

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

*Pleading for a complete return to Christianity
as it was in the beginning.*

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** THE WORD OF GOD FOR 1965 **

2 Corinthians 4:16-18.

“SO we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, because we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.” (R.S.V.)

Looking Outward and Looking Upward

SOME of the least read books in the Bible are among the “Minor Prophets.” The very title is misleading, for we tend to think of these books as minor in the sense of being unimportant. But the books were so called by the Jews, not because of their being any less important than the “Major Prophets”—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel and Daniel—but because they were much shorter, lesser in size.

So little do many Christians know of these books that, when they are announced as readings in the assembly, we fumble about to find them. Many have no idea where they are to be found, and recourse has to be made to the list of Contents at the beginning of most Bibles: there we are told the page on which the “minor prophet” will be found!

Habakkuk is one of these least known books of the Old Testament. Almost nothing is known of the prophet or his prophecies. We do not know when he lived, nor under what circumstances he prophesied, and therefore have no understanding of the applications or meanings of his utterances. The most substantial clue we have is in chapter 1, verse 6, where the Chaldeans are referred to. That helps us to deduce that Habakkuk prophesied about the time of the captivity of the Jews by the Chaldeans (the Babylonians). But it is disputed as to whether even that passage means the Chaldeans at all: some interpret it as referring to a people called the “Kittum,” or to the Greeks under Alexander. Anything written about Habakkuk and his prophecies must be conjectural and based on the internal evidence of the book.

Outline of Contents of Habakkuk

The prophet cries to God because of the lawlessness he sees around him, and asks how long it will go unpunished.

In reply God announces that he is raising up the Chaldeans, with their fierce armies and their contempt for all who stand in their way.

But, asks the prophet, if God is holy how can he allow the brutal inhumanity and idolatry of the Chaldeans, whose atrocities are worse than the evils that they are sent to punish?

The prophet waits in imagination upon his watchtower to see if God will resolve the dilemma. The answer comes in showing forth the principle that the pride of the Chaldeaans will be their downfall, and the faithfulness of the righteous will be his salvation.

In view of the almost entire ignorance as to Habakkuk and his prophecies, it is amazing that this short book of three chapters should contain one of the greatest statements in the whole Bible—chapter 2, verses 1-4, especially the latter half of verse 4—"the righteous shall live by his faith." These few words are explained in inspired commentaries in three passages in the N.T.—Rom. 1:7; Gal. 3:11 and Heb. 10:38. The words form the whole theme of Paul's letter to the Romans; they are the foundation of the doctrine of justification by faith and, indeed, of the gospel of Christ.

Habakkuk's Times and Ours

Another great passage appears in Hab. 3:17-18. As the prophet looked upon the world situation in his time he saw that everything was failing. Not only politically and nationally was this so, but life itself was threatened by the ever-recurring danger by failure of crops, famine. We must remember that then, as now, everything depended upon mankind being able to sustain himself in food. Nothing else was of any importance in comparison with the solution of that problem.

How like our own times! The problem of feeding the rapidly growing world population today is one that overrides every other problem. This is literally a matter of life or death, for if there be insufficient food to sustain these growing populations nothing can follow but certain and miserable death. This vast problem is not being faced as it should be; rather the attitude is "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die." With all his materialism, the wisdom and skill of man are showing themselves as almost hopelessly unable to deal with the coming situation.

What is the attitude of this man of God, Habakkuk? Read again those glorious verses in chapter 3:17-18. The prophet does not deny the reality of the threat: he is a realist. He does not close his eyes nor deafen his ears to what is apparent all around him. Even though he cannot see any solution in man's ability to deal with things, he is not in despair. As he has uttered in his great statement — "the righteous shall live by his faith"—so he displays its great meaning in his own immovable, unswerving faith in the living God. In effect Habakkuk says that, although everything may seem to fail and disaster threatens, God will bring His purposes to pass. He abides faithful."

If such a faith is seen under the old Covenant, how much more under the new. And, indeed, that great man of God, Paul, has shown the meaning of Habakkuk's faith and message for the people of God in these days. The passage quoted at the head of this article bears exactly the same meaning as Habakkuk's — although everything pertaining to this life fail, everything that is material and physical be found wanting, yet it is not to these things we look for what is real and abiding and worthwhile. It is to the unseen, the spiritual, the faithfulness of God we are to look and to know that, because things are in His hands, He will bring His will to pass. And we know that His will is perfect blessing and joy for His children.

Let us then in 1965, God willing, look less at the difficulties and discouragements of things around us, and set our hopes and affections upon God, "looking unto Jesus." Then shall we see things in their true values and meaning, and our worship and service be transformed; we shall work with greater incentive and meaning, and shall be sustained constantly by the glorious truth that "he who is righteous by faith shall live."

EDITOR.

'Jehovah's Witnesses' and the Deity of Christ

"What think ye of Christ?" is the test,
To try both your state and your scheme:
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of Him.

In this way, John Newton, the former slave-trader, expressed his conviction that the soundness of any religion must be judged by what it teaches concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

Truth concerning His nature and character is vital. If a religious body errs here, it cannot even be called Christian. Further, any religious faith that relegates Christ to a position of inferiority to Deity, or which refuses to give Him divine honour, is one to be detested and avoided.

Judged by this standard, the doctrine of the "Watchtower" and its servants must be repulsive to all those who truly love Christ.

"Jehovah's Witnesses" teach that Christ was an archangel prior to His birth at Bethlehem, and in that prior existence was known as "Michael."

"In this great fight Michael, who is Christ Jesus . . ." (*Deliverance*, by Rutherford, p.248 .

"As chief of the angels and next to the Father, he was known as the Archangel (highest angel or messenger whose name, Michael, signifies, "Who as God," or, "God's representative." (*"Studies in the Scriptures,"* by Russell, vol. 5, p.84 .

I think we should note that this doctrine was not original with Russell. It was merely a revival of a very ancient heresy, which has been periodically shown its ugly head. Away back in the third century Arius of Alexandria created a sensation when he declared that Christ was a created being and subject to God. He was of a similar, though not of the same, substance with God. It was this heresy which caused the Council of Nicea to be convened in 325 A.D., which lay behind the formulating of the Nicene Creed, and which brought Athanasius to light as the champion of the orthodox view of Christ.

Hundreds of years later—in 1578, in fact—there came an echo of this Arian heresy when, in Poland, the elder Socinus and a nephew published a theory which claimed that Christ was only elevated to a position of authority over the saved after His resurrection. If you will examine Russellism you will find that even this detail has been incorporated into "Watchtower" doctrine. (See "Let God be True" by Rutherford, p.43, and "Studies," by Russell, vol. 1, p.179).

The questions to be settled are these:

- 1) Did the Lord pre-exist?
- 2) If so, what was His position and nature?

(1) **The Pre-existence of Christ.** In order to avoid unnecessary argument, let us define the terms we use.

When we say that the Lord **pre-existed**, we mean that he existed before He appeared on earth in human form as a baby at Bethlehem.

When we speak of the Pre-existence of **Christ**, we mean that the One whom we know as our Saviour, the Christ, existed before He came to earth. The scriptures do not describe Him as "Jesus," nor even "the Christ" during that pre-existent period. At that time He was "the Word," and we do well to remember that the names "Jesus" and "Christ" refer to his human life and the divinely appointed office which He came to fulfil. A great deal of fruitless argument has been caused because the various names ascribed to the Lord have been carelessly used.

There was a time when He was not known as "Jesus," nor as "the Christ;" there was also a time when He was not known as "the Son of God" (see Heb. 1:5). But there never was a time when He was not known as "the Word of God" (John 1:1).

Passages that establish the Saviour's Pre-existence.

(a) **He existed before John the Baptist** (John 1:15,17). This could not refer to the Lord's physical life, for, in point of fact, as a man, John the Baptist was about six months older than Jesus.

(b) **He existed before David**, who lived some 1,000 years before John the Baptist (Matt. 22:41). Jesus Himself points out that the Christ is more than a son of David, since David calls Him "Lord."

(c) **He existed before Abraham** (John 8:57). The expression, "ego eimi" ("I am") is always used in the Septuagint Old Testament in reference to God.

(d) **He existed before Creation** (John 1:1; John 17:4).

These are but a few of many similar passages that might be advanced to establish the Lord's pre-existence. The question remaining is this: what was the nature of that pre-existence? Was He a divine being? Did He share the nature of God? Or was He, as the "Watchtower" says, a created being? An Angel?

(2) The Deity of Christ.

That Christ was not formerly an angel is proved by:

Hebrews 1:3-9, where the writer emphasises the distinction between God's last messenger, His Son, and all previous messengers. The word "angel" means "messenger" and is used in this sense in this passage.

Hebrews 2:5-8 declares that God has even treated His Son in a way far different from all angels, who are ministering spirits.

Hebrews 2:7 teaches that God's Son was for a little while made "inferior to the angels" (Goodspeed's version). But it was only for a little while. After He had

effected the purification of sins He took His place at the right hand of God, "showing Himself to be as much greater than the angels as His title is superior to theirs." (Goodspeed; Heb. 1:4).

A "mighty god"

Another favourite expression of the "Watchtower" supporters is that the Lord was "a mighty god" before He came to earth.

This is an attempt to break the force of Isaiah 9:6, which is one of the strongest Old Testament passages on the nature of the Saviour, because it declares plainly that God would manifest Himself in human form. Notice that the child which was to be born, is declared to be "the Mighty God."

Now, "Jehovah's Witnesses" claim that since the definite article is not used in the Hebrew text, it should not read "the Mighty God", but "a mighty god." They say this does not refer to God Himself, but to some mighty angel. But turn to Isaiah 10:21: "The remnant of Jacob shall return unto the Mighty God." Can anyone deny that the "Mighty God" spoken of here is Jehovah Himself? Particularly in the light of Jeremiah 32:18, which says, "the great, the mighty God, Jehovah of hosts is his name." Certainly Isaiah 10:21 says that the Mighty God is Jehovah. Are there two Mighty Gods, one mentioned in Isaiah 9:6 and a different one in Isaiah 10:21? Incidentally, the definite article is also absent from the second passage!

"A god"

But the "Watchtower" also tries to make the "god" argument on the basis of John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Both of the versions recommended by the "Watchtower," namely Wilson's "Emphatic Diaglott," and the later "New World Translation" (the scholarship for which has never been disclosed) say "the Word was a god," or, "a god was the Word." In both cases they take unwarranted liberties with the Greek text. The Holy Spirit tells us that "in the beginning"—a plain allusion to Genesis 1:1—before anything had been created, the Word existed. John 1:1 says the Word "was." In the Greek text this word "was" is in the imperfect tense, *een*, indicating something neither past, present nor future, but in a continuous state. It is not the form "egento," which means "became." In other words, the Word did not "become"—come into being—but He existed already at the beginning.

May I suggest that in your reading of John 1:1-2, in order to feel the force of the passage, you omit the word "was" and read it thus: "In the beginning—the Word, and the Word—with God, and the Word—God. He (not "the same")—in the beginning with God." (To be continued).

F. WORGAN.

Words

SECTION ONE

THE writing of this article began about three months ago and was then of necessity set aside. It is now hoped to complete, in two sections, what was then intended to be written. These sections, essentially different, have one thing in common: the necessary use by the writer of a dictionary.

We suppose not many people would count the dictionary as one of our most interesting books, but we have seen it so described. We all know how useful it is when we want the spelling of an awkward word;; it renders even better service when providing the definition of some word we are not sure about.

Long and strange words are a characteristic of this scientific age, which creates its own peculiar words as it goes along. Many of these words wander into our reading, by means of magazines and newspapers, to baffle and annoy those not accustomed to them.

We think and venture to say that any book intended for wide distribution, and has in it items which concern the beliefs in some way of a large portion of any community, should be written in the plainest possible terms, so that "he who runs may read."

He is an exceptional man of learning who has the ability to express His thoughts and knowledge in terms understandable to the ordinary reader. This should be the ambition of every right-thinking person who sets out to write for his fellow creatures. The lack of this consideration is what makes the book "Honest to God" so lamentable a production. Its writer, unfortunately, is not one of the exceptional kind of learned men.

"Honest to God" is a book to which, on two grounds, exception may properly be taken, neither doing its writer much credit, especially as a man holding the position he occupies. First: to a great many people, what he wrote was made inaccessible because of the great number of words in his book which were outside their understanding. We have a good one-volume dictionary which has given us unfailing help, but there are words in this "honest" book which are not recorded in it. We searched diligently for we wanted to know what the Bishop was trying to say.

However "Honest to God" may have been the purpose of its writing, it cannot be said to have been honest to a good many who bought it. Clustered up with high sounding words of mysterious origin the book, to a large number of people, was a closed book before it was opened.

After the book came the critics and they were many, for and against. Two leading writers joined in affirming unmistakably that the Bishop was an atheist. As far as this writer could discover, the charge is not denied. So the question: Is it conceivably possible that a man who is an atheist could be qualified to write a book which would be honest to God? It does not seem likely.

The charge we level at the Bishop is a simple one. It is this: That, in view of the chosen title of the book and the wide and intensive interest its publication was intended to create—his first duty, as its writer was to his readers—that the language used should be as simple as it could be made. This he utterly failed to do. It would appear almost certain that the understanding of his words was the last thing he sought to achieve. He assaulted many people's ideas of God in words that seemingly were minted for that purpose.

As a Bishop he had a pattern set clearly before him, and it is one that he should have followed: "A highway shall be there . . . it shall be for those: the way-faring men though fools shall not err therein." Is it not possible that the book, and the Bishop with it, might have ultimately reached greater success, in a right sense, if he had ministered to the "fools" rather than to those he would consider wise and prudent?

W. BARKER.

SECTION TWO

ABOUT the same time as excitement arose over "Honest to God," the writer was rather troubled by an activity of the mind for which he could not account: the unwitting reiteration of words from John's Gospel first chapter (well known to all): "And the Word was made flesh." The curious thing about it was that when sitting at the desk or occupied in something quiet the trouble ceased, but as soon as I started walking reiteration began. Searching for a reason for this, I account for it by the knowledge that I have done most of my real thinking while on my feet, walking or shaving! or, years ago, when working a machine: activity of the body stimulating the imagination. Whether this is a curiosity of my personal make-up or not I have no idea. I assume the reiteration was an affect of an unsettled mind, which needed attention. What happened suggests that. Then one day—for the last time—I got up from my seat to attend to something or other and the reiteration began as soon as I had made a few steps. This time I turned back to my seat, picked up a New English Version of the N.T., and read that first chapter down to the 14th verse, where those words come, and read them as they are there: "So the Word became flesh," and the immediate perception of the difference (and they are different) was like a blow in the face. The dictionary was picked up and I looked at what it said about "so" and was astonished to see that it had no less than 25 lines of definition in small and closely set type. This produced an idea which I am trying out. Five of the definitions were chosen, four of which I name here, thinking what a good subject for Bible Study they provide with each of four speakers taking a definition and from the background of his own way of thinking explain its application to the words of scripture to which it applies. The four definitions singled out are respectively, "likewise, accordingly, therefore, thus." The first definition "In like manner" prompts the question: "In like manner—to what"?

The writer's understanding of both question and answer is intended to be the subject of an article in next issue of the S.S.—W.B.

(To be continued)

SCRIPTURE READINGS

JANUARY, 1965

3—Numbers 6:1-21	Acts 21:17-36
10—Isaiah 6	Acts 21:37 to 22:21
17—Jeremiah 6:9-21	Acts 22:22 to 23:11
24—Genesis 37:12-36	Acts 23:12-35
31—Job 19:14-29	Acts 24:1-21

PAUL'S DEFENCE FROM THE STAIRS (Acts 22:1-21)

HAVING just escaped by the "skin of his teeth" (Job 18:20) from being torn to pieces by an angry mob of his own countrymen, Paul longed to be able to remove the prejudice and misunderstanding which had brought the trouble about. It was only necessary that the truth should be known for this to be accomplished, but very much skill in speech would be needed to make it known. "Blind unbelief is sure to err," wrote William Cowper—and how true this is. He had had experience before of Jewish prejudice and hardened hearts. Also the Lord had told him: "They will not receive thy testimony concerning me." While the moment might appear unsuitable for another effort, however, he determined to make it. We must bear in mind that he "had unceasing pain and great sorrow" in his heart for his kinsmen according to the flesh (Romans 9-2) because of their rejection of Christ. For Jerusalem this was, so far as we know, Paul's last opportunity in person, and a brief study of his words testifies to his longing—and his skill.

Observe first the local circumstances. We understand the castle (of Antonia) was strategically placed next to the Temple Courts, and the stairs from which Paul spoke would be a good pulpit, overlooking a wide level area where the angry mob had followed the soldiers. It was perhaps surprising that he had permission from the commandant. It was Paul's behaviour and personality that must have impressed him at once. It had been impossible to establish any facts from the mob. How Paul must have thought of his Lord when the cry went up "Away with him." The element of surprise was doubtless responsible for the silence when Paul turned towards them from the stairs and beckoned with the hand. He was quick to take advantage of this, and it was intensified with expectation when he spoke to them in their own tongue; Greek would have been understood but wisdom required Hebrew.

We have always thought that Paul had a good speaking voice even if he

was "in bodily presence weak" (2 Cor. 10:10), and the reports we have of his speeches show him to be a skilled speaker—on this occasion, perhaps, especially. His very first words indicate his keen appreciation of the situation: he was a Jew, born in Tarsus, yes, but not educated in a heathen city. He sat at the feet of one of their greatest teachers, Gamaliel of all people, guarantee of strict religious orthodoxy. They revered their ancestry. They were very zealous, in their own eyes at least, for the Law of Moses; so was he. They wanted to kill him because he had profaned their Sanctuary. He had been as fierce in its defence, had actually been responsible for death and persecution of those with whom they now associated him. This was not just what he said. Their own high authorities could confirm it. Surely these facts must tell upon their intelligence and reduce their prejudice.

His zeal for their faith had not stayed at this city but was to be extended to faraway Damascus. Here came the crisis in his story—interest maintained by the account of a miracle. The great light from heaven, reminding them of the ancient prophets; the voice from heaven—"what if an angel hath spoken to him?" (Acts 23:9). The silence was continued while the experience of blindness, and the heavenly messages through the devout Jew, Ananias, are recounted. The gospel story had been heard by all and some might even be present who had accepted Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, and all knew of baptism as the initiatory rite and the means of forgiveness in Christ's name. The gospel had been preached and Christians were living among them—this being thirty years after the Saviour's crucifixion. While the new religion was in a measure doubtless despised, it had won its way and had times of peace and progress.

CORRESPONDENCE

"The First Resurrection"

I have read J. D. Bales on "The First Resurrection is not Literal," in which he makes out a powerful case for his thesis that the literal resurrection will happen in "one hour," and that it will involve the resurrection of both classes, i.e. the saved and the unsaved. His position is impregnable.

Yet I regret that after occupying so much ground in building up his position, and presenting such a strong case for his claims, he should have left us bereft of the meaning of the "first resurrection." This seems to weaken his position in some measure. To avow that it is "symbolical or figurative" without en-

deavouring to satisfy the longing of most believers to learn what it means, weakens his effort considerably.

The doctrine of a coming Millennial reign of Christ on earth is a widely held notion; and it is one of long standing. Moreover, it is believed and taught by members of the church of Christ. In the U.S.A., they issue their own periodical. It is taught by the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Christadelphians, the Latter Day Saints, the Pentecostals, the Plymouth Brethren, the Seventh Day Adventists, the British Israelites, and other bodies. I have contacted some of these people and find that they are unable to gainsay the contention, clearly presented, that the Millennium belongs to the present reign of Christ, that it is now past, and that we are witnessing the closing features of the "little season" before the appearance of "The Great White Throne." If this is susceptible of logical argument I cannot see why we should be mute when it comes to the necessity of maintaining this position.

In fact, as a people pleading for a complete return to "the faith once delivered to the saints," I regard it as being incumbent upon us to offer a reasonable explanation of what is meant by this prophecy. And it is not to our credit that we shun this obligation whenever the question of the meaning of the 1,000 years' reign of Christ is raised. There can be no question that most people are deeply interested in the future of the world. The ever-present threat of nuclear destruction is forcing them to face up to issues which formerly we all side-stepped, and we ought to be in the front rank in placing before all enquirers the Bible's teaching on these questions. To convey the impression that the Bible is silent, or that what it teaches is opaque and indistinct, on matters affecting our future wellbeing, is to belittle and defame the book.

May I also point out that it is along these lines that the answer will be found to Alf Marsden's query in the September issue of the "S.S."—"Whither Now?"

We have a little time left to us to shake ourselves out of our lethargy. Appointing elders will not remedy things; we had them long before the 1914 war and they did not stop the decline then; nor will they now. What is wanted are men who will "Take the oversight." Peter wrote: "The elders (older brethren) which are among you I exhort: tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight." (1 Pet. 5:1, 2.). Woe to the elder brethren who fail to grow capable of doing these things after a lifetime of fellowship. We cannot please ourselves. "If a man desire the oversight" (1 Tim. 3:1.) does not

mean that we may please ourselves, else if no one desires, then no one is to blame.

In the very nature of things all must desire; and all should desire. Every church has its elders; some may be comparatively young, but they may be the elders. In a church where there are brethren 50 or 60 years of age, then these younger ones could not be regarded as elders. It is a matter of relativity of age in each congregation. Elders become "pastors" as a result of the growth they have made during the time they have been members of the church. Those already functioning should be on the lookout for others coming up, who are growing in grace, knowledge and ability, and with a gesture and invitation should encourage them to take the oversight with them. Radical, I know, but I believe this is more in harmony with the spirit of the New Testament than the practice of choosing Pastors. Too often these become the "lords" over the heritage. There can be no more important work for the Lord, the church, and the saint, than that performed by the Pastor! God bless them, wherever they are to be found.

One last thought; let us not make too much of the past leaders of the church. Most of them were politically-minded and indulged in these matters. With what disastrous consequences we have every reason to know. When we reflect that the 1914 war was the result of political activity going back for many years, and that the 1939 war was an attempt to turn the tide of history which, apparently, had taken a wrong turn a few years previously, and that this again has produced the present world situation so far as human responsibility is concerned, then I think we have every reason for rejecting the whole business, and to leave these things to those who say: "We will not have this man to rule over us."

Let us constantly remember that the Lord is King of kings, and that we as His people can do more to save the world from the ravages of nuclear war if we remain faithful to the Lord. Remember, all political parties are committed to the use of the nuclear weapon. Surely, the Lord does not ask His saved people to support these things. Had ten people in Sodom been righteous, the city would have been spared.

Each one of us needs to guard against lightly regarding ourselves in situations similar to those now existing. Even when Babylon the great is nearing destruction, the Lord sends this message to His people: "Come out of her, that ye receive not of her plagues."

J. B. Kendrick.

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Dec. 9th, 1964.



(Conducted by
A. E. Winstanley,
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Kent).

TALKING TO THE LITTLE ONES

THE STORY OF JOSEPH

I EXPECT you could tell me the story of Joseph—the boy who was cruelly wronged by his brothers. Do you remember what they did? They sold him into slavery for twenty pieces of silver, to some travelling merchants. Then the merchants sold him to an Egyptian named Potiphar.

Open your bible and read Genesis, chapter 37—or ask mother or dad to read it to you.

Now can you tell me why the brothers did this wicked deed?

Envy

“And his brethren envied him” (Genesis 37:11). That was the trouble—**envy**. What is that? Well, here are two other words for it: “jealousy,” or “ill-will.”

Sometimes people see others doing well at something and dislike them for it—that's envy, jealousy, ill-will. Of course, when someone else does get on or do well in what they are doing, we should be glad for them. That is what it means to **love** others.

The trouble with envy is that it so often leads to something worse. Because they envied him. Joseph's brothers “hated him and could not speak peaceably to him” (Genesis 37:4).

You know how the rulers of the Jews had our Saviour killed, don't you? But do you know why they did it? Here's one reason: the Roman governor, Pilate, “knew that for envy they had delivered him” (Matthew 27:18).

Envy is like a weed in a lovely garden. Small at first perhaps, not very important, or so it seems. But the little weed can quickly grow, multiply itself and spoil the whole garden. So be wise and don't let it take root in the garden of your life. And what shall we plant in its place? Why, the flower called **love**, of course

Sin begets sin

You may not understand this: “Sin begets sin,” so I'll explain. When Joseph's brothers had sold him they dare not tell their father the truth. So they told a lie: they said they had found the blood-stained coat. They had themselves dipped it in the blood of a goat, and they deceived Jacob, making him think a wild animal had killed the lad.

That's the trouble with sin—one wrong so easily leads to another—and another—and another. That is what we mean when we say that sin begets sin. And that is why it is so important to love others as Jesus did. Then it is so much easier to do them kindness—as Jesus did.

God with Joseph

Though sold as a slave to Potiphar, Joseph “prospered.” And this is the reason why: “**God was with him**” (Genesis 39:3).

Does this mean that Joseph was God's “favourite” and that the Lord was going to see that he prospered no matter what he said or did? Of course not. The Lord was with him because he was a **righteous** person. He did right, trying always to please God. Others treated Joseph badly, but he did not try to “pay them back” or “get his own back.” He tried always to do what God expected of him.

This too reminds us of our Saviour. He, “when he was reviled, did not revile in return; when he suffered he did not threaten, but committed himself to God.”

Let's be like Jesus—and Joseph—**“Trust in God and do the right!”**

* * *

I think there is only one quality worse than hardness of heart, and that is softness of head. (Theodore Roosevelt).

All sunshine makes the desert.—Arab proverb.

Not only is he idle who is doing nothing, but he that might be better employed.—Socrates.

The Deathless Book

THE Bible is indestructible. There is no danger that any man, or any combination of men, will destroy the sacred volume. They can, and do, destroy the faith of men in the Bible; but they cannot destroy the Bible.

About twenty-five hundred years ago, Jehoiakim, king of Judah, cut the roll of Jeremiah's prophecy with a penknife and then consigned it to the flames; but he did not destroy the inspired message of the "weeping prophet." Jehoiakim died in disgrace and, as the prophet said, was given the "burial of an ass." "Therefore thus saith Jehovah concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah: They shall not lament him, saying, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! They shall not lament for him saying, Ah Lord! or, Ah his glory! He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem." (Jer. 22:18, 19).

Early in the fourth century of our era Diocletian, the Roman Emperor, launched a relentless and bitter attack on the Bible. He sought to consign every copy of it to the flames. About two years after he began his ruthless destruction of Bibles, he erected, over the ashes of burned Bibles, a monument which bore the inscription—"Extincto Nomine Christianorum"—"Extinct is the name of Christians." Twenty years later, another Roman Emperor, Constantine, was seeking to put the New Testament in all the churches in his empire.

Voltaire, in the eighteenth century, predicted that the Bible would, within one hundred years, be a forgotten book. Within much less than a century the Geneva Bible Society was using his home as a basis from which it distributed millions of Bibles. Ingersoll, American agnostic, once held a Bible high in his hand and boastfully exclaimed, "In fifteen years I will have this book in the morgue." Within fifteen years Ingersoll was in the morgue—in his grave; but the Grand Old Book lived on.

The poet, Blake, well said:

"Mock on, mock on, Voltaire, Rousseau;
Mock on, mock on; 'tis all in vain!
You throw the dust against the wind,
And the wind blows it back again."

Another poet, Flynn, has said:

"They burned Truth in the market place
And thought their work complete;
But next day, with a smiling face,
They met it on the street.
They threw it in a dungeon damp
And thought it was no more;
But lo, it walked with lighted lamp
Among them as before.
They scorned and ostracised it,
And ordered it to depart;
But still it dwelt in all the land
And challenged every heart."

A recent writer, A. Z. Conrad, paid this tribute to the Bible:

Century follows century: there it stands.
Empires rise and fall and are forgotten: there it stands.
Dynasty follows dynasty: there it stands.
Kings are crowned and uncrowned: there it stands.
Despised and torn to pieces: there it stands.
Atheists rail against it: there it stands.
Agnostics smile cynically: there it stands.
Profane punsters caricature it: there it stands.
Unbelief abandons it: there it stands.
Higher critics deny its inspiration: there it stands.
Thunderbolts of wrath smite it: there it stands.
An anvil that has broken a million hammers: there it stands.
The flames are kindled about it: there it stands.
The arrows of hate are discharged against it: there it stands.
Radicalism rants and raves against it: there it stands.
Fogs of sophistry conceal it temporarily: there it stands.
The tooth of time gnaws but makes no dent in it: there it stands.
Infidels predict its abandonment: there it stands.
Modernism tries to explain it away: there it stands.

"Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." (Psalm 119:89).

The Role of the Christian Wife

1. She was created to be a helper to her husband, not a competitor. Together they will live more fully than alone. Marriage stretches their powers, their understanding, their wisdom. Marriage is a commitment, not a contract—not a covenant. A commitment has no reservation! It can be compared to the commitment one makes to Christ and is binding as long as one lives. It is a true ministry, for better or for worse!

2. Hers is a ministry of affection. How women need to know what it means to a man to have a loving wife. She is his attentive audience, his source of praise, his tender life. She is always loyal when others may misunderstand him. She it is who seeks to keep her life uncluttered so that she can give more time to his needs.

3. There is a joy in submission. The New Testament plainly teaches that a husband is the leader, the head of the wife and that she is to be subject to him in the Lord. (Eph. 5). As the Christian loses his life to find it, so the greatest love leads a wife so to trust her husband that she has no fear in promising to obey him. There are great rewards in submission. The self-centred, dominant woman may at first feel a thrill at being able to control her husband, but as a psychiatrist said, a woman loses respect for a man she can dominate and finally detests a man she can control. In a recent magazine a well-known actress told of her life with five husbands. In closing she said, "I hope yet to meet a man who will really be the head of my house! I'd be glad to obey him." The Christian wife's role is to encourage her husband to accept the leadership God has placed in his hands.

4. The virtue of unselfishness pays its greatest rewards in marriage. In no other relationship in life (because no other relationship is so close) is the golden rule as effective. "If I wish he were more thoughtful of men, I will be more thoughtful of him."

5. His spiritual welfare should be her prayerful concern. "Think of it: as a wife you may be your husband's salvation." (1 Cor. 7: 16, NEB.). The power of a wife's influence may make the difference between heaven and hell.

6. Her marriage is permanent. "A wife must not separate herself from her husband." (1 Cor. 7:11; see also 7:13, 30). The Christian wife says, "I have chosen. I will no longer seek someone who can please me, but I will seek to please him whom have chosen."

7. The physical relationship is hallowed by God's law and love. "And the wife equally must give the husband his due. The wife cannot claim her body as her own: it is her husband's . . . Do not deny yourselves to one another." (1 Cor. 7:3-5, NEB.). This physical symbol of a spiritual oneness expresses and enhances love.

HELEN M. YOUNG.



THE NYASALAND PROJECT

As stated in December 1964 issue of the "Standard," the church in Tunbridge Wells has decided not to proceed with this project.

As far as possible we are writing to those who contributed to ask their advice about the return or disposal of their gifts.

However, quite a number of gifts were anonymous, and some who did not send anonymously specifically asked that their names be not recorded.

If any brethren who contributed have not received a letter from us, we would be glad to hear from them immediately with instructions concerning the return or disposal of their contributions. A. E. Winstanley, 43a Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.



The public wishes itself to be managed like a woman: one must say nothing to it except what it likes to hear.—Goethe.

EXPLANATION

We are sorry to be late with S.S. but the time lost in the post due to the Christmas rush between correspondents and Editor and between Editor and ourselves has been so prolonged that delivery of all parcels before January 3rd will not be possible.

Walter Barker (Printers) Ltd.

W.B.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Bedminster, Bristol.—We were privileged to have the services of Bro. C. Philip Slate, of Wembley, for a mission from 4th to 18th November. About eight thousand coloured pamphlets were distributed, and the local press gave us some useful publicity. Attendances were good and some interest was aroused among

non-members. Contacts were made which are being followed up.

Bro. Slate gave splendid teaching to the church and preached the gospel so that none went away ignorant of God's way of salvation. It was disappointing that there were no immersions during the mission, but the seed faithfully sown bore fruit when on 6th December we witnessed the confession and baptism of Miss Yvonne Edwards, Mrs. Violet Carey and Mrs. Joy Ponting. Bro. Tom Nisbet travelled to Bristol specially for the occasion, and to pay his tribute to our late Bro. Ernest Baker. We pray that those now added to the church will remain faithful to the end. We are indeed grateful to God for all His many blessings. A.L.D.

Ince-In-Makerfield (Wigan). — Saturday, 24th October, 1964, saw the beginning of a series of meetings which were addressed by Bro. Fausto Salvoni, a former Roman Catholic priest, from Milan, Italy. The first meeting was held in Queen's Hall, Wigan, when over 400 people heard Bro. Salvoni tell the story of his conversion to the Lord. For five nights, meetings were held in the Ince Public Hall, and on Friday, 30th October, 30th the final meeting was held in our meeting-place in Petticoat Lane. Many brethren, from near and far, and a good number of friends, heard Bro. Salvoni as he earnestly contended for the faith once delivered to the saints. Pray with us, brethren, that the seed sown will bring forth fruit in due season, to God's glory.

Rejoice with us, brethren, in that one precious soul has been translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. On Lord's Day morning, 15th November, 1964, Mrs. Banks attended our adult Bible Class because she wanted to express her desire to obey her Lord in baptism. Mrs. Banks, who lives on the nearby housing estate, had attended our mid-week Bible studies quite often, as well as some of our gospel meetings: she had also attended a number of Bro. Salvoni's meetings, and the seed had fallen into a good and honest heart. On that Lord's Day morning she made the good confession and obeyed her Lord. Please remember our sister in your prayers; pray that she may grow to be a useful servant in the Lord's vineyard.

Morley.—We are pleased to report that on Sunday, November 1st, 1964, two men were baptised. They were John Day, who has been attending our meetings for about six months, and after serious thought and prayer obeyed Jesus in baptism, and Bro. Parker who came into contact with our congregation and studied with us for about nine months, before being baptised.

We commend them to our heavenly Father that they may bring others to follow Jesus. M. Gaunt.

Wallacestone.—The church at Wallacestone rejoices to record that on 30th October, 1964, two were immersed into Christ. One, a young woman, Margaret Clifford, has been attending our meetings for some time and having prayerfully and sincerely searched the scriptures to see if what she heard was indeed so, made known her decision and was immersed by Bro. John Baird. The other, Mrs. Muraska, a former Roman Catholic had been brought to a knowledge of the truth through the efforts of Bro. Alex. Freckleton over a period of almost two years, and was immersed by him. We thank and praise God for these decisions and pray that as their knowledge of God's word increases they will become useful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. James Grant.

COMING EVENT

INCE-IN-MAKERFIELD (Wigan)

CAMPAIGN FOR CHRIST (Spring, 1965)

THE Lord willing, we plan to conduct a campaign for Christ, commencing on Friday, 16th April and concluding on Lord's Day, 2nd May, 1965.

During the past few years a number of campaigns have been conducted in the British Isles, and at each campaign a party of workers from the U.S.A. has come over to help in these efforts. When such campaigns are held a brother is appointed to lead the personal work, and one is selected to preach the gospel at the evening gospel meetings. Each day begins with a devotional period, when the day's work is planned, words of encouragement and advice are given, and questions or difficulties are dealt with. The workers then proceed to visit the homes of the district, inviting the occupants to attend the gospel meetings, and endeavouring to make appointments for home Bible studies or the showing of film strips in the home.

We plan to hold such a campaign, using workers who are already in the British Isles. We appreciate the work that our American brethren have done, but we feel that we ought not to always rely on them, so we are appealing to any brethren who can possibly devote all, or some time, during the above period, to come to Ince and have a part in this campaign for Christ.

Bro. Albert Winstanley, of Tunbridge Wells, has already kindly agreed to serve as gospel preacher at the evening meetings. Brethren, please give this matter your prayerful consideration, and write to us soon, telling us of your intention to have a part in this effort.

Philip Partington, 636 Atherton Road, Hindley Green, Wigan, Lancashire.

EVANGELIST WANTED

THE church meeting at Cambrian Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, would like to hear from any brother willing to come and labour for the Lord in this south-east corner of England. Brother Winstanley hopes, the Lord willing, to move to the Midlands during the summer of 1965. The church here feels that a brother is needed to replace him, to work with the congregation until such time as men will be prepared to be elders. The south-east is a fast-growing area of our country; Tunbridge Wells is a growing town, and this congregation believes that God wants a strong, vigorous work to be maintained in this area. It is a sad fact that many large towns in the south-east have no church, and there is a desperate need for workers here.

To any brother looking for challenging opportunities to labour for the Master, and willing to work hard in an outpost for restoration, we appeal: come here and help us.

If any family is considering moving home and seeking employment in a new area—why not come to the south-east? Any interested brother should write first to A. E. Winstanley, 43a Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

For the church,

DEREK L. DANIELL,
JAMES F. STYLES,
ALBERT E. WINSTANLEY.

"If you like him . . . let him know it;
Warmly shake his hand and show it;
Let every true encouragement be said.
Do not wait till life is over
And he's underneath the clover,
For he cannot read his tombstone
when he's dead."

Fred Taylor.

AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

WE have received a further anonymous gift to help the church here and want through the "Standard" to acknowledge it. The gift—a £5 note—came in an envelope date-stamped Blackburn and Accrington, Lancs., 1st December, 1964. We thank the fellow-disciple who has shown his love for us in this practical way, and we thank God for the encouragement so given us. A. E. Winstanley, 43a Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

THE DIRTY STORY

- It advertises your own ignorance.
- It displays your lack of sense of decency.
- It indicates the state of your inner character.
- It typifies the meagreness of your resources of entertainment.
- It proclaims the coarseness of your idea of humour.
- It proves to your friends how greatly they may be disappointed in you
- It nauseates those who love fun but hate dirt.
- It dishonours your parents, your children, your home, your friends, your business, your religion and your God.
- It proves your unworthiness and accomplishes nothing but your own undoing.
- It makes you a moral and spiritual inferior in the presence of clean people.
- "For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he." (Prov. 23:7).
- "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." (Matt. 12:37).

"Gospel Advocate."

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All correspondence, including articles, news items, coming events, etc., to be sent, before the 10th of the month to the Editor, C. MELLING, 133 Long Lane, Hindley, Lancs. Payments to PAUL JONES, address as above.

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EVANGELIST FUND: Contributions to R. McDONALD, who is also Secretary of Conference Committee, "Aldersyde," 10 Mardale Road, Bennett Lane, Dewsbury, York.

NYASALAND Mission: Contributions to W. STEELE, 31 Niddrie Road, Portobello, Edinburgh, Mid Lothian.

Hymn Book Agent and Treasurer: FRED HARDY, 73a Bridge Street, Morley, Leeds, Yorkshire. Tel. Morley 255.