

# *The* **SCRIPTURE STANDARD**

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

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## *'Grow in Grace and Knowledge'*

ALL the apostles were great men. To be placed in such a work by one who "knew what was in man" raised them to the highest honour. Simon Peter was one of this group. Two of his letters are preserved in the New Testament. The last words we have from this apostle of our Lord concerns our subject. "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen" (2 Peter 3:18). When God made the creatures and plants, He created in them the ability to grow. Did you ever know a child who did not want to grow up? In all areas of activity men and women want to improve and grow. Christians must have this same trait. They must grow in grace and knowledge to please God and to keep the holy commandments. Are we growing in grace and knowledge? We must grow in BOTH, or not at all. He who grows in one, will make development in the other also. The one who does not grow is a perpetual baby and must be sick.

**Consider the origin of this growth.** Christians have been "born again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (1 Peter 2:23). And so growth begins. It begins with the first spark of life and continues on and on. Without this birth there would be no spiritual growth. Without the seed there would be no birth, hence no life. Christ told Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again, born of water and of the spirit, otherwise you cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:3-7). All men should experience the new birth. What a tragedy it is to be born only once.

**Next, let us notice the nature of this growth.** The apostle spoke of it as a growth in grace and knowledge. In both instances God supplies that which man cannot supply, but which his nature demands or needs most desperately. He furnishes man with his word, which is a guiding light. He also freely showers upon man his favour of grace so bountifully. But man may accept or reject them. Many souls reject both. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving" (Colossians 2:6-7). First, the Christian should take root. There will be tempestuous winds to try the deepest roots. Paul teaches that part of our Christian development is downward. This growth is necessary if there is to be upward growth, steadfastness and fruitfulness. The same lesson was taught in the Lord's parable of the sower. The seed which fell on stony ground where it could not develop good roots, did not produce, could never grow or continue to live.

After the roots are developed, then growth is expected in a different direction. We should be "built up in him." Upon our faith in Christ as the foundation, we are expected to grow upward and bear fruit. It should be daily, steady growth, not in jerks and spurts. This will be the best kind of growth in anything.

**What are the means of this growth?** The apostle commanded it. Now what is necessary for us to experience it? For this growth to be realised there must be a supply of food. Unless life is sustained and nourished, there can be no development. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2).

There must also be some exercise. Though a person may have all the food he could wish for, he will not be strong and able to do his best unless he exercises. We are expected to work out our own salvation and God has ordained that we "walk in good works."

The environment must be considered. Life in outer space will have its problems due to the very different environment man will encounter. Even so, evil surroundings may overcome all the good that wholesome food and exercise can bestow. For the best growth good environment is necessary. The warmth of sunshine is needed, as life cannot thrive in a dark, frigid climate. Also helpful is a pure atmosphere. Associations help to mould character. We should seek the company of the best people (See I Cor. 15:33).

**Consider the need for growth in grace and knowledge.** We must have growth to have life, because where progress ends, decay begins, and decay leads to death. We all have plans, dreams, and ambitions for our children. But when a child fails to grow properly, we are deeply concerned. Growth is expected. We expect children to act like children but it is most disappointing to see a man act like a child. It has been said that some Christians are like the wasp, larger in infancy than at any other stage of life. But remember, God expects his children to grow daily.

If we do not grow, we are not adding the Christian graces and give evidence of being almost blind and very forgetful. We cannot see as far ahead as we ought and do not remember the goodness of God's grace. If we are growing, adding the Christian graces, "doing these things, ye shall never fall." So you can see that there is less danger of falling from God's grace while we are growing. Also, if we grow in grace and in knowledge, adding the Christian graces, we may expect an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

## *Training for Service—2*

### II. What Bible should I use?

THE first question asked in last month's exercise was "Why must all effective teaching and preaching be based on the Bible?" There are many answers to this question, but one would certainly be that the Bible is what we have to preach: in a unique sense it is the authoritative revealing of God in words to men; by the words of that book we shall be judged according to our obedience or disobedience. It is therefore essential that we read, study and know what the book contains. It is the teacher's "textbook," the preacher's message.

We cannot be too careful in making sure that, so far as we are qualified to judge, we have the translations "in our own tongue" of what God has spoken. Of course we know that the writers of the Bible used three languages in recording the words of the Holy Spirit—Hebrew in the Old Testament, and Greek and in a very few passages Aramaic in the New. If we can read these tongues, so that we read the word of God in the original, so much the better. But very few of us can claim such an achievement. Consequently we have to be content with translations which qualified scholars have made of the scriptures into the various languages of the world. Here we must pay testimony to the laborious, faithful and devoted services which scholars have rendered, often with little or no monetary support or reward, in making these translations.

But although we may not be able to read the Bible in the Bible languages, there is a "middle way" that we may take. Versions, at least of the New Testament, are published which give on one line the original Greek, and underneath a word-for-word translation. The translation reads awkwardly because of the different arrangement of words in a Greek sentence from what we use. But we can with a little intelligence make sense of the English. Often such interlined or interlinear versions contain also the Authorised Version rendering, which makes it all the easier to find our way. Such a version is "THE INTERLINEAR GREEK-ENGLISH NEW TESTAMENT—also a marginal text of the Authorised Version—" published by Bagster at 42/-. I have recently been given a new copy of this version by a sister in Christ—I hope that many of you students may prove as fortunate! The advantage of such a version is that we can find out, so far as is known, what the writers of scripture set down in the original language. That is vital, for if we can ascertain what was so written, and can learn its meaning at the time, we are a good way towards understanding exactly what the Holy Spirit meant.

## TRANSLATIONS MOST WIDELY USED

## The Whole Bible

FIRST, of course, comes the so-called **Authorised Version**, presumably "authorised" by King James 1 of England to be read and used. Hence this is sometimes termed the **King James Version**; another designation for it is the **Common Version**. It is the **Common Version** because it is far and away the most widely used in the English-speaking world. It is in almost every home (whether read or not is another matter), is used in almost every religious denomination called Christian, and its annual sales far exceed that of any other translation. It was issued in 1611, over 350 years ago, and has won its way into the hearts and memories of almost all religious people. Its beautiful wording and its poetic and even musical sound endear it to all. It is a masterpiece of English literature. To many people this translation alone is the Bible: other translations are hardly accepted as the word of God. There is, and perhaps never will be, any danger of its being ousted from the affection of Bible-lovers, be the new translations issued ever so numerous.

But there can be danger, in this attitude, of sentimentalising the scriptures. The first essential in understanding the Bible is accuracy—to know that we are reading what the writers wrote. The A.V., when published, was the most accurate as well as the most beautiful translation. But since then many Hebrew and Greek manuscripts ("manu"—hand, "script"—writing, "written by hand") have been discovered much older than those from which the A.V. was translated. The probability is that the nearer to the original a manuscript is, the more likely its accuracy, since mistakes multiply with the number of copies made. Since the time of the A.V. manuscripts of almost the complete Scriptures have been unearthed, such Greek manuscripts as the "Codex Sinaiticus," "Alexandrinus" etc., dating back to about the year 350 A.D. The finding of such manuscripts, or rather the making of them available to a wider circle of students, resulted in the latter half of the 19th century and the first half of the present in a great incentive to Bible translation. We mention a few, with comments, of these versions, in hope that the Bible student will be able to decide which to use, and will be aided in intelligent Scripture exposition.

Following the A.V. the next translation of the whole Bible which has had wide circulation is the **REVISED VERSION (R.V.) 1881-5**. This is probably the most scholarly and accurate translation ever to be issued to date. Its accuracy is shown by the fact that very few translations published since show any appreciable differences from the renderings of the R.V. But its very scholarship seems to have been gainst it: it does not read with nearly the same glow and beauty of the A.V. No attempt is made to translate into our modern speech. The version has never endeared itself to readers and it is less used today than it ever was, except by students who desire first of all accuracy.

It is interesting to know that the whole of the R.V. N.T. was telegraphed across the Atlantic to the United States—the longest telegram ever to be sent. In 1901 an American revision the "**STANDARD REVISED VERSION**" was published. In this version of the N.T. the term Holy Spirit is consistently used instead of the R.V.'s "Holy Ghost," and the word "Saint" is omitted from the titles of the books. And there are many other improvements.

It is very difficult to present a translation which is at the same time accurate and beautiful to the ear. In 1862 Robert Young, author of the "Analytical Concordance to the Bible" issued his "**LITERAL TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE**," a word-for-word rendering of the original texts into English, but this scholarly work has had little influence on Bible studies. A much deeper influence has been exercised by Joseph Bryant Rotherham's "**EMPHASISED BIBLE**." Rotherham, we are proud to say, was a member of the churches of Christ. The chief characteristic of this work is that the text is set out and supplied with certain signs intending to convey the different shades of emphasis in the original. Rotherham's version was one of the first to render the unutterable name of the God of Israel throughout the O.T. by "Yahweh."

It was said above that the discovery of ancient Bible manuscripts in the 19th century resulted in a great incentive to Bible translation. In this century this activity is accelerating: the new translations and versions issued these past 50 years are greater in number than even in the most active days of the Reformation, 1520 to 1560. It might be suggested that there is no need for these numerous translations, and that they bewilder the Bible-reader and student, causing him to wonder what the Scriptures do say and whether a passage is to be accepted or rejected. But on the whole it is true to say that some of the versions in modern speech are much easier to be understood than the language used in the A.V. The Authorised Version was in its time a translation into the speech of its day. And we cannot

always understand that speech, for language is constantly changing. It is surely right that so much interest is being shown in what the Bible really says and means, and so much scholarship being devoted to finding out these things.

### Some Modern Speech Translations

"THE COMPLETE BIBLE: AN AMERICAN TRANSLATION" (1927, revised 1935), sometimes called the GOODSPEED TRANSLATION (Goodspeed translating the N.T.) Although, as E. J. Goodspeed writes, the translation was "for American readers," this version contains few Americanisms, but has a dignity and simplicity which makes it acceptable to readers of English anywhere. However, the student needs to beware of accepting, for instance, the translation "taboo" for "unclean" in God's commandments concerning sacrifices and food, as though the God of Israel was simply a tribal god like those of the nations around.

In the Goodspeed translation, Old and New Testament, God is addressed as "You," a usage many dislike, including myself. But such objection is only traditional, for "You" sounds less respectful and majestic than "Thou." Many other modern-speech translations have "you" when addressing Christ as man, but "Thou" as God and "Thou" for God Himself. Such use is understandable, for the disciples of Jesus would not speak to Him in any other way than that of their common speech.

"A NEW TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE" by James Moffatt, 1928 (N.T. 1913; O.T. 1924). This version is characterised by the freedom and vigour (even crudeness) of its language. To read it, especially the O.T., is to be constantly jolted, but perhaps the translator gets nearest to the original speech of the Bible by this very fact. In some of the sacred writings the rough language of the day was used, and is most effective.

Moffatt seems to take liberties with the order of the text, placing passages, even whole chapters, where he thinks they best fit. But that is not necessarily the order in which those passages were written. We feel the need to stress that Moffatt's translation should be used with care.

"REVISED STANDARD VERSION" (N.T. 1946; O.T. 1952). In the 13 years since its publication this version has attained immense popularity. When one has read a few chapters it is easy to understand why, for it combines the beauty and dignity of the A.V. with the accuracy of the R.V., which it seems to be replacing. This version is being used more and more by preachers and teachers, and is being adopted by churches as the version for the public reading of the Scriptures. It must be stressed that it is not a new translation; it is a revision of the Authorised and Revised Versions, but in modern speech.

In 1959 was published the BERKELEY VERSION IN MODERN ENGLISH, an American publication named after its place of publication—Berkeley, California. This has been described as "a more conservative counterpart of the Revised Standard Version."

Many other translations of the whole Bible have been made, too numerous to comment upon, or even to list in this study. What we have written refers to those translations most easily obtainable and which, we think, will be of most help to those desirous of being used to bring God's message to people today. Our next study will deal with translations of the N.T. That portion of the Bible necessarily constitutes our message to the church and the world today, so it is right that we devote more detailed study to it.

### QUESTIONS

(You are invited to send your answers to C. Melling, 133 Long Lane, Hindley, Lancs. They will be marked and returned to you, with comments, as soon as possible. Even if you get a little late in sending answers, still try them: question and answer is the best way of learning).

1. No original writings of the Bible are, so far as is known, in existence. How then can we believe that the various translations render what God originally spoke?
2. The language of the Authorised Version is that of the early 17th century. Is it possible from the A.V. alone for a man to know God's way of salvation? And how?
3. By comparing scripture with scripture show how it is possible for one to understand God's will, apart from explanations or commentaries of men.

# CORRESPONDENCE

## "WITHER NOW"

Brother Editor,  
IN both of my letters to the "S.S." (March and June) I expressed a willingness to discuss the container question; in neither have I sought to avoid the issue.

It is expected that I should be misunderstood by one who ruthlessly extracts clauses (not complete sentences) from my letters to make a contradiction appear. When this is done to Scripture the statement is: "A text taken out of its context is a pretext." Thinking brethren can read the context and see whether or not I changed positions.

Nor can anything I have written be fairly regarded as a call for a "conference," especially since I deny the validity of a conference to solve church problems.

In mine of June I offered what has been used effectively in the past by many papers as a fair way of discussing issues, and stated: "If what I am suggesting is not wise perhaps someone will bring forth a suggestion for more adequate discussion." To date there has been neither an acceptance of the offer (expressed to me) nor an alternative suggested—only the same appearance of letters which disagree with each other almost as much as they do with mine. That this has been the practice for years is not denied, but let us hope that its value for edification does not have to be proven!

Justifying immersion in a quarter of a column in the "S.S." is hardly parallel to justifying immersion in a four-inch column in a newspaper read by people who have scores of objections (all of which we feel we can answer, given the space) with which they will flood the correspondence page. In a two-inch column any half-witted affusionist can raise more questions than the most competent immersionist can legitimately answer in three ten-inch columns!

In the July "S.S." three men used six columns on the container question; but the editor may be pardoned for not printing a six-column letter from one person, especially if others also submit letters. This is one reason why I insist on an equal amount of space for two men to discuss the matter fully and fairly. If this be wrong, please favour me with an explanation and alternative.

Churches from Brighton to Morley and Ince to Tunbridge Wells which I have served can speak of my "fruits" among them. "Love me and say whatever you will about me."

If my proposal for discussion is not acceptable, one thing is certain: the

issue is only clouded by misrepresentations, hasty conclusions, and an unswerving insularity which will not come out in the open.

C. PHILIP SLATE.

[The letter above should have appeared the September "S.S.," but the editor responsible for the delay. Only when the "S.S." was received for September was it noticed that the letter is not included. A search revealed that it had been laid by with some other correspondence from Bro. Slate. We apologise to Bro. Slate for the oversight and for the concern caused to him and assure him that the error was a purely accidental one.—Editor.]

## "THREE COVENANTS"

POOR FATHER ADAM!

Poor Mother Eve!

It was all because you ate a piece of apple or sucked a juicy fruit. But nevertheless, you had broken the everlasting covenant, and God, your Father, and our Father, could not do otherwise than bring you to judgment and punishment. And what a terrible judgment it was. To think that it involved all of your posterity! Still, the ordinance of the everlasting covenant had been broken and the penalty had to be met. How much worse it would have been if our Father had not been gracious.

The occasion was relieved with a promise, "that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head." A son was born some time later, and, no doubt, they looked to him to right the wrong the serpent had done. He turned out to be worse than his father, so again the everlasting covenant was broken. He offered to God as a sacrifice the "first fruits of the ground," while Abel his brother, offered a lamb. Cain was rejected, and Abel accepted. Somewhere in this matter "Sin lay at the door."

Cain became angry and slew his brother. The Lord appeared to Cain because he slew his brother, and demanded an explanation. And the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?" And Cain said, "I know not. Am I my brother's keeper?" This was a lie, which he endeavoured to cover with a feint. But God knew the truth and said: "What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."

Here again, we see the awful consequences of interfering with Divine arrangements.

But what a small thing it was that terminated with such disastrous results! Cain became the first apostate in history. He changed the ordinance of the Lord, sinned in doing so, slew his brother, told a lie, and pretended it was the truth.

No wonder this little story—the only outstanding event in the first fifteen

hundred years of human history—is given such prominence, for it has stood as a beacon shining down the ages warning all who profess to serve and worship God, that they had better be careful as to what they do with the Divine ordinances. It tells the evil results that can follow when broken.

In spite of this, there has been the great apostasy culminating with the rise of the Pope of Rome, and all the sectarianism consequent upon the reformation efforts, both of the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries.

It ill becomes our brother to pose the question he does in his letter "Have these broken the everlasting covenant?"

Turning to the points raised, there cannot be the same justification for what he is contending for as in the instances he compares it with. The Lord gave one cup to about twelve people; it would have to be a big cup for five hundred people, and so if more are introduced, the act and sense of a communal family act is not destroyed. The Lord had "unleavened bread" before Him as he proceeded to establish the feast, and naturally used it. But if the wine in the cup is the thing that matters, then there is no reason why other methods than the one advocated cannot be used. Each one could bring his own supply, and when thanks had been given proceed to drink it.

If the mode of serving the wine can be adjusted, then, why not the time? Actually, to copy Paul's example, the feast should be spread on Saturday night between six o'clock and twelve. Then, is it necessary to partake of the emblems every time we meet? If the change suggested is warrantable, can we not change other things? Is there not some justification for keeping the feast once a month, or once a year? I think we had better keep to the "one cup" idea as close as we can. It remains the best.

Bro. Sam Wilson's article was very sound, I thought. That the latter portion of Is. 24 can be applied to conditions as they will be when the Lord returns, is clear, and I think in this part, pertains to the end of time which is quite near.

J. B. KENDRICK.

phrase "changed the ordinance" could apply to any of the first three "everlasting covenants."

The ordinance of the first covenant made with Noah was the rainbow, which man cannot change; the ordinance of the second covenant made with Abraham was circumcision, to which the Israelites clung so tenaciously without alteration; the ordinance of the Mosaic covenant was the keeping of the Sabbath, which the Israelites neglected, but which also remained unchanged. Hence by the process of exhaustive argument, Bro. Wilson concludes that Isa. 24:5 must refer to the only other "everlasting covenant"—that spoken of in Heb. 13:20. Bro. Wilson finally points to the close connection between Heb. 13:20 and Luke 22:20, and enumerates the obvious inferences of this connection with special reference to the cup.

Bro. Wilson was originally a member of the church in Dennyloanhead before emigrating to New Zealand many years ago. It has been my privilege to meet and to have close contact with him during his recent visit to Scotland. Those who read his articles may be assured of his sincerity and deep spirituality. May I be permitted to compliment this brother for his most able and scholarly presentation of this study?

By comparison, Bro. Worgan's argument is illogical and obscure. While considering his final note about "never questioning the sincerity" of my opponent, I wonder whom the remarks refer to, "allowing zeal to outstrip judgment in trying to prove our own position," and "taking care to handle the word of God reverently and consistently" are intended to apply to. Referring to Bro. Wilson's remarks on the common cup, Bro. Worgan states, "This of course is the thing that our brother was bent on proving from the moment he put pen to paper." I wonder if there is just the slightest suggestion here that there is something not quite above board about Bro. Wilson's article. I earnestly hope Bro. Worgan's criticism was not intended to convey that idea.

I have read and re-read Bro. Worgan's letter, and I look in vain for anything constructive in all he has said. Nowhere does he state, "Thus saith the Lord," nowhere does he take a decisive stand or give that guidance which he evidently thinks we so desperately need.

Without troubling to define the extent of the "section of Isaiah" he refers to, or to tell us why he comes to this conclusion, Bro. Worgan states that "a proper study of that section of the book should show any student how mistaken Bro. Wilson is," i.e. that Isa. 24:5 refers to the near end of the gospel age and that the prophet was not writing for the people of his own time. He concludes that this is "ignoring the historical sig-

Dear Bro. Melling,  
BRO. WORGAN'S criticism calls for a closer study of Bro. Wilson's article than most of us perhaps would have troubled to undertake. In his proposition, Bro. Wilson states that Isaiah 24:5 is a prediction concerning the end of the gospel age. In support of this he sets out to show, by 1 Peter 1:10-12 and Psalm 102:18, that the prophet was not writing for the people of his own day, generation, or dispensation, and because it cannot be demonstrated that the

nificance of the passage" and is "tearing v.5 out of its setting." He does not actually tell us what the passage does refer to.

It would be helpful, surely, if he would give us the benefit of his knowledge. His argument apparently is that in view of the "historical significance," nothing in this section of the book can possibly refer to the end of the gospel age. I would invite him to consider the prediction in the very next chapter, 25:8: "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away all tears from all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall be taken away from off the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it." I would ask him to compare this with 1 Cor. 15:54: "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass that saying that is written, **Death is swallowed up in victory.**" (See also Rev. 21:4).

I would now ask Bro. Worgan if he is prepared to deny that Isa. 25:8 refers to the end of the gospel age. If Isa. 25:8 can refer to this time, despite the "historical significance" of this section of Isaiah, why cannot a brother maintain that Isa. 24:5 refers to this age without being accused of tearing the passage out of its setting, to suit his own requirements?

Bro. Worgan knows what everyone who practices the use of individual cups knows that there is not the slightest shred of support for this practice in the word of God. He knows that this practice has caused trouble and division wherever it has been introduced and perpetuated. He knows that there is a scriptural method of observing this ordinance, and he is committed by reason of his employment to the defence of the indefensible. Bro. Worgan is aware that the questions he raises (but does not answer) are being made matters of controversy by those seeking to justify an antiscriptural practice. While posing these questions he himself offers no solution. If Bro. Worgan seeks a solution to this cause of division amongst us, he knows that the simplest—the only remedy is in his own hands. Is it too much to ask him to accept the plain teaching of the word of God.

Our brother would like to suppress any question about the sincerity of those concerned in this dispute. In view of the position as it stands, and of the apostles' teaching relative to apostasy. I cannot personally grant him this concession. If the apostles gave warning of men of ulterior motives in their time, I am not prepared to assume that there cannot be such a thing today. Bro. Wilson's proposition speaks eloquently of the times in which we live, and his deductions are correct.

On consideration of the case before us, we find that the use of individual cups springs not from a desire for unity, not from love toward the brethren, nor from a desire to adhere to scriptural practice. Are we to be forbidden to ask what is the animating force behind this innovation? Let these erring brethren discard this offensive practice and so demonstrate the purity of their motives and their love for unity of God's people. They will then be in a position to help us sort out the remaining hindrances to unity and concord.

JOHN M. WOOD.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### OCTOBER 1965

3—1 Kings 10:1-22	Luke 12:22-43
10—Eccles. 11:1 to 12:8	Luke 12:49 to 13:5
17—Isaiah 1:1-20	Luke 13:6-21
24—Isaiah 62	Luke 13:22-35
31—Proverbs 25:1-14	Luke 14:1-14

### THE SABBATH: A DIVINE INSTITUTION

WE all agree that the Sabbath is a divine institution. We do not believe it is now binding on Christians, nor that God has transferred the command in Exodus 20 to the sermon on the mount of the apostolic ordinances for the church. The Seventh Day Adventists certainly have a good point in pleading for a sabbath day now, for one day's rest in seven is good for man. This cannot be denied. Moral and social conditions where a "Continental Sunday" is the habit are not good for man. The measure of its invasion of Britain is the measure of British moral decadence. Statistics are sometimes used illogically, but full places of amusement and empty places of worship are concurrent with moral laxity and full prisons. Bearing in mind that behaviour which would have been popularly condemned and legally punishable about 70 years ago, is now accepted as normal and in some cases not punishable by law, we observe there is a considerable downward drift. Nevertheless Christians have no scripture for enforcing observance of either the Sabbath or the Lord's Day upon others.

The Jews were unique and outstanding in moral character when Jesus came, and observance of the Sabbath was fundamental to their way of life. This fitted wonderfully into the Saviour's need for opportunity for preaching and teaching His way of life. He used the Sabbath synagogue worship—quite similar to the comparatively informal worship we practice as churches of Christ—freely for this purpose, and of course the

apostles followed the practice when carrying the gospel to other parts of the world (Luke 4:15 and 44; Acts 5:5-13 14:1). The Jewish worship was making and influencing seekers after God in all nations, witness the "centurion who built us a synagogue," Cornelius, and "devout Greeks" (Acts 13:50; 17:4 and 17). This day of rest and worship is twice in our month's readings the occasion of teaching.

**Luke 13:10-17.** Jesus was teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath. We feel sure those in charge of the service were glad to have Him, the crowded meeting-place, the rapt attention. It must have been a wonderful experience to have such a speaker, such attention and such attendance. Our own meeting-houses need such a speaker to draw the crowds. We should be surprised and perhaps overwhelmed by such an event in these days, but Jesus needed no advertising!

The heart of Jesus must have exulted because "the common people heard Him gladly." On the occasion of the return of the seventy He expressed His gratitude to the Father for revelation to "babes" rather than to the intelligentsia, then thinking of those simple-hearted believers who had gone out preaching for Him. Often the common people were glad for His healing rather than His teaching. They were amazed and wondered at this latter, and were sometimes more than disappointed (Luke 4:22 and 28; John 6:66 etc.).

On this occasion Jesus saw an afflicted woman in the meeting, stopped His discourse, called her to Him, and healed her forthwith. She naturally and properly expressed her gratitude aloud and glorified God. Apparently the elders who controlled the meeting were scandalised at this interruption, and the president, attacking Jesus indirectly, made it clear that this sort of thing must not happen again. So it is possible to let ideas of reverence and order blind us to "the weightier matters," and to resent the exercise of kindness and love. To do this on the grounds of sabbath-breaking was just inexcusable, and Jesus made this so plain by contrasting the attitude to animals with that towards afflicted men and women by His Pharisaic enemies. They were ashamed and the people rejoiced.

**Luke 14:1-6.** Our second incident is in the house of a Pharisee on the Sabbath. We can assume that the synagogue service was over, and Jesus was the invited guest (see verse 7). The houses were open and people would be standing around. These included a man with palsy, there perhaps by design, seeing the Pharisees "themselves were carefully watching Him" (a fuller translation). It would seem that they thought they could discredit Jesus as a teacher by this accusation of sabbath-breaking, as it was tried often. On this occasion,

as so often, Jesus knew their thoughts and asked the very plain question "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" The experts in the law could surely answer this but "They held their peace." Jesus with pitying love healed the man as He had healed the woman, and made the same incontestable point by referring to the obvious action any Pharisee (or other person) would take to help an animal on the Sabbath. One wonders how the Pharisee reconciled having a feast on the Sabbath with his traditions!

Jesus obeyed the law of the Sabbath, and never made excuse for Sabbath-breakers: every jot and tittle held good until its fulfilment in Him. We now in many cases have two days free from toil for bread—Saturday, the Sabbath and Sunday the Lord's Day. In the providence of God we have freedom to worship on the Lord's Day and an obligation not to forego the assembling of ourselves together. We have the day because Christians from earliest times and under apostolic guidance observed "the breaking of the bread" on that day and called it "the Lord's Day" (Acts 20:7; Rev. 1:10). We know there are duties and obligations which may at times prevent complete consecration of the day to worship and service, but we ought to use it as far as ever possible in that way, and at least eschew worldly pleasures in favour of Christian fellowship and labour. **BUT EVERY DAY IS THE LORD'S.**

R. B. SCOTT

## *Parables of Jesus*

### **No. 4: THE LOST SOUL**

**A glimpse into the "Regions Beyond"**

Scripture: Luke 16:19-31

MAN has many blessings that distinguish him from the lower animals; he has faculties and abilities not found in them. Not the least of these is the faculty of memory, an ability to look back on his past life. Most of us can recall experiences, pleasant and otherwise, and by the aid of memory, live again former days. One thing a wise God has held from us however, is the ability to see the future, and, intriguing though it may sound for us to be able to do this, God, who is wiser than we, has decreed that men must "walk by faith and not by sight."

Nevertheless, man has always been curious as to what the future may hold: this is evident in the variety of tricks resorted to by the more credulous, from palmistry to tea-cup reading, from crystal gazing to card reading. Most daily newspapers and periodicals have their "stars column," where so-called astrologers purport to reveal "What the stars foretell"—incidentally, none of them agreeing with what the other says.

There is something else, however, that

has also intrigued mankind, something that goes far beyond fortune-telling, and that is, What happens after death? Our Spiritualist friends are particularly good at trying to convince us of what happens in the "Life after Death"; yet again a wise God has drawn a veil over this also and attempts to pierce that veil have ended in every case in failure. Yet in our story the Scriptures do lift that veil and we are given a very real glimpse of what did happen to at least two persons who passed over to "the other side." This story has not met with the interest one would have thought it would have aroused, seeing so many seem to be concerned as to what does happen the other side of the grave.

Let us take a look at the parable and note what it reveals and what it does not. The reader will notice two principal characters in it, drawn from the two extremes of human experience—sumptuous wealth on the one hand, direst poverty on the other. One had all this world offers as an example of a successful life—wealth "beyond the dreams of avarice": the other, everything that makes like miserable and hard, abject squalor coupled with sickness of a most distressing kind. Lazarus, the poor beggar, was evidently homeless and destitute, a pitiable object indeed; yet, although he desired to be fed from the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, nobody gave to him. The dogs of the street had more sympathy for him (and they would be poor enough!) than the rich man or his servant. It is a sad reflection on human nature, that prosperity has the effect of making us indifferent to the needs of others. Yet there are always worthy souls, all too rare, who do concern themselves with the less fortunate. These are often men and women who themselves have known what it is to suffer in some way and this gives them a keener insight into the needs of others.

It is safe to assume that the rich man never had suffered, neither from hunger nor from any other of the normal afflictions of human life, otherwise he could not have remained so indifferent to that case of obvious distress right on his doorstep.

The two men had, however, one thing in common; they both died. But what a difference in the record after they have died! We read in the case of Lazarus (v.22) "he was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom." What a funeral for that poor sufferer! Forgotten by his fellows, heeded not by those to whom he had a right to look for succour; yet angels attended to his last journey; what peace, what comfort it must have brought to that suffering soul. Of course, we are not told what happened to his body—that is of little significance. In accordance with the customs of that time, his body would be

dragged away to some common place of interment, with no mourners to accompany it, and no service or other outward sign of sorrow; buried, in modern parlance, in a "pauper's grave."

Note, however, the cryptic comment of Christ on the rich man: "He died, and was buried," and that's that. It doesn't need much imagination to picture his funeral, we have only to call to mind the pomp and ceremony that accompanies the burials of earth's great ones. We are not told of the professional mourners, the weeping and wailing, and all the funeral trappings and display, so beloved of mankind; maybe speeches would be made extolling the departed; nicer things said about him in death than were ever said in life.

One thing does need bearing in mind by all of us—we don't bury dead men, only dead bodies: the persons who inhabited those bodies have departed from all earthly strife, care and sorrow. And we are told just what happens to the departed; some, as Christ taught, to everlasting bliss, other to everlasting torment. It is not the purpose of the writer to go into the precise meaning of hell fire. We need to bear in mind that it is spirits who inhabit these places, not bodies, so what form these "fires of hell" take is not specifically revealed. One thing is certain; when we do depart from this life, we take our faculties with us, the ability to see, hear, converse, to exercise memory, experience feeling. Note the request for water, and the reference to "being tormented in this flame" and to Lazarus being "comforted." We evidently can experience both comfort and torment according to where we are.

The positions of both these men were completely reversed; all the sufferings of the one are over; for the other they are just starting—with this significant difference; time has ended for them both, eternity has begun. Should any of our readers have any doubts as to the Christian life, take note of these facts. Time is but a narrow peninsula between two great oceans of eternity, and whatever our lot here below, it is not to be compared with what we shall be in the hereafter. Each of us should so order our days as to make sure on which side of the "great gulf fixed" we find ourselves on that great day which awaits rich and poor alike.

We need also to bear in mind that the rich man didn't find himself where he was because he was rich; he was where he was because he was *not* rich. Riches in the eyes of God do not consist of this world's goods, but of Christian graces through being obedient to Christ. There has been much muddled thinking about riches in the Christian life; true, our Lord made it plain that a rich man cannot enter into heaven, for the simple reason that the riches he was referring

to belong to this life and so, whether our possessions are many or few, when we leave this present world we leave all our possessions behind. When we get to the other side, it matters not what we have possessed, we enter into glory with the riches we have accumulated "toward God."

The Christian faith has seen many noble men of wealth who have in very truth, "adorned the gospel of God," and their wealth has readily been at the disposal and call of the church. God calls men from all ranks and walks of life and uses consecrated men and women whether rich or poor in His service. So let us get the idea out of our minds, if it has ever been in, that riches are a bar to salvation. Like anything else they hinder our salvation if we allow them to come between us and God.

Let us look at this rich man and note the remarkable transformation that has come over him since he died. Previously we are given no indication that he believed in either prayer, preaching, or repentance; we now find he believes in all three. Note verse 24—"Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame."

Here we have him praying for succour and ease, and that at the hands of the very man he neglected on earth. He receives in reply those telling words, "Son remember"; then follows a reminder of the reversal of the fortunes of himself and the one to whom he now turns for aid, Lazarus. The rich man now in verse 28 turns to preaching; "Send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come to this place of torment," but Abraham reminds him that there are Moses and the Prophets they can turn to. "Nay father Abraham," is the reply, "but if one went from the dead they would repent"; note this reference to repentance—this man has learned too late what he ought to have done—and Abraham's stern reply, "If they heed not Moses and the Prophets they will not be persuaded though one return from the dead." And how true that is today; men will not heed either Moses, the Prophets, nor the testimony of the apostles that Christ has risen from the dead—a typical comment on today's faithlessness in the world.

Note here the three-point refusal of Abraham. Send Lazarus to me, No; Send him to my brethren, No; Send someone from the dead, again No. This man prayed in hell more than he ever prayed on earth but his prayers were of no avail. So much for those who would have us believe there is a second chance after death, there is no such thing: "Now is the day of salvation." Faith, prayer,

preaching, repentance were all exercised by the rich man when it was too late. God had nothing more to say than what had already been said, and if we refuse now the offers of mercy it is too late when once we have left this present life.

What are the lessons we can learn from this study? We suggest five. (1) This world has nothing to offer of lasting value; (2) "God is not mocked, as a man sows so shall he reap"; (3) The faithful are rewarded; (4) There is no escaping the judgment of God; (5) God has the last word to say. If they don't believe Moses and the Prophets there is nothing more to be said.

When Statesmen have made their last parley;

When Dictators have made their last threat;

When we watch the skies with misgivings;

And the fires of conflict are set;

When our faith is attacked and derided,

And many have forgotten to pray,

Remember the Life Eternal,

And that God has the last word to say.

HAROLD BAINES

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Aylesbury.—Our second annual "Training for Service" Bible School was held from July 25th-August 8th and was a great success. Brethren attended from various parts of the country and from Holland, and everyone appreciated the fine fellowship. The lectures and discussions were on a very high standard.

Bro. V. Hunter, of Wembley, gave a series of ten lectures on "Calvinism," showing its effect on religious thought. Bro. Roy Davidson, of Holland, gave a ten-lesson series on "Preaching and Teaching in the New Testament," a very comprehensive study. Bro. W. Jackson, of Ipswich, gave a five-lesson series on "Christian Living," a practical and devotional study based on Peter's Epistles. Bro. P. Slate, of Wembley, gave a five-lesson series on "Biblical Interpretation," a much-needed study. Bro. Ralph Limb, of Sible Hedingham, ably led the open discussion period each day. Bro. L. Channing gave lectures each evening on the "Holy Land," illustrated by colour slides taken during his recent visit there. These attracted a good number of local visitors, some attending all ten nights of the series.

We would like to express our appreciation to everyone who took part: to the brethren bringing lessons so well prepared and ably delivered; to the sisters for providing hospitality; to all our

visitors for their support; and to all those who contributed to the success of our school. The Lord willing, we are planning for another school to be held next year.

**Birmingham (Summer Lane).—One hundred years anniversary celebrations.** The church was gladdened on Saturday, 28th August at the response to her invitations to come and rejoice with her on attaining her centenary. About one hundred and sixty were entertained to tea and more than two hundred were present at the social meeting, under the chairmanship of Brother Arthur Eccles.

The programme included four very well-known and much-loved hymns, the singing of which gave expression to the general feeling. Brother Alan Clarke read 2 Peter 1, and the brothers from Kirkby-in-Ashfield and a sister from Eastwood supported the Birmingham brethren in choral items. The high-light of the evening was the address by Brother Albert Winstanley. His words of encouragement to the saint and salvation to the sinner set the pattern for the mission which was to follow.

Our brother preached on each evening except Monday and Friday of the following week, and we are delighted to report that his preaching and personal teaching of the word have resulted in the addition to the church of a lady who had previously been with the "Jehovah's Witnesses." Sister Mary Bolding had come to realise the many errors in this spurious religion by the rational process of reading the word of God for herself, without the befogging influence of the "Watchtower."

Our sister was first introduced to the church and to Brother Winstanley by Brother Eccles. We pray for her that she may add many Christian graces to her knowledge and new-found freedom.

Following a suggestion and much work by Brother Robert Reid, the second Saturday of our effort was devoted to a reunion of past friends of the "Summer Lane Chapel." This resulted in another very encouraging gathering, of which at least one in every three were old friends. More than one hundred and fifty were present, Brother Mountford (Sunday School Superintendent) was chairman of the meeting and we sang old Sunday School hymns, Brother Winstanley provided entertainment and blessing with an address on "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?"

Lord's day, 5th September, saw the close of our celebrations. At both morning and evening meetings seventy or more were present and we were launched into our second century with an exhortation from the letter of Jesus to the church at Smyrna—and through the proclamation of the gospel based on words from Revelations 15 "He shall come."

We are greatly indebted to Brother Winstanley for his unstinted services.

On two occasions during the week we were favoured with a visit from Brother Donald Hardy, of Morley, who brought his projector and provided film shows. First, to the sisters at their specially-arranged meeting on Wednesday afternoon. At this gathering about seventy of the sisters and ladies from the district were shown the film, "God of the Universe," and afterwards entertained to tea by the sisters of the women's meeting committee.

On the second Sunday, Brother Hardy visited the Bible School and showed the film "Naaman the Leper."

We are sure that all who have visited us during this happy period and all who have worked to make the whole a success have been well repaid in the blessing which God poured out upon us. May we take to heart the message of Brother Harold Baines, "Hats off to the past, but coats off to the future." P.J.

**Loughborough (Oxford Street).—On Saturday, August 21st a meeting was held to welcome Bro. A. E. Winstanley to Loughborough. He now lives here—at 59 Frederick Street—and will be assisting the church in its future labours for the Lord.**

We were encouraged to have brethren present from Kirkby, Eastwood, Ilkeston, Leicester and Birmingham. Bro. Edmund Hill welcomed Bro. Winstanley and both these brothers outlined some of the church's plans for future efforts.

Brethren, pray for us. Tom Stones.

## OBITUARY

**Cleveleys.**—Bro. Leslie F. Taylor fell asleep in Jesus on Wednesday, September 8th after a brief illness. Some will remember his father, Frank Taylor, who served the churches as a speaker for many years, and was in membership at Bethesda, Manchester and Rodney Street, Wigan; Leslie, too, previous to coming to Cleveleys. He came to Fleetwood when the church was formed there. When the cause in Blackpool ceased, the few members there joined with those at Fleetwood, and the cause was started at Cleveleys. Bro. Taylor had almost a life association with the churches, and at Cleveleys was an elder and church treasurer. His wife and two daughters are in fellowship there.

They were a happy and devoted household. May they find comfort and grace to help in this time of sorrow.

Bro. Erie Winter was able to be of service to Leslie and his dear ones during the last few days. He also conducted the funeral service. A. L. Frith.

### CAMEROONS EVANGELISATION FUND

AGAIN it is a pleasant duty to report progress in connection with the above fund, and may I, on behalf of our African brothers, thank again all those who have contributed to this worthy cause. Financial help has come from Wigan, Peterhead, Dennyloanhead, Tranent, Dunbar and Athelstaneford and we are delighted to say that the fund total has now reached £263 4s. 8d., which is most encouraging.

We realise that perhaps too much is being asked of individual church members to subscribe such a large amount, and so we would be pleased if individual churches would consider giving a small gift to this good work.

In addition to the press fund, I am pleased to acknowledge the extremely valuable help being sent by the churches in Australia towards financing a motor-scooter for an African preacher, and the great asset this machine has proved in a country lacking modern transport in certain geographical areas.

Please remember our African brethren in your prayers. Contributions as before to James R. Gardiner, 88 Davidson Terrace, Haddington, East Lothian, Scotland.

### TRAINING FOR SERVICE

Loughborough.—The church meeting in Oxford Street would be glad to hear from any brethren willing to spend part of their holidays in intensive Bible study.

Bro. A. E. Winstanley has indicated his willingness to assist in this way any brothers desiring to study to improve their usefulness in the kingdom of God. Tom Stones, 34 Homefield Avenue, Loughborough, Leics.

### COMING EVENT

Kentish Town. — 94th anniversary meetings on Saturday, October 9th, at 3 and 6 p.m.—tea at 5. Bro. A. E. Winstanley speaking. Your presence and your prayers invited warmly.

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### ADVICE FOR THE YOUNG

Better lose the favour of men than the friendship of God,

You're starting, my boy, on life's journey,

Along the grand highway of life.

You'll meet with a thousand temptations,

Each city with evil is rife,

This world is a stage of excitement,

There's danger wherever you go.

And, if in weakness you're tempted,

Have the courage my boy, to say NO.

Be careful in choosing companions,

Seek only the good and the true.

And stand by your friend in trouble,

Never changing the old for the new.

And when, by one of your friends, you are tempted,

Have the courage, my boy, to say NO.

"Some will hate thee, some will love

thee, some will flatter to deceive thee,

Cease from men and look above thee.

Trust in God, and do the right."

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