

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

Vol. 63 No.2

FEBRUARY 1994

## MANY INFALLIBLE PROOFS

A few weeks ago, T.V. viewers had the doubtful privilege of watching the Bishop of Durham being interviewed by Sir David Frost, and heard him reel off a list of things in the N.T. in which he can't believe.

Apparently, the Bishop does not believe that wise men brought gifts to the baby Jesus, or that a star guided them to the crib; nor is he too sure about there having been "No room at the Inn." The Bishop does not believe in the "virgin birth" of Christ: nor does he believe in hell (predictably he thinks that we create our own hell here on earth); nor does he believe in the "Second Coming" of Christ; nor does he believe that anyone will be prevented from entry into heaven; nor does he believe in the resurrection of Christ. David Frost rightly remarked that his eminence seemed more and more to believe in less and less. In the first place one wonders why the Bishop stays in a job, and accepts a large salary, for upholding a religion which, according to the Bishop, is based upon a Book completely untrustworthy. In the second place one wonders how the Church of England can tolerate one of its Bishops to, year after year, pour doubt and scorn upon the Holy Scriptures, not only in the privacy of his own home but from the housetops, and now on T.V. However, when one remembers the homosexuality amongst its clergy, then one can understand its acceptance of a Bishop parading his numerous doubts upon the Bible's integrity.

In all walks of life, these days, whether it be religion, or politics, or business etc. it is generally true that one will only "hit the headlines" by being controversial or involved in scandal. Perhaps the Bishop realises that if it were not for the fact that he was "controversial" he would not have much chance of being interviewed on T.V., or enjoying all the attention he currently receives from the media.

Clearly, space will not allow comment upon all of the items listed by the Bishop, but perhaps a few remarks upon his rejection of the **resurrection of Christ** is called for: since the resurrection of our Lord forms the basis and very bedrock of Christianity. If Jesus did not rise from the dead He must still be lying buried somewhere: and if this is true it means that He ranks with all the other good men who are buried somewhere; but is no better than they are. It is Christ's resurrection from the dead more than anything else, that sets Him apart from all other men. This makes Christ entirely unique and places Christianity on a plane infinitely higher than all other forms of world religion.

### THE PREDICTIONS

While not privy to knowing exactly why the Bishop disbelieves in the resurrection of Christ, it would seem obvious to even a small child that if Jesus was put to death

(and surely the Bishop believes that Jesus died) and was later found to be alive: He must have been brought back from the dead, i.e. resurrected. We might not understand it, or be able to explain it: but we surely must accept it.

First of all, anyone who denies the resurrection (and the Bishop is certainly not alone in this) must, as a consequence, disregard all O.T. prophecy (the scriptures). Paul said that **“Christ died for our sins ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES. And that He was buried, AND THAT HE ROSE AGAIN THE THIRD DAY, ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES.”** (1 Cor. 15:3). The “Scriptures” (which had predicted Christ’s death, burial and RESURRECTION) were, of course, the O.T. and Paul continually made reference to these O.T. prophecies. For example, (on the present theme), the apostle in his discourse in the synagogue at Antioch (in Pisidia) recounted to his audience how Christ (God’s Messiah) was slain and laid in a tomb. **“But”,** says Paul, **“God raised Him from the dead. And He was seen many days of them which came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem who are His witnesses to the people”**. Paul continues, and shows that this Christ was the fulfilment of **“God’s promise made to the Fathers.”** Concerning this promise, **“God hath fulfilled the same unto us, their children IN THAT HE RAISED UP JESUS AGAIN,** as it is written in the second Psalm, **‘Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee’**. And as concerning **THAT HE RAISED HIM UP FROM THE DEAD,** now no more to return to corruption **He said on this wise, ‘I will give you the sure mercies of David’.** Wherefore **He saith also in another Psalm, ‘Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption’** (Acts 13:15). And so, Paul sees the resurrection portrayed in these three quotations from the O.T. (i.e. Ps. 2:7; Is. 55:3 & Ps. 16:10). The first one; **“This day have I begotten Thee”** refers to the day Jesus rose from the tomb and became **“the first begotten from the dead.”** These are examples but there are others. For instance, Paul similarly discerned the resurrection of the dead in the words of Hosea, when the prophet said, **“I will ransom them from the power of the grave: I will redeem them from death: O death I will be thy plagues: O grave I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.”** Paul, recognising that that prediction had been fulfilled (when Christ conquered death and the grave) echoed the prophet and declared, **“O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?** (1 Cor. 15:55). And so, if we reject the resurrection, we reject O.T. prophecy.

In the second place, those who deny the resurrection, are in effect, repudiating the many predictions that Jesus, Himself, made to the effect that He would rise from the tomb: e.g. **“From that time forth Jesus began to show unto His disciples how that He must go up to Jerusalem and suffer many things of the Elders and Chief Priests and Scribes, and BE KILLED, and be RAISED AGAIN the third day.”** (Matt. 16:21). Jesus repeated this prophecy several times, predicting that He **“would be crucified and THE THIRD DAY RISE AGAIN”** (Matt. 20:19). Jesus also advised His disciples that **“AFTER HE HAD RISEN”** He would rendezvous with them in Galilee (Matt. 26:32). Jesus also challenged the Jewish leaders with these words: **“Destroy this temple (His body) and in three days I WILL RAISE IT UP.”** (John 2:19). He also said, **“For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”** (Matt. 12:40). These examples could be multiplied, and show that not only was Christ’s resurrection foretold in the O.T. but that Jesus forecast it personally, and even named the day: the third day. If Jesus did not rise from the dead He was a false prophet. And so, those who do not believe that He rose, accuse Him, wittingly or otherwise, of being a great deceiver.

When Jesus was accosted by the Sadducees (for the Sadducees, like the Bishop, did not believe in the resurrection of the dead) and was presented with that hypothetical scenario of the woman who had married seven brothers. He replied, **“Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures or the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry**

nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But, as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead but of the living.” (Matt. 22:29). Thus, all who deny the resurrection err on at least two counts: (1) they don’t know the scriptures (O.T.), and (2) they don’t know the power of God. Surely if anyone seriously reflects upon the obvious power of God, they must inevitably come to the conclusion that it would be a fairly simple matter for God to raise the dead.

### MANY INFALLIBLE PROOFS

In the Acts of the Apostles (Chap. 1) the writer, Luke, describes how (in Luke’s gospel) he had chronicled **“All that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day He was taken up, after that He through the Holy Spirit had given commandment to the apostles whom He had chosen: to whom also He SHOWED HIMSELF ALIVE after His passion by MANY INFALLIBLE PROOFS, being seen of them forty days, and speaking the things pertaining unto the kingdom of God.”** (Acts 1:1-3). “Infallible Proofs” comes from a Greek word *Teknerion* which Thayer defines as “That from which something is plainly and surely known; an indubitable evidence; a proof.” The proof was not merely a reasonable proof, but so certain that any doubt was impossible. Luke had, of course, already described some of these proofs in the latter chapters of the gospel bearing his name. Jesus did not hide himself away after His resurrection but **SHOWED HIMSELF ALIVE** after His passion by many infallible proofs. Those who reject the resurrection quite often feel obliged to try and discredit the apostles and their testimony, describing them as simple-minded, naive and suffering from delusions brought on by the excitement and keen anticipation of the expected resurrection.

Nothing could be further from the truth: for the apostles did not wait around the tomb on the third day, in excited expectancy of Christ’s emergence. Indeed they did not believe that He would arise at all (John 20:25; Luke 24) and even when the news of His rising was brought to them they dismissed it **“as idle tales”**. In any case the question of sudden delusion or hallucination does not arise, for the apostles, and a great many others, had ample opportunity to observe Jesus at very close quarters, over an extensive period of time (of nearly six weeks) prior to His ascension into heaven. Thus it was impossible for them to have been deceived. Quite apart from the nail prints in His hands, they had travelled and lived intimately with Jesus for the past three years, and would quickly have recognised an imposter. We are also told that during these forty days, Jesus spoke to them **“things pertaining unto the Kingdom of God”** and this, an imposter would have been unable to do. In short, Jesus took up exactly where He left off prior to His arrest and crucifixion.

It should be born in mind that Jesus made at least a dozen recorded appearances. He appeared to **Mary Magdalene** (Mark 16:9): to **the women** returning home (Matt. 28:9): to the **two disciples** going to Emmaus (Mark 16:12): to the apostle **Peter** (Luke 24:34): to the **ten apostles** in the Upper Room (Luke 24:36): to the **eleven apostles** in the Upper Room (Mark 16:14): to **Thomas** (John 20:27): to **seven apostles** at the sea of Tiberias (John 21:1-3): to the **eleven apostles** on a mountain in Galilee (Matt. 28:16) to **five hundred brethren** at one time (1 Cor. 15:6); to **James** (1 Cor. 15:7) and to the **apostle Paul** (1 Cor. 15:8). Recognition of a person may not always be easy, especially if only given a brief glance, or if seen at dusk, or seen from a great distance, but Jesus showed Himself, as we have seen, to many, in different locations, on separate occasions giving ample and **infallible proof** that He had conquered death and the grave. To perhaps the greatest doubter of them all (and Thomas does not appear to have been expecting Jesus to rise) Jesus said, **“Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thine hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.”** (John 20:27).

## CONSEQUENCES IF THE DEAD RISE NOT

Well over 100 years ago David King said, "Jesus and the resurrection ever held the foreground in apostolic preaching. With the Modern it is not so. Jesus remains; but the resurrection is kept in the rear and in many instances, almost, if not entirely, forgotten. This results from Jewish and Heathen leaven." Disbelief in the resurrection has, I suppose, manifested itself in every generation and 2,000 years ago, **even when the apostles were present** (as eye-witnesses of Christ's triumph over the grave), Paul had the same problem. Evidently there were some brethren in Corinth causing great concern by their assertions that the dead rise not. The response of Paul was to give us that wonderful fifteenth chapter of his first epistle to that congregation. Paul said that the resurrection formed a vital part of the gospel he had been preaching i.e. that Christ died, and was buried. **"And that He rose again the 3rd day according to the scriptures. And that He was seen of Cephas, then the twelve. After that He was seen of above 500 brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that He was seen of James: then the apostles. And last of all He was seen of me also, as one born out of due time."**

Many of the 500 witnesses (who had seen Christ simultaneously) were still alive and could be questioned by any doubters. Paul emphasises the ramifications of unbelief and says, **"But if there be no resurrection of the dead then is Christ not risen and then is our preaching vain (worthless) and your faith is also vain. For if the dead rise not then is not Christ raised. And if Christ be not raised your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins. If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable. BUT NOW IS CHRIST RISEN FROM THE DEAD and become the first fruits of them that slept . . . . If (after the manner of men) I have fought with beasts at Ephesus what advantage is it to me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die."** Surely Paul has said it all, and forcefully described the futility of the Christian faith, if Christ is still in His grave: i.e. Christians should pack it all in: eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow they will all die.

## CONCLUSION

Space is slipping away. How can we sum up? As mentioned earlier, the resurrection is the doctrinal sheet-anchor of Christianity for without it, little is left. Enemies of Christ know this and try to discredit the evidence. Likewise, it was for this reason that Jesus **"showed Himself alive"** to many witnesses: yet leaving room for faith in those who did not see Him. As Jesus said to Thomas, **"Because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed; but blessed are they that have not seen Me and yet have believed."** Clearly much more virtue attaches to the latter. Some say that we can discard the "virgin birth", the miracles and the resurrection from the "Christian Story" without destroying its essential message, but this is patently a fallacy and such a gospel would be an insipid and pointless charade: "vain" as Paul described it. Christ then would rank merely as a good man but with no hope to offer beyond the grave. **"But,"** says Peter, the resurrection brings hope, for God, **"according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope BY THE RESURRECTION of Jesus Christ from the dead."** (1 Peter 1:3).

Those who deny the resurrection of Christ are, in effect, declaring to the world that God's word is a collection of myths and fancies and can not be trusted. This is a very dangerous thing to do: and how anyone claiming to be a Christian can do it, is a mystery. In rejecting the resurrection they (1) renounce O.T. prophecy: (2) they discard the predictions of Jesus Himself, that He would rise the third day; (3) they repudiate the testimony of the many witnesses who saw Him alive by **"many infallible proofs"** including Peter, James and Paul: and (4) they apparently ignore the incredible impact the resurrection had upon the disciples: transforming them instantly from a despondent and frightened huddle (locking themselves up for fear) to a powerful force of fearless missionaries, quite ready to die for their cause.

It is difficult to understand why the Bishop, or anyone else, has trouble believing the resurrection. After all, if God made the world and all it contains: and made man: to resurrect man from the dead would not seem to be too difficult. As Paul said to king Agrippa, **“Why should it be thought an incredible thing with you, that God should raise the dead?”** (Acts 26:8). Why indeed.

EDITOR

## GLEANINGS

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

### KNOWING

I know the helpless, hopeless plaint,  
The whole head sick, the whole heart faint;  
But now I trust His touch of grace,  
That meets so perfectly my case,  
So tenderly, so truly deals;  
Because I know that Jesus heals.”

F.R.H.

### THE SILENCE OF LOVE

*“Rest in (margin: ‘Be silent to’) the Lord.”* (Psalm 37:7)

After many days of severe suffering, an invalid was free from pain for a little while. “Now,” she thought, “I shall be able to pray a little.” But she was too wearied out and exhausted for this; feeling that utter weakness of mind and body which cannot be realised without actual experience, when the very lips shrink from the exertion of a whisper, and it seems too much effort of thought to shape even unspoken words. Only one whisper came: “Lord Jesus, I am so tired!” She prayed no more; she could not frame even a petition that, as she could not speak to Him, He would speak to her. But the Lord Jesus knew all the rest; He knew how she had waited for and wanted the sweet conscious communing with Him, the literal talking to Him and telling Him all that was in her heart. And He knew that, although a quiet and comparatively painless hour had come, she was “so tired” that she could not think.

### “BE SILENT TO THE LORD!”

Very tenderly did He, who knows how to speak a word in season to the weary, choose a message in reply to that little whisper. **“Be silent to the Lord!”** It came like a mother’s “hush” to one whom his mother comforteth. It was quite enough, as every Spirit-given word is; and the acquiescent silence was filled with perfect peace. Only real friends understand silence.

### “YOU DO NOT NEED TO SAY A WORD”

With a passing guest or ceremonial acquaintance you feel under an obligation to talk; you make effort to entertain them as a matter of courtesy; you may be tired or weak, but no matter, you feel you must exert yourself. But with a very dear intimate friend sitting by you, there is no feeling of the kind. To be sure, you may talk if you feel able: pouring out all sort of confidences, relieved and refreshed by the interchange of thoughts and sympathies. But if you are very tired, you know you do not need to say a word. You are perfectly understood, and you know it.

### “AS IN THESE STILL MOMENTS”

You can enjoy the mere fact of your friend’s presence, and find that does you more good than conversation. The sense of that present and sympathetic affection rests you more than any words. And your friend takes it as the highest proof of your friendship and confidence, and probably never loves you so vividly as in these still moments. No matter that twilight is falling, and that you cannot see each other’s faces, the presence and the silence are full of brightness and eloquence, and you feel they are enough.

**“WE KNOW HE LOVES US”**

Even so we may be silent to the Lord. Just because we know He loves us so really and understands us so thoroughly! There is no need when very weary, bodily or mentally, or both, to force ourselves to entertain Him, so to speak; to go through a sort of duty-work of a certain amount of uttered words or arranged thoughts.

**“SO TIRED”**

That might be if He were only to us as a wayfaring man, that turneth aside to tarry for a night, but not with the beloved and Gracious One who has come in to abide with us, and is always there! If this is His relation to us, there is no fear but what there will be, at other times, plenty of conversation; but now, when we are “so tired,” we may just be silent to Him, instead of speaking to Him.

This is one of the expressions which are exclusively used concerning the things of God. There is no such thing as being silent to anyone else. Silent **with** a mortal friend, but never silent **to** any but the Immortal One. Though it has its earthly analogy, it is not identically the same. For none but our Lord can interpret the unseen pulsings of that which to human ken is **only** silence. He hears the music they are measuring out before Him. He takes the confidence of that hush at its full value of golden love. He sees the soul’s attitude of devotion and faith through the shadows which hide it from itself.

**“WITH GOOD WORDS AND COMFORTABLE WORDS”**

Sometimes He takes the opportunity of our silence to speak to Himself. He answers it **“with good words and comfortable words.”** And do we not know that one such word from Him is more than anything else, worth ten thousand-fold all the weariness or exhaustion of pain which brought us to be silent!

But sometimes He answers silence with silence. What then? Are we to conclude that He is gone away, or is not thinking about us, forgetting to be gracious? We are judging Him as He would not judge us. He did not put such an interpretation on our silence; then why should we on His? Let us take His interpretation of it; surely we should believe what He Himself asserts! “He will be silent in His love” (Zeph. 3:17, margin). Can any words be more beautiful!

**THAT HE MAY BE GRACIOUS”**

It is as if He, even He, who made man’s mouth, had made no words which could express His exceeding great love, and therefore He could only expand it in the silence which lies above and below and beyond all language. When we have said, as very likely we have often done, “Why art Thou silent unto me, O Lord?” Why did we not take His own exquisite answer, and trust the love that was veiled in the silence? For whenever we can say, **“Truly my soul waiteth upon (Heb. is silent to) God,”** we may rest assured that any apparent waiting on His part is only **“that He may be gracious,”** yes, **“very gracious unto thee.”** We may be sure He has many things to say to us, when He sees we can bear them. But till His time to speak is come, let our silence of trust respond to His silence of love.

Frances Ridley Havergal.

**THE SOUL’S DESIRE**

“Prayer is the soul’s sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed!  
The motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast.  
Prayer is the burden of a sigh, the falling of a tear,  
The upward glancing of an eye when none but God is near.

James Montgomery.

**“I OFTEN SAY MY PRAYERS”**

“I often say my prayers, but do I ever pray,  
Do the wishes of my heart, go with the words I say.

I may as well kneel down, and worship gods of stone,  
Than offer to the living God, a prayer of words alone."

#### WHAT SHALL WE ASK?

"And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.

Unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Ephesians 3:19-21).

Leonard Morgan.




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Conducted by  
Alf Marsden

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"Could you please explain Nehemiah 9:13,14. I was always under the impression that precepts, statutes, and laws were different names for the same thing. Is this correct?"

Neh.9:14 reads, "And thou madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commanded them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant". Isn't it amazing how, when we read something, we arbitrarily form a mental definition of what we have read. We may, of course, be right or wrong. How many times have we heard speakers say, "I've looked at that part of the scripture over a long period of time, and I've only now come to understand it". But it's been there all the time, you see; we just haven't probed it with the mind. Whenever I read **anything**, I always have a dictionary to hand, because I know that unless I understand the **precise** meaning of the words I am reading that there is a good chance that I **shall not** understand the importance of what the words say. It is true that the words precepts, laws, and statutes have a basic inter-connection as regards meaning, but they also have precise meanings. Anyway, let's take a closer look at our question.

#### PRECEPTS

Precepts may be defined as, "rules for action or conduct, exhortations". It ought to be quite obvious to any student of the Bible that both God and Christ gave more than enough of these. The O.T. abounds with exhortations and rules from God to the nation of Israel. Similarly the N.T. from Jesus to the people of **His** day. There is not the slightest doubt in my mind that the Christian community should act according to the rules laid down, and saying this in no way refers to the Bible as being a **rule-book**, the obedience to which supersedes faith in God and His Christ. Any intelligent person will know that a community functions best when it lives according to its own rules, and the Christian community is no exception; indeed, people who are **truly** faithful will **want** to live according to the rules especially if such rules have God's approval.

The precepts of God are fundamental in this respect. Let me give you an example. In Isa. 28 God speaks against the spiritual immaturity of Ephraim and Jerusalem. In 28:9,10 we read, "**Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breast. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little**". Now every parent knows that an infant must be brought up to conform to rules of conduct; many parents lay down the **principles** but fail to insist on the **practice**. God gave His principles in precepts, and **did** insist on Israel

putting them into practice; when the people **didn't**, He punished them.

So what do we learn from this? When God chose the nation of Israel to be His peculiar people, the nation was like a new-born babe relative to what God expected of them. The people had to learn the rules, and God gave these in precepts designed for staged growth. Precept upon precept; here a little, there a little. He loved them, and He wanted a reciprocal love. He also wanted faithfulness and trust. He wanted them to grow to maturity under His benign care. Instead, their wayward and perfidious practices proved that **they** did not want to be guided by God. His precepts were good; **they** ignored them and consequently wrought their own destruction. The N.T. Church is similarly exhorted to be **"like new-born babes, desiring the sincere milk of the word, that we might grow thereby"**. The growth of the saints to spiritual maturity should be no accident, but rather a recognition that such growth should be looked upon as a prime function of the Church, with responsibility devolving on the leadership in its several localities. Such development should be ensured by staged and structured teaching, a desirable state of affairs which, in my experience, has never been adequately achieved.

### LAWS

A law may be defined as, "A rule established among a community, and enjoining or prohibiting certain action"; it may be further defined as, "an invariable sequence between certain conditions and phenomena". Therefore, I can become 'a law unto myself', i.e., I can take my own line and disregard the rules. In Rom. 2:14 we read, **"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law (Mosaic), do by nature the things contained in the law (Mosaic), these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves."** When their actions coincided with the Mosaic Law, that was good; when their actions didn't, then they had become a law unto themselves in the wrong sense.

The Common Law of England has been developed over many years, and has been formed by the study of individual cases which have been seen to have similar sequential events and conclusions; it is in fact 'Case Law'. Before any attempt at codification could take place, judges had to travel the length and breadth of the country studying individual cases as they came up. They then had to analyse their findings, and so develop laws which were 'common' to most people and localities. This type of law has developed up to the present time, and is still being added to.

Paul saw what can only be described as 'a law of the flesh' as distinct from the actions that he **wants** to do. He poses what is a problem to many people, i.e., that when they think to do good, their actions, dominated by the flesh, accomplish exactly the opposite. He sums up, **"I find then a law that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members"** (Rom. 7:21-23). Many Christians, to their shame and loss, have thought that this is a normal condition vis-a-vis the flesh and the Spirit, because did not Paul say, **"So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin"** (v25). It is a monstrous thought to think that with the mind we can have a passive faith, but that we can go on sinning in the flesh. What Paul is describing is the sinful condition of a person **before** coming to Christ. Read chapter 8 and you will understand, for as he says in 8:2 **"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."** It is 'the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus' to which the Christian should be conformed.

### STATUTES

In English law, when a legislative enactment is made by Parliament, such an enactment becomes Statute Law; it is put into the Statute Book and is intended to be permanent. As regards God's statutes, The Legislative Enactor is God Himself, and the Statutes are written in His Book, The Bible. They are also intended to be of a



permanent nature unless they are abrogated by Divine fiat. Such statutes are to be found in Lev. 3:17, regarding the eating of fat or blood; in Lev. 16:34, regarding the Day of Atonement; in Num. 19:21, regarding ritual cleansing; and in Ps. 81, regarding the exclusive right of God to be the God of Israel. Moreover, the O.T. abounds with commands by God which He expects to be obeyed by the people.

It is quite evident from Jer. 31:31-34 that God intended that under a new covenant, which would embrace Jew and Gentile, His law should be of a spiritual nature after the 'inner man'. The One to bring this into being would be His Christ, Jesus of Nazareth. Paul tells us in his Ephesian letter, "**But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off (Gentiles) are made nigh by the blood of Christ**" (Eph. 2:13). He then goes on to say that the sacrifice of Jesus has abolished the enmity between Jew and Gentile, "**even the law of commandments contained in ordinances**" (v15). There are no nationalistic lines of demarcation in the Kingdom of God (v14). The introduction of the phrase "**the law of commandments contained in ordinances**" means that such ordinances were, in fact, Divine decrees, and such decrees were expressions of the authoritative Will of God and consequently having the effect of Statute Law. This effectively is the Gospel, and indicates to us that the Gospel is intended to be of a permanent nature, and that being so, then the **terms** and **conditions** of the Gospel must also be of a permanent nature; in fact, one of God's statutory pronouncements. Other things which I would take to be statutory requirements of God are; love, marriage, belief and faith in God and His Christ, and Breaking of Bread.

There are other meetings which are held in local churches such as Bible Schools, women's meetings, Bible studies, training classes, etc., but I look upon these as 'community rules', initiated and controlled by the Oversights in different communities of Christians: as such they are ancillary to the main requirements of Christ for His Church. I have mentioned above that Gospel promotion is a Divine decree, but some of the Gospel meetings which we hold are quite sterile, i.e., we preach to the converted. For the Gospel to be effective, we have either to get people in to listen, or we have to take the message out to them.

As I have thought about this question I have come to the conclusion that there is more to it than meets the eye. I have only scratched the surface: and perhaps more agile minds than mine could get more teaching out of it.

(All questions, please, to Alf Marsden, 20 Costessy Way  
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## THE DENOMINATIONS SUBSTITUTES FOR CHRISTIANITY

### 2. - CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

The founder of this new religion, and during her life time, its virtual dictator, was Mary Baker Eddy, since known as 'the Reverend Mother'. It was first established in Boston as the Christian Science Association, constituted in 1879, and re-organised as "The First Church of Christ Scientist" in 1892. With this Church all branch Churches must be in association. They manage their own affairs, but conform to the regulations of the *Church Manual of the First Church*, and their office-bearers must be members of the mother Church. The business of the mother Church is transacted by the Christian Science Board of Directors, a *self-perpetuating* body of five. Each branch Church must possess a reading room and a library open to the public during the day. Propaganda is largely carried on through these reading rooms and by annual lectures, at which, however, there is no discussion or argument. The official organ is *The Christian Science Journal* (monthly). One of the best informed and conducted daily papers, *The Christian Science Monitor*, is published in the U.S.A. It is clean and avoids scare-mongering.

There is also *The Christian Science Quarterly*. These journals, together with Mrs Eddy's *Science and Health*, the Bible, and the *Church Manual*, are to be found in most reading rooms. Branch Churches have a Board of Directors with President. Other officials are Secretary, First and Second Readers, and Librarians. Some of these receive honoraria and some salaries, but others nothing at all.

#### *Worship*

The Sunday Services follow exactly the same order in every Church. They consist of hymns from the *Christian Science Hymnal*, a Scripture reading, silent prayer, the Lord's Prayer (Mrs. Eddy's form), followed by a Lesson-sermon from the *Quarterly*. These Lesson-sermons consist mainly of portions from the Bible and from *Science and Health*. No comment or addition is allowed. So-called Communion Services are held on the second Sundays in January and July, but there are no Communion elements. At these services the tenets of the mother Church are read. There is usually a testimony meeting held on Wednesdays.

#### *Healing*

An aspect of Christian Science which gives its notoriety is that of mental healing. It was on this that Mrs. Eddy first began her work under the influence of the famous Dr. Quimby. Her 'philosophy' seems to have been developed later. There can be no question that many cures are wrought where the diseases are subject to mental treatment; there can equally be no question that there are many failures, some failures which might have been avoided by surgical or medical treatment; and equally no question that eventually all patients have to face death. All practitioners, nurses, and teachers have to be recognised by the mother Church, and none but such are accredited. Practitioners and nurses charge a fee, just as they do in orthodox medical circles. The Committee on Publications, Donington House, Norfolk Street, Strand, W.C.2, will supply a list of accredited practitioners, nurses and lecturers.

#### *Heresy*

It is when we come to examine this new religion closely that we see, in spite of its name, that it is neither scientific nor Christian. *Science and Health* and the Bible are put on the same level, in fact, the Bible itself must be interpreted through *Science and Health*, which in its full title is described as *A Key to the Scriptures*. Mrs. Eddy's philosophy can be summarised as follows:

God is all in all.

God is good. God is mind.

God, Spirit, being all, nothing is matter.

These propositions she observes are equally understood if read backwards, which proves their correspondence with truth ! This philosophy (Idealism) is most ancient. But if we are to accept it, we cannot begin by making choices. We cannot, for instance, say that pleasure, health, life, are part of reality, whilst pain, illness, and death are not: that in dealing with life we must avoid doctors, surgical instruments, vaccines, while we accept mental suggestion. And as Dr. H. A. L. Fisher says, "If everything is Mind, what is a dollar and for what reason is it pursued? But Mrs Eddy's mind was capable at one and the same time of holding to an inexorable exclusive logic, and of entertaining quite contradictory propositions. Here is her exclusive logic: "If God is good, is real, then evil, the opposite of God, is unreal." By the same principles one could declare that there is no night, no black, no female and so on. Yet she can say "We learn in science food neither helps nor harms man," and still go on eating and advise her followers to do the same ! Apart from such contradictories, no one with an open mind can read the New Testament account of the passion and suffering of our Lord, follow this with the Pauline interpretation of the Cross, then read, what *Science and Health* has to say about the matter, and say, 'these are one in the same thing'. They are quite different things, and moreover, the one is a rather ancient

heresy in a new dress. Of old it went by the name of Docetism, and against it Christians maintained that Jesus Christ was manifest *in the flesh* (matter), that *He suffered* (not seemed to suffer), and died (not seemed to die), and rose again from the dead and was received into glory. And so must we against this new religion.

W. ROBINSON.

## “BE NOT AFRAID”

In the midst of a storm Jesus told the disciples:

**“It is I: be not afraid.”**

When they *willingly* received His words they received *immediate* relief (John 6: 20-21). In the pressing throes of our own stormy seas we need an anchor for the soul. It is tragic to contemplate what fear will do to an individual. The Greek word for fear is “phobos,” from which we derive a familiar clinical term *phobia*. Fear produced a score of suicides when the stock market panic came in 1929. Fear will cause an experienced hunter to have “freeze” or a strong man to quiver at the sight of a mouse. Worst of all, fear will rob us of the peace we ought to possess as children of God. We are living in an era filled with many anxieties. It is reassuring to be able to shelter ourselves within the loving arms of the Almighty. Christians need never worry even when the world situation darkens. Things will not get any worse than during the Neronian persecutions and the dark hours of Domitians reign. Yet, the powerful triumph of the valiant Christians of that first century speaks volumes to us today. Like Moses, we should not fear the wrath of the king (Hebrew 11:27). Should even death surround us we will not walk that valley alone (Psalms 23:4). Carnal powers may destroy the body, but they are unable to erase our spiritual being (Matthew 10:28). Therefore we exclaim with David in Psalm 27:1:

**“The Lord is my light: whom shall I fear.”**

### FAITHFULNESS

Being faithful to our Redeemer in the very face of death will result in a glorious reward (Revelation 2:10, 14:13). Let us never forget that the way of Christ is worth living for and, if needs be, dying for. These words have no meaning for the luke-warm members of the Church, but for those dedicated to holding forth the banner of Truth, they convey a thrilling hope. When war clouds threaten and earthly empires crumble, beloved brethren, be not afraid!

When personal problems seem to overwhelm you, release those burdens into the care of **“the God of all comfort”** (II Corinthians 1:3-4). He has not given unto us the spirit of fear but of power, love and a sound mind (II Timothy 1:7). The Greek word in this text for *fear* refers to “timidity”. We are supplied with boldness from the Lord Jesus Christ to sustain every need. There is even an avenue of escape available when temptation comes our way (I Corinthians 10:13). Our Lord intercedes on our behalf before the throne of Glory (I John 2:1) because He cares for us. Are all of these blessings being used by us as we journey in this pilgrim land? Back in the Old Testament we read that Jehovah had a controversy with His people. They were heirs of Israel’s riches but such gifts were bestowed upon them in vain. Due to such foolish behaviour the Lord, who wanted to be their solicitor, was forced to be their judge (Micah, Chapters 6 and 7). If we, today, overlook the peace which Christianity bestows, we will meet with the chaotic existence of the people of Micah’s day. Why not turn loose your hidden fears and restless burdens and cling to the gracious provisions of the Lord?

**“Hold Thou my hand! So weak I am and helpless,  
I dare not take one step without Thy aid;  
Hold Thou my hand! For then, O Loving Saviour,  
No dread of ill shall make my soul afraid.”**

### CHRIST HELP US

Because of the constant help of our Redeemer none of us should be afraid of the challenge of Christianity. Some delay their obedience to the Lord for fear they would not be able to live up to His demands. The one-talent man in Matthew 25 is typical of many in our times who are too fearful to try. What happiness they rob themselves of due to their unfortunate viewpoint. This same spirit animates members of the body of Christ who lack the courage to practise church discipline, manifest love toward those who persecute them or to live sacrificially in service unto the Master. It takes courage to be a Christian. The “**fearful and unbelieving**” will be lost (Revelation 21:8). But Jesus has promised His faithful followers:

“**Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.**”

The world is filled with folk who are afraid of a five letter word — TODAY. Having misspent *yesterday* and pushing aside responsibility until *tomorrow* their morbid refusal to face *today* results in wasted motion and endless strife. Many souls are being lost today while we sit at the drawing board scaling bombastic “ten year plans for the congregation.”

### TODAY

- Today I will not waste my time, because the minutes I wasted yesterday are as lost as a vanished thought.
- Today I refuse to spend time worrying about what might happen. I am going to spend my time making things happen.
- Today I am determined to study to improve myself, for tomorrow I may be wanted, and I must not be found lacking.
- Today I am determined to do things I should do. I firmly determine to stop doing the things I should not do.
- Today I begin by doing, and not wasting my time. In one week I will be miles beyond the person I am today.
- Today I will not imagine what I would do if things were different. They are not different. I will make success with what material I have.
- Today I will stop saying, “If I had time”, for I never will never “find time” for anything. If I want time, I must make it.
- Today I will act towards other people as though this might be my last day on earth. I will not wait for tomorrow.

When death draws near and thoughts of the Judgement Day arise, we need not be fearful. Notice the majestic beauty and power in 1 John 4:17-18: “.... **that we may have boldness in the day of judgement ... there is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear.** The world will not comprehend the peace we treasure in our hearts nor the eager anticipation with which we view eternity. Whatever comes, the saints of God remember those precious words ... “**It is I, Be Not Afraid.**”

If you do not share in the hope that Christians have, let appeal to you in the impelling language of Hosea:

“**It is time to seek the Lord.**”

J. Ramsey.

### COMPLACENCY

Brethren it appears that the Church is in the doldrums. Perhaps it is because many of the membership fail to give of their full capacity. The many gifts given unto them are not used. Sad, but true, if we be honest with self. I came across a statement the other day and it gave me much food for thought. It was this, “Today there are many in the Church being rocked to sleep in the devil’s cradle of complacency.” Again sad but nevertheless true.

Many believers have become complacent with their lot in life and have stopped “diligently” pursuing the things of God . . . no longer on fire to accomplish more for God’s kingdom. The spirit is dampened; the fire is almost out; the striving stopped. Would you agree with this? Much has become common-place and taken for granted. Saved and secure, so why bother . . . no extended effort, no striving. If sitting back and relaxing, resting on past laurels; it’s wrong. It’s time that the Church moved forward with everything that’s in it, to do what God has told us to do. Time is short, we live in the last days perhaps. It seems that many are enjoying what God has given them, while the rest of the world is perishing. Surely that’s not right. We can’t afford to sit down and pat ourselves on the back, and say “We’ve got it made.”

Beloved, we should always be striving toward the mark of the high calling in God. As Christians, we thank God for all the benefits afforded us. And rightly so. We should share the joy and comfort acquired. God commissioned the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ to take the gospel to a world that’s lost and dying . . . it’s time to wake up and obey that divine commission and to do something with the knowledge gained from the word of God. We need to spread the news of Christ, of God, the word, the Church. The enemy, Satan, knows that he can not destroy the Church from the outside. He tries to move in with complacency, and lull the church to sleep. We need to wake up and be alert to his wiles.

Beloved we must take time to be holy. We must work at being a Christian, We must keep **and share** the faith. It is expected of us. Apathy, complacency, the sit-back attitude, and the like, are all tools of Satan. Be alert, awake, alive to what is happening. The master expects his Church, the individual, the Christian; to witness, to worship, to fellowship and to work, for Christ and Church all, brethren, to the saving of souls.

Andrew P. Sharp, Newtongrange.

## DON'T FEAR CRITICISM

*“Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves”*

(James 1:22)

The galleries are full of critics. *They* play no ball; *they* fight no fights; *they* make no mistakes, because *they* attempt nothing. The DOERS are down in the arena.

Henry Ford forgot to put a reverse gear in his first automobile. Edison once spent two million dollars on an invention that proved of little value.

It is said that “the man who never makes a mistake never makes anything.” The man who makes no mistakes lacks boldness and the spirit of adventure. He is the one who never tries anything; he is the brake on the wheel of progress. And yet it cannot truly be said that he never makes mistakes, because the biggest mistake is never to try anything except to criticise those who are DOING things.

### JUST ONE MISTAKE

He brushed his teeth twice a day; attended his clinic twice a year; wore his overshoes when it rained; always slept with his windows open; kept to a diet of vegetables. He golfed, but only nine holes at a time. He took eight hours sleep every night, He never smoked, drank or lost his temper. He rested all day Sunday. He intended to live to be a hundred. He survived through the care of eighteen specialists, four health institutions, and a great number of body-build foods and antiseptics.

*But he made just one mistake.* He forgot God. He lived as if this world was all. He is now with those who cry, “The harvest is passed; the summer is ended, and we are not saved.”

— (Jer. 8:20) *Selected.*

## WHAT IS YOUR VALUE ?

Think about this for a moment. You have a plain bar of iron worth about 35 shillings. If this is made into horse-shoes it is worth about 75 shillings. Made into screw-drivers it is worth 1,875 shillings. Made into needles 22,750 shillings is its worth.

Made into balance springs for watches it is worth 1,750,000 shillings.

Like your iron your value is determined by what you make of yourself.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

March 6	Psa. 95	Hebrews 4
March 12	Psa. 110:	Hebrews 5
March 20	Gen. 22:1-19	Hebrews 6
March 27	Gen. 14	Hebrews 7

### THE CHRISTIAN'S REST

The idea of rest was very consoling to the Israelites. Robert Milligan in his great book *Reason and Revelation* pointed out that "they had long been accustomed to its pleasures and its advantages.

Of this they had gained much experimental knowledge. 1) In observing the weekly sabbath. 2) In sanctifying many other days to the Lord. 3) In keeping the Sabbatical Year. 4) In observing the Year of Jubilee. 5) In the comparative rest which they enjoyed in Canaan, from their long and weary pilgrimage." But, as the Hebrew writer said: "**There remains therefore a rest to the people of God**" (4:9).

[Please note that Jesus of verse 8 actually stands for Joshua. Jesus is simply the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua.]

The future rest is evident from the fact that it was prophesied in Psalm 95:7-11; it could not refer to the weekly sabbath as it had been observed for countless years before the prophecy; nor could it mean the rest in Canaan, for if Joshua had given to the people the real rest, God would not afterward, through David, have spoken of another day. To quote Milligan again: "The section closes with renewed warnings and exhortations to labour earnestly to enter into the rest prepared for the people of God; in view especially of the heart-searching and all-permeating character of the inspired word, by means of which, as Christ has said (John 12:48), we shall all be judged at the last day."

### CHRIST — OUR HIGH PRIEST

The Hebrew letter was written at a time when the temple in Jerusalem was still standing and priests were making daily sacrifices and the high priest was entering the holy of holies once a year as decreed by the Law. The Hebrew writer had to encourage the Hebrew Christians that they were now part of a system which was far better than the Jewish system. Above all, they had a greater high priest in Jesus Himself. "**Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like we are, yet without sin**" (4:14-15). "**For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens; who needs not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins and then for the people's: for this He did once when He offered up Himself**" (7:26-27).

The book of Hebrews is in many ways, a treatise on the priesthood. Under the Old Covenant, all priests were of the tribe of Levi. Under the New Covenant, all who have obtained access to Christ's grace are priests of God. We can say this: **Israel constituted a kingdom with priests; spiritual Israel constitutes a kingdom of priests under Jesus their high priest. And Christ's priesthood is eternal. "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek"** (7:21). As one writer put it: "Jesus has conquered death and it holds no terrors for Him. He is victor over it and it cannot engulf Him as it did the former priests. The superiority of His priesthood over theirs is as great as that of life over death, as immortality over mortality. He will not relinquish the priestly mitre to another brow. Upon the peaks of Mount Hor, 'Moses

stripped Aaron of his garments and put them upon Eleazar his son; and Aaron died there on the top of the mountain' (Numbers 20:28). No such scene will ever occur in the career of our great high priest."

#### WARNING AGAINST FALLING AWAY

We read: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shame" (6:4-6). This passage, I would submit, puts paid to the belief: "Once saved always saved". It clearly teaches that people who have experienced every blessing and benefit accruing from a relationship with Christ Jesus can turn their back upon all of these to the extent that no appeal remains to restore them. What a frightful position to be in! Albert Barnes has commented: "We should dread apostasy from the true religion. We should habitually feel that if we deny our Lord and reject His religion there would be no hope. The die would be cast; and we must then perish for ever ... If the sin of apostasy is so great, then every approach to it is dangerous and then every sin should be avoided".

God has given unto His people many warning signs. To ignore them is to do so at our own peril. The Old Testament scriptures are full of examples and consequences of those who heeded not the warnings. Brethren, let us learn from them all.

#### MELCHIZEDEK

Melchizedek is a most interesting figure in the Bible. We first read of him in Genesis chapter 14, where it says: "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven

and earth: and blessed be the most high God, who has delivered your enemies into your hand. And he (Abraham) gave him tithes of all" (18-20). We also read of him in Psalm 110: "The Lord has sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (4). The Hebrew writer, among other things, wrote: "... to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abides a priest continually" (7: 2-3).

I am of the view that Melchizedek was a real person and not an angelic being, as some have contended. W. Carl Ketcherside has written: "The Holy Spirit shrouded his life in mystery, giving no clue as to his progenitors or posterity, allowing no insight into predecessors or successors. He appears on the sacred page in his full glory as monarch and mediator, he pronounces a blessing upon the father of the faithful and receives from him a tenth of the spoils he has taken. And since 'it is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior' (Hebrews 7:7), it is evident that the priest who is made after the order of Melchizedek will be superior in office and dignity to one who proceeds from the loins of Abraham." Aaron, for example, was quite different. We know that his father was Amram and that his mother was Jochebed. We know too that his sons were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. "Melchizedek and Jesus resembled in the fact each was a king as well as a priest; each was a king of righteousness and a prince of peace; neither had direct ancestors or successors in the priestly office and so far as the record shows both continued in office: Melchizedek because the record gives no account of his death; Jesus because the record attests that 'he always lives'" (W.C.K.).

Ian S. Davidson, Motherwell.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Slamannan District:** The New Year Social took Place on Saturday 1 January, at 12 noon in the meetinghouse at Motherwell when a goodly number gathered together for a wonderful time of fellowship. Bro David Chalmers was in the Chair and a very enjoyable afternoon was passed with excellent messages from our speakers interspersed with solos from Sister May Wilson, Slamannan, and Bro. Harry McGinn, New Cumnock: with tapes of 'Yesteryear' presented by Ian Davidson, Motherwell. We had three very capable speakers in John Purcell, Manchester: Jimmy Grant, Wallacestone: and John Morgan, Wigan. It was a nice change to hear our speakers from south of the border and we thank them for making the journey — to us it was well worth while. The catering was, as usual, excellent and we had the normal interval mid-way, for chit chat. What better way to spend New Year's Day.

H. McGinn.

## COMING EVENTS

**Tranent Social:** 19th March at 4 p.m. Loch Centre.

**Kirkcaldy Annual Social:** April 16th  
Speaker: A.E. Winstanley.

**Kirkcaldy Ladies Day:** April 30th  
(details to follow).

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The new address of:- Joseph M. Malcolm, is 13 Pirley Hill Drive, Shieldhill, Falkirk FK1 2EA. Telephone 0324 613224.

The new address of:- David Scott, 40 Ross Crescent, Tranent, East Lothian EH33 2BD.

## OBITUARIES

**Kirkcaldy:** Sadly my first report of 1994 is of the loss of two of our members May Salmond died on the 21st December aged 87. Mrs Salmond had been a member for many years, although she was unable to attend services due to old age and ill health.

David Allan Wilson died on the 25th December aged 54. David was mentioned in the last issue of Scripture Standard. Although we had only known David for about a year, we were blessed by the times spent together. Please keep these families in your prayers.

Ruth Moyes, Secretary.

The true religion of Jesus Christ our Saviour is that which penetrates, and which receives all the warmth of the heart, and all the elevation of the soul, and all the energies of the understanding, and all the strength of the will.—*Gospel Broadcast.*

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is published monthly.

PRICE PER YEAR — POST PAID BY SURFACE MAIL

UNITED KINGDOM and COMMONWEALTH .....	£ 7.00
CANADA & U.S.A. ....	\$13.00

AIR MAIL please add £2.00 or \$3.00 to above surface mail rates

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DISTRIBUTION AGENT & TREASURER:

JOHN K. KNELLER, 4 Glassel Park Road, Longniddry, East Lothian, EH32 0NY  
Telephone: Longniddry (0875) 853212 to whom change of address should be sent.

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

"The Scripture Standard" is printed for the publishers by  
Lothian Printers, 109 High Street, Dunbar, East Lothian. EH42 1ES. Tel: (0368) 863785