



THE BIBLE AND

# OUR TIMES



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H.M. King George with Queen Ingrid of Denmark at a Danish Embassy banquet.

# No Time for Despondency

By A. B. Cheesbrough

saw the dark clouds that would overshadow the world, and gave similar advice to His people. To them He says: "Lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28.

Although there will be "distress of nations," although fear will tear the heart-strings of men everywhere (Luke 21:25, 26) on account of "those things which are coming on the earth," don't be despondent, don't be cast down, don't give way to doubt, don't despair. Remember it is always darkest before the dawn. "Your redemption draweth nigh." This is the Christian hope, but well may those who are without God and without hope in the world be despondent! If redemption draws nigh for those who are looking for the coming of the Saviour in power and great glory, what is drawing nigh for the wicked? Eternal destruction! Weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth! "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" 1 Peter 4:18.

No, it is not a time for despondency, but it is

## A Time for Watchfulness

"Watch ye therefore." Luke 21:26. The whole world is being enamoured by the evil one. Since he first deceived Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, Satan has led in the great controversy with Christ for the world's dominion and seeks to gain universal power. In these last days, he "is come down . . . having great wrath, because he knoweth he hath but a short time." Rev. 12:12. Everywhere this wrath is manifest, in cold wars as well as hot. His agents are active in every sphere, blinding men's eyes to truth and instigating suspicion

**T**HIS is no time for despondency." So said His Majesty the King in his speech from the steps of St. Paul's, when he opened the Festival of Britain on Thursday, May 3rd. With no lasting peace in sight, the memories of two world wars still occupying our minds, untold loss occasioned by the blitzing of our land by the enemy, and dark clouds overhanging the world—still, he declared, it was no time for despondency! And we agree.

Despondency makes for defeat, yet the bravest are subject to it. Elijah exhibited great courage when he defied the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. But when he received a threatening message from Jezebel he became so despondent that he wished he were dead. The David who faced the Philistines and slew Goliath wrote: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me?" Psa. 42:11.

Looking down the ages to the time just prior to His appearance the second time without sin unto salvation (Heb. 9:28), Jesus fore-

and hatred, which in spite of the great desire for peace by the peoples of all nations, will culminate in bloodshed, death, and ruin. In the church he has his fifth columnists working for the destruction of the Christian faith. The day of the Lord will take many people un-awares. Watch, therefore!

It is not time for despondency, but it is

#### A Time for Prayer

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always." Prayer, not play, is the need of the hour. Pray that "ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21:36.

Just as the Israelites who applied the blood of a lamb to the door-posts of their houses were accounted worthy to escape the angel of death who was to pass through all Egypt, so will those who seek to be cleansed by the blood of the Lamb of God be accounted worthy to be delivered in the time of trouble which is to come upon the world before Jesus comes. (Dan. 12:1.)

"The day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it? Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness,

and repenteth Him of the evil." Joel 2:11-13. It is not God's desire that evil shall overtake this world. Repentance saved Nineveh when Jonah preached the message of God.

It is not time for despondency, but it is

#### A Time for Faith

In the parable of the importunate widow which Jesus told in order to emphasize the need for prayer (Luke 18:1), Christ concluded His story with the words: "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" The answer to this question is found in Revelation 14:12: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Jesus knew that He came from God and went to God, and believed that He would be raised by His Father on the third day. The believer in the soon-coming of Jesus knows too that if he dies before that event he will have a part in the first resurrection. (Rev. 20:6.)

It is not time for despondency, but it is

#### A Time for Courage

"In the world," says Jesus, "ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have over-

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The King and Queen tour the Festival of Britain after the ceremonial opening.



# Watchers at the Cross

By Edward A. Butters

AMONG the milling crowds around the foot of the Cross of Jesus were three groups representative of all mankind. In fact that pathetic scene provides a glimpse of the world in miniature.

"And sitting down they watched Him there." Matt. 27:36. Can any words express more complete apathy than those? Transpiring before them was the world's greatest tragedy, yet those uncouth Roman soldiers simply sat down and watched. They had fulfilled prophecy: "They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture." Psa. 22:18. But they were absolutely unconscious of the fact, and after they had concluded gambling over the seamless garment of the Son of God, they could find nothing better to do than to sit and watch.

Just as surely as Jesus died on the cross, He is coming again. To tell mankind when and in what circumstances, He gave a series of signs. Distress of nations, wars and rumours of wars, earthquakes, pestilences, strikes all cry aloud the same theme—Jesus is coming again! And yet multitudes of men and women simply sit down and watch events saying: "These things always have been, and always will be." Like the soldiers at the foot of the cross, they are fulfilling prophecy, for Peter forewarns that in the last days scoffers would arise saying: "Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." 2 Peter 3:5, 4.

God forbid that you and I should be among that careless group. Far rather



By C. H. Dixon © Newton and Co. Ltd.  
Mary and John gaze in anguish at the dying Jesus.

Then let us sit beneath His cross,  
And gladly catch the healing stream;  
All things for Him account but loss,  
And give up all our lives to Him!  
Of nothing speak or think beside—  
My Lord, my Love, is crucified.

#### They Railed at Him

"And they that passed by railed on Him." Mark 15:29. This is not apathy, but active opposition to the dying Son of God. Among these passers-by were the scribes, Pharisees, and rulers of the Jews. They knew of His spotless life, His miracles, that He had even raised the dead. They knew the prophecies that told of the suffering servant of Jehovah. Yet in spite of their knowledge they railed, jeered, and reviled Him. They went so far as to quote the psalms at Him: "He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighteth in Him." (Compare Psalm 22:8, 7.) They called on Him to save Himself: "He saved others," they mocked, "Himself He cannot save." And their statement was true. If He had saved Himself, you and I would be lost to all eternity.

No wonder the ancient Hebrew prophet in the Lamentations cried out: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow." Lam. 1:12. Physical suffering can be borne, but gross ingratitude is hard. It is impossible to find any excuse for these passers-by who are sinning against the light in their own souls. Surely if any people deserved a just retribution, those men did.

Maybe we look back to that time and say to ourselves: "I would not have done that to Jesus." But the writer of the Hebrews says that we do in fact join them if we knowingly refuse to obey truth: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good Word of God and of the powers of the world to come, and then [R.V.] fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they *crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh*, and put Him to an open shame." Heb. 6:4-6. In other words, the men and women who do not follow the light of truth when it comes to them and they recognize it, join that mocking group passing by the cross of Jesus.

Behold Him, all ye passers-by—  
The bleeding Prince of life and peace!  
Come, sinners, see your Saviour die,  
And say, was ever love like His?  
Come, feel with me His blood applied—  
My Lord my Love, is crucified.

#### The Devoted Ones

And now we linger lovingly before the third little group at the foot of the cross. "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother." John 19:25. Who else would you expect to be there? So close, not sitting, nor passing by, but standing in helpless devotion. Although He was her Saviour, He was also her Son. He was the Babe that lay on her breast, He was the Boy who learned to pray at her knee. She had dried His tears and comforted Him in His childish sorrows, but now she can do nothing for Him. Sweat and blood are flowing down His face and she is unable even to mop it with her handkerchief. "A sword also shall pierce thine own soul;" so she was told when He was a Baby.

The disciples, save John, had fled and stood afar off, but Mary Magdalene was there with Mary, the mother of Jesus. She had been a

great sinner, but Jesus had forgiven her. She had been possessed of seven devils and Jesus had released her. In her utter love, she remains at the foot of the cross and is the first at the tomb after His resurrection. That little remnant must have brought happiness to Jesus in His dying agony and unspeakable joy in His rising again. God grant that you and I may be among the lovers of Jesus when He comes again.

Beneath the cross of Jesus  
I fain would take my stand—  
The shadow of a mighty rock  
Within a weary land:  
A home within the wilderness,  
A rest upon the way,  
From the burning of the noontide heat,  
And the burden of the day.

#### No Time for Despondency

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come the world." John 16:33. God wants cheerful Christians, and of all folk who can afford to ignore discouragement, disappointment, and despondency, they have the greatest right to be happy and confident about the future. Theirs is the long-term policy. They endure as seeing Him who is invisible. They look for a kingdom which cannot be moved.

It is no time for despondency, but it is

#### A Time for Service

When Jesus saw a man who had been blind from birth, His disciples asked, "Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither." Then, as if to say, "Never mind the why and the wherefore," He declared: "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day." The work of God was to be made manifest in this man. He was blind, he must be made to see. All round us are men and women blind to the precious truths of the Word of God, blind to God's ways and His dealings with men and nations, blind to their own destiny and that of a wicked world. They must be made to see. While it is day, before the storm bursts, before the decree goes forth (Rev. 22:11), before it is too late,

- Work, till the last beam fadeth,  
Fadeth, to shine no more;  
Work, while the night is darkening,  
When man's work is o'er.



Wyclif sending out his preachers with copies of the first English printed Bible.

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## The "Two Witnesses"

By J. A. McMillan

IN the book of Revelation we are introduced to God's "two witnesses." Rev. 11:3. These witnesses for God do many remarkable things, among which we may notice that they "prophesy" (verse 3), they punish their detractors (verse 5), and they have power to shut up the heavens so that no rain falls (verse 6). They are the object of hatred, yet cannot be disposed of when slain (verses 7, 8), but rise to life and enjoy greater prominence afterward. (Verses 11, 12.)

Considerable speculation has been aroused by this prophetic picture, and attempts have been made to identify the two witnesses with individuals. Some, for example, have thought that Moses and Elijah were here portrayed, because of the miracles wrought by these two men of God. (Compare Rev. 11:6 and Exod. 7:19; 1 Kings 17:1.) However, similarities are not

proof of identities. We believe that a literal interpretation is not admissible for the reasons which follow.

In the first place, the messages of the book of Revelation are expressed in symbols. This is clearly stated in the very first verse of chapter one. The "things which must shortly come to pass" were to be "signified," or made known by signs. Symbols are used to convey spiritual truths. A "Lamb as it had been slain," signified the crucified Christ of God. (Rev. 5:6.) A "woman clothed with the sun" is one of seven "signs" that are presented in the Revelation and symbolizes the Christian church. (Rev. 12:1.)

It might be possible then that the two witnesses, which are also spoken of as "the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks," are symbolic. This view is not only consistent with

the general tenor of the book, but it is demanded by two additional features. These two witnesses have but one mouth. (Rev. 11:5.) And they have only one body or "carcase." Verse 8. (R.V., margin.) Taken literally, this would be a human monstrosity. Understood spiritually, it has a most important significance.

#### A Clue to Their Identity

Who then are the two witnesses? The reference to the "two olive trees and the two candlesticks" (verse 4), offers a vital clue. John is borrowing his phraseology from the prophecy of Zechariah. That old Hebrew prophet tells us that these symbols signify, "the Word of the Lord." Zech. 4:2-6. They are also spoken of as "the two sons of oil that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." Zech. 4:14 (R.V.). The saintly Vitrunga therefore very properly concluded: "They represent the Holy Spirit bestowing His gifts and His grace through the Old and New Testaments."

Nor is he the only student of prophecy who has come to this conclusion. Lord John Napier of Scotland, who invented logarithms, testified in his book on the Revelation in 1593: "In His mercy, the Lord will see that the two witnesses, the Old and the New Testaments, are allowed to preach." And in 1641 a book published in Geneva declared: "These two witnesses, the Old and New Testaments, may thus be put to death, their volumes exposed to all kinds of abuse, and shamefully trodden down." —*"Paraphrase et Exposition de l'Apocalypse,"* page 292.

#### The Bible's Witness During the Dark Ages

When we accept this explanation, which is followed by most modern expositors whom, if there were space, we could quote, the eleventh chapter of Revelation becomes plain. The Holy Scriptures were indeed caused to witness for God during the long dark medieval period of 1,260 years "clothed in sackcloth." And at the end of that prophetic period—in 1798—they were subjected to the most shameful and public repudiation ever meted out to any publication in the history of mankind. The French Revolution proscribed the Bible and had it officially burned, thus hoping to rid the world of God's two witnesses.

During the Dark Ages, Bibles were hidden away and their reading was sternly discouraged. "The fifteenth century may well be described

as the *via dolorosa* (the path of grief) of the English Bible." And when Wyclif attempted to put the Word of God into the hands of the people, he was regarded as an enemy of society and the church.

When printing was discovered, it was the Bible that came forth as the first volume to be circulated. But the outcry was tremendous. In a convocation held at Oxford in 1408 it was decreed "that no man hereafter by his own authority translate any text of the Scripture into English or any other tongue."

Because the witnesses could not be bribed nor corrupted, therefore they must be silenced. And so they prophesied "clothed in sackcloth." But true also to the prophetic Word a wonderful resurrection has come and to-day they are exalted to a prominence never before enjoyed. How we should value and appreciate the Holy Scriptures which testify of God and His love.

Have they one body and one mouth? Yes indeed. Some would shut off the voice of God speaking through the prophets and would listen only to the New Testament. Yet they have but one witness. Others would listen to the Old Testament while ignoring the New. Yet they have but one witness. The New is included in the Old, the Old is unfolded in the New. They truly speak with one mouth, they both together make one inspired body of divinity.

To remove any misunderstanding as to the inspiration of the Old Testament, in the light of the fuller revelation contained in the New, the seventh Article of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England declares:

"The Old Testament is not contrary to the New: for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man. Wherefore they are not to be heard, which feign that the old Fathers did look only for transitory promises."

Here is weighty evidence that the Old and New Testaments speak for God with one mouth—that their contents constitute one body of inspired teaching. God spoke through the prophets in the Old Testament. God speaks to us through His Son in the New Testament. In both Testaments therefore, we have God speaking to mankind. They are His two witnesses.

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# EUROPE IN SEARCH OF

In the minds of the statesmen of Western Europe to-day there is a clear conviction that a united Europe is not merely desirable but a fundamental necessity for survival. On this, as prophecy so long ago foreshadowed, they are quite definitely of "one mind." Rev. 17:15.

That this conviction is shared also by the peoples of Europe is evident from the fact that when the Eric Stern opinion research group took a poll during the spring of 1950 they found that sixty-four per cent of those questioned in France, Italy, Norway, Holland, and Western Germany, expressed their belief that European Union would be a "good thing."

The question in Europe to-day, therefore, as Peter Viereck put it in a recent lecture, is not whether there should be "One Europe" but "what kind of unity, how, and under whom?"

## Are Politics Enough?

There have been, and there still are, those in Europe who believe that the principles of freedom and democracy as expounded on the

political and economic level are adequate to reanimate the spirit of the West, and these are working through their respective parties for their special brand of United Europe.

But while the secularists of various breeds are pressing their particular solutions to the European impasse, there are a large and increasing number of people who feel that no merely economic nor political cement will be adequate to hold Western Europe together and fortify it for its coming battle for survival. They are convinced that Europe needs the lead of a vital faith.

This conviction is being deepened as men realize that the menacing might of Communism lies in the fact that it is more than an economic or political system. For all its atheism it has all the characteristics of a religion and it is being advanced by its adherents with a truly religious zeal. Only, therefore, if the West has a superior faith can it hope to hold its own.

## Where is Spiritual Reinforcement to be Found?

So the minds of European statesmen are very seriously facing the question as to what spiritual authority can be invited into the counsels of the European and world powers, to expound the true basis of a Christian order and to guide in the translation of these principles into practical policies of human government and social life.

As they begin to look around for the spiritual lead which can vitalize the peoples of Europe, they see, on the one hand, a Protestantism broken up into a multiplicity of denominations and sects, differing in their Christian emphases, and further divided by national boundaries into still smaller autonomous groups.

On the other hand, they see the powerful



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Above. — Russian peasants cast their votes for the re-election of Stalin.



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Left. — Representatives of the North Atlantic Treaty powers in session.



# A "SAVIOUR"

By W. L. EMMERSON

Roman Catholic Church outnumbering all the Protestant churches put together, and united into one cohesive whole by allegiance to the Pope, whose word commands implicit obedience from millions of Roman Catholics in every country in Western Europe, as well as from the universal Catholic church.

From the point of view of numbers and capacity for corporate action, therefore, the Roman Catholic Church seems to be far and away the most influential section of the Christian church in Europe and the world.

Furthermore, it is noted that while Protestantism has tended to devote itself primarily to personal Christian experience and to be rather "other-worldly," Rome has consistently claimed a hearing in the corporate life of the nations, and takes every possible opportunity of enunciating its considered principles of political, economic, and social life.

Since the close of World War II there has issued from the Vatican, a series of authoritative encyclicals dealing with every aspect of the world crisis. And in each the leaders of the nations are assured of the solicitude of the Holy Father and the prayers and support of Catholics the world over.

The European statesmen remember, moreover, that during the medieval age this church actually did provide the spiritual background of a Catholic Europe which endured from the break-up of the Roman Empire in the fifth century until the French Revolution.

What wonder, therefore, that, not being forewarned and forearmed by the divine finger of Bible prophecy, they should see in the powerful church of Rome the apparently perfect ally for the establishment of a European and world Christian order.

## Phenomenal Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe

That European statesmen are, in a very practical way, looking toward Rome for a spiritual



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The Roman Catholic cathedral of Strasbourg provides a significant background for the flag of the Council of Europe.

lead in their opposition to the advancing wave of Communism is clearly indicated by the rise of the new Christian (Catholic) Democratic parties in every Western European country since the end of World War II and the fact that in this short period they have actually secured the reins of government in most of them.

In Italy Signor de Gasperi leads the Christian Democrat Party and heads the Italian government. Quite openly he says: "We are Catholics, and we carry out the principles of Christianity. It is from the latter that we derive our guidance and rule of life. Christianity

is our moral code and our guide in our social relations."—*Catholic Herald*, July 7, 1950.

In France the Catholic-supported M.R.P. is the dominant political party. The Catholic-supported Social Christian party has a majority over all parties in the Belgian parliament, the new government in Holland is led by Dr. Carl Roone of the Catholic People's Party, and in Germany the Christian Democrat, Dr. Konrad Adenaur, is head of the new Bonn government.

#### Will Spain and Portugal Come In?

For a long time the Catholic forces in Europe and America have been seeking the re-entrance of Spain into the Western European "family" and a definite step to this end was recently taken when Spain was re-admitted to the specialized agencies of the United Nations Organization. It may not be long before she is also accepted into membership of the United Nations itself, and perhaps even to the Council of Europe in view of the enormous strategic importance of the Iberian peninsula for the defence of the West.

When that happens Portugal will undoubtedly also be invited to join and the dominance of the Catholic forces in Western Union will be assured.

#### Catholic Ascendancy at Strasbourg

To make sure that this advantage is developed to the full a Catholic Secretariat for European Problems has already been established in Strasbourg by the Catholic leaders of eleven European countries to keep the views of Catholics before the Council of Europe. Significant indeed is the declaration of its Secretary-General, Professor d'Alligny, that the "aim" of the Secretariat, "is to fight the anti-Catholic bias which is growing in certain non-Catholic countries because of the misguided fear that the Catholic element may gain control of the Council of Europe."—*Catholic Herald*, November 11, 1950.

#### Rome Presses In

The Roman Catholic Church is fully conscious of this turning of the nations to Rome and is openly congratulating itself on the new trend of events.

"One thing that has happened since 1940," declared Cardinal Griffin in London not long ago, "is that the English people have become

increasingly conscious of the Catholic church as a great force in the post-war world. . . . To-day it is a commonplace to be told by non-Catholics that they fully recognize that in the strength of the Catholic church, much more than in any purely material resources, lies the great hope of saving Europe, and, indeed, the world."—*The Tablet*, July 8, 1950.

"It is increasingly recognized that the only answer to the Communist atheist revolution is the Catholic Church," writes the diplomatic correspondent of the *Catholic Times*. "That is one reason why the Holy Year has created such widespread interest among non-Catholics. The evil now spreading in the world may, in short, as so often before, be a blessing in disguise, by ensuring a general religious revival and a general recognition of the Catholic Church as the fount and origin of our Christian civilization."—July 14, 1950.

Still more recently the same commentator declared: "Russia regards the Catholic Church (rightly) as the main obstacle to her aggression," and "the civilized world is now turning to the Catholic Church as to its only hope."—November 3, 1950.

Elsewhere the *Catholic Times* goes so far as to say: "It is not round Strasbourg but round Rome that Europe must unite to resist the challenge of the Kremlin."—*Catholic Times*, August 18, 1950.

#### Significant Warnings

To the great majority both of European statesmen and people the support of the Vatican is received with unqualified satisfaction. Any fears which they might have had, remembering the history of papal domination in the Middle Ages, have apparently been dispelled by such assurances as that which the Pope used in a letter to Cardinal Fumasoni-Biondi, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, when he said that "the church has no desire to rule over peoples or to vest itself with power in merely temporal matters: its anxiety is to bring the heavenly light of faith to all nations and to promote human civilization and fraternal concord among peoples."—*Catholic Times*, September 15, 1950.

There are, however, those who cannot be so sanguine about the papal intentions.

(Concluded on back page.)

# THE TEST OF TRADITION

By H. F. DeAth

**M**ANY use the word tradition with only a vague sense of understanding. This is perhaps because the word is hard to define. Nevertheless, it is most important that we be made aware of what may be involved in this much-used word.

In the midst of an eloquent speech to his army, just before the Battle of Agincourt, Shakespeare puts into the mouth of the young king, Henry the Fifth, these words: "This story shall a good man teach his son."

Most of what is meant by tradition is here simply summed up. It is something passed on from one generation to another. This something we call tradition may be good or bad or harmless, and may vitally affect those who are influenced by it.

There are all sorts of traditions connected with every department of human life and activity. Nations, families, schools, professions, regiments, trades, businesses, publications, and organizations of every description, secular and religious, all have their traditions.

The British way of life, for instance, has its traditions, many of which have been moulded by Christian principles and influences. Similarly, every organized Christian church has its own particular traditions of teaching and practice. It was so in the days of the infant Christian church at Thessalonica, when Paul wrote to it thus: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions

which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle." 2 Thess. 2:15.

Most of "the traditions" here mentioned are clearly set forth in both the writings of the Old and New Testaments. Others were spoken, but not recorded. There must have been many in the Thessalonian church who treasured certain sayings of their apostolic teachers. Just as we are apt to cherish particularly striking statements of eminent Christian saints and preachers, whom we have known or whose writings we have read. These sayings we may talk over with others, till they become, as it were, incorporated into our very lives, and may eventually be passed on to our children for their edification and guidance.

At the same time we are warned to be on our guard against uninspired, unauthentic traditions. Jesus told the Pharisees: "Ye have made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." The purely human, the false traditions, that negate the eternal laws of God, and make His commandments of none effect must be rooted up from our hearts and



By F. Shields

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The Bereans earnestly search  
the Scriptures of truth.

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lives, if we are to be true followers of Jesus and true saints of the living God.

#### The Test of Tradition

For this reason, we are in hearty agreement with wise old Cruden, who states in his well-known biblical concordance that traditions "are good or bad, according as they agree with, or deviate from, the Word of God, which is our only rule of faith and practice." By the Word of God, Cruden means, of course, the Old and New Testament Scriptures, which make up our Christian Bible.

No thoughtful person, therefore, questions the appeal to tradition. In every walk of life and human activity it is natural and inevitable. The danger is, and especially in the realm of religion, that so many fail to look closely into the origin and character of accepted traditions, in order to satisfy themselves that such traditions have a sound and proper basis. They fail to heed the counsel of an ancient Hebrew prophet: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. 8:20.

There was a time when the clergy and people of the Anglican Church took seriously the sixth article in the *Book of Common Prayer*:

"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not required of any man, that it should be believed as an Article of Faith, or be thought necessary to salvation."

But, alas! this is no longer so. To-day that church is a church of a thousand voices, each of which is connected with individuals who hold themselves free to teach what seems right in their own eyes. How far this is so may be gathered from *The Book of Uncommon Prayer*, by the Rev. F. W. Moyle, Rector of Allesley, in which that gentleman repudiates the Genesis story of creation, and brands the doctrines of the virgin birth, physical resurrection, and the second coming as "tinsel stuff." Yet the miraculous birth of Jesus, His bodily resurrection from the dead, and His second coming from heaven, whither He ascended, are most clearly taught in Holy Scripture.

#### A False Step

The history of the Christian church would have been very different, if, in its youth, the

church had not turned aside from the basic law of God, summed up in the Ten Commandments. This law is set forth in the Old Testament Scriptures as having been "written with the finger of God." Exod. 31:18. Hence we find the same law fully endorsed and amplified in the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Son of God, and in the writings of His chosen apostles.

By the beginning of the fourth century, the Christian church had become numerically strong and very popular. Its popularity was its undoing. An unholy compromise was made with the then pagan state, under Constantine the Great. This alliance of church and state reached its climax when the church officially turned its back upon the seventh-day Sabbath of the fourth commandment and accepted in its place the pagan Sunday, then known as "the venerable day of the sun," which the Emperor Constantine proclaimed as a universal day of rest.

The significance of this false step was that the church thereby rejected that precept of the law wherein is enshrined the very sign and seal of the living God, the blessed memorial of the Creator, graciously designed by Him to safeguard the church from the assaults of evolutionary atheism. Thus the foundation was laid for the great apostasy, the development of which is outlined by Daniel the prophet and the revelator John.

No wonder the apostle Paul urged the early church to be on its guard against the "man of sin," who should exalt "himself above all that is called God." (See 2 Thessalonians 2:1-7.) No wonder the prophet Daniel and the seer of Patmos were given warning visions of the sad departure of the professed church of God from the law of God, and from the basic truths which cluster around that law and which lie at the heart of the Christian Gospel. How clearly does the apostle to the Gentiles define the true foundation of the Christian church, and warn us of the danger of tampering with its fundamental teachings.

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone." Eph. 2:19, 20.

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the *tradition*

of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Col. 2:8.

Truly the world abounds in all sorts of traditions. Vigilance must be our watchword. So many traditions are fundamentally opposed to Scripture. The Bible is the supremely authentic record of what the Christian church stands for. It stands for nothing less than "the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12. All tradition, therefore, must be tested on these grounds. No matter how fondly cherished or how hoary with age, no tradition which does not pass the scrutiny of Holy Writ, should be accepted.

The Church of Rome may prefer its tradition to Scripture. But the true Bible Christian must prefer Scripture to any contrary tradition. The traditions of men change often and quickly, according to human desire or mood. The Scriptures do not change. They constitute a fixed and unalterable standard by which to guide our erring feet.

Even the church itself, being a human organization, must not be considered a sufficient and final authority on tradition. As history all too clearly shows, the church, through corrupted leaders, may err and stray from the path set before it by prophet and apostle and by Jesus Himself. Hence the paramount need for a fixed and unalterable standard, by which to judge tradition. This we have in Holy Scripture.

"Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:13-17.

## The "Two Witnesses"

(Continued from page 7.)

### What Is Their Witness?

To what do these witnesses testify? They testify to the nature and grace of God; to the origin and destiny of man; to the problems of life and death; to the assurance of a heaven to be won and a hell to be shunned. Above all, they testify of Jesus, the Son of God who loved us so much that He left heaven's glory and the homage of the angelic hosts to suffer rejection by the chosen race and crucifixion on the cross.

These witnesses are merely a means to the end—this end being Christ. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Rom. 10:4. Jesus recognized this when he said to the Jews: "Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of Me; and ye will not come to Me, that ye may have life." John 5:39, 40, R.V.

The Word of God testifies that life is in Jesus, the Son of God. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John 5:9-12.

God's Two Witnesses are reliable and true. Have you accepted their testimony regarding Jesus, the Son of God? Are you enjoying the life which by faith you may have in Him? There is an old prayer which each of us should offer as we open the Word of God: "God grant us to ken and to kepe well Holie Writ."

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# THE CHILDREN'S



# Pages

## A Surprise for Teddy

By Perley R. Wade

EVERY day Teddy's mother went to somebody's house to do the washing. Teddy was only four, and did not go to school, so he went with her.

He liked Wednesday best, when Mother washed at the house where the Bennett twins lived. Teddy did not have many playthings, and every Wednesday, as soon as he got to the house, he would run to the garage where in one corner was the twins' scooter, and he would play with it on the

footpath all day long. The twins did not mind, for they knew that Teddy was very, very careful with it, and always put it in its place when he had finished playing with it.

One day the twins' mother said: "Next Wednesday is Teddy's birthday."

"Oh," cried Rosalie, "let's give him a birthday present!"

"Let's!" echoed Robert.

"I know something that would make him very happy,"

said Mother, and she whispered something in Rosalie's right ear, and then she whispered something in Robert's left ear; and both twins said: "Of course; but we want to do more than that. We want to do it all ourselves. May we take some money from our gift bank?"

Mother said yes, so the twins took some money out

of the bank they kept their gift money in, and went down to the shop. It was Monday, and early Tuesday morning they ran out to the garage with the parcel they had brought, and were busy all the morning.

When Teddy came on Wednesday morning with his mother, the scooter was not in the garage, but he did not have a chance to miss it, for Robert took him out for a swing, and then asked him to help him water the garden.

Then Rosalie came out and joined them, and they let Teddy take turns with their roller skates until before he knew it, it was time for lunch.

Teddy was lonely when they went into the house. He knew his mother always brought sandwiches for him when he was with her, and he thought he would get her to give them to him.

He went into the house and washed his hands and face carefully, and started to find Mother.

His mother was not in the kitchen just then, but Mrs. Bennett was, and she smiled at him and said, "Happy birthday, Teddy. I have some lunch for you to-day."

She took his hand and led him out of the house to the big back porch. There was a little table set for three, and Rosalie and Robert stood beside it, and as he reached the table, they sang.

Happy birthday to you!  
Happy birthday to you!  
See the scooter, dear Teddy.  
It is our gift to you.

Teddy looked, and there at the foot of the back steps was the scooter. It had a coat of new green paint and looked very shiny and new. How happy he was!

"I did not know that you knew it was my birthday," he said.

Then the three children sat down to lunch. There was



See how nicely you can paint this picture and send it with your name, age, and address to Auntie Margaret, The Stanborough Press Ltd., Watford, Herts., not later than July 12th.

jelly and fruit salad, and plenty of other good things to eat, and when they had finished, Robert brought out a beautiful birthday cake with five candles on it, and Rosalie carefully brought out three dishes of ice-cream. Oh, it was a lovely party, and Teddy was very happy!

And when Teddy went home that night, he did not have to put the scooter back in the garage.

## "PARTNER-SNIPS"

DURRELL was proud of his little garden.

"Come and see my partner-snips, Uncle Ben," said Durrel one sunny afternoon in spring.

"Don't you mean *parsnips*?" asked Uncle Ben with a smile. "You have a very fine row of parsnips," he added, admiringly.

"No, Uncle Ben, these are *partner-snips*," emphasized Durrel. "At least that is what I call them. You see, we have them in partnership—God and I—so I call them *partner-snips*."

"That sounds very interesting, Durrel. Tell me more about your partner-snips; I am curious."

"Well, you see," began Durrel, "in the first place, I bought the package of parsnip seed. That was *my* part. Then God furnished the rich, dark earth to plant them in. That was *His* part. I spaded and raked it, and planted the row of seeds; then He sent the rain and sunshine to make the seeds grow. Then I kept the ground loosened around each little plant, so that the warm air could get down to the roots, and I kept the weeds out, even the little ones."

"That is very fine," said Uncle Ben. "But when the parsnips are full grown, what happens?"

"Oh, that will be my part to do," said Durrel. "I will dig them and get them ready for market. Then I will give God the money to use for missions—that will be *His* part. So you see, it is a *partner* business all through."

"I wonder," mused Uncle Ben. "Perhaps it is not too late for me to plant a row of partner-snips. Somehow I rather like the idea of raising *partner-snips* for missions."

—A Contributor.

## Sunbeams' Letter

My Dear Sunbeams,

To-day I have been gardening. Everything looked so neglected, with weeds everywhere. Soon it looked much tidier, and I felt very pleased. But there were no flowers growing to make it look gay. So out I went and bought some little plants and packets of seeds. If the flowers come up like the pictures on the packets, my garden will be just a blaze of colour. I can hardly wait to see what happens. As I was working I was reminded of this little verse:

We should be like gardens,  
Bright and sweet with flowers,  
Blessed with heaven's sunshine,  
Cheered by gentle showers:  
Violets are the kind words,  
Roses, deeds of love,  
Fragrant pinks and pansies,  
Thoughts of God above.

I thought, what a lovely verse for the Sunbeams to remember. This old world is just full of selfish thoughts, unkind words and deeds. These are like ugly thorns and weeds. How good it would be if there were so many Sunbeams like beautiful flowers that all the weeds were just crowded out.

I want to remind the children in York that a special Sunbeam Band is being organized for them. The first meeting will be on Sunday, June 17th, at 3 p.m. The address is: 41 Micklegate, York. Do try to go along, and I know you will have a grand time together.

Thank you, Jeffrey Heath, for your good painting. I am so glad that you like your badge. Do your friends ever ask you what it stands for?

Barbara Case had a very nice stencil set for her birthday. It will be good practice for the

painting competition, won't it, Barbara?

Elaine Bunker must have had an exciting walk at Whitsun. She got locked in Lydford Gorge in Devon, and had to climb the fence to get out. You won't forget that walk in a hurry, will you, Elaine? Thank you so much for your interesting letter.

Now I must say good-bye. God bless you all.

Yours affectionately,

AUNTIE MARGARET.

## Results of Competition No. 9

*Prize-winners.*—Patricia Adams, 21 Thorpe Avenue, Bakestone Moor, Whitwell, Near Worksop. Age 14. Gloria Hampton, 106 Uxbridge Drive, Ernesettle, Plymouth. Age 6.

*Honourable Mention.*—Ronald Willson (Norderph); Josephine Aldridge (Bishops Cleeve); Brenda Plant (Stoke-on-Trent); David Withey (Bristol); Eileen Harvey (Westcliff-on-Sea); Jennifer Hartley (East Leake); Richard Payne (Bishops Cleeve); Christine Smith (London, S.W.20); Hazel Harris (Cambridge); Alan Woodhead (Leeds); Susan Grout (Southampton); Carole Westwood (Watford).

*Those who tried hard.*—Barbara Cammish (Sheffield); Sadie Wyschna (London, N.1); Margaret Cutler (Langley); Paul Evans (Bristol); Helen Carter (Hove); Marion Paget (Wokingham); Janet Chambers (Nottingham); Jean Sparkes (London, S.W.4); Nigel Payne (Bishops Cleeve); Michael Evans (Kensington, W.10); Vanessa Jezard (London); Beryl Palmer (Norwich); Joan Shaw (York); Christine Roberts (Coventry); Ann Hembling (Stockton); Garth Anthony (Derby); Patricia White (Plymouth); Pearl Rich (Launceston); Sandra Durrant (Brighton); Ann Edwards (Torquay); Valerie Westwood (Watford); Brian Allen (Whetstone); Margaret Russell (Birmingham, 22.A); Linda Brown (Birmingham, 22); Lydia Harris (Maxey); Elizabeth Ball (Yelverton); Ann Culbert (Merton, S.W.9); Jacqueline Bates (Derby); Dorothy Atkins (Derby); Susan Clee (Leeds); Christine Hallam (Chesterfield); Molly Hawley (Derby); Brian Smith (Chesterfield); Diane Johnson (Bristol); Jelda Sleeman (Torquay); Gillian Bennett (Oldbury); Barbara Kent (Lowestoft); Joyce Parmenter (Richmond); Rita Kent (Lowestoft); Ruth Price (Wokingham); Maureen Heeks (Birmingham, 7); David Davies (Nelson); Grace Selfe (London, E.16); Amy Randlesome (Beccles); Iorweth Gwynfryn Davies (Nelson); Doreen Evans (Enfield Wash).

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# STRAWS in the WIND

## A WONDERFUL RECORD

At the last annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society it was stated that during the 147 years of its existence it has circulated 580 million copies of the whole or a part of the Bible. This works out at 10,000 copies for every day since 1804.

## NECESSITY AND INDULGENCE

A QUESTION in the House of Commons recently elicited the information from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the British public are saved 3s. 2d. per week per head by way of food subsidies, while at the same time they spend 18s. 10d. weekly on drink, tobacco, and gambling.



## Europe in Search of a "Saviour"

(Continued from page 10.)

The late Mr. H. G. Wells, for example, in one of his last books was already viewing with considerable concern the new development. "Two great propoganda systems that work crossways to the real issue at stake," he wrote, "are the new Vatican party and the Communist party."

And actually of these two he regarded the possibility of a "revived Holy Roman Empire," as the more dangerous.

Then only just recently, M. Paul Ramadier in a speech before the French Socialist Congress warned against a Europe dominated by the Vatican.

It is very unlikely that either Paul Ramadier

or H. G. Wells derived their fear of the Vatican from biblical prophecy. Mr. Wells, certainly had no time for prophecy. He said in fact on one occasion, that only "cranks" read the book of Revelation. It would, however, have been illuminating for him, as it would now be for M. Ramadier, if they read the thirteenth and seventeenth chapters of that prophecy in the light of their fears. For both would have been surprised to read that the very movement which they most fear, was foreseen by the revelator nearly two thousand years ago, when he declared that the kings of the Roman earth would have "one mind" and that "to give their power" again "into the hands of the beast" for the establishment of a harmonious European and world order.

## A Decisive Hour

These significant warnings, independent of and yet in striking correspondence with the message of prophecy, most surely witness to its relevance to the modern situation and make it clear that both European and world civilization have come to a decisive hour in more senses than one.

For if the nations pursue with growing eagerness, and in flagrant neglect of the clear warnings of history and Bible prophecy, their policy of fraternizing with the apostate church of Rome in the belief that it is the authoritative exponent of God's laws, they may achieve a "Pax Romana" which will give a temporary respite, but they will assuredly discover when it is too late that they have ranged themselves in opposition to God Himself in the last great conflict of the ages.

(Next Time: "Spotlight on the New World.")

