

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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OUR EXAMPLE.

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia explains that "at His baptism, Jesus received from heaven the final confirmation of His Messiahship," and that He then, "under the irresistible influence of the Spirit, turned aside to seek out in silence and alone, the principles which would govern Him in His Messianic work. This was absolutely necessary to any wise prosecution of it . . . and by the conflict in His temptations, He came to that clearness and decision which characterised His ministry throughout."

From His first temptation (Mt. 4:3-4) emerged the principle that He will never use His supernatural power to help Himself; from the second (Mt. 4:5-7), He will not, of self-will, run into dangers, but will avoid them except to the clear path of duty; and from the third (Mt. 4:8-10), He will employ only moral and spiritual means to moral and spiritual ends.

The first temptation proved Jesus a Man of faith. He had faith that God would, in some way provide Him with necessary food. The second temptation proved Him a Man of common sense. He would not be a fanatic, running before the Spirit, but would be led by Him in paths of holy sanity and heavenly wisdom. Jesus waited on God. Now, surely such a Man will take the short and easy road to that universal dominion which rightfully belongs to Messiah. But no, Jesus turned away from worldly methods to the slow and lonely and difficult road of truth-preaching which could end only with the cross.

What lessons are there for us in these temptations? From the first we may learn that we should never use the

Scripture to prove a pre-conceived idea, nor defend a man-made custom. Jesus refused to use the Scriptures unwisely.

From the second we learn that we should guard against that fanaticism which has been the destruction of many an otherwise useful servant of God. Jesus could have turned the stones into bread and satisfied His hunger, but such fanaticism would have destroyed His ministry, and it will destroy ours.

From the third we may learn that regardless of how innocent and pure and sincere our means of securing world dominion for Christ's church may seem to us, peace and unity can be gained, not through a war of selfish inconsideration, but by practising the Golden Rule in matters of faith.

ONE ANOTHER.

"Use hospitality one to another" (1 Pet. 4:9).

"Love one another" (John 15:17).

"Consider one another" (Heb. 10:24).

"Comfort one another" (1 Thess. 4:18).

"Serve one another (Gal. 5:13).

"Receive ye one another" (Rom. 15:7).

"Exhort one another" (Heb. 3:13).

"Confess your faults one to another" (Jas. 5:16).

"Submitting yourselves one to another" (Eph. 5:21).

"Pray one for another" (Jas. 5:16).

"Above all have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover a multitude of sins" (1 Pet. 4:8).

—Bible Talk.

Reasons for believing the Bible to be the Word of God.

ITS UNITY

BUT now I will open the book. Its existence after such opposition and the influence it has exerted, have attracted my attention. I will let the book speak and I am ready to listen. What do I find when I open the Bible? I discover that I have been misled; Instead of merely *one* book, I find that there are sixty-six. They were written by about forty different men, during a period of some 1,500 years. They were men from widely differing walks of life, too. Kings, fishermen, shepherds, priests, prophets, a doctor, a tent-maker, and so on. Their cultures were different. One wrote while in captivity in Babylon, and another from a Roman prison cell. Some wrote in Hebrew and others in Greek. And as I read these books I understand why Jerome in the fourth century called the Bible "The Divine Library." But, when I examine these books more closely, another realization dawns on me. I am impressed by the amazing *Unity* of the Bible, and I understand what led Chrysostom to use the expression "the bibles"—the Book! Sixty-six books indeed, yet possessing an inner unity and harmony that cannot be ignored.

Give any forty men in this age the commission to write 66 books of religion and history, and then compare the resultant conglomeration (for that is what it most assuredly would be) with the Bible. The unity existing between these books is reason for believing that the Bible is not a merely human production.

4—ITS SCIENTIFIC TRUTH

But what do these books contain? Although the Bible is not primarily a scientific text-book, it certainly does contain statements which have to do with the various branches of science.

It touches upon biology, astronomy, anthropology, philosophy, and a host of other subjects. And, although these matters are only introduced when they bear upon the Bible's central theme, the plan of redemption, every statement that the book makes is scientifically accurate. Do not be discouraged or misled when you hear talk of the "conflict between the Bible and Science."

There is no conflict between the Bible and the established facts of Science. Any difference that exists is between the Bible and the immature theories which are presented as established and proved facts. If the past is anything to go by, we may safely say that even these differences will disappear when man's investigations bring further facts to light. Never forget that the statements of the Bible are unchanging and unchangeable, whilst Science is a progressive study, in which the theories of yesterday are cast aside and abandoned today. As man's knowledge of the universe and of the laws operating in that universe increases, the more clearly do we see the harmony between the Bible and Science. And this explains why, in so many things, the Bible has been found to be in advance of the scientific knowledge of the age. To put it another way, let me say that the Bible has anticipated many of the greatest scientific discoveries.

(1.) In the realm of *Botany*, for example: A Swede named Linnaeus is considered to be the first man to make a systematic study of the plant world. In 1735 he published a book which is said to have laid the foundation of systematic botany; he classified everything into the three "kingdoms of nature," animal, vegetable or mineral. But if you will turn to Genesis, chapter one, you will find the same three divisions. Verses one to ten deal with the mineral world; in verses eleven to nineteen we have the vegetable world; and from verse twenty to the end of the chapter the record deals with the animal world, including Man himself.

Let me here suggest that you examine the following subjects and passages.

(2.) The *Rotundity of the earth* is taught in Isaiah 40, verse 22. And when you read that verse remember that the word used for "circle" is the Hebrew word

khug, which has to do, not with a circle drawn upon a flat surface, but with a sphere, a ball.

(3.) Again, one hundred and fifty years before the birth of Christ, men taught that there were no more than 3,000 stars. This was because they had no idea as to the size of the earth. Today, standing in the northern hemisphere it is possible in good conditions and with the naked eye, to count up to about 4,000 stars, and the same number in the southern hemisphere. Of course, when we use the telescope this number is greatly increased and continues to increase with the size and power of the telescope. Today we know that it is literally impossible to count the stars in space because as the great man-made eyes penetrate farther and farther into the blackness of outer space new worlds appear. But read Genesis 15, verse 5. "Look towards heaven, and tell (count) the stars, if thou be able to tell them: and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be." This is God's promise to Abraham, assuring him that his posterity should be innumerable, even as the stars are innumerable.

(4.) In recent years science has established that light is vocal, and this has given a new significance to Psalm 65, verse 8, and Job 38, verse 7. The one text speaks of the "outgoings of the morning and evening" rejoicing. The other says, "the morning stars sang together."

These are not merely figures of speech, because we now know that "the elements repeat themselves, in their qualities, in octaves, and light-waves travel in octaves." (C. J. Grist).

For further study, notice:—

(5.) Job 27:7, which speaks of the earth in space.

(6.) Psalm 8:8, "the paths of the sea," which led Matthew F. Maury to make the study resulting in the establishing of the science of Oceanography and prepare charts of those "paths of the sea."

(7.) Job 28:25 speaks of atmospheric weight.

(8.) Jeremiah 10: 12-13 tells of the principle of evaporation and condensation and the relation between lightning and rain. Lord Kelvin once said, "I believe there is never rain without lightning."

These and many other interesting matters lead us to the conviction that the author of this book could not have been human. The nature of these statements is such as to demand an inspired origin. This must be the Word of God.

5—ITS HISTORICAL TRUTH

Again, the fact that the trustworthiness of the Bible is established by the discoveries of archaeologists, helps us to believe. Let me quote a few examples of the way in which the spade testifies to the truth of the Bible:

(i.) In Genesis 14:1 we read of a certain Amraphel, king of Sinar, Sinar is the old name for what we now know as Babylonia. In 1901 a black stone was discovered, about 10 feet high, containing what transpired to be 248 laws—the laws of one, Hammurabi. The stone was found in Iran (Persia) which was known as Shushan in the time of Esther. The laws revealed that even in the days of Hammurabi, some 2,250 years before Christ, there existed a civilization of a very high order, for they regulated both the moral and social life of this man's kingdom. We now know that this Hammurabi and the afore-mentioned Amraphel were the same person. Now, the importance of this discovery lies here. Hitherto the critics of the Bible had argued that it would have been impossible for Moses to have written the first five books of the Bible, because writing was not known in his day. This argument collapses completely now that we know that hundreds of years before the time of Moses the Laws of Hammurabi were written.

(ii.) Moving on into the book, Exodus, we read in chapter one that there arose a new king who had no regard for what Joseph had done for Egypt. This king determined to afflict the Israelites and, among their tasks was the building of two store-cities, Pithom and Raamses. This king has been identified as Raamses II, and his mummy has been found. Further, in 1883 at Tel-el Muskhuta, excavations brought to light the store-city of Pithom, a city which, being near the frontier of Egypt, had been used for military supplies. The treasure chambers

were divided by strange brick walls and the bricks used in the walls, were found to be partly mixed with reed or stubble and partly without. Unlike those usually built by the Egyptians, these walls were also built with the use of mortar, just as the Bible says (Ex. 1:14). See also Exodus 5: 6-19.

(iii.) You have probably heard or read of the Tel-el Amarna tablets. These tablets form 300 letters written on clay, in the cuneiform writing of Babylonia. They were found in a village about 150 miles south of Cairo, and they must have been written at least 1,400 years before Christ. The authors were the governors of the various provinces, Syria, Philistia, Palestine, Phoenicia and others, and the letters are important because they reveal that at that time Palestine was a province of Egypt and they tell of unrest throughout all Palestine and that Israel was in slavery in Egypt. They even complain of troublesome raids that were being made on the caravans and villages by certain Habiru, or Hebrews.

(iv.) The Pharaoh of the Exodus from Egypt has also been found. He is named Merneptah II. Excavation has brought to light a papyrus on which a hymn of praise to Merneptah is written, mentioning Israel, and even referring to the death of his young son.

A study of the results of excavation helps towards the conviction that the Bible is the word of God.

FRANK WORGAN

(To be continued.)

A Scripture and its Interpretation

NO apology is offered for the re-introduction of the above heading (slightly altered) to this reply to Bro. Eric McDonald, for it covers the point at issue between us. Had he not written words quoted from his tract, neither of my two articles would have appeared. I am pleased, however, to have written them, because for many years the scripture involved (Acts 2:38-39) has seemed to me to be often misapplied, and, as before stated, I have long had thoughts of writing on the subject.

Bro. Eric's statement in the tract has in it two things which he must prove to justify his words. (1) That "God grants *at baptism* the Holy Spirit"; (2) That the Holy Spirit thus granted is comparable with that bestowed on the Day of Pentecost. So far, the two verses in Acts 2 appear to be the only basis of authority for his statement. He should, therefore, be prepared to show that the words of that passage mean exactly what he says they mean, or else withdraw his statement, as unproved or unprovable.

In his answer to me, he has done neither of the two things required of him, nor has he made any attempt to deal with arguments presented for consideration. These briefly re-stated are:—

(1) As Joel's promise contained miracle, and was fulfilled by things "seen and heard," which necessitated miracle, so also the fulfilment offered by Peter must also have included miracle. As this display of power is now not available, to name this passage as applicable today is to misuse and not to "rightly handle the word of truth."

If it is doubted that miracles have ceased, what does Paul mean in 1 Cor. 13:8-9? and how shall we understand verse 13: "and now abideth faith, hope and charity; *these three*."?

(2) After using the illustration of a baby needing frequent supplies of food, and Peter's words about "the milk of the word," I wrote: "In contrast with that we are offered for belief an impartation of the Holy Spirit . . . at a particular moment (baptism) which apparently, once imparted, continues for the natural term of human life." Again saying: "That I cannot believe."

(3) Quoting once again Paul's words, about the man of God being thoroughly furnished for every good work by the inspired word, it was quite clearly shown that, interpreting Peter's words as our brother does, he places the two apostles in opposition to each other. Take away the statement from the tract, and the two apostles are in agreement, as indeed we believe they are and should be.

Each of these three arguments is completely ignored, which is scarcely the attitude one would expect of a seeker after truth.

But let us look at what he does say. When he writes: "I do not see how one can limit the promise to Jews only," the implication is not quite fairly stated. The words of mine to which he refers begin with "If," a qualifying word, and, as used, limits what I wrote as referring to the day of Pentecost, and to that day only.

The words, "all that are afar off," he associates with Paul's letter to the Ephesians where the same words are used about Gentiles. That kind of argument, frequently used in disputes, is often labelled with a Latin tag, *non sequitur* (meaning, it does not follow). Because Paul wrote of Ephesians (Gentiles) as being far off, it does not follow that Gentiles are referred to every time. Words used as these are governed by their context, and the Holy Spirit took good care of the context when recording the story of Pentecost. Are we not told that on that day, in Jerusalem, there were gathered people "out of every nation under heaven"? Farther off than that they could not be. They were there, "called" to witness things "seen and heard" which they could, and doubtless did, carry away with them all the rest of their days, whether in Jerusalem or away in those far off places from whence they came, to tell and re-tell the wonders of this Pentecostal day. It cannot be said that that part of the prophecy was not fulfilled, even though there was not a single Gentile included amongst them!

Then our brother doubtfully suggests that what took place at Pentecost could not be a bestowing of the Holy Spirit with power because there were so many to receive it! He appears not to have remembered what was once said, "With man it is impossible, but not with God; with God, all things are possible." This was power from God. Moreover, our brother forgets the words he has himself stressed in this connection; that the promise was to "as many as the Lord our God shall call." The phrase carries not only the thought of extension (as Eric uses it) but of limitation also. As he truly suggests, not every one who believed was sufficiently capable or fitted to possess such a power as this, and doubtless, through the years it was in operation, the Spirit would be given or withheld according to the Divine will.

Though rather outside the scope of this enquiry, there is an incident—an astonishing one—which sheds light on how the Spirit operated with large numbers of people. The reference is rather long and thus cannot be quoted. Please look it up, it will be found well worth while. Acts 4:8 and onwards, to verse 23, then 24 of which take special note: Moffatt reads, "on hearing this the entire company [the New English N.T., 'as one man'] raised their cry to God." The only way that could be carried out today would be to have the words printed and passed round, but here the Holy Spirit welded a whole company into one body, having one mind and one voice. Though some of them had come from afar, and doubtless they made a very mixed company, with divergence of tongues, moved by the Holy Spirit, they spoke a common language, and offered their one combined prayer in remarkable terms to the Father of all. Thus began that unity which characterised the early church, when they had all things common, were all of one mind, speaking the same things.

Reading and replying to these points which Eric has raised—interesting in themselves though they may be—we are driven to ask ourselves, what has any of this to do with the proving of the positive and unqualified statement he makes, the truth of which we have felt compelled to deny? The answer is: nothing whatever.

So that that statement may be seen for what it is, and not lost sight of completely, the essential part of it is here again repeated: "God grants at baptism the Holy Spirit . . ." This, so definitely stated, I as definitely deny. Who then shall decide between us? Let it be, as was said of some who are described as being "more noble" than others because they searched the Scriptures to see whether things said were actually as affirmed. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God," is the advice of Peter. Let that be the test. On another page of this copy of the S.S., we are told: "The book is open." So it is—wide open. Let every reader who cares to do so judge for himself from the Book where truth lies. Let it be said here that if our brother could have named just one N.T. instance of the granting

of the Spirit at baptism, he would have gone—if not all the way, a great part of it—to have proved his case. **But this he cannot do!** nor can anyone else. That is why his statement is made without a line of argument nor even a word of scripture in its support.

The old Book has it that “a threefold cord is not quickly broken.” There are three instances in “Acts” of baptisms where, as is clearly shown, no baptismal gift of the Spirit took place, and that negative, though factual, evidence is so strong as to completely destroy this objectionable statement, despite the confidence with which it is made.

Here follow the three incidents. In Acts 8 : 14, we read, “when the apostles which were in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who, when they were come, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit (for as yet **he was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord**). Let it be noted that those Samaritans did not receive the Holy Spirit at baptism as they should have done according to our brother’s interpretation of what is granted at baptism.

It may be well to ask here why it was that Peter and John were sent to Samaria. The answer is found in the limitation of power possessed by Philip, in contrast with that held by the Apostles. Though “full of the Holy Spirit,” and able to work miracles, as he was, Philip could not hand that ability to any other person. The supreme power of impartation was vested in the apostles alone. No one else at any time had such power. With their deaths the power ceased. The gift’s great purpose was the conservation and preservation of the faith once for all time delivered, until it was duly recorded in the Word; also, so that by signs and wonders God’s presence should be identified as being with the apostles, and the message they had to tell. In every case of impartation by the laying on of the apostle’s hands, the gift carried with it, in one form or another, powers which were beyond those of the natural man.

Acts 10:44 “While Peter yet spake these words the Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the word . . . they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?” The Spirit here was not given as a consequence of baptism, was not in fact given after baptism, but before it.

Acts 19:1. “Paul . . . came to Ephesus and finding certain disciples he said to them, Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed?” They had not, being disciples of John the Baptist. Paul explained, and they, accepting the teaching given to them, were baptized, and when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, they spake with tongues and prophesied. The Spirit was granted not at baptism nor as a consequence of baptism, but after the laying on of hands.

In writing as I do, I have no wish to appear offensive to anyone, though I am fighting for the truth—or what I believe to be the truth—on this issue. To me, the idea of the Spirit being granted at baptism is a confession of disbelief in the efficacy of the order of the new birth. The Word, through which belief is brought into being—creating life—is thought not to be able to sustain the life thus produced, so that at baptism the Holy Spirit must be granted to carry on the task. At what point of baptism and how the Spirit is imparted is not told, apparently is not known. The Spirit, as given by the apostles, was by a definite and perceptible act, and always resulted in a manifestation of the power of God, but not so here. This is mysticism, mysterious and inexplicable. The Word is seen as not sufficient, so something has to be invented to take place at baptism to supply a supposed need. As for the sufficiency of the Word, let it be remembered that *without the Word*, the Scriptures—there is no God, the Father; no Son of God, the Redeemer; no Spirit to inspire. Nothing but mysticism to explain the past, the present, and the future.

Bro. Eric’s desire to stress the importance of baptism is praiseworthy, but to attempt to give it an importance it does not possess is not a good thing but wrongful. It lends itself to misunderstanding of what it is we teach. A charge of teaching baptismal regeneration has been openly made against us, and if his words are allowed to appear on any statement of our plea, we would have the greatest difficulty in rebutting such a charge. The Spirit is life, and to say that God gives

life as a result of baptism, is to straitly contradict what scripture teaches. Baptism is not the beginning of anything, as his words imply, but an end; it is not a cause but a result, a fulfilment. The words of Jesus to John show that: "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Jesus said, "Ye must be born again, born of water and the spirit." Water is a natural symbol of the emergence of life that had hitherto not been manifest—a birth. The life that emerges has been a living thing since conviction entered the mind of the believer, and baptism is a righteous act completing a spiritual process. It is a safe thing to say—and scriptural—that if there is not spiritual life before baptism there is certainly none after it.

W. BARKER.

ADDENDUM

Calling the other day at our local library, I noticed a book on display, a copy of the library edition of the English N.T. Picking it up, admiring it for its beautiful type face, wide margins, and general "get-up" I opened it out flat, somewhere in Acts. That word "Acts" at the head of the page sent my thoughts instantly to this discussion and looking up 2:38-39, I got a surprise. A little "gate"—which I was pleased to see—had been interposed between two parts of Peter's reply.

Let it be admitted here, that the Authorised Version does lend itself, if casually read, to the idea that remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit are both contingent on baptism, but the new rendering clearly shows in the text that that is not so.

The Authorised reads: "Then Peter said unto them. Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise . . . etc.

The new N.T. reads: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus the Messiah, for the forgiveness of your sins"; (a semi-colon instead of a comma) thus making a distinct break between the two parts. Moffatt uses the semi-colon. Rotherham is more pronounced and has a — (dash).

The original Greek has no punctuation marks, which shows that when they are used, as now, these marks become an additional means of interpretation of words being translated. It is not that they make Peter to say something different, but they bring out the true meaning of the words actually used. If the A.V. is read again and the question is asked, Why did not Peter say, "Repent . . . and be baptized for the remission of sins and for the gift of the Holy Spirit" if both are contingent on baptism? The answer is because they are not both contingent on baptism. There is a relation between repentance, baptism and the remission of sins, but the relation of the gift of the Holy Spirit is not with baptism, but with the promise of Joel and its fulfilment.

That I believe to be the true reading of Peter's words, making it clearer to understand; but making Bro. Eric's position the more impossible to maintain.

W. B.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

READINGS FOR FEBRUARY

4	Micah, 5:2-15	John 7:37-52.
11	Daniel, 9:1-19	" 8:1-30.
18	Exodus, 3:1-15	" 8:31-59.
25	2 Kings, 5	" 9:1-34.

"NEVER MAN SO SPAKE

WITH a warrant to arrest Jesus the Temple police went to get Him, and it must have been something hardly known in history that an entirely undefended man, making no effort to evade, was left at liberty doing just

what the attempted arrest was intended to prevent—namely, continuing His teaching. The explanation in scriptural terms is that "His time had not yet come." This thought appears in ch. 7, verses 6, 8, 30, 34 and 8:20, but the words of Jesus recorded from 7:32 to 38 were the immediate cause of failure to arrest. His astonishing claims of familiarity with God indicated by His confident assertion of the divine mandate, and "power to take up His life, and lay it down" (7:33 and 34), would have been obviously false if made by any other person; but they went home with conviction to His hearers, however unwilling they may have been to accept Him. His claim of ability to satisfy

thirst and provide men with an ever-flowing fountain of satisfaction could only be rightly made by a man sent by God. Thus to quote Farrar ("Life of Christ," p.419) on the officers "A sacred spell was upon them, which they were unable to resist; a force infinitely more powerful than their own, unnerved their strength and paralysed their will. To listen to Him was not only to be disarmed in every attempt against Him, it was even to be half-converted from bitter enemies to awe-struck disciples."

Evidence of the same kind of power is seen in Nazareth (Luke 4:30); at the feeding of the 5,000 when He dismissed the multitude which would have seized Him to make Him a king (John: 6:15); in the Temple (John 8:59) and finally at His arrest (John 18:6). However, even at this time angry murmurs were arising, and some were actually seeking to kill Him although it might not be generally known (7:20). Though it was true many believed in Him (8:30) His subsequent rebukes excited their antagonism, and they seem to have drifted again into unsympathetic neutrality (8:48). The words of Jesus had powerful influence on those who listened but the reaction to them varied, as it always does. The same gospel address which brings penitent tears to some eyes brings hardness of heart to others. No doubt the verdict of the multitude recorded in Matthew 7:28 and 29 was honest, but how many took those words to heart?

It is true that hardened sceptics pay lip service and show real respect to the peerless teachings of Jesus, but they reject His claims and Christhood and Sonship to God, and in this way charge Him with dishonesty, or deny the truth of the records. Perhaps this is done without realisation of its inconsistency for we know nothing of Christ without the records, preserved to us only in the pages of the Bible. Many unfortunately among His followers today sit in judgment on the Word by which they will be judged on the last day.

Jesus never spoke an unnecessary word. This would be impossible for any but a sinless person. He claimed this, and the greater our interest in His words the nearer we shall come to being like Him. He said that "men will render account for every careless word they utter" (Matt. 12:36), and this makes every honest person feel with the "publican" who prayed, "God be merci-

ful to me a sinner!" and say with Malachi (3:2) "But who can abide the day of His coming, and who can stand when He appears?" "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," and so the perfect speech of Jesus "Never man so spake" was the echo of His perfect heart.

It would seem that the chief priests and Pharisees were in session while Jesus was teaching during the feast of tabernacles (7:2, 14, 45-52) and they were doubtless in close touch with all that was being said and done. They were profoundly disturbed by signs of acceptance and approval of the Man of Nazareth, and His perfect behaviour and speech, transcending completely anything they had either thought, said or done, so filled them with envy that they determined to put Him to death by any possible means as soon as possible. Thus humanly speaking it was the goodness of Jesus that brought about His rejection. We can read in the mixed comments of the multitude a disposition to reject His claims. Before He came to feast there was an undertone of expectation but some said He was a deceiver (7:12), and could not be the Christ—for different and, of course, insufficient reasons (7:15, 20, 27, 30, 41-43).

Jesus did not pander to their desires or expectations but spoke in very plain terms. They would be more and more conscious of His demand for righteousness, and with many this would be very unacceptable. "Was there not in their minds an uneasy sense of their distance from the Speaker . . . were they not conscious, in their carnal and vulgar aspirations, that this Prophet came, not to condescend to such views as theirs, but to raise them to a region where they felt they could not breathe?" (Farrar: "Life of Christ"). However, this may be it is certain the multitude could have intervened in favour of the Christ when the "time had come" if they had so desired. Did they not love Him for His kindness and dislike Him for His call to righteousness and self-denial? Do not His own Israel of God find the path of holiness oftentimes hard to follow?

Viewing the incomparable words of our Saviour, shall we not pray with David, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer" (Psalm 19:14).

R. B. SCOTT.

NUCLEAR TESTS

Dear Bro. Editor,—Re Bro. Breakell's letter of protest against nuclear bombs, I am very disappointed with the churches in general and particularly with our own assemblies. We seem to have forgotten the Sermon on the Mount, with all its implications, from our social and spiritual Master, the Prince of Peace.

The devil is working overtime. What are you doing, my brother, my sister, in or out of the assembly to protest against the devilish bombs, with their output of strontium 90, with pollution of life and vegetation? Why this apathy? We ought to be foremost in saving life that we may save souls. "Saved to serve"! that has always been our motto. To do this we need not affiliate with outside bodies or vote for a particular party. Our fight is in no way political, but a striving in a non-violent way for humanity.

So again I urge my brethren everywhere to protest to M.P.s. and governments. I, like many dear brethren who have gone before and suffered and died, do not wish to have any man's blood on my hands or conscience.

In the name of the Prince of Peace—
"Christians, awake."

H. WILSON.

HITHERTO AND HENCEFORTH

AS life's path behind us lengthens,
As the way before grows steep,
Still we praise Thee, Heavenly
Shepherd,
Ever watchful o'er Thy sheep.
Ways unknown may lie before us
Beckoning on to heights unscalded;
Dangers call for prayerful climbing,
Help us walk these heights unscathed.

Hitherto Thy grace sufficient;
Thither onward lead us still;
Strength unfailing shall sustain us,
Joy and peace our spirits fill.

Bountiful Thy daily blessings
Boundless is Thy store for each,
Therefore henceforth may our praises,
With thanksgiving, Thy Throne
reach.

R. M. CALLIS.

CORRESPONDENCE

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editor,

May I, writing on behalf of the brethren meeting in Cleveleys, reiterate the sentiments expressed by Bro. Winstanley in the December issue of the 'S.S.'? The position of editor is not only an unpaid one, which is too often a point overlooked, but is also a very thankless one. For once then, let us put our thanks and appreciation on record. May God bless and guide you so that you may continue to serve in this capacity in the future as ably as you have in years past. If you will allow me to misquote: an editor "can please some of the people all the time and all of the people some of the time, but not all of the people all of the time." We should like also to express our thanks to Bro. P. Jones, as agent, and Bro. R. B. Scott, who gives us notes on the readings.
Eric Winter.

[It would ill become us to enlarge on the above letter and that of Bro. Albert Winstanley referred to. All we can say, and on behalf of Bren. Jones and Scott, is a most sincere "Thank you." Such encouragement helps us to realise how much worthwhile is this aspect of the Lord's work.—Ed.]

Dear Bro. Melling,—On behalf of the congregation at Woodstock, Cape Town, I would like to extend our deep appreciation to you and all concerned for the co-operation in the publication of the news-items, and also my articles during the year 1961. We pray it may be ours to share in 1962, God willing. In the "Bulletin" we have already expressed our wishes to all, brethren in the cause of Christ.

I also appreciate the comments and words of appreciation towards me for the news-items, articles, "Bulletins," etc. These are but few of the things that tend to strengthen and upbuild each other. We need it.

Till we correspond again, God bless you and all in the Master's service over there. We, as a family, are all well by the grace of God. Trusting my brief letter shall find you one and all the same.

1st Cor., 15:58; Isaiah, 26:3.

—T. W. HARTLE, Wife and Family.

It is not so difficult a task to plant new truths as to root out old errors.

When you are in the right, you can afford to hold your temper. When you are wrong, you can't afford to lose it.

WHAT MAKES A ROPE STRONG?

Pulling together! That's the answer. Many tiny strands, each weak by itself; but, united in a common effort, they become strong enough to bind a giant. What makes a rope strong makes a character or a church strong. When you take hold of a rope you seldom think of those strands that are entwined about each other, so as to give the rope such strength. When we speak of a strong character or church, the little things that combine to make for unity and power are often overlooked.

Strands that make a character strong like a rope are many. Take habits of speech, reading, clean associates, places and kinds of amusements are on the **must** list for a stalwart soul. Integrity, industry, ideals and a hundred other things are important items in the rope-like structure of a man's moral and spiritual fibre.

The strands that make a church are the individual. Under the hand and mind of God, they are directed towards a common end, united in a common cause—God's glory and man's salvation. That is, if the church is to be a strong church.

It cannot be strong unless its members are united. Strong like the church in Jerusalem: "All that believed were together," "Steadfastly with one accord," "One heart and one soul." (Acts, 2:44 and 46; 4:32.)

A strong rope-like church is one that has renounced the world. We must be knit together in love, for love is the bond of perfectness (Col. 3:14). Remember this: Strong ropes don't just happen, neither do strong characters and churches. It takes pulling together!

The influence of every member, his time, his money, and his prayers should all be co-ordinated with that of every other member to give the church its greatest possible strength for its task.

—o—

Our lives are a mosaic of minor parts—dishwashing, mending clothes, writing letters, answering phones, checking orders, typing invoices, visiting the sick, breaking bread with friends, and performing a hundred commonplace tasks.

How we play our role in this daily drama determines not the degree of our skill but the height of our joy.

THE FAULTY EXCUSE

The man who says he is kept away from the church by hypocrites who go is not, influenced by hypocrites anywhere else. Business is full of them, but if he sees a chance to make money he does not stop for that. Society is crowded with them, but he never thinks of becoming a hermit. Married life is full of them, but that does not make him a bachelor. Hell is full of them, yet he isn't doing a thing to keep from going there.

He wants you to think he's avoiding hypocrites, yet he takes not a step towards heaven, the only place where no hypocrites are to be found.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Bedminster, Bristol.—We enjoyed a profitable time whilst Bro. Tom Nisbet was serving the church here. His timely messages were given in a friendly but persistent way, and we were delighted to witness the good confession and immersion of four who have been added to Christ's church. Bro. and Sister Ivor Carey were reported in last month's "Standard," and Sister Jean Collins (daughter of Bro. and Sister Sid Collins) and Sister Iris Forster, daughter of Sister Williams.

It is significant that three of these had passed through our Sunday school. We trust and pray that they will remain faithful, and be a strength to the church of Jesus Christ. A.L.D.

Eastwood

The church here held an intensive Gospel Mission during the period December 5th to the 18th, 1961, with Bro. Frank Worgan, the speaker, who gave of his best. Eager for work he was ever ready to do personal work along with public proclamation of the Word. The standard was high, the gospel preached in a clear yet forceful manner. Though we cannot report immediate results by baptism, the seed was truthfully sown, and pray the harvest will come.

We were unfortunate owing to the inclement weather, for only at two meetings out of the whole were we clear of fog. Without doubt this restricted the numbers attending. The church was strengthened, for in addition to the gospel meetings, Bro. Worgan in Bible Study expounded upon the second coming of Christ, and the person and work

of the Holy Spirit. We are indebted to him, but will ascribe to our Heavenly Father, the praise and glory for everything accomplished. Chas. Limb.

Ilkeston.—It is with joy that we record the addition of another to the church here. Reginald James Bullock made the good confession and was baptised on Wednesday, November 22nd. Our young brother, who is fifteen years old, has come through the Lord's Day school and also attended our gospel meetings. He is the son of Bro. and Sis. R. J. Bullock. We pray that he may grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord. We hope he will become a great worker for his Lord. May God help and bless him in our earnest prayer. F.G.

Ilkeston.

The church here has again been cheered by the addition of another to the Lord's Church. We were happy to hear Barbara Irene Bullock, a Sunday School scholar, make the good confession and be immersed into the ever blessed name on Wednesday, December 13th.

Barbara is the sister of Reginald Bullock, who was immersed on November 22nd. This makes the addition of three to the church since August. We pray that she, along with the others, may be kept faithful and receive the crown of life which is promised to all who endure to the end. F. G.

Pairs, France.—I have just terminated an encouraging four-day mission in Orléans, France. Brother H. B. Frank has been working diligently there toward the establishment of a permanent congregation. It was there that I began my first work of evangelisation in France. There was one baptism, the daughter of an Adventist family whom we contacted in 1954. The seed sown never lacks power to produce a harvest. Here in Paris the work is most encouraging. We were hosts to the Rheims and Orléans churches on November 11th. There were forty present for the tea and an afternoon service. Our joy was complete to see Mme. Rahal put on the Lord in baptism after the service. She had been studying with us for some time. At the same service Sister Petitot renounced the errors of a small Evangelical group with which she was affiliated. Having been scripturally baptised some years ago we were happy to welcome her to the fellowship of the brethren. We are now preparing for

a four-day mission with Brother Richard Andrejewski, one our finest French preachers. Brethren, pray for our efforts. Donald Daugherty.

Slamannan District

The new year social gathering was held in the Slamannan Church meeting house on 1st January, 1962, under the presidency of Bro. David Dougall, evangelist. There was a good attendance despite the bad weather and our thanks are due to the Slamannan Brethren for the work entailed in catering for the large gathering and for the service rendered.

Bro. Dougall, in welcoming all present, quoted 3rd John:2, as a wish for all in the new year, and Ezekiel 34:26, as a wish for all the churches.

Bro. Jack Nisbet, our first speaker, gave us a fine address on the Letter to the Ephesians and on Paul's work among these brethren. He exhorted all that this should be the target for all Christians, because its teaching leads one to become "A Perfect (Complete) Man" in God's ways.

Bro. Leonard Morgan, our other speaker, also gave us a fine address, based on the character and life of Herod, whom Jesus referred to as "that fox." Many lessons were brought before us by Bro. Morgan from the life of this man.

We were favoured with choir, male voice and duet pieces from the Mother-well Brethren and solos by the Slamannan Brethren.

A recitation was given by Bro. Duncan Stewart.

We look forward to a happy and prosperous year in the work of the Lord.

Hugh J. Davidson.

Wallacestone

Brethren rejoice with us. On Sunday, 17th December, God manifest to us yet again that His word is still His power unto salvation. We had the joy of witnessing the immersion into Christ of Janet Baird (daughter of Bro. and Sister John Baird) and Gerald Fox, a young man who has been attending our meetings for some weeks.

After Bro. A. Scobbie had taken the "Good Confession," Bro. J. Baird united them with their Lord in the ordinance of baptism.

We are having a rich, refreshing time at the hand of God, causing us to take courage and to press on. We solicit your prayers and thanksgiving.

James Grant.

COMING EVENTS

Ince-in-Makerfield (Wigan)—

Saturday and Sunday, 10th and 11th February, 1962. Visit of Bro. Dale Buckley (Glasgow). Gospel meetings at 7-30 p.m.

Saturday, 14th April, to Sunday, 29th April, 1962. Evangelistic effort with Bro. A. E. Winstanley (Tunbridge Wells), preaching.

Meetings on Saturdays, Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7-30 p.m.

Additional meetings on Friday, 20th April, at 7-30 p.m., and Monday, 23rd April, at 2-30 p.m. (Forum), and 7-30 p.m. with tea being served at 5 p.m.

Visitors welcomed. Accommodation provided for any who desire to spend the week-end with us.

Pray for us, brethren.

Morley (Zoar Street).— Anniversary weekend, February 24th and 25th. Speaker, Bro. W. Steele (Edinburgh). Saturday, tea 4.15 p.m., meeting 6.15 p.m. Sunday, breaking of bread 2.30 p.m., Gospel meeting 6 p.m. All welcome.

Reading.— The Church here invites brethren and friends to the first anniversary meeting (D.V.) on Saturday, 24th February. Bro. A. E. Winstanley is our speaker at 3.30 and 6.30 p.m. Tea in the "Friend's" Meeting House.

Blackburn Park Road—

The church invites brethren and friends to the following meetings:—

Saturday, Feb. 24th and Sunday (25th) at 7-30 p.m. Speaker, Bro. G. Lodge (Dewsbury). Also, Saturday, March 3rd to Sunday, March 18th, with Bro. A. E. Winstanley (Tunbridge Wells) as follows: Sat. (3rd), Sun. (4th), Tues. (6th), Wed. (7th) all at 7-30 p.m.

Sat. (10th), tea at 4-30 p.m., meeting, 6 p.m. Sun. (11th), Tues. (13th), Wed. (14th), Sat. (17th), Sun. (18th). All at 7-30 p.m.

SPECIAL NOTICE

Owing to the indisposition of Brother Fred C. Day, who is secretary of the Church in Birmingham, all correspondence should be addressed to: Paul Jones, 41 Pendragon Road, Birmingham, 22b. BIRchfields 5559 until further notice.

"HOW CONCERNED . . .?"

Accidents are mounting! The "done thing" is to drink, The brewers are succeeding more than I care to think

More of our Youth are drinking, they say its good and new, Our task is not decreasing. "How concerned are you?"

The Highway Code is laughed at, the Drew Report is dropped, The Drinking Laws are chaffed at; few licences are stopped.

Wine-drinking is increasing, more Spirits are sold too Drink's war is never-ceasing. "How concerned are you?"

More children drink than ever—parents think it right, Alcoholics' figures soar, each a sorry sight;

Lost is much we cherished, the foe is riding high, Ask yourself, e'er we perish: "How concerned am I?"

—ALAN F. HICKMAN.

LET'S FACE IT

MANY a meal has been ruined by ample servings of cold shoulder and hot tongue.

Some of our children have a hard time trying to follow in the footsteps of a father who hasn't made any.

Most of us would be speechless if we could only speak well of others.

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Articles, letters, appeals etc. for insertion must be sent before the 10th of the month to the Editor, **C. MELLING**, 133 Long Lane, Hindley, Lancs. News items, obituaries, coming events personal notices, changes of address, etc., to **W. BARKER**, c/o Walter Barker (Printers) Ltd., Langley Mill, Nottm. Payments to **PAUL JONES**, as above.

EVANGELIST FUND: Contributions to **R. McDONALD**, "Aldersyde," 10 Mardale Road, Bennett Lane, Dewsbury, Yorks.

Secretary of Conference Committee: **A. HOOD**, 45 Park Road, Hindley, nr. Wigan.

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

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