

The Bible and
OUR TIMES





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Assize judges attending a special church service before entering upon their solemn task.

Autumn Assizes and the Great Assize

By J. R. Lewis

★ THE old feast of Michaelmas, September 29th, is just another day to most of us, but to the incarcerated prisoners in county goals like Chester or Worcester, its approach is watched with the mingled emotions of dread and despair. It is the day when the autumn assize convenes and the circuit judge dispassionately gazes on every defaulter and his transgressions.

To the tradition-loving cathedral cities, the arrival of a judge of the Queen's Bench is a memorable occasion, rightly befitting one from whose lips may fall the sentence of death. He will be welcomed by the Lord Lieutenant of the county and then in procession with the mayor and aldermen in colourful civic robes, preceded by policemen and a macebearer, he will attend divine service. Intoned prayers from the clergy tremble in the high Gothic spans. The judge communes with his Maker before administering justice to his fellow men. The assize has begun.

Back in the Shire Hall, the prisoner enters the

dock. He watches and feels like the fly perpetually buzzing on the court window. It can see the sunshine outside, but with all its buzzing and wing-beating, it will never get outside. Neither will he. He answers to his name, the charge is read, and prosecution and defence commence their opening gambits in a game of verbal chess growing more tense and more strained as policemen, detectives, and witnesses are skilfully moved as pawns and pieces to checkmate the immovable man in the dock. The jury debate their verdict, and, if the charge is proved, the demands of the law will be met. If the offence is a capital crime, the supreme penalty will be exacted.

On Trial for Life

Inevitably there must be among the spectators those who quiver and quake as they imagine the feelings of the accused, and equally inevitable it is that all men and women will stand trial for life one day. The earthly court preludes and prefigures

a heavenly court, the last great judgment, which one day will be convened. There the whole human race will face its Maker and render an account of its behaviour.

The guide Book handed to the Queen at her Coronation is decisive in its utterances on this awesome event: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Heb. 9:27. "We shall all stand before the judgment seat." Rom. 14:10.

Few biblical scenes can match for solemnity that described by Daniel the prophet. (Dan. 7:9-11. Read Moffatt's translation.) There it is announced that "an Assize was held." The judge is a "Being sat on the throne of justice, with robes white as snow." The attendants are "millions of angels" and "the court was held and the records were opened." Who can guess the complexities of life which will be laid bare as "the dead were judged by what was written in these books." Rev. 20:12, Moffatt.

Day of Atonement and its Antitype

September in such cities as Leeds and Manchester with their large Jewish quarters, provides added atmosphere of judgment to come, for the Hebrew people traditionally celebrate at this time a religious feast, four thousand years old, the Day of Atonement. Ordained by God, communicated to Moses, and celebrated by our Lord Himself, this important annual festival was observed throughout Old Testament times as a type of divine investigation which will one day be fulfilled in the factual judgment of the heavenly Assize.

On this Day of Atonement in ancient times Jewry pilgrimaged to the Jerusalem temple and on that day made their annual sacrifice for sin. There was a consecration of heart to the purpose of God and an expression of desire on the part of all to continue living among the covenant people of God. Those individuals, however, who were careless and indifferent, who failed to share in the benefits of the sacrifice and dedication, were formally and legally separated from the race, and were compelled to live apart henceforth as strangers to Jewish privileges.

The scenes of that day were an acted lesson foreshadowing the great judgment. In that day, those who have offered heart and soul to God, and shared in the blessings of our Lord's sacrificial death, will be rewarded with the pleasure of dwelling with the Lord and His people for all eternity. The indifferent, careless, and Christless,

will, as in the earthly symbolic service, be "cut off" for ever from the kingdom of God. The great heavenly assize will mean a verdict of life or death to each and all of us.

Prepare My Soul!

Many Bible commentators from Isaac Newton down to today believe, on the basis of the 2,300-day prophecy in the eighth chapter of the book of Daniel, that the close of this investigative judgment will not be long delayed, and that soon a final sentence of death will be passed on all who are guilty of transgressing the laws of the kingdom of heaven.

That sentence may be withheld from us if with humble thanks to God we avail ourselves of the voluntary sacrifice of Christ which has fully met the demands of the law. "Christ . . . suffered, . . . the just for the unjust." 1 Peter 3:18.

Whosoever believes this divine statement, no matter how guilty, will be pronounced guiltless. Oh, glorious Gospel, oh, wonderful redeeming Love. Oh, that all might believe and find pardon in that day.

The Day Is at Hand!

(Continued from page 5.)

Believing in the evolutionary theory of the unbroken succession of life and the inevitability of progress, these apostates from the Christian faith state that there is no need for the second coming. For a long time they have been telling us that man is inherently good, that sin is an outmoded synonym for the days of ignorance, and that sooner or later all will be well with the world.

Never before in the history of Protestantism has there been a greater diversity of views among the churches. While on one hand there is a seeming revival of orthodoxy and the advent hope; on the other, present conditions have driven modernist theologians into a state of confusion. Having no basis for their views in the Scriptures, and little hope so far as the future of man is concerned, they have nothing to offer a troubled world.

Surely we have come to the time concerning which all the prophets, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the apostles have spoken. Man has reached the climax of his evil purposes. The end of the road is before him. Christ must come again.

Friend, are you happy to learn that Christ is coming soon? Are you prepared to meet Him?

The

DAY IS AT HAND!



★ THE most astounding news today is, "Christ is coming soon." Long have the people of God anticipated this glorious event. Multitudes have prayed throughout the Christian centuries with hopeful intent, "Thy kingdom come." Now the message is being proclaimed in every land, "The day is at hand!"

Many will ask, "How do you know that this news is true?" We answer, "We know it by studying the prophecies of the Bible and comparing them with the events of our times."

After enumerating many signs that would reveal the nearness of His coming, Christ added these words: "When ye shall see *all* these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." Matt. 24:33. "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28.

What are these signs? First, we look through Christ's prophecy and note the ones He mentioned, as recorded in Matthew twenty-four and in Luke twenty-one. Then we look through the Bible and note other signs of the end that prophets and apostles have mentioned. Putting all these signs together, a very clear picture of our day emerges. We then learn why it is unmatched by any previous period of time either in the scale of its achievements or in the measure of its failings.

As we consider the unprecedented happenings of our times and compare them with these signs, we become increasingly impressed with the stupendous fact that we are living in that wonderful day to which patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and saints have looked as the time of the consummation of their hopes.

Three groups of signs, each depicting the contrasting lights and shadows of the times just before the second coming of Christ, find their fulfilment in the days in which we live.

1. *The increase of knowledge and the decline in morals.*

The prophet Daniel, in speaking of the time of

the end, wrote that "knowledge shall be increased." Dan. 12:4.

Christ, in telling about the signs of the end, declared, "Because iniquity [lawlessness] shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Matt. 24:12.

The apostle Paul wrote: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

We have been told that, with the spread of knowledge, ignorance, the handmaiden of all evil, would disappear and the world would grow better. But what have we seen?

In fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy, knowledge has been greatly increased in modern times. Religious knowledge contained in the Scriptures has been widely disseminated. In the past one hundred and fifty years since the first Bible society was organized in England, well over one billion two hundred million copies of the Scriptures have been scattered over the earth. The Bible, or portions of it, is now being circulated in 1,118 languages at the rate of some twenty-five million copies a year.

Not only has religious knowledge increased, but during the past century a most astounding scientific awakening has taken place. Nothing seems to have escaped the mind of man. Literally millions of inventions have come to birth in this century, bringing us the steam and motor ships, which rapidly ply the ocean; the steam and diesel engines that haul long lines of goods and passenger trains

across the continents; the mammoth aeroplanes that fly day and night across the skies to every nation; the motor cars that crowd the highways; the multitudes of machines that produce the comforts and conveniences of our day; the telephone; the radio, television, and other inventions too numerous to mention—all are the products of this modern generation.

So far as knowledge is concerned, the world is bursting with it. But as knowledge has spread, has society grown more settled and more saintly? Far from it. In spite of having more religious and scientific truth than any other age had, this is the most perilous time of history.

Crime is on the increase. Juvenile delinquency is becoming a tragic and almost uncontrollable problem. Millions are spent annually on drink, gambling, pools, and questionable amusements. Furthermore, the home, which is the foundation of society, is disintegrating because of the increase of divorce and promiscuous behaviour between men and women.

These facts have been told in many of today's books, magazines, and newspapers. Little more need be said of the moral decline of these times. Another sign must be pointed out.

2. *Unprecedented search for peace, and the spread of war.*

Everyone knows that we have come to a time

By Frederick Lee

of world crisis. Fear is on every hand. Men tremble as they look into the future. Already two terrible world wars have sapped the vitality of nations and destroyed large portions of the earth. And a third war, more dreadful than the others, is staring us in the face. Every nation is staggering under an almost overwhelming debt brought about by war and its destructiveness.

And this has all come about in a day when, more than at any other time in history, men have been working for peace and security.

The Bible pictures just such a paradox. The prophet Isaiah wrote: "And it shall come to pass in the last days . . . many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord. . . . And He shall judge among the nations: . . . and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation

shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Isa. 2:2-4.

Another prophecy of the last days gives the other side of the picture. The prophet Joel declared: "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong." Joel 3:9, 10.

Christ described this crisis time in these words: "And there shall be . . . upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; . . . men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Luke 21:25, 26. And of this time He said, "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." Verse 10.

War in our day has been outlawed. Armies have been disbanded. Fortresses have been destroyed. Battleships have been sunk. Peace pacts have been signed. Peace conferences have been held. A League of Nations was organized, and now a United Nations seeks the peace of the world. However, in spite of all the efforts to increase the prospects of peace, they do not nearly match those forces that make for unrest, strife, and war. And now the dream of a better day has been exploded by the atomic scientists, who have become frightened by what they have done.

3. *Heralding the first advent of Christ, while scoffing at the second.*

One of the great signs mentioned by Christ was this: "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14.

There has been a most remarkable spread of the Christian faith in the past hundred years among all the nations of the world. Every denomination has played its part in this work. But when is this salvation to be realized to which the Gospel points? Is not that hope to be fulfilled only after the second coming of Christ? But what do many churchmen say regarding this blessed event?

The apostle Peter tells us what they will say in the last days. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and 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 3:3, 4.

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By W. Strutt

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In Christ's coming kingdom wars will cease and all nature will be at peace.

Christ's Kingdom of Tomorrow

By Carlyle B. Haynes

★ CHRIST'S second coming will change the face of the world. It will solve all the complex problems of mankind.

Moreover, it will bring the beginning of a new world government, marking the end of all evil, sin, and suffering, and establishing righteousness, peace, and everlasting joy.

Jesus has been here once. That is the biggest fact in history. Human life is worth living because of it. All the sweetness and light in the world, all the mercy, grace, and hope, stem from the fact that nineteen centuries ago the Son of the living God visited this earth.

If He had never come, darkness, gloom, and hopeless despair would have been the lot of earth's inhabitants. His first coming brought the only genuine hope for the future which men know.

When Jesus was here before, He laid the foundation of human salvation. When He comes again, He will carry to completion that salvation. He is about to inaugurate His glorious, endless reign of righteousness, justice, equity, and peace.

No other remedy exists for this ruined world. This is the one great hope of the whole creation. It is the only hope of our sorely burdened earth, which under His benevolent reign will know at long last the blessedness of righteous rule.

"Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." 1 Cor. 15:24.

"All rule," "all authority," and "all power," other than that of God, is to be "put down." Here is the first step in clearing the way for the estab-

lishment of the new, eternal administration. There is to be no divided authority, no limitation of divine rule. God the Father and Christ the Son will for ever be supreme.

Injustice and oppression will then no longer be known. "He shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor." Psa. 72:4.

From His dwelling place in heaven the Lord has observed the failure of man to rule justly and well. He has marked the oppression, unfairness, and cruelty of human administrations. It has moved His heart. And He declares:

"For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord." Psa. 12:5.

David looked forward to this glorious time, and thus described it:

"The Lord is King for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land. Lord, Thou hast heard the desire of the humble: Thou wilt prepare their heart, Thou wilt cause Thine ear to hear: to judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress." Psa. 10:16-18.

One of the first provisions of Christ's kingdom of tomorrow will be the destruction of mankind's dread enemy, death. "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Rev. 21:4.

Moreover, those of God's people, who have in this world passed under the dominion of death will be delivered. "Thy dead men shall live." Isa. 26:19. "The dead in Christ shall rise." 1 Thess. 4:16.

Never to die any more! Let your minds contemplate a world in which death is unknown. Let the glory of it move your hearts. These bodies of ours, subject to infirmity, disease, decay, disintegration, and death, are to be so changed that they will never die, never grow old, never become sick, never become infirm, but be maintained in endless vigour and abounding strength.

"When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Cor. 15:54.

These weak, feeble, diseased bodies are going to be fashioned anew, and made like the glorious body of our Lord. "We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile

body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." Phil. 3:20, 21.

These are some of the things we confidently expect as a result of the return of Jesus and the establishment of His glorious kingdom of tomorrow. But they are not all. Thrilling and inspiring as they are, there are still more which have been disclosed to us in the revealed plans of His coming kingdom.

A Clean and Happy World

The earth itself is to be completely made over, renewed, cleansed of sin and the curse, until it is wholly new. This is assured. "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth." Isa. 65:17.

In this new earth, where righteousness and peace are eternally established, there will be pleasant, homelike joys, activities, and occupations. "They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. . . . Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." Verses 21, 22.

Peace and security, quietness and confidence for ever, will be the characteristics of the kingdom to come. "My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." Isa. 32:18.

Every person "shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid." Jer. 30:10.

There shall be no crime, no violence, no accidents, no war, no destruction. "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise." Isa. 60:18.

There will be no sickness in the coming kingdom. "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." Isa. 33:24.

Will you survey it all, and sum it all up? Look at the whole of this divine programme. Examine all that God has disclosed of His plans and purposes, His projects and promises, at the time His government goes into effect.

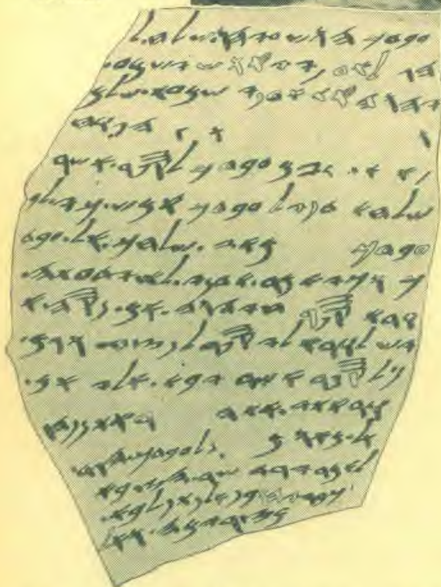
Nothing that man has done or can do bears any comparison with what God has revealed. Nothing we have seen, or heard, or thought can equal it. All the proposals of men pale and grow dim alongside of it. What God proposes to bring about exceeds our most extended imaginings. The things which He has in preparation have not entered into the heart of man.

The earth will be made new. Not one country alone, not one continent or one hemisphere, but

(Continued on back page.)



TOP.—
Inclined
road leading
up to great
gateway of
Lachish.
RIGHT.—
Gateway
room where
Lachish
letters were
found.



One of
the
Lachish
letters.

By
courtesy
of the
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of this city mound, a small Canaanite temple was found early in the excavations, belonging to the later half of the second millennium B.C. In and near it were discovered seven scarabs of Amenhotep III of Egypt (1413-1377 B.C.), one of which is definitely dated at about 1403 B.C. by the statement on it that up to Amenhotep's "tenth year" he had killed "lions terrible 102."

The fact that these are the latest relics found in the temple, ties in with similar finds at Jericho,



and supports the Bible account that Lachish fell during the southern campaign of Joshua around 1400 B.C., when, of course, the temple would cease to be used for the idolatrous Canaanite worship. (Joshua 10:31, 32.)

Higher up the slopes of the Lachish mound, Dr. Starkey found a great double wall of Hebrew masonry, twenty-five feet high in places, and enclosing an area of some twenty-two acres. A sloping roadway was found running up the south-west corner of the mound to two great gates with massive flanking towers on either side, while within the city the foundations of an inner citadel with twelve-foot walls of Hebrew masonry was uncovered.

Solomon began the work of fortifying Lachish against the Philistines, but the greater part of the construction was probably done by Rehoboam, of whom it is recorded: "Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem, and built cities for defence in Judah. He built even Bethlehem, and Etam, . . . and Lachish, and Azekah. . . . And he fortified the strongholds, and put captains in them, and store of victual, and of oil and wine." 2 Chron. 11:5-11.

Lachish was three times captured during the Hebrew period, once by Sennacherib and twice by

★ APART from Jericho, to which we have alluded in an earlier article, one of the most thoroughly explored mounds of Southern Palestine is that of Tell el Duweir, the site of ancient Lachish, a border fortress guarding the Judean highlands from incursions from the coastal plain. Sad to say, the leader of the expedition which worked here for many years, Mr. J. L. Starkey, was murdered in 1938 by Arab brigands while he was returning to the site after a visit to Jerusalem.

On the lower slopes near the north-west corner

Nebuchadnezzar, and all three disasters have left their records in the ruins.

"In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib came up against the "fenced cities of Judah" and Lachish became his temporary headquarters during negotiations with the king in Jerusalem. (2 Kings 18:13, 14.) That the taking of Lachish was regarded as a great victory by the Assyrian king is evident from the great bas-relief recording the event on the walls of his palace at

layers of charred strata underlie buildings of the Persian period all over the city area.

A clay seal once attached to a sheet of papyrus was discovered with the impress of a signet ring bearing the words, "For Gedaliah, he who is over the house." A person of this name was left in charge of the remnant of the Jews by Nebuchadnezzar after the deportation of Zedekiah and the nobles of the land. (2 Kings 25:22; Jer. 40:5, 6; 41:2.)

The "Lachish Letters"

Most important of all the literary finds at Lachish, however, and indeed one of the most important discoveries ever made in Palestine—were a series of inscribed potsherds belonging to the period of the final overthrow of Lachish by Nebuchadnezzar, which have become famous as the "Lachish Letters."

Unearthed in 1935 from among the charred remains of the guard room at the main gate of the city destroyed in the final burning of 588 B.C., they comprise some eighteen pieces of pottery written upon with carbon ink in early Hebrew characters. The messages reveal them to be military dispatches from a person called Hoshaiah—a biblical name found in Jeremiah 42:1 and Nehemiah 12:32—to "my lord Ya'ush," the military gover-

LE and SPADE HOLY LAND

W. L. Emmerson

Nineveh, and now on view in the Assyrian Gallery of the British Museum.

On the roadway approaching the entrance gate of Lachish the excavators found a bronze helmet crest mount just like those in the Nineveh reliefs, and many arrowheads, pikes, and scale armour dropped during the Assyrian attack on the gates.

While Sennacherib did not destroy Lachish, evidences that it was burned by Nebuchadnezzar were found in abundance by Dr. Starkey. "Large sections" of the wall "bear evidence of having been brought down by fire, the south-west corner bearing the main brunt of the Babylonian attack," and two



Photo by W.L.E. © S.P. Ltd.
The site of Samaria, the ancient capital of the Northern Kingdom.

nor of Lachish, and penned a few weeks or perhaps only a few days before the destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar.

The actual events recorded in the letters throw a vivid light upon the last days of the Hebrew monarchy. Letter Four provided conclusive evidence that Tell el Duweir was the city of Lachish, a fact not certainly known when the excavation was begun.

Letter Six complained of the "words" of certain princes which were "not good" and which were "weakening" and "slackening" the hands of the army officers. Evidently these men had been impressed by the prophecies of Jeremiah, whose enemies declared, "he weakeneth the hands of the men of war." Jer. 38:4.

Professor Torczyner, the translator of the letters, believed he had found in Letter Three a glimpse of Urijah the prophet who also prophesied "according to all the words of Jeremiah" and in consequence of persecution had to fly to Egypt, but was brought back to die a martyr's death. (Jer. 26:20-23.) This same letter refers to "Nedebiah, grandson of the king," who is named in 1 Chronicles 3:18 as one of Jehoiakim's grandchildren.

Well, therefore, might Professor Torczyner write of the letters: "Up till now we have got even out of our most fortunate excavations, only outside evidence concerning the contents of the Bible, reports written mostly by Israel's enemies about wars, sieges, captures, and destructions. Now, for the first time, we have got in our letters real internal records written by the men themselves who wrote our Bible, concerning their religious thought and their sufferings within the last period of Judah's independent history, adding thus a most important chapter to our Bible."

Israel's Capital Uncovered

In the northern kingdom, the most important excavation has been at Samaria, the capital of the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel, and here again most valuable confirmatory light has been thrown upon the Bible story, by the successive expeditions of Harvard University, the Field Museum of Chicago, and the Palestine Exploration Fund.

The gate of the city was found low down on the north side of the mound, with masonry of the Hebrew monarchy period and also of Herodian times. On the top of the mound the palaces of Omri and Ahab were identified, with additions by Jeroboam II. These are among the finest Israelite masonry known, and show evidences of in-

timate acquaintance with the palaces of Assyria and also with the architecture of Syria and Phœnicia, which is what one would expect in view of Israel's much closer contact than Judah with the nations to the north.

At Samaria, as later at Lachish, a number of inscribed potsherds, or ostraka, were found written in ink in primitive Hebrew characters. These date from some time prior to the capture of Samaria by Sargon, king of Assyria—possibly around the time of Jeroboam II. The personal names on the Samaria ostraka, in contrast with those at Lachish, frequently include the name Baal, showing how much more rapidly the northern kingdom sank into idolatry than the mountain kingdom of Judah.

Equally as important as the ostraka found by the Chicago expedition, was the discovery in Ahab's palace during the later British expedition, of a large number of fine ivory fragments carved with mythological figures of Egyptian, Syrian, Assyrian, and Babylonian origin, which once formed part of decorative panels on the palace furniture. These recall the indictments of Amos against the nobles of Samaria reclining upon their "beds of ivory" (Amos 6:4) in their "houses of ivory" (Amos 3:15) and also the "ivory house" which Ahab built for himself. (1 Kings 22:39.)

Beneath the court of Ahab's palace was a subterranean chamber, perhaps an enlarged cave, which had evidently been used as a prison. This may have been the actual dungeon into which Micaiah was thrown after his fearless prophecy of Ahab's doom. (1 Kings 22:27.)

The outlines of a large pool near the palaces is believed to be the Pool of Samaria, where the chariot of Ahab was washed out after the king's death. (1 Kings 22:37, 38.)

Complementary Finds in Mesopotamia

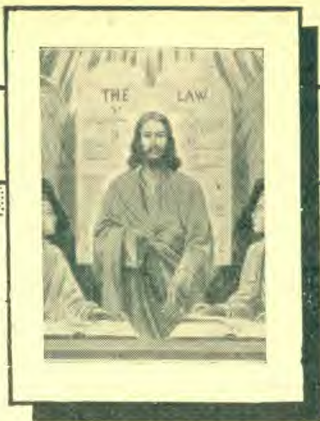
While at times we may regret the paucity of material on Palestine sites substantiating the Bible story of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, finds in Egypt and Mesopotamia have often come to our aid and filled in the historical details in a remarkable way.

For example, the fact that "Ahab the Israelite" was on the throne just before the middle of the ninth century B.C., is confirmed by the fact that Shalmaneser III mentions him as an important king on his "Monolith Inscription," now in the British Museum.

(Continued on page 13.)

Know Your Bible

THE LAW OF GOD



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What striking testimony does Paul pay to God's law?

"So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God." Rom. 7:25.

What other law does Paul recognize?

"But with the flesh the law of sin!" Rom. 7:25.

"When the first man transgressed the law of God, he began to have another law in his members which was repugnant to his mind; then he felt evil of disobedience when he experienced in the rebellion of his own flesh a most righteous retribution recoiling on himself."—Augustine in *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, Ch. 7.

What is the relation between these two laws?

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4.

What then does God's law do?

"By the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3:20.

How did this show itself in Paul's experience?

"What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Rom. 7:7.

"Sin is lack of conformity to the moral law of God, either in act, disposition, or state."—A. H. Strong in *Outlines of Systematic Theology*, page 144.

Can we be justified then by God's law?

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3:20.

The law of God defines, exposes, and condemns sin, but it cannot justify the sinner. Other means must be found if the sinner is to gain justification.

How many come under the law's condemnation?

"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God." Rom. 3:19.

Where was the law of God systematically proclaimed?

"And God spake all these words, saying . . ." Exod. 20:1-17.

What else did God do with His law?

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to Me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law,

By J. A. McMillan

and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them." Exod. 24:12.

The Ten Commandments are the only part of the Bible written by God Himself. They are a direct divine revelation, indeed "the oracles of God,"

Who are the three principal persons referred to in the law of God?

"I am the Lord thy God." Exod. 20:2;
"Thou," Verse 3; *"Thy neighbour,"* Verse 16.

The Ten Commandments comprehend the relations that should exist between each soul and his

Creator, and between each soul and his fellow-creatures. The first relationship is covered by the first four commandments, the second by the last six commandments.

What are the basic principles of the law of God?

"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Deut. 6:5.

Did J sus endorse these principles?

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matt. 22:37-40.

How does Paul apply this in dealing with our neighbour?

"Owe no man any thing, but to love his neighbour [R.V.]: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness; Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. 13:8-10.

"Every part of this law must remain in force upon all mankind and in all ages; as not depending either on time, or place, or any other circumstance liable to change, but on the nature of God and the nature of man, and their unchangeable relation to each other."—John Wesley in *Works*, Sermon XXV, Vol. 1, page 225.

What else beside sin does the law define?

"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:2, 3.

What relation does the law have to righteousness?

"Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law." Isa. 51:7.

"There are two things in the universe which awe

me," declared the profound thinker Kant: "the glories of the heavens above, and the majesty of the moral law."

Why then are we unable to obey God's law?

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7.

What then must God do?

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8:3, 4.

"The reason, then, why sin shall not have dominion over the one who is under grace, is that grace includes a power that produces in the life of a believer that righteousness which the law demands but cannot produce because of the sinfulness of the flesh."—J. Strombeck in *The Sunday School Times*, September 17, 1938.

Because of man's inability through sin, what gracious provision has God made?

"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Heb. 8:12.

What does God call this provision of grace?

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." Heb. 8:8.

Every repentant sinner is accepted by a loving God and freely forgiven all his sins and cleansed in the precious blood of Christ.

What additional change does the new covenant provide?

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people." Heb. 8:10.

The law is still God's law, but in the new covenant relationship, instead of threatening condemnation, it is written within our hearts and our spiritual nature accords with its principles.

How is the law written in our hearts?

"Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." 2 Cor. 3:3.

The law written on stone condemns the transgressor, but the law written in the heart witnesses to the transforming grace of Christ.

What then is the law designed to do?

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." Gal. 3:24.

"In this scripture the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance towards God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."—E. G. White in *Review and Herald*, March 13, 1952.

What is the Bible description of a righteous man?

"The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment. The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide." Psa. 37:30, 31.

How does God define His true people?

"Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12.

What supreme motive prompts this obedience?

"If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments." John 14:15, R.V.

With Bible and Spade in the Holy Land

(Continued from page 10.)

At Khorsabad, about ten miles from Nineveh, Paolo Emilio Botta uncovered the palace of Sargon II (722-705 B.C.), the conqueror of Samaria according to the Bible, whose very existence the

critics once doubted. When his very substantial palace was found they had to beat a hasty retreat. Later excavation of Sargon's palace uncovered wall reliefs and inscriptions which listed the capture of Samaria as the outstanding event of the first year of his reign.

The building inscriptions of Nebuchadnezzar illuminate vividly that king's boastful attitude toward the city of Babylon as recorded by Daniel. (Dan. 4:30.) The cylinders of Nabonidus fill in the details of the last days of Babylon, and it was on them that the name of his son, Belshazzar, was first found, again to the discomfiture of the critics who had pronounced the Bible account of him entirely fictitious.

Finally, the cylinder chronicles of Cyrus dovetail with Daniel's account of the fall of Babylon in a remarkable way. One of Cyrus' cylinders found at Ur of the Chaldees tells how, after the capture of Babylon, this Persian king "returned the gods" captured in earlier times "to their shrines." This helps us to understand the deeply religious character of this man, who also declared, according to the Bible records: "The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah." Ezra 1:2; 2 Chron. 36:22, 23.

With the return of the Jews after the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities the Old Testament story ends, and with it must close our present survey. The story of archaeology and the New Testament is another vast field upon which there is here no space to embark.

But as we look back over the array of evidences which we have, as it were, been able to call forth from the dust of the ages, in confirmation of the absolute trustworthiness of the Bible record, there is surely none but will echo in mind and heart the fine words of Oliver Wendell Holmes:

"I believe in the spade. It has fed the tribes of mankind. It has furnished them with coal, gold, iron, water. And now it is giving them truth, the mines of which have never been open till our time."

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THE CHILDREN'S



Pages

The Empty Purse

By Ivy Doherty

GERALDINE was so happy she could hug herself! A big smile kept flashing across her face as she sat idly dreaming in the rocker by the window. Presently Mother said, "What are you thinking of, Geraldine? You have been grinning there like a Cheshire cat for I don't know how long."

"It's a secret, Mother, but I'm sure I can tell you if you promise

to keep it a secret, too. Promise?"

Mother solemnly promised.

"I have three pounds saved now, and I am going to buy myself a new hat, dress, shoes, and a handbag to match, and a pair of stockings." She rattled it off so fast she was out of breath.

"Wait a minute," said Mother.

"Have you sat down and counted how much all these things will

cost? I am sure you would need almost twice as much money as you have."

"Oh, I have a good idea. I have seen the things I want in town, and I know I will have plenty. Three pounds is a lot of money, Mother. And think, I earned it all myself baby sitting!"

"I am very proud of you for working so hard and earning your own money, but I still feel we should check over the prices of each piece of clothing ahead of time, so you will not be embarrassed when you go to pay for them and find you don't have enough."

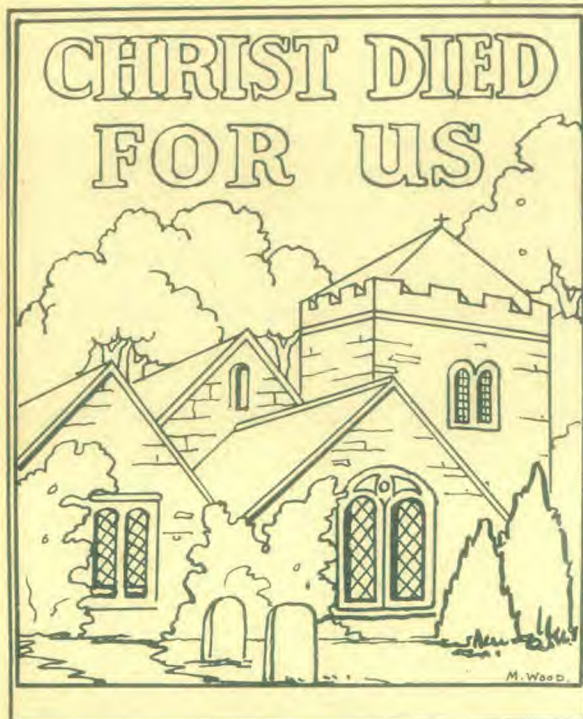
"Oh, Mother, I can't be bothered! You always have to spoil my dreams by being so practical," said Geraldine. And Mother, noticing the impatient way she spoke, said no more. But she thought a great deal, and what she thought had much truth in it. Geraldine was soon to learn a lesson she would remember for a long, long time.

At last the great day came. Geraldine put on her best clothes, and was very impatient because Mother was called to the telephone just as they were ready to get into the car.

All the way to town she kept opening her purse to count her money. She would put back the money and sigh. She could hardly wait for Mother to get the car parked.

Mother took Geraldine to the big departmental store where she always found her "best buys," and said, "I shall stand here near the glove counter and wait for you. I shall be watching so that I know everything is all right."

Geraldine was both nervous and excited as she walked off, clutching under her arm the purse containing the precious three pounds. First she visited the dress department. The dress was the main item. When she had chosen that she would know



See how nicely you can paint this picture and send it with your name, age, and address to Auntie Pam, The Stanborough Press Ltd., Watford, Herts., not later than October 14th. In case OUR TIMES arrives late, still send your entry. All attempts will be considered.

what colour her other things would need to be. A smiling assistant came up beside her. "May I help you?" she asked.

"I would like to look over the size eleven dresses on this rack," she said a little shyly. "I shall show you which ones I would like to try on when I have seen them."

"I shall be back in a few minutes, then," said the pretty lady.

Finally Geraldine had four dresses put aside, but the pretty lady was nowhere in sight. Geraldine stood and stood until her arm ached from holding the dresses so that they would not touch the floor. Would that lady never come? Ah, there she comes now.

"It will be one of these," she said as she handed them to the lady. In the cubicle she tried them on, swirling this way and that before the large mirrors. At last she decided that it would be the powder blue one with the flared skirt and the black velvet bows right down the front of the bodice.

"That will be 25/-," said the pretty lady.

"Oh," thought Geraldine, "I didn't even think to look at the price." She paid the amount and was soon moving along to the hats. "It must be a blue one," she decided, "the colour of my dress."

It didn't take her long to find the right one. This time she looked at the price tag, 15/-.

Two pounds of her money was gone already, but she didn't realize she had spent so much. She carried off her purchases and went in search of the new shoes. The only pair she really liked were nearly a pound. "I'll have to have the kind I like," she said to herself, and splash went her money for the shoes.

"It looks as though I will have to wait for the new handbag," she told herself. "I'll have just about enough for the stockings,

and then I must go to Mother."

Geraldine had not been doing any mental arithmetic all this time. She was perfectly sure she would have enough left for the stockings. So she chose the ones she so much desired and handed them to the saleslady.

"That will be 6/-," the saleslady said. It seemed rather much for a pair of stockings, Geraldine thought, but anyhow, she began to reach in her purse for the money. The lady stood watching, and she saw Geraldine's face getting redder and redder.

She had a few pennies, which she picked out. Seven of them—and that was all. When she reached in for more, there weren't any.

The saleslady coughed, as if to say, "Do you want me to stand here all day holding your stockings?"

Frantically Geraldine turned the purse upside down. But no money came out. The purse was empty!

"I'm sorry," she stammered. "I don't seem to have enough money. I must go and ask Mother for some. Would you put the stockings aside till I return, please?"

The saleslady was a little irritated, but put the wrapped stockings on a shelf above her head, and went on to serve someone else.

You should have seen Geraldine's face when she asked Mother for the money. Mother had not brought her purse with her! The parking meter was supplied with loose pennies she had put in her pocket for that very purpose.

"But, Mother, the lady is keeping the stockings for me," said Geraldine, as if her scolding tone would compel Mother to hand over the desired change she did not have.

"You must go and tell her you will have to cancel your order," Mother told her.

"I can't do that, Mother. It

would look too foolish," Geraldine wailed. "I shall have to leave the shop without going to see her."

But Mother said, "That is not the thing to do. You told her you would be back, so back you must go. Maybe someone else will need that very size and colour, and she might not have another pair just like them."

So with red face and pounding heart Geraldine made her way back and explained to the assistant what had happened.

On the way home Geraldine said, "You were right, Mother," and although she was quite a big girl, she began to sob. Mother did her best to comfort her, but did not say much. There was not very much to say.

But when they were home again she said, "Geraldine, get a Bible and read Luke 14:28." There Geraldine found that Jesus had said exactly what Mother had said about counting the cost ahead of time. If you don't think it's good advice, ask Geraldine. She knows!

Results of Competition No. 15

Prize-winner.—John Slight 154
Prince Regent Lane, Plaistow, London,
E.13.

Honourable Mention.—Catherine Stanford (Woodbridge); Amy Randlestone (Suffolk); Priscilla Rose (Waltham-stow); Veronica Law (Greenock); James Sparkes (Clapham); John Colesby (Hall Green); Ruth Balderstone (Garston).

Those who tried hard.—Jackie Parkin (Cleethorpes); James Slight (Plaistow); Susan Roberta Dean (Todmorden); Catherine Pearson (Greenock); Hazel Harris (Cambridge); Kathleen Umpleby (Malton); Mary Durant (Broadstone); Georgina Phillips (Garston); Gary Ashton (Garston); Anne Coupland (Birmingham).

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STRAWS IN THE WIND

Catholics in Britain

⊠ Most recent estimate of Roman Catholic numbers in England credits that church with four million members. It is claimed that each year there are 12,000 converts to the Catholic faith.

Evanston Hopes

⊠ Apart from the main theme: "Christ—the Hope of the World," the representatives of 160 churches who are now assembled at Evanston, U.S.A. will discuss "the race question in Africa; the question of peace and war, including the hydrogen bomb; the responsible society in a world perspective; our unity in Christ, and our disunity as churches." In a broadcast talk at the time of the opening of the great ecumenical council, the Bishop of Chichester said: "It is my own profound longing that, as it meets today in a divided world, the word which sounds forth from the Evanston Assembly may be a word of hope and justice and peace. And I believe it will be."

God's Kingdom of Tomorrow

(Continued from page 7.)

the whole earth. All the misery, wretchedness, sin, violence, terror, injustice, and oppression will be gone for ever. Social and political conditions will be made new. There will be justice and equity in all human relations,

Our every faculty will be raised to its highest power. There will be abounding health, thrilling vigour, unimpaired strength, as the millenniums roll on and on.

Every Faculty Renewed

Eyes that were blind here will be opened, ears that were deaf here, unstopped. Tongues that were dumb here will be loosed, limbs that have been crippled here, made whole. Truly, the people of God "shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isa. 35:10.

Fulfilled then will be the ancient

oath of God: "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." Num. 14:21.

What completion of happiness and fullness of joy there will be in the presence of the One who has made all this possible, to look upon Him, to be with Him, the glorious Christ, the Holy One of Israel, the eternal Son of God! Greater than the great ones of earth is He. Higher than the kings of the earth.

"And He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." Rev. 21:3.

While our hearts thrill at the contemplation of the glories of this coming kingdom, and as we meditate on the infinite goodness of our Lord in making such a future possible, let us remind ourselves that all these soul-thrilling prospects are for the followers of God, the saints of Christ. They cannot be claimed, nor the future kingdom reasonably be expected, by those who have not, and who will not, surrender themselves to, and accept the salvation of, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Even now every person looking at these words is preparing for a harvest of glory or a harvest of shame. Even now everyone is deciding whether he will be in the kingdom of tomorrow on the new earth. Our individual future is in the making now. "He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. 6:8.

There is no cheating that harvest, dear friend. What is it you are hoping for the future? Eternal life and eternal death are set before you. If your mortal body is quickened to life in the resurrection when Jesus returns, it will be because your living spirit has been quickened by the Spirit of the Lord.

May you know "the power of His resurrection" now, that you may live His life here and hereafter.

