

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

VOL. 57 No. 9

SEPTEMBER, 1989

## WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED ?

When Jesus made that well-known comment, that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, the disciples could only gape at Him in open-mouthed astonishment. They were aghast at this information. Mark says (10:26) that **"they were astonished out of measure"** and began to reason amongst themselves and to say, **"Who, then, can be saved"**.

Obviously their amazement was due to the fact that the rich of their society, being a very powerful and privileged class, could buy their way into anything, and use their considerable influence to get anything. Nothing changes and even today in a great many countries nothing gets done without a bribe and the rich can buy any mortal thing. And so, the disciples reckoned that if the rich could not easily get into the Kingdom of Heaven, there was not much hope for anyone else getting in. Thus their puzzle: **"Who then can be saved.?"** Although an uninspired question, it was a good one and one with which each generation must grapple. I suppose that everyone has their own individual opinion as to the answer to the question, and I suppose that the world-at-large still imagines that those with wealth and influence must surely have a 'head-start' even in matters pertaining to the Kingdom of God. However, Jesus, pointed out, more than once, that material affluence and worldly influence count for very little (indeed for nothing) with God, and that God's list of priorities place more emphasis upon qualities of the personality (and includes things like humility, honour, honesty, kindness, compassion, integrity, generosity and piety) rather than a fat bank balance. Men would have to **seek** to enter and would have to conform to God's conditions of entry: and these conditions of entry were non-negotiable. In these circumstances, personal attachment to material wealth was more likely to be a hindrance than a help: as witness the crestfallen sadness of the young man **"who went away sorrowful, for he had much possessions."** Clearly, the term 'rich' is one of relativity, and even a relatively poor man can allow his hold on his 'riches' to deflect him from entry to God's Kingdom. Jesus didn't say that it was **impossible** for a rich man to enter, only much more difficult.

### Many Opposing Factions

In the July issue of the "S.S." an article on baptism, by W. Carl Ketcherside, was published as a short tribute to Brother Ketcherside, occasioned by his recent death. Many brethren in this country held Brother Ketcherside in high esteem although it was known that he was 'a controversial figure' in some quarters. A few days ago I received a letter from a good brother (a countryman of Brother Ketcherside's and from the same locality) in terms highly critical of Brother Ketcherside and pointing out that, far from being the champion of church unity, Brother Ketcherside personally

divided 'hundreds of churches' in Missouri and Kansas. I have replied to this good brother to the effect that we can but take people as we find them and Brother Ketcherside made no attempt to divide churchers on his two visits here. Sadly the churches have been divided in Britain but certainly not by Brother Ketcherside. Indeed brother Ketcherside has published several books to try and encourage unity amongst brethren and devoted much space in his magazine *Mission Messenger* to the 'unity' theme. In that same letter my correspondent also censured Brother Ketcherside's printed article, *Design of Baptism*, as containing doctrine to damn mens' souls, and was also highly critical of the long quotation, in that article, from the words of Alexander Campbell: adding the grave doubt as to whether Alexander Campbell was, himself, a Christian and placing a question-mark over the validity of Campbell's own baptism.

Let me say how pleased I am to receive all letters, whether they approve or disapprove of the material printed in the *Scripture Standard*, and I am very glad that there are brethren sufficiently interested in the cause of Christ to make their views known. I must admit, however, that when I had read this letter about Brother Ketcherside and Campbell, that age-old question came to mind again – "Who, then, can be saved"? We all know about the difficulty of rich men entering the Kingdom of Heaven, but if brethren of the calibre of W. Carl Ketcherside, and Alexander Campbell, are faulted and flawed, what hope is there for the likes of us lesser mortals?

Having now briefly referred to this letter and laid it aside, we could now, perhaps with profit, reflect upon the unhealthy level of general disputation which seems to pervade the brotherhood all over the world. This, sadly, ranges from the bitter accusations and counter-charges of false-teaching amongst many opposing factions, right down to the common pattern of petty criticisms which seems to be the norm in single congregations. Perhaps there is a great deal too much of it. When we think of all the fine men and women we have known in the churches now passed on to their reward, and we recall all the criticism aimed at them, both at the time and even after their decease, we must often have pondered this same old question: "Who, then, can be saved.?"

### **A Shortage of Infallibility**

False-teaching is certainly quite rampant today and we must be educated enough to recognise it, and strong enough to want no part of it. We must denounce it too, and guard against it being imported into our congregations: but we must also be sure that we ourselves have not got any erroneous notions: and that seems little short of claiming infallibility. The Bible is infallible but that is not the issue: and that is not to say that any man's understanding of it is infallible. We hear countless sermons and exhortations but we don't always agree with everything that is said, and few of the speakers would claim infallibility. Surely this is why we have Bible Study meetings: i.e. that we might have a better understanding of God's word. Hopefully we are moving on from the sincere milk to the strong meat: and amending our views as we go. We are to grow, not only in grace but in our knowledge of the scriptures, and to learn to handle them aright. Surely this is a life-time's endeavour and we are learning all the time. Brother Ketcherside was not infallible and many, including myself, wrote to him quite often to disagree with some of his opinions, but then, perhaps he disagreed with some of ours: and perhaps he knew more than we did. Where is the infallible interpreter of the scriptures? Let him step forward! Alexander Campbell was not infallible either, but just think of what he accomplished for the Restoration Movement with his sermons, debates and writings, and think of the converts he made. The present divided state of the churches, especially overseas, tells us, perhaps, that infallibility in handling the scriptures is in very short supply. If it is clearly shown to us that we have hitherto misunderstood some portion of God's word, then we should be big enough to acknowledge this and to change: Paul himself was once very seriously

mistaken 'in all good conscience' and was very happy to change. We can't afford to be smug, or even Pharisaical, in our regard for others and as Paul says, those who think they stand should beware, lest they fall. After all, if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us, and we must **all** be grateful for the limitless grace of God. If God forgives us on the ratio of our patience and forgiveness of others, then we might be in trouble. It is also probably outwith our capacity to exercise completely fair judgment, as we are not always privy to the full facts and often suffer from a bias, or particular influence from our upbringing.

In the final analysis we must also remember that we are but servants of the same **Master**: just servants, and as such, on an entirely equal footing with one another. With regard to "weaker brethren" and those who regarded days to the Lord, and those who didn't, those who ate all things, and those who didn't, Paul warned against harsh judgements and asked "**Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own Master he standeth or faileth ...**" and later, he repeats his question, "**But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at naught thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ**". (Rom. 14:4, 10). Brother Crosthwaite used to tell about the couple who had tried all the local congregations but had never been satisfied with any of them for any length of time, and who ended up meeting in their own home. An elder of the church called one day to visit them and remarked that he was glad that at last they were secure in their own little assembly of two. The man leaned across and whispered to the elder, "Yes, but to tell you the truth I've got some very grave reservations about the wife." Who are you to judge another man's servant? Christ will judge His own servants. "Who, then, can be saved.?"

#### **The Weightier Matters**

For the benefit of any readers who may not already know, those who will be saved (will be saved) by the **grace of God** (Eph. 2:8) and through the **gospel** of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 11:14). If we are to be saved we must have faith in God (Heb. 11:6): believe in Christ as the Son of God (Acts 16:31) and confess Him as our Saviour. (Rom. 10:10) We must repent of our sins and change our past way of life (Acts 2:38) and be baptised (immersed) for the taking away of our past sins (Acts 22:16). In effect, we must call upon the name of the Lord, (Rom. 10:13) obey and serve him faithfully for the remainder of our lives (Matt. 16:15). It is, of course, quite a simple matter to produce these facts, to trot them out as it were, but it is once we have set our hands to the plough that we must strive to remain steadfast and not to look back. "**Those who look back**" said Jesus, are **not fit** for the Kingdom of God. This is another well-known remark Jesus made about the Kingdom of God. And so it is not simply a matter of qualifying for entry into the Kingdom but also a 'fitness' to remain there. In short, "**are we fit for the kingdom of heaven?**" We must "**work out our own salvation with fear and trembling**" and it is in this outworking that we become involved in a study of the scriptures, teaching others and being taught. It is then that a correct understanding of the Word of God becomes paramount in our lives, and our great desire to do the right thing makes us critical of those we deem to be adrift from the truth:- 'false teachers'.

Certainly no one is advocating a lax attitude to God's word, but, even in our quest for meticulous doctrinal accuracy, surely we should try not to lose sight of the 'common decencies', to say nothing of the Christian graces. Jesus had some very sharp words for some who were **scrupulously correct** in their religious observances when He said, "**Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees for ye pay tithes of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law; judgement, mercy and faith: these ought ye to have done and not leave the others undone.**" (Matt. 23:23). The Jews were required to pay tithes on produce of the land and these religious leaders were showing a good example in paying tithes even on tiny herbs. They were found

wanting, however, on the weightier matters: the “common decencies” of their Jewish religion: i.e. JUDGMENT (justice and fairness to others); MERCY (compassion and kindness to the poor and miserable); and FAITH (piety and obedience to God, or as Luke puts it ‘the love of God’). And so there is always the possibility of us being meticulously correct in religious observance and yet miles away from the love of God. There is surely little point in being doctrinally correct (as we see it) if we become mean, nasty and bitter in the process, or lose sight of the “common decencies” of the Christian religion. I’m sure the scribes and Pharisees never imagined for a moment that God perceived them in such a nauseating light; and were probably very proud of their punctilious attention to detail. Jesus was **not** lowering the standards and disparaging attention to detail, but was cautioning us against neglect of the weightier matters. This should surely make us wonder how God really perceives us. Does He think of us as highly as we might hope; or are we as smug, blinkered and self-satisfied as those Pharisees? Perhaps many of us honour Him so often with our lips, when, in fact, our hearts are far from him. It is all far too complex and complicated for us ever to make serious pronouncements, like Paul and Peter did, upon the brethren: they were inspired apostles laying down the ground rules. We are all just servants of the same Master, doing our best to be considered fit for the Kingdom of Heaven.

As Jesus moved through the villages to Jerusalem “... **one said unto Him, Lord, are there few that be saved?**” Jesus refused to put a figure on it but said, “**Strive to enter in at the strait gate (narrow door): for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.**” (Luke 13:23).

Editor.

## GLEANINGS

*“Let her glean even among the sheaves.” Ruth 2:15*

### CHRIST DIED FOR US

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

### CRUCIFIED

“They nail’d my Lord upon the tree, And left Him, dying, there:  
Thro’ love He suffered there for me; ‘Twas love beyond compare.

Upon His head a crown of thorns, Upon His heart my shame;  
For me He prayed, for me He died, And, dying, spoke my name.

“Forgive Him, O forgive! “He cried, Then bow’d His sacred head;  
“O Lamb of God! my sacrifice!” For me Thy blood was shed.

His voice I hear, His love I know; I worship at His feet;  
And kneeling there, at Calvary’s cross, Redemption is complete.

Chorus:— Crucified! crucified! And nailed upon the tree!

with pierced hands and feet and side! For you! For me!

Redemption Songs 222.

### O THE DEPTH OF CHRIST’S LOVE!

“I beseech you, my dear brother, to help me to praise, and to lift Christ up on His throne above the shields of the earth. I am astonished and confounded at the greatness of his kindness to such a sinner. I know that Christ and I shall never be even; I shall die in His debt. . . .”

“ But seeing Christ’s love will shame me, I am content to be shamed. My desire is, that my Lord would give me broader and deeper thoughts, to feed myself with wondering at His love. I would weigh it, but I have no balance for it . . . .”

“O the depth of Christ’s love! It hath neither brim nor bottom. Oh, if this blind world saw His beauty! When I count with Him for His mercies to me, I must stand still and wonder, and go away as a poor dyvour, who hath nothing to pay. Free forgiveness is payment. . .”

Samuel Rutherford.

### YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND

“You cannot understand. Who can? You try to confound me. I am confounded before you speak. Paul said it was unsearchable. He went climbing up from argument to argument, and from antithesis to antithesis, from glory to glory, and then sank down in exhaustion as he saw far above him other heights of divinity unscaled, and exclaimed, “that in all things he might have the PRE-EMINENCE.”

T. De W. Talmage.

### I AM ALONE, YET NOT ALONE

“I am alone, yet not alone. There is a feeble and sentimental way in which we speak of the Man of Sorrows. We turn to the cross, and the agony, and the loneliness, to touch the softer feelings, to arouse compassion. You degrade that loneliness by your compassion. Compassion! compassion for Him! Adore if you will – respect and reverence that sublime solitariness with which none but the Father was – but no pity: let it draw out the firmer and manlier graces of the soul. Even tender sympathy seems out of place. . .”

“Such and greater far was the strength and majesty of the Saviour’s solitariness. It was not the trial of the lonely hermit. There is a certain gentle and pleasing melancholy in the life which is lived alone. But there are the forms of nature to speak to him, and he has not the positive opposition of mankind if he has the absence of actual sympathy. It is a solemn thing doubtless, to be apart from men, and to feel eternity rushing by like an arrowy river. But the solitude of Christ was the solitude of a crowd. In that single Human bosom dwelt the thought which was to be the germ of the world’s life: a thought unshared, misunderstood, or rejected. Can you not feel the grandeur of those words, when the Man reposing on His solitary strength, felt the last shadow of perfect isolation pass across His soul: “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?”

F. W. Robertson.

### “HE DIED FOR OUR SINS”

“Paul told the Corinthians that when Christ died, He died as the Representative of guilty man, to make expiation for us by the sacrifice of Himself, and to endure the penalty which we deserved. **“He bore our sins in His own body on the tree.”** “He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.” **“He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him”** (1 Peter 2. 24, 3. 18; 2 Cor. 5. 21). A great and stupendous mystery, no doubt! But it was a mystery to which every sacrifice from the time of Abel had been continually pointing for 4000 years. Christ died **“According to the Scriptures.”**”

J. C. Ryle.

Selected by Leonard Morgan.

## “IF ANY MAN SPEAK” (1 Peter 4:11)

The Head Covering (1 Cor. 11:2-16) contd.

### Didn’t Jesus Have Long Hair?

Once some children asked me, how, at the last supper, was Jesus able to wash the disciples’ feet without having to crawl under the table, I explained that they did not sit on chairs but reclined on couches with their left elbows on the table and their feet sticking outwardly. They contradicted me saying Jesus and his apostles sat at a

table, like we do, because they had seen it on television. In a similar way people are confused by medieval paintings of Jesus portraying him with Latin features and long hair. Verse 14 of the passage under consideration shows that in no way would Jesus have had long hair. **“Doth not even nature itself teach you that if a man have long hair, it is a dishonour to him?”** but, some protest, Jewish men always had long hair because Samson had long hair. Samson was an exception and for an exceptional reason (Judges 13.5). The exception does not establish a rule.

#### **Hair is Woman’s Glory. Woman is Man’s Glory**

Whereas long hair gives splendour to a woman, it is a disgrace for a man. It could be a **“shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven”** (v.6) her splendour having been removed. The usage of the word **“glory”** in this passage is a key unlocking its meaning and purpose, the underlying spiritual principle.

It is not a question of whether a man is more important than woman. In this world men and women have different aptitudes suited to different but equally vital rolls. In the next, we will be like the angels, there will not be difference of sex. That Paul is not simply banging the male chauvinist drum is seen in words which are intended to guard us against having such an attitude: **“Nevertheless, neither is woman without man, nor man without woman, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, so is the man also by the woman; but all things are of God.”** (vv. 11-12). But these words also indicate that we are living in a world where men are intended to be men and woman are intended to be women. A world in which by the very nature of the creation, **“the woman is the glory of a man.”** (v.7) because **“woman was created for the man”** (v.9). Woman’s splendour is a man’s glory, be he father or husband. The woman was created **“for the man”** (v.9). Consider the **“shame”** to man when a wife, mother or daughter, removes her tresses. This is something that is depreciated in this cock-eyed world.

When a wife or daughter partakes in corporate worship with her glory on display she is dishonouring the man. **“The head of a woman is the man”** (v.3). **“every woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered (i.e. with her glory on display), dishonoureth her head (i.e. her husband or father)”**. How? in that man is responsible for **“ruling”** his household and it is inappropriate for his women to be displaying their glory, so as to provoke admiration, when their minds should be concentrated on eternal things. **“Judge ye in yourselves: is it seemly that a woman pray unto God unveiled?”** (v.13). The dishonour shown to her head by not hiding her glory equals the shame of having her head shaved. **“But every woman praying or prophesying with her head unveiled dishonoureth her head; for it is one and the same thing as if she were shaven.”** (v.5).

#### **When Praying or Prophesying**

The legalist would say that it is only when a woman is actively praying or prophesying that she needs to be covered. Would it only be unseemly when praying or prophesying but not be unseemly when taking part in other acts of public devotion? The legalist would say that it refers to private praying and prophesying since women are required to be silent in the churches (1 Cor. 14.33-35). Who is going to be distracted by their glory when they are behind closed doors?

Some might ask; **“If they are to remain silent, in what way could it be said that they are praying and prophesying?”** When a person prays on behalf of the church the whole congregation is spiritually involved. **“Else if thou bless with the spirit, how shall he that filleth the place of the unlearned say the Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he knoweth not what thou sayest?”** (1 Cor. 14.16). That would also apply to prophesying for the church. **“For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.”** (v.17).

#### **Because Of The Angels**

Some think that according to verse 10 (**“for this cause ought the woman to have a sign of authority on her head, because of the angels”**) angels are tempted by their

beauty so it should be hidden from the angels' gaze. Does a covering prevent angels from seeing a woman's beauty? Would angels only be tempted whilst she is praying or prophesying and not at other times? "What about Genesis chapter 6 verse 2", they reply: **"the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took wives of all that they chose"**? Surely, it is argued, "sons of God" must refer to angels. If that is the case why does it go on to say in verse 3 **"And Jehovah said, My Spirit shall not strive with man for ever, for that he also is flesh: ..."**? Jesus says quite plainly **"For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels in heaven."** (Matt. 22.30). Angels are not tempted by female beauty.

They are, however, very concerned about our spiritual welfare. Matt. 18.10 **"their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven."** 1 Peter 1.10-12. **Concerning which salvation ... which things angels desire to look into."** q.v. ... We might not be concerned what others think, should our deportment belie our professed piety, but think of the distress to the messengers of God when we do things which call in question our right to be involved in devotion.

### Authority On Her Head

Some have suggested that the head covering is a token of authority, man's authority over the woman. Nowhere does the scripture say that. The words **"a sign of"** (1 Cor. 11.10) in the ASV are supplied by the translators. They are not in the Greek. She is required to have authority on her head. **"Authority"** is from *exousia* meaning leave or permission or right to do as one pleases. A person with a wrong disposition has no right to worship. Matt 5.23-24. **"If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."** 1 Cor. 11.27-28. **"Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup."** A woman who has her glory on display has not got the right to worship. A woman who hides her glory displays a correct disposition, giving her the right to worship.

The underlying principle then is that women should not be displaying their glory so as to provoke admiration in circumstances where one's thoughts should be on spiritual things, i.e. in public devotion. A principle which would also be thwarted should decoratively eye catching coverings be worn, The purpose of the covering is to hide the glory, not to enhance it.

### Symptomatic

If we observe the rules on head covering pedantically, it will be deadeningly legalistic. We must be motivated by the underlying spiritual principles and our love for God through Jesus our Lord.

The sad thing is that the turning away from New Testament principles such as these is symptomatic of serious, spiritual, soul destroying sickness.

Brothers and sisters, let us encourage each other, with firmness and love, to be faithful to the Word in all things.

Some discount these matters as unimportant, saying they are not necessary to salvation and are therefore matters of opinion. Jesus says **"He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much: and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous in much."** Luke 16.10.

Allan Ashurst,  
60 Kenwood Road, Stretford,  
Manchester.

## **“HE SHALL BE CALLED A NAZARENE”**

Matthew’s gospel, with its theme of Jesus as the Messiah and King of the Jews, opens with prophecies which foretell both His Divinity and humanity, and also His several dwelling-places on earth.

### **His Divinity**

His divinity is foretold in Isaiah 7:14 in the meaning of the name Emmanuel, “. . . and shall call His name Immanuel”, God with us. Also in Micah’s prophecy (5:2), partially quoted by the chief priests and scribes to Herod, the One who was to be born in Bethlehem and be Governor that should rule Israel, has origins from eternity, for Micah continues where they left off: “...whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting.”

This prophecy also pinpoints the place of His birth as Bethlehem Ephrathah, linking up with the words of David: “I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids, until I find out a place for the LORD, and habitation for the mighty God of Jacob. Lo, we heard of it at Ephrathah, we found it in the fields of the wood” (Psalm 132: 4-6). This is very interesting, since it was in the fields round Bethlehem that the sheep were reared for the Temple sacrifices!

### **His Humanity**

The humanity of Jesus is obvious in that the Holy Spirit miraculously placed the actual life of the Son of God in the womb of Mary, perfect and complete, so that her body could protect and nourish that life and eventually give birth to the full-term baby, still the Son of God, but clothed now with human flesh, the mysterious “seed of the woman” which God had prophesied way back in Genesis would crush the serpent’s head with His heel (3:15).

### **His Homes**

From Bethlehem it was necessary for the family to go down into Egypt to escape Herod’s fury: “... he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, Out of Egypt have I called My Son” (Matthew 2:14,15). Thus it fulfilled Hosea’s prophecy: “Out of Egypt have I called My Son” (11:1), which is also a reference to the deliverance of “Israel My son” from Egyptian bondage under Moses.

Matthew tells us that Joseph, when returning from Egypt came and “... dwelt in a city called Nazareth that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene” (2:23).

We read also that after the temptation in the wilderness, which followed His baptism, Jesus left Nazareth and “... came and dwelt in Capernaum which is upon the sea coast in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali” (Matthew 4:13) in order to fulfil Isaiah’s prophecy (9:1,2).

So we know that Micah foretold His birthplace, Hosea foretold the flight into Egypt, and Isaiah foretold that the Capernaum area would be the base for His ministry period. That leaves the greater period of His life, all His growing-up and maturing, foretold in prophecies that cannot be located.

### **“Spoken By The Prophets”**

Though Matthew tells us that He was to be called a Nazarene, “which was spoken by the prophets” (2:23), there is no marginal reference as to who the prophets were, neither is there any mention of Nazareth in the Old Testament. In cases like this a concordance is invaluable.

The word ‘grow’ in connection with the Messiah reveals four references: 1) In Isaiah we read, “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall GROW out of his roots” (11:1); 2) Isaiah, at the beginning of a chapter



which deals with the sufferings of the Messiah on our behalf says, **“He shall GROW up before Him as a tender plant and as a root out of dry ground”** (53:2); 3) Jeremiah says, **“In those days and at that time, will I cause a Branch of righteousness to GROW up unto David (33:15);** and 4) in Zechariah we read, **“Behold the man, whose name is the BRANCH; and he shall GROW up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD”** (6:12).

A visit to Nazareth unveiled the meaning of these prophecies when the Israeli guide, in summing up her Nazareth talk said, “The name Nazareth comes from a Hebrew word *netzer* which means a branch which grows up from a root. It is used of the palm tree which reproduces by sending up a shoot from the root.” The name Nazareth, then, is encoded in those four prophecies which speak of the Messiah as a Branch growing up from the root.

Hence we discover that the prophets mentioned in Matthew 2:23: **“which was spoken by the prophets”**, are Isaiah, Jeremiah and Zechariah.

#### The Messiah's Genealogies

The two genealogies of Jesus in Matthew and Luke support these conclusions. In Matthew we have His legal descent through the husband of His mother. It links Him legally with David and the Davidic covenant, and concludes with Abraham, and so links Jesus with the covenant God made with him, that in him all families of the earth should be blessed, for Mary also came from the same stock.

The two lines converge at David, but the natural line of the Messiah's descent through Mary (though Luke's genealogy gives the husbands' names only) continues past Abraham back to **“Enos which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.”** As the source of Adam's life, Jesus can truly be described as the root of Adam and the **“root of Jesse”**, and, from that root, His own eternal life, He grew up as a separate branch of David's line.

As if to re-emphasize the implications of the One whose name is BRANCH, Zechariah quotes the Lord of Hosts as saying **“Behold, I will bring forth my servant, the BRANCH”** (3:8, and compare Isaiah 52:13), and then he links the BRANCH with priest and king (6:13), which Hebrews confirms as relating to Jesus in His comparison with Melchi-zedek (Hebrews 7:15-17).

The Hebrew word *netzer*, meaning ‘offshoot’ becomes *natzeri* when ‘My offshoot’ is translated. As Nazareth is derived from *netzer*, *natzeri* could be translated as ‘belonging to Nazareth’ or ‘Nazarene’ as it is in Matthew 2:23. In fact a literal translation of **“He shall be called a Nazarene”** is “He shall be called my offshoot” – My BRANCH which grows up from the root.

In Revelation 5:5 the elders refer to Jesus as **“the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David”**, and in Revelation 22:16, in His last recorded words to us, Jesus describes Himself as both the root and offspring of David.

A.M. Parker.




---

Conducted by  
Alf Marsden

---

**“Should those who participate in public prayers (in the Church) use the opportunity to ramble all over the scriptures, telling God what he already knows and preaching the gospel. This often happens at funerals: in short, are prayers suitable opportunities for preaching or rambling?”**

When I first read this question I hurriedly consulted the Oxford Dictionary to find out what ‘rambling’ really meant. It is defined as ‘peripatetic, wandering; disconnected, desultory, incoherent’. The word ‘peripatetic’ is an interesting one; it evidently is of the school of Aristotle, and refers to Aristotle’s custom of teaching while walking in the Lyceum at Athens. The other definitions are self-explanatory and give us a clear picture of what the questioner is driving at. I have not the slightest doubt that this question will strike a responsive chord in many minds.

#### The asking

An omniscient God will know what we want before we even ask. With this realisation in mind, should we then be deterred from asking? No, most certainly not; on the contrary, we are exhorted to ask. Jesus said, **“Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you”** (Mt. 7:7).

Many people are victims of their own misconceptions. They tend to say, “Well if your God knows what you want before you ask him, why does he not give it to you automatically?” Peoples’ misconceptions lie in the fact that they do not understand God. He has, in His providential care, made available many things to us, but He is not an automaton, nor should we be like newly-hatched birds in the nest, lying there with beaks wide open waiting for food to be dropped in. He has made available salivation, but we have to seek it. On this physical planet which He created there are many precious, life-sustaining minerals, but we have to dig for them. Animal and plant life He has given us for bodily sustenance, but we have to process the food from them in order to gain strength. For those who, through incapacity, cannot fend for themselves, he has taught us the lessons of caring and sharing; the incident of Cain and Abel shows us quite conclusively that we are our brother’s keeper. Let us have no misconceptions of God. He is the Great Provider, the Almighty, the Omnipotent; He is not, in that sense, ‘one of us’, but He has made the means available so that we can become ‘one with Him’! Let us seek; let us knock; but as regards prayer, let us ask.

#### The Rambling

We all know how some prayers go on and on and on, taking in every event, seemingly, from Greenland’s icy mountains to the coral seas of the Pacific, with a few choice items thrown in such as praying for a fine day for the Bible School picnic, and successful examination results for teenage students. Don’t misunderstand me; some of these things may weigh heavily on some and they may see them as fit subjects for prayer, and I would not wish to offend in this respect. What I do think is that we can be more objective in our prayers, and perhaps take our example from scripture.

First of all we learn that prayer is enjoined on the Christian. Paul says, **“Pray without ceasing”** (1 Thess. 5:17). This does not mean that prayer should never be interrupted and should go on for 24 hours a day and every day, but rather that it should be a spiritual discipline which is constantly recurring. We no doubt recall the words of Jesus to Peter in the Garden of Gethsemane, **“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak”** (Mt. 26:41) Quite simply, Peter and the others had gone to sleep; I wonder how often sleep overtakes our prayers?

We must never be tempted to indulge in long prayers in order to hide our deficiencies in our Christian walk; remember the denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees by Jesus, **“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye devour widows’ houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation** (Mt. 23:14). Over in the O.T. the same principle is made clear, **“Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in Heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few”** (Ec. 5:2). Similarly, Jesus again, **“But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathen do:**

for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking" (Mt. 6:7). These scriptures, and others, ought to encourage us to make brief prayers.

I feel I must also mention the odious practice of 'getting at' fellow-saints in the assembly through the medium of prayer; this practice should never be entered into by the devout Christian. The scripture is quite explicit as to how disputes between Christians should be conducted, and to attack a fellow-Christian through prayer shows a complete lack of courage and a total disregard to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. The one engaged in public prayer should remember that he is praying on behalf of the members of the assembly, and not in spite of them.

We must also realise that there is a time and a place for preaching the Gospel, and that trying to do it through prayer is not the proper nor the best way. Prayers at funerals are a classic example of this. We invariably have a captive audience of non-members on such occasions, and so the desire to 'get at' them with the Gospel through prayer is very strong indeed; however, we should not succumb to that temptation because the emotional stress, for one thing, is very intense and would probably nullify any good which we think might be accomplished. By engaging ourselves in such activity, we are probably signalling to the world the paucity of our efforts in bringing people within the sound of the Gospel by normal means.

#### The Help of the Holy Spirit

There is a very striking passage in Rom. 8:26,27 where Paul says, "**Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered**". This is a beautiful pen-picture by Paul of the Holy Spirit taking hold at our side in times of weakness. We don't know how to pray as we ought, i.e., as it is necessary, but He, the Holy Spirit, takes our cause and pleads it "with groanings which cannot be uttered", or 'in a language that we don't understand'. Paul makes it clear to us that the Holy Spirit, as part of the Godhead and as our 'other Paraclete', knows the mind of God and intercedes for us when in our weakness we might be praying for something which is not according to God's will for us. Well might Paul say "**And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God**" (v.28). If we do not realise what it is right to pray for, on what basis do we presume to tell God that His answer to our prayer is not for our good? We either believe that God is working at all times for our good, or we don't. We say that we realise and understand the vast resources of Heaven working on our behalf; let us see if we can muster the faith to rely upon them.

#### Postures in Prayer

There has developed, in recent years, a non-reverential posture in prayer I refer, of course, to the practice of sitting before God. I have mentioned this before, and it causes me some concern, because I believe it to be unscriptural. Standing before God in prayer is acceptable because Jesus intimated that it was, "**And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any**" (Mark 11:25). Kneeling before God is another scriptural posture, "**For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**" (Eph. 3:14). On the face before God is another scriptural posture, "**And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt**" (Mt. 26:39). I understand, of course, that there will be some who through age or infirmity cannot take up any posture other than sitting; I am quite sure that God understands this.

The Bible abounds with examples of prayers made by God's people throughout the ages. I suggest we study these. In the meantime I fully endorse the views of the questioner and look for the time when our prayers will be more objective.

(All questions, please, to Alf Marsden,  
20 Costessy Way, Winstanley, Wigan WN3 6ES.)

## JESUS' FOREKNOWLEDGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Jesus often endorses the authority of the Old Testament scriptures by quoting them, but we may assume that he had nothing to say about the actual text of the New Testament, as this was not written until a good many years afterwards. However, one of his sayings throws an interesting light on this subject.

This is his comment recorded in Matt. 26:13 and Mark 14:9, relating to the woman who brought an alabaster box of ointment and anointed his head. No doubt the onlookers would regard this as a fairly trivial incident in his life, hardly worth mentioning, and John tells us more than once (John 20:3 & 21:25) that Jesus did signs and many things which are not written down. If the Gospel had only been passed on by word of mouth, quite likely this short episode would have been forgotten. Equally, if the Gospel writers had used their human judgment to decide which items to include, this one might very well have been left out.

Yet Jesus said to them, "Whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her" (Matt. 26:13).

Although it is not recorded that Jesus ever told his followers to write anything down, is he not here foretelling the writing of the Gospels? How otherwise would it be certain that this little story of the woman and her ointment would be spoken of wherever the Gospel went?

Also, is he not confirming the inspiration of the scriptures? How otherwise would two writers have remembered to include this small incident just before telling of the tremendous events of the crucifixion and resurrection? Jesus therefore had foreknowledge of what would eventually go into the New Testament scriptures.

Besides knowing the contents of the future New Testament, is he not also predicting that it will survive down the ages and presumably be translated into the necessary languages for it to be understood wherever it is preached?

This saying of Jesus has certainly come to pass, for everyone who hears or reads the Gospel sooner or later comes across the account of this woman's way of showing her devotion to her Lord.

(Miss) R. M. Payne,  
1 Kenilworth Avenue,  
Reading RG3 3DL.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

Sep. 1	Dan. 9:1-19	2Thess. 1
Sep. 8	Dan. 9:20-27	2 Thess 2
Sep. 15	Deut.7:1-11	2 Thess. 3
Sep. 22	Psa. 132 & 133	1 Cor.1:1-25
Sep. 29	Isa. 40:12-31	1 Cor.1:26 to 2:16

### Second letter to the Thessalonians

WRITER: apostle Paul

DATE: c. A.D. 53, soon after the first epistle

PLACE: probably Corinth

CHURCH FOUNDED: by Paul c. A.D.50. See Acts 17:1-9

PURPOSE: to correct a misunderstanding regarding the second com-

ing of Christ. Also to condemn idle and disorderly lives.

THESSALONICA: a city and seaport of Macedonia and a noted commercial centre. Many retired Roman soldiers resided there.

### The Great Apostasy

Paul in chapter 2 speaks of great events prior to Christ's coming He mentions the man of sin (2:3), who had been variously identified as the Jewish nation, Simon Magnus the Gnostic, Caius Caesar or Caligula, Titus and the Flavian house, Mohammed, Napoleon Bonaparte, Antiochus Epiphances, one not yet revealed, etc. Personally, I see the man of sin as the Papacy and the restraining power as the pagan Roman

Empire (2:7).

I must quote Alexander Campbell. In his debate with the Catholic bishop John Purcell, he said: "The man of sin was to exalt himself above all that is called a God or an object of worship ... and certainly not only in the arrogant titles which he assumes, but in the dispensations which he has granted in respect to laws divine and human, no magistrate, king, or potentate ever claimed so much on earth, as the man of sin, as the popes of Rome. He is styled **Universal Father, Holy Father, His Holiness, Sovereign Pontiff Supreme Head of the Church on Earth, Infallible One, Vicar of Christ, Prince of the World, Lord of Lords, Pater Familias, Successor of Peter, Prince of the Apostles. Lord God the Pope.**" He was an embryo in Paul's time and had grown to maturity by the days of Gregory the Great. Luther struck him with a chronic consumption from which he has never recovered. An important point is this: If the mystery of godliness was God manifest in the flesh (1 Timothy 3:16), then the mystery of iniquity (2:7) is surely satan manifest in the flesh.

#### **Walking Disorderly**

I have a number of books on my shelves entitled *The Twisted Scriptures* and some deal with walking disorderly (3:11). This phrase has been quoted to justify writing-off a lot of brethren. But the context clearly shows that Paul used it to designate the idleness into which the brethren had drifted or lapsed. How were such to be treated? The faithful in Thessalonica were simply commanded to refrain from extending hospitality to these loafers and slackers, who in turn were commanded and exhorted to get a job. So the next time "walking disorderly" is heard, recall the context.

#### **Letter to the Corinthians**

WRITER : the apostle Paul

DATE : c. A.D. 57

PLACE : probably Ephesus

PURPOSE : "Two factors lie behind the writing of 1 Corinthians. First Paul had

received reports of the church which made him very uneasy (1:11;5:1). Second, a delegation arrived from Corinth, and (or with) a letter seeking his advice on various questions (7:1;16:17). In the letter, Paul takes up five of the matters reported to him: divisions in the church; a case of incest; court-cases between members; the abuse of Christian 'freedom'; the general chaos reigning in church services, even in the Lord's supper.

He also answers questions the Corinthians have written about: questions about marriage and single life; problems over food consecrated to idols and social functions held in the temples; whether or not women should be veiled and their place in public meetings; the matter of spiritual gifts; the meaning of the resurrection of the dead" (The Lion Handbook of the Bible).

CHURCH ESTABLISHED : during Paul's second missionary journey. See Acts 18:1-17.

CORINTH : a city of Greece at the western end of the isthmus between central Greece and the Peloponnesus. During its history, the city was razed to the ground. Later it was rebuilt by Caesar. Augustus made it the capital of the new province of Achaia.

The town was dominated by the Acrocorinth, a steep, flat-topped rock surmounted by an acropolis, which in ancient times contained interalia, a temple of Aphrodite, goddess of love, whose service gave rise to the city's notorious immorality. In Paul's day, "to Corinthianize" was to indulge in sexual licence.

GENUINENESS : never doubted

#### **Division**

The plea of the apostle Paul was for unity. Division was always condemned by him. Indeed, all the New Testament writers opposed schism within the body of Christ. I do not think I have read of a more troubled or divided church than that in ancient Corinth. It did not take long for Paul in this epistle to address

himself to the problem (1:10-18). It must have troubled him greatly.

I have heard it said that the Church of Christ today is one of the most divided communities on earth. What a tragedy! It appears we have not learned from history. Alexander Campbell in his introduction to his great book *The Christian System* wrote: "Next to our personal salvation, two objects constituted the summum bonum, the supreme good, worthy of the sacrifice of all temporalities. The first was the union, peace, purity and the harmonious co-operation of Christians guided by an understanding enlightened by the Holy Scriptures; the other, the conversation of sinners to God." Please note that which he placed first. To me, it is no surprise in the light of Jesus' prayer in John's gospel (ch. 17). Beloved brethren, I know quite a bit about the history of the Churches of Christ, both here in Britain and the United States. One thing that has struck me forcibly is the weakening of the cause of Christ everywhere through division. Sadly, the church today is as divided as ever it was. Someone once said: "The only way to cure our divisions, is to resolve never to create or promote another one and to work to eliminate those which we have inherited."

### Wisdom

There is man's wisdom and there is God's wisdom. There is the wisdom of this world (passing age) and the hidden wisdom, now revealed, which God ordained before the world unto our glory (2:7).

Paul said of the Greeks or the Gentiles that they "seek after wisdom" (1:22). How true! Ancient Greece was the home of philosophy, (a word, incidentally, which means the love of wisdom). We have all heard of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, who lived long before Jesus and whose influence in the world remains strong to this day. (How strong can be seen, for example, in a study of numerous chapters in Bertrand Russell's book: *History of Western*

*Philosophy*). I must admit I have some of their works in my library. I read them only out of interest, but they in no way compare with the writings, for example, of Moses, David, Solomon and Paul – in other words, the revelation of God. To quote Campbell again: – "The Bible is the medium of conversation with the Lord of life. One hour of such company is more to be desired than a thousand years in intimate converse with the wisest philosophers and most august potentates that earth ever saw".

At the heart of God's wisdom is the gospel of Christ. Paul wrote: "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block and unto the Greeks foolishness" (1:23). It is a message of salvation (1:21).

### Revelation

In this world, basically, man can learn in three ways – by seeing, by hearing and by using rational deduction (2:9). What man cannot learn by these three ways God has to reveal unto him by the Spirit (1:10). Remember what revelation is. It is the unfolding of the Divine mind. Revelation is simply what God has said. Interpretation, by the way, is what we think God meant by what he said. The first is perfect, the second may not be. The Bible, of course, is God's revelation to mankind.

Ian S. Davidson, Motherwell.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Namiwawa, Malawi:** On 3rd May, 1989 13 people were baptised at Chisupe, and 6 restored.

On 4th June, 1989 17 people were baptised and 9 restored at Nkanda. Bro Masiye spoke on Luke 3:7-11.

On 9th July, 1989 a new place has been opened at Machinga. Bro. Nggwabe spoke on 2 Tim. 3:1-9 and 487 people attended the meeting.

Assistance Needed: With reference to our report in the February *Scripture Standard* regarding our building (church) at Namiwawa I have to say that

repair work is still going on. We are short of corrugated iron sheets which are very expensive here. Therefore we have no alternative but to ask our brethren in the U.K. (or elsewhere) to assist us by donating something to our work: either in money or materials. Please send any help to The Secretary, African Church of Christ, Namiwawa, P.O. Box 88, Jali, Zomba, Malawi. Receipt will be given and donor published in "S.S."

W.F. Khonde (Sec.),  
African Church of Christ Mission.

## OBITUARY

**Motherwell** : It is with deep regret that we announce the death of our brother Hugh Davidson, husband of the late sister Amy Davidson, whom we sadly lost seven months ago.

Brother Davidson was well known in the Slamannan District which he served for many years as Secretary. Baptised into the Lord in 1935 he was a mainstay of the church at Motherwell. He was, indeed, a faithful and steadfast member, an inspiration to all as a preacher and teacher of the young. Hugh will be greatly missed in the District by all who knew him.

The funeral took place on Wednesday 19th July, and was conducted by Bro. Jim Sinclair and assisted by Bro. Jack Nisbet and Bro. Mark Plain.

W.J. Purcell (Sec.)

## COMING EVENTS

### Week-end Mission

The church in Tranent propose, God willing, to hold a week-end Mission on the dates Friday 29th, Saturday 30th September, and Sunday, 1st October, Friday and Sunday at 7.30 p.m., Saturday at 6.00 p.m.

Preacher : Bill Mair, Buckie.

### Annual Social

The church at Newtongrange, intend, God willing, to hold their Annual Social, on Saturday, 14th October, 1989 at 4.00 p.m.

Chairman : Robert Hunter

Speakers :

Mark Plain (Tranent)

Harry McGinn (N. Cummnock)

Try to be with us.

A.P. Sharp.

### Anniversary Meeting

The congregation at Hope Chapel, London, intend, God willing, to hold their Anniversary Meeting at the Meeting-place on Saturday, October 7th 3.p.m. Afternoon Meeting 4.45 p.m. Tea 6.30 p.m. Evening Meeting.

Bro. Geoff Daniell will speak at both meetings, and stay over to Sunday.

Everybody Welcome.

Dorothy Scott (Sec.)

### THANKS

The Davidson family wish to thank everyone who, on the death of their father, expressed sympathy by way of letter, card, telephone call or visitation. The support shown at a difficult and trying period was deeply appreciated by Hazel, Angus and Ian.

### NEW MAGAZINE

Dear Editor,

In January of this year (1989) *First Century Christian* was brought back into publication. The original prospectus also serves as the present prospectus. Brother Roy J. Hearn, original founder of the paper serves as its editor. There will be no list of staff writers, however, good articles are solicited from good men in the brotherhood. We would like to receive good articles from others that will teach the truth, strengthen faith, teach sinners, and build up the church; articles on worship, Christian living, the home and family, Christian evidences, the church, and other timely subjects are most welcome. Articles dealing with problems and controversies will also be considered but, please, not a steady diet of this. The following are some guidelines for those wishing to submit articles.

1. Please do not send carbon copies or previously published articles.

2. Most readers favour shorter articles; please keep articles to three or four

pages, double-spaced.

3. Avoid superfluous wording. Do not hesitate to use plenty of Scripture to confirm points made.

4. Use only the King James or American Standard versions in quotations, except when exposing errors of modern versions.

5. Articles on floppy discs (IBM PC format) are most appreciated. Disks will be returned.

6. Articles should be sent to: Roy J. Hearn; 4035 Barron Avenue; Memphis, TN 38111.

We would appreciate it if you would announce the publication of this paper, and encourage our brethren to help us to make it a paper that will bring glory to God and the church.

Annual subscription rates are as follows:

Regular—\$10.00 (Mailed to each member/family), Foreign—\$12.00, Club—\$8.00 (Five subscriptions minimum), Congregational—\$7.00. Bundle Rates (Monthly): 25—\$10.00, 50—\$20.00, 100—\$30.00.

Roy J. Hearn.

---

Dignity is the capacity to hold back the tongue from saying what should never have been in the mind in the first place.

### I WONDER

I wonder what makes some children of God think they would enjoy themselves in Heaven, spending eternity with God, the Lord Jesus, and the redeemed of all ages when it appears they do not enjoy spending an hour or two with Him and His brethren on the Lord's day in worship.

I wonder how some members think ~~the~~ the voice of our Lord will sound so sweet at the judgment, when His voice through His written words holds no interest for them at all.

I wonder how people expect to escape the wrath of God in the day of judgment, when they live lives of indifference, neglect, disobedience and sin during this worldly sojourn.

I wonder how people expect to reap that which was not sown, or how they expect to harvest life while sowing death or how they can lay up heavenly treasures but never make any deposits, or how they can expect to grow spiritually but never engage in spiritual exercises.

H. Spurlock.

---

Our Goliaths can be feared or fought; succumbed to or slain.

When people complain of boredom they have usually done nothing to deserve it.

---

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is published monthly.

#### PRICE PER YEAR — POST PAID BY SURFACE MAIL

UNITED KINGDOM and COMMONWEALTH ..... £ 6.00

CANADA & U.S.A. .... \$10.00

AIR MAIL please add £1.50 or \$3.00 to above surface mail rates

#### DISTRIBUTION AGENT & TREASURER:

JOHN K. KNELLER, 4 Glassel Park Road, Longniddry, East Lothian, EH32 0NY  
Telephone: Longniddry (0875) 53212 to whom change of address should be sent.

EDITOR: JAMES R. GARDINER, 87 Main Street, Pathhead, Midlothian,  
Scotland EH37 5PT. Telephone: Ford 320 527

---

"The Scripture Standard" is printed for the publishers by  
Lothian Printers, 109 High Street, Dunbar, East Lothian. Tel: (0368) 63785