



The Bible and

**TOUR
TIMES**



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An expelled German, carrying his meagre possessions, gropes his way through the woods into the Western Zone of Germany.

★ "AND thou shalt grope at noonday, . . . and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways." Solemnly the warning against disobedience to God was read to Israel at Shechem by their leader Joshua. Forty gruelling years of sojourn and wandering in the wilderness—the painful price of unfaithfulness—had created within each Israelitish heart a yearning desire to possess this fertile land of promise which they had recently entered. The lush green and the crystal waters, the fertile fields and olive groves provided for this downtrodden race of emancipated slaves a heavenly contrast to the arid, barren wastes of the desert through which they had passed.

Would their present foothold in the land of their dreams prove temporary, or would it constitute the first step toward permanent and complete possession?

GROPING at Noonday

By R. D. Vine

From the foothills of Mounts Ebal and Gerizim the answer was declared by the godly Joshua to the assembled host. In a word it was: "Trust in God, be faithful and obedient to Him, then prosperity and success will crown your efforts; but if you lose faith in God and disobey His commandments, then you will fail." "If you forget God," he said, "then thou shalt grope at noonday, . . . and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways." Deut. 28:29.

Groping at noonday! Pitiful picture. Groping implies either darkness or blindness, or both. Men laboriously, painfully grope their way when it is dark, and the way is strange and dangerous. When the merciless shades of blindness destroy men's sight, they pitifully grope their way toward a goal they cannot see, and of which they cannot be sure.

Here, however, is no picture of ordinary groping or physical blindness. It is one of mental and spiritual blindness, hampering and thwarting men's efforts to find a way through their difficulties. Instead of well-directed efforts toward a goal which is clearly envisioned by the eye of faith, there is ill-directed groping and paralyzed action which ends in disillusionment and failure.

Groping at noonday! Yes, by forgetting and abandoning their God, Israel frequently and blindly groped their way to national disaster, though hoping and working and planning for national security. Through their unfaithfulness, the noonday brightness of God's grace and power which would have assured them personal and national prosperity, was blacked-out by their own spiritual darkness. They reeled and staggered in a blindness of their own creating.

A Modern Parallel

It is even so to-day. There is much uncertainty in the world. Men with sincere desires are groping their way toward what they hope may prove to be better times. Yet gloomy expectations oppress the spirits, and render the groping process even more unsteady and uncertain. As with Israel of old, peace and security are desired. But as with Israel, the omnipotent God is too often forgotten. Divine wisdom and the divine way out, are supplanted by human wisdom and man-made plans of salvation.

Truly the condition foreseen of old prevails to-day, where God through His prophet declared: "The wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." Isa. 29:14. And so, instead of confident marching toward a glorious goal, there is unsteady groping toward a fearsome future. The blazing noonday of God's guiding truth is forsaken, while men blindly grope in the miserable darkness of their own creating.

Our Lord's commentary on the last days—our days—was that of "men's hearts failing them for fear;" or, as Dr. Moffatt translates it: "Men swooning with panic and foreboding of what is to befall the universe." Luke 21:26. Like Israel, they desire peace, and plenty, stability, security—the "promised land" envisioned by all and talked of by politicians; but like Israel, they forget the one and only means to that desirable end. Therefore we see them as it were "groping at noonday."

Darkness Yet Light

The tragedy of the situation is deepened by the fact that it need not be. God's truth shines to-day with noonday brightness. The Holy Bible, more widely distributed than ever before, points the way whereby men need no longer grope and stagger as in the dark, but may walk with certain, hopeful tread. Such is God's will. He wants us to "walk in the light;" to "run and not be weary," to "walk and not faint." Isa. 40:31; 1 John 1:7.

Blazing with noonday glory is the Bible's prophetic word showing us clearly where we stand to-day, and pointing unerringly to the way we are going. Said Peter: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do

well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." 2 Peter 1:19. Here we have the reassuring brilliance of prophetic truth, yet men grope and stagger because that light is ignored, discredited, and obscured by the blinding darkness of human wisdom. No wonder the Lord warned: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might." Jer. 9:25. To glory in these things brings darkness and failure.

"But," God goes on, "let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me." Verse 24. The midnight darkness of human thoughts and plans is dispelled by noonday brightness, when men grasp God's hand and humbly seek His guidance. They no longer grope their way with sagging spirits, but walk with calm assurance of success.

Light from "The Sun of Righteousness"

It is even so in our individual lives. Groping, not safely walking, is the only word descriptive of those who are weighed down with sin. How can evil be conquered in the life? How can sinful weaknesses be overcome? How can the heart be purified and the mind made wholesome? Darkness enshrouds those who neglect God in these vital matters. In many cases, it is even as the Psalmist pictured: "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end." But what of those who wisely turn to the Lord? The Psalmist answers: "Then they cry unto the Lord in their

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War to-day darkens the Eastern
skies and
more clouds
are looming
up.



Let God Make You Again!

By

E. W. H. Vick

★ "SADLY, sadly the sun rose; it rose upon no sadder sight than the man of good abilities and good emotions, incapable of their directed exercise, incapable of his own help and happiness, sensible of the blight on him and resigning himself to let it eat him away."

How we could read our own selves into these words with which Dickens describes Sydney Carton. We have all had experiences which have left us sad at heart. If we could only call back yesterday we would do things so differently. With regret and remorse we realize that the opportunities are gone for ever; yesterday will never return.

Of all the words of lip and pen,
The saddest are these—It might have been.

We start out in life with fair hopes and bright promise, we pass through varied experiences until, through failure on our part, or injustice on another's, we resign ourselves to our disillusionment. How many marriages end in the bitterness of divorce! How many young people, ambitious for education, see the vision of the cap and gown fade before some mediating pleasure or difficulty! How many lives end in tragedy that might blossom in prosperity! We look back and feel that we have cheated ourselves of the sweets of life, and grieve because the opportunities will come no more. We know that we are to blame, wholly or in part. We know that we held the key to the door of success. "Not in our stars, but in ourselves," not lack of opportunity or knowledge, not the shaping of circumstance but only ourselves!

The end always proves the man. In retrospect are shown our defects. Tragedy is that which



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"As the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in Mine hand." Jer. 18.6.

happened when it need not have happened, or that which did not take place when it should have done so.

If the saddest thing is a wasted experience, the gladdest is a restoring of the wasted time. The Gospel transforms the saddest into the gladdest; life's restitution after its destitution is the glory of the Gospel. Life is not just the inevitable fruition of the evil seeds sown in it. Life is not the record of the moving finger of fate, that writes and moves on, and whose account cannot be changed or erased by piety, wit, or tears. The Gospel gives back the wasted years. "I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten." Joel 2:25. That is God's promise; that is the theme of the Gospel.

The Gospel gives life in place of death, righteousness for sin, satisfaction for frustration, faith for fear, purpose for fatalism, hope for doubt. This is only possible through the great creative power of God. He is the Master of our lives, and only waits for the full recognition of His power by us; then He takes us, broken as we are, and shapes us, making again that which we thought was marred for ever. Then we can begin again with Him, knowing that, although we cannot change the past, the present is so much better because of it.

The Master-Potter

A potter was making a pot. He shaped it carefully as he turned the pliable clay on the wheel. Jeremiah was watching. He noticed that although the vessel was spoiled in the process, the potter started all over again. "So he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it." Jer. 18:4. He made it again! Your life may be a spoiled vessel, but Jesus is the Master-Potter. The Lord is also called our spiritual Physician. The wounds caused by neglect and sin are His speciality. "I will heal their backsliding," He says in Hosea 14:4. And when the Lord heals, He keeps us in health.

To have the years restored! To be made again! To be healed! We can believe this for ourselves. God gives back. What might have been will be through His power. God takes a man, fit only for the company of the devil, restores his lost powers, transforms him, and causes him to sit in heavenly places. He is never the same again; but because of the past he is stronger than he would have been without it. Even his weaknesses are made into strength.

Do you have an ache because of the past? Dear soul, bury it in the love of God. He restores. The discordant notes of the bygone can be made resonant by the skilful touch of the Master's hand.

Two travellers were climbing in the Alps when they heard exquisite strains of music echoing around the mountains. Enthralled, they listened to the rich notes, sweeter than any violin, richer than any organ. Then the music ceased. They started their climb down the mountain, and came upon a man with his great Alpine horn. "Won't you blow it for us?" they requested. He did so. Nothing but jarring, rasping noises came from the instrument. In amazement, they realized that these sounds were transfigured into the enchanting strains which they had heard just a quarter of a mile up the mountain. Just so, above the ugliness of the past may be heard the transformed harmonies of a beautiful present.

Touch Thou the sad discordant keys
Of every troubled breast,
And change to peaceful harmonies
The sighings of unrest.

Where broken vows in fragments lie
The toll of wasted years
Do Thou make whole again, we cry,
And give a song for tears.

Your BIBLE QUESTIONS Answered

Please explain Romans 3:20. What are the deeds of the Law spoken of here?

THE deeds of the law here mentioned are the efforts which man puts forth to save himself. Verse nineteen declares that all the world is guilty before God. Therefore no deeds which man can do will meet the requirements of the law; for they are as imperfect as the mortal, sinful man who does them. Thus man cannot be justified by imperfect deeds. He can only be justified by One who has wrought out for him perfect righteousness, and that One is our Lord Jesus Christ. So all our endeavouring to keep the law in our own strength will not gain salvation without Christ. This does not mean, however, that a Christian is absolved thereby from obedience to the law of God. A Christian does not keep the law to be saved but because he is saved. The principles of the law will inevitably be worked out in his life by the power of the grace of Christ.

Is there any connection between the Passover and the Communion Service? How often should we celebrate the Lord's Supper? Is there any Scriptural authority for observing it at any given times?

The Passover marked the beginning of the Jewish sacred year. It was a memorial of their deliverance from Egypt. Like every other feast or fast of the year it also pointed forward to Christ or His work. These feasts came yearly, and definite times were appointed for their national observance. When Christ fulfilled the Passover by His death, He instituted in its place the Lord's Supper which looked back to Calvary. "Ye do show the Lord's death till He come." No special time for celebration is mentioned in connection with its institution. The directions given by Paul to the Gentile Christians also made no reference to any definite time. Paul never alludes to the time, but only to the rite itself in 1 Corinthians 5:7.

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By Bougereau

The death of Abel.

OUR DEAD SHALL LIVE

By Ernest Cox

★ DURING one of his extended missionary journeys, the apostle Paul came on one occasion to the great city of Athens. Athens was, in those days, the very centre of the world's culture and education. It was also a great centre of idolatry.

At Athens, Paul gained the opportunity that he coveted most of all—that of being allowed to proclaim his faith on Mars Hill. Mars Hill was something of a "Hyde Park" and university lecture hall combined. It was the principal gathering place and discussion centre for the philosophers and theologians of those days.

Paul's distinguished audience heard him

quietly and patiently until he began to speak of the Christian's confidence in a personal and literal and bodily resurrection. Then they laughed him to scorn. They speedily put an end to his speech, and perhaps to his patience, by ridiculing the very idea of the resurrection.

Because of this summary dismissal, Paul felt very disheartened and discouraged. He went on to the next city, Corinth, very much in fear and trembling. But at Corinth the Lord gave His servant remarkable success. In that licentious city, a strong body of believers was raised up, who, despite their many faults, did maintain an influential witness for the true God.

But the Athenian philosophers were not alone in ridiculing the glorious hope of the resurrection. Most of those people to-day who have, as they say, "no time for religion," have no belief in Christ; they also have no confidence in any survival after death. Like many of the Grecian philosophers, they think that death is the "end of everything," and that it is useless and foolish to look for any renewal of life.

But one great truth that the Bible insists upon, from Genesis to Revelation, is that for the righteous, a richer, grander, and fuller "life beyond" is what should be expected and planned for.

Why God Permitted the Death of Abel

There were striking intimations of this even in far-off Old Testament times. It is very significant that the first member of the human race to suffer death, died for his faith.

"Abel . . . brought of the firstlings of his flock. . . . And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect. . . . And Cain talked with Abel his brother, . . . and . . . when they were in the field . . . Cain rose up . . . and slew him." Gen. 4:4, 5, 8.

Thus, in a broad sense, the first martyr was Abel. The very first man who died, sealed his implicit obedience to God with his blood.

Upon a certain fatal day, when all the world itself was so young and fair, the two brothers were talking together in the beautiful countryside. What they were talking about specifically, we do not know, but perhaps it is not difficult to surmise.

Would they not, in all probability, be discussing the great difference that divided them? One had faith, the other had not. One had hope in God, the other had not. One was determined to practise implicit obedience, to shun the ways of sin, to live a life in every way well-pleasing to God; the other had no such intention.

The difference between the two brothers was that which must ever exist between those who strive after righteousness and those who are carelessly and deliberately wicked. Though they were but one generation removed from the innocence of Eden, there could be no lasting harmony between the two men. The righteousness of Abel evidently became so great a re-

proach to the wickedness of Cain, that eventually the elder gave full rein to his fury, and killed his godly brother.

It is a sobering thought that the first human son and brother became the first murderer. The first fatal victim of evil was his younger and better brother—the one above all others whom Cain ought to have sheltered and protected and loved.

But if death indeed be the end, what an injustice did God permit to Abel! If death as we know it marks finality in our existence, it ought to have been Cain who had died.

For God declares that death is the wages of sin (Rom. 6:23), and Cain was the sinner. Cain it was, who was consumed with jealousy, envy, and hatred, to the point of slaying the innocent.

Surely the lesson which our loving heavenly Father taught to that first tragic family, and would teach to us, is simply that for the righteous, death is not the end, *but, as far as their conscious experience goes*, their passing through "the valley of the shadow" (Psa. 23:4) will mark their entry into their glorious reward.

God's Reputation at Stake

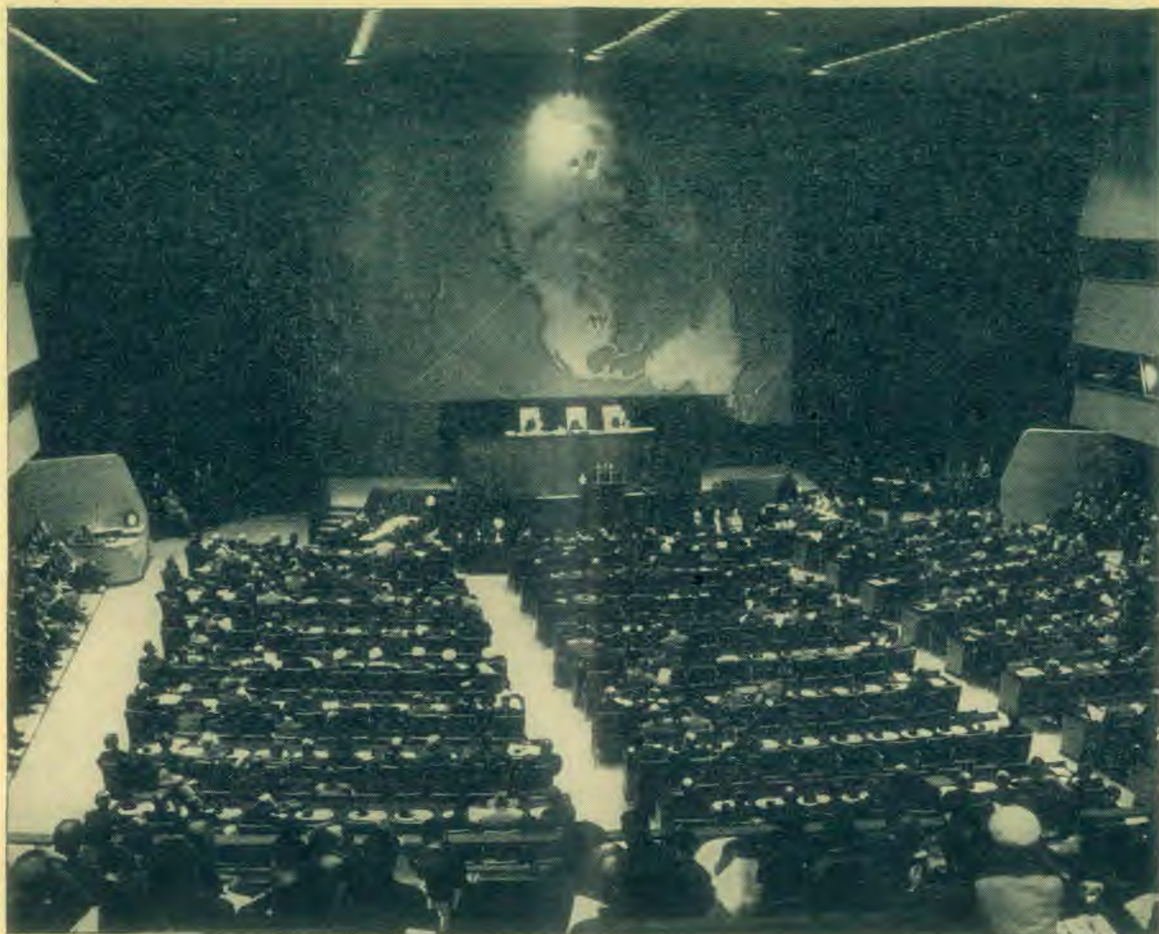
Without question, God's whole reputation for justice and fidelity hangs upon the ultimate resurrection and reward of Abel. For if Abel indeed be "dead and gone forever" and never to rise again—never to receive any reward or recognition of his faithfulness, his love, and his loyalty—then the whole incident is beyond understanding. If the godly Abel was just blotted out of existence for ever by a diabolical brother, then the whole incident is most monstrously unjust.

But Abel is not blotted out for ever. During all these millenniums his precious life has simply been "hid with Christ in God," Col. 3:3. It could be in no safer keeping. And at the resurrection of the righteous, Abel will receive his just reward, together with all the saints.

For the divine Record declares of those faithful ones of the early ages, and specifically including Abel: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off . . . and . . . God . . . hath prepared for them a city." Heb. 11:13, 16.

We may wonder, perhaps, just to what

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The United Nations Assembly in session.

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★ On October 25, 1949, President Truman attended the cornerstone dedication ceremony of the United Nations' £15,000,000 peace capital. The delegates from fifty-nine countries listened attentively as the President spoke of this new "act of faith" on behalf of world peace. Opening his address, he said:

"These are the most important buildings in the world, for they are the centre of man's hope for peace and a better life. This is the place where the nations of the world will work together to make that hope a reality."

In closing he declared: "It should be our purpose—it must be our duty—to make every day in the year a United Nations day until the peace of the world is made secure."

Many wondered that day whether the tall, gleaming shafts being erected on the East River would become a Temple of Peace or a Tower of Babel.

The rabbi of a Jewish synagogue not far distant from the site, preaching on the following Sabbath day, recalled the Genesis story of the Babel builders and warned that if the United Nations were to look upon the atom bomb as a symbol of the will for peace, then "God's power and might shall surely be set **against** it, and disaster with a scattering of nations shall be its ultimate destiny."

Plan After Plan Fails

Man always has been on a search for peace, but at no time have these efforts been so great as in the past fifty years. One plan after another has been proposed and abandoned.

One of the most hopeful eras was in the first decade of the present century. The building of the Hague Peace Palace symbolized the optimism of the times, but this brilliant scheme

tumbled like a house of cards when the first world war broke out in 1914.

In the decade following the close of this war, many centres of hope sprang up: Geneva, Locarno, Versailles. Treaties and pacts were signed, declaring solemnly for disarmament and the outlawing of war.

When the chief nations of the world, on August 27, 1928, signed a treaty outlawing war, one press writer declared it to be "one of the greatest events since the birth of Christ." The League of Nations was looked upon as a bright new hope.

and denunciation are hurled back and forth. This new era of open diplomacy and free-for-all discussions, with no holds barred, makes men continually wonder how it is possible to arrive at any settled peace; for it is clear that few are willing to work for peace except on their own terms.

As men wait to hear the international chorus for peace, instead there comes forth a chattering of unknown tongues in a disharmony such as the world has never known before.

It is no wonder that men are recalling the Genesis episode regarding the Tower of Babel.

EMPLE OF PEACE

By Frederick Lee

or Tower of Babel?

But this, too, was doomed to failure. Again the towers of refuge were shattered under the impact of unbridled passion and hate, as World War II broke out. There was little left of hope when that war ended. No-one then arose, as so many did at the end of World War I, to declare that war had received its deathblow, never to rise again. There was little optimism regarding the future. The atom bomb which brought the war to an end left the world mute and fearful.

What now is before us? Is it total war, or total peace? While men have been seeking the latter, the tendency is toward the former. Even those nations which have been built upon the principle of peace and non-aggression are finding themselves forced to consider the need for a state of constant military preparedness.

Clashing Interests Laid Bare

The clashing interests of the nations were once hidden in diplomatic procedures and secret councils. But now we find them daily aired before the world in the United Nations, where gather newspaper correspondents, radio broadcasters, and television technicians to make the unhappy scene as vivid as possible. Thus the world waits in confusion and alarm as invective

God is behind every righteous purpose of man; but when the godless fill the land and desire to take it captive, then He is prepared to confuse their plans. What would men do with universal power to-day? Would they give full freedom to everyone? Would they exercise the humility by which men are lifted to a higher plane of living? We fear not. This has not been the course of history. Whenever men have had overmuch power they have also had overmuch pride.

Take Nebuchadnezzar, for instance. He built Babylon, and no metropolis before was ever so great or wonderful. Not recognizing God as the source of his might, the king assumed that he himself was strong in his own right. Thus, as he looked upon his thriving capital, he said to himself: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" Dan. 4:30. This boasting cost him his kingdom. It is God's purpose that men shall know "that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." Verse 32.

During the nineteenth century, in which men made marvellous material progress, did they

render praise to God, or to themselves? God was not in their thoughts. They said to themselves that nothing is impossible to man. Thus men created a vast new world on the principle that might makes right and that man is his own saviour. Moral principles soon were put into the discard, and everyone was led to do what was right in his own eyes. Is it any wonder that the foundations of society began to crumble? Or that confusion and uncertainty beset the multitudinous plans of men to-day?

The Way to Peace

The world will not know peace until Christ, the Prince of Peace, takes the sceptre. The last days are designated in the Holy Scriptures as a time of wars and rumours of wars.

Paul, describing the last days, said: "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." 1 Thess. 5:3.

Bible prophecy indicates that the laudable plans of men to bring about a secure peace in the world will fail, that the temples of peace will become towers of Babel, and that wars shall increase until they lead to a final Armageddon. Then Christ will appear with the armies of heaven to cause wars to cease from one end of the earth to the other. Then will come to pass the words of the prophet John:

"The seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever." Rev. 11:15.

Those who know the Lord need not fear these things. They will be prepared for every eventuality. They know the frailty of human nature and the fallacy of trusting in man. They have a refuge that bombs cannot penetrate.

With the Psalmist the Christian declares, "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." Psa. 18:2.

As we see the signs that declare the day of the Lord is at hand, let us seek that spiritual peace which Christ promises to all those who are obedient to His will and who walk in His way. Soon the Prince of Peace shall descend from heaven to claim His own.

Our Dead Shall Live

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extent the saints of God in those early ages had hope and assurance of life beyond the tomb. They knew what had happened to the saintly Abel. What did they think of it? Had they any grounds of hope for Abel and for themselves?

Surely they had, for only fifty years after the death of Adam, a most remarkable incident occurred. An incident which is but briefly mentioned to us, but it most probably was widely known and discussed at the time, by saints and sinners alike.

The Lesson of Enoch

The divine Record is brief but startling: "All the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years; and Enoch walked with God; and he was not; for God took him." Gen. 5:23, 24.

Of Enoch's outstanding experience, the inspired commentator in the New Testament declares: "Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him." Heb. 11:5.

Apparently, just as the ancient world was very rapidly sinking into the grossest iniquity, just as men were more and more meriting the wages of sin, the Lord suddenly intervenes and swiftly withdraws one of His saints from a degenerate society.

Why did God do that just then? No doubt Enoch was a supremely good man, yet there have been other men of most noble and saintly character, like Joseph, Samuel, and Daniel, who nevertheless came to the common end of all men.

The ways of God are often inscrutable, but it may be that Enoch's translation was accomplished by the Lord mainly for the encouragement of His saints in those early, and comparatively dark days. They would have this striking incident upon which to rest their faith in their own survival. The Lord was surely reminding them, amidst the prevailing corruption and iniquity, that there is a glorious reward for the righteous.

Enoch was righteous. Everyone knew that. He was apparently famous for his constancy and loyalty to God. His daily life was so irreproachable that he seemed to live in the very atmosphere of heaven. In the eloquent Bible phrase, "He walked with God."

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If I Had My Way!

By Mary J. Vine

★ SHE was obviously hard beset, poor woman. Her troubles were manifold. Her market-basket on her knees, she was pouring out her heart to her immediate fellow-passenger, but one by one the rest of us gave up and listened, too. There was nothing else we could do. She probably intended it that way.

Aunt Susan apparently was at the bottom of a lot of it. An interfering, dominating old lady was Aunt Susan. And then there was "My son John." For a young man who had been offered so much sound advice, he was obviously not giving too good an account of himself. There was that matter of his girl friend—she did lower her voice here, for a moment evidently the rest of us must be excluded. With the increased cost of living, however, we were all vigorously gathered in again. Where *would* it end? And what she hadn't said to her coal merchant wasn't anybody's business. Worry—worry—worry. "And then, as I was saying, there's young Bobby. Cheeky? You wouldn't believe it. If I'd talked like that to my mother—"

Apparently, though, there was a remedy. It cropped up every few sentences.

"Now if I had my way!"

"Now if I had my way"—and Aunt Susan was successfully eradicated.

"If I had my way"—and Son John toed the line without more ado, girl friend and all. (Here the conductor grinned broadly on the rest of us.)

"If I had my way"—and no government could have arranged its Budget more satisfactorily. ("She ought to have the job," whispered my next neighbour.)



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"If I had my way"—and what could be fairer—no longer would she have to wrestle for coal.

"If I had my way"—and even young Bobby would be brought to book.

Judging from her account, though, the poor lady was thwarted at every turn. Her way wasn't anyone else's way, nor, seemingly, Providence's either. Words failed her. She summed it all up limply. "It's no use," she said, "it's no use."

I couldn't but be grateful as I stepped down from the bus. The little trip from town is usually common-place enough. To-day I had brought home more than the weekly rations. I had food for thought.

Our own way never is any use, is it? Not ever?

There was a woman once—and such a lovely woman she was. But like every other woman, she had her problems. She and the man she loved—the dear father of her children—were divided on that very thing, the two boys who should have been their greatest mutual delight. For "Isaac loved Esau, . . . but Rebekah loved Jacob."

In a way it was understandable. Esau was fearless, manly, a child of the forest, the natural complement of the gentle Isaac, the guarded child of promise. So, when the two boys stood before their father, it was the bigger boy who

brought the proud light into his father's eyes, it was in his doings that he showed an interest. What, after all, was there for him to talk about to Jacob, Jacob who wandered among the countless flocks thinking his own thoughts and doing his mother's bidding about the tents?

Just naturally, therefore, Rebekah's mother-heart turned more yearningly than ever toward that younger twin, and she determined, come what would, that she would give the Lord a hand. For wasn't that what the Lord had said, that the elder should serve the younger? She was puzzled. Had the Lord changed His mind? Isaac was blind, old, failing fast; she must do something fast, too.

What she did, we know.

Even against Jacob's better judgment, she had her own way. She was sure of herself. Wasn't she justified, so far as she could judge? Wasn't she on the side of Jehovah? "Upon me be thy curse, my son," she said.

But she had gone before the Lord, and how heavily the curse fell. What should have been his strong support—his mother's love—became a deadly snare, and but for the mercy of the Lord, would have been his destruction. Only long years of exile served to counteract the baneful influence of Rebekah's misguided affection, and she—she never saw her dear one again. She had her own way, but in that one black moment she lost everything she most prized. If only she had waited on the Lord.

And if only we, too, would do the same. How sweetly would the days fly by if, in each passing hour, we recognized that this very moment, thronged as it may be with not too congenial duties and in the association perhaps of not too congenial companions, is, nevertheless, despite its seeming incompatibility, a specially prepared opportunity straight from the hand of the Father for us to show what manner of persons we can be by His grace. For so it is. Maybe it does seem that His purposes are slow in taking shape, so far as we are concerned. Oh, let's not try to hurry Him.

Even at the beginning of their wilderness wanderings, before ever the children of Israel had begun to murmur at all, the Lord took them a long way round. Their journey would have been more direct through the land of the Philistines. But no, He "led the people about, through the way of the wilderness." The reason? "Lest peradventure," He said, "the

people repent when they see war." It was a long way round, true, but rather extra steps than butchery. Better to wait awhile than, like Rebekah, to suffer loss. Perhaps, whether we recognize it or not, we, too, are facing just such alternatives, and the way we want to take would, if we could pursue it, bring us but misery and grief.

The writings of a wonderful woman, Ellen Gould White, have often brought immeasurable comfort to me. "God never leads His children," she once wrote, "otherwise than they would choose to be led if they could see the end from the beginning." And again: "The Lord is ever setting before us not the way we would choose which seems easier and pleasanter to us, but the true aims of life. It rests with us to co-operate with the agencies which Heaven employs in the work of conforming our characters to the divine model."

May God help us, each one, to respond.

Groping at Noonday

(Continued from page 5.)

trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses." Psa. 107:27, 28. The Lord Jesus always has the way out, and is more than willing to lead those who turn to Him. Whether the troubles be international, national, domestic, or personal, the Lord has all the basic answers, and these are described in His Word.

Though "darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people"—who therefore blindly grope their uncertain and unhappy way—such need not be. For with increasing brilliance shines the sun of prophetic truth, guiding the feet and moulding the plans of those who take heed. Transcending all, however, is the noonday brightness of God's grace, undiminished, accessible to all, bringing health and healing to those who sincerely wait upon Him. Upon such, says the prophet, shall "the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings." Mal. 4:2.

Why should we grope our way unhappily along life's journey, shrouded in human darkness, certain of nothing but sorrow and failure, when the glorious light of God's love and power is able to provide for us, here and hereafter, "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think"? Eph. 3:20.

Our Dead Shall Live

(Continued from page 10.)

The Lord marked the daily life of this godly man, as He later did that of Job. And the Lord took Enoch. He exempted him from death. He conferred the reward of his righteousness upon him immediately.

So all men might know, definitely and certainly, that death is not the end for the righteous. The good man will not fail of his reward. For God Himself is the "Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Heb. 11:6.

It is evident that the striking object lesson of Enoch's translation was not lost upon the early patriarchs. With Abraham, they looked for "a better country . . . an heavenly." Heb. 11:16. They looked for a better experience than is man's lot here below, a much sweeter, closer, and more lasting fellowship with God. When Jacob was upon his death-bed he expressed the strong confidence that he had in a future felicity with his Maker. Almost with his last breath he declared, "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord." Gen. 49:18.

After a long, and at times, most troubled life, the aged Jacob yearned for the peaceful rest of that "better country."

How much greater confidence may we, in these days, have in the eternal and beneficent purposes of God, since Jesus our Saviour came, so much more clearly to bring our future "life and immortality to light." 2 Tim. 1:10.

Your Bible Questions Answered

(Continued from page 5.)

The phrase "as oft" mentioned here, means, as in Revelation 11:6, "as often as they will." It meant, in connection with the Lord's Supper, either daily, weekly, quarterly, yearly, or whatever time was agreed upon. Some students believe that Acts 2:46 refers to a daily observance of the Lord's Supper; others declare that Acts 20:7 shows a weekly observance. However, we believe that it is safe to say that there is no stated time specified in Scripture.



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THE CHILDREN'S



Pages

The Right Seed

By Eta Mai Scott

THIRTY-FIVE years ago there was a little boy named Jack Selly. Jack was the son of a busy farmer. He was always tagging after his daddy when he went into the fields or the meadow where the big red cattle were during the long summer.

Jack was a happy boy and nothing gave him more pleasure than working with his father in the garden. What fun it was to plant a tiny mustard seed and in a short time see a fluffy bunch of green in the spot where only a few days before he had planted the seed! How interested he was in the tiny sweet potato slip he had planted in one corner

of the garden! He watched it grow bigger and bigger, until one day Father dug down beneath the vine and brought forth a big yellow potato.

"I want to be a farmer, Daddy, just like you," Jack declared one morning as he helped his father gather beans in the garden. "I want to learn all about planting," Jack went on, "so I'll know what to plant in different kinds of soil."

"That's a great idea," Father answered, "and nothing could give me more pleasure than teaching you those things. But I want to teach you about planting other things, as well. For instance," continued

Father, "an ugly word or an unkind deed planted in the human heart is the very seed that will grow if a person cultivates it, until he will get into the habit of saying only unkind things, and doing unkind deeds. And if he should plant the seed of untruth in his life, it will grow up and choke truth until the boy may even believe

A Child's Prayer

Jesus the children's tender Friend,
Please hear me, when I pray;
Help me to serve and follow Thee
In childhood's happy day.
May all I am, and all I own,
Be Thine, dear Lord, and Thine alone.

Help me to follow, dearest Lord,
Wherever Thou dost lead;
To show my heart's true love for
Thee
By earnest word and deed,
That others may Thy beauty see,
And long to rise and follow
Thee.

Lilian G. Heard.

in his own false stories. But if a boy will plant kind words, kind deeds, cheerfulness, and love as he begins to grow, his life will be like a rich piece of ground on which wonderful vegetables and flowers grow in abundance."

"I—I—understand, Father."



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 September 4th.

Jack answered solemnly. "I'm going to be careful about the seed I plant."

And Jack kept his word. To-day he is a grown man and owns a big plantation where he rules with love because he began early in life to plant the right kind of seed.

As his father taught him, Jack is teaching his own little boy the importance of planting good seed in the heart as well as in the soil.

SCARS

By Elsie Pratt

I AM sure there is hardly a boy or girl who does not know what a scar is. If you look at your knees, you will most likely see a constant reminder of some playtime accident. Whatever the cause, the scar is always there, and it should help to make you more careful.

There are some people who bear scars because they were trying to help someone else.

There was once a little girl who thought her mother's hands were ugly, for they were very scarred. But when she learned that the hands were burned while rescuing her from the fire, she thought those hands were the most beautiful.

Then there was David Livingstone, the brave missionary who was hurt by the lion while working for God. He was scarred for the rest of his life.

Some people have scars which were made for their good. For instance, perhaps big Brother or Sister once had an operation for appendicitis, or for some other trouble. In this case we might say that the doctor had to be cruel to be kind.

But do you know, boys and girls, that there are some scars that cannot be seen, and which only you know about. It may

be that Mother and Father do not wish you to read certain kinds of books or magazines, or they do not wish you to do some things which they know will not be for your good. Maybe you promised to obey, but when you thought no-one was looking, you just went your own way. Afterward, I expect you wished you had kept your promise, because your conscience kept telling you you had done wrong. In this way scars are made on our characters, and this makes Jesus very sad.

Some time ago I was reading some verses written by a blind Christian lady named Fanny Crosby. Perhaps some of you know these verses which have been set to music, and this is the chorus:

"I shall know Him, I shall know Him
As redeemed by His side I shall stand.

I shall know Him, I shall know Him

By the print of the nails in His hand."

Yes, Miss Crosby looked forward to the day when Jesus would come, and there would be no more sickness, pain, or death, and the blind would receive their sight. She, with us, looked forward to seeing that beautiful city, with its streets of gold, and never-fading flowers. "But," she said, "I long to see my Saviour first of all." And how would she recognize Him? "By the print of the nails in His hand."

Yes, children, those nail prints are scars that Jesus will always bear, a constant reminder of His wonderful love for you and me. The disciples saw those nail prints after His resurrection, and they knew it was the Jesus they loved so much.

But those wounds look very different now. A bright light shines from them, for Jesus is glorified. I wonder, when the

angels look upon those bright scars, whether they take up their golden harps and play a still more beautiful song.

We do know, however, that if we keep God's commandments, and love and serve Him always, then we shall see Him face to face one day. And as we look at His pierced hands we shall say, "Those scars were made for us," and we shall sing a song in which the angels cannot share. That will be a wonderful day, won't it? Let's all plan to be ready, shall we?

Your Letter

My Dear Sunbeams,

For bright shining we must read our Bibles and learn its promises. Our picture reminds us that God will help all who call upon Him when they are in need. Learn the text in Psalm 91:15.

Yours affectionately,

AUNTIE MARGARET.

Results of Competition No. 12.

Prize-winner.—Paul Coupland, 131 Pretoria Road, Bordesley Green, Birmingham, 9. Age 8.

Honourable Mention.—Barbara Derwenk (Brough); Janet Lennox (Carlisle); Anna Savage (Hastings); Ruth Campion (Torquay); Norma Foyster (Norwich); John Roberts (Bishops Cleeve); Sheila Scragg (Bristol, 3); David Simmons (Torquay); Leslie Price (Coventry); James Sparkes (Clapham Common); Jean Sparkes (Clapham Common); Gillian Frazer (Hayes).

Those who tried hard.—Paul Martine (Bungay); Margaret Scott (Bristol); Ruth Price (Wokingham); Beryl Capewell (Brixton); Miriam Harris (Cambridge); John Evans (South Harrow); Dorothy Atkins (Derby); David Balderstone (Watford); Christine Sadler (Newcastle-on-Tyne); Lydia Harris (Maxey); Robin Alexander (Torcross); Patricia Lewis (Birmingham, 21); Ann Matcalfe (London, S.W. 19); Hazel Harris (Cambridge); Ruth Balderstone (Watford); Margaret Yates (Cardiff); Vivien French (Greenford); P. Brown (York).

The Bible and OUR TIMES

(Formerly "Present Truth")

Vol. 68. No. 17. Price 3d.

Printed and published in Great Britain fortnightly on Thursday by

THE STANBOROUGH PRESS LTD.,
WATFORD, HERTS.

EDITOR: W. L. EMMERSON

Twelve months 9/9 post free

Six months 5/- post free

Straws in the Wind

Four Million Lepers

It is estimated that there are some four million lepers in the world of whom 400,000 are receiving treatment.

Hydrogen Bomb Era

ACCORDING to John and Stewart Alsop in the *New York Herald Tribune* we are passing from the uranium bomb era with its top limit bomb of 100 kilo tons or the equivalent of 100,000 tons of high explosive, into the hydrogen bomb era which may begin with a two-megaton bomb equivalent to 2,000,000 tons of high explosive and capable of totally devastating an area of 100 square miles.

New Flurry in Arab World

THE Arab kingdoms of the Middle East are concerned about a rumoured attempt on the part of Britain to associate together the tiny sheikdoms of Bahrein, Kuwait, Qatar, and Oman. Persia and Saudi-Arabia are both anxious that they should not all pass into the protection of Iraq.

No Isolation To-day

"ISOLATION," said General de Gaulle in a recent speech, "no longer means anything in the

day of atomic bombs, rockets, multi-engined planes and even propaganda. What would be-



Open Thy Windows!

Open thy windows heav'nward!
Let into thy soul the light!
God's Word is a Lamp that
burneth,
Illuminating paths of right;
An evermore glowing Day-star,
Gleaming in gloomiest night.

Open thy windows heav'nward!
Let sunshine into thy soul!
To quicken, heal, and restore
thee.
To keep thy spirit whole;
The Sun of righteousness rewards
The life under His control.

Open thy windows heav'nward!
Lift up to the hills thine eyes!
Transformed by His grace and
mercy,
Behold His glory arisel
The Son of man in His beauty,
For thee shall descend the
skies!

Mrs. M. H. Cooper.



come of the United States if Europe being lost, Africa was closed to them as already half

of Asia has been, if they found themselves besieged materially and morally by a whole totalitarian world?"

Soviet's 40,000 Planes

GENERAL CURTIS LE MAY, of the U.S.A. Strategic Air Command, believes that Russia has almost 40,000 planes, of which half are in organized units ready for immediate action.

Ocean Deepes

REPORTING in *Nature*, Dr. J. N. Carruthers and Commander A. L. Lawford state that the Mariana Trench 200 miles south of Guam which is 35,220 feet deep has now been proved the greatest ocean depth. It is 789 feet deeper than its nearest competitor, the Philippine Trench, 2,000 miles to the east.

Way Out for Europe

In his latest book, *Understanding Europe*, Christopher Dawson urges that Europe was once united by the Catholic faith, that it is divided today because it has lost this bond, and that it is doomed unless this unifying force is recovered. But would a Europe united by totalitarian Catholicism be a free Europe?

