

# Scripture Standard

**Volume 85-2**  
**March 2018**

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**Pleading for a  
total return to  
New Testament  
principles.**

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**contend earnestly  
for the faith**  
**Jude 1:3**

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## **I WANT TO BE WITH YOU**

Revelation 3:14-22

When considering commands in Scripture we should note whether the one who gave it has the authority to say it and also note to whom was it given before deciding that it could apply to us.

Satan has no authority, so his instructions are discounted. King Jesus' teaching has supreme authority and has given authority to his apostles.<sup>1</sup>

We must also consider to whom are they given before we apply them to ourselves. Evidently the instructions like "You, yourselves, wait in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."<sup>2</sup> was only for his apostles and do not apply to Christians today, whereas John's statement: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us"<sup>3</sup> has apostolic authority and is written to and for Christians.<sup>4</sup> Likewise "He who believes and is baptised will be saved; but he who disbelieves will be damned."<sup>5</sup> has Jesus' stating how people can become Christians.

All the epistles are written specifically to Christians. They are letters written: to Christ's churches, to Hebrew Christians and to individual Christians. Some contain reminders

of how they became Christians and are useful for explaining the way of salvation to non-Christians: passages like Romans 6:1-7, Colossians 2:12 and 1.Peter 3:21 and Ephesians 4:5. However, in being ready to give a reason for our faith<sup>6</sup> we must be careful to correctly apply "the word of truth"<sup>7</sup> not to indiscriminately applying to non-Christians, teaching meant specifically for Christians.

The danger of the "Once Saved, Always Saved" doctrine is that it could cause Christians to be complacent and gradually fall away. Yet those who advocate the "Once Saved, Always Saved" doctrine say those who do fall away are not real Christians in the first place. How can a person who is not a Christian fall away from being a Christian?<sup>8</sup>

This brings me to a document by an apostle of Christ **written to Christians**,<sup>9</sup> abundant in warnings of dangers of being caused to fall away: John's "Revelation of Jesus Christ" **which was all written to Christians for Christians.**

In a group of Christians jostling for position on a narrow footpath one of them said to me "I want to be beside you." At first, I was overcome with awe. I have never thought of myself as someone that anyone would particularly want to be beside. Then it made me think of this verse:-

See! I stood at the door and am (still) knocking: if anyone can hear my voice and would open the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him and he with me.<sup>10</sup>

Using it in Gospel appeals is liable to take away from the impact it should have as a warning to Christians,

**He was depicted as knocking at the door of Christians!**

**The handle was on the inside!**

**Christians! were keeping Him outside**

**His bruised hand, patiently, longingly, knocking on the door.**

**But they thought they were great<sup>11</sup>**

**What was so terribly wrong with them?**

**Why was Jesus on the outside?**

**They were lukewarm. Yuck!<sup>12</sup>**

**If only they would heed His voice.**

**Brothers and sisters, here is an amazing thought:**

**JESUS WANTS TO BE WITH US, WITH EACH AND EVERY  
ONE OF US!**

**DOESN'T THAT OVERCOME YOU WITH DEEP AWE?**

**DO WE SAY TO OURSELVES IN AMAZEMENT:**

**“HE WANTS TO BE WITH ME.”?**

**ARE WE IN DANGER OF KEEPING HIM OUTSIDE?**

**Let's strive to be overcomers.**

See! I come suddenly.

He is blest who keeps the sayings of this scroll's prophesy.<sup>13</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

- |                   |                        |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Luke 10:16     | 8. Hebrews 6:4-6       |
| 2. Luke 24:49     | 9. Revelation 1:9      |
| 3. 1.John 1:8-10  | 10. Revelation 3:30    |
| 4. 1.John 2:1     | 11. Revelation 3:17    |
| 5. Mark 16:16     | 12. Revelation 3:14-16 |
| 6. 1.Peter 3:15   | 13. Revelation 22:7    |
| 7. 1.Timothy 2:15 |                        |

## JUDAH

Jonathan Ashurst, Byron GA

In previous issues, we studied the lives of Jacob's first three sons: Reuben, Simeon, and Levi. When Jacob's fourth son was born, his mother Leah named him Judah, because his birth caused her to praise the Lord. (Genesis 29:35)

After Judah's birth, Jacob's two wives, Leah and Rachel, continued to compete for Jacob's attention. They and their handmaidens, Bilhah and Zilpah, bore him several more children. Because Rachel was Jacob's favourite wife, Rachel's two boys, Joseph and Benjamin, became Jacob's favourite sons. (Genesis 30:1-24, 35:16-19)

Many years later, after Rachel had died, the envious brothers plotted against Joseph. It was Judah's idea to sell him to a passing Ishmaelite caravan on their way to Egypt. The traders gave them twenty shekels of silver in exchange for their younger brother. When they returned to their father, the brothers deceived him into thinking that Joseph had died. Jacob was distraught and refused to be comforted. (Genesis 37)

Leaving his brothers, Judah moved to another part of Canaan and married a Canaanite woman named Shua. They married and had three sons: Er, Onan, and Shelah. After Er grew up, Judah arranged for him to marry a woman named Tamar. However, because of Er's wickedness, the Lord killed him. Tamar was married to Onan, to carry on the family name. However, Onan's wickedness caused the Lord to strike him down as well. Judah delayed marrying his third son to Tamar, because he feared Shelah might die too. (Genesis 38:1-11)

Years later, after Judah's wife Shua died, Tamar took the situation into her own hands. When Judah learned that his daughter-in-law had become pregnant through harlotry, he ordered that she be burned. However, once Tamar proved that Judah was the father, Judah relented in shame. As Tamar gave birth to twin boys, they each struggled to be the firstborn. This was reflected in their

names, Perez and Zerah. (Genesis 38:12-30)

It may seem strange that these incidents are recorded in the Scriptures, until we remember that it was through Perez that the Messiah would eventually come. (Ruth 4:12, Matthew 1:3, Luke 3:33)

When famine struck the land, Judah and his brothers traveled to Egypt to buy food. The ruler accused them of being spies and demanded that they bring the youngest brother they had mentioned, as proof of their innocence. It was Judah who later convinced Jacob to allow Benjamin to come with them to Egypt, and when Benjamin was accused of theft, it was Judah who pleaded to be enslaved in his place. Moved by their change of heart, the ruler revealed himself to be Joseph and promised to care for his brothers throughout the famine. It was Judah who led the family down to Goshen. (Genesis 42-45, 46:28)

When Jacob blessed his sons, he explained why the three oldest were found unworthy of the right of the firstborn. Thus, a part of this special promise was passed down to Judah. Many mighty rulers would descend from his line, culminating in the arrival of the Messiah. (Genesis 49:8-12)

Judah and his brothers died in Egypt. Years later, after Moses led the nation out of bondage, the Lord enabled Bezalel, a descendant of Judah, to help make the tabernacle furnishings. (Genesis 35:2,30; 38:22) Caleb (Numbers 13:6, 34:19, Joshua 14:6, 15:13) and Achan (Joshua 7:1,17-18) were also from Judah's tribe.

The camp of Judah set out first during their travels through the wilderness. (Numbers 2:9; 10:14) In Joshua's day, they were given a large area in the south of the Promised Land. They drove out the Anakim, but were unable to conquer Jerusalem at that time. (Joshua 15)

The Simeonites lived scattered throughout the midst of the people of Judah. (Joshua 19:9) After Joshua's death, the tribe of Judah led their brothers in extending their control over the land God had granted them (Judges 1). The first judge, Othniel, was Caleb's

son-in-law and of the tribe of Judah. (Judges 3:7-11) However, near the end of the period of the judges, 3,000 of the men of Judah complained to Samson that his actions were stirring up the Philistines against them. (Judges 15:9-15) The city of Bethlehem in Judah is mentioned several times near the end of the book of Judges (17:7-9, 19:1-2,18). The Lord chose the tribe of Judah to lead the way in punishing the tribe of Benjamin for their wickedness. (Judges 20:18)

Much of the book of Ruth occurs in the Judean city of Bethlehem (Ruth 1:1-2, 1:7) In this same city, David was anointed. This famous descendant of Judah would eventually succeed Saul as king. Many of his famous deeds occurred in the land belonging to the tribe of Judah. (for example, 1 Samuel 17:1, 2 Samuel 2:1-4, 2 Samuel 19:43, 2 Samuel 24:1)

David conquered the city of Jerusalem and established it as the capitol of the nation. (2 Samuel 5:6-7) When he wanted to build a house for the Lord there, the Lord promised to build him a house, that is, preserve his kingly line. (2 Samuel 7) Though some of his sons tried to rebel against him, it was David's son Solomon who would succeed him. (2 Samuel 18:31-32, 1 Kings 1:32-37) Solomon used the materials David has prepared in order to construct a magnificent Temple for the Lord. (2 Chronicles 3:1; 5:1) David and Solomon contributed much to the wisdom literature. (Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon)

After Solomon died, the northern tribes rebelled from his son Rehoboam's authority. They served other kings, beginning with Jeroboam. However, the Lord allowed David's descendants to continue ruling over Judah and the other southern tribes. (1 Kings 12:16-24) Some of these kings were wicked, while others were faithful to God. Well-known kings in this line include Asa, Jehoshaphat, Uzziah, Hezekiah, Manassah, and Josiah. (2 Chronicles 14:2-4, 1 Kings 22:41-45, 2 Chronicles 26:3-6, 2 Chronicles 31:20-21, 2 Kings 21:10-12, 2 Kings 22:1-2)

Eventually, God allowed the Babylonians to take the southern kingdom captive. Many of those taken, including Daniel and his

friends, were descendants of Judah (Daniel 1:1-6) Seventy years later, the people were given permission to return to the land and rebuild the Temple. (2 Chronicles 36:15-23, Ezra 1:5)

In the New Testament books, the tribal allotment of Judah is often referred to as Judea. Mary went to visit Elizabeth in the land of Judea. (Luke 1:39-40) As Micah had prophesied, Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea. (Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:1-6) John the Baptist preached in the wilderness of Judea. (Matthew 3:1) Much of Jesus' ministry and teaching occurred in Judea; however, they were generally less welcoming than the people of Galilee. (Matthew 19:1, John 7:1) His triumphal entry, the Last Supper, His ordeal in Gethsemane, the crucifixion, and his burial and resurrection all occurred around Jerusalem, which was between Judah and Benjamin. (Matthew 21:1-28:10) The establishment of the church on the day of Pentecost also occurred in Jerusalem. (Acts 2:1-6) Many incidents in the book of Acts are set in Jerusalem. From there, the good news of Christ spread throughout the world. (Luke 24:47, Acts 1:8)

The writer of Hebrews explains that because Jesus was from the tribe of Judah, his priesthood is superior to the one used under the Law of Moses. Jesus had come to establish a new covenant with both Israel and Judah, and this new covenant was open to all mankind. (Hebrews 7:14; 8:8)

In Revelation, John saw a vision of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. (Revelation 5:5)

God used Judah and his tribe, who were flawed but resilient, to carry out His plan of redemption. Let us, like John, recognise and worship Jesus Christ as our sovereign redeemer.

(Revelation 5:1-10)

“Behold,  
the Lion of the tribe of Judah,  
the Root of David, has prevailed”

## CULTURAL BIAS

James Lim, Lavender, Singapore

Does our cultural bias affect our reading of the scripture?

A verse below was often quoted to me when I was a novice that I should study the bible because the word “study” is mentioned.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15 KJV

Another verse that was often taught to me was Heb.5:12 about eating “meat” for the mature to mean advanced Bible study into deeper things e.g. Greek, Hebrew, prophecies. Without knowing much Greek and Hebrew, I wondered what happened if I am not smart enough to study. If I are not academically strong, would I never be able to be mature or an approved workman of God?

2 Timothy 2:15 in other versions, share something in common which is different from KJV.

Is it due to poor translation on the part of the translators or is it our poor understanding of the Old English meaning of the word “study”?

Other Old English versions

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

RSV

Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth.

ASV

Modern English versions

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who



does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth

NKJV

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

NIV/ESV

Others 15

All other versions agree with the Greek word σπουδάζω spoudazō which means diligence or “going all out”

This word spoudazo is also used by Paul in Gal 2:10 They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager σπουδάζω to do.

How many doctrines do you think we will be asked on judgement day?

(We certainly need to study God’s word. That is not the issue. The issue is whether we have misunderstood and misapplied verses like 2Tim.2:15 thus making us more academic than compassionate.)

Then the righteous will answer Him, saying,  
Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You,  
or thirsty and give You drink?

When did we see You a stranger and take You in,  
or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick,  
or in prison, and come to You?

And the King will answer and say to them,  
Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it  
to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.

Matthew 25:37-40

## **LORD, teach us...**

To give our best like Abel	Genesis 4:4
To walk like Enoch	Genesis 5:24
To heed the warning like Noah	Hebrews 11:7
To be assured of the promises like Abraham	Hebrews 11:13
To be peaceful like Isaac	Genesis 26:31
To wrestle for a blessing like Jacob	Genesis 32:26
To accept God's will like Joseph	Genesis 50:19-20
To endure like Job	Job 1:21
To not be afraid like Amram and Jochebed	Hebrews 11:23
To lead meekly like Moses	Numbers 12:3-8
To praise like Miriam	Exodus 15:21
To receive with peace like Rahab	Hebrews 11:31
To have a different spirit like Caleb	Numbers 14:24
To be zealous like Phinehas	Numbers 25:11
To choose to serve You like Joshua	Joshua 24:15
To rely on Your power like Gideon	Judges 7:2-7
To be devoted like Ruth	Ruth 1:16-17

To give back like Hannah	1 Samuel 1:11
To grow like Samuel	1 Samuel 2:26
To be discerning like Abigail	1 Samuel 25:3
To have a heart like David's	Psalms 51
To request like Solomon	1 Kings 3:7-9
To pray like Elijah	James 5:17-18
To speak the truth like Micaiah	1 Kings 22:14
To ask for a double portion like Elisha	2 Kings 2:9
To hold fast to You like Hezekiah	2 Kings 18:6
To proclaim the promises like Isaiah	Isaiah 9:6-7
To turn to You with all of our heart like Josiah	2 Kings 23:25
To hope like Jeremiah	Lam 3:22-24
To be self-disciplined like Daniel	Daniel 1:8; 6:10
To not conform like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego	Daniel 3:12,16-18
To risk all like Esther	Esther 4:16
To return like Ezra and Nehemiah	Nehemiah 1:8-9

*New Testament  
examples in next issue*

## MILCH COWS

Graham A. Fisher, Aylesbury.

The cart was slowly making its way down the hot, dusty road. It was being pulled by two milch (milk) cows who were bellowing as they went. Maybe they sensed that they were going to die as sacrifices; maybe they missed their calves who had been taken from them; maybe they resented being yoked together and to a cart for it was a new experience for them; maybe it was God signalling to the people of the village of Bethshemesh; maybe it was a combination of all of these reasons for this cart was no ordinary cart. Firstly it had no visible driver, yet it moved down the road with a certainty of purpose, swerving neither to right nor left. A group of five noblemen, plus no doubt their servants, were tracking its progress some distance behind, curious to see how it would get on. On the cart was a big box and in the box were two tablets of stone, a golden urn containing wafers and a wooden rod. The box was absolutely beautiful, shining in the brilliant sun. It was covered in gold, had golden cherubim on top, and seemed to be a treasure chest (which it was but not the treasures we would instantly think of). There was another smaller box also on the cart. This contained five golden mice and five images of tumours (growths which must have been like giant warts). This peculiar procession was going across the frontier between the land of the Philistines and the Jews. The box – the big golden box – was the Ark of the Covenant on its way home to God's people. That little scene tells us so much about the folly of man and the wisdom and care of God.

The story is quite a simple one to tell in outline. The Jews and the Philistines had been at war, as they were so often, and during the battle the Ark of the Covenant, which contained the tablets of the Ten Commandments, a golden urn of manna, and Aaron's rod, had been captured by the Philistines as Israel had been defeated. For seven months the Philistines had had the Ark, and for seven months they had been plagued apparently with mice and tumours. Their god, Dagon, had been smashed at Ashdod,

plague had swept through their cities, especially where the Ark resided, and mice must have overrun the country. Sensing that God, the God of the Jews, was behind their troubles, the Philistines decided to erect a test to see if this was so, hence the scene on the dusty road which we have just described near the frontier. If the cows pulled the cart directly along this road, they would know that God, Jehovah, was indeed plaguing them for having the Ark.

They were right; He was! The golden mice and the golden tumours were a gift offering from the Philistines to Jehovah. The Philistine lords saw the evidence and then returned home – and you can read about it in 1 Samuel 6. As you can guess, the story may be simple enough to tell but behind it lie a great many lessons.

How did the Philistines come to get the Ark in the first place? Well really it was Eli's fault. Eli was the priest before Samuel and had been a faithful priest in himself, to a point, but he had two wayward sons: Hophni and Phinehas. They too were priests because the priestly office was hereditary for the tribe of Levi and the sons of Aaron especially. These sons, however, were worthless. They would take their priestly share of the sacrifices before they were ready, and they took more than their share, selecting the best for themselves. They played fast and loose with temple maids committing adultery with them, and Eli knew of it and did not stop them. He was weak, as many others are (including his successor Samuel), when it came to his own family, and through his weakness God was mocked and the priestly office became a sham. Israel was punished by God for this and the Philistines did the punishing for Him. They defeated them.

Not knowing why they had lost, the Jews decided it was because they did not have the Ark of the Covenant with them to act as a totem, or mascot, a protection from God, so they brought it to the battlefield.

‘Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines. They encamped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines encamped at

Aphek. The Philistines drew up in line against Israel, and when the battle spread, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men on the field of battle. And when the troops came to the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has the LORD defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD here from Shiloh, that it may come among us and save us from the power of our enemies." So the people sent to Shiloh and brought from there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, who is enthroned on the cherubim. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God. As soon as the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel gave a mighty shout, so that the earth resounded. And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shouting, they said, "What does this great shouting in the camp of the Hebrews mean?" And when they learned that the ark of the LORD had come to the camp, the Philistines were afraid, for they said, "A god has come into the camp." And they said, "Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. Woe to us! Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with every sort of plague in the wilderness. Take courage, and be men, O Philistines, lest you become slaves to the Hebrews as they have been to you; be men and fight." So the Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated, and they fled, every man to his home. And there was a very great slaughter, for there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers. And the ark of God was captured, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.'

1 Samuel 4: 1-11, ESV

That's how they lost it: but now it was coming home, seven months later, and the Philistines were glad to see it go!

Let's look briefly at the Jews, and then at the Philistines, in this story. We know why the Jews were punished so there is no need to labour the point about parental responsibility. God had warned Eli that he must put right the evil which his sons were committing but he did not do so. God will not go on for ever ignoring sins but

will one day exact a toll from us all. We will answer for our failings for we must give an account of our lives to God.

*To be continued in next issue*

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## OBITUARY



Our brother in Christ, Fred Miller, went to be with the Lord on the evening of Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2018. He was born in 1931 and became a Christian in 1948. Through the years, he and his wife Charlotte evangelised in the United States and several other countries. In 1977, they were invited to help establish a church of Christ in London. The following year, the family moved to the United Kingdom, where they worked with churches for ten years.

Fred used his knowledge of ancient Greek and Hebrew to write Biblical commentaries on Ezra, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Micah, Zechariah, and Revelation. He completed a transliteration of the Dead Sea Scrolls and translated his own version of the Bible based on the King James Version. <http://www.moellerhaus.com/> He also wrote *Christian Attitudes and Racial Problems* to encourage churches to overcome prejudice. He and Charlotte have six children, two of whom were adopted.

His funeral service was held 16<sup>th</sup> February in Carrollton, Georgia, USA.

## NOTICES

### **STRETFORD, Manchester**

The Green Hut, 538 Kings Rd. M32 8JT

**Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> May**  
**Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> September**  
**Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> October**

**1:00 pm** Lunch

**2:00 pm** Message

John Purcell: Tel. 0161-439 1758

#### **Map:**

[eusebos.eu/eusebos/d4web-4s/longford.htm](http://eusebos.eu/eusebos/d4web-4s/longford.htm)

### **EASTWOOD, Nottinghamshire**

Seymour Road, NG16 3ND

**Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> May**  
**Saturday, 11<sup>th</sup> August**  
**Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> November**

**6:00 pm** Refreshments

**7:00 pm** Message

Adrian Limb: Tel. 01773-761 670

[cofcastwood@aol.com](mailto:cofcastwood@aol.com)

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### **BIBLE QUESTIONS**

Brother Frank Worgan is happy to receive Bible questions requiring urgent answers by letter or e-mail.

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