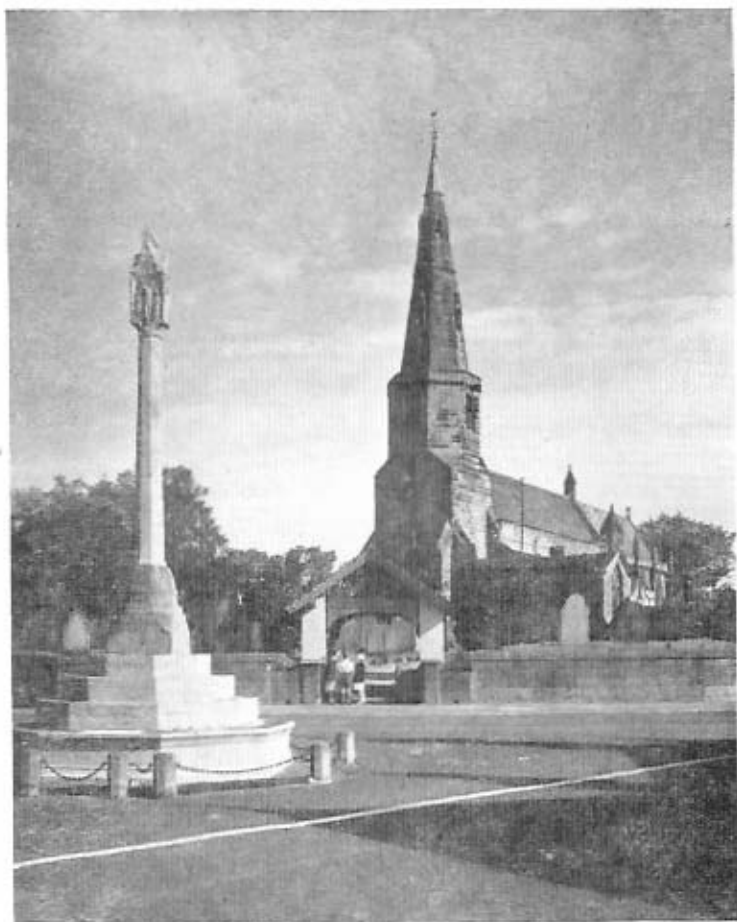


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My dear Friends,

Most people, whether they attend Church or not, revere the Bible and, if they are Christians, consider themselves bound by our Lord's precepts contained therein. Many of Christ's sayings are frequently quoted by those who never enter a church; for example, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." No Christian should attempt to underrate the importance of such a command.

But we have no right to single out one or two of our Lord's commands because they appeal to us and ignore others. One of the most neglected commands of our Lord, although it is one of the simplest to carry out, is: "This do in remembrance of me." Holy Communion was never meant to be an extra occasional service for the specially pious—an extra, or addition to the Sunday services. Holy Communion is for all—sinners and Saints. The actual words of our Lord, preserved in the Holy Communion Service, are "Drink ye ALL of this,"—that is, every one of you.

On the night before our Lord was crucified, at that solemn moment in the upper room, He took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and gave it to them, saying: this is My Body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me. And the cup in like manner after supper, saying, this cup is the new covenant in My Blood, even that which is poured out for you.

That His disciples should receive the bread and wine, His Body and Blood, was almost if not actually, the last dying command of our Lord. The Church catechism reminds us that there are two Sacraments generally necessary to salvation; that is Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. It is surprising that people should value the one Sacrament, and neglect the other. It is just as important that we should receive Holy Communion as that a baby should be baptized. Of course Holy Baptism can take place only once—Holy Communion is administered frequently. There are very few Churches now in which Holy Communion is not administered every Sunday and also during the week. It is one of those services which come to mean more and becomes more helpful the more often we attend it. As a matter of historical fact, we find that Holy Communion was part of the normal Sunday worship of the early Christians. We read in Acts ii v. 42:

"And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread (Holy Communion), and in prayers."

St. Paul in Corinthians has much to say about Holy Communion. It is the only service ordained by our Lord Himself. We might expect, therefore, that amongst Christians it would receive greater attention than any other service. There is an old saying, "The Lord's own service on the Lord's own day"—in other words, Holy Communion every Sunday.

There is an abundant warrant both from the New Testament and from the Prayer Book as well as from the practical experience of Christians throughout the ages for laying great stress on Holy Communion. The sixth chapter of St. John is largely taken up with a remarkable discourse by our Lord in the synagogue at Capernaum, in which He referred to Himself as the Bread of Life. "I am the living bread which came down from Heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread which I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." This statement caused great offence, leading even to an uproar. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?"

Instead of attempting to explain away the meaning of the words which had caused great offence our Lord continued, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My Blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him."

Many of His disciples were offended and said "This is a hard saying: who can hear it?" Instead of softening the tone of His words, our Lord made belief in this great mystery a test of discipleship, and so "many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him." Then our Lord turned to His chosen Apostles and made belief in this mystery a test of loyalty to Him. "Will ye also go away?" Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Remembering the scene in the upper room when He broke the bread and said, "This is My Body," and took the cup and said, "This is My Blood," the Apostles understood that Jesus would be spiritually and specially present with His followers in the great mystery of Holy Communion, strengthening them with His Body and Blood. The Church has always accepted Christ's assurance, and in the Catechism we are taught that the Holy Communion "the Body and Blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful (those who have faith) in the Lord's Supper."

We believe that our Lord's discourse in St. John vi refers to Holy Communion. It is so assumed in the Prayer Book, in the Prayer of Humble Access. "Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the

flesh of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, and to drink His Blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His Body, and our souls washed through His most precious Blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us."

In some way that we cannot fully understand, the bread and wine when consecrated become the Body and Blood of Christ—not, of course, materially. We shall never understand if we think only in terms of the material. Our Church has never precisely defined the manner of the change of the Consecrated Elements. We are invited to "draw near with faith and take this Holy Sacrament to your comfort."

Our belief is well expressed in a well-known verse attributed to Queen Elizabeth I:

Christ's was the word that spake it;
He took the bread and brake it,
And what that word did make it,
That I believe and take it.

Many readers, no doubt, believe this, but how many TAKE IT? Perhaps during Lent there may be a serious endeavour on the part of many of these believers to receive the Holy Communion. Remember our Lord's command—"Do this in remembrance of Me."

Your sincere friend,

W. HERBERT BULLOUGH.

LENT

Traditionally the season of Lent concentrates the thought of the Christian chiefly upon his own spiritual condition. It is regarded as a time for self-examination and spiritual renewal. In such concentration, however, there is the danger that self-examination may degenerate into extreme self-preoccupation and even morbid introspection, and that the emphasis upon personal spiritual renewal may develop into a too individualistic conception of Christian experience.

It Needs Thought

Hence the value of using Lent also as an opportunity for thinking afresh about the foundations of the Christian faith—for serving God more adequately with the mind. There is always present, even for the Christian, not only the peril of the unexamined life, but also of the unthinking acceptance of beliefs of whose validity he has not even attempted to assure himself.

Clearly much truth must be accepted on the authority of others. Particularly is this so in the realm of science, though in a measure it is true also of religion. But this does not absolve the Christian

from the responsibility of thought, and of striving to attain for himself a conviction which arises out of his own experience and study.

Task For Lent

To ask such questions as "What new aspects of the truth about God did our Lord reveal in His life and teaching?" and "How may His teachings be applied to the problems of modern life?" and to try to discover the answers to such questions both in the New Testament and in other writings, will be a rewarding task for Lent. The deeper search for truth and its relevance to human life is indeed a peculiarly difficult undertaking, especially in the modern world, in which the popular slogan tends either to confuse men's thinking or to lead them to abandon the discipline of thought altogether. Yet this stress upon thought may easily lead to the view that faith cannot go beyond the point which reason itself has reached.

But even in scientific research hypothesis usually precedes proof; and in religion faith leads to experience and so to intellectual conviction. Knowledge may be limited, but there are no limits to the possibilities of faith. Personal religion should combine both faith and reason; each balancing and supporting the other; each enriching the other and enlarging its content.

It is always a man's personal life which determines the ultimate quality of what he can do for his fellow-men; yet he must never be content with the mere development of his own spiritual life as an end in itself. Unless that inner life is given expression through the duties which fall to him as a citizen, and in his many and varied relationships, he is coming short of the standard which was set by our Lord, who said of himself: "I am among you as he that serveth."

Renewed Challenge

What "service" may mean for the individual can be defined by no general statement; it must be interpreted by each one according to his own gifts and opportunities. It is well, therefore, that a special season in the Church's year should be set apart for the consideration of Christian truth and of its contemporary application to both personal and corporate life.

If during Lent Christians can seek to renew and deepen their dedication to God—consecrating to him their gifts of mind as well as character, and to gain a clearer insight into their own share of responsibility for the Church's task in the world, the victorious message of Easter will be not only a promise for the future but an achieved reality; not only a call to thanksgiving but a renewed challenge to faith and service.



The Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop Sherrill at Edinburgh

W. C. C.

Growing Together

MAYBE when the history of our times comes to be written it will be found the really important things that happened were not the more sensational events which hold the headlines in our day; but the great movements of the spirit and of ideas which were going on beneath the surface all the time. And there can't be much doubt that the gradual growing together of the Christian Communions into which the Body of Christ has for so long been divided will be seen to be one of them.

Writing some months ago on this very matter, the Archbishop of Canterbury said: 'This century has witnessed a growth in a remarkable way of a most real unity of spirit between the Churches in the World Council of Churches. Where there was separation, suspicion and jealousy, there is now, at least among the leaders and many of their followers, fellowship, increasing understanding and a great measure of co-operation, and a happy acceptance of each other as members of the one Body of Christ. So, as I do not doubt, God is re-equipping his Church to meet the increasing bankruptcy of modern civilization.'

Of course, there is still a long way to go. Meanwhile, it is important for us all to understand what is at the end of the road. It is natural to wish to defend the positions and truths in

which one believes from the bottom of one's heart. And equally it is natural to be wary of any movement which seems to suggest that the deep differences which for very long have divided the several parts of the Body of Christ should be relatively unimportant. Had they been so, people would not have believed in them so passionately nor suffered for them so much or so long as in fact they have. Does this growing together of the Churches in the World Council of Churches which the archbishop so rightly salutes mean any weakening in these fundamental positions?

It does not. The goal of unity is not sameness but oneness. The end of the process of growing together is not that all Christians should be the same but that all Christians should love one another.

This is a great and exhilarating concept. At the end of this year, when the Assembly of the World Council of Churches meets in New Delhi, this

TOPIC FOR THE MONTH

THE SIGN

Not ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified

No. 674

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- 2 Th. Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- 3 F. Anskar, B., 864.
- 5 S. Sexagesima. Agatha, V.M., 251.
- 12 S. Quinquagesima.
- 14 Tu. Valentine, B.M., 270.
- 15 W. Ash Wednesday.
- 19 S. First in Lent.
- 24 F. St. Matthias, A.M.
- 26 S. Second in Lent.

Days of fasting, or abstinence:

All weekdays in Lent. Fridays, 3, 10; Wednesday, 1; Thursday, 23, 22, 24, 25 are Ember Days.

definition of what unity really means—a definition worked out at St. Andrews in 1960 when the World Council met there—will be placed before it: 'The unity which is both God's will and his gift to his Church is one which brings all in each place who confess Christ Jesus as Lord into a fully committed fellowship with one another. . . .'

The vision is a very great one. It may well be a matter for the most profound thankfulness that in our own times we have all moved—including the Church of Rome, as the archbishop points out—so hearteningly towards it.

SIGNET

TEMPTATION

... more subtil than any beast of the field.—GENESIS 3. 1.

THE devil came to me in angel's guise
And showed me that my sins were very small.
'How ludicrous to weep and agonize,'
He slyly smiled, 'They're hardly sins at all!'

He bade me rather think how I had prayed,
Tired though I was, night after arid night,
And what a thankless effort I had made . . .
'Such waste of time and thought can scarce be right!'

God drew the veil. His blinding light showed clear
The devil, my complacency, and pride.
His words of comfort showed my prayers were dear,
And that it was for sins like mine he died.

Margot Crosse

A New Look at the Old Testament

By William Neil

2. 'IN DIVERS MANNERS'

ANYONE opening the Old Testament at random will at once see that there are at least two different kinds of writing in it—poetry and prose. Unless you are reading a modern translation you may think that that means on the one hand the Psalms and the Song of Solomon, and on the other hand everything else. But there is far more poetry in the Old Testament than appears in the Psalter or in occasional songs like the one in Judges 5.

Story and Song

The books of the prophets are also largely poetry, likewise the Book of Job, as you can see if you look at Moffatt's translation. Many passages in the narrative parts of the Old Testament also have a rhythm and a swing which suggest that at one time they too were recited in ballad form. Indeed, the earliest parts of the Old Testament go back to the days when minstrels and story-tellers handed down from father to son the stories and songs which told of the deeds of David and Saul, of Samuel and Elijah, and long before them of Abraham, Joseph and Moses.

But as we glance through the Old Testament it becomes clear that there are not only song and story but also legal codes, sermons of prophets, collections of proverbs—in short, the literature of the Jewish nation gathered together over a period of a thousand years. Yet it is literature with a difference, for all of it in one way or another revolves around God: his dealings with man and man's obligations to him.

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews begins his epistle with the words: 'God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.' He is saying that while the Old Testament saw different aspects of the truth about God at different times and in different ways we have now had the full disclosure of the mind and purpose of God in the person of Jesus Christ. But even if the Old Testament writers

saw only part of the truth at any one time it all builds up into a picture which sheds an enormous amount of light on our understanding of the New Testament.

The People of God

However, it will do so only if we recognize that these Old Testament writers had a variety of ways of illuminating the truth and that poetry was their favourite method.

I want, therefore, to suggest this month that the best way to approach the Old Testament is to think of it rather in the same way as we think about drama or poetry in general. It comes much more into the same category as music and painting than into the category of science. It does not set out to prove the existence of God or that the universe in which we live is governed by moral laws. It invites us to believe that this is the case and then to test it by our own experience. In a sense this is what the scientist also does when he has a 'hunch' that something might be true—for example, that the atom could be split—and then sets out by experiments to see if he is right. But reading the Old Testament demands that we use our imagination all the time like the poet or painter or composer.

We have to think ourselves into it, to see it as our story with ourselves as the characters. Just as Shakespeare or any other author feels that his characters are part of himself and the reader has to do the same if he wants to get the most out of a play or a novel, so we have to translate the thoughts and actions of Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Amos and the other Old Testament personalities, good and bad, into terms of our own experience. These are not just people who lived long ago, they are sometimes ourselves, sometimes our friends, and we can learn from their reactions to the things that happen to them what we ought to be doing ourselves.

The Activity of God

When we say that the writers of the Old Testament were more poets than scientists and that we must use the same kind of imagination as a poet or an artist uses in order to understand it, does that mean that the Old Testament is not 'true'? Not at all. The scientist has one way of approaching truth and the poet has another. But there is only one truth which can, however, be seen from different angles.

Thus while we may say that the Old Testament conveys truth about God and ourselves in the form of the history, prophecy, law and philosophy of the people of Israel, it is more helpful for us as Christians to think of it as the first part of a great tapestry depicting the activity of God amongst us, or as the first movement of a symphony which is still unfinished, or as the first act of a drama in which we are all given parts to play.



... upon the harp will I give thanks unto thee, O God, my God.—PSALM 43. 4



W. Howard

As I See It . . .

This Campaign Business

By Rosamund Essex

I DON'T like it.

'I think it is the best thing that has come to parish life in a hundred years.'

'I don't like or dislike it. I just think that what I give is private, between me and God. So I didn't sign a pledge-card.'

These were the comments from three people in a parish which has experienced a campaign and is still talking it over. As the three reactions were so firm, so convinced and so contrary, I thought I would ask Canon H. N. Hodd about them. (He is the adviser on Christian Stewardship to the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England.)

Giving Back to God

He sat and smiled at me. His task, he explained, is to help people to think honestly and seriously about their duty to give *back* to God some of this world's goods that he has so graciously allowed them to have.

If you say (as my friend had), 'I don't like these campaigns, they are interfering; or they take too much on themselves; or they are unscriptural,' Canon Hodd will sweep in to show you, not that you are exactly wrong, but that Christian stewardship is abundantly and gloriously right.

'Look you,' he says, 'even the Old Testament shows you what!' And he tells you how, by talking in the most homely way imaginable about Abra-

ham and Isaac, Joseph's vision, and David's building of the Temple.

'People say that in the New Testament,' Canon Hodd continued, 'Jesus has little to say about money, and that what he does say is not very complimentary. But think of the Parable of the Talents. We stretch the story to mean our natural gifts. But talents were cash, and don't let's pretend they were anything else. The story is about stewardship.'

'Again, the Parable of the Prodigal Son. We get all worked up about the son's riotous living. But, in fact, the trouble was he had "wasted his substance." He hadn't bothered about stewardship; and when he got home again, he said to his father, "Put me on your wage list now, till I learn how to be a good steward over my own money."'

As we talked on, I found the reason why Canon Hodd is so convincing about the campaigns. It is because his spiritual spectacles, though bright, are not rose-coloured.

Unchristian Ideas

'Of course there have been mistakes,' he said; 'mostly from over-enthusiasm. Some stewardship visitors have over-pressed parishioners. They have suggested fatally high targets, or introduced the wholly unchristian notion that the parish Browns will, no doubt, like to keep up with the parish Joneses.'

'In any kind of campaign it is essential that the visitors should be properly

trained,' he continued. 'When they are visiting, they must answer the questions put to them. But there is one question that I say they should never answer, and that is "How much do you think I ought to give?" What a man, or his family together, give to God is between them and God.'

'Isn't it a bit tempting to try and get each parish or person to give up to the maximum?' I asked. 'Tempting, but wrong,' said Canon Hodd, twinkling in his chair. 'There are three kinds of giving to God. First, through the Church, as dues and alms. Second, at a man's own discretion—for cancer research, perhaps, or to refugees, or to the little country church visited in the holiday, to which one could not give if every available penny were already pledged. Third, the occasional gift of the heart—the breaking of the alabaster box at someone's desperate need.'

As for those running the campaigns, Canon Hodd sees good in them all. The professional organizations can be useful, especially when a capital sum has to be raised for restoration. But you can see his preference is for the Church to do the job herself. When a parish gets dull and lifeless, and there seems no one, lay or clerical, who could possibly get a campaign on its feet, that is the time for helpers from a parish where a campaign has been held to come and help.

'I will tell you a story,' said Canon Hodd at the end. 'A working party in one parish, which had supplied fêtes and bazaars, felt aggrieved after a Stewardship Campaign. Done out of a job, they said. So the vicar asked them to coffee. "Here is £20," he told them. "Now make the nicest clothes you possibly can for children between four and eleven, and send them to a refugee camp from this parish."'

'Soon the working party worked as it had never worked before. Instead of garden aprons with bands suitable to no mortal waist, and botched-up kettle-holders, the most beautiful children's clothes were made because they had some purpose and use. Fabulous children's clothes were sent that creased the furrows of refugee-mothers' faces into rare and wonderful smiles. And there is a waiting list for the working party!'

Well, that's one aspect of Christian stewardship. But what do you think about it?

Editor's note: Miss Essex will welcome readers' views on this matter. Her address is c/o THE SIGN, 28 Margaret Street, London, W.1.

BEN-HUR

A Tale of the Christ, retold by John Lanningham

PART 2—THE ACCIDENT

TWENTY-ONE years after these events, on a blazing hot noon-day of high summer, in the gardens of the former palace of King Herod on Mount Zion, two young men stood talking together.

The two had been boyhood friends. The elder, a nineteen-year-old Roman, wore the loose tunic of his kind. His features were handsome; his manner haughty. His companion, two years younger, had the features of a Jew. He also was handsome. The name of the Roman was Messala; that of the Jew, Ben-Hur.

'Did you not say that the procurator is to arrive to-morrow?' Ben-Hur asked.

'Yes, to-morrow,' Messala answered. There was a pause, while Ben-Hur looked shyly and fondly upon the friend of his boyhood who had but recently returned from Rome. The Roman in his turn looked critically upon the Jew.

'It is five years since we parted,' he said. 'You have grown handsome. It was kind of you to walk from your house to welcome me back, but how different are our futures! I am to be a soldier; and you, I pity you; what can you be?'

Angrily, Ben-Hur turned away: 'We had better part,' he murmured. 'I wish I had not come, I sought a friend and find a—'

'A Roman,' said Messala.

* * *

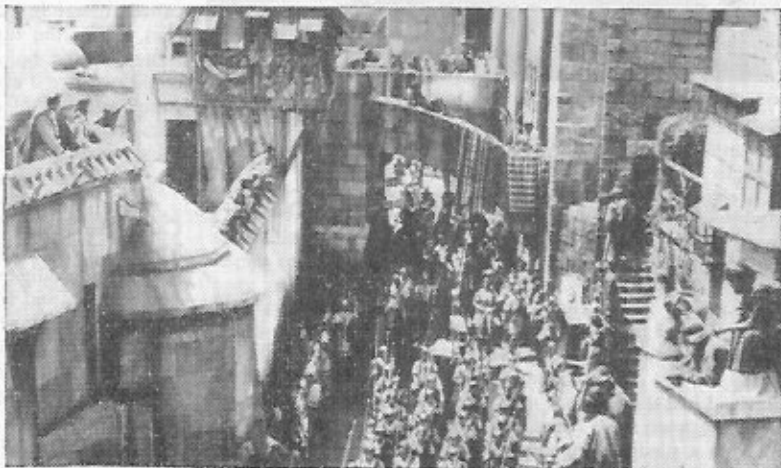
Deeply disturbed, Ben-Hur made his way across the city to an ancient and imposing house which lay in a street parallel to the fortress of Antonia. It was surrounded by a high wall. In the wall was a gate, and in the gate a wicket. This he opened and stepped quickly within. Without pausing, he reached a room deep in shade, since its curtains were drawn to keep out the heat. There was a divan within this room. Upon it he flung himself face downwards and lay there, his forehead upon his crossed arms.

With dusk a woman came to the door and called. This was Amrah, the faithful nurse who had looked after Ben-Hur in childhood. She called: 'Your mother has asked for you.'

'Where is she?'

'In the summer-house on the roof.'

Ben-Hur, going out of his bedroom,



It was a stirring sight

walked across to a room half concealed by a curtain. He lifted the curtain and entered. In a recess by the window was a couch, and on the couch the vague figure of a woman. It was Ben-Hur's mother.

'Amrah tells me something has happened to you,' she said softly.

He answered simply: 'I visited the young Messala.'

'What could he say to trouble you so?'

'He is very much changed.'

'You mean he has come back a Roman.'

'Yes.' He paused, then continued: 'In what am I his inferior?'

She could see he was burning to know whether there were any grounds for the inferiority of his Jewish race which Messala had somehow made him feel. Her voice became firmer. 'Let us compare the Hebrew and the Roman. Israel has at times forgotten God while the Romans never knew him. The Romans may be bloody, warlike, and proud; they may rule us

and possess our holiest places; but the glory of the men of Israel will remain a light in the heavens out of reach: for their history is the history of God.'

There was a long silence in the room. Beyond the open window the stars were shining in the summer night. Then she continued in a softer voice. 'As for what you shall do, my boy—serve the Lord, the Lord God of Israel, not Rome. For a child of Abraham there is no glory except in the Lord's ways, and in them there is much.'

'I may be a soldier then?' Ben-Hur asked.

'Why not? Did not Moses call God a man of war? You have my permission, if only you serve the Lord instead of Caesar.'

Ben-Hur was content. It seemed for the moment that the storms which had raged through the young mind as a consequence of his conversation with Messala had calmed. He fell asleep, and the mother, placing a cushion under his head and kissing him tenderly, went away.

* * *

The terrible blow which changed the whole life of Ben-Hur and his family fell the

next day. When Ben-Hur awoke the sun was over the mountains and the pigeons were fluttering on white wings above the courtyards of his house. Over towards the southeast of the city he saw when he arose the gold and white of the temple against the blue of the sky. He also saw, sitting upon the edge of the couch where he had slept, a fifteen-year-old girl singing to awake him and accompanying her song with touches upon the strings of a little harp. Tirzah was her name, and she was Ben-Hur's sister. She was as beautiful as he was handsome. 'The singer is as pretty as the song,' Ben-Hur said gaily. With that he arose as Amrah entered, bearing a washbowl and towels. When she had gone, Tirzah dressed her brother's hair as she loved to do, every now and then making him look into the little mirror which she carried by her girdle so that he may see her handiwork. As she worked they talked. Ben-Hur said, 'What do you think, Tirzah—I am going away.'

She was amazed. 'Going away, when? Where? For what?'

He laughed. 'Three questions all in a breath! Well, you know the law requires me to follow some occupation.

This story is from the book by General Lew Wallace, on which Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer have based their motion picture William Wyler's presentation of Ben-Hur. Photographs © by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc., 1961.

Even you would despise me if I spent my time in idleness. I am going to Rome.

'I will go with you!'

'You must stay with mother. If both of us leave her, she will die.'

The brightness faded from her face. 'But must you go? Here in Jerusalem you can learn all that is needed to be a merchant, if that is what you are thinking of.'

'I am not thinking of that. I am to be a soldier.'

She threw her arms around his neck, as if to hold him back. 'We are so happy! Stay at home, my brother.'

But he only smiled. 'A prince of Judah, or some other one of the tribes, will come soon and claim you, my sister. What will then become of me? Besides, war is a trade: to learn it thoroughly, one must go to school, and there is no school like a Roman camp.'

'But you would not fight for Rome?' Tirzah asked, large eyed.

'Yes,' Ben-Hur said soberly, 'I will fight for her if, in return, she will teach me how one day to fight against her.'

'When will you go?'

But the question was destined never to be answered. As Ben-Hur turned to his breakfast and a slave stood by him to serve him the attention of all three of them was arrested by a sound coming up at a distance from the street below. It was the sound of martial music. Ben-Hur sprang to his feet. 'Soldiers! Soldiers from the Praetorium, I must see them,' he cried, springing up and running out. In a moment more he was leaning over the parapet of tiles which guarded the roof of the north-east corner of the house. Tirzah stood by his side, resting one hand upon his shoulder. Below them they saw the street, some ten feet wide, spanned here and there by bridges. It was a stirring sight. Slingers, bowmen, a body of infantry, and after them musicians blaring upon their trumpets and an officer riding alone. The plumes of them all nodded grimly; the ensign swayed; the faces of the men were grave, stern and watchful. The golden eagle showed that a person of importance was being escorted. That person was the officer riding alone, seated upon a purple cloth.

Howls of rage rose from the crowds as he passed by. 'Robber, tyrant, dog of a Roman!' they shouted. And then, as Ben-Hur noticed the laurel line which the officer wore upon his head he realized who it was. It was none other than Valerius Gratus, the Procurator of Judaea.

His interest was immediately quickened, and it was that which made him make the fatal move. He leant forward to get a better view and, in doing so, his hand in an instant dislodged a tile of the parapet upon which he was resting. The tile fell, shot down into the street, and fell like an arrow to-

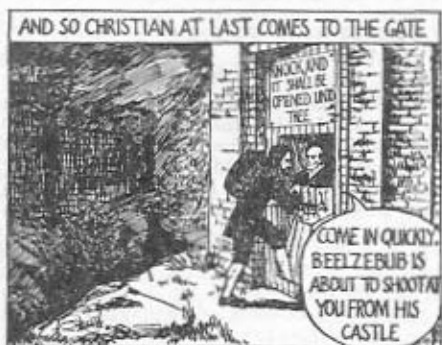
wards the head of the procurator riding by below. Ben-Hur shouted a warning; the soldiers looked up; the officer looked up. But it was too late.

The tile struck him full upon the forehead and, with a clatter of armour, he fell from his saddle as though dead.

To be continued

The Pilgrim's Progress

By John Bunyan



QUESTION PAGE

4135. What is the meaning of 'The resurrection of the body' when our bodies are either cremated or decay after burial?

The word 'body' in the Creed means that by which the spirit expresses itself, and not the earthly body which returns to the dust from whence it came. The New Testament tells us very little about life in the world to come, but it is clear that the Risen Christ possessed a body which could be seen and recognized, and yet which could pass through locked doors and behave in other ways in which our earthly bodies cannot. St. Paul deals with the point in 1 Corinthians 15, 35-54.

4136. What academic qualifications are required for ordination in the Church of England? From whom can one obtain details?

The selection and training of candidates for Holy Orders in the Church of England is undertaken by the Central Advisory Council for the Ministry, Church House, Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W.1. The Secretary of the Council will send details on application. Candidates under thirty years are normally required either to obtain a University degree, followed by two years' post-graduate training at a recognized Theological College, or to take a three or four years' course at a Theological College and pass the General Ordination Examination. Candidates between the ages of thirty and forty are required to take two years' training at a Theological College, and those over the age of forty

Question of the Month

4134. What is meant in the Creed by the phrase 'the Communion of Saints'?

The phrase 'the Communion of Saints' has been interpreted in several ways. Traditionally it means the spiritual union existing between each Christian and Christ, and so between each and every Christian whether in heaven, in paradise, or on earth; since all are members of the Church. The Church is thus understood not as simply a society on earth, but as the Church Triumphant in heaven, the Church Expectant in paradise, and the Church Militant on earth; hence the reference to the 'whole state of Christ's Church militant here in earth' in the Communion Service.

to follow such courses of training as shall be prescribed by their bishops.

4137. Why is a God capable of overcoming death necessarily one capable of also overcoming sin?

A sin is, by definition, an offence against God, and since God is almighty, he is capable of both forgiving sin and of overcoming its results, one of which is death. The question at issue in the Gospels is not whether God can over-

come death and sin, but whether Jesus Christ was God or not. He claimed to forgive sin, and when challenged, as in St. Mark 2, 7, he proved that he could also heal. But in the last resort we accept Jesus as Lord through faith, and not because the matter can be proved.

4138. How did we come to get the Apostles', the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds?

The Apostles' Creed, which is said at Mattins and Evensong, is the ancient Creed of the Roman Church. It began to take shape in the second century and was used in almost its present form in the fourth century, although some amendments were made when Charlemagne imposed it throughout his empire in the eighth century.

The Nicene Creed, which is to be found in the Communion Service, is based on an earlier version which was issued in A.D. 325 by the Council of Nicaea. It was drawn up at this Council to defend the Orthodox faith against the Arian heresy, and is derived from the ancient Baptismal Creed of the Jerusalem Church.

The Athanasian Creed is not a recognized standard of faith as are the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, and until modern times it circulated only in Western Europe. It was drawn up in what is now France, somewhere between A.D. 380 and 430.

Questions on the faith and practice of the Church should be sent to Question Page, THE SIGN, 28 Margaret Street, London, W.1, with a stamped addressed envelope for reply. Each will be answered by post individually; some will be printed on this page. A book token for 5s. will be awarded to the sender of each question published.

HOME & GARDEN

1. FISH PIE PLUS!

By Hazel Macleod

THE cookery books of Victorian times make rather amusing reading for the modern woman. Looking through an old copy of Mrs. Beeton the other day, I came across some suggestions for Lenten Dinners—I must say that her Lobster Patties and rich puddings with rum sauce didn't seem very much like Lenten fare to me. In fact, the fish pie recipe I give below may seem rather luxurious eating for Lent, but it is easy to simplify, omitting the egg and cheese. The following ingredients are required:

- ½ lb. cooked white fish (this recipe is excellent for adding flavour to the cheapest kinds),
- ½ pt. thick white sauce.
- 1 teaspoonful chopped parsley.
- Pepper and salt.
- 1 hard-boiled egg.
- 1 or 2 tomatoes.
- 1 lb. cooked potatoes, mashed with a little margarine and milk.
- 1-2 oz. grated cheese.
- A little grated nutmeg if liked.
- 1. Remove skin and bone from the fish, mix with sauce, parsley, seasoning and grated nutmeg.

2. Slice the egg and the tomatoes thinly.

3. Mash the potatoes until soft and creamy. (If left-overs are used, warm them to improve the creaminess, freshly cooked potatoes are much nicer!)

4. Put the fish in sauce in the bottom of a greased pie dish or casserole. Cover with a layer of sliced egg and then with the sliced tomatoes. Pile the mashed potatoes on top and sprinkle the grated cheese over it.

5. Bake in a hot oven for half an hour.

2. LAWN & SHRUBBERY

By Dr. W. E. Shewell-Cooper

WE used to rake lawns this month to try and remove the moss, but now we apply a special mercury dust which kills the moss completely. There's a leaflet available on this subject free to readers of THE SIGN who send a stamped addressed envelope. Sometimes in the south the lawns need a very light mowing at the end of the month and I follow this by giving a dressing of fish manure at 2 oz. to the square yard.

It's possible to patch up any gap there may be in the lawn with the new *Agrostis Z.103*. Plants for this purpose can be bought in little 2-inch cardboard pots which are ready to pop into the soil 9 inches apart. They then spread over the earth and make a lovely sward.

I am very keen on evergreen flowering shrubs. They are beautiful when they are blooming, most of them have lovely berries for the autumn, and, anyway, their foliage is pleasant. Order such shrubs now, trying, for instance, *Arbutus*, *Choisya*, *Escalonia*, *Hypericum*, *Olearia*. Read all about them in my book *The A.B.C. of Flowering Shrubs*, published by Eng. Univ. Press.¹ Give the roses a top dressing of sedge peat an inch deep and apply this around the shrubs as well after you have planted them. Plant also such bulbs as *Aconites*, *Scillas*, *Ixias* and *Ranunculuses*, and the moment your bulbs are finished flowering indoors you can plant them out in the garden where they should bloom for years.

In the vegetable garden you can make up your mind to sow broad beans and Early Bird peas as soon as the soil is right.

¹ From Mowbrays, or any bookseller, 7s. 6d., post 9d.

HOUSEWIVES' CHOICE

By Elizabeth Gundry, Editor of 'Shopper's Guide'

IT'S no mystery why such a large number of little girls and old ladies die from burns—yet still these tragedies multiply. The reason is simple: while wearing a nightdress they get too near a fire.

The best solution is to go in for any kind of heating that does not have a flame or glowing element. The next best is a really good guard—a British Standards one. The third best is to buy pyjamas, not a nightdress that billows out.

But if none of these precautions are followed, at least the nightdress can be made of relatively safe fabric. Specially flame-proofed Winccette costs little more, but is now just as safe and pretty as the ordinary kind; the brand name is Proban. Alternatively, brushed nylon is warm (and, like all nylon, eminently washable and dries dry); if a flame touches it, it will only melt and cause some burns, but will not envelop the body in flame within five seconds, as some fabrics do.

What price carpets?

Carpets are a major headache to the Consumer Council,¹ which deals with subscribers' shopping complaints. It is impossible to judge the quality by the looks, and every week brings sorry stories of carpets worn through in a matter of months. Sometimes the Council manages to get a replacement for the disappointed shopper; but often the retailer shrugs the responsibility off by saying a higher price should have been paid.

Is price, in fact, a guide to quality? SHOPPER'S GUIDE tested a wide selection of carpets, which were laid on a college staircase with the passing feet counted by an electronic eye. A 21s. rayon carpet wore through after 44,000 treads, where a wool Wilton at twice the price was still going strong after half a million feet had passed by. So in the long run, the 21s. carpet would prove about six times as dear as the other!

But amongst the other samples there were very varying results—for example, one carpet at 36s. lasted half as long again as another at the same price.

SHOPPER'S GUIDE concluded that though a cheap carpet is never a good buy, dearer ones may or may not give proportionately better wear. And some characteristics inevitably add to price but not to durability: involved designs or a multiplicity of colours, for instance.

All that the shopper can do is try to estimate how dense the tufts are (this is even more important than length)

¹ Orchard House, Orchard Street, London, W.1.

and ask what the carpet is made of: wool is tougher than rayon—and less prone to crushing and soiling, too—though there are a great deal of rayon and rayon-mixture carpets about now because their lower price makes them attractive.

Bag of mystery

As with sausages, mattresses usually have to be taken on trust. A pretty tick may be only a gay deceiver if the springs inside are flimsy and few, insecurely stitched and poorly padded.

Because of this the British Standards Institution now lays down strict standards of manufacture which specify the quality, purity, and minimum amount of materials to be used. In addition, it sends inspectors to bedding factories, and identifies approved mattresses with its kite-mark, shown here, for the guidance of shoppers.

What's more, every British Standards mattress has a descriptive label. Here is how to interpret the details given:



Elizabeth Gundry

Lotte Meistner-Graf

Springs. In a 4½-ft. mattress there should be at least 288 springs, and the best have 1,000 or more. Pocketed ones tend to be softer and more durable.

Fillings. On top of these go a pad—hair, for preference, because it is springy, but fibre is cheaper and quite adequate. Between this and the tick is usually a layer of wool or wool mixture felt, or of cheaper flock.

Richard Tatlock's Puzzles

3. NO CLUES (open to all)

Last month's puzzle was concerned with the Epistle of St. James. This month we turn to Ephesians—with a puzzle like we have often had before.

There are no clues to the adjacent crossword except one: It can, and must, be completed by words drawn from the Epistle to the Ephesians. Authorized Version, of course (I'm a Conservative!).

One stray word has been provided and, as always, I don't know whether it makes the puzzle easier or harder!

Many solutions may be possible, but so long as all your words come from Ephesians, your solution is acceptable.

Together with the completed pattern I would like a list of the chapters and verses from which your words are drawn, and a guess at what led me to choose TAME as the stray word.

Two half-guinea book tokens are offered as prizes.

4. ACROSTIC (age limit, 13)

The acrostic below—everyone knows how to do acrostics—will provide a word which is found in the Litany.

Solve the acrostic and find the word. Then write and tell me how many times the word appears in the Litany. Also, write out neatly the sentence or sentences in which the word appears.



My first is in Pleasure, but not in Leisure;
My second in Truck, but not in Luck;
My third is in Bought, but not in Taught;
My fourth is in Vain, but not in Pain;
My fifth is in Fair, but not in Pear;
My sixth is in Dumb, but not in Glum;
My seventh is in Lane, but not in Stain;
My eighth is in Hymn, but not in Limb;

My ninth is in Scent, but not in Rent;
My last is in Ease as well as Please.
Three five-shilling book tokens for the best answers. Neatness counts. Don't forget your name, age, and address.

The closing date for both puzzles is February 15th. Entries, please, to The Puzzle Editor, THE SIGN, 28 Margaret Street, London, W.1.

November winners:

No. 21. Miss J. Ausden (Watford), Mr. E. M. Austin (Windsor).
No. 22. Timothy Alexander-Macquibban (Norley, Cheshire), Richard Dobson (Co. Tyrone), Stephen Carter (Wombourne).

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CHURCH OF ENGLAND CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

Quarry Mount,
Greetby Hill,
Ormskirk.
4th January, 1961.

Dear Mr. Bullough,

Thank you very much for the gifts for the children at Christmas, we appreciate them most warmly. As usual, it was a most enjoyable time even though a little hectic. We had our first sight of Father Christmas on Christmas Eve when he came and gave each child a gift. Later on they went off to bed hoping for better things to come, and sure enough they did. It began very early Christmas morning, and though very sleepy we heard children's voices and it was lovely to see their faces and hear them say to each other "smashing, just what I asked him for."

Once again, many thanks to you all. All good wishes for the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

J. E. HOUGHTON.

CALLING ALL FARMERS AND AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

The next meeting for all those who attended the Dinner and any others who were unable to be with us will be held in the Schools on Friday, 17th February, at 7-30 p.m. We are looking forward to another grand gathering of our farmers and their wives. The subject for the lecture and discussion is "Seed Time and Harvest." The lecturer will be Mr. G. J. Clarke of the Ministry of Agriculture and the subject will be supported by a colour film "Enough for All." An invitation is extended to any parishioner interested in the subject under discussion to join us at this meeting, Friday, 17th February, at 7-30 p.m.

(Refreshments will be served).

WISE, WITTY AND OTHERWISE

Really !

A traffic policeman at a busy corner saw an old lady beckon to him one afternoon. He held up a dozen cars, a truck and two taxis to get to her side.

"What is it, lady?" he asked rather impatiently.

The old lady smiled and put her hand on his arm. "Officer," she said in a soft voice, "I just wanted to tell you that your number is the number of my favourite hymn."

Hymns up to date

"The poor man in his castle !
Officials at his gate
Assess his rates and taxes
And claim the whole estate.
All things must be entered,
All incomes great or small,
The gross amount is wonderful,
Our rulers spend it all."

D. V. CHATWORTHY.

The story is told about an old preacher in a country church who was one day seeking to inspire his somewhat apathetic congregation. Said he:

"This church must get up and walk."

"Amen," exclaimed a pious brother, "let her walk!"

"This church," added the minister, "must run."

"Amen, let her run," said the saintly man.

"More than that," shouted the preacher, encouraged by the response, "this church must fly."

"Amen," ejaculated the pious one, "let her fly."

"Brethren, it takes money to make a church fly," climaxed the minister.

"Amen," came from the saint, "let her walk."

THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE

A Message from the Bishop of Winchester

On 14th March, 1961, an event will take place which could be of considerable importance to the Church of England and indeed to the whole of the English-speaking Christian world. It is the publication of the first part to be completed of the NEW ENGLISH BIBLE—the New Testament.

You will already know from the national press and from other sources that the New English Bible is a co-operative venture undertaken in 1947 by all the major Churches of the British Isles (except the Roman Catholics), with the support of the University Presses of Oxford and Cambridge. You will have heard that it is no revision, but a completely new translation. It can fairly claim some special authority, for though there have been several admirable translations in recent times, none has been published with the same wide encouragement and none has been the work of so representative a body of scholars. It attempts to present the meaning of the original Greek and Hebrew, as interpreted by the best available and most modern scholarship, in English which is as clear and natural for the contemporary reader as the subject matter will allow. However deeply you

revere and love the Authorized Version you will know the pressing need for a translation of this kind. This need is felt not only at home, but by those engaged in making the Bible more fully intelligible in many tongues all the world over, and who, in their own task of translation, wish to have recourse to an authoritative text in current English.

Those who have laboured for fourteen years so far on the work of establishing the text, translating, and finally revising the translation now offer it to all those who may care to use it. They hope that it will stand beside and shed light on other versions.

ALWYN WINTON

Chairman of the Joint Committee.

Library Edition 21s., Popular Edition 8s. 6d.

Orders can be handed to the Rector.

ALTAR FLOWER ROTA

- Feb. 5—Mrs. Sumner and Mrs. Dickenson.
12—Mrs. H. Dickenson.

LENT

SIDESMEN'S ROTA

- Feb. 5, 10-30 a.m.—C. Aindow and T. Forshaw.
" 6-30 p.m.—E. Grimshaw and R. Brett.
" 12, 10-30 a.m.—J. Huyton and S. Parks.
" 6-30 p.m.—E. Serjeant and H. Guy.
" 19, 10-30 a.m.—R. Gaskell and H. Baldwin.
" 6-30 p.m.—H. Dean and J. Balmer.
" 26, 10-30 a.m.—J. Cheetham and E. Battersby.
" 6-30 p.m.—W. Jenkinson and T. Sismey.

SERVICES AT ST. CUTHBERT'S, 1961

First, Third and Fifth Sundays in month

Second and Fourth Sundays in month

	8 a.m.	10-30 or 11-30 a.m.
Feb. 5—John Davies		Anthony Grimshaw
" 12—Robert Gaskell		Harold Grimshaw
		Ian Ainscough
" 19—Peter Balmer		John Gaskell
" 26—Arthur Gilbert		Harold Grimshaw
		John Davies
Mar. 5—Anthony Grimshaw		Stanley Marshall
" 12—Ian Ainscough		Harold Grimshaw
		Peter Balmer

MOTHERS' UNION

At the meeting at Barton in January we had our usual Bring and Buy stall, which realised £4 5s. 9d. The party has been arranged for Friday, 3rd February. The tickets are 4/- and can be had from Committee members. We look forward to a very enjoyable evening.

R. G.

BURIAL OF THE DEAD

"In sure and certain hope"

- Dec. 16—Thomas Jackson Higson, aged 64 years, Shirdley Hill Farm, Halsall.
Dec. 20—Walter Bell, aged 78 years, White House Farm, Halsall.
Dec. 23—Dorothy Ainscough, aged 79 years, 134 School Lane, Haskayne.
Jan. 7—Edward Ainscough, aged 79 years, 134 School Lane, Haskayne.

BAPTISMS

Received into the family of Christ's Church

- Jan. 8—Derek John, son of George Stanley and Margaret Townsend, 75, Sumner Avenue, Haskayne.
Jan. 8—Keith, son of William and Valerie Jean Stopforth, 3 Plex Lane, Halsall.

Holy Communion	8 a.m. and 11-30 a.m.
Mattins	10-30 a.m.
Evensong	6-30 p.m.
Holy Communion	8 a.m.
Mattins (Said)	10 a.m.
Sung Eucharist	10-30 a.m.
Evensong	6-30 p.m.

Holy Baptism: Second Sunday in the month at 3-30 p.m.

Churchings: After any service or by appointment.

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