

Iron Curtains

by THOMAS A. DAVIS

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IN OUR world today a military and ideological "iron curtain" divides one large segment of humanity from another. But there is more than one such curtain in the universe. The Bible tells us of the "rulers of the [spiritual] darkness of this world," and of the prince of darkness who, as David said, "hath persecuted my soul; . . . he hath made me to dwell in darkness." Psalm 143:3. This enemy is striving with all craft and cunning to exclude the light of the knowledge of God from the world, and he has all but succeeded in isolating humanity from the kingdom of heaven, for "the whole world lieth in wickedness." 1 John 5:19.

Then there are the more circumscribed iron curtains within the individual human heart, strongholds of prejudice, bigotry, and dogmatism which refuse to admit to the mind any new idea which might clash with preconceived ideas. How many there are who, like the Pharisees and Sadducees of Christ's day, have closed tightly the portals of the mind to the truth of heaven. Ofttimes the light of truth almost pierces through the barrier of sin. But they harden their hearts and turn carelessly away from the appeals of the Holy Spirit.

Others there are who are inwardly

convinced that in the kingdom of the Prince of Peace there are things infinitely superior to what they know inside the domain of sin. But there are so many things to hold them back; fear of ridicule, loved ones, friends, position, power, property, money, wrong habits—an iron curtain of heredity and environment between them and God.

Innumerable are the barriers which would keep men from the kingdom of heaven. But the forces of the King of kings stand ready to rescue all who move to escape. All heaven rejoices at the escape of one soul from the camp of the enemy. Said Christ, "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." Luke 15:7.

Today Christ stands at the barricaded heart of every sinner and says pleadingly, "If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." Revelation 3:20.

would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and *ye would not!*" Matthew 23:37.

The man of our story heard of his danger in time, and hastened to receive the treatment that saved his life. And for us there is still time, a little time. Let us hasten to Him who "forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases," that when the door of doom shall be shut with terrible finality, we may be "accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass." Psalm 103:3; Luke 21:36.

"Only Nine Days Left!"

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"YOU have only nine days left!" With these ominous words the news commentator ended his warning to an unknown man mingling with the multitudes of Chicago, who little suspected that agents of death were at work within his veins. Five days before, he had been bitten by a dog. Evidently with only a casual treatment of the wound he had disappeared into the surging city crowds, all unsuspecting that the dog was rabid. And now, hour by hour, the deadly germs were multiplying in his body. With every throb of the heart he was drawing nearer to the moment when an unthinkable doom was certain.

This occurrence brings very forcibly to our minds the grim fact that humanity is inoculated with a deadly disease, sin. And the results of that disease are inexorably certain. When it has run its course and reached its conclusion, it ends in only one thing, death. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James 1:15. Eternal death, endless oblivion!

Today more and more people realize that the pangs of death are already upon the world. Earthquakes, floods, tornadoes and cyclones ravage the earth. Wars grow ever more devastating. Crimes of every kind are prevalent. We are reminded of the words of H. G. Wells: "The end of everything we call life is close at hand and cannot be evaded. . . . There is no way out or around or through the impasse. It is the end."

We may seek to ignore the fact and casually shrug it off. We may seek our own remedies to avert the results. We may turn to an easy gospel, and perhaps find in some modern religion what we imagine to be relief. But "they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace." Jeremiah 8:11.

The world has long scorned the proffered healing. Multitudes are refusing or neglecting the only cure, the blood of Jesus. For the world today Jesus is weeping as He did for old Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, . . . how often