

Going to Buffalo?—the Convention Number

# The Sunday School Times

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Published weekly by The Sunday School Times Co., 1031 Walnut St., Phila., Pa.

Philadelphia, April 27, 1918  
Vol. Sixty, No. 17

\$1.50 a year; in clubs, \$1.00  
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## When Jesus Stood Still

By Annie Johnson Flint

All things that are written... concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished (Luke 18: 31).  
And Jesus stood still (Mark 10: 49).

THE Son of man must go as it was written: Be mocked and scourged, in agony must die; Steadfast he set his face toward shame and spitting, Yet could he halt at Bartimæus' cry.

This too was written; from the world's foundation It was ordained that here the two should meet, That at the wayside beggar's prayer for mercy The Son of God just here should stay his feet.

No powers of earth or hell can change his purpose, Or turn aside the thing he hath decreed; All things concerning him must be accomplished,— So must he hear the sinner's cry of need;

So must he hearken unto thee, who trusts him, This too concerns him, for he loveth thee; Come thou in faith, the world of doubt defying, And all that doubting world must wait thy plea.

## EDITORIAL

Would you like to go to what promises to be the greatest International Sunday School Convention ever held, at Buffalo, N. Y., June 19 to 25, without any money cost to yourself? If this interests you, just turn to page 248 in this issue and read an announcement by the publishers.

## Christ's Coming and the Kaiser

Too many Christians are blocking God's plan for their lives with their own plans. In God's sight are we real stewards? Is it success or fidelity that most moves us? Prebendary Webster, of England, was

saying not very long ago that he thought the reason the doctrine of the Lord's return did not always make a strong appeal to young Christians was because of their eagerness to carry through some of their own schemes. By way of illustration Prebendary Webster told how, when he was in Germany before the war, he had a conversation with a Lutheran "Sister," who had been to Keswick. She said that on one occasion she was telling the Kaiser all about the convention, and he listened with great interest. Then she went on to speak of the teaching there about the Lord's return, when the Kaiser suddenly interrupted her in his quick, impulsive way, with: "That would not do at all; it would spoil all my plans!" How would it affect your plans?

## To Gain an Hour

If "daylight saving" could only give us an additional hour every day! It does give us an additional daylight working hour, and it is an admirable change, to be eagerly welcomed by every sensible person. But there are times when we wish we had twenty-five hours, instead of twenty-four. We wonder how we can get through what we must get through. And then, as Christians, we feel that we must take less time for prayer and give more time to work. A good antidote to that mistake is the word written the other day by a great evangelistic leader to a friend, in a personal letter: "I strongly feel that with so many duties as I have now I ought to spend three hours at least each day in prayer and communion with God, instead of an hour and a half!" For prayer is work. No man accomplishes so much, with so little an expenditure of time, as when he is praying. Prayer can add an hour to every day's working time even more directly and certainly than daylight saving. So let us give first place to our most important work, prayer, and thus gain time for all the less important work that we have to do.

## Who Is to Stumble?

It is fine to watch others stumble—when they ought to stumble. God wants us to count confidently upon their stumbling. But he does not want us to stumble at all. There are two kinds of stumbling

described in God's Word. For one kind there is no excuse nor necessity. The other kind we ought to bring to pass constantly. Here is the stumbling that God wants us to rejoice in,—David, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, describes it:

"When evil-doers came upon me to eat up my flesh, Even mine adversaries and my foes, they stumbled and fell" (Psalm 27: 2).

The other kind of stumbling, that need never occur, Jude tells us about: "Now unto him that is able to guard you from stumbling, and to set you before the presence of his glory without blemish in exceeding joy" (Jude 24). When we wear Christ, our invulnerable armor, having shod our feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace (Eph. 6: 15), we are guarded by his omnipotence from stumbling; and our adversaries, Satan and his servants, striking against Christ as they attempt to injure us, stumble and fall in ignominy, helplessness, and defeat. Either Satan must stumble, or we. Which shall it be?

## Believing for "All"

Sin's worst, brought to God, is no match for his grace. Sin's least trifle, if not brought to God, is more than a match for us. That is why we are not to attempt to deal with sin nor the results of sin by ourselves, but are to bring all to God and then at once to praise him that he is more than undoing all the disaster. When we are fully Christ's, in body, mind, and spirit, we are safe. Then he turns every circumstance and incident of our life into blessing, no matter what it was before he touched it. A believing and tested Christian has said keenly that we are tempted to alter a certain word of God so as to make it read, "We know that some things work together for good to them that love God"; or, "We know that all things work together for good, except this particular, unpleasant thing." And he points out that that is not what God tells us, but that we are to praise Him because he says "All things"; and that "all" includes everything,—the pleasant and the unpleasant, the human and the diabolical. Just now, under the pressure of the seemingly intolerable burden that may bear down upon you, do you believe this? God has said it.

## Flank Movements—Shall We Use Them?

THE flank attack is a favorite one in accepted military tactics. It endeavors to find the enemy, not on his strong front lines, but around on his weaker sides. Sometimes the attempt is to "pierce" these vulnerable side-lines; sometimes the flanker tries to "envelop" his enemy; sometimes he endeavors to squeeze him between the jaws of a "nutcracker." The frontal attack, the books teach, is usually too costly, and its chances of success too problematical, to be undertaken unless the flank movement is impossible, as it now practically is on the strongly entrenched and completely covered French and Belgian front. The original attack on Belgium was part of an attempted "flank" movement on France. But now, until some penetrating frontal movement has created a new flank, the line must be frontally assailed. There are, it would appear, no "sides" between Switzerland on the south and Holland on the north.

Flank movements have their uses in the Christian world-campaign. The forces of Jesus may, and often must, get around on to the enemy's sides, and attack from those angles, using auxiliary and indirect means to capture men and society. And some flank movements used by the church, again, have no rightful place in her campaigns.

The "social" work of the churches, the attempt at community uplift and amelioration, is a flank movement, as compared with the distinct endeavor to bring the Word of God and the Spirit's power to bear on the single souls of men, to win them to the supreme surrender and right relation to God, without which any social amelioration is body without a soul, the painting over of an unhealed leprosy.

The countless "social" (in another sense), and

similar activities of our churches, as they seek to bring men within the range of Christian influences or give them better equipment for Christian living, for more effective living of every sort, may be looked upon as distinctively of the flanking order.

Very decidedly "flank" is it when a church competes with various other agencies in social amusements, possibly having dancing floors, billiard tables, smoking rooms, theatrical stages and such other equipment as a part of its working plant. In church finance the indirect method of taxation by wooing the wary sixpence from unwilling pockets through such mediums as suppers and bazaars, instead of the direct way of positive, consecrated, and joyous giving, may be considered a flank movement.

In Christian thought, both in "offense" and "defense," the attempt is often made to get around to "the enemy's" standing ground and viewpoint, leaving our characteristic Christian or "traditional" position for a while in order not to rouse his opposition and to put ourselves more completely in accord with him, to "get around on his blind side," as it were. "Natural Theology," or the endeavor to establish the great truths of religion without recourse to the Christian revelation, is a case in point, of which a specific instance could be the effort to establish the fact of immortality on purely speculative grounds, without calling in the aid of the Scripture declarations and the Scripture facts, in the hope of disarming prejudice or incredulity, or to find approach to men whose state of mind was not yet ready for the fuller proof.

Many encircling maneuvers are not only permissible but advisable. But if these flank movements offer many opportunities for victory, they also present

# Why Was it Necessary for Christ to Die ?

Was there any other way that God could solve his mightiest problem ?

By Lewis Sperry Chafer

**UNBELIEF**, be it religious or otherwise, will never receive the one explanation which the Bible gives of the necessity for the death of Christ. This is due, in part, to the fact that, along with the Bible explanation, there is also a demand upon personal faith and an adjustment of heart toward God. However, all serious-minded persons must face this problem, the solution of which most evidently determines the eternal destiny of man.

Of the five extended accounts of the death of Christ given in the Bible, one is unique. The four records given in the Gospels present only what was seen and heard by spectators. It has pleased the Spirit of God to record in the Twenty-second Psalm what was in the mind and heart of the One who was being crucified. This Psalm opens with the words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It then goes on to a vindication of the righteous character of the Father by the yielded heart of the suffering Victim, and is a record of what he saw and felt. In contrast to what any witness might have seen, this Psalm is intensely personal: "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."

Though written a full thousand years before Christ died, and eight hundred years before death by crucifixion had been conceived of by man, this Psalm throws a flood of light on the fact of the death of Christ, and reveals very much of the inward attitude of Christ toward his Father and toward the sufferings he was appointed to bear. Here, as everywhere, the Suffering One is found to be wholly yielded to his Father's will; and, by all the added disclosures of this Psalm, the importance of discovering the true answer to the problem as to why he died is increased. The Bible knows but one answer to this problem, whether it be in type, in prophecy, in history, or in doctrine, and this one answer is such as to lay claim to the heart that accepts it. Hence the age-long struggle of unbelief to dispose of the problem some other way.

Christ did not die because of inability to defend himself from an overpowering foe. He, the Creator of the worlds, could have dismissed the whole material universe by one word of sovereign command. "Twelve legions of angels" were waiting to do his bidding; yet he submitted to a death of seeming weakness and defeat. He had said, speaking of his life, "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." And when he died he spoke as the One who is in final authority over all life: "Father, into thy hands I commend [deposit] my spirit." He dismissed his spirit. Therefore he did not have to die because of weakness.

He did not die because of his own unworthiness or sin. Happily the plain Bible record of his sinless life has been sufficient to check the advance of any theory based on such a claim. *He did not deserve to die.* To this all are agreed.

## What Was God's Greatest Undertaking?

But the modern religious unbelief which proposes to retain some acknowledgment of Jesus Christ is now pressing another answer to the question as to why Christ died. This last answer is a far more subtle evasion of the vital question. The exponents of this theory agree that he did not have to die, that he did not deserve to die, that he was willing to die, that he did die and rose again (at least in spirit, they say, if not in body), and that he is now a present help for all who call upon him. According to this theory, he died as the supreme example of true sacrifice, fortitude, and loyalty, and his death is a cure for sin because it woos men to higher ground by the very manifestation of that which is most noble. Thus the death of Christ in its relation to the sin question, according to this theory, is only one of the countless influences which radiated from his wonderful life and service for men. But such a theory is never based on Scripture, though it offers latitude for endless imagination and human sentiment.

According to the Bible, Christ did not deal with the sin question by merely becoming an example before men: He was "made sin," or the sin offering, "for us." His death was an expiation for sin, a perfect substituting for the sinner, and a blood-bought redemption, reconciliation, and propitiation before

**"I would rather go to hell on my own feet than to heaven on the back of another man." This is said to have been a recent blasphemous statement of a minister who was trying to explain away the truth of the substitutionary, expiatory, vicarious death of Jesus. No doubt that minister belonged in the class of those here described by Mr. Chafer, who claim that it is "immoral for God to lay the sin of man upon his Son." May God pity, forgive, and redeem all those who "strive to avoid the saving issue of the cross of Christ."**

God. And there is not a hint in the Bible that he was ever dealing finally with the sin question at any other time than when dying on the cross. On the other hand, it is everywhere stated that he was finally dealing with the sin question through the cross, and there dealing with it upon a scale that met the demands of the very holiness of God. To satisfy man's conception of the crime of sin would be trivial compared to satisfying the divine conception. In the Bible teachings, the death of Christ is said to answer every righteous demand of the holiness of God toward every sinner. In the measureless grace of God, that death has now placed the sinner where he has only to believe in the Saviour who has been provided.

The cross, rather than being but one of many incidents in the career of Christ, is clearly the revelation of the greatest undertaking of God. Even creation itself must be given a place of secondary consideration. He did create the worlds, and they are said to be "the work of his fingers," but when referring to the undertaking of the redemption of a lost soul, a much stronger figure is used: "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" The tremendous task of saving lost men called for the making bare of his mighty right arm of infinite power. This infinite result of saving men could never be accomplished by a moral example: it was accomplished by God's Lamb, taking away the sin of the world. It is one thing to think of Christ as One who encourages us to go to our judgment and doom with spiritual refinement and fortitude, but quite another thing to find in him our divinely provided Substitute, who has completely met our judgment and doom, and that in him there is *salvation and safety* for evermore.

A prominent clergyman of this country recently stated that "the most important thing in the death of Christ" he saw illustrated in the withering and dying of one generation of flowers to enrich succeeding generations of flowers, and that he saw the "most important thing in the death of Christ" illustrated, also, in the pain of a mother's heart in sympathy for her suffering child. This may be "the most important thing" this clergyman has seen in the death of Christ, but it does not follow that this is all there is to see. The death of one generation of flowers does not save succeeding generations of flowers from dying, and the mother's pain in sympathy with her child does not relieve the pain of the child. Christ did not die to show us how to die gracefully, or merely to express sympathy with us in our lost estate: He died that we might not die, and he became a perfect sin-offering to the extent of all that can ever be demanded even before the righteous throne of God. This is the Gospel. Anything short of this, as an explanation of the death of Christ, must come under the anathema that is pronounced upon "another gospel."

In vain has unbelief striven to avoid the saving issue of the cross of Christ. By many it is being claimed that it would be *immoral* for the sin-judgments of one to be placed upon another. This challenge involves a deeper question than will be found illustrated by any human experience. Five million brave men may cross the sea to face a foe for us and even die that we might be saved from slavery; but this is far removed from becoming the substitutionary sin-offering for a lost world, through all its generations, and a substitutionary sin-offering which

In line with the teaching Mr. Chafer gives on this page, is the fuller treatment in his clear book, "Salvation" (Philadelphia School of the Bible, Philadelphia, 75 cents). The leaflet of Mr. Charles G. Trumbull, "Was Jesus' Life or Death the More Important?" will be found helpful, too, in exposing the falsity of the theory that Jesus died merely as a supreme example of sacrifice (The Sunday School Times Company, Philadelphia, 26 cents a dozen copies; \$1 a hundred [same rate for fifty or more]; or 2 cents each, postpaid).

is acceptable in all the righteous judgments of God against a fallen race. Yet such was the far-reaching effect and value of the death of Christ. It is not *immoral* for God to lay the sin of man upon his Son as the innocent Victim unless it can be proved that the Son was unwilling to become such a sacrifice. About this there can be no question: "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O my God. Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." "But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel" (the thought of Christ while on the cross, Psa. 22:3). He was *willing*, then, to be made sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Yet more is true; for it is in connection with the mystery of the God-head that we believe that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." Cannot God satisfy his boundless love for sinners by laying their sins on his own breast, in the person of his Son, without that infinite love-act being condemned as *immoral*? Who can measure the blasphemy of such a thought? And yet for just such blaspheming sinners He died. Not simply to soften their hearts; but rather that the righteous judgment of that and all sin might not sink them into perdition forever. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself," and he did so much, and did so well, that it is added of him that he is now "not imputing their trespasses unto them."

Here is the glorious Gospel that surpasses every dream of man. The work is *perfectly done* and sinful man has but to enter into its priceless values. The sin question is *already* dealt with to the fullest satisfaction of God, and he is only waiting for the believing heart to receive the Saviour his love and grace have provided.

## How the Cross Satisfies God and Man

Only God could provide a sufficient Saviour and the righteous grounds of an eternal salvation. Man cannot save his fellow-man, and man is equally helpless to save himself. The sentiment that there is saving value in the death of a soldier for his country is presented not only without regard to the most vital facts of revelation, but is repudiated by every thoughtful soldier. There is but one way of salvation. Men do not get saved by dying for their country. They believe in the One who has died for their sins. Thoughtful men would prefer to trust in the saving grace of God as a way to heaven, rather than to trust in an enemy's bullets. The Lord Jesus Christ was the only One who could truthfully say, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again."

The Lord Jesus Christ was God's Lamb, and in his death he *took away* the sins of the world. This is a revelation from God which is to be *believed*, and there is salvation for all who *do believe*. Through their blindness of heart, men may quarrel with the idea of the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ; yet it must be admitted that this is the faithful and consistent testimony of God's Word in regard to the meaning of his death.

The effect of the cross is twofold. (1) It has so answered the demands of the righteousness of God against sin that there is nothing now to hinder the outpouring of his saving grace upon all who trust in the Saviour provided. Grace can thus "reign through righteousness." The cross solved the mightiest problem of God. It is the outshining of the wisdom of God; for by the cross he has solved the greatest problem of the universe: "How could he be *just* and still satisfy his love in being the *justifier* of sinful men?" So, also, the cross has released the infinite power of God in behalf of every sinner who puts his trust in that saving grace; since by that cross every moral hindrance to the exercise of his power in our behalf has been forever swept away. The cross does not save, else all would be saved. Rather, it has so dealt with the sin question that any who now *believe* in the Saviour *may be saved*. (2) The cross has solved the deepest problem of a human soul: "Where is there a final cure sufficient to satisfy a sin-sick soul?" Morality says "try again"; religion says, "fast, pray, sacrifice, observe ordinances and strive to please God" (which are important factors in the daily life of one who is saved). But when the problem of salvation is in question, happy indeed is the person who discovers that the judgments of sin are forever met and the limitless saving power of God is set free for the one who will *believe* and *receive* the exceeding grace of God as it is revealed and offered in the Lord Jesus Christ, "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

EAST ORANGE, N. J.