

O *The Bible and* **OUR TIMES**



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Discerning The Times



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*Current Events in the
Light of the Bible
By the Editor*

FROM DOUBT TO FAITH

ONE of the outstanding religious centenaries this year is that of the birth of Sir William Mitchell Ramsay who, in the course of a lifetime of archaeological research in Greece and Asia Minor, effectively silenced the critics of Luke, the Gospel historian and the chronicler of the missionary journeys of the apostle Paul.

Born on March 15, 1851, in Glasgow, William Ramsay grew to young manhood in his native Scotland, graduating at the age of twenty with the highest classical honours at Aberdeen University. After following this up by further academic distinction at Oxford, he turned his steps toward Greece and Asia Minor to continue his studies in practical archaeological research, which soon made him the world's greatest authority on the historical geography of this region.

When he first went out to the Middle East, Ramsay shared the higher critical views of the German Tübingen school on the worthlessness of the narrative in the Acts of the Apostles as a source of accurate historical and geographical knowledge of the first century A.D.

"I had read a good deal of modern criticism about the book," he wrote in later years, "and dutifully accepted the current opinion."

"I began to study the Acts in search of geographical and antiquarian evidence," he

says elsewhere, "hardly expecting to find any."

It was when, however, in the course of his explorations, he came across a remarkable corroboration of a statement in Acts 14:6 that the realization dawned upon him that the writer of the Acts knew a great deal more than he had been given credit for by the critics.

On the evidence of Strabo's great *Geography* it was generally accepted that Iconium was a city of Lycaonia, but Luke in the passage referred to above clearly indicated that the apostles crossed a frontier when they journeyed from that city to "Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia." In other words, Luke believed that Iconium was in Phrygia. When Ramsay discovered archaeological evidence that, at the time of Paul's journeys, Iconium was, in fact, in Phrygia, he turned with a new and enthusiastic interest to the sacred writings.

In the years that followed, book after book came from his pen with such titles as: *St. Paul, the Traveller and Roman Citizen* (1895), *Historical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* (1899), and *The Cities of St. Paul* (1907). In all of these he showed conclusively that "the more closely we are able to test the story in Acts, the more vivid and true to the situation and surroundings does it prove to be."

"I entertain the strong hope," he added, "that

the demonstration which has now been given of its accuracy in disputed points will do away with all future doubt as to the faithfulness of the picture that it gives."

From the travels of Paul, Ramsay went on to study the historical and geographical references in Luke's gospel. These researches he incorporated into his book, *Was Christ Born in Bethlehem?* (1897). Among other Lucan references which he vindicated in the face of critical opinion was that Quirinius or Cyrenius was governor of Syria at the time that Jesus was born. (Luke 2:2.)

Ramsay also turned his attention to the seven churches in Asia, referred to in the early chapters of the book of Revelation, and his book, *Letters to the Seven Churches*, published in 1904, throws a flood of light upon the choice of these churches to symbolize the eras of Christian history from its early beginnings right down to the last days of earth's history.

He showed how great a place Ephesus (Rev. 2:1) occupied in the political, economic, and religious life of the Græco-Roman world, and how great was the clash between the

Gospel of Christ and the great "Diana of the Ephesians." Acts 19:28.

He revealed ancient Smyrna to be one of the greatest centres of emperor-worship, making it easy to understand why the Smyrnan believers were chosen as a type of the suffering church. (Rev. 2:10.)

Pergamos, with its mighty acropolis lifted high above the surrounding plain, is seen from Ramsay's account to be a fitting symbol of the material exaltation of the church through its fatal alliance with the Roman state in the days of Constantine. (Rev. 2:12.)

Thyatira, with its multiplicity of workers' guilds, can be seen to typify most remarkably the rigid guild system of the Middle Ages, which made it fatal indeed to quarrel with the dominant Roman church. (Rev. 2:18.)

Sardis. Ramsay showed, had a "name" and a memory of a great past, but in the days of John was but a shadow of its former self, typical of the deadness of the post-reformation church which Wesley did his best to stir into new life. (Rev. 3:1.) Twice in the history of Sardis, he dis-

(Continued on back page.)

Professor Wm. Ramsay (right) when a young man went out to the Middle East a confirmed critic of the Bible. After ten years of excavation he came to the belief that Luke's account of Paul's journeys was "unsurpassed in its trustworthiness." Below.—The majestic ruins of the Parthenon, Athens. Above.—Steps leading up to Mars' Hill where Paul addressed the Areopagites.



MEN WITH A MESSAGE

By A. S. Maxwell

CERTAIN Protestant ministers were recently requested by the editor of a religious weekly to give their opinion as to the kind of sermon that should be preached in a time like this.

It was a challenging question, enough to make every preacher pause and examine himself—and his repertoire. For with the world on the brink of catastrophe, and Christendom menaced by paganism as never before in history, it is obviously imperative that every ambassador for Christ should be giving the message which the people need in such an hour.

What should that message be? In what terms should the minister of Christ present the Gospel to a generation threatened with atomic disaster? How should he offer the Christian evangel on the eve of a third world war and the possible total collapse of civilization? What is God expecting him to say in this supreme crisis of the ages?

Certainly this is no time for pious platitudes in the pulpit; for arid discussions of political and social problems; or for the analysis of current trends merely to show off the minister's knowledge of psychology or psychiatry. Rather it is a time to speak the Word of God with power.

From this moment forward every sermon should be a message from heaven, preached with the fervency of "a dying man to dying men."

Noah and Jonah

When the patriarch Noah stood beside the ark facing the multitudes of the antediluvian world who, he knew, would soon be engulfed by the Flood, his address to them was no fine academic discussion of the nature of sin, but rather a forthright appeal to the people to turn from their wicked ways and live. Undoubtedly he brought to those judgment-bound souls the final word he had received from God for himself and his family—preaching it with all the fervency and zeal he could muster: "Come thou and all thy house into the ark"! Gen. 7:1.

When Jonah arrived in Nineveh and found himself amid the milling throngs of the Assyrian metropolis—all doomed to destruction, he knew, within six weeks' time—he did not attempt to play with fine phrases or present some great oration. Instead, in simple, challenging words he gave the divine warning and admonition: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. . . . Let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands." Jonah 3:4, 8.

John and Peter

As John the Baptist confronted the crowds at Jordan he did not seek to entertain or amuse them, but with great vehemence cried out: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." Matt. 3:2, 7, 8.

When Peter stood before the thousands who had gathered at Jerusalem for Pentecost, knowing full well that many of them would suffer the judgments about to befall the city, he spoke with deep solemnity and earnestness, climaxing his moving appeal for repentance with the urgent exhortation, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation"! Acts 2:40.

These men were not just routine preachers, presenting well-planned addresses as occasion demanded; they were men with a message. They sensed that they were God's spokesmen. Each of them, as his hour of crisis approached, heard the voice of God calling him to speak the words needed for the time. Each responded with whole-souled dedication, flinging himself without reserve into his divinely-appointed task of warning and saving his fellowmen.

The same spirit should be manifested by every minister of the Gospel to-day. All the zeal, earnestness, devotion, and fervency that characterized the preaching of these mighty men of old should mark every pulpit utterance

of the servants of Christ to-day. With "a loud voice"—of conviction, certainty, and power—they are to proclaim God's last message to mankind: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Rev. 14:6, 7.

God's Word for To-Day

If perchance you who read these words are asking yourself, What shall I preach in such a time as this? here is your answer.

Preach that the judgment hour has come. The judgment of the nations; the judgment of our Western civilization; the judgment of all human institutions and achievements; the judgment of every living soul. It is the time of which Daniel spoke when he said, "The judgment was set, and the books were opened." Dan. 7:10.

Preach that the end of all things is at hand; for this is the most solemn fact of our day. Time is running out. Prophecy declares it; events confirm it. The final scenes in the great drama of the ages are just ahead. Human history moves swiftly to its close.

Uplift God as Creator. Call upon the people to give glory to Him that "made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

Give glory to Him, too, not only as Creator but Redeemer. This means preaching the

cross, uplifting the Crucified. And to-day, as ever, it will be proved true that when He is lifted up He will draw men unto Him.

Preaching the Word; giving glory to God as Creator and Redeemer; warning the world that the hour of His judgment has come; calling men from sin to repentance; you will be preaching the everlasting Gospel as God wants it preached to-day. (Rev. 14:6.)

This is the message for the hour. Basically it is no different from the message which Noah proclaimed to the antediluvians; that Jonah brought to the people of Nineveh; that John the Baptist spoke on the banks of Jordan; that Peter preached on Pentecost. It is the same story of divine love for lost men and women; love seeking to warn and woo and save, adapted in this twentieth century to the closing crisis of the ages.

No greater message was ever delivered to Christ's ambassadors to give to their fellow-men. Truly it warns of desperate and imminent peril but at the same time it offers all the blessed consolations of the Gospel—the everlasting good tidings of a redeeming and returning Saviour. It makes plain, as the apostle Paul wrote to the Romans, that we are "far on in the night," but declares with equal certainty that "the day is at hand." Rom. 13:12 (Moffatt). It proclaims the end of the world of sin, but at the same time heralds the beginning of "new heavens and a new earth" in which only righteousness shall dwell.

What shall I preach to-day? What else do we need to preach? Here are the tidings of great joy all people yearn to hear. This is the word of hope the world is waiting for. God help us, preachers and laity alike, to proclaim it with clarity and power! God make us men with a message.

By C. S. Dixon

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Paul declares his message of the crucified and risen Saviour to the Greek philosophers on Mars' Hill.



God Cannot — I CAN

By Kenneth H. Gammon

THERE are some things that God cannot do. In making this statement, I am fully conscious of the omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience of God. Nevertheless I affirm that there are some things that God cannot do. The Lord God is bound by His very nature and by His determined purpose to certain limits, beyond which He cannot because He will not go.

God Cannot Lie

In the book of Malachi, chapter three and verse six, for example, we read: "I am the Lord, I change not." That is one thing the Lord cannot do. He cannot change, for if He did He would be guilty of breaking His word. And that is a thing that He cannot do. It is recorded of Him: "Thy word is very pure." "Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of Thy righteous judgments endureth for ever." Psa. 119:140, 160.

God's word is true. He will not and cannot lie. Likewise He cannot steal or covet. He cannot, in fact, do anything contrary to the Decalogue, for these ten eternal principles are a revelation of the character of the Lord. The Lord God is perfect, and therefore His will and His law are also perfect. (Psa. 19:7.) "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good." Rom. 7:12.

He Cannot Break His Own Law

Now if this law is holy, then any transgression of its precepts must be unholy. Indeed we read that "whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. God cannot transgress this law, but I can, you can; and how often we do! God cannot change His



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There are great decisions in life which we must make for ourselves. God will not force man's will.

standard, He has no need or reason to. Neither have we, but unfortunately we do sometimes attempt to change it. We say: "I can guide my own way through life. I can please myself as to how I live. It is up to me to decide what I can and what I cannot do." Truly as the Scriptures say: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Prov. 14:12.

God Cannot Force Man's Will

God has set before me the way of life so plainly and so clearly, that there is absolutely no need for me to misunderstand it. But I can go on in my own way, self-seeking, pleasure-loving, self-indulging, self-pitying, self-justifying, self-excusing; in fact, I can go on absolutely opposed to and contradicting the will of God, negligently, carelessly, or defiantly, and, here is the serious and solemn point—God cannot make me do otherwise. God cannot change me! You may wish to challenge this statement, but think it through.

Man is the crowning work of God's creation.

To man was given the power of thought and of free choice. Man is a king within his circle of choice, and into this circle, the realm of the human will, God will not force His presence or His authority. God will warn us of the results of our choice, whether to good or evil, whether for right or wrong, but ours is the choice. God cannot make me change from the ways of sin and death. (Rom. 6:23.) I can follow the urging and wooing of His Spirit, or on the other hand, I can reject it.

God Cannot Do More Than He Has Done

God cannot do more for my salvation than He has already done. He has given the greatest treasure of heaven that I might not perish. He has given me His Word as a guide to life eternal. He has given me His Son who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life." John 14:6. By this great Gift for our redemption, God has proved that He cannot do more for my salvation than He has already done. But I can! Am I fulfilling my part of the covenant? Have I accepted this Saviour into my heart and life? Whose fault will it be if I am lost? If I am lost, God cannot be blamed.

God Cannot Refuse the Penitent

We can refuse to hear God calling to us, "Give Me thine heart." We can refuse to listen to His offer of mercy. But if we turn to Him, by the very nature of His covenant, He cannot refuse to hear our penitent cry. No call so quickly reaches His ear or so quickly moves His compassionate heart as that of the repentant sinner. He longs for us to turn to Him—to have done with the world and all its vain allurements, to give up our "sin-polluted heart for Jesus to purify, to cleanse by His own blood, and save by His matchless love." He has promised to do this and He will not go back on His word, for: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, . . . and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:9, 7.

It remains then but for us to come to Him in meekness and lowliness of heart. We must choose to do His will. Our will must be linked with the Divine. It is the sum total of His will, that we might be one with Him.

God cannot force us to make the right choice, but if we do, then we make it possible for Him to do all He wants to do for us. As the apostle

Paul wrote: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. 2:12, 13. God's will is leading you to do the right thing. By His Spirit He is calling you to do His will. By His Son Jesus, He is offering you pardon and peace. He cannot do more. You can. You can seize these promises by faith and make them yours. You can believe and accept and have this glorious salvation. You can choose to be obedient to Him in all things.

And if we are His, God cannot let us be lost. He will never let me be lost. He will never let me go while I hold fast to Him. I can rejoice in this, and I can be sure that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. 8:38, 39.

God Cannot Wait Much Longer!

God "is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9. But though He is patiently waiting, God cannot choose for us, and neither can He wait for ever for us to make our choice, for He longs to liberate His people from the misery and suffering of this old world, and transport them to the bliss that He has prepared for them. The end of probation must soon come, when we shall either be eternally saved or eternally lost.

Jesus will soon return as He promised. (John 14:1-3.) He cannot long delay, for all the signs of His coming are fast fulfilling. So friend, while there is time, will you be saved? Will you accept this Jesus as your own personal Saviour from sin, and take Him to be the Lord of your life? You can, if you will, even to-day!



At the Bedside of a Dying World

"We are at the bedside of a dying world," said Dr. Harold Roberts at a recent meeting in London, "and we are beginning to see the things which really matter; and against a church that abides in Christ, that is true to its own nature, and is committed to its own purpose and nothing else, the gates of hell cannot prevail."



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The aeroplane instead of drawing the nations together more closely in peace and fellowship has become a dealer of swift death from the skies.

IN the wonderful symbolic revelations which God gave to the prophet Daniel nearly two and a half millenniums ago, the course of history from the days of the Babylonian world empire right down to the end of time was dramatically set forth.

That the people of God might clearly recognize the approach of the climax of history, special signs were enumerated which would mark the beginning of "the time of the end." One of the most striking of these was that "many" would begin to "run to and fro" and "knowledge" would be remarkably "increased." Dan. 12:4.

In other words, the opening of this climactic period would be signaled by a burst of progress and advancement such as had characterized no previous age in the world's history.

Phenomenon of Nineteenth Century Progress

Without a shadow of a doubt this outstanding "sign" began to be fulfilled in the

phenomenal transformation in human life of the early nineteenth century, for which Auguste Blanqui in 1837 coined the description, "the industrial revolution."

How great a change in the social and industrial structure of this and other countries has been wrought since that time was well expressed by Sir Robert Acland some little while ago in an article in the magazine *Tribune*:

"In the last hundred and fifty years," he said, "there has been a social revolution without precedent in history. Take a typical citizen from a Babylonian civilization. . . . Teach him the right language, and put him down in any European market town of 1780, and in twenty-four hours he'd understand how the ordinary man at the grass roots was thinking about his own life. Take a citizen of Sheffield from 1780 and put him in Sheffield to-day and he wouldn't have a clue to your thoughts unless he could remake the basic pattern of his thinking."—"*Tribune*," March 18, 1949.

Certainly, in the expansion of knowledge, in discovery and invention, there is no corres-

Science of DESTRUCTION

By W. L. EMMERSON

ponding period of time in all the history of man which can be compared with the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

What Mr. Gladstone Saw

Mr. William Gladstone indeed was not exaggerating when he declared that he could point to a single decade in his own lifetime during which the world had advanced further than in five hundred earlier decades.

That great English statesman was, of course, thinking of the steamships at sea and the new steam locomotives on land which were in his day working such a transformation in communications, and the series of mechanical inventions coupled with the new steam power which were changing the industrial life of the nation beyond recognition.

Since his day, however, not only have the steamer and the locomotive been speeded up in a manner of which he could never have dreamed, but there has been added oil and electric power. These have given us first the automobile, then electric traction, and finally have lifted man from the earth and sent him speeding at ever-increasing speeds toward the stars.

Mr. Gladstone viewed with wonder the newly-invented telegraph of Morse and the telephone of Graham Bell, but little did he know that these wonders would, in just over half a century, be followed by wireless telegraphy and telephony and latest of all television, by means of which it will soon be possible for individuals at opposite ends of the earth to both see and hear one another at will.

Life Transformed Beyond Recognition

What shall we say, too, of the vast expansion of knowledge in the realms of chemistry,

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The modern methods of communication could have brought only blessing to mankind but are now being used to make war more swift and destructive.

physics, biology, and the other sciences, which have further transformed the domestic and industrial life of the world beyond the dreams of even the wildest visionaries of a few generations ago. And then, in the last few years, there has come the most astounding advance in all history with the entering of the world into the "atomic age." Truly D. R. Davies has said in his recent book, *Theology and the Atomic Age*, that "if the nineteenth century may properly be described as the 'wonderful century,' then the twentieth century can only be thought of as 'the incredible century.'"—Page 38.

Rosy Visions Dashed

Now all this spectacular progress could have proved an inestimable boon to mankind. By making the whole world one it could have brought about a new and better understanding



between nations and peoples. It could have so increased the world's productivity and wealth as to eliminate want and provide an abundance for all human needs. It could have reduced the incidence of disease, increased longevity, and have brought a new happiness to all men everywhere.

That, in fact, is what many, with their finite vision, declared would be the glorious outcome of modern progress and enlightenment.

But the same Word which unerringly predicted the coming of this wonderful age, had something very different and tragic to say as to the ends for which man would use his new-found powers.

It declared that far from ameliorating and eventually eliminating all human woes, these vast new gifts would be so perverted by human ambition and greed as to progressively increase distress upon the earth. Instead of enmity disappearing in an age of undreamed-of peace and plenty, the new knowledge would provide new incentives for the acquisitive spirit of man. As a result, strife would become more bitter and widespread until eventually mankind would be reduced to universal chaos and ruin with the hearts of men "failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming upon the earth." Luke 21:25.

Prophetic Pictures Tragically Fulfilled

As we look out upon the human predicament to-day we cannot fail to see how tragically the prophetic picture has been fulfilled.

In our last issue we compared the tragedy of our time to the shadows cast by the declining sun, at first growing so imperceptibly as hardly to be noticed, then creeping more rapidly, and finally lengthening out with alarming rapidity as the orb of day disappears and dark night falls. And how accurately this delineates the terrible diversion to destructive ends of the wonderful discoveries of our modern era of science and technology.

When Samuel Morse in 1836 sent that first message, "What hath God wrought!" over the wires of his simple telegraph, what visions were in his mind of the possibilities of this new means of human intercommunication. Sad to say, however, besides making possible the dissemination of thoughts of peace and human brotherhood, the telegraph, telephone, and the radio, have provided also new means for broadcasting hate.

From Steamship to Dreadnought

The steamship which in 1833 ploughed its peaceful way across the Atlantic and arrived in New York in the incredibly short time of seventeen days, has now been equipped with powerful guns and heavy armour, torpedo tubes, and even more modern devices like rocket-firing equipment, gun control apparatus, radar, etc., and has become not an emissary of peace but a courier of swift and sudden death on the high seas.

Beneath the ocean, the power-driven submarine has been developed entirely for aggressive purposes, and in modern wars has become the chief instrument for the blockade of enemy coasts and the starving of vast populations.

Vehicles of Death

The motor car has conferred many blessings on mankind in facilitating transport and the speedy distribution of commodities. But it has also been transformed into the armoured car and the tank, and to-day the nations are engaged in a race for the production of more and more deadly vehicles of death.

The aeroplane which, in its beginnings, was hailed as still another medium of peaceful intercommunication, has been transmuted into the deadly bomber hurling tons of high explosives from the skies, into fighting planes swifter than sound, and into air transports capable of moving whole divisions of troops complete with every weapon of offence and defence thousands of miles, if necessary, in a matter of hours.

Latest of the modern sources of power, jet and rocket propulsion have been monopolized by the military authorities and have made possible planes incredibly faster than propeller-driven craft and have also brought into being a new type of offensive weapon, the guided missile, of which latter Stewart Alsop wrote recently in the *New York Herald Tribune*:

"There is no doubt whatsoever that the world is now on the threshold of the grim era when guided missiles will be a decisive factor—probably the decisive factor—in war."

But the most recent and darkest of the clouds cast over our troubled world is the black shadow of atomic destruction which now threatens to wipe out not cities or countries but the whole of mankind.

(Continued on page 12.)

An Antidote to **ERROR**

By Ernest Cox

In our last issue we saw clearly that the simple Bible truth concerning the mortality of man testifies to God's power. Sinners, the Bible makes very clear, will not exist eternally. Eventually God must again reign supreme over a righteous universe. Human mortality also witnesses to God's love in that He will bestow eternal life at Christ's second coming upon those who have shown themselves prepared to sustain a happy life in perpetual harmony with Him.

If only all appreciated the Bible teaching of man's present mortality and his future immortality through Christ they would be preserved from some of the most serious errors which the enemy of souls has ever sought to foist on the human mind.

Prayers for the Dead Futile

When we remember that man is but mortal, that is, that after natural death, life is not resumed *until* "the dead in Christ . . . rise" at His coming (1 Thess. 4:16), the blatant pretensions and heresies of Romanism become glaringly apparent.

The Bible plainly declares that "the dead know not anything." Eccles. 9:5. They sleep undisturbed until awakened by the returning Saviour, the great Life-giver. For Jesus Himself declares: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His [the Son's] voice, and shall come forth." John 5:28, 29.

It is therefore obvious that the departed and canonized "saints" of Romanism also, at present, "know not anything." They, too, await the call of the returning Christ before regaining life and consciousness.

If, as the Bible states, the whole hierarchy of papal saints "know not anything," what is the use, and where is the object of praying to them? They cannot hear prayers. They cannot accept or reward devotion.

It is often urged by the Romanists that if



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Another saint, this time Catherine Laboure, is "canonized" at St. Peter's in Rome.

we have a friend who is a worthy man, may we not ask him to pray for us? And the more worthy he is, surely we may believe the more acceptable and effectual his prayer will be.

Certainly we may and should pray for one another. Indeed the Scripture definitely enjoins us so to do. The apostle James admonishes us to "pray one for another." James 5:16.

But after we die we cannot pray. For at the moment of death our thoughts cease until they shall be gloriously revived at the resurrection of the just. (Psa. 146:3, 4.)

So that it is of no use for us to implore any departed "saints" (canonized or not!) to pray for us. They cannot even pray for themselves. All prayer and praise is dumb in death. (Psa. 115:17.)

When it is once clearly understood and accepted *that the dead are dead* until the resurrection—that they are not alive in heaven or hell or purgatory or anywhere else—then much of the false fabric of Romanism immediately collapses, as does many another unbiblical, but "popular" belief, together with all those heathen creeds which teach a crude ancestor-worship.

True Estimate of Our Bodies

Further, the truth concerning man's mortality enables us rightly to honour and esteem our God-given human frame. The idea that the body is a kind of "prison-house" for the higher and nobler part of man, has led many to despise the body as something of an encumbrance, rather than regarding it as the crowning act of a wondrous creation.

Indeed, the glorious resurrection of the body was one of the main themes of apostolic teaching. The apostle Paul did not believe that we should survive the experience of death as isolated ethereal spirits, but that the saints will, *all together*, on that glad morning of resurrection and re-union, live again by means of a renewed and recognizable spiritual body. (1 Cor. 15:44.) Indeed, Paul declared that Christ is, to those who trust Him, "the Saviour of the body." Eph. 5:23.

Dangers of Delay

Finally, the acceptance of the Bible statements concerning man's mortality tends to stress the importance of a genuine and undelayed conversion.

The real substance of the snare which the devil so deceitfully set for our mother Eve was that God's warning could be safely ignored—whatever she did, she would not die.

Too late, Eve beheld the mounting fruits of her folly, when for the first time she gazed upon the lifeless form of a fair and noble youth—her own son—murdered by a brother's hand. Eve must then have realized, more than ever before, the real infamy of Satan's malicious lie, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23), whatever plausible theories to the contrary may be advanced by Satan or sinner.

Yet there are tens of thousands to-day, presuming to fritter away the precious years of life in a course of wrong-doing, under the mistaken notion that whatever they do, they can never *really die* or become extinct.

The Word of God, however, contains repeated warnings that the time will come when presumptuous and rebellious sinners will cease to be. Those who remain obstinately unrepentant, and choose to reject God's mercy through *Christ*, will *perish*. (John 3:10.)

Therefore the Lord continually urges us to "choose life." Deut. 30:19. He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. (Ezek. 18:23.) He is "not willing that any should perish." He gave His only Son to the human race, that through His merit, all who would, might "come to repentance" and live in His kingdom for ever. (2 Peter 3:9.)



The Science of Destruction

(Continued from page 10.)

Five years ago the world was given the first intimation of the horrors of this most potent instrument of destruction ever conceived by the human mind, when no fewer than 200,000 of Hiroshima's total population of 345,000 souls were wiped out at a blow. And now we are told that the bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are but children's toys compared with those which are now being stockpiled in readiness for World War III.

Self-Destruction Imminent

No wonder that Dr. Bramuglia of the Argentine described the present century at a meeting of the Security Council as "this horrible century," and the World Council of Churches has declared that "man's rebellion against his Creator has reached such a point that, unless stayed, it will bring self-destruction upon him."

"To many people during the past three centuries," declared Fr. John Russell in a sermon in Birmingham during the British Association week, "science has seemed to be the one and only key to human happiness." Now, however, we realize only too clearly that in the hands of wicked men science has led not to "paradise" but to total "chaos."

As Mr. W. F. Oakshott put it in the educational section of the last British Association meeting, man has passed from the "palæotechnic" age of the early industrial revolution, through the "neotechnic" age of the dynamo, the motor car, the aircraft, and the radio, and has now entered the "apocalypotechnic" age in which technics threaten the whole world with final ruin.

"No Way Out" or One Way Out?

Far from solving all human problems, science has produced a problem which man is impotent to solve! There is humanly speaking, as Mr. H. G. Wells bitterly declared before his death, "no way out."

What only can this miraculous advancement of our time and its devilish perversion portend? It surely means that the predicted "time of the end" has come and almost gone, and that the "end of time" is at hand.

We must have reached the time when God

can but little longer permit man to retain the powers which he has demonstrated himself utterly incapable of using to the advantage and blessing of mankind.

The time must be almost upon us when God will step in and take control Himself to bring peace and order out of universal chaos and strife.

God grant then that when that day comes, as come it must very soon, He may find us each one waiting and ready.

(Next Time: "The Dance of Death.")

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ENROL NOW

To the Principal,

As a reader of OUR TIMES I wish to avail myself of the FREE Correspondence Course on "GREAT TEACHINGS OF THE BIBLE," offered by the Voice of Prophecy Bible School, it being clearly understood that I place myself under no obligation whatsoever. Please send me the first two lessons and instructions.

Name Mr. _____
Mrs. _____
Miss _____
(Please use block letters)

Address _____

Age (if under 21) _____

THE CHILDREN'S Pages



The "Twins" and a Shilling

By Mrs. D. R. Toussirot

FIRST of all I must tell you that the two little girls of whom my story is about are not really twins. In fact they are not even sisters. But the reason I call them twins is because that is what everyone else calls them.

You see they were nearly the same age, their birthdays were during the same month, they were just about the same size as one another, and they lived in the same street. They even used to dress the same, as often as they could, and they were always together.

One day they had been on an errand for one of their mothers to a little shop about ten minutes' walk away from

home, and as they returned they walked back through the woods. That was not the only way to go home. They could have got there just as quickly by going along the road, but they did enjoy walking through the woods.

It was autumn and there were not very many leaves left on the trees, so they did not look quite as pretty as they did in the spring and summer time, but lots of the leaves that lay on the ground were still pretty shades of yellow and red. They made a nice soft carpet to walk on, too.

So Margaret and Rosa, as the two little girls were called, walked along carrying the

shopping bag between them and talking about all sorts of interesting things. In Rosa's free hand she carried the shilling change which was left over after they had done the shopping.

They were so busy walking and talking that after a little while Rosa forgot to hold the shilling quite tightly in her hand so as not to lose it, and she also forgot to look quite carefully where she was walking. So almost before she realized what had happened, she tripped over a tree root that had grown up out of the ground, and was now hidden by leaves. As she tried to save herself from falling right over she put out her hand and the shilling fell to the ground.

Just as soon as she realized what had happened she was very worried. Neither Rosa's nor Margaret's daddy earned very much money and so to them a shilling meant really a great deal. They knew that it could not have fallen far, but they really did not know where to begin to look. There were so many leaves everywhere, and they were frightened to move the leaves to look underneath them in case that should make it more hopeless than ever.

After they had looked for a few minutes, one of them



See how nicely you can paint this picture and send it with your name, age, and address to Auntie Eva, The Stanborough Press Ltd., Watford, Herts., not later than May 3rd.

thought of something. "Jesus must know where that shilling has gone, because He knows everything," Margaret said. So they stood just where they were, face to face, folded their hands, closed their eyes, and Rosa prayed: "Dear Jesus, You know where that shilling is. If we go home without it, Mummy will be quite sad, so please tell us where to find it."

Then they remembered that if they wanted Jesus to answer their prayer they must really believe that He would. So they opened their eyes and looked down at the ground once more, and what do you think they saw? There just between them in front of their

A SPRING PRAYER

Dear God, we thank Thee for the spring,
With every tender growing thing,
And for the happy birds that sing;
For cowslips and anemones,
The blossoms on the apple trees,
We thank Thee, Lord, for all of these.
—Selected.

toes, and on top of the leaves was the shilling brightly shining.

Then what do you suppose they did? Pick it up and hurry away home just as quickly as they could? Well yes, that is nearly right, but first of all they shut their eyes again and Rosa said, "Thank You, Jesus, for answering our prayer," and they really were thankful, too.

WELCOME

To Our New Sunbeams!

4928 May Goudy, 4929 Kenneth Williams, 4930 Ann E. Sharp, 4931 Margaret Bone, 4932 Judith Galbraith, 4933 Margaret Cutter, 4934 Berice M. Bryant, 4935 Myra J. Parmenter, 4936 Jean Bailey, 4937 Renato Adcock, 4938 Avril V. Dumont, 4939 Peter David Jurgenson, 4940 Eileen V. Moyle, 4941 Pat Moyle, 4942 Mary Hughton, 4943 Richard J. Payne, 4944 Peter Galbraith, 4945 Pamela

Galbraith, 4946 Wendy G. Jenkins, 4947 Rita Morley, 4948 Esther Dunstan, 4949 Carol Cliff, 4950 Jelda M. Sleeman, 4951 Elizabeth Wierzbowski, 4952 Wendy Coombes, 4953 Margaret Moon, 4954 Pat Armstrong, 4955 Ann Jeune Nicholls, 4956 Joseph T. Fluin, and 4957 Ann Moss.

Correction

In our list of new Sunbeams issued in No. 4 copy of OUR TIMES, No. 4921 should have read David Baker and not Doris Baker.

Results of Competition No. 2

Prize-winners.—Pearl Rich, Trespearne, Laneast, Launceston. Age 9; Tom Thomas, 5 Rock Road, Pontlottyn, Glamorgan. Age 13.

Honourable Mention.—Ronald Morley (Marlborough); Monica Jenkins (London, S.E.11.); Christine Nunn (Shirley); John Reynolds (New Malden); Gloria Snowdon (Beccles); Julia Cotton (Bournemouth); Eleonore Baron (Accrington); Victor Gascoyne (Wimbledon); Betty Campion (Torquay); Avril Baker (Newport); Maurice Puckett (Southampton); Siegfried Baron (Accrington); Gloria Dunk (Bristol); David Palmer (Stoke-on-Trent).

Those who tried hard.—Sixty entries!

Results of Competition No. 3

Prize-winners.—Helen Read, 37 Purbrook Avenue, Watford. Age 12; John Baker, 44 Thompson Avenue, Lliswerry, Newport. Age 10.

Honourable Mention.—Margaret Cutler (Causeway Green); Gillian Ball (Bere Ferrers); Rita Moss (Southampton); Roger Smith (Southampton); Veronica Law (Greenock); June Eagle (Norwich); Barbara Ferguson (Blackburn); Maureen Walsh (Hove, 4.); Miriam Harris (Cambridge); Jeffery Heath (Liverpool, 8.); Sheila Ellis (Bow, E.3.).

Those who tried hard.—Eighty-one entries!

Results of Competition No. 4

Prize-winners.—Maureen Woodman, 20 Primrose Road, Bassett, Southampton. Age 12; Mary Mewis, 5 Barden Terrace, Armley, Leeds, 12. Age 7.

Honourable Mention.—Malcolm Bates (Staveley); Ruth Balderstone (Garston); Jennifer Haug (Colchester); Barbara Woolley (Wembley); Barry Precious (Watford); Angela Booth (Denton); Lydia Harris (Maxey); Hazel Snedker (Edmonton); Alan Crowe (Lowestoft); Roy Warren (Watford); Betty Campion (Torquay); Amy Randlesome (Beccles); Molly Rich (Launceston).

Those who tried hard.—Seventy-one entries!



My Dear Sunbeams,

You will see that our Sunbeam Band is still growing! This is really fine.

Congratulations to all those who have entered for the competitions! I am so sorry that it is impossible for the names of all those who tried hard to be printed. If this had been done there would have been very little room left for a story for you, or even a letter, so I am sure you will understand.

A kind friend of the Sunbeams has sent along some hand-made children's garments, and I have also received a coat from Miriam Harris of Cambridge. Thank you very much. These have been sent to the "Save the Children Fund," and were acknowledged by them in a very nice letter.

I was sorry to hear that Shirley Arnold, of Huntingdon, has been ill again, I do especially ask all the Sunbeams to pray that she may soon be quite well and strong again. I know that Jesus is happy to hear us pray for one another.

Valerie Smith of Thorpe, and Pauline Bruce of Manchester, have both been in hospital. I do hope you are quite well again. I am anxious to hear if you did well in the scholarship exam, Valerie. It was lovely to hear that your brother Richard is so proud of his Promise Card.

I would like to thank Eleonore Baron of Church, for her good letter. Your choice to serve Jesus faithfully is the most important one in life to make.

Thank you also to Elizabeth, Ronald,

and Gillian Ball of Bere Ferrers for your letters. I think you did yours very well, Gillian, especially as it was the first one you had written. Splendid! Ronald is doing his very best to be a real, true Sunbeam for Jesus, by keeping the promises each day. I hope that Elizabeth enjoyed the special programme which was given at the church.

I do wish I had enough room to mention all the names of those who have written such lovely letters. Many of you were kept waiting rather a long time for replies. This was due to my own absence from the office for nearly three weeks.

Just keep on shining all the time!
Yours affectionately,
AUNTIE EVA.

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STRAWS IN THE WIND

PERSIA'S OIL

PERSIA'S proposal to nationalize her oil resources is a matter of great concern to Britain as the British government is the principal shareholder in the Anglo-Iranian company and Persian oil meets a large proportion of Britain's needs. Persia is the largest Middle East oil producer, her output in 1950 being 32,258,000 metric tons. This is three times the pre-war tonnage.

END OF MISSIONARY CHAPTER

THE departure of most of the foreign missionaries from China during the past two years, truly remarks *The Guardian*, marks "the end of a chapter in a great missionary endeavour. The exodus of foreign missionaries does not indicate any lack of appreciation of their work on the part of Chinese Christians. Nor in many cases have they been instructed to leave by the Communist Government. Things have developed in a way which leaves them no alternative. The danger of embarrassing and even endangering their Chinese Christian brethren by their presence is so great that only this course is open."

AMERICA'S GROWING MIGHT

THE striking increase of the armed might of the United States is pointed out by the Washington correspondent of the *Economist* when he notes that she mobilized nearly 400,000 men for the Revolutionary War, 500,000 in the war of 1812, about 3,000,000 in the Civil War, 4,000,000 in the first world war, 14,000,000 in the second.

BIBLE CIRCULATION

THE British and Foreign Bible Society report

the dispatch of 3,239,400 Bibles and portions in three hundred languages during 1950 from their London office. When figures are in from the publishing branches in Australia, Canada, Japan, Italy, Hong-Kong, etc., the total will be at least twice this figure.

From Doubt to Faith

(Continued from page 3.)

covered, the city had fallen through "carelessness and failure to keep proper watch." (Compare Revelation 3:2.)

Philadelphia, Ramsay found, was a "key" city or "door" through which Greek culture was taken into the hinterland of Asia Minor. How well, therefore, it symbolized the church which was to bear the Advent message to the world. (Rev. 3:8.)

And Laodicea, the wealthy banking city, yet withal the cultural inferior of "little" Philadelphia, is seen to be a remarkable type of the last-day church so rich yet so devoid of spiritual power. (Rev. 3:17, 18.)

Certainly no one can study the churches of Revelation in the light of Sir William Ramsay's findings, without realizing how inspired and illuminating was the divine symbolism.

Among the devoted scholars of the past century who have dedicated their lives to vindicating the trustworthiness of the Bible, therefore, Sir William Ramsay, without any question, must be given a high and honourable place.

