

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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JESUS RULES - O.K.?

AN ancient mode of cancelling bonds, or other contractual obligations, was by striking a nail through the writing. This practice existed in Asia in Christ's time.

It is a profitable exercise to think of all the things that were nailed to the cross of Christ. Think of all the matters that came to a head at the crucifixion of Jesus. Men are apt to blame one another or "pass the buck" to someone else, but for Jesus, 'the buck stopped here' - at Calvary. Think also of all the wonderful blessings brought into the world and affixed to the cross by those terrible nails. Paul (Col. 2:14) in eulogising on all the amazing benefits which accrued to the disciples at Colosse, through Christ, says that God not only forgave all their trespasses but also "Blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, *nailing it to His cross.*" And so the Mosaic Law, like many other things "contary to us" was *figuratively* nailed to the cross. The gospel writers also tell, however, about something which was *literally nailed* to the Lord's cross, and that was a written placard bearing the title "THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS". Most commentaries on the N.T. explain that, when a criminal was publicly executed, it was the common practice to nail a poster to the gallows setting out the name of the criminal with a brief statement of his crime. This was so that passers-by, looking up, could see the placard and learn the cause of what had brought the condemned man to that inauspicious end. We are informed that it was by Pilate (or on his instructions) that the poster was placed on the cross and that Pilate was alone responsible for the exact choice of words employed. According to Luke (23:38) Pilate penned the superscription in *three separate languages* - in *Greek, Latin and Hebrew*. Jerusalem was, of course, a very cosmopolitan city and, especially at that time, would be packed with men from all nations. We can, therefore, understand that Pilate would want as many spectators as possible to read what he had written and thus he employed three of the world's main languages. Was the statement, written above the head of Jesus, really left to the whim of Pilate, or did God have a hand in it all? Perhaps Pilate chose the words with tongue-in-cheek; or perhaps, even as it seems, to annoy the Jews, but "THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS" was a great truth nevertheless. Some time ago I read the opinion of someone who thought that these words of Pilate were not really his own but were, in fact, God's own loud and triumphant declaration to the entire world, then and yet to come, and that the choice of languages (Greek, Latin and Hebrew) was very significant. These three languages represented three entirely different worlds and concepts. For instance, Greek was representative of culture, and learning.

GREEK- The Language Of Culture

Like many another ancient language Greek has preserved its main characteristics throughout its history so that if any of the great Greek poets or philosophers of 25 centuries ago could re-appear in the Athens of today it would take them only an hour or two to adjust themselves to all the differences which have arisen since their day. The Greek language is very expressive and of great clarity and economy - a thought can be expressed in one or two words of Greek that would take a whole sentence in English. Perhaps this is why the New Testament was written, basically, in such a language. Such was the respect for this language that throughout Europe, for 2,000 years, a knowledge of Greek has been the hall-mark of the professional scholar. Greece was the birthplace of European civilisation and while the Picts, Scots and Ancient Britons were belting one another on the head with wooden clubs and grunting "Uggh" the Greeks had, centuries before, written definitive works in all the disciplines of learning. The intellectual curiosity of the Greeks led them to investigate questions about everything and resulted in a vast accumulation of writings on subjects as varied as Biology; Philosophy; Natural History; Mathematics; Astronomy; Geography; Physical Science etc. etc. Greek is indeed the backbone of scientific language. Even today, in the study of all these subjects we continually encounter "English" words provided by the Greeks e.g. Philosophy (*Philo*, I love; *sophos*, wisdom); Atom (*Atomos*; that which cannot be divided); etc. etc. Words, like silicones, biology, electrodynamics; barograph, heterodyne, hygiene, thermometer, thesis, theory, therapeutic, theology, etc. etc. are all in every-day use in the 'English' language but are originally Greek - and the list is almost endless. From Greek politicians and law-givers came the basis of the western legal system and the conception of democracy (another Greek word). From their mathematicians and philosophers came much of the basis of modern science. Greek dramatists set the pattern on which drama has developed ever since. Their artists and sculptors laid down the principles of European art and even our Victorian buildings are often copies of their architecture. Athens was the very hub of all forms of culture and at the Olympian Festival the Olympic Games were born. Even when conquered by the Romans Greece remained the tutor of Europe and Horace wrote "Greece taken captive captured her savage conquerer and carried her arts into clownish Rome". Euclid, Archimedes, Pythagoras, Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, Pyrrho, Homer, Euripides, Sophocles and Herodotus are just a few of the names to conjure with. The Greeks were not in any sense Barbarians but were enlightened, elegant, accomplished and very refined. Nor were they irreligious for did not Paul, on his visit to Athens, comment on how religious they were, misdirected worship though it was. The vehicle of language for all the culture and learning was Greek. Yet "Jesus Is King" even in the realms of learning and refinement. "Jesus is King" was expressed on the cross - in Greek. There is no disharmony between Christ and true culture. Jesus rules everywhere.

LATIN - The Language Of Law & Government

The idea of *international language* spoken by all the peoples of Christendom seems remote or even visionary, but such a language existed for many centuries - from just before the dawn of the Christian era until about the 9th Century. This language was latin, the tongue spoken by the victorious Roman legions who carried it through most of Europe and into Asia and Africa. Wherever Rome established her rule Latin became the standard speech of the nobles and other leading citizens. The Latin of western Europe developed into different languages (about 800 AD) all having a strong resemblance e.g. Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Old French and Rumanian. In the Middle Ages scholars, priests and statesmen could travel the length and breadth of Europe without learning the tongues of the various countries because there were sure to be men of learning who spoke Latin. State documents, scholarly and scientific documents in Europe were exclusively written in Latin and many English authors,

such as Bede, Bacon, Camden, wrote in Latin to reach a wider public. Even Sir Isaac Newton penned his discoveries in that language. About one quarter of the 'English' we use is borrowed from Latin and we rarely speak a sentence without using a word like 'mile', 'city', 'army', 'justice', 'religion' etc. etc. which are all Latin words. In other 'Romantic' languages in Europe the proportion of Latin in their language is very much higher. When Greece was producing immortal poetry Latin was still only a dialect spoken by a few tribes in the vicinity of Rome and it was not until the 1st Century (B.C.) that it had developed into a superb literary medium, a truly marvellous instrument for prose or poetry. It was thus a fairly young language when Pilate put it above Christ's head. With the gradual breakdown of the Roman Empire, which followed the death of Marcus Aurelius (AD 180) Roman literature almost disappeared but Latin continued to be written for 1,500 years (throughout the Middle Ages and beyond) and is still a learned language.

Latin was not so much the language of culture as the language of law, administration, discipline and government. The Romans gave new meaning to these terms. From Rome they sent out their legions, highly trained and disciplined to subjugate the world under one command. Democracy was not what they had in mind. These Legions conquered everywhere (except the rough Highlanders of the north of Scotland) and brought 'civilisation' to much of the world. (Having missed out on this civilisation the Scots are just as uncouth as ever - which is a pity). From Rome came also engineers, civil servants, and colonists and with application and industry they eventually built up a vast empire with a flag (or standard) on nearly every shore. They brought order, organisation, discipline and authority out of chaos. The Roman Centurion who spoke to Jesus reckoned that 'authority' was what they both had in common. They had a genius for law and government and gave the world a system which, even today, forms the basis of 'British Justice'. The apostle Paul, on more than one occasion was pleased to claim the protection given by Roman law and justice. Most legal phrases are still in Latin as are medical and horticultural terms.

The aqueducts of ancient Rome are wonders of engineering and the hot baths in the houses of the ruling classes, and the great sewers all show the high degree of technical skill which prevailed at that early age. The old proverb said that "All roads lead to Rome" and some of these wonderful paved Roman roads can be seen today and in parts of Britain we can still walk along them and cross Roman bridges. In the world of commerce, law and administration - represented in the Latin tongue "Jesus is King" even there. In a society which respected, and even revered authority, Jesus could claim to have 'All authority both in heaven and in earth'. "Jesus, the King of the Jews" was written *in Latin* on the cross.

HEBREW - The Language Of Religion

It was the language in which the O.T. was written (except for a few passages in the Aramaic dialect) and in which the scriptures are still read in Jewish Synagogues. Hebrew is the best known member of West Asiatic and African languages known as Semitic. The Semitic (named from Shem, son of Noah) languages are divided into two great branches - Northern and Southern. To the former belong Hebrew, Phoenician, Aramaic and Assyrian, while Arabic and Amharic (language of Ethiopia) are of the second group. Hebrew and Phoenician are virtually dialects of one tongue and Hebrew was spoken in Palestine as early as 2,000 years before Christ. The words are mostly short and sentence construction simple. Apparently much can be expressed in a few words of Hebrew and reading is done from right to left and from the end to the beginning. In daily speech the Jews came to use the Aramaic language of their Syrian neighbours but Hebrew was preserved as a religious and literary language. From earliest times dispersed Jews have adopted the language of the country in which they happened to dwell and even in the 1st Century AD Josephus, the great Jewish historian, wrote mostly in Greek so that he could reach the greatest number of

readers. His "History Of The Jewish Wars" was written first in Aramaic and then in Greek but only the more easily read Greek version has survived.

Hebrew was the language of revealed religion. The Jewish religion, that of the one true and living God, shone down the centuries as a great shaft of light, surrounded on all sides by the murky darkness of ignorance and paganism. Consider the debt owed by all the world to that great light. Our entire knowledge of God in the O.T. is enshrined in the Hebrew language. It was the language which carried all the force and impetus of God's revealed will to the world. It was chiselled upon tablets of stone. "Thus saith the Lord" - the call and cry of an extremely long and continuous line of prophets was relayed in that hallowed of tongues. The oracles of God have been preserved in 'the Jews language' and we can understand Nehemiah's disgust at the "Jew that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon and of Moab; and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, but could not speak *in the Jews' language*" (Neh. 13:24). The Jews, it seems had an aptitude for religion, a view shared by Jesus, it seems, for He remarked to women at the well, "Ye (the Samaritans) worship ye know not what; we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews." (John 4:22). Hebrew was indeed the vocabulary of God. Small wonder then that "THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS" should be written in Hebrew, in the language of God (and, incidentally, the mother tongue of those murdering God's Son). Yes, Hebrew was the language of religion.

All One In Christ Jesus

Undoubtedly we all owe a great debt to the Greeks for learning and culture, and to the Romans for law and government, and to the Jews whose religion and writings were our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ but now, in turn, we are all united in the debt we owe to Jesus. The languages employed on that Golgotha declaration that "Jesus was King" must now re-echo these sentiments *in this present day*. Every voice, represented by Greek, Latin and Hebrew, (indeed in every dialect of the world) must confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Every tongue must confess and every knee must bow - and better now than later. All nations share alike the great debt we owe to Him who hung upon the tree. Little did Pilate realise, as he nailed that placard to the cross that that same Jesus, while refusing to come down from the stake, would yet exercise His limitless power in rising up from the grave - thus proving His right to the description on the caption. Jesus proved Himself to be "Jesus The King" *not only of the Jews* but King over all, "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." His kingdom is boundless and He must reign until all enemies are under His feet. As Daniel had predicted, "...there was given unto Him dominion and glory, and a kingdom that all people, nations and languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Jesus rules - yes, but with love. Napoleon once remarked, "Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and myself founded empires but on what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon force, Yes, upon force. Jesus Christ founded His empire *upon love* and, at this hour, millions of men would gladly die for Him."

The Lord is King! lift up thy voice
 O earth, and all ye heavens rejoice!
 From land to land the joy shall ring,
 The Lord omnipotent is KING.

WHAT VERSION?

AS Christians we should be defending the written word of God. We are soldiers in a war against Satan, but are we prepared, and ready for battle? If tomorrow you are confronted with an opportunity to speak to someone who is searching for the truth and if that person is using a J.B. Phillips translation, could you instantly give three good reasons why a person should not use that particular version. If that person were to tell you that he also had at home a "Revised Version", an "American Standard Version", and a "New American Standard Version", which would you advise?

It is most unfortunate that we live in an age where knowledge is becoming our enemy. For hundreds of years men have wanted the Bible translated into a readable form. Then came along the odd scholar who undertook the task. Next came the printing press to mass produce these translations. Today we have high speed mass production producing a mass of translations. Some people think this is wonderful, personally speaking, I do not.

When the truth was presented to me I experienced confusion because of the new translations which I was then reading. I am convinced there are new translations on the market today which clearly obliterate the terms of Salvation. These translations add very little truth, faith and stability to us, but much has been added to error, doubt and instability. Consequently many people are confused, many wonder, many are insecure.

If you were to ask a specific question about the Bible today you may get a dozen answers, and many of them are only the theological views of the so-called translators or translator. It is very hard to have unity when your thinking is guided by such a source of division.

No-one opposes new translations which are true. The opposition centres around translations loaded with errors, that pervert the gospel and hurt the church. It is granted that every man has the right to publish a commentary, but it is also contended that no man has the right to offer one to the public in the disguise of a Bible. The purity of the Bible should not be violated.

Our first concern in Bible study is to be sure we have the pure Word of God, as nearly pure as translators can render it, and then we can go on from there to learn its meaning. What good is an easily understood Bible if you don't know whether or not it is true? If the truth means nothing, then why read the Bible in the first place?

Many people have suspected that this mass of new translations has been brought about for two reasons. The sceptics were unable to destroy the Bible from Outside, so they are busy trying to get Christians to do for them, what they were never able to do on their own. Others think that it is not love for God but for the pounds and pence that is the real reason for so many new perversions of the Bible. Certainly in some instances money has entered into the picture.

Verbal Inspiration

The Bible is God's verbally inspired, immovable perfect Word. Hundreds of times we read that God spoke. It was not the word of Moses, or Joshua or Daniel, but God speaking through these people. "All scripture is given by the inspiration of God". (2 Tim. 3:16). "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Peter 1:21).

"God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets." Heb.1:1. When we read the Bible it is God speaking. When Moses wrote, he wrote what God directed him to write. This is what the Bible means by "inspired".

The ten commandments were given by the voice of God speaking from Mount Sinai. "And God spoke all these words." Exodus 20:1.

Jesus our Lord quoted from, and endorsed, the Old Testament as the inspired Word of God. He quoted from Deut. 8:3, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Jesus defeated the devil by quoting the Old Testament, the written Word of God.

Christ did not come to destroy but to fulfil the Old Testament. Matt. 5:17 & 18. Jesus said the scripture cannot be broken. John 10:35. He also said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away but my Word shall not pass away." Matt. 24:35.

Jesus verified the Genesis account of creation in Matt. 19:4-6. He accepted the account of the flood in the days of Noah in Matthew 24:37-39. He also mentioned the flood in Luke 17:27. Jesus approved the story in Matt. 12:40-41. We now have the inspired Word of God.

Inspiration of the Bible resides not merely in the original Hebrew and Greek words but in the truth itself. Any correct translation is inspired.

It was a history-making event when the Authorized Version, later called the King James Version, was made. Forty-seven of the world's finest scholars presented this translation with fear and trembling. The King James Version has stood the test of time and helped to civilise the world. Its few inaccuracies and obsolete words did not keep it from showing men and women the requirements of Salvation.

The King James Translation of the Bible brought the church to us. It was the translation that gave us the Restoration Movement. The few inaccuracies in translation and obsolete words are not of any great importance and they were well taken care of in the American Standard Version of 1901. Anything which cannot be proved by the King James Version and American Standard Version Bible is not the truth. All the New Bibles have not brought us one new thing that is truth.

The King James Version and American Standard Version Bibles are not perfect translations and no-one objects to new translations which are accurate and reliable. But we *must* object to those who re-write the Bible to suit the whims and fancies of un-inspired men.

Other Versions

Having said this much it seems only right to briefly mention some examples. Let us start with the *Revised Standard Version*. When you compare this to the Authorized Version we find the disappearance of words from the text through and through, page after page, verse after verse. Scores upon scores of deletion without any indication that the original words had been omitted. Hundreds of verses are missing.

The phrase, "the Son of God", in some places is changed to "a Son of God" which casts doubts in one's mind. In Isaiah 7:14 the prophecy of "a virgin shall conceive and bear a child whose name shall be called Immanuel," has been changed to "a young woman shall conceive", which severs the prophecy and fulfillment in the Virgin Birth of Jesus.

In Matthew 1:25 the Revised Standard add further confusion by dropping the word "First-born" out of the sentence that "Joseph knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son".

When the R.S.V. is fully exposed it is a shocking translation. In fact it is not a translation neither is it a version. It is poison and should be treated as such. There is a review of this translation, by Foy Wallace who has written 170 pages on the R.S.V.

Now we come to the *New English Bible*. In Mark 1:4 we read, "John did baptize in the wilderness and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins". The New English Bible changes it to, "a baptism in token of repentance". There is no such word as token, in the text, and no word that means, what token does.

A token is a symbol of something, an outward sign. Denominational creeds for centuries have chanted that baptism is the outward sign of inward grace. Baptism is NOT a token of repentance, nor is it an outward sign of inward anything. It is distinctly for the remission of sins.

In Luke's Gospel it is equally unwarranted and in-excusable to omit from 22:19, after "This is my body", the statement of Jesus "which is given for you, this do in remembrance of me". Both these phrases are omitted and verse 20 is also completely omitted, which states in the A.V. "Likewise also the cup after the supper saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood which is shed for you".

In Gal. 3:1 the A.V. says, "O foolish Galatians who hath bewitched you that you should not obey the truth". The New English Bible changes Paul's statement to "You stupid Galatians". The word foolish does not mean stupid. It is another reflection on the editorial committee of the New English Bible to indulge in inferior language.

Because of the vastness of this subject I will only point out some errors in the following versions. There is, as I have already said a book covering these versions in greater depth. To be precise, it is an 855 page book on this single subject, which took 11 years to compose.

The Scofield Reference Bible makes admission of changes in the text which they claim will assist the reader. Pre-millennial theory and the seven dispensation theory stand out like a sore thumb. It is a text book of false doctrine.

The Living Bible can be summed up as dishonest, coarse, crude and vulgar. It teaches error at every opportunity and must surely be one of the worst paraphrased editions out.

The J.B. Philip New Testament in Modern English is not far behind the Living Bible for being crude and has an abundance of errors like the other new Bibles. In Galatians 3:1 he begins, "O you dear idiots of Galatia", instead of "O foolish Galatians."

In the New International Version we are no better off. The amount of verses and phrases which have just been dropped right out leads me to believe this is deliberate. For example Mark 16:9-20 is added on with a reluctant note that some *reliable* manuscripts omit these verses, which is not the case. In 2 Cor. 11:23 this verse is translated as Paul saying, "I am out of my mind to talk like this". Paul out of his mind? Paul may have been speaking foolishly but he was not out of his mind and never said so.

In chapter 2 of Acts and verse 39 the conjunction "for" is removed which connects the gift of the Holy Spirit in verse 38 with the blessings of the gospel to Jew and Gentile in verse 39 - and is thus definitive of the Holy Spirit's gift.

One of the most well known verses in the Bible, John 3:16 is misquoted. This verse in this translation says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." There is a world of difference in the words "should not" perish and "shall not" perish. One is conditional and the other is not.

In Acts 11:14 Peter's report of the words of the angel, "who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and thy house shall be saved", is omitted.

The errors of this translation are bad enough, without the preface, which tells us that the scholars who did the translation came from various denominations, one being the church of Christ. Not that I class the church as a denomination.

These Bibles are the latest of today's versions They are perversions of the Word of God. This is a crisis that we are facing today whether we are aware of this or not. What we do in private may be our own personal affair but what we do and say in public we will be held responsible for, and God will not hold us guiltless.

Versions or Perversions

These are some of the weapons of Satan today, in disguise. Let us be comforted by the words of Paul who once said, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

The King James Version has stood the test of time. It was the translation that gave

us the restoration movement. The few inaccuracies in translation and obsolete words are not of any great importance and they were well taken care of in the American Standard Version of 1901. The 1901 version is probably the most accurate word for word translation ever made. It is sometimes called "slavishly accurate". Whatever that means, it will never be said about the rash of new Bibles we are getting. Accuracy is not one of their faults.

It would be expedient, I think, to close this article with a word of advice as to what version we should use from the Bible itself.

There are six verses which spring to mind.

- (1) Deuteronomy 32:7, "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee."
- (2) Proverbs 22:28, "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set".
- (3) Hebrew 13:7-9, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever. Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."
- (4) 1 Corinthians 16:13, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."
Graeme Pearson, Glasgow

GLEANINGS

"Let her glean even among the sheaves." Ruth 2:15

WE QUOTE - HUDSON TAYLOR

"It is not hard to please those we love. God is not hard to please, nor is human love, for it is a dim reflection of His own. We do not estimate our love-gifts by their intrinsic value, but rather by the love they express." And then he continues: "God wants our love. He wants our sympathy; He wants the gifts and offerings which are prompted by love. Shall He look to us in vain? Our David still thirsts, not for the waters of the well of Bethlehem, but for the souls for which He died. Shall He not have them?"

LOOKING UNTO JESUS

"Well has it been said that the whole Gospel message is conveyed to us sinners in those three words, "Looking unto Jesus." Is it pardon we need, is it acceptance, free as the love of God, holy as His law? We find it, we possess it, "looking unto Jesus" crucified. Is it power we need, victory and triumph over sin, capacity and willingness to witness and to suffer in a world which loves Him not at all? We find it, we possess it, it possesses us, as we "look unto Jesus" risen and reigning, for us on the Throne, with us in the soul. Is it rule and model that we want, not written on the stones of Horeb only, but "on the fleshy tables of the heart"? We find it, we receive it, we yield ourselves up to it, as we "look unto Jesus" in His path of love, from the Throne to the Cross, from the Cross to the Throne, till the Spirit inscribes that law upon inmost wills.

Be ever more and more to us, Lord Jesus Christ, in all Thy answer to our boundless needs. Let us "sink to no second cause." Let us come to Thee. Let us follow Thee. Let us yield to Thee. Let us follow Thee. Present Thyself evermore to us as literally our all in all. And so through a blessed fellowship in Thy wonderful humiliation we shall partake for ever hereafter in the exaltations of Thy glory, which is the glory of immortal love."

H.C.G. Moule

I CAN BELIEVE

"A scientific man tells me that there are over four million fibres within an inch of brain matter. I cannot conceive of such a number of fibres, or even of one million, being crammed into such a small space. But I accept the statement of the scientist, because he has investigated it, because he has put a small portion of brain matter under the microscope. And if I can believe that - which is a miracle - I can believe that Jesus, who is the maker of the material and spiritual universe, could give sight to the blind, the power of hearing to the deaf, and speech to the dumb. Therefore, all this ridicule of the life of Jesus counts for nothing."

Isaac Selby

SOLITUDE, NOT LONELINESS

"Go forth into the plain, and I will there talk with thee." Ezek. 3:22

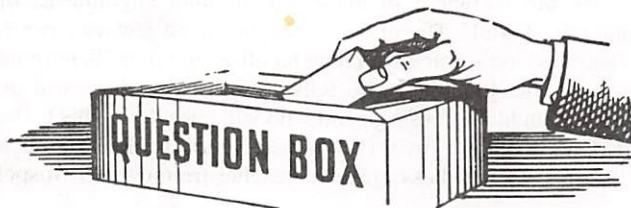
"Why not talk with him in the city? Is the city without divine messages? Are the countless throngs upon the city streets very far from God? Not necessarily. God speaks as surely in the city as in the desert. By unexpected events, by labour and strife, by the various fortunes of vice, and the amazing struggles of virtue, God speaks to men with distinctness and solemnity. The point is that busy men may hear God in solitude, and solitary men may hear Him in the city. Change of mere position may have moral advantages. In the great temple of the sea we may offer peculiar worship; in the quiet sanctuary of the wilderness we may hear the softest tones of heaven. This should be insisted upon so as to destroy the fallacy that in the absence of any one set of outward circumstances worship is impossible."

Joseph Parker

JONATHAN EDWARDS

"Jonathan Edwards, one of the purest and princeliest souls that ever were made perfect through suffering, has told all that fear God what God did for his soul. In intellect Edwards was one of the very greatest of the sons of men, and in holiness he was a seraph rather than a man. And to have from such a saint, and in his own words, what God from time to time did for his so exercised soul is a great gift to us out of the unsearchable riches of Christ. Well, Edwards testifies to the grace of God that immediately after every new season of great distress, great mortification, great humiliation, great self-discovery, and great contrition, there was always given him a corresponding period of great liberty, great enlargement, great detachment, great sweetness, great beauty, and great and ineffable delight. Till he testifies to all who fear God, and challenges us out of Hosea, saying to us: Come, let us return to the Lord our God: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come to us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth."

SELECTED BY LEONARD MORGAN



 Conducted by
 Alf Marsden

"From views which you have expressed in previous articles I gather that you think all training and development should be carried out by the local Church. How would you set about such training, and does it mean that you are against training from any other source?"

There can surely be little doubt that training and development in the Church are urgently needed. I have spent the last twenty years or so devising schemes of industrial training and I suppose this has influenced my thinking to a marked degree, but when one examines the subject closely one can see that the training methods used to achieve the corporate objectives of a company are very similar to those which could be used to achieve the corporate objectives of the Church; as a matter of fact, I recently read a report which suggested that people who wrote training programmes for religious groups should make the best computer programmers. Of course, there will always be those in the Church who think that any form of planning is anathema, but I am not one of those. So where do we start?

Moses and Jethro

Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, taught his son-in-law a very important lesson, one that *we* ought to take note of as well because it illustrates a very important principle. The scripture is Exodus 18:13-27.

The recorded incident tells us how one day Jethro watched Moses judging the people from morning till night. He was evidently appalled by what he saw and asked Moses what he thought he was doing. Moses replied that the people came to him and he had to make them know the statutes of God and the decisions. Jethro then said, "What you are doing is not good. You and the people with you will wear yourselves out, for the thing is too heavy for you; you are not able to perform it alone" (v18). He then counselled Moses to choose men of trustworthy character and judgment, teach them the statutes and decisions, and then appoint them over groups of the people; the really serious matters were to be brought to Moses.

Jethro was counselling Moses in the twin arts of delegation and management of time. There are still too many leaders in the Church who consider themselves to be one-man masters of everything; this hinders the development of others and does nothing to make the community a viable one. Delegation means giving to others *some part of our own job*; the one who delegates has to make a value judgment as to whether the task delegated is capable of being done by the one *to whom* it is delegated. There is no doubt that delegation, if done well, is a good motivator. Management of time means exactly what it says; our time needs to be managed efficiently. Keep a diary for a week and record *every* activity you engage yourself in and the amount of time you will be seen to be wasting will astound you. I feel sure that Moses was a more able administrator after his counselling from Jethro. Perhaps we could look upon Jethro as the first recorded management consultant.

In the N.T. Paul also counselled Timothy, "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also". (2 Tim 2:1,2). Paul here is literally saying to Timothy, 'deposit thou these things to trustworthy and reliable men'. The qualification is as he stated it in 2 Cor. 3:5 where he says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God". The one who teaches must always have in the forefront of his mind that it is God's grace which he handles, and there is nothing in it of self-elevation. You will note that Paul also tells Timothy that there will be 'others in addition' who will be taught the message and who will pass it on. This is the way to pass on the knowledge of God in Christ. Paul taught Timothy who will teach others who will teach still others, an endless chain of teacher-training and Gospel propaganda.

Investigation

Investigation of training needs goes hand in hand with a definition of objectives. It is not the slightest use to train the right people with the wrong objectives in mind. The setting of objectives is quite simply answering the questions, 'what are we going

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to do, when are we going to do it, who is going to do it, and what do we intend the end results to be? Then, and only then, we can begin to look for people who will stand a good chance of achieving our objectives. They need to be evaluated in order to see if any additional training is required for them to achieve their respective tasks. In our selection process we must not be deluded into thinking that formal educational qualifications, important though they are, can automatically furnish us with the right people for the task. Skill and expertise lurk in the most unlikely places; nor must we fall into the trap of selecting those who always agree with us; a group of 'yes-men' will almost certainly not reflect the views of the community as a whole; we must get the *right* person for the task, a round peg in a round hole.

We then begin to devise a training programme. Supposing the Church needs a counselling service and we have someone who likes this work and is quite intelligent and perceptive, but unfortunately he comes across to people as being abrupt and arrogant and an inveterate talker; what are we going to concentrate on in the programme? Obviously, we have to concentrate on developing a more conciliatory attitude, and also we have to teach him the art of listening, and I mean *listening*, not just developing my own argument while the other person is talking, but *actually listening to what he is saying*. You think its easy? Well, just analyse yourself next time you are in the cut and thrust of argument. We then have to put the programme into practice and decide who is going to be responsible for the training. If specialist training is needed, then we may have to look outside the Church; which brings me to my next point.

Other Sources

The questioner asks am I against training from any other source, and I suppose he/she means any source other than the local Church. Well, it is true that I have always been an advocate of the idea that the local Church should perform as many of its functions *as is possible*. It should have no problem at all with the *doctrine*; if it has then there is something fundamentally wrong. What it *may* have difficulty with will be found in the areas of instructional expertise and method, and I see nothing wrong in going to an outside source, such as a Technical College, in order to gain knowledge in these areas. Indeed, many of our forefathers laboured long hours in dim light teaching themselves the Greek language so that they could better understand the Bible themselves and pass on their understanding to others; where is *that* spirit these days. It is also true to say that many of our forefathers *did not bother* to try to improve themselves, resting on that naive assumption that 'the Lord hears sparrows as well as nightingales'; well, of course He does, but unfortunately the general public are not nearly as tolerant as He is.

It seems to me that we must not let events of the past cloud our judgment about the present and the future. If there are brethren in the Church who are capable of teaching others then surely their expertise, together with a love of the Lord and His word, can be utilised for the benefit of others without there being set up any extra organisation over and above the local Church. It would be quite wrong, I believe, to sacrifice good *principles* because people in the past engaged themselves in corrupt *practices*; a good principle will always be a good principle; it is *people* who corrupt. No, I am not against other sources of training, but what I am against is a uniform pattern of doctrinal teaching which would subvert the autonomy of any local assembly, and may run counter to the teaching and training given in such assemblies. That would only exacerbate the problems we already have.

As the Church moves towards the 21st Century we shall need to be clear on such issues as legal separation, divorce, and the problems of Church membership relative to these issues. In the past local Churches have been bombarded by papers by well-intentioned brethren on such issues as head covering and the Lord's Table; they have only served to confuse, and it would have been far better if they had never been

sent. Let us teach and train by all means but let the teaching be direct and to the point; salvation is too important to rest on supposition and assumption. The fundamentals of Churches of Christ will always be fundamentals if they are rightly taught from God's Word; what we do not want to see are 'cloned' Churches, and neither does the world want to see such Churches.

(All questions, please, to Alf Marsden, 377 Billinge Road, Hayfield, Wigan, Lancs.)

SCRIPTURE READINGS

APRIL 1985

7—Isaiah 61	Matt. 12:1-21
14—Ecc. 12	Matt. 12:22-37
21—Jonah 3	Matt. 12:38-50
28—Isaiah 6	Matt. 13:1-23

THE SABBATH

THE eighth commandment of the Decalogue is: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all the work, but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." But what precisely was meant by 'no work'?

By Jesus's day the interpreters of the law were not satisfied with this simple prohibition, so they laid down thirty-nine basic actions which were forbidden on the Sabbath. Among them were reaping, winnowing, threshing and preparing a meal. When the apostles plucked the ears of corn etc. they were guilty of all these things. But Jesus defended them; and in that defence he quoted the action of David (1 Samuel 21:1-6), the Sabbath work of the temple, and God's word to Hosea the prophet: "I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice" (Hosea 6:6). Consider His argument carefully. Remember too that He who spoke was also "Lord of the Sabbath." (12:8).

THE CLEAR CUT LINE

Jesus said: "He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather

with me scatters abroad" (Matthew 12:30). Of course, these words should be carefully studied within their context.

I was reading an old magazine the other day called *The Interpreter*. This particular edition was published in 1910. In it the writer considered these very words of Jesus. He commented: "There is no immediate state in this life: no neutral ground or camp in which we can stand. We are in and for the kingdom of God, or we are in and for the kingdom of Satan. The world is lying in the arms of the wicked one, and unless we have been drawn out and delivered from the arms of the wicked one, by the power and might of the Mighty One, this is where we are and what we are. There is no other realm here below in which we can find a foot-hold. It is either Christ or Belial. Don't deceive yourself or let the deceiver deceive you. This is the truth without sophistry or guile, if there be any truth in Jesus."

In simpler terms: there is a war on. It is good against evil, light against darkness, God against Satan. The book of Revelation clearly discloses the outcome. "And the devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Revelation 20:10).

JESUS GREATER THAN JONAH AND SOLOMON

This subject is very fresh to me because I recently delivered a talk on it at a meeting in Dennyloanhead. In my preparation I studied all I could on Jonah and Solomon. I derived great benefit from the exercise.

Jonah was an outstanding prophet. As a result of his preaching, Nineveh, that great city, repented and turned to God. At first Jonah did not want to go to this wicked capital of the Assyrian empire. In

fact, his reaction to the Divine call was to attempt to flee to Tarshish (Spain) from the presence of the Lord. He learned the hard way that such action was futile. 'Where can I go from your Spirit? or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend into heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in sheol, behold, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me' (Psalm 139:7-10).

Note what Jesus said: "The men of Nineveh will rise in judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here" (12:41). As Albert Barnes commented: "They, ignorant and wicked heathen, repented when threatened with temporal judgment by a mere man - Jonah; you, Jews, professing to be enlightened, though threatened for your great wickedness with eternal punishment by the Son of God - a far greater being than Jonah - repent not, and must therefore meet with a far heavier condemnation."

Solomon was a great man. He ruled over the Jews for forty years after the death of his father David. He was filled with the wisdom of God. What wisdom! "Thus Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men - than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all the surrounding nations" (1 Kings 4:30,31). The Queen of Sheba (Ethiopia) once said to Solomon: "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. However, I did not believe the words until I came and saw it with mine own eyes; and indeed the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard" (1 Kings 10:6,7).

I would urge all our readers to study the three great books of Solomon - Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. You will find them all totally relevant to our age.

Our late bro. William Wardrop of Motherwell often said: "The best of men are men at the best." Such was Solomon. In his life he erred despite his vast wisdom and understanding. For instance, God had decreed in Deuteronomy of the future king: "But he shall not multiply horses, for the Lord has said to you, 'You shall not return that way again.' Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself". (Deuteronomy 17:16,17). Solomon did all three, and sinned against God.

Note again what Jesus said: "The Queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here" (12:42). The lesson is clear: responsibility is based on opportunity. The greater the opportunity, the greater the responsibility.

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

The seed in this parable is the word of the kingdom (13:19). We immediately recall the apostle Peter's remark to the saints of the Dispersion: "Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides for ever..." (1 Peter 1:22,23).

Analyzing this parable, Benjamin Franklin in his book *The Gospel Preacher* wrote: "No matter how rich your ground, nor how well you prepare it, nor how honest your labour, you cannot raise wheat nor corn without seed; no matter how good the ground, how honestly you labour, nor how much the Lord blesses you with rains, sunshine, and a genial season you must have the seed. It is indispensable. In the same way, in the kingdom, we must have the seed of the kingdom, or we can not have the products of the kingdom".

In the interpretation of every parable three things require our very special attention and consideration:

- 1) The illustrating example.
- 2) The object to be illustrated.
- 3) The similitude existing between them.

Robert Milligan in his outstanding book *Reason and Revelation* wrote: "From these data the scope or main design of the parable may be generally inferred without much doubt or difficulty. For instance, after the student shall have thus carefully examined the Parable of the Sower he will readily perceive that its scope is to show that the fruits of the Gospel, or the word preached, depend on the state and condition of the hearts of those who hear it."

As a child of God it is my task today to sow the seed of the eternal word. My earnest prayer is that it will fall on good ground and bring forth a rich harvest. Such an increase, of course, is of God (1 Corinthians 3:7).

Consider the things that can destroy the effectiveness of the word - Satan (13:19), tribulation and persecution (13:21), and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches (13:22). Satan simply cannot stand any additions to God's kingdom. In the book of Revelation he is depicted as a fiery red dragon standing before the woman (the church) who was ready to give birth (an increase), to devour her child as soon as it was born (Revelation 12:4). But read on in that chapter, and take comfort from the fact that God protects His own.

IAN S. DAVIDSON, Motherwell

NEW CONGREGATION

A church has been started at NEW CUMNOCK, Ayrshire, Scotland, and will, for the present, meet in a room in the Town Hall.

Breaking Of Bread: 11.00 a.m.

Gospel Meeting: Time to be arranged.
Bible Study on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. at my home - 6 West Park Drive, New Cumnock, Ayrshire, KA18 4LJ.

A warm welcome is extended to any of our brethren, passing through the locality or holidaying in the area. Also any brethren wishing to help us establish the church here. Their help, if only by being

present, or, better still, by taking part, will be much appreciated.

Harry McGinn

HYMN BOOKS WANTED

Any church or brethren who have HYMN BOOKS, suitable for use in a Gospel Meeting, and are willing to sell the same, please contact me regarding cost and delivery etc.:- Harry McGinn, 6 West Park Drive, New Cumnock, Ayrshire, Tel: Afton Water 2988.

HELP FOR ETHIOPIA

I am indebted to brother Paul Dover (Nottingham) for the following letter he received recently. It is from the Church of Christ in Addis Ababa and is self explanatory. Brother Dover does not know much about the church of Christ in Ethiopia except that they are supported from the USA and have about 10,000 members. I am happy to print the letter and brethren here, as individuals, and as churches, can thereafter make up their minds as to what help to give. The letter, on letter-headed paper, reads thus:-
CHURCH OF CHRIST P.O. Box No.3147
ADDID ABBA - EHTIOPIA
Tel No. 445142

To Paul Dover,
Nottingham, England.
Dear Brethren,

We were very glad when we received your letter dated 7.1.85. With the help of the Lord, and our brethren around the world, we are trying the most we can to feed our hungry brethren in Ethiopia. We have opened two feeding centres 175 miles north of the capital city where we are trying to feed and water the needy brethren.

Anything you would like to share with us is acceptable, and if you want to send money, you can send a cashier cheque by mail to our address and we can receive it. Most of all be with us in your prayers so that the drought will soon be over and the famine over-come.

Your brother in Christ,
Behailu Abebe.

Brother Dover suggests that any donations be sent to be added to all others

and thus save costs. The Treasurer is Hazel Turner, Garden Cottage, Stone Street, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. If cheques are sent in her name she can convert them into one large cheque in Ethiopian currency.

(ED)

should bear these points in mind when replying to Mr. Banda's requests and correspondence.

Chester Woodhall.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Kirkcaldy, Scotland: On Feb. 6th, 1985, Dorothy Frane responded to the gospel and was added to the church in baptism. Please pray for her that she will grow in grace and will be able to overcome her problems which this decision has created.

Robt. Hughes Sec.

Kitwe, Zambia: For some time now congregations of the Church of Christ, individuals and brotherhood publications in America and Europe have received correspondence from Mr. Kumwenda Banda of Zaire often soliciting assistance. Mr. Banda has seen himself as president and top national leader in terms of his own organization chart of his 'Church of Christ Nearest You'. We have encouraged the view of self governing, self propagating and self supporting New Testament congregations and this is at variance with Mr. Banda's view that large sums of money should come from our congregations in America and Europe to help him - regardless of whether his and our teaching and practice are in agreement. In the pioneer days in America, congregations of the Church of Christ were established without money from abroad - why not Zaire? In Zambia, in some places, self reliance amongst the congregations has worked. Mr Kumwenda Banda has now chosen to affiliate himself and his friends to a segment of the Independent Christian Church with whose Missionaries in Zambia he has been meeting and from whom he hopes to receive the financial and other aid which he wants. According to Mr. Banda, he will listen if we will come up with a counter financial offer. In Zaire there are congregations of the Church of Christ who are independent and not in Mr. Banda's Camp. You

OBITUARY

Burns Street, Ilkeston: We are very sad to report the passing from this life of our dear sister Winifred Wheatley on 21st January, aged 73 years. Winnie was the daughter of christian parents (Anthony Gregory being her father) and the wife of Bro. Wilf Wheatley, both being stalwart christians. She was baptised into Christ 53 years ago and had been a faithful and consistent member of the church. Winnie was a quiet and humble person but strong and courageous in her witness for the Lord, always working, seeking to help others, gentle and kind in her ways. She progressed through Sunday School and eventually became a Sunday School teacher herself, and wherever there was need for help, Winnie was there, doing what she could. She will be sorely missed by her husband and family and the church but their consolation is in the knowledge that Winnie has gone to be with her Lord. "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord" will surely be the words that Winnie will hear. May the loving Lord grant grace and consolation to her Husband Wilf and the family.

The funeral service took place on the 25th January, first at Burns Street and later at the Bramcote crematorium. Winnie's ashes were interred in her parents grave on 2nd February. All services were conducted by the writer.

Tom Woodhouse, on behalf of the church
Kirkcaldy, Scotland: On 11th February, 1985, sister Maggie Abercrombie passed from this scene of time to be with her Lord, after a short illness. She will be remembered for the lengthy recitations she used to make at Social gatherings of the church. We will miss her but look forward to the promised reunion on that Great Day. Please remember her family in your prayers.

Robt Hughes

TREASURER'S REPORT

Our balance sheet sets out the main sources of income and expenditure for last year. It is also a simple commentary upon our financial standing at the end of the year. You will note that our income almost matched our expenditure. We appreciate your support and generous gifts which help to keep us in print.

Thanks are also due to our overseas readers who not only include a little extra with their subscription but encourage us with their letters. British postal regulations prohibit our including a reply with the magazine and it would be expensive to reply to each by air mail but please be assured of our thanks and appreciation.

Whatever your perception of the Scripture Standard; the one I receive as treasurer, is of the Family of God, working in many different countries to establish the Kingdom of God, having a common contact through our magazine.

May we mutually encourage one another in our labours for Him.

INCOME	£	£	EXPENDITURE	£	£
Bank Balance b/f	573.45		Printer	2655.28	
Cash in Hand	<u>26.28</u>		Postage	464.77	
	599.73		Stationery	<u>12.73</u>	3132.78
Cheque not Drawn	<u>53.17</u>	546.56	Balance Deposit A/c	281.04	
			Balance Current A/c	340.75	
Subscriptions	2324.93		Cash in Hand	<u>44.00</u>	
Gifts	674.13			665.79	
Bank Interest	<u>38.98</u>	<u>3038.04</u>	Cheque not Drawn	<u>213.97</u>	<u>451.82</u>
		<u>3584.60</u>			<u>3584.60</u>

Treasurer J.K.KNELLER Auditor J. McLUCKIE

1st January 1985

COMING EVENTS

CHURCH SOCIAL: The Tranent Church Social will, (D.V.) be held on Saturday, 23rd March, 1985, at 4 p.m. in the Primary School Dining Hall. The Speakers on this occasion will be:

John Geddes, Buckie
Robert Hughes, Kirkcaldy
A cordial invitation is given to attend.
J. COLGAN, Sec.

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