



THE STRUGGLE

“We wrestle . . . against the rulers of the darkness of this world. **Ephesians 6:12.**”

THE GAME OF LIFE IN PROGRESS

IN these three beautiful pictures illustrating the game of life, Satan, the prince of darkness, is represented as playing with man for his soul.

The scene chosen is a wide vault, whose arch is embellished with lizard-shaped monsters, which adhere closely to the two pillars, down which they seem to creep. On the left-hand side of the picture, near Satan, is an open-mouthed lion ready to devour his victim at the first opportunity.

The upper surface of a sarcophagus is transformed into a chess-board, beside which man sits, his head resting on his hand, and his countenance full of careful thought as to what moves he should make next.

Opposite him is Satan, seated, his chin resting on his hand, his hair and beard bristling wildly, and every feature expressive of cunning intent, and a determination to watch every move, take advantage of every mistake, and win if possible.

Beneath the arch, in the background, stands a lovely angel form unnoticed by either of the players, but watching intently the progress of the game.



THE DEFEAT

“What Shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” Mark 8:36.

THE GAME OF LIFE LOST

HERE we see the results of the game lost. Satan has been victorious. With a wild and horrid leer and a deathlike grip he has seized his victim, and in triumph points to the sure but gruesome signs of death,—the skulls and cross-bones. Amidst smoke and flame, the hand of Death rises to strike man with his poisoned dart.

In sadness and despair man sits, with covered face, and weeps over his defeat. His hope is gone; he knows no peace; he feels the icy clasp of his conquering foe. With keen regret, he now ponders over his loss of faith, his neglect of prayer, and his failure to study and follow his Guidebook. Life, with its opportunities for gaining the life to come, has been wasted; and now, when too late to make amends, he sees his fatal moves and his great mistakes.

The figures on the wall have changed their visage, and seem ready to pounce upon the doomed and helpless man. The lion also has become more fierce, and thirsts for his blood, while the angel turns in sadness from the scene and weeps.

The entire view is one of inexpressible sorrow and regret.



THE VICTORY

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” 2 Tim. 4:7.

THE GAME OF LIFE WON

IN the closing scene of this allegorical representation of man’s conflict with the powers of darkness, we have pictured the happy issue of a faithful Christian life.

Satan has been defeated, and has departed.

The sleeping lion, the open Word, the cross and crown, all speak of victory.

Instead of sitting in sorrow and mourning over defeat, the man, with cheerful looks and thankful heart, lifts his eyes toward heaven, and rejoices that he has met and vanquished his deadly foe.

In the place of the ugly monsters on the wall, cherubs are seen, with laurel wreaths ready to place upon the victor’s brow, while the angel, with joyful satisfaction, points the victor to his exceeding great reward.

This is the game which all, whether conscious of the fact or not, are playing. What its outcome will be in each case depends upon how each one meets and fights life’s battle day by day. All may be victors if they will.

“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”

Proverbs 4:23.

The Goodly Land

We have heard from the bright, the holy land,
We have heard, and our hearts are glad;
For we were a lonely pilgrim band,
And weary, and worn, and sad.
They tell us the saints have a dwelling there,
No longer are homeless ones;
And we know that the goodly land is fair,
Where life's pure river runs.
They say green fields are waving there,
That never a blight shall know;
And the deserts wild are blooming fair,
And the roses of Sharon grow.
There are lovely birds in the bowers green,
Their songs are blithe and sweet;
And their warblings, gushing ever new,
The angels' harpings greet.
We have heard of the palms, the robes, the crowns,
And the silvery band in white;
Of the city fair, with pearly gates
All radiant with light;
We have heard of the angels there, and saints,
With their harps of gold, how they sing;
Of the mount, with the fruitful tree of life,
Of the leaves that healing bring.
The King of that country, He is fair,
He's the joy and light of the place;
In His beauty we shall behold Him there,
And bask in His smiling face.
We'll be there, we'll be there in a little while,
We'll join the pure and the blest;
We'll have the palm, the robe, the crown,
And forever be at rest.

W. H. HYDE.