

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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THEN COMETH THE DEVIL

Brother Leonard Morgan was telling me, the other day, that he has been obliged to reply to some letters in the local press which were denegrating Bible 'fundamentalism,' and deriding the existence of the Devil. I suppose this highlights the fact that in the minds of the general public the devil is presumed to be but a *general influence* and not a person, just as the Holy Spirit is reckoned to be *an influence* for good. The little boy, when asked about the Devil, said, "Ach, he's just like Santa Claus, it's yer faither aw' the time", and I suppose this sums up the feelings of many adults as well. Just as 'Hell' is said to be our own making, so the "*Devil*" is another term for diabolical human action. However we know better. From the Bible we learn that just as the Holy Spirit is a very real personality so is the Devil. One can, perhaps, understand *the general public* having a hazy notion of these things, but when Bishops and the clergy (products of Colleges, Universities and other seats of 'learning') deny the existence of the Devil then we must indeed question the fitness of some 'religious' 'seats of learning'. It is a simple matter to short-circuit the whole controversy of the subject (if indeed there be any real controversy) by referring to the way in which the Devil was regarded by Jesus and His apostles. Did they regard him as *an influence*; did they regard him as a figure of fun; did they take him very seriously indeed; did they regard him as a very real personality; did they regard him merely as a simple personification of our own evil passions and tendencies? What sayeth the scriptures?

The Devil in the O.T.

The terms "*Satan*" and "*the Devil*" are used fairly interchangeably for the same person. 'Satan' refers to his role as 'adversary or accuser' in the former case, and his diabolical works in the latter. The Devil is from the Greek *diabolos* (from which, of course, our English word 'diabolical' comes). The primary meaning of the Hebrew word being 'Adversary or Accuser' it is thus used to describe the action of the "Angel of the Lord" in meeting Balaam (Nu. 22:22). However in later books (Chron., Job, Zechariah) Satan becomes a definite spiritual being. In 1 Kings 22:22 the "Lying Spirit" who engaged to put false words in the mouths of the prophets of Ahab performs somewhat the same function of that performed by Satan in later times. (There are still prophets speaking very false words.) 1 Kings 22 is well worth another read. It seems, however, to be the book of Job where Satan is more plainly encountered where, amongst the "Sons Of God" he appears. An account of his recent activities is demanded by God, and then he is asked to consider God's servant Job. Satan as the 'accuser' attributes Job's loyalty merely to be self-interest — "Does Job serve God for naught? There seems little in this account to suggest that Satan is a *mere influence*."

The same characteristic (adversary; accuser) appears in Zechariah (2:16; 3:1) where we see "Joshua, the High Priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan, standing at his right hand to resist him". A like view meets us in the imprecations of Ps. 109 (v.6) in the words, "Let Satan stand at his right hand". We have a further glimpse of the character and purposes of Satan in 1 Chron. 21 (where Satan provokes David into the sin of numbering Israel).

Thus, even in the O.T., Satan emerges as a real person; and one of very considerable power, arraigning himself as the enemy of God and mankind; God the meanwhile utilising his activities for purposes of God's own (e.g. allowing him to subject poor Job to terrible sufferings that Job's true loyalty might be made known to the world in general, and to Satan in particular).

The devil in the N.T.

In the N.T. it will be noticed that the translators have frequently translated Satan into the Greek *diabolus* "the accuser"; his function being by no means restricted to mere accusation. In the parable of the tares, for instance, Satan is described as *the one who introduced evil* into the world and all evil persons are his children. It was inevitable that Jesus had to have an encounter with Satan before He could enter upon His work and so "He was led up of the Spirit to be tempted of the Devil" (Matt. 4:19). In the parable of the sower the Devil is rightly described as bringing to perpetual ruin Christ's work of healing and reformation; and when the seed of the gospel is sown in human hearts "Then cometh the devil". On the return of the 70 disciples from successfully spreading the kingdom of God, Jesus declared that He beheld "Satan, as lightning, fall from heaven" The 70 had had victories over Satanic power but these were merely precursors of greater victories to come. (Luke 10:18). At that last evening, when Jesus ate the Passover with His disciples before He suffered, "Satan entered into Judas" to betray Him. The powers and desire of the Devil to wreak a whole repertoire of evil and destruction on the earth are thus completely boundless. With this the apostles agree. Peter declares that it was Satan who prompted the lie of Ananias (Acts 5:3). It was Satan that hindered Paul when he would visit the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 2:18). The sinner in Corinth was "delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh" a statement which brings out the idea that Satan inflicts disease; supported by our Lord's saying of the woman "whom Satan hath bound, Lo! these eighteen years"; and Paul's regarding the "thorn in the flesh" as a "messenger of Satan sent to buffet him". This view allies itself with a large number of scripture passages which appear to imply that this physical world is largely under the dominion of Satan. In the temptation of Jesus, Satan offered Him "all the kingdoms of the world" (Matt. 4:8) and in a parallel passage Satan claims that this power was "delivered unto him" (Luke 4:6). Indeed, our Lord's answer implies the reality of this offer and the correctness of this claim. In the gospel of John, Satan is repeatedly referred to as "the prince of this world", and Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians (2:2) calls Satan "the prince of the power of the air". In the Revelation Satan, under various forms, is more prominent than elsewhere in scripture and has angels under him who are his emissaries - a view implied in Matt. 9:34; 12:24 & Eph. 6:12. Indeed in the Revelation he is represented as having at one time dwelt in heaven and from thence been expelled. These facts are all quite inconsistent with Satan being a mere influence. Additionally, the persecutions upon the church are due to the directions of Satan and all heretical doctrines and immoral practices are looked upon as the "depths of Satan". The devil is certainly not a matter for levity, or amusement and he must be treated with a healthy respect. Even "Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, disputing about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." (Jude 9).

Thus the N.T. view of Satan is essentially the same as that of the O.T. although there is in the N.T. a better definition given to his character, his power and his far-reaching resources.

Satan's Devices

Paul was continually concerned about the spiritual health of church members lest the coming of the devil would destroy their faith and rob them of their reward. Those outside the church did not interest the devil for he had them already in his grasp. Paul's worry was "Lest Satan should get the advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices." (2 Cor. 2:11). Thus it is that the devil does not appear to us ugly, or repulsive, but rather something beautiful and very attractive. The common caricature of the devil is, of course, as something rather hideous with hoofs, horns, tails and a pitchfork. This is far from the truth, as we well know, for if he were ugly he would have a much lesser number of followers. Satan is master of disguises and comes in all forms. Paul warned against "false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel: for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light". (2 Cor. 11:14). Only the putting on of "the whole armour of God" can enable us "to stand against the wiles of the devil". The devil is not crude or clumsy but very sophisticated and full of wiles. Satan uses even our friends and family as stalking horses behind which to hide and seduce us away from the truth. Peter, whose love for Jesus would have tempted Him to detour the cross was sharply reprimanded with, "Get thee behind me Satan". Satan is fully and actively employed in setting snares for the unwary, and even for the wary. Paul warns Timothy on three separate occasions about the "snares of the devil" and offers instruction to those trapped "that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him, at his will." (Tim. 2:26). He is as effective and merciless as a lion on the rampage (a roaring lion) and yet as subtle and devious as a slithering serpent. He encourages us into sin *gradually* and comes to us under the guise of friendship. He always gives us plausible, and even 'laudable' reasons for the things he suggests that we do, and calms our qualms; as with Eve "Thou shalt not surely die". Satan paints in false colours and is the master of camouflage. He was the originator of the stratagem of term-switching and calls sin mistakes or faults; drunkenness he calls weakness; religious zeal he calls fanaticism; conviction of truth he calls bigotry; meekness as weakness; peaceableness as cowardice; 'living-in-sin' he calls 'sleeping together'. Satan has successfully thwarted the impact of the gospel by *counterfeiting* the teaching of the apostles with the commandments of men, by *causing division* amongst the disciples of Christ and by *corrupting* God's holy ordinances (of baptism and the Lord's Table). He is the author of doubt and despair, as Paul says (2 Cor. 4:4) "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them". When we look around we can see for ourselves the frightening efficiency with which the devil has accomplished his task of blinding men's minds to the truth. Even those within the church are very vulnerable and caused Paul to say, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." (2 Cor. 11:3).

Perhaps the devil's greatest strategy is to encourage procrastination and to convince us that there is plenty of time. It is said that the devil once held a conference with his junior demons and discussed the best way of hindering the spread of the gospel. Various suggestions were made. Some suggested discrediting the claims of Jesus to Sonship of God, but the devil rejected this and said that Jesus' works and miracles proved His Sonship. Others suggested a denial of the resurrection and the spreading of a 'swoon' theory but this also Satan rejected as being unequal to meet the evidence in the N.T. which clearly supported the resurrection and the witnesses who

saw Him. There are indeed so many 'infallible proofs' in the N.T. of all of Christ's claims that it was difficult to know what to discredit. Finally someone made a suggestion which the devil pounced upon with great enthusiasm. The suggestion was that man should be persuaded that there was *no hurry* in these matters, and that people should be encouraged to think *a little longer* about taking such a serious step as becoming a follower of Jesus. Given time, said the devil, most of them will take so long that they will be attracted in other directions and never take the step to Jesus. In this way millions would die *still thinking about it*. This, surely, is why Jesus said, "Now is the day of salvation". It is the devil who says "Perhaps, tomorrow".

Satan is Powerful but not Omnipotent

Satan's days, like our own, are numbered. Satan's power extends only to our death. One of the reasons for Jesus becoming 'flesh' was that He might die, and in death, "destroy him that had the power of death that is, the devil. And deliver them (us) who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage". (Heb. 2:15). And so the good news is that the works of the devil are destined for ultimate destruction. John says, "He that committeth sin is of the devil for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For *this purpose* the Son of God was manifested, *that He might destroy the works* of the devil" (1 John 3:8). Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, but meanwhile He gives His followers sufficient power to cope with Satan until that time of ultimate destruction shall come. For instance Paul could promise that if we put on the whole armour of God we shall be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Indeed the devil is cunning but those prepared with this armour (loins girt with truth, the breastplate of righteousness, feet shod with the gospel of peace, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the Spirit; being prayerful and watchful with all perseverance) can circumvent his wiles and parry his devices.

Thus Satan, far from being a *mere influence*, is a very real and powerful spiritual being unleashing himself upon the world and dedicated to every evil purpose and the complete frustration of man's redemption. Satan may desire to have believers "that he may sift them as wheat" but this trial also works experience, hope, patience and every grace. His persecution of the church but purifies it from its dross, and burns up its chaff. We can rejoice therefore that Satan's days are numbered and that eventually he shall suffer the same fate as all those he has seduced. In the meantime however we must be diligent to recognise his approach, and to counter his devices. "Put on therefore, the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand". (Eph. 6:11-13).

EDITOR

BREAKING THE BREAD

After giving it serious consideration I have decided to answer Bro. Gardiner's last article on this subject. As I stated in my original article, the Greek word "KLAO" is not confined to one meaning or action. Bro. Gardiner quotes Vine as giving the word to mean, "To break; to break off pieces". As can be noticed there is a good degree of elasticity in the word and it does not mean precisely the same everywhere it occurs. The action in each case has to be determined by the circumstances. The context of Matt. 14:19 is quite different from that of Matt. 26:26. In the former, the circumstances necessitated that Jesus break the loaves into numerous pieces, distributing them to the multitude that they might partake of a common meal. The circumstances of Matt.

26:26 were quite different, unless Bro. Gardiner is asking us to believe that Jesus intended to distribute to the disciples a common meal. We know however that he was instituting a 'communion' and I find it hard to believe that he did not intend to partake in that communion which he instituted and for which he gave thanks. In his booklet 'The Voice of One Crying In The Wilderness', Bro. J. D. Phillips says, "Under, 'IDIOMATIC PHRASES'." Bullinger says: "To break bread; *klasai arton*, is the literal rendering of the Hebrew idiom, *paras lechem*, and it means to partake of food, and is used of eating as in a meal. The figure (or idiom) arose from the fact that among the Hebrews bread was made in round cakes about as thick as the thumb. These were always BROKEN, and not cut. Hence the origin of the phrase "TO BREAK BREAD". (Figures of Speech, p. 839). An example; Luke 24:30 — "And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them". In verse 35, they speak of how Christ "was known of them in the *breaking of bread*", i.e. as He sat at meat with them. Peter says they "*ate and drank with him* after He rose from the dead" Acts 10:41. (Bro. Gardiner keeps telling us that we don't know whether Jesus ate on those occasions that He gave thanks and broke bread. He certainly did on this occasion. J.G.).

The same idiom is used to denote the communion. The expression in the Greek of Acts 2:42 is "The Breaking of the loaf" (*ton arton*). Wilson, after showing that "the breaking of bread" sometimes denotes an ordinary meal, adds, "Also what is emphatically styled, "the breaking of THE LOAF" in the Lord's supper, as mentioned in Acts 2:42. See also Matt. 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:25. (Emphatic Diaglott, p876). It means to brake and eat. Those who deny it are logically bound to go with the Pope who says that since "the cup" (Matt. 26:26; Mark 14:23), is not mentioned in connection with "the breaking of the loaf" Acts 2:42; 20:7-11) we have authority for "communion in one kind"; i.e., to partake of the bread but not of "the fruit of the vine" (Matt. 26:28-29)! They fail to see that 'the breaking of the loaf' implies the whole thing: giving thanks, breaking the loaf, eating, giving thanks for the cup, and drinking of it. Some of our brethren know that "the cup" is implied in "the breaking of the loaf", (Acts 2:42) but do not know that the eating is, too!

The full expression is used in Acts 20:11. In verse 7, it says, "the disciples", Paul being among them, "came together to break bread" (to observe the Communion). The 11th verse says, "And having come up and broken the loaf, and tasting it." He "broke off" (from *klaoo*) a fragment (enough to taste it, as we do in the Communion). The Concordant Version, closely following the original here, reads, "breaking bread and taking a taste." Christ did the same. (Matt. 26:26).

In Acts 20:7, it says the disciples "came together to break bread (or the loaf)"; while in 1 Cor. 11:33 Paul says "when ye come together to eat". In the former passage "the BREAKING of the loaf" implies EATING (for surely they did not break it and go off and leave it!); and in the latter the EATING implies the BREAKING.

From the foregoing, it can be seen that the very fact that Jesus "broke" the loaf means that HE also ATE. The BREAKING IMPLIES THE EATING. "The breaking of bread" implies the breaking off of a piece, not breaking it in half. The eating of the piece so broken off would naturally follow" (Frederick M. Kerby, Director of THE WASHINGTON BUREAU of THE CHARLESTON GAZETTE, Information Dept.). "The situation no doubt implies that He also ate of it" (Carl H. Kraeling, New Testament Department, Yale University). "Does 'He broke' (Eklase) mean that Jesus BROKE, and ATE (Luke 22:19)?" Answer: "Yes, though not expressly stated" (Robert H. Pfeiffer, Curator Semitic Museum, Harvard University). "Is there anything in the Greek New Testament to indicate that Jesus broke the loaf in halves and gave it to the disciples without eating of it himself?" Answer: "NO: HE HAD TO EAT BEFORE THE OTHERS. The Talmud prescribes that those at the Table cannot eat until the one who 'breaks the bread' partakes (Berekthoth 47a). According to the Palastinian Tosephta,

Berakthoth 6. 10a,61, 'Whenever Rab (died in 247) **BROKE THE BREAD** (after the benediction) he partook of it with his left hand and distributed (the bread to the people at the Table) with his right hand' (i.e., he partook as soon as possible so that they could begin eating". Robert H. Pfeiffer).

Rabbi Mayer Winkler, a native Jew, says, "**PARAS LECHEM** means to **BREAK THE BREAD**, but it involves the idea **TO BREAK AND EAT**, because, according to the Jewish law, if you pronounce a benediction over bread, you must eat. Otherwise, you are not allowed to pronounce the benediction".

Rabbi Julius L. Seigel, a Jewish believer, says the same, and adds: "According to Rabbinic and Talmudic law, no person should pronounce a 'blessing' (see Matt. 26:26) and 'break bread' with his guests (see Lk. 22:19) unless he also partakes." The Jewish laws and customs gave to "the breaking of bread" its idiomatical meaning. **USAGE GIVES TO ANY EXPRESSION ITS MEANING**. The fact that Jesus "broke" the bread means that He also ate of it. The writers and early readers of the New Testament could have had no other idea in mind when recording and reading what Jesus did. See Matt. 26:26; Mk. 14:22; Lk. 22:19. **IT IS FOLLY**, as the native Greek scholar and lexicographer, Sopheclès, says, "**TO SUPPOSE THAT THE WRITERS OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT PUT UPON WORDS (and phrases) MEANINGS NOT RECOGNISED BY THE GREEKS**" (and Hebrews). Pages 9, 10 and 11.

As I understand it, when Bro. Gardiner presides, he fragments the bread (the loaf) in one action, a vast difference from breaking off pieces. You can only do that as I understand the meaning of the word, by breaking off a piece at a time. Bro. Gardiner says in his February article, "Thus, whether we break bread **IN PIECES** or break **OFF PIECES** it amounts to the same thing - **DIVIDING THE LOAF INTO FRAGMENTS**, and Vine employs the plural 'pieces'. **KLAO** means the same thing where-ever it is used, "to break into pieces". That is not what Vine says. If the meaning of **KLAO** had been to break '**IN PIECES OR INTO PIECES**', then he would have rendered it so. But he said it meant to **BREAK OFF PIECES** and this is in accord with his comments on 'This do' as I drew attention to in my first article, namely: "The act of giving thanks and breaking the bread, each one for himself". This I suggest again is what the disciples did as Acts 20:7 implies, while 1 Cor. 10:16-17 states it to be a fact. I want again to emphasise these verses because I believe it is quite clear that each disciples broke from the one loaf for himself and then ate it. Paul says, "The loaf which **WE** (the congregation) **BREAK**, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? for we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all **PARTAKERS** of that **ONE BREAD**". I don't think God could make it plainer than this. Each disciple or Christian broke a piece from the one loaf and ate it." Bro. William Hurte says in his Catechetical Comm. on the N.T. of this verse, "The bread which we break". What does this signify? It is, lit., the loaf, which in itself is a symbol of the oneness of those who partake of it, and also of Him who is their life. The breaking of the loaf, or each breaking a piece from it for the purpose of eating, is their voluntary reception of His life to be embodied and reproduced in their own" Page 305.

Bro. Gardiner reasons at length that if you break the bread, you must of necessity have at least two pieces. I did not appreciate that this was in dispute. In fact this is exactly what I have contended for. When the presiding brother breaks the bread, he breaks it into two pieces, one of which he eats or partakes of. The other he passes for the other brethren to break a piece from and eat. Bro. Gardiner says in his Feb. 85 article, "By Bro. Grant's method, every member eats broken bread *except one*". I cannot quite figure out how he comes to that conclusion. If I break a piece from the one loaf when presiding and eat it, I am eating of a broken loaf. The difference is that I am not eating of a loaf which has not been symbolically broken in two to represent Christ's broken body. This is what happens each Lord's day in most of the churches as the brethren will freely admit. Those brethren who were responsible for the revised

hymn book changed the wording of one of our best loved hymns 213 in the New, 369 in the Old, because they were no doubt aware that no where is Jesus' body taught as being broken in our oldest and most reliable M.S.S. Incidentally I find no command nor example of any Christian breaking the loaf twice.

It is also worth noting at this time that Bro. Gardiner is rather inconsistent in his reasoning. In his Oct. 84 article he says, "I would care to refer also to Matt. 14:19 - the feeding of the 5,000 where the wording is virtually identical to that of Matt. 26:26 (the instruction of the Lord's Table) with reference to taking bread, blessing it and breaking it (where the word 'break' comes from the same Greek word. Plainly Jesus took each loaf in His fists and broke it into a *great number of pieces* suitable for distribution by the disciples to 5,000 people, and above. *It is equally plain that Jesus did likewise when He broke the bread at the institution of the feast.* I can't tell into how many pieces, Jesus broke the five loaves but it is a fact that He shattered the loaves into many fragments". Page 147.

In his article in the Feb. 85 issue he reasons, "Paul has every right to use the term KLAO in 1 Cor. 10:16-17. each member does break it and eat it. Is anyone going to seriously suggest that Jesus, when He broke the bread, did not break it into (*at least*) *two pieces, portions or fragments* (use what word you may)? It is impossible, even for Jesus, to break it without ending up with more than one piece. We are not told where He broke it - whether near the middle or what-ever, *but He did break it into pieces (at least 2 in number)*. How, then, can we object to the presiding brother doing likewise?" Page 19.

Two things strike me as inconsistent in Bro. Gardiner's reasoning.

- 1 The statement in the latter article is clearly contrary to his clear and emphatic statements in his first article. Compare the italic statement.
- 2 He says, "Thus Paul has every right to use the term KLAO in 1 Cor. 10:16-17. *Each member does break it and eat it.*"

But according to bro. Gardiner's understand of 'KLAO' each disciple would have to break it into at least three pieces to do as he says the Lord did.

Bro. Gardiner places a great deal of store in Luke's record of events that night the Supper was instituted, but I see no reason to question the veracity of Matthew's statements. Firstly he was present that night and so certainly had a first hand knowledge of what took place, what was said and when. Secondly Mark's account accords perfectly with Matthews, whereas so far as Luke is concerned it would seem that his record is more sporadic and he certainly does not record events that night in their correct sequence as is evidenced from the account of the enquiries as to who should betray Jesus. J.A. M'clymont in his book on the N.T. and its writers says on Page 39, "A distinguishing feature of this Gospel (Matthews) is the large place assigned in it to the words of Jesus, arranged in a SYSTEMATIC form, not broken up into fragments as they are in the other Gospels. For this reason Godet compares Luke to "a botanist who prefers to contemplate a flower in the very place of its birth and in the midst of its natural surroundings, while Matthew is like the gardener who for some special object puts together large and magnificent bouquets".

Let me conclude by stating that I have no desire to become involved in a protracted correspondence, but having stated what I believe to be the truth and presented the points supporting my contention, I am content for the brethren to study the subject for themselves and come to their own conclusions.

"Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good".

James Grant. (Wallacestone)

GLEANINGS

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

MOVED WITH COMPASSION

"Christ's sympathy was incalculably deeper and more poignant than ours can ever be. For His eye was clearer than ours, and saw deeper. To Him the single sufferer represented crowds. The one black drop brought to His mind all the sullen ocean of blackness, which rolls its heavy tides round the whole world. We see but the wave or two that break nearest us, and all the other multitudinous billows escape our knowledge. We mass men in the race, and, generalizing, lose the impression of individuals... With Jesus it was as if the very nerves of His own frame had been prolonged into that of others, so close was His union with them, by the wonderful completeness of his self-oblivion. Thus in truest fashion His sympathy answered to the meaning of the word, which so far transcends the ordinary manifestations of it in our hearts, being a real suffering together with those whom He pitied. Our selfishness puts an armour of brass over our hearts, through which the sharp point of others' woes scarcely reaches us, except as a dull blow that does not pierce deeply enough to bring the blood; but Jesus came among men with His naked breast exposed to all the slings and arrows that were showered on all, and he was sore wounded by them all. His pity was His life. He was a Man of sorrows because He bare our griefs and carried our sorrows, and the burden was laid upon His shoulders by the perfectness of His pity which made them all His own, long before He fainted beneath the cross on the short journey from the judgment-hall to Calvary. Christ's pity was essential to His service of men."

Alexander Maclaren.

THE PERENNIAL FRESHNESS OF THE BIBLE

"The Bible differs radically from all other books in its perpetual freshness. This characteristic will be recognised only by those who know the Book in that intimate way which comes from living with it, as with a member of one's family. I mention it first, because it was one of the first *unique* properties of the Bible which impressed me after I began to read it as a believer in Christ. It is a very remarkable fact that the Bible never becomes exhausted, never acquires sameness, never diminishes in its power of responsiveness to the quickened soul who comes to it. The most familiar passages yield as much (if not more) refreshment at the thousandth perusal as at the first. It is indeed as a fountain of living water. The fountain is the same, but the water is always fresh and always refreshing. We can compare this characteristic of the Bible to nothing but what we find in a living companion, whom we love and to whom we go for help and fellowship. The person is always the same, and yet without sameness. New conditions evoke new responses; and so it is with the Bible. As a living book it adapts itself to the new phases of our experience, and the new conditions in which we find ourselves. From the most familiar passage there comes again and again a *new message*; just as our most familiar friend or companion will have something new to say as new situations require it."

Philip Mauro

WE QUOTE - ALEXANDER CAMPBELL

"Hope differs from faith, in that it looks forward to future objects. It looks not back, nor does it contemplate the present: "for", says Paul, "what a man sees, why does he yet hope for?" nor looks it on all the future; but only on future *good*. It desires and expects good, and nothing else. There is not one dark cloud, not one dark speck, in all the heavens of Christian hope. Everything seen in its wide dominions, in the unbounded prospect yet before us, is bright, cheering, animating, transporting. It is all

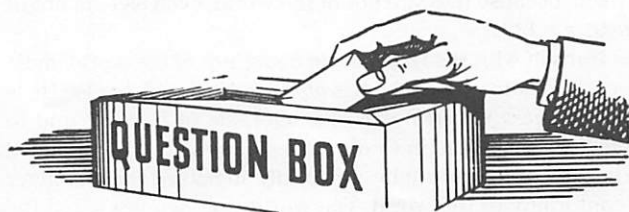
desirable and desired. It is all expected. It is all "earnest expectation"; not a doubtful, but a "confident, expectation of things" desirable and to be "hoped for".

THE WHOLE BIBLE

"This Book contains - The mind of God, the state of man, the way of Salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practise it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveller's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here, too, Heaven is opened, and the gates of Hell disclosed. Christ is its Grand Subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened at the Judgment, and be remembered for ever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labour, and condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents. It is "the Word of our God which shall stand for ever"."

H. Pickering

Selected by LEONARD MORGAN



Conducted by
Alf Marsden

"What does it mean to be 'of the world'?"

In the July 1985 issue of the S.S. I said, quote - "We shall continue to be perplexed by this state of affairs until we realise the futility of that quaint expression we use, i.e., "we are *in* the world, but not *of* the world. Of course we are of the world; even the most cursory examination of the lives of most Christians will signify this". Unquote. From conversations I have had with Christians in the Wigan area it would seem that some have the idea that I was attacking their salvation, but that is not true, and I would have thought that the context of the article ought to have signified this. However, it seems that explanation is needed, and it is the duty of the speaker or writer to be clear and unambiguous.

The World

Space does not allow for a discussion of all the aspects of this phrase, but suffice it to say that there are two Greek words which are used primarily to denote what is meant by 'the world'.

The first word is KOSMOS, and this word is used primarily to denote (a) the earth, see Matt. 13:35; Rom. 1:20 (here, the universe could be indicated), (b) by metonymy, the human race, mankind, Matt. 5:14; John 1:9,10; (c) Jews as distinct from Gentiles, Rom. 11:12,15; (d) the present condition of human affairs, i.e., in respect to alienation from God, John 7:7; 8:23 (here Jesus indicates His divine nature), 1 Cor. 2:12, etc.; (e) temporal possessions, Matt. 16:26.

You will notice that this word KOSMOS not only indicates the planet earth on which we live, but also indicates the human race itself, its conditions, affairs, and pursuits. From this we can understand that the adjective 'worldly' is predominantly

concerned with, or devoted to, affairs of this life, especially to the pursuit of wealth and pleasure.

The second Greek word is AION, and means an age, or period of time, and is referred in the N.T. to spiritual or moral characteristics. In its usage it refers to (a) the cares of the world Matt. 13:22, (b) the children of the world, Luke 16:8; 20:34, (c) the wisdom of the world, 1 Cor. 1:20; 2:6, (d) the fashion or form of the world, Rom. 12:2, (e) the character of the world, Gal. 1:4. Therefore, if we use the adjective 'worldly' in the sense of AION, then we would be saying that the Christian could be influenced by the cares, wisdom, fashion, and character of the age.

Keeping these words and definitions in mind, and understanding how they are applied in the N.T., we now have to ask ourselves what is meant by being 'not of the world'.

Not of This World

We now need to examine in some detail the prayer of Jesus to His Father as recorded in John's Gospel. Referring to His Disciples (later to be the Apostles) Jesus prayed, "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17 - Read vv 12-19).

For the Lord to equate Himself with His Disciples in being 'not of the world' must either mean that He is referring to some state which is *outside* the world, or else He is referring to a state of *unworldliness* which was a characteristic of Himself, and to which He had brought them, and kept them in God's name. Personally, I am inclined to the latter view because only He who was totally 'unworldly' in nature and character could lead others to non-conformity to the world. The world (the people) hated the Disciples, as it hated the Lord, because of their and His *unlikeness* to themselves.

Therefore, what I am suggesting up to this point is that the phrase 'not of this world' does *not* mean that in some way we as Christians are *removed* from the world, but that the Christian, relative to the world in which he lives, should be a non-conformist. This point is fundamental to the whole argument.

Salvation

It was intimated to me that being 'not of this world' had, and I quote, "nothing whatever to do with what we *do*, but what we *are*." The person who said this also added, "you are going to have salvation depending on works". Well, even a fleeting suggestion that salvation is wrought by works is anathema to my mind. But having said that, it should also be evident that salvation should *produce* good works in the Christian. Paul puts these twin ideas in their true perspective when he said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus *unto* good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:8-10). James reinforces the argument when *he* says, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works" (James 2:17-18). We know that faith is not a work to produce salvation; that it is the gift of God; so James must have been speaking of post-conversion works which are the fruits of the Spirit in the Christian life.

It is further argued that our citizenship is in Heaven, therefore we cannot be 'of this world'. It was Paul who said, "For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20). However, we still live in the world as aliens, hence the expression "we are in the world but not of the world" (I am not sure if this is a precise scriptural

expression or not). This sort of argument could very quickly lead the unsuspecting mind into the thought of 'once saved, always saved', and it ignores the plain N.T. teaching regarding the conduct of life of the regenerated person who still, somehow, has to respond to the upward call of God in Christ Jesus, and overcome the pervasive force of the world. In Phil. 1:27 Paul says, "Only let your conversation (citizenship, commonwealth) be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."

The same Apostle was always one to teach and practice self-denial. Concerning his previous heritage and position he could say, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ..... For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung (refuse) that I may win Christ" (Phil. 3:7,8). His burning passion was to *know* Christ even as he was known *of* Christ, and for this he was willing to forsake *everything* (this to my mind, can only mean everything which is temporal, worldly). He knows that he has not yet attained that exclusive and exalted position, but his upward surge makes him forget everything which is behind; position, possessions, everything in fact which would hinder his climb to God and Christ. "Ah", some will say, "that is alright for Paul personally, as it was for the rich young ruler, but God doesn't make that demand of everyone". I wonder! It seems to me that what God demands is *entire consecration*, and there is an echo of this in God's early dealings with His children, "Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob; because they have not *wholly* followed me: save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, and Joshua the son of Nun; for they have *wholly* followed the Lord" (Num. 32:11, 12).

When I see the resplendent lifestyle of we Christians, comparatively speaking, I sometimes doubt as to whether we have allowed the transforming power of the Spirit to operate in our lives; that Spirit who wants to so transform us that we shall reflect the resplendent glory of God and Christ. If we want to say that we are a 'colony of heaven here on earth', then I think we must admit that our colonial aspirations are much eroded by worldly influence. Unless and until we can realise our full heavenly potential while here on earth, then I see no reason to doubt that in the degree that we fail, to *that* degree we are 'of the world'. It is in that sense that I stated, "Of course we are of the world, until we have made a complete renunciation of it."

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

'DON'T USE BIG WORDS'

The following selection is an extreme example of the use of long and unusual words. Yet we sometimes wonder if speakers and writers have some such specimen in mind as a model when they attempt to express themselves in speech. Please read it, being sure that each word is pronounced correctly.

"In promulgating your esoteric cogitations, or articulating your superficial sentimentalities and amicable, philosophical, or psychological observations, beware of platitudinous ponderosity. Let your conversational communications possess a clarified conciseness, a compact comprehensibility, coalescent consistency, and a concatenated cogency. Eschew all conglomerations of flatulent garrulity, jejune babblement, and asinine affectations. Let your extemporaneous descantings and unpremeditated expatiations have intelligibility and voracious vivacity, without rhodomontade or thrasonical bombast. Sedulously avoid all polysyllabic profundities, pompous prolixity, psittaceous vacuity, ventriloquial verbosity, and vaniloquent

vapidity. Shun double-entendres, prurient jocosity, and pestiferous profanity, obscure or apparent.

In other words, talk plainly, briefly, naturally, sensibly, truthfully, purely. Keep from "slang"; don't put on airs; say what you mean, mean what you say. And don't use big words!—Anonymous."

Words are signs of ideas, it is true; but big words are not necessarily signs of big ideas. Their use is not conclusive evidence of learning or of depth of thought. In fact, it may betray the utter lack of both. Small ideas clothed in big words are as little boys trooping around in their father's oversize trousers. The force of the thought usually diminishes in proportion as the size of the words increases. The great masterpieces of literature have been cast in simple language. As examples, consider Lincoln's Gettysburg speech; Judah's pathetic and moving appeal to Joseph (Gen. 44:18-34); the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7); and the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32). Lincoln said that, even when he was a boy, he sought to put the thoughts of others in language "plain enough, as I thought, for any boy I know to understand." It has been said that Spurgeon tried to express himself in words which the unlettered household servants could understand. Jesus the wisest and greatest of all teachers, spoke to the humble folk of Palestine "as they were able to hear," not as he was able to speak. (Mark 4:33). It is crass folly to speak or write "over the heads" of the people. The gospel was intended for every creature; it must be presented in simple language if all are to understand. He sins against the flock who deliberately puts the hay in racks so high that the lambs cannot reach it.

Plainness of speech is agreeable to the needs of men and befits the simplicity that is in Christ. Paul disclaimed the use of high-sounding and pretentious words in his preaching. "And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God . . . not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth". (1 Cor. 2:1-13). It is God's good pleasure through the foolishness of preaching to save lost men, but they will not be saved by preaching they cannot understand.

"Tell me the old, old story of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love;
Tell me the story simply, as to a little child;
For I am weak and weary, and helpless and defiled".

Simplicity is the soul of greatness—"Gospel Advocate"

SCRIPTURE READINGS

OCTOBER 1985

6—Psalm 34	Matt. 24:23-34
13—Gen. 7	Matt. 24:35-51
20—Dan. 1	Matt. 25:1-30
27—Psalm 41	Matt. 25:31-46

MATTHEW 24

This particular chapter has been used from here to Timbuktu to describe the

events of "the last days". Its contents have been frequently applied to our own age. In consequence, "the end of the world" (verse 3) is nigh.

Revelation is the unfolding of the Divine mind. Revelation is what God has said. Interpretation is what we think God meant by what He said. God's revelation is infallible, but our interpretation is not.

I may well be mistaken about Matthew 24, but I think this great chapter has everything to do with the end of the Jewish Age and nothing to do with the end of the present world. In other words,

it is my contention that the events described here by Jesus have already been fulfilled and are all part of history. Verse 34 of the chapter is so important to our understanding: "Verily I say unto you, This generation (in Jesus's day) shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled".

The destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 by the Roman army under Titus was an horrific episode. Jesus Himself described it as a period of "great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be" (verse 21). The Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, who was at the siege of the city and who acted as interpreter, later corroborated much of what Jesus said. The following is an example: "Now of those that perished by famine in the city, the number was prodigious, and the miseries they underwent were unspeakable; for if so much as the shadow of any kind of food did anywhere appear, a war was commenced presently; and the dearest friends fought one with another about it, snatching from each other the most miserable supports of life... Moreover, their hunger was so intolerable, that it obliged them to chew everything, while they gathered such things as the most sordid animals would not touch, and endured to eat them; nor did they at length abstain from girdles and shoes; and the very leather which belonged to their shields they pulled off and gnawed. The very wisps of old hay became food to some; and some gathered up fibres and sold a very small weight of them for four Attic... Now the number of those that were carried captive during this whole war was considered to be ninety-seven thousand as was the number of those that perished during the whole siege, eleven hundred thousand..." (Wars of the Jews: book 6 chapter 3; book 9 chapter 3).

The prophet Joel also spoke of these terrible events. He prophesied of a great and terrible day. The Apostle Peter quoted him in that memorable address on the day of Pentecost.

"I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: blood and

fire and vapour of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and notable day of the Lord: and it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:19-21).

The language is Eastern, and the picture is one of calamity. Alexander Campbell has written: "In the last days of Jerusalem and of the Jewish state, these predictions were fully accomplished."

Matthew 24 should be read in conjunction with the parallel passages in Mark 13 and Luke 21. Please note that Luke speaks of Jerusalem encompassed by armies. (Luke 21:20).

THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS

The Greek word for a virgin is *parthenos*. (This is why the Parthenon in Athens is so named). The term is used both of man and woman. In every illustration I have seen of these virgins, young ladies are depicted. This is a mistake. The ten virgins who went out to meet the bridegroom would most certainly have been men. (A study of the marriage ceremony in those days could prove helpful here).

Five of these virgins were wise, and five were otherwise. The wise ones were ready for the coming of the bridegroom. They were watchful. *Watch* is the key word in this parable.

A number of other passages immediately spring to mind.

"You are the sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober..." (1 Thessalonians 5:5,6).

"Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong" (1 Cor. 16:13).

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8).

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

Robert Milligan of America once penned a book entitled *Reason and Revelation*. It is a great work. In it he has a small section on parables. Of this particular one he wrote: "Scope - Christ will hold all men personally responsible for whatever he has committed to their charge."

Note the words of the Master: "And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey" (Matt. 25:15). Each had at least one talent. No one was left without. I believe this is still the position to-day with all citizens of the Kingdom of God.

May I share with you a statement by a Biblical commentator. "This parable tells us that God gives men differing gifts. One man received five talents, another two, and another one. It is not a man's talent which matters, what matters is how he uses it. God never demands from a man abilities which he has not got, but he does demand that a man should use to the full the abilities which he does possess. Men are not equal in talent, but men can be equal in effort. The parable tells us that whatever talent we have, little or great, we must lay it at the service of God".

The parable goes on to reveal that the reward of work well done is still more work to do; that the man who is punished is the man who will not try; and to him who has, more will be given, and he who has not will lose even what he has. Dear reader, are you using to the utmost of your ability in the Lord's service the God-given talent or talents?

THE JUDGMENT

During His earthly pilgrimage Jesus described the final judgment scene but once. His words are recorded in verses 31-46 of Matt. 25. They should be read again and again.

A division will take place. It will be done as a shepherd in Palestine separated his sheep from the goats. Each will find himself or herself on the right hand

or the left hand of the judgment throne. There will be no half-way house. For the righteous the reward will be eternal life; for the wicked the end will be "everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41). (Notice for whom hell is actually prepared).

How I treat all my brothers and sisters in the Lord is of vital importance. So revealed Jesus. I must heed His word. After all, it will judge me at the last day. (See John 12:48).

Ian S. Davidson, Motherwell

EXCUSE FOR CREEDS

One of the most common excuses offered for human creeds is, that "we want something to keep us together—something to bind us in union". This apology is based upon two preposterous assumptions. It assumes, with great apparent innocence, that the Bible cannot keep us together, that it cannot bind us in union. Then it assumes, with much modesty, that a human creed *can* keep us together — bind us in union — *can do* what the Bible *cannot do*. This, it appears to us, should startle any good man at once.

These assumptions are arrogant in the extreme, and not only arrogant, but made without any regard to facts. Do human creeds keep churches together? We assert, fearless of successful contradiction, that the whole history of human creeds proves that they do not keep churches together. Let us take one look at three of the most popular creeds in this country, and see what they have done in keeping churches together.

How has the Baptist creed succeeded? Has it kept the Baptists together? By no means! From the one original Baptist stock we have now not less than nine or ten parties of Baptists. How has the Presbyterian creed succeeded in keeping its adherents together? It is thought to be a very wise and powerful document. Has it kept Presbyterians together? It has succeeded no better than the Baptist creed. With all its adhesive power, Presbyterians, within the last century have

sundered into some eight parties. This needs no commentary. How has the Methodist Discipline succeeded? It is itself nothing but an offshoot of the Episcopalian creed, which did not prevent the Methodists from standing off from the established church. The Discipline has not been in operation more than one hundred and twenty years. How has it succeeded in keeping Methodists together during that period? During that time Methodism has stranded into some eight to ten fragments. What comment this furnishes upon the efficacy of human creeds to cement together. Other creeds have done no better; and yet, in the face of all this, men want human creeds to *keep them together!*

All history shows, beyond all dispute, that wherever human creeds have prevailed, divisions have abounded, partyism has increased, and unity has been diminished. But where the people had confidence in the Bible, the law of God, the "perfect law of liberty," union has more widely extended, and peace has more generally prevailed. Why then, in the name of reason, hold on to human creeds to keep churches together, when they have so universally failed, and refuse the Bible, which has never failed.

From "THE LIGHT"

ON YOUR KNEES!

A Professor of English, a keen Christian, also a keen mountaineer was making his first ascent of the Weisshorn. When near the top, the guide stood aside to permit the professor the honour of first reaching the top. Exhilarated by the view, forgetful of the fierce gale that was blowing from the other side of the mountain, he sprang up and stood erect on the summit. The guide pulled him down, exclaiming, "On your knees, sir; you are not safe up here except on your knees!"

The Christian was quick to see a deeper lesson in the guide's warning. Life's summits, whether of achievement, of love, of knowledge, are perilous and are best enjoyed "on our knees".

SURE REFUGE

While a small steamboat was crossing a stormy bay, the engine suddenly stopped, and for a few minutes the situation was one of real peril. One elderly woman rushed to the captain anxiously asking if there was any danger. "Madam", was the uncompromising reply, "we must trust in God". "O, sir," wailed the enquirer, "has it come to that?"

A good many of us act as though we felt like that in times of peril. We are willing to trust in almost anything — except God!

WORTH THINKING ABOUT

It isn't necessary to blow out the other person's light to let your own shine.

If you would have friends, be a friend. It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Kitwe, Zambia: Prior to 1985 there were two congregations in Zambia's Northwestern Province - SOLWEZI organized in 1978 and ZAMBEZI in 1983. With our big evangelistic push into the rural areas in 1985, ten new congregations and preaching points have been opened up in Northwestern Province. The latest congregation to be formed is at MUTUTUKU village in SOLWEZI area subsequent to gospel preaching and baptisms in June 1985. Northwestern Province is the tribal home area for KAONDE, CHOKWE, LUNDA and LUVALE peoples. At least three Zambian preachers whom Chester has trained have been involved in the preaching. ZAMBEZI - KITWE is around thirteen hundred kilometers round trip. There were 7 more baptisms at MUTUTUKU in the last week of July. We are hoping and praying for further progress in the second half of 1985.

Chester Woodhall.

THANKS

Betty and I would like to thank everyone for the many visits, 'phone calls, letters and cards which we so kindly received (and which helped us greatly) on the occasion of the sudden and tragic death of our youngest son (Clyde) a few days ago.

Editor

ANNUAL SOCIAL

The church at Newtongrange intend (D.V.) holding their ANNUAL SOCIAL on Saturday 19th October, 1985, at 4 p.m. The Speakers will be:-

- Bro. Chalmers (Dalmellington)
- Bro. Brown (Dennyloanhead)
- Chairman Bro. R. Hunter

Try to be with us - a warm welcome awaits you.

A.P. Sharp, Sec.

THE DIFFERENCE

In a market place in a village in northern India, a Mohammedan said to a Christian, "You must admit that we have one thing you have not, and that is better than anything you have."

"And what is it you have."

"When we go to Mecca" said the Mohammedan, "we at least find a coffin. But when you Christians go to Jerusalem you find nothing but an empty grave".

The Christian replied, "That is just the difference. Mohammed is dead and in his coffin. And all false systems of religion and philosophy are in their coffins. But Christ is risen, and all power in heaven and on earth is given to him. He is alive for ever more, and not only saves, but *keeps.*"

PARADOXES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST

- He who is the bread of life began his ministry hungering.
- He who is the water of life began his ministry thirsting.
- He who was weary is our true rest.
- He who paid tribute is the King of Kings.
- He prayed, yet heard our prayers.
- He wept, but dries our tears.
- He was sold for thirty pieces of silver, yet he redeemed the world.
- He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, yet he is the Good Shepherd.
- He died, and by dying destroyed death for all who believe and obey Him.

"LOVE YOUR ENEMIES"

Doing an injury puts you below your enemy. Revenging an injury makes you but even with your enemy. Forgiving an injury sets you above your enemy.

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