

The **SCRIPTURE STANDARD**

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

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BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

I have been corresponding for some months now with a gentleman who believes that the *one baptism* of Eph. 4:5 is baptism in the Holy Spirit. This assertion comes from one far from being a complete novice in the scriptures but from a very God-fearing gentleman with a life-time of bible-study behind him and an otherwise extensive knowledge of the contents of the bible. Since entering this correspondence I have discovered that this belief, that Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the only baptism authorised by God today, is a belief very widely held amongst many denominational bodies. With a view to assisting some of our younger readers to a better understanding of the matter I offer the following brief remarks on the subject.

The first consideration which springs to mind is to discover the identity of the various baptisms of New Testament times and to ascertain which, if any or all, are valid today. There would appear to have been five baptisms which receive mention in the New Testament and which figured in the early days on New Testament history. Firstly we might note the baptism of suffering (Matt. 20:22); the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:11); baptism of John the Baptist (Matt. 3:11) baptism of fire (Matt. 3:11) and the baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ in water for the remission of sins (Matt. 28:19). Although followers of Christ are called upon to suffer when necessary I think most bible students would agree that the baptism of suffering was unique to our Lord and not something vied for today. It had particular referencē to Jesus and to a lesser extent to the apostles. I will maintain that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit had also a limited application to a certain few in New Testament times and is not therefore something to be expected or sought after today. Similarly the baptism of John the Baptist was something of temporary duration in New Testament times and men ought not to seek the baptism of John today — in this connection it seems strange that men can understand why they should not pursue John's baptism today but cannot understand why they should not expect the baptism of the Holy Spirit today. Most strange. Why is it that men can read their New Testaments and understand the temporary nature of John the Baptist's baptism; that it fulfilled its short-term purpose and is no longer with us, but can not understand that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit had a similar short-term purpose and is similarly not with us now. The apostle Paul was aware of all of those five baptisms and yet he declared (many years after all five of those baptisms had received due notice in

these early days of Christianity) in Eph. 4:4,5; "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." According to the apostle, at that time at which he wrote, inspired as he was by the Holy Spirit, there was only ONE baptism. Of the five baptisms already mentioned which one was it? My correspondent maintains that it is the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Is he correct or very seriously mistaken. The context of these words of Paul's is governed by the previous verse (Eph. 4:3) which is an exhortation to the Christians at Ephesus to endeavour "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." In what way were these Ephesians responsible for the unity of the Spirit? It devolved upon them to *Uphold the institution* by which this unity had been secured. The circumcised and the uncircumcised had been made one body, they had received the one Spirit in gifts and sealing, they had received the one hope of glory through Christ the one Lord, they had embraced the one faith by the apostles, and the one immersion into Christ, and one Father by their birth from above, and this unity was to be kept unbroken. Judaising teachers were even then busy laying another foundation, even the rites of Moses, and the Ephesians are urged to beware and accept no other foundation or ground of unity than that laid by the apostles of Jesus. It would be most inconsistent with Paul's argument here if there could be anything divisive about baptism, or that he should talk of One baptism while meaning four or five baptisms. In Paul's mind there was as much right for two Lords as two baptisms; for two bodies as two baptisms; for two faiths as two baptisms. If my correspondent is correct in his belief that the one baptism is Holy Spirit baptism it follows, therefore, that from the moment that Eph. 4:5 was penned baptism in water for the remission of sins became invalid. Did the baptism commanded by Jesus become invalid when Eph. 4:5 was penned? Did Jesus ever give any hint that his baptism was to be of a temporary nature and that it would expire in terms of Eph. 4:5. Surely not — rather the reverse. Jesus indicates the PERMANENCY of the baptism in water for the remission of sins in His parting instructions to his apostles (Matt. 28:19-20). "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age." Clearly these instructions to the apostles have a continuity about them and Jesus expected his disciples in every age, each generation in turn, to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, baptising them into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, even to the end of the world. *This* is the baptism to which the apostle Paul referred as the ONE baptism in Eph. 4:5. It was to be, like the gospel, age lasting. There seems to be nothing temporary about that. Subsequent events tell us that the apostles were not disobedient to Christ's instructions but began, at Pentecost. (Acts 2) to implement them and we read of the apostle Peter preaching the gospel and on being asked what sinners must do, instructing that they should repent and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. That day 3,000 gladly received his words and were baptised in water for the abrogation of their sins. Paul knew that Christ's baptism in water had supplanted the baptism of John the Baptist for when he came across some disciples in Ephesus who knew only John's baptism he explained to them the difference between the two baptisms and had them baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. (Acts 19: 1-5). Similarly the apostle Peter knew that even baptism in the Holy Spirit did not supplant the baptism of Jesus in water, for remission of sins, for when he was confronted with the fact that Cornelius and his friends had been baptised in the Holy Spirit he nevertheless, COMMANDED that they be baptised in water in the name of the Lord. (Acts 10-47, 48).

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit was a 'one-off' event in the early formation of the church and it was a fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy. Similarly the crucifixion was a 'one-off' event which was the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy. The miracles, wonders and signs come into this same category. One might as well expect disciples to go around raising the dead today as to expect the baptism in the Holy Spirit. There are only two recorded instances of baptism in the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. One, in Acts 2, involved the Jews (in the form of the apostles) and one involved the Gentiles (in the form of Cornelius and his household) in Acts 10. Unique phenomena attended both baptisms, in the form of a *sound* as of a rushing mighty wind (filling an entire building) and cloven tongues like fire sitting upon each participant. Each participant could immediately thereafter speak in known languages which he had never learned (Acts 2:8). I wonder if those special phenomena attend any of the alleged baptisms in the Holy Spirit today? I offer to travel any distance to see and hear them. The apostle Peter, in response to the incredulity of those who witnessed this baptism explained that this was the FULFILMENT of the prophecy of Joel's that in the last days God would pour out His spirit upon all flesh. The entire prophecy was fulfilled before that 'great and notable day of the Lord' which in this context was the overthrow of the Jews as the nation of God (Acts 2:16-21). Baptism in the Holy Spirit seems to have been confined to the two instances recorded and *all* the early disciples were certainly not recipients of it. Why men should expect to be recipients of it today is beyond me. We are however, commanded to be baptised in water for the remission of sins — Oh that men are as punctilious about seeing that this was done. Baptism in the Holy Spirit was not a command but a gift (Acts 11:17) and a promise. Even the apostles had to 'tarry' until Jesus deemed the time fit to bestow it upon them. If Jesus sees fit to bestow it upon us today we shall know it and so will everyone else — for we shall be able to speak in languages we have never learned. If Jesus *does not* bestow the gift then we shall know that He has not bestowed it for we *shall not* be able to speak in languages we have never learned. It would seem therefore that the onus of proof lies with those who claim to have been baptised in the Holy Spirit to demonstrate the fact by speaking in languages they have not learned. Mind you speaking in languages we have never learned would have little relevance today but was a most important capability for the apostles to receive. God's full revelation. the bible. is available today in virtually every language.

In summing up then, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit was a promise and not a gift, not a command: was received, not obeyed: Christ was the administrator, not man: it was poured out from heaven, not performed on earth by man: it was promised as a miraculous power, not commanded as an ordinance. It was a miracle, was always attended by miracles, and always conferred miraculous powers. It was not a memorial, a type, a symbol, a likeness, a form, an object lesson, setting forth any fact or truth. It was perhaps one of the most extraordinary and miraculous events in the gospel dispensation; did not and could not become a permanent element in the church. There is now only one baptism in the church, and it is the 'one baptism' taught in Eph. 4:5. It is commanded by Jesus and men are taught to administer it to others. Men are to obey it. It is in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and it is in water. It is a monument of Christ's burial and resurrection, a monument of the great facts of the gospel, a likeness, a form, an object-lesson setting forth Christ's burial and resurrection, also the sinner's burial to his past sinful life, and his resurrection to a new life in Christ. It is for the remission of sins and is a permanent gate into the church and kingdom of God.

THE TRESPASS OFFERING

(Part II).

Let us think now of the trespass offering itself. We see again a threefold division. The first is our involvement with and our responsibility toward others which requires one of the three offerings; a female lamb or kid, or two turtle-doves or pigeons, or one tenth of an ephah of fine flour. We see that the offering of the animal is similar to that of the sin offering. The two birds are offered, one for a sin offering, the other for a burnt offering, reminding us again that sin must be atoned for before we can offer what is represented by the burnt offering. But the offering of the fine flour on its own is special, of course, to the trespass offering alone as the priest took a handful and burned it upon the altar. So it did come into contact with the altar and the fire and as the fine flour reminds us of the human perfections of the Lord Jesus, this more than makes up for our human imperfections and trespasses against each other and that perfect life of His is the perfect example for us. It is not for nothing that as our Advocate with the Father, He is called, 'Jesus Christ, the righteous' because His righteousness exposes and yet covers our unrighteous dealings with our fellow man. Not that this excuses us but is accepted of God when we come to Him in confession and repentance. Another explanation could be that neither the birds or the flour are mentioned in the sin offering of Lev. 4 but are here introduced into the trespass offering because these are for the injury that sin does to us rather than our guilt Godwards. And this was God's provision to maintain them in fellowship with Himself and to keep them in a right relationship with each other.

In the second section it is a trespass against the Lord in holy things, that is against the priesthood or against the service of the sanctuary, done in ignorance and therefore excusable but still requiring a ram for an offering similar to the sin offering. But in the third section it is that which is done deliberately against our fellowman. One is in holy things, the other is in human things and both require the same sacrifice with a repayment of interest of the thing we have gotten falsely, a restitution of the full amount plus one-fifth of the principle, either to the priest in holy things or to the man we have robbed or gotten deceitfully. Zacheous is a typical example of this as we have seen, for in the exuberant joy of receiving Christ, he was prepared to go beyond what the law demanded in restoring fourfold what he had gained wrongfully from others.

And so the grace of God in our lives makes us to fulfil even more than what His law requires. Roman 8 reminds us that the law is weak because of the flesh, but the righteousness of the law can be fulfilled in us if we walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. This is the great gospel message of the trespass offering. It is a gaining of that which we have lost through sin and our gain is superabundant in comparison. Sin robbed God of that which was His right and due and sin robbed us, like the man in the Parable of the Good Samaritan, leaving us wounded, bruised and half dead. But the Lord Jesus has made restitution for us, by His sacrificial work. Psalm 69 v 4 says, 'He restored that which He took not away.' And that is our experience through grace. Col. 2 v 13 reminds us, that being dead, He hath quickened us together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, so what we lost in Adam we have gained in Christ. And that restoration will be complete when He shall have put down all rule and authority under His feet and Christ shall be all and in all. So shall it be at the end time when ALL shall be restored and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, Rev. 11 v 15. And we shall reign with Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also be subject unto Him who hath put all things under His feet that God may be all in all. And

all because of the great trespass offering of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory for ever and ever. This is the One Who shows us the way of forgiveness, restitution and reconciliation that we might show to others the same as what He has done for us. Therefore 'Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you' Eph. 4 v 32.

John D. Hartburn,
Houghton Le Spring.

GLEANINGS

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

The goodness and mercy of God

"He is rich in mercy to all who call upon him."

"There is a richness in this sentence, refreshing to the soul of the humble penitent, which encourages and confirms his confidence in God, reminds him that the fountain of everlasting love, is ever full, and overflowing, and that the gracious command, "Open thy mouth wide," is accompanied with the encouraging promise, "And I will fill it." What an anxiety is shown by the Saviour in the following passage, that no bruised reed should be broken, but that all should see, understand, accept, strive after, and obtain, the spiritual blessings which he longs to bestow on every humble supplicant, and which they enjoy not because of their ignorance and unbelief — "Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." Sinner! What further encouragement, or assurance, can you desire? That if you use the means, a prayerful investigation of God's word, you will obtain the end — an admittance into his heavenly kingdom, and an inheritance amongst all them that are sanctified."

The riches of Christ

Men thirst for gold. They buy, bargain, and sell, "do, dare, and die," that they may be rich. They will forsake their homes and families; traverse oceans and deserts; dwell in deathly atmospheres, and under burning suns; brave all dangers; endure all sufferings; and sacrifice all ease, to secure wealth. It is the great master passion of the human race. The great hive of the human family is filled with strife, toil, anxiety, anguish, fraud, deception, outrage, and murder, in the strive for gold. Many men have made shipwreck of their faith, their peace of mind, and their happiness in the mad struggle for the coveted distinctions of wealth, and the riches that so often take wings and fly away. And after the chase is over, the desire accomplished, in the accumulation of great riches, it is not always that they bring the most happiness, or give birth to the surest comforts. Their pleasures are not certain or secure.

Do the multitudes who strive so earnestly, and even madly, to be rich, always succeed? Or having succeeded, are the pleasures of wealth full and with alloy? Let those whom God has entrusted with this world's goods, give answer. It is for the Christian to search for gold that never cankereth, and to secure wealth that can never be destroyed. There are such riches, imperishable and eternal, beyond all vicissitudes and changes; a heritage with God, upon which no shadow comes, and over which no fire passes. The riches of Christ are such; the wealth and worth of righteousness, the untold and unconceived treasures of heaven, are unsearchable and immortal. Such were the riches proffered to the acceptance of the Gentiles and the world, by the great Apostle; and such is the wealth to be secured by the wise and good of all generations.

The unsearchable riches of Christ were preached by Paul, and became the burden of all his labours. He was a man of strong intellect and great attainments, but there were few charms for him in the science or knowledge that did not centre in, or were in some way connected with, the cause and the cross of Christ. To philosophers and statesmen, martial heroes and mighty princes, he bore the same message, and pressed his way to the throne of the Caesars, preaching and proffering to all, the riches of Christ and him crucified."

"I have no influence."

"What if the little rain should say —

"So small a drop as I

Can ne're refresh those thirsty fields —

I'll tarry in the sky?"

What if the shining beam of noon

Should in its fountain stay,

Because its feeble light alone

Cannot create a day?

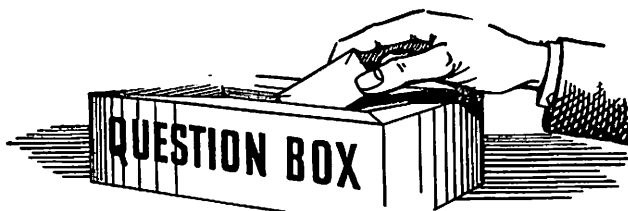
Does not each rain-drop held to form

The cool refreshing shower,

And every ray of light to warm

And beautify the flower?"

Selected by Leonard Morgan. From The Gospel Banner and Biblical Treasury, 1849.



Conducted by
Alf Marsden

"Would you please comment on the significance of the withering of the fig tree by Jesus."

As most of our readers will know, the incident is recorded in the gospels, and as Mark seems to have it in the right chronological setting we shall look at the record in that gospel message. (Mark 11:12-14; and 20-26). The incident records that Jesus looked to the fig tree for fruit because He was hungry, and He found none. He made a curse on the tree, and subsequently we read that the fig tree had dried up from the roots and withered.

The Context

Before we can comment on the significance of this incident I believe we must look at the context in which it occurs. This incident, along with others, occurs in that period of the Lord's life which is popularly called His Passion; I prefer to call it 'the way to the Cross.' Chapters 9 to 16 of Mark's gospel should be read and studied carefully to some depth; from chapter 9 onwards, Jesus begins to prepare the disciples for what is about to happen at Jerusalem.

Chapter 9 opens with the record of Jesus being Transfigured in front of His disciples. When we read the record of the Transfiguration we can understand that this

took place for the exclusive benefit of Peter, James and John. If we cast our minds back to Mark chapter 1 we find there the record of Jesus being baptised in the Jordan river, and as He is baptised we read of the voice from heaven which says, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." We can understand that the voice of the Father is for the ears of Jesus, and the Spirit in the form of a dove is for the eyes of the Baptist as a means of identification. In contrast to this, chapter 9 records, "he was transfigured before *them*"; "there was a cloud that overshadowed *them*"; "*they* saw no man any more, save Jesus only with *themselves*"; "*they* were to tell no man what things *they* had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead". Obviously, there were things which the disciples had to know in preparation for the Cross. If we read Mark 9:30-32 we can see that there was a degree of misunderstanding among the disciples as to His Mission.

The early verses of chapter 10 re-emphasise the running battle which the Lord had with the Scribes and the Pharisees; this battle, as we know, culminates at Calvary. It is in this chapter that Jesus gives the last and most precise pronouncement about His coming death. He states with precision that He will be delivered into the hands of the Chief Priests and Scribes, the leaders of the Jewish nation. He even goes so far as to say that *they* will deliver Him into the hands of the Gentiles, and that they, the Gentiles, would scourge Him, spit upon Him and finally kill Him; the third day He would rise from the dead. An amazing prediction when one reads what subsequently happened. At this time the Lord was journeying southward toward the capital. (Read Mark 10:32-34). In contrast to the precision of the Lord, one can read of the confusion and lack of understanding among the disciples, because immediately after the disclosure by the Lord as to His death, James and John expect Jesus to give them an exalted position. If such gross ignorance could be displayed by those who were *with* Him, how do *we* cope with ignorance in the twentieth century when men have so perverted the teachings of Jesus until it is almost unrecognisable? Blind Bartimaeus also highlights the ignorance of the Scribes and Pharisees when he addresses Jesus as "thou son of David"; with all their learning and knowledge of the scriptures they had never reached that point.

The beginning of chapter 11 records that Jesus sets the seal on His Divine Mission; He sends for the colt on which to ride into the capital. (Read Zechariah 9:9 for the prophecy of this). The record continues that He rode into Jerusalem on the colt; the people shouted 'Hosanna'; He entered the Temple, looked around, and then departed to Bethany. The following morning, returning to the capital from Bethany, He was hungry and saw a fig tree some distance away; it was in full leaf. He went to it expecting to find fruit and found none. He cursed it, and rode on. The disciples evidently heard this. Jesus then rode into the city, went through the Temple like an avenging angel, and incurred the deep displeasure of the Jewish leaders to such an extent that they vowed to kill Him. The Lord's violent action in the Temple is sandwiched in the record between the two halves of the episode of the fig tree.

The primary significance

There is no doubt at all in my mind that we are intended to see the impending doom of Judaism. The battle with the Jewish leaders is reaching its culmination. It seems quite clear that they cannot bear the blinding presence of the Lord and are determined to remove Him from the scene once and for all, and they think that by so doing they will remove the threat to *their* authority. But when Luke records the Lord's journey to Calvary with the women lamenting, he records that Jesus says to the women, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in which they shall say, Blessed are

the barren, and the wombs that never bear, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in a dry"? (Luke 23:28-31). In other words, what Jesus is saying is, "If they will crucify the One in whom is life, what shall be the end of the dry and withered Judaism as personified in the Scribes, Pharisees and the priestly class." You will recall that Peter said to the Lord, "Master, behold the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away" (Mark 11:22). It is then that Jesus stresses to His disciples that they should have faith in God and rely upon *His* authority. Later on, as Mark records in chapter 12, Jesus speaks the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen to His tormentors. This is a direct reference to the Son of God coming to the nation of Israel and of their complete rejection of Him. At the end of that simple but profound parable, the Lord ends by saying, "And have ye not read the scripture: The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes"? (Mark 12:10-11).

Yes, the dry, withered, unfruitful Judaism was doomed; it should have borne fruit for God but it hadn't. This, I believe, is the primary significance of the cursed fig tree.

The secondary significance

Preachers and writers tend to spiritualise on the scriptures, that is, they attach secondary spiritual implications to primary scriptural truth; there is little harm in doing this provided that the primary significance is not neglected. We have stated what we consider the primary scriptural truth to be, relative to the question; the secondary spiritual significance ought to be fairly obvious.

The christian must be a fruit-bearer. He *will* be a fruit-bearer of one sort or other, and by his fruit he will be known. The fruit which the christian should bear must be to the honour and glory of God. Jesus said to His disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (John 15:16). The ones who have responded to the gospel should be as those to whom Paul wrote in Rome, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law, by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. 7:4). There are many scriptures which encourage us to bear fruit for God, but as a christian I can think of no sadder statement than that found in Isaiah 5:2, "And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein; and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes." This was the sin of Judaism; it can be our sin also. (All questions to Alf Marsden, 377 Billinge Road, Highfield, Wigan, Lancs).

STUDY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT AS HISTORY

2. Preparation Period

The second of the six periods into which we may divide Old Testament history is the Preparation Period.

We can read the details of this period in the book of Genesis, from chapter eleven through chapter fifty, and on to the book of Exodus, through the first twelve chapters.

The three prominent events of the Preparation Period are:

- (a) The Dispersion;
- (b) The Journeys of the Patriarchs; and
- (c) The Experiences in Egypt.

Babel in Chaldea. 'Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth; and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth' (Gen. 11:9).

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. 'By faith, Abraham obeyed the summons to go out to a place which he would eventually possess, and he set out in complete ignorance of his destination. It was faith (his trustful belief in God) that kept him journeying like a foreigner through the land of promise, with no more home than the tents which he shared with Isaac and Jacob, co-heirs with him of the promise. For Abraham's eyes were looking beyond to that city with solid foundations of which God Himself is both architect and builder' (Hebrews, 11:8-10). See also Genesis 12-45.

Joseph, the son of Rachael, who was Jacob's favourite wife, is seventeen years of age when this event opens, Jacob loved Joseph more than all his children. His brothers hated him yet the more. Yet when Joseph was sent by his father to seek his brothers he sought until he found them in Dothan. They saw him afar off, even before he came near to them, and they conspired against him to slay him. Years later, they were constrained to say: 'We were verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us and we would not hear.' They did not kill him, but sold him to Midianite merchantmen, who took him as a slave into Egypt.

The Lord was with Joseph; and he was a prosperous man. The Lord blessed the Egyptian's house, for Joseph's sake. Potiphar left all he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not aught he had, save the bread which he did.

Temptation, very strong temptation, came upon Joseph, but he sinned not because he was a lover of God. 'How shall I do this great wickedness and sin against God?'

Joseph was cast into prison, but the Lord was with him. The Lord gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

God brought Joseph out of prison in a providential way, to show favour unto him by the hand of Pharaoh.

Joseph became Prime Minister of Egypt and was the provider of food to the hungry of the famine years. His place and their need brought his brothers unto him. Here they settled and multiplied.

Jacob died in Egypt and was buried in Machpelah's cave.

Joseph died in Egypt. 'By faith, Joseph when he was dying made mention of the exodus of the children of Jacob (or the children of Israel as we now know them) and gave commandments concerning his bones: 'God will surely visit you and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.'

When Jacob died, his children were living prosperously in Egypt, but when Joseph died the clouds were beginning to darken the sky for them. Soon after the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour; and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field; all their service wherein they made them serve, was with rigour.

This event ends by the raising up of a deliverer, Moses, who was to lead Israel's children out of Egypt.

From: 'The Young Christian'

THE TREASURER'S REPORT AND BALANCE SHEET FOR 1979

We print again a balance sheet for the past year. Some readers feel that a financial report is unnecessary, nevertheless, I feel that some explanation of my management of the funds is necessary in view of the gifts received and the appeals we make for help in times of crisis.

Last year we increased the size of the magazine and in consequence had to increase our subscription rates quite considerably to cover the extra cost. The position at the beginning of the year is that we have sufficient to print through 1980 with some subscriptions still to come. Hopefully when all have subscribed we shall be able to face next year as confidently as this year.

A closer look at the make-up of the balance sheet shows that income from subscriptions and gifts fell well short of our expenditure. The importance of the bank interest and the legacy from the Samuel Wood's Trust Fund (a once only gift) can be easily appreciated. We did, however, pay for the printing of 13 issues which increased our expenditure.

Finally I would like to thank Bro. John McLuckie for his assistance in auditing the books.

January 1980

J. K. Kneller

Circulation: January 1980. U.K. 471. Overseas 86. 40 Copies are sent free.

Expenditure	
W. Barker (Printer)	£1,468.91
Petty Cash	160.00
Refund Postage	2.00
	£1630.91
Balance in Dep A/c	£1,074.25
Balance in Cur. A/c	424.77
Cash in Hand	15.31
	£1514.33
	£3145.24

Postage	£126.98
Stationery	8.00
Cash in Hand	28.15
	£163.13

Income	
Balance b/f	£1,277.46
Subscriptions	1,099.47
Gifts	268.00
Interest	119.70
Legacy (S. Woods)	380.61
	£3,145.24

Details of Petty Cash	
Cash in Hand	£3.13
Withdrawn	160.00
	£163.13

SCRIPTURE READINGS

APRIL 1980

- April 6, Joshua 1; II Peter 1.
- April 13, Genesis 19, 1-23; II Peter 2.
- April 20, Genesis 8; II Peter 3.
- April 27, Deut. 7, 1-11; Eph. 1, 1-14.

Peter's Second Letter

Most of us would say without a shadow of doubt that this letter was in fact written by Peter. This is the man who upon early acquaintance with Jesus said,

"Depart from me O Lord, for I am a sinful man" (Luke 5, 8). Now after years of self-forgetting service to Jesus, he anticipates "putting off this tabernacle" (1, 13-14).

His heart overflows in loving concern for fellow-believers. He therefore writes a second time, probably to a wider circle of readers with both encouragement and solemn warning. Like his fellow apostles he has seen apostasy creeping into the churches. His letter is one of the latest to receive general acceptance in Christian assemblies.

There is some mystery as to how it came to be included as an integral part

of the New Testament. Our editor has dealt with this subject in the January issue. The conditions prevailing in the first centuries of the Christian era would account easily for the late date upon which some of the letters were accepted. They would be received by churches in different parts of the constantly expanding Christian world, accepted, prized and used by those who actually received them. Their very existence might be unknown in some regions. The letter we are now reading bearing the name of an honoured apostle and embodying such obviously apostolic teaching would be assured of ready acceptance. Under the divine providence rejection of many books claiming authority was taking place while the canon was being completed. Reputable scholars have assured the ordinary man that such rejections were justified. Numerous writing of the early "fathers" have so fully quoted from the accepted books that it is said the whole of the New Testament could be re-constructed from them. Second Peter is one of those not so often or so early quoted from, but do not its contents assure us of its genuineness? Could a forgery speak so graphically to our souls? No! God through Peter speaks to every one of us with divine authority.

Steps Upward

Peter begins with a thought involving growth — "grace and peace be multiplied." Multiplication is much faster than addition! This is accomplished only through "the knowledge of God and Jesus" (1, 2). Encouragement to the same end appears in the last verse of the letter (3, 18). However growth is a process in which each Christian shares by an effort and plan set out in verses 5 to 11. The foundation is provided — "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" — and the final issue is "partakers of the divine nature." All diligence is needed to step upwards from faith to love. Without the diligence and the upward movement assurance of the entrance into the eternal kingdom is

lost. Peter had had the experience of increasing knowledge of Jesus in actual personal contact. How much he had learned thus by knowledge of Jesus, meaning getting to know the life and character of Jesus, and constantly growing more like Him. We because of the witness of the apostles and prophets in the Word of God can grow too by the same process. The gospels reveal Jesus. We grow like those we know and love.

The eye-witness

We can all be deceived by "cunningly devised fables" from time to time, and sceptics have tried to make the Bible look like that — very unsuccessfully! Can we imagine the tremendous impression made upon Peter, James and John by the transfiguration? "Honour and glory" actually appeared and a voice from heaven was heard, but this was not the revelation which provided their needs. It was the personal touch of Jesus, and His thoughts, words and actions which brought us the gospel. "We have the word of prophecy" to guide us, and those writings were "God-breathed" (II Tim. 3, 16). Here Peter stresses the reality of the heavenly vision. Something which could not be mistaken or forgotten, and something to be remembered and recorded as showing the supreme position and authority of Jesus. "No ray of glory from the sky, doth shine upon our wilderness; but we believe Thy faithful word, and trust in our redeeming Lord." We are glad the rays of glory fell upon Peter for he needed it indeed in part preparation for his great work for God, the conclusion of which he had in view while writing, and what a conclusion? (John 21, 16-19). From a worldly standpoint so terrible but from his "The abundant entrance" (1, 11).

The False Prophets

Historically Peter's warnings have indeed been fulfilled. So many perversions of the gospel have been propagated that

the man of the world might be excused for wondering whether it is true. The way of truth has indeed been evil spoken of because of the confusion in the religious world. While for ages the actual truth was hidden away from ordinary folk by suppression, even when translations into the language of the common people were spread, they were monopolised largely by professional men, and protestantism became another word for division. The twin dangers of covetousness and the flesh have wrought havoc among professors of Christianity, but in spite of this multitudes have come to know Jesus, and the world has been immeasurably benefitted.

Doom

That God will consummate His work in creation there can be no doubt and Peter sets this out in graphic words. With the opening up of scientific research, man can accept more easily the literal fulfilment of what Peter wrote so long ago. Christians can consider them without fear, and LOOK UP FOR THEIR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH. But let us remember, "What manner of persons ought we to be?"

The Ephesian Letter

We turn from Peter to Paul. Here is a letter for Christians in a specific area. In a sense the theme is the same. Paul is exalting Christ, and the high privilege Christians have — "we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love" (1, 4). Space permits only a few introductory words. There is probability that this letter was intended to be circulated among churches in the province of Asia as that addressed to Colosse was for Laodicea. Some have thought that the letter there mentioned might be this letter (Col. 4, 16). This is interesting as a sign of co-operation in sharing literature among churches in those early days when copying would be indeed laborious, and circulation difficult. We may again refer to our editor's article on THE CANON. R. B. Scott.

ZAMBIAN REPORT FOR 1979

Land of Famine. Zambia has had many problems during 1979. The overriding problem has been overflow of the Rhodesian civil war into Zambia. In November, for example, Rhodesian Government forces blew up all key bridges in Zambia. The ferry which was Zambia's only link with Botswana was destroyed by Rhodesian Government bombs many months ago. There have been the usual shortages in Zambia — soap, cheese, flour and bread. A shortage of Zambia's staple food of maize has threatened famine. However, there is now a peace settlement for Rhodesia, the Zambia-Rhodesia border has reopened with supplies flowing into Zambia and 1980 should be a more peaceful and prosperous year for Zambia.

Black is Beautiful — Zambianization. Zambia's war footing to counter Rhodesian warfare has made some problems for missionary work — introduction of curfews, search for white Rhodesian spies, danger of being sandwiched between military operations. As a consequence of the racial nature of the Rhodesian war, there was an increase in Black consciousness in Zambia. With the departure of the Woodhall family for furlough, the Zambians were given full opportunity to lead, without expatriate assistance, the Copperbelt churches of Christ. This is called "Zambianization." However, the call from many quarters since has been for their return.

Baptisms and Congregations. At the last count in 1979, there were 45 congregations in northern Zambia and 15 congregations in Zaire. The largest congregations have over 100 active members, the smallest have 5-6 members and the average size is 25-30. There have been baptisms throughout the Copperbelt. The Kitwe congregations have had over 100 baptisms

during 1979. Two new congregations have been organized since March 1979, despite the difficulties, one near Kitwe and another near Chingola which has built its own meeting place. There has been further expansion from the Copperbelt base into other nations and provinces — Zaire (15 congregations), Luapula (5), Northwestern (3) and Northern (4). There has been outreach amongst men, women and youth. 123 Christian programmes were produced for Radio Zambia during January to March 1979.

Preacher and Leadership Training. In December 1979 four Copperbelt students were graduated from the full time two year preacher training course. One of the graduates, John Mwansa is working as an itinerant evangelist with the Kitwe congregations. A fifth student Makiyi — a grandfather — who completed one year full time preacher training in December 1978 has worked for a year as an evangelist in Northwestern province. As a result of his preaching there is a congregation at Zambesi of 30 members. A range of part time leadership training courses have been available on the Copperbelt — about 60 have completed at least one part-time course during 1979. It is hoped that these will help in the development of Zambian elders and deacons. Chisebwe is an example of an effective evangelist based in the Mufulira area and whose range stretches into Zaire. Chisebwe has pursued part time and not full time studies. There are no evangelists on foreign support and this is one of the very few mission fields of which that can be said.

Zambianization of Church Activities. Daniel Zulu (Kamuchanga) is in charge of showing Bible filmstrips. Eric Schoeman (Arcadia) and Chesebwe (Mufulira) operate Christian cassette libraries. Daniel Zulu and Chisebwe

have loudspeakers for open air market preaching. Edwin Chikindira (Ndola) handles mail enquiries for information and literature from all over Zambia. Joseph Hamugando (Livingstone) and Chisebwe organize Christian radio outreach. World Bible School — every congregation receives enquiry direct and does own followup. Christian Literature — every congregation is responsible for receiving and distributing its own literature. Camp meeting held near Mufulira in October 1979.

1980 and the future. Churches of Christ are still a small religious group in Zambia — there is scope for much more evangelism. The congregations require good well trained leaders — and effective training means a missionary. We thank you for your support for this ministry.

Chester and Angela Woodhall

P.O. Box 2297,
Kitwe, Zambia.

SACRIFICE

When he has more than he can eat
To feed a stranger's not a feat.
When he has more than he can spend
It isn't hard to give or lend.
Who gives but what he'll never miss
Will never know what giving is.
He'll win few praises from his Lord
Who does but what he can afford.

AN

APPRECIATION OF THE LIFE OF BROTHER ROBERT McDONALD

Robert McDonald died in hospital on Tuesday, December 4th, 1979, age 82, and the funeral service was held in Dewsbury crematorium, on Monday, December 10th, 1979. Brother Graham Gorton officiated.

Of his early life in Scotland, I have no knowledge, apart from the fact, that he was in fellowship with the brethren meeting in Motherwell.

He was soon to show that tenacious character, (which was to be seen on more than one occasion during his life) when during the first world war, 1914-1918 for conscience sake, he suffered along with other brethren as a conscientious objector.

In the July issue of the Apostolic Messenger 1917, he was one of five brethren who met for Breaking of Bread, on Sunday, May 13th, 1917, at BALLACHULISH.

In the September issue of the same magazine there is a list of names of brethren "who are or have been imprisoned," and Robert McDonald's name is under the heading: WAKEFIELD — Work Centre. Other names mentioned: Edward Price, Wigan; Richard Worthington, Wigan; Frank Cook, Bulwell; J. W. Pritchard, Bentley; E. C. Gould, Birmingham; Harry Haines, Burnley; Noel Stephen, Mollington; Clifford Cartwright, Leeds; Arnold Blackburn, Liversedge; Andrew B. Morton, Newmilns; R. W. Sims, Bulwell.

In those days it took a great deal of courage, pluck, and grit to take the stand against war, and our brethren suffered much for their faith. With the Apostle Paul they could say: "That I may know him . . . and the fellowship of his sufferings." Philippians 3:10.

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God, Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:9,10.

That resolute spirit again was manifested when along with other brethren, he joined the fight against Modernism. They warned the brethren of the dangers to the cause of New Testament Christianity. His determination to rally others to the cause of the Old Paths was evident, and one was impressed by his perseverance and

steadfastness, and yet again he was to suffer for his deep convictions. For a long number of years he was the Treasurer of the Old Paths Committee, and I had the privilege to be Secretary, working with him for a few years. We had some glorious times together, and in those days we had fine meetings and happy fellowship.

How disappointed he must have been not to have had the success his efforts deserved, in later years.

And what shall we say about his unstinting services to the churches, as he went about preaching and teaching. He came down from Scotland, during the first world war, and settled in Yorkshire, and spent very many years of active service for the cause of Christ.

As a preacher of the Gospel he served a good number of churches, and we are indebted to him for the way and manner he sent out the message of redeeming love. His voice commanded attention for it was loud and clear and the message went out with clarity.

The brethren at Hindley have much to thank our brother for, he was a great help at the Hindley Bible Schools and loyally served us in different ways. His voice so strong and silent, another old stalwart of the faith has passed on, and one is saddened by the state of the churches today, compromise seems to be the order of the day.

The things our pioneers stood for are gradually being eroded, and one longs for another Nehemiah who will yet rebuild the walls that are broken down.

Bro. Fred Sugden reporting in the Scripture Standard November issue 1956, about a Conference and Rally at Morley wrote among other things: Bro. R. McDonald a long-trusted servant of the Morley Church, fulfilled the duty of Chairman.

I like that: "a long-trusted servant."

We commend his loved ones to our loving heavenly Father, praying that His love and grace may uphold them in the loss of one so deeply loved

Leonard Morgan.

CONFIDENCE

Someone asked a mother if she lay awake at night worrying about her boys and girls who were away from home.

"No," she said, "I do my very best to teach them how they should live and conduct themselves as Christian boys and girls, then, before I go to bed, I kneel and ask God to take care of them, helping them to remember their rearing. Then I go to sleep.

"After all," she continued, "it would express little confidence in either God or my children to stay awake to see if He really takes care of them as I asked, don't you think?"

ULVERSTON CHURCH Building Report

The church meeting in Ulverston would like to report on the progress of the building in which many of you have an interest.

Previously we reported that a new roof had been put on the old stable which makes up approximately half the building site

Since then more work has been carried out on the stable, namely:—

(1) Six window openings made and windows fitted and the front wall rebuilt and pointed.

(2) Dividing wall repaired, first floor joists and boarding installed and stairs fitted.

Unfortunately, the builder is six months behind schedule with the completion of this work.

However, in an effort to make the first floor usable we have accepted the estimate of another contractor for the next stage of the work (ceiling, doors, etc). We have also negotiated for electricity supply and installation.

This will tax our resources but week by week, as the work progresses, we hope to set more money aside to meet the bills. If you feel you can help in any way to make this part of the site fit to use in the Master's service, we shall appreciate your help, however small.

A financial statement is given below.

Receipts

Gratefully received in response to appeals	£4,603.20
Provided from our giving	£3,487.58
	<u>£8,090.78</u>

Payments

Cost of Building	£2,200.00
Legal charges	£ 129.53
Improvements to date	£3,003.20
	<u>£5,332.73</u>
Balance in hand	<u>£2,758.05</u>

Immediate needs

Work nearing completion	£1,667.00
Electrical work	£ 700.00
Building and joinery	£1,460.00
	<u>£3,827.00</u>
Deficit	<u>£1,069.05</u>

Future work — drainage, toilet facilities and ground flooring — cost not known.

Robert Brown, Beckstones,

Next Ness Lane, Ulverston, Cumbria.

OBITUARY

Ulverston: The church at Ulverston regrets the passing of its oldest member, sister Mrs. Mary Cox, who died on 19th January, aged 73 years. She had been a faithful member of the church for almost 60 years and could recall memories of church activities of days gone by. During her life she passed through many experiences, both of joy and sorrow, but all served to strengthen her faith. Her enthusiasm, cheerfulness and zest for living have been an encouragement to us all. She made the best of everything in life and held a far greater hope for what is yet to be. We thank God that we were privileged to know sister Mary. Besides the church there are many others who will miss her concern and cheerfulness. Amongst them are her family, neighbours and her many friends. This was borne out by the overflowing attendance at the funeral service. We have lost a virtuous woman. Sister Mary Cox has attained her goal and heaven has gained a Godly soul.

R. Brown, Sec.

COMING EVENTS

Longshoot, Wigan. The church at Longshoot, Wigan hope to hold a Ladies Day on May 10th, 1980, God willing, and the first meeting will take place at 10.45 a.m. Coffee will be served at 10.15 a.m. and the last meeting of the day will be at 6 p.m.

We look forward to a day of fellowship with sisters and any friends who can make the journey to be with us. A note of the numbers coming would be helpful if sent by the end of March. Any interested should contact Sister N. Layland, 10 Carr Lane, Worsley Mesnes, Wigan, Lancs. Phone Wigan 31983.

Buckie, Scotland. God willing the church at Buckie hopes to hold a SOCIAL gathering on June 7th, 1980 in the Buckie meetinghouse. Tea at 3.45 p.m.

The speaker on this occasion will be Jack Parker, Wigan. A warm welcome to all who can join us in happy Christian fellowship. Singing items will be greatly appreciated.

Contact brother John Geddes, Elm-bank, Ianstown, Buckie. Tel. 0542-33793.

Brighton. The church at Oxford Street, Brighton, hope (D.V.) to hold their anniversary meetings on Saturday and Sunday, 12th and 13th April, 1980. Tea on Saturday at 5 p.m. Evening rally at 6.30 p.m.

Breaking of bread on Sunday 11 a.m. A warm welcome to all.

CHURCH SECRETARY

Ulverston: The Secretary is Robert Brown, 'Beckstones,' next Ness Lane, Ulverston, Cumbria. LA 12 7QW. Tel. No. Ulverston 55094.

CHANGE OF SECRETARY

Oxford Street, Brighton: Change of Secretary to Bro. E. Lake, Flat 14, 16 Partland Place, Kemp Town, Brighton, BN2.

EVANGELIST WANTED

The Slamannan District Churches of Christ require an evangelist and all interested brethren should apply in writing to the District Secretary, Hugh Davidson, 21 Glen Lyon, St. Leonards, East Kilbride, Scotland, G74 2JJ.

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