God is unique in that He alone knows the end from the beginning. The Bible is unique in that it alone has a clear prophetic description, outlining the end from the beginning.

In chapters two, seven, and eight of Daniel for instance, are the most striking prophecies describing the rise and fall of the empires from Daniel's day to ours—and beyond. (Read PRESENT TRUTH regularly for expositions of these and other Bible prophecies.) The fall of Rome, the rise of the Papacy, the martyrdom of the saints during the Dark Ages, are merely a few of the things which were foretold in the Bible, centuries in advance. The general trend of human affairs, political, domestic, religious, and social, is described with the most amazing accuracy in the New Testament. Our own days, which Bible prophecy indicates are the last days, are especially spotlighted by the prophetic searchlight.

The Lord Himself warned that in the last days, there would be unparalleled "distress of nations, with perplexity," and that in tackling the overwhelming problems, men's hearts would fail them for fear. (Luke 21:15, 16.) None will deny that our atomic age, while one of bewildering scientific advancement, is one of

moral decline, of spiritual declension, and of fearful foreboding.

Of all the holy books in the world, the Bible alone has really ventured into the realm of prophecy. In fact, almost one-third of its voluminous contents is prophecy. Through the ages not one solitary detail has failed, yet the chances against all the biblical forecasts being fulfilled, are countless millions to one. But the one chance has happened—and is still happening, and will continue so to do until the final phase of things has been fulfilled—that of Christ's return in glory to deliver a distraught world from the shackles of sin and tyranny.

Prophecy, however, cannot save us. (1 Cor. 13:2.) Only an acquaintance with the God of prophecy, and the acceptance of His way of salvation, will qualify anyone for the final deliverance and glorification which He is so anxious for us to have.

A Practical Test

The sublimest proof of the Bible's inspiration is reserved for those who "taste and see that the Lord is good." Psa. 34:8. As the well-known saying has it—rather mundane, perhaps, but nevertheless to the point: "The proof of the pudding is in the eating." This very practical proof was applied by the prophet Jeremiah: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart: for I am called by Thy name. O Lord God of hosts." Jer. 15:16. As Romaine truly remarked: "The longer you read the Bible, the more you will like it; it will grow sweeter and sweeter; and the more you get into the spirit of it, the more you will get into the spirit of Christ."

The Bible reveals a God who is not only the supreme Creator, the divine Overruler of the universe and the affairs of man, and the omnipotent Sustainer of all things, but who is a loving, forgiving, compassionate Father to all who turn to Him in the simple way which Jesus Christ revealed.

Acceptance of its lovely teachings will bring sweetness and joy into the life, and a calm serenity and assurance as we face the future, which the prevailing anxieties of the world around will be quite unable to mar.

Jesus Knows and Cares

(Continued from page 5.)

crete experiences and companionship, as real as those by which we become acquainted with human companions in life's associations. Trial, disappointment, want, perplexity, sickness, joy and sorrow, victory and defeat—all have their

place in revealing God to us, in bringing us through places where we shall feel our need of His divine aid, or in giving to us a knowledge of His divine power and working on our behalf.

We may know Him in His power and majesty; and we may know Him in His love and tenderness. We may know that He is the Saviour of all men, and that He pardons their sins; but, sweeter than all that, we may know that He pardons our own sins. We may know Him in the familiar relationship of Friend, Father, and Brother, and in that tenderest of all associations to the troubled and grieved believer, the Comforter. He pities our sorrows and longs to bear our burdens. We may carry every perplexity to Him, being assured of consideration at His hands. By a multitude of figures God represents His care and solicitude for His chosen ones. He calls Himself our Shield, our Refuge, our Strong Tower, our Rock of defence. He longs to become this to every soul, and into this fellowship every child may enter.

We may come to know God with more definite, satisfying knowledge than we know any earthly friend. Our associates change. We may count them friends to-day; but the reverses of to-morrow may change their attitude toward us. Not so with God; He is the "same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." "He is faithful that promised." This personal knowledge of God will prove to be a bond stronger than any theory or logic which human reasoning can adduce. Others may turn against Him; we will remain loyal.

Then let us no longer behold Him afar off, but seek to draw near, into sacred, personal communion. By the study of His Word, by prayer, by meditation, by asking and believing, by dedicating to Him our all, we may enter into the joy of communion, and joy of communion will give joy of service.

Rusted Riches

(Continued from page 7.)

be lovers of their own selves, covetous." 2 Tim. 3:2. And "covetousness, which is idolatry," is equally sinful as well as equally common among the poor as among the rich. (Col. 3:5.)

A Sign of Our Times

This passage from James is more than a moral disquisition on patience. It pin-points the setting of this class warfare in "the last days." Moffatt renders James 5:1: "You have been storing up treasure in the very last days." (See also verse 3.) In pleading for patience,

the apostle directs the gaze of the brethren to "the coming of the Lord." Verse 7. He then emphasizes that "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." Verse 8.

So this capital-labour crisis of our time constitutes a "sign of the times" along with the other social, political, physical, and religious events that characterize our twentieth-century civilization. It should be borne in mind that no one "sign" is sufficient of itself to convince one of the nearness of Christ's return. It is the accumulative effect of the whole array of signs that is so compelling, bringing the conviction that "the Judge standeth before the door." James 5:9.

That brings us to the fourth feature of James' teaching here. It is that the solution of the world's complex economic problems lies in the speedy return of Jesus, the Carpenter of Nazareth. The gospel according to Marx is that man needs a changed environment. The Gospel according to Mark is that man needs a changed nature.

To all Jesus says: "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to His servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." Mark 13:33-37.

When Jesus Comes Back

(Continued from page 10.)

people were converted under Peter's preaching. Those were all great meetings, but no meeting ever held anywhere on this earth can compare with that meeting when the Lord shall come to make up His jewels. For He "shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matt. 24:3. Think of the great congregation that will be there—the rejoicing, the singing, the shouting, the victory!

A father and his ten-year-old daughter were spending their holiday at the seaside. One day they went out to enjoy a swim in the ocean and, although they were both good swimmers, some distance out from shore they became separated. The father, realizing that they were being carried out to sea by the tide, called to his child: "Marv, I'm going to shore for help. If you get tired, turn on your back.

You can float all day that way. I'll come back for you."

Before long, many searchers and boats were scurrying over the face of the water hunting for one small girl. Hundreds of people on the shore had heard the news and were waiting anxiously. It was four hours before they found her, far from land, but she was calmly floating on her back and not at all frightened. Cheers and tears of joy and relief greeted the rescuers when they came back to land with their precious burden, but the child took it all calmly. She seemed to think it was strange the way they acted. She said, "Father said I could float all day on my back and that he would come for me, so I just swam and floated, because I knew he'd come." Yes, she knew he'd come!

O friends, may such faith in our heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ be ours—faith that will sustain us in hours of waiting.

So, by His grace, let us do all the good we can, to all the people we can, as long as ever we can, and help carry the Gospel of God's grace to all the world until Jesus comes back. Give your heart to Him now, friends, so that you will be ready to meet Him then. Will you do it? God bless you, and you, and you.

Pillars of the Bridge of Life

(Continued from page 11.)

your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." Thank God, Christ "was raised again for our justification." 1 Cor. 14:17, 18; Rom. 2:25.

This was not sufficient, however, for Jesus must ascend to heaven on our behalf, for all He accomplished on earth would be of no avail unless He was accepted by His Father. His ascension became the fourth pier in the span. Therefore said Jesus, "Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." When Jesus presented Himself before His Father He pleaded: "I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am." John 20:17; 17:24. The Father, in accepting His Son's sacrifice said, "Let all the angels of God worship Him." Heb. 1:6.

Having been thus reinstated, Christ entered upon His mediatorial and priestly work on behalf of His brethren in the flesh. This, therefore, becomes the fifth pillar. "We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man."

"Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession" and "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 8:1, 2; 4:14, 16.

Of this great bridge there is but one pillar remaining, the return of Jesus. Before Christ went away He said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you." Then He gave that blessed promise that completes the bridge over the river of death. "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I

am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-5.

Does not your heart respond to this revelation of the love of God? We see Jesus leaving the throne of God and becoming man. His sinless life is made available to every believing sinner; He takes the death penalty upon Himself. He being sinless, the grave cannot hold Him, so He provides an escape from death and the grave for all who believe. He ascends to His Father on our behalf and becomes our High Priest and Mediator. Soon He will come again to gather all the faithful to Himself.

"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." 1 Cor. 15:22, 23.



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When Bill Came Back

By Frankie Kinman

THERE was great rejoicing when Bill came back. But when Bill had been taken away, there were some very real heart-aches. You see Bill was what we call a stay-at-home cat, and a big, fine fellow he was, too.

He really belonged to the folk in the bungalow a few doors off, but frequently he would come and see us in our house.

We were always glad to see him because he was so friendly.

He had a very bad ear—a canker—so we set about trying to cure it. It was rather a difficult job, because Bill objected to the treatment. At last, however, we were able to bring about a cure.

I think that Bill was very grateful for this, because from that time on he would walk in

and out of the house just whenever he chose, especially at meal times.

By and by the bungalow

"What's
for
dinner?"



folk moved to another district, and in spite of requests for Bill to be left in our care, he was taken to his new home.

You cannot imagine how

very sad we were when we had to say good-bye to Bill as he was carted off. Bill, himself, took a last look, as much as to say: "Can't you do something about it?"

Of course, we couldn't; he was not our cat.

But we were sad indeed. Three whole weeks passed by, and we had almost forgotten about Bill, when early one morning I opened the side door.

Who do you think was there? I know you can guess. Yes, it was Bill sitting on the door-step, waiting for re-admission to our home.

What rejoicings! "Here's

Bill come back. Come in Bill. However did you find your way back, and such a long way, too?" Of course, Bill could not tell us. He just simply purred and purred.

Our reunion was not to last for long for Bill was returned to his new home once more.

However, three days later there was Bill on our door-step again.

We had another confidential talk with him about his return journey. We have never been able to discover which route he took on each occasion.

It was clear that Bill was determined to remain with us, and his former owners decided

"It smells
quite
good
to me."





Bill
prepares
for his
afternoon
nap.

not to take any further action about it.

While Bill has proved a great favourite, he has also been most helpful because we keep chickens, and where there are chickens, there are usually field rats. Bill knew all about this, of course. He began at once to spend a good deal of time in or near the fowl-house, getting one rat after another. He worked so diligently that

there is scarcely any work of the kind left for him to do nowadays.

To-day, or rather to-night, Bill is in retirement, and he is stretched out in front of the fire.

He has earned his retirement for he is thirteen years old. He has been such a friend and helper that we have always been glad that he came back.

A Gipsy Trust

By May Wynne

"Why is the Squire angry with Father?" asked Meg anxiously. "And is it because of his anger that Mother cries?"

Primrose, her elder sister shook her head.

"'Tis all a question of politics, which I do detest," she grumbled, "nor do I care a fig whether King George is on the throne or Prince Charlie, so long as they leave us in peace. But that they will not do, and so Father will lose his farm, and we our home all because Father will not support the king over the water."

This was sad news, and Meg stole away alone to think it all out.

It would be terrible if they

lost their home—such a dear old thatched farm with the loveliest garden and such fruit trees!

What could Dad have been saying to make the Squire angry?

Meg was asking herself that again as she turned down Mulberry Lane, but the sound of a cry, full of pain, startled her.

It came from the thickest and darkest part of the woods, and Meg's first feeling was to run right away.

But, when the cry for help came low and suffering, Meg scrambled over the bank and went thrusting her way through wet bracken to where the grimmest gipsy lay faint and wounded.

He looked up at Meg with dim eyes, clutching at her hand.

"I cannot move," he moaned, "I had to fight my way, . . . and now . . . I swoon with weakness. If you be a true maid carry this packet to Squire Beverton, but promise to give it to no other. Life or death, maid . . . and Gipsy Foster had vowed to take it all the way; . . . but see! he cannot stand."

Meg's heart was pounding.

Squire Beverton! the cruel Squire who was taking their home from them.

Alas! And yet she could not refuse, for the poor gipsy had thrust the packet upon her and sank back unconscious.

Here was a dilemma, but Meg was a quick-witted maid and true as steel.

It was only a gipsy's trust—but it must be carried out.

So away went Meg back up the lane, and through the open gates of the Manor.

Squire's eldest son was just entering the Manor as Meg reached the great nail-studded door and while he, within, spoke to the butler, Meg had slipped past him.

It was dusk and lights burned in the great hall. There was a door to the left opening as Meg ran light-footed across the polished boards.

Entering the room, Meg found two men, one the Squire big, handsome, stern, and the other young, fair-haired, with such a kind, sad face.

At the sight of the little girl the Squire gave a cry of anger and sprang forward to catch her by the shoulder twisting her about and calling her ill names, such as spy.

But Meg was no coward and with a little cry drew back.

"I am not a spy, but a true maid," said she, "and a sick

gipsy bade me bring this packet w-which speaks of life and death. He trusted me, so here is your packet, Sir, and I will go home and never come here again to be called spy."

But the fair-haired gentleman smiled kindly as he turned to the furious Squire.

"Come, Beverton," said he, "none are condemned without trial. Let us read this packet and listen again to the tale."

"The girl must remain here," said the Squire, "I dare not let her return now she has seen you." He whispered this behind his hand—but Meg had ears like a hare.

"I am no tale-bearer," she said, at which the young man laughed, and the elder snarled.

The Squire cried out as he read the letters, and even the younger became excited.

"No minute to be lost," said the Squire. "You must go away—"

Meg heard no more of their whispered talk and the Squire seemed to have forgotten her till he and his companion turned to the door.

Then, how glum the Squire looked.

It was the other who spoke. "The child is to be trusted," said he. "A loyal maid, I'm sure. She braved much accepting poor Foster's trust. I will answer for her—since, had she failed, my life would have soon been lost."

He came to Meg and laid his hand on her shoulder.

"Will you promise, maid," he asked, "on your honour to mention nothing of this matter of the packet or visit here, even to your mother?"

Meg looked up fearlessly, her brown eyes sparkling.

"On my honour, I promise, sir," said she.

"I trust that promise," was the swift answer—and the Squire said no more.

Together they hastened from the room leaving Meg to slip away to her home.

It was not until a week later that a rumour ran round the village that Prince Charlie had been hiding at the Manor, but was now escaped to France.

Even so, Meg spoke no word of her adventure; and it was a secret between her, the Squire and his son Jock that it was for her sake her father not only remained at the old farm, but Meg herself had the gift of a white pony from the Squire's lady. Meeting her one day in the wood, the Squire smilingly laid his hand on her arm.

"The lass we can ever trust to keep her word. God bless her," said he.

Competition results will be in our next issue.

Your Letter

My dear Sunbeams,

I EXPECT you were very surprised when you heard that Auntie Hazel had left and I am sure you would like me to wish her much success in the new work she has begun.

Do you know, Sunbeams, I am looking forward very much to the interesting times you and I are going to have together in our "Corner." You will not forget to write to me, will you? Then I shall enjoy replying to you.

You see this is the best way we can get to know each other. Don't you agree?

I shall be looking out for Mr. Postman to bring me a letter from you.

I have been so happy to enrol four new members to the Sunbeam Band, Brian Hurst, Huntingdon; Shirley Wake, Co. Durham; Gloria Fixter, Lowestoft; and Jennie Morton, Co. Durham; welcome to you all. I hope you will always shine for Jesus and show to all you know what a difference it makes to us when we love Jesus and try to please Him every moment.

Now I must say good-bye, Sunbeams, until next time, and don't forget to keep shining.

Yours affectionately,

AUNTIE EVA.

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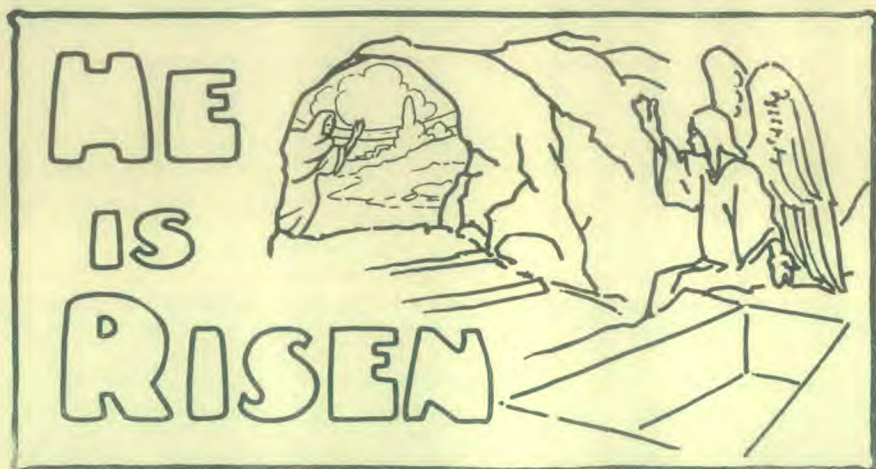
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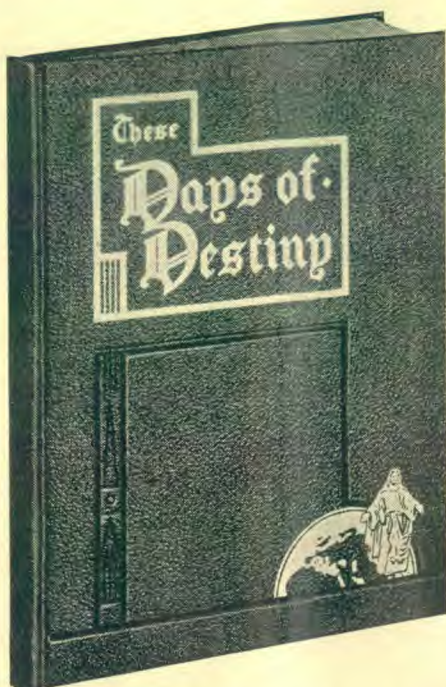
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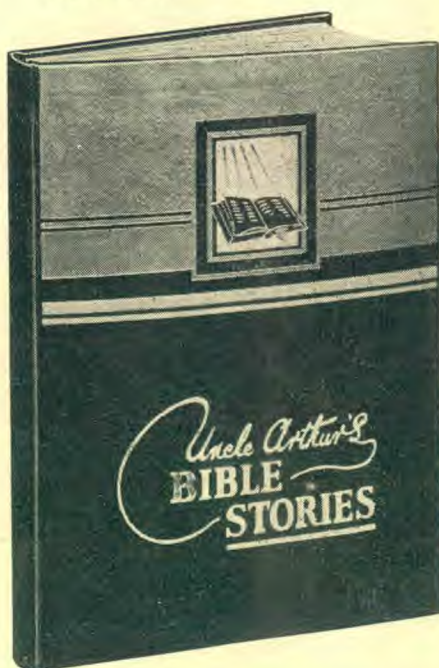
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Keep Looking Up!

Keep looking up, O troubled soul,
There is a God who cares;
A Friend who understands you so,
And every burden bears.

Keep looking up, when all around
Is sorrow, toil, and pain;
The God who understands you so,
Will turn your loss to gain.

Keep looking up—from God alone
Comes strength in time of need;
Lean hard on Him each passing day;
He is a Friend indeed.

Keep looking up—for very soon
This blessed Friend will come;
And take us up to be with Him,
In that eternal home.

By E. E. Pratt