

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

VOL. 26. No. 4

APRIL 1960,

The Bible and the Bible Alone.

IT is the wholly admirable policy of the British and Foreign Bible Society to circulate translations of the Bible in some one thousand languages, without notes. Thus it is the Bible alone. Bishop Tillotson said, "The Bible, and the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants," but the saying is not wholly true.

Because of its policy the B. & F.B.S. can be commended to the support of all Christians. We maintain that to give a Bible to any who can read, without any expository or explanatory notes, is sufficient to make Bible Christians, Christians only. Much mischief is done by the addition of notes to propound or support human opinions or "doctrines of men." Jesus said of the religious teachers of His day that they worshipped God in vain, "teaching as doctrines the precepts of men" (Matt. 15:9; Mark 7:7) and made "void the word of God through your tradition, which you hand on" (Mark 7:13).

There is always danger that "helps" to the study of the Bible can become hindrances. Where difficulty is found in understanding a Scripture passage there is the natural tendency to turn to Bible commentaries to find out what qualified Bible scholars say. More often than not it is found that the scholars themselves differ as to the meaning, so that at the end the Bible student is left, as the hymn says, "bewildered in a dubious road." He would have been wiser to have compared Scripture with Scripture, when it would often be found that the Bible is its own best commentary. As with His dealings with men, so also with His written word.

"God is His own interpreter
And He will make it plain."

Not only the meaning of difficult Scripture passages, but the cheapest and simplest teachings have been made confusing by the traditional teachings and practices of men. Sometimes the simplest teachings of the word of God have been clothed in theological jargon or mystical language, until the ordinary Christian or the seeker after knowledge feels indeed that he is a "layman" and cannot hope to understand for himself without the "clergy," the professional religionist whose business it is to teach the meaning of Scripture, should enlighten him.

These reflections are prompted by a reading of the Report of the Church of England Commission on Baptism, presented a few weeks ago to the Church Assembly. This Report proposes new services for the "baptism" of infants and adults. It has aroused much opposition and has been referred back for further consideration. By the way, to test its workability the Archbishop of Canterbury suggested that the clergy might carry out practice services with dolls to represent the babies! We imagine that, had we suggested such a thing, we should have been rebuked for irreverent flippancy. Surely, however, the Archbishop's suggestion unconsciously shows up the ridiculousness of this practice of infant "baptism."

The Anglican Correspondent of the *Guardian* wrote two articles on the proposed new services, criticising the Report rather severely. In the second article he speaks of baptism in the words of the New Testament. He says "The theology of Baptism is essentially one of drowning. 'We are buried with Christ by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.'

Moment of oblivion

The man who goes down into the waters of Baptism faces a moment of oblivion. Immersion in the water cuts him off, so to speak, from the things of sense. He comes up a new person. Yes—it is the same familiar world; but the life that went down into the water has undergone a death, and a newly created life has taken its place. Henceforth his life is 'hid with Christ in God,' as St. Paul describes the change."

A few months ago, in quoting Bishop Anders Nygren on baptism, we suggested that many who teach and practise infant sprinkling and pouring are compelled in the light of the New Testament to apply to baptism its true God-given meaning and purpose, in language as strong as any we use, who believe baptism to be immersion and for the remission of sins. The above quotation is a further proof of this. We could not have stated the case for New Testament immersion clearer, for that statement is the word of God, clear to all. That is what we mean when we say that anyone left alone with His Bible can without error find God's way of salvation, and that it is only when human teachers come in that confusion and division arise. All sectarianism and denominationalism have arisen through taking from or adding to the word of God, which is given that "the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." (2 Tim. 3:15-16).

Having said what the New Testament teaches on baptism, was not that sufficient for a Church which states in one of its Articles that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, and what is not written therein is not to be required of any man"? But no: in what follows the Correspondent cancels out what he previously wrote, in order to bolster up the practice in the Church of England of infant sprinkling. For in what he continues to say he makes meaningless what he has already said. We descend from the word of God to the doctrines of men, from God's truth to man's tradition, indeed from the sublime to the ridiculous. For he goes on:

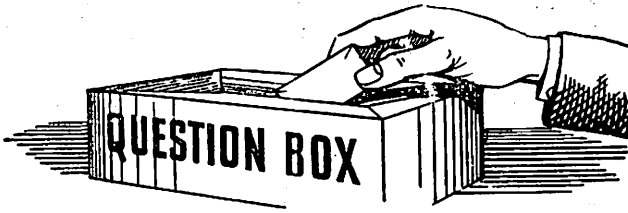
"It is right and proper—and the Commission is clearly right here—that in the service for adult Baptism we should look for a portrayal of baptismal theology in its fullness. Those who are being baptised can follow the service. But the requirements of infant Baptism, on the one hand, and adult Baptism on the other, are different, and must be different. What is implied in infant Baptism is membership with the potentiality of worthy membership. With adults there ought to be a full sense of responsibility.

In the service for adult Baptism, there can be no great objection to a repetition of the same idea of collect, epistle, gradual psalm, and gospel. It is right, too, that it should be linked directly with confirmation—for adults seeking baptism invariably do so with a view to confirmation. Thus, the Commission is, I suggest, on the right lines in having prepared a service for "The Ministration of Baptism and Confirmation to those who are of age to answer for themselves."

Is not this a clear case of making void the word of God through men's traditions? It is a tacit admission that there is nothing in the New Testament on which to base a service for the baptism of any but believers in Christ, in other words that infant "baptism" has no New Testament justification. Consequently, such a service must be manufactured to conform with traditional practice. It is in effect an admission that what he has written of New Testament immersion cannot apply to infants. So, to accommodate this, separate and special services have to be compiled for "adults" and for infants.

How long will intellectual, intelligent and sincere men and women continue to subscribe to such meaningless and contradictory practices, which place them in all sorts of absurd and embarrassing situations, calling for explanations equally absurd? How long before men follow the Bible alone?

EDITOR.



CONDUCTED BY
L. CHANNING

Send your questions
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Q. Is the "rest" referred to in Hebrews 4:1-11 the sabbath day given to the children of Israel? If so, does this mean that we should keep the sabbath today?

A. The "rest" of which the writer to the Hebrews speaks in this passage is certainly not the Jewish sabbath, and therefore neither this nor any other part of the New Testament can be used to justify the observance of the sabbath today, for the keeping of the sabbath day was done away in Christ, with the rest of the law of Moses. The meaning of the passage is somewhat obscured by the Authorised Version, but is clear when read in a good modern version.

The writer's purpose is to exhort his readers to continual faithfulness, warning them against the dangers of falling away. In this, he is extending and restating the exhortation given in the previous chapter (verses 12-19). In later chapters, he again comes back to this theme re-emphasising it in different ways, notably in chapters 6 and 10:19-39.

In the passage under consideration, the writer takes as a basis for his exhortation the heavenly rest into which all who are faithful shall enter. He contrasts this with the weekly rest of the Jewish sabbath, using the latter as a type of the heavenly rest, and also with the rest of the children of Israel in the promised land of Canaan. An analysis of the passage will make the line of reasoning clear.

Verse 1. Here the writer shows that there is a promise of heavenly rest to the people of God. In 11:13-16, he calls it "a heavenly country," showing that even the patriarchs of old looked for its fulfilment. Here he warns his readers to beware lest, in spite of the promise, they fail to enter it.

Verse 2. He supports this warning by showing that the good news (particularly that concerning the heavenly rest) came to the people of God of the Old Testament, but it failed to benefit them through their lack of faith.

Verse 3. After stating that the faithful will enter God's rest, he proves his previous statement concerning the Israelites who were unfaithful, by quoting Jehovah's oath in regard to them, as recorded in Psa. 95:11, "They shall not enter into my rest" (R.V.). The rendering of the A.V., "if they shall enter into my rest", is incorrect and misleading.

Verses 4-5. Lest there be any misconception the writer goes on to show that Jehovah could not have been speaking of the sabbath rest of Gen. 2:2-3, for all Israel, faithful and unfaithful alike, had enjoyed that rest through the weekly celebration of the sabbath.

Verses 6-8. Neither could Jehovah have been referring to the rest in the promised land of Canaan into which Joshua led the people of Israel. (Note, that the name "Jesus," in the A.V. is the Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua. It is corrected in the R.V.). He proves this by again going to Psa. 95, and this time to verses 7 and 8. He shows that years after the people had settled in Canaan, and therefore when they were enjoying rest in the promised land, Jehovah could still appeal through the mouth of David saying, "Today if ye shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Another, and future, time of rest must therefore be meant.

Verses 9-10. Here the line of argument is concluded, for it has been proved that there is a heavenly and future sabbath rest for the people of God, of which, the writer adds, the old sabbath rest was typical, for as God ceased from his works on that day, so shall the people of God one day cease from their labours. We might add, that this reminds us of the Lord's invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that

labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matt. 11:28-29), a statement that involves both future as well as present rest.

Verses 11-13. The writer concludes his exhortation to faithfulness, by urging his readers to strive to enter into that rest, and to beware lest they fall, as did the children of Israel, through disobedience. He reinforces this by a reminder of the living, penetrating and revealing power of the word of God. Faithfulness then, must be true faithfulness, the faithfulness of the heart.

Q. 2 Pet. 2:5 says that Noah was "a preacher of righteousness." For how many years did he preach?

A. This passage is the only one in the New Testament that directly states that Noah was a preacher. It is, however, interesting to note that Josephus, the Jewish historian contemporary with Christ, makes a similar statement concerning the testimony of Noah against the evils of his day. He says, "But Noah, disgusted with their proceedings, and afflicted with their evil counsels, exhorted them to repentance in heart and life." (*Antiquities*, book 1, chapter 3).

However, Peter's statement must be connected with his other statement concerning Noah and the evils of his day. In 1 Pet. 3:18-20, he says, "Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, that aforetime were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water." (R.V.). This is admittedly a difficult passage, but it certainly cannot mean that which is asserted by some commentators, namely, that Jesus preached in Hades to the souls of those who had been disobedient in the days of Noah. Such an interpretation is against everything the scriptures teach, since it implies a second chance of salvation after death. The true meaning supports Peter's later statement that Noah was a preacher of righteousness, since through him the Spirit of Christ testified against the evils of the day. In the same way Peter says the prophets were also inspired (1 Pet. 1:10-11).

Peter's statements are supported by implication, not only because we know that Noah was a prophet (Gen. 9:24-27) but because it is inconceivable that Noah would obey God and erect the Ark on dry land, without warning those around him of the impending judgment.

As to how long Noah continued to warn those of his day, we have some indication in the Genesis record. In Gen. 6:3 we read that the Lord God said in the face of the wickedness of the day, "My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." This is a difficult passage, the construction of which nearly all commentators agree is obscure in the Hebrew.

Some interpret it to mean that in view of man's wickedness God was going to shorten his span of life to 120 years. But we have no evidence to suggest such a limitation. Indeed, the normal duration of life was a good deal longer than this in the case of the patriarchs after the Flood, and eventually became a good deal shorter—three score years and ten. (Ps. 90:10).

The correct interpretation, and that which is in keeping with the context, seems to be that God was going to give 120 years respite before bringing judgment upon the earth, during which mankind was going to be given a last chance to repent, in the light of Noah's preaching, and the visual testimony of the building of the ark. This is consistent with Peter's statement (1 Pet. 3:20), that the "longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah," whilst Noah through the Spirit of Christ preached the need for a return to righteousness, "while the ark was preparing"—that is, 120 years.

The Precentor.

HAVING listed all the tunes suggested in the Church of Christ Hymn Book, it seems appropriate to suggest a few thoughts on the Precentor, hoping that these will be of benefit to those who are, and those who desire to become servants to the church in this sphere.

The Importance of singing

There are very few Christians who do not sing hymns, either about the house or at daily work. Spontaneous singing of this kind is very much indulged in and enjoyed, but the standard of such singing, at its best, is not very high, nor is the "sacrifice of praise" offered in the assembly. More than ever there is the need in our churches for efficient precentors. This for many reasons. We list but two, confident that these will be sufficient to prove that the need exists. All will agree that praise is an integral part of the worship of the church, on an equality with the prayers, the readings and many other engagements into which the church enters when at worship. In that the praise is addressed to God, it must be the best that we can produce. Not that we would suggest that to attain the best we are licensed to have trained choirs or to restrain the unmusical, but rather that the church should be so guided and led in her praise that, all united, we may raise our songs to God to the best of our ability. This is where an efficient precentor is needed.

The second reason we would suggest is that those who contend for instrumental music may be silenced in their insistence that this form of assistance is necessary to produce good singing.

The Duties of a Precentor

Let us consider the place and purpose of a precentor. His purpose—to start the singing do you say? Yes, and much more. His purpose is to lead the praise, not the first verse only but the whole hymn; to keep the time—and how necessary this is, for much of our singing becomes slower and slower as the hymn proceeds and as the meeting progresses. In keeping the time also he is to restrain the speed if this tends to get too fast. Again the precentor is there to direct the volume, the light and shade of the singing. In the present hymn-book, and the Christian Hymnary which went before it, emphasis marks, *p*, *f*, *m*, etc., have been omitted because it was realised that a proficient leader would be able to draw from the congregation emphasis fitting to the mood of the hymn.

Let us instance one well-known and loved hymn. No. 62: "Man of sorrows, what a name!" In this hymn each line requires a different amount of volume. Each verse is a crescendo. It rises to the Hallelujah! and diminishes slightly for the remainder of the line. To make a rigid plan, as given in *Sacred Songs and Solos* No. 102, is to rob the hymn of much of its feeling and spoils the last verse. The earlier verses commence *pp*. (double piano—very soft) and rise to the last line of each verse *f*. (*fortissimo*—loud). The words of the last verse demand that the first line of this verse be sung *m*. (*moderato*) and again *crescendo* to the hallelujah at *ff*. (double *fortissimo*—very loud) and slightly diminishing to the end of the line. The Sankey setting is—first line *p*., line two *m*., third line *mf*., and the last line *ff*. throughout the hymn. Thus the purpose of a precentor is so to sing the praise himself that all may follow and all supply the right amount of volume, singing in time and at correct speed.

Another phase of the purpose of the precentor is to pitch the tune correctly. Now, in that we say correctly, that is exactly what is meant; but let us enlarge on the word. Every tune has been written in a key. (The key takes its name from the note on which the scale starts. That note is Doh in Tonic Sol Fah). The most popular keys are E flat, A flat, C, G, F, and B flat. The leader's work is to pitch the tune in a key which will suit the congregation. This will be more easily understood if we illustrate. Consider the tune, "Angelus," a L.M. sung mainly to "At even when the sun was set," 381 in the *Bristol Tune Book*, where the tune is set in E flat. When sung in this key it does not rise above top E flat, which note is reached but once in the whole verse. Now we ask, who comprise the majority of

the congregation? For a men's meeting this original setting is ideally suitable, but for a mixed meeting or if the sisters are in the majority, to sing "Angelus" in F is quite reasonable and gives the bass that little lift which is so necessary with this tune. Thus we have seen the purpose of the precentor in keeping the time, the speed, the volume, and in pitching the tune correctly. It is hoped to enlarge on these themes later.

Where should the Precentor stand?

Now what of the place or position of the precentor? Let us urge upon one another, at the very outset of this consideration, that the precentor—song leader—leader of singing, whatever you like to term him, is not some dignitary in the church, some office-bearer, someone to whom special honour or mention is due. He is a servant of the church, given a job to do, and having accepted the work, is to do it well, knowing that an answer must be given to the Lord for the use made of the privilege so conferred. Therefore we can apply to the precentor Paul's instruction, "Study to show yourself approved unto God."

May we say a word on the place of the precentor in a purely physical sense? Some contend that he must stand in front of and facing the congregation, others are just as adamantly opposed to his taking this position. If we consider carefully and without bias we will come to the conclusion that the only right position for the precentor is that place from which the work can be best done. It will vary with the person; those who suffer from stage-fright could not possibly do the work if everyone was looking at them. It will vary with the hall, as it will with the size and constitution of the congregation. All these points must be taken into account and the decision rests with the elders in each assembly. It is incumbent upon them to make their decision known to the church, to silence the critics and give confidence to the one appointed to serve.

(To be continued)

SCRIPTURE READINGS

APRIL 1960

Apr. 3rd Num. 13:1-3, 17-33	Matt. 11:20-30
„ 10th Deut. 28:1-9	„ 12:1-21
„ 17th Deut. 34	„ 12:22-37
„ 24th Joshua 1	„ 12:38-50

NUMBERS

This fourth book of Moses, while containing various laws and observances in common with Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy, fully justifies its name. We find two numberings, one at Sinai before the attack upon the promised land was ordered by God, and the other at the conclusion of the wanderings in the wilderness, when encamped in the plains of Moab. A comparison of the figures shows that instead of a very considerable increase which might have been expected over such a period and with such wonderful blessings from heaven, there is a decrease of 820. This would certainly be due to the judgements inflicted by God on account of distrust and disobedience.

For the purpose of the journeyings

both towards the promised land originally, and during the thirty-eight years of wanderings, it was necessary to have order, and the exact instructions for it are recorded in chapter two. In the centre is the Tabernacle; whether on the march or encamped this must occupy the central position. The most particular attention was given to its care. Only those qualified by birth, age and fitness could handle the very numerous parts and furnishings—thus the tribe of Levi, divided into three families, apart from the descendants of Moses and Aaron, whose work was with the sacrifices, had each its separate duties. No other tribe could share the privilege. While all other nations had idols, the Israelites had a dwelling for their God which they recognised did not and could not hold Him. His presence was visible there in cloud or fire but His power was not in any sense limited. He was the God of the whole earth and heaven.

Perhaps the saddest part of this history is the failure of the spies. Even this is relieved by the courage of Caleb and Joshua—a minority representing such a minority among the whole people that to advance upon the enemy at that time must, and of course did, lead to

defeat—which was also a lesson in disobedience, and might have had more serious results. It was of course fatal for those who were immediately responsible, for they died in the wilderness, and those they said and thought would be a prey to their enemies went into the land and conquered it.

Here is no consistent record of the many years of wilderness journeys under divine guidance and protection, but such incidents as should teach us, and did teach the people, to trust and obey God without wavering and murmuring. The lesson is not easy to learn by reason of our weaknesses, and our growing weary in well-doing. Moses grew weary of their murmurings also, and lost the priceless reward of leading his beloved people into the land. We can indeed understand his impatience, but God had not shown it in His instructions, and we observe that Moses said "Shall Moses and Aaron bring water from the rock?" forgetting, or at least failing to make public acknowledgment, that it was God Who would give the water. This is the significance of "sanctify Me in the eyes of the people." This was not the normal behaviour or attitude of Moses. His meekness before the presumptuous behaviour of Miriam and Aaron was truly remarkable in view of the special honour which God had given him.

The book concludes with the account of the victories over Sihon and Og and the agreement to give their land on the east of Jordan to the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh. The condition that they should join in the war for the rest of Canaan was made so that they should not "have rest" until all the land was subdued—a test of their loyalty, which they fully justified (Joshua 22).

DEUTERONOMY

This title signifies "second law" or "law repeated" and is largely a repetition or recapitulation of both history and law. However, it would seem to be Moses's final word. He was ready now to be taken, having been faithful in all God's house as a servant, so it was only natural he should spend his latest days in a supreme effort to leave them a powerful and eloquent instruction and appeal to serve God faithfully. He well knew their failings, and had suffered with them and for them with complete unselfishness for forty years. We can perhaps share his earnest longings for

their future welfare, and his fears that those judgements of which he wrote so emphatically would indeed fall upon them. He exhausts the power of language to describe the greatness of the blessings which should be theirs if they obeyed God, and the terrors they would suffer if they turned away.

Some of the enactments laid down represent modification of previous laws by reason of the changes in condition anticipated as the people moved into possession of their land, and gained a settled and perhaps more civilised life. But the main principles as given in the ten commandments are particularly important (4:44 to 8:20), and hindrances to obedience named. We have in ch. 7, warning against intercourse with heathen nations; in ch.8, forgetfulness of mercies received and in ch.8 to 10:11, self righteousness. They had as little cause for that as we have—it is the grace of God which brings salvation (Titus 2:11), not any merit of man's.

There are some special gems in this galaxy, worthy of repetition. "The secret things belong to the Lord our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law" (29:28). "The eternal God is your dwelling, place, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (33:27). And after so many years of self-sacrificing and patience-trying service—"his eye was not dim nor his natural force abated": Moses—the man of God.

R. B. SCOTT.

CORRESPONDENCE

"THIS DO . . ."

Dear Bro. Editor,

I would not attempt to prove that Christ did not use one container when instituting the feast, and I am not anxious to suggest that the congregation with which I meet should change its present practice of distributing the fruit of the vine in one container, but, neither the Word of God nor Brother Ashurst's article in the March S.S. makes it "plain that when a congregation gathers to remember Jesus they must all share a drinking vessel in order to 'this do.'"

Division amongst Christians is being caused today by those who are making laws which God has not made.

The scriptures clearly show that, as the bread represents the body of our

Saviour, so the fruit of the vine represents His blood, and to say that Christians who partake of the fruit of the vine but who do not share the same drinking vessel, are not remembering the Lord, is saying more than my Saviour did.

Luke's record of the passover feast (and the same principle applies at the Lord's table) tells us clearly that Christ, in speaking of the cup, referred to its contests.—"And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves." (Luke 22:17).

If we are insisting on following, in detail, the examples found in the scriptures, then we must cease to use baptisteries in church meeting-places, and only count a baptism valid when

carried out in a river or outdoor pool. I appeal to the brethren to cease from striving over non-essentials and to unite in our efforts to save the souls of men.

PHILIP PARTINGTON.

WORLD REFUGEE YEAR :

Dear Editor,

I am pleased to be able to report the response to my letter in the December issue of the S.S. about the World Refugee Year. I am able to send to the World Refugee Year, 9 Grosvenor Crescent, London, S.W.1., the sum of £150.

There is still time, before the end of the Year on 31st May, for brethren to send their gifts directly to this address.

ERIC McDONALD.

This Earthly House.

"A house . . . eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5:1).

YOU tell me I am getting old, but that's not really so,
The house I live in may be worn and that of course I know;
It's been in use a good long while and weathered many a gale,
I'm therefore not surprised to find it's getting somewhat frail.

You tell me I am getting old, you mix my house with me,
You're looking at the outside—that's all that most folks see.
The dweller in the little house is young and bright and gay,
Just starting on a life that lasts through long, eternal day.

The colour changing of the roof, the windows looking dim;
The walls a bit transparent and getting rather thin;
The foundation's not so steady as once it used to be:
And that is all that you observe; but it's not really me.

I patch the old house up a bit to make it last the night,
But soon I shall be flitting to my home of endless light.
I'm going to live for ever there, my life goes on, it's grand;
How can you say I'm getting old? You do not understand.

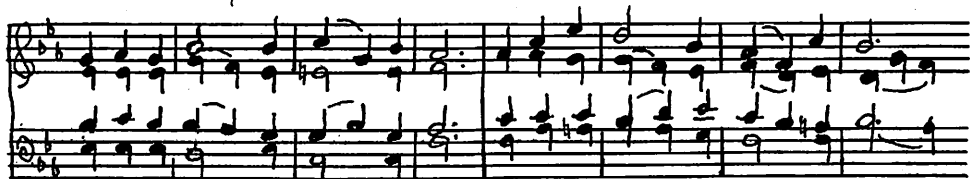
These few short years can't make me old, I feel I'm in my youth;
Eternity lies just ahead—full life and joy and truth.
We will not fret to see this house grow shabby day by day,
But look ahead to our new Home which never will decay.

I want to be prepared to dwell in that blest House above,
Cleansed in the precious Blood of Christ and growing still in love,
The beauty of that glorious Home—no words can ever say;
'Tis hidden from these mortal eyes, but kept for us some day.

My house is getting ready in the Land beyond the sky,
Its Architect and Builder is my Saviour now on high;
But I rather think He's leaving the furnishing to me,
So it's "treasure up in Heaven" I must store each day to see.

A Tune for New Book Hymn No. 306.

GREENWELL



The inclusion of the above may come as a surprise to readers and provoke a charge of innovation, as indeed it is. Never before in the pages of the *S.S.* has music appeared to adorn (or sully) its pages. Music may not be the correct word but it has the garb of music.

It is like this. Since his youth, the writer has been addicted to the making of tunes, and now in his old age he is still at it. A week or two ago he was carrying about with him, in his mind, an embryo tune nearing completion. Quite by chance he picked up a new hymn book, and was casually looking it through, when he noticed a hymn marked 8887, to which two long metre tunes were given as suitable to sing to the words. As the tune with which he was "struggling" was a long metre, he tried it out, and was taken by surprise by the way the air fitted the words, the extra note of the tune falling out without demur!

This prompted a letter to the Editor asking if he cared to have it printed, and here it is.

The above is rather personal to myself and I will even go further. As may be generally known I am very deaf—living in a silent world. Though I have heard this tune—and others, form in my mind, I cannot hear them by my ears. So I am making an appeal to those readers who have ears to hear to "lend" them to me. That is those who have critical ears and know something of what music really is. I ask such to listen to the tune and then write and tell me what is

thought of it. I think it a good tune but am I engaging my mind on a fantasy? Incidentally the hymn to which the tune is set is surely a worthy addition to our songs of praise. It is number 306 in the new hymn book.

W. BARKER.

WANTED: OLD BIBLES

A brother in Nigeria writes thus: "Last year I taught five class daily in the school. This year I am teaching the Bible again in six class daily, about 198 pupils and 77 can read the Bible in the English tongue. As that, I hope you will let them see the need and send to me for these poor children their old Bibles as soon as possible. It is two weeks now since we reopen school. The children, not a matter of deceit, enjoy more than any other subject, the Bible lessons and are eager to study and practise it."

If any churches or individuals have any unwanted copies of the Bible, please send them to: N. D. Isong Uyo, Christian School, Obio Itak, c/o Ikot Mbay P.A., Via Uyo, E. Nigeria.

THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH

Not long ago the Pope of Rome passed away. At his death, the Catholic church was left without a head until a new Pope could be chosen, which was several days. The Bible teaches us that Christ is head of the Church, His Body. Thus we see that Catholics accept a man instead of Christ as their head. This teaches me a lesson as it should all people today. That is: The wisdom of God teaches that the Church was not set up before Christ died on the cross, thus not without a head, even for three days.

R. F. McCLENDON.

Lesson Outlines

SERIES 1. LESSON 13.

Conversion. The Proconsul in Cyprus.

Lesson Verses. Ac. 13:1-12.

Memory Verse. Ac. 13:12.

Objective. "The ways of the Lord are right and the just shall walk in them; but transgressors shall fall therein." (Hos. 14:9).

Time. A.D.47.

Places. Antioch, Seleucia, Cyprus, Salamis, Paphos.

Antioch in Syria. Seleucia on the Orontes; the seaport for Antioch. Salamis in N.T. times was a seaport on the eastern end of Cyprus, but is now completely silted up. Famagusta, the modern seaport, is three miles south of Salamis. Paphos at the western end of Cyprus was connected to Salamis by a good road. The temple of Venus, the goddess of love, was at old Paphos, and the new Paphos seven miles to the north-west was the seat of the proconsul, the Roman governor.

Persons. Church at Antioch; prophets and teachers, (1) Barnabas, (2) Symeon, the Black, (3) Lucius of Cyrene, (4) Manean, the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and (5) Saul; Jews; John Mark; Sergius Paulus; Bar-Jesus or Elymas; the holy Spirit.

Prophets and teachers. (a) "Judas and Silas as prophets, by their words, greatly encouraged and gave confidence to the brethren." (Ac. 15:32). (b) "And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied; in all about twelve men." (Ac. 19:6-7) (c) "For just as we have many organs in one body and all the organs do not perform the same function, so we are many members in one body in Christ and that body as a unity has its respective organs. Possessing then a variety of gifts according to the favour granted us, let mutual regard be unfeigned. If the gift is for prophecy, let it be exercised with corresponding faithfulness," (Ro. 12:4-6, Auth. N.T.) (d) "God has placed the organs of the body of Christ in the community; (1) envoys, (2) prophets, (3) teachers, (4) works of power. Desire the greater gifts. If perchance one has the gift of prophesying, and know all mysteries and all knowledge, but has not love, he is nothing." (1 Co. 12:28-13:2). (cf. Ac. 9:8).

The prophetic function is not now operative. "Love never fails; but whether it is prophesying, they will come to an end; or whether it is tongues, they will cease; whether it is knowledge, it will come to an end." (1 Co. 13:8).

John Mark went with Barnabas and Saul from Jerusalem to Antioch and accompanied them as assistant for a part of their missionary journey. He wrote the gospel of Mark. Saul also called Paul was commissioned for the propagation of the Message among the Gentiles.

Sergius Paulus, a great Roman provincial officer, was proconsul of Cyprus. Bar-Jesus or Elymas (Magcs or sorcerer) a false prophet, in contract to Paul and Barnabas as prophets of the Lord. The holy Spirit said "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the task I have assigned them." After prayer, fasting and laying hands on Barnabas and Saul, they let them go. Thus commissioned by the holy Spirit they left Antioch to spread the Message abroad (cf. Ac 9:15; 16:6-10; Ro. 1:1; Gal. 1:15).

Message. On landing at Salamis they proclaimed the Message of God in the Jewish synagogues. After traversing the island from east to west, they met Sergius Paulus and Bar-Jesus, a member of his staff. The proconsul, a man of understanding, desired to hear the Message of God from Barnabas and Saul but Elymas tried to divert the proconsul from the faith. Paul to Elymas: "You crafty parasite, son of the devil, enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the right ways of the Lord. The hand of the Lord is upon you. You will be blind and not see the sun for a season. A mist and darkness fell upon him and he had to be led by the hand."

Results. The proconsul believed, being filled with the teaching of the Lord.

Emphasis. Let us be like the proconsul. "The Lord approves the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish." (Ps. 1:6).

A. HOOD.

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

If there's really someone needing what we find we have in store,
We might give and keep on giving and there'd still be plenty more.
It's not always from the pocket where we give the greatest aid,
It could be deeds of kindness which have rightly been displayed.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Bedminster, Bristol.—We had the joy of hearing the confession of Ann Roberts, and of witnessing her baptism on Lord's Day, 7th February, 1960. Ann is the grand-daughter of Bro. Blandford, of Newport, Mon. We trust that she will continue faithful and that she will help in making the glorious Gospel better known.

A.L.D.

Dewsbury.—The church is very pleased to report the addition of three to our number, by immersion at Morley on March 6th. They are Bro. and Sister Mr. and Mrs. Overend, and Sister Mrs. Hall. The church is encouraged by these additions and hopes it is a foretaste of good times ahead. We should also like to thank the church at Morley for their kind interest and help, and the use of their baptistery.

R. McDONALD.

Woodstock, Capetown. — We rejoice that a young man, who has been seeking the true way of salvation for the past eight years, was baptised into Christ on Lord's Day, 28th February, 1960.

T. W. HARTLE.

[We acknowledge with pleasure a most interesting collection of photographs sent by Bro. Hartle of scenes, meeting-houses and brethren in South Africa.—ED.]

Morley.—Once again we have pleasure in reporting a great time on Saturday, February 27th, the occasion of the 66th anniversary of the founding of the church.

After tea, ably served by the Morley sisters, at which 120 sat down, the writer had the privilege of presiding over as good a gathering as we have ever had. Our two speakers gave very fine addresses. Bro. John Dodsley, of Kirkby-in-Ashfield, spoke on "Preparation," suggesting that as Noah prepared an ark to be the saving of his house, we likewise should prepare ourselves for Christian service. Bro. Len, Channing, of Aylesbury, gave a most telling message on "Occupy till I come," urging us to be well occupied in the Lord's work.

We had many visitors from surrounding churches, and from Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Lancashire.

Bro. Channing served the church again very well on the Lord's Day at the Lord's Table, at which the whole church assembled with one exception, an elderly sister who was in hospital. Our brother spoke on the word "Add," in the afternoon, and on "Builders and Building" in the evening.

We thank our two brethren and all who contributed to a happy week-end.

HAROLD BAINES.

OBITUARY

Buckie.—The church has suffered a loss with the passing of two sisters to higher service.

Sister Isabella Thompson was in her 32nd year. Although unable to meet with us she never wavered in her faith and she loved the brethren. On Feb. 27th, Sister Jessie Sargent died in her 73rd year. Our hearts were saddened by the passing of such a worthy member of the Lord's church. We admired her steadfastness and she remained to the end firm and loyal to her Saviour. Baptised many years ago, Sister Sargent had been a great worker in the church, especially in the Sunday School, where she was a mother amongst the children. She was a faithful saint who did what she could and would have done more. She loved the Lord and we leave her in his care and keeping, and look forward in faith to meeting her where there will be no more parting, no more tears, but all will be joy. We commend those who mourn her loss to the care our heavenly Father.

Both funerals were conducted by Brothers Peter Innes and John Geddes.

JOHN GEDDES.

Bathgate. — The church has lost another of her elders, Bro. Robert Fleming. He had been in poor health for a long time, but was a regular attender at the meetings until winter arrived.

Bro. Fleming was well known in the Slamannan district churches, and was a preacher of the gospel. He had been in the church for a long number of years, and to it he gave his service well. He was of a kindly and loving disposition. We all miss him, but are encouraged to go on, relying on God's help.

H. HOUSTON.

SPRING CONFERENCE, 1960

The Tranent church, East Lothian, with the support of the church at Haddington, invites the brotherhood to meet in conference on Saturday and Monday, April 16th and 18th. All meetings will be open to the public, except the business session 2 p.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday.

Saturday: 10 a.m., prayer and praise; 12 noon, lunch; 2 p.m., business session; 3 p.m., three 15-minute addresses on faith and work based on (i) "This is the work of God" (John 6:28, 29); (ii) "Work out your own salvation" (Phil. 2:12, 13); and (iii) "Working in you that which is well-pleasing" (Heb. 13:21); followed by questions addressed to the three speakers; 4.30 p.m., tea; 6 p.m., Gospel meeting.

Monday: 10 a.m., prayer and praise; 12 noon, lunch; 2.30 p.m., three 15-minute addresses based on (i) "You are the salt of the earth" (Matt. 5:13); (ii) "You are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14-16); and (iii) "You are my disciples, if—" (John 13:35), followed by questions addressed to the three speakers; 4.30 p.m., tea; 6 p.m., Gospel meeting.

Those intending to be present at the conference should write Bro. Mark Plain, 33 Lammermoor Terrace, Tranent, East Lothian, as soon as possible. Please state number in party, sex, and expected length of stay.

Catering: Lunch at 12 noon on both Saturday and Monday is being provided at their place of accommodation for those who have been placed by Bro. Mark Plain. Others will make their own lunch arrangements. Tea, at 4.30 p.m. Saturday, will be served centrally to all attending the conference.

Travel arrangements from Edinburgh: Trains arrive in Edinburgh at the Waverley Station at the East End of Princes Street and at the Caledonian Station at the West End of Princes

Street. Buses for Tranent leave the Bus Station at St. Andrew Square (at the East end of Princes Street) at frequent intervals. The Stance is No. D13. The following buses leave this Stance and will take you to Tranent: Pencaitland, Ormiston, Gifford, Haddington, Berwick, Dunbar, and Tranent. The bus takes 30 minutes from Edinburgh to Tranent.

SPEAKERS

Saturday: 3 p.m., (i) Bro. Sam Davidson, Motherwell; (ii) Bro. Edward Jess, Dalmellington; (iii) Bro. W. H. Clarke, Hindley; 6 p.m., Bro. Leonard Morgan, Hindley.

Mon.: 2.30 p.m. (i) Bro. J. R. Daniell, Bristol; (ii) Bro. Jas. Brown, Glasgow; (iii) Bro. P. Partington, Ince, 6 p.m., **Summing up of the week-end.**

Communications with reference to the business session should be addressed to Bro. A. Hood, 45 Park Road, Hindley, Wigan, Lancs.

COMING EVENTS

Ulverston—Anniversary, Saturday, Apr. 30th. We hope to have many brethren present from different parts. Kindly let us know for catering arrangements, and whether staying overnight. Speakers: Bro. Jas. Melling (Wigan), James Maltenau (Tunbridge Wells), Len. Channing (Aylesbury), John Breakell (Eastwood). Write James McF. Black, 37 The Gill, Ulverston, Lancs.

Eastwood (Seymour Road).—D.V., sixth anniversary of the opening of the meeting-place on Saturday, April 30th and Sunday, May 1st, to which a very cordial invitation is extended to the brotherhood. On Saturday tea will be served in the Community Centre, Church Street, Eastwood, at 4.15 p.m. A public meeting will follow at 6 p.m. Speakers: Bro. John Partington (Hindley) and Bro. R. McDonald (Dewsbury). Bro. McDonald will serve the church on Lord's Day, May 1st. An intimation of numbers coming would greatly assist in catering.

CHAS. LIMB.

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

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