

# *The* **SCRIPTURE STANDARD**

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

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## *Peace*

For three weeks now our newspapers, political magazines and wireless broadcasts have been filled with news of the United States-Russia-Cuba crisis. Especially in the first week of that crisis hopes and fears alternated. It was realised that at last what has long been feared might be coming upon us—nuclear warfare, with its known and unknown horrors. To use the term perhaps most in men's minds, we were "on the brink" This was it. Thanks to God, even those who had been busiest in building up their nuclear arms realised, with a clarity lacking when such warfare was theoretical discussion, what hasty decisions and wrong steps would lead to. They drew back. We are not in a position to know the inner workings of this crisis, but for the outcome we are all profoundly relieved and thankful.

It is not our aim in this article to dilate upon the political or military issues of that crisis. We have already read and heard enough of it, and much more is yet to be written upon it. But it did show the depth of longing in almost everyone's hearts for peace. Whatever their political or religious or national persuasions, almost all men desire the preservation of peace.

### **THE WORLD'S CONCEPTION**

Yet how very little in these past forty years have we experienced peace, even in worldly matters. In that period the world had passed through its two greatest wars. Not restricted wars, but worldwide—their official names are World Wars One and Two. Those of us old enough remember with what relief we heard the Armistice announced on November 11th 1918. We were optimistic then in believing that that had been "a war to end all wars," and that there was going to be built "a world fit for heroes to live in." Yet that war and its aftermath, "the Peace," sowed the seeds which grew into the second World War. The years from 1918 were but an uneasy and threatening interval terminating in 1939 in the still more terrible second World War. In 1945 that ended, but again the years since have been even more troubled and threatening than the years 1918 to 1939. We need not enlarge upon the fearful preparations for war which have been and are still being made since World War Two ended. The best that can be said for those years is that they have been less horrible than war.

Yet they are known as "the years of peace." For on the whole the world means by peace the absence of war. Maybe experience has made men cynical, so that, compared with war anything is preferable. Hence, to most people, peace is a negative quality, release from war. Both cannot be at the same time, so if there is not war there must be peace. Peace is not something in itself, positive, but the state when war is not raging. Peace between nations consists in their not being at war, even if there is no agreement, harmony or concord. Thus, great worldwide organisations like the League of Nations and the United Nations have been formed after the two World Wars, in which nations gather to "preserve the peace" and keep the world free from war. Yet we have seen these organisations used by nations to bring about their own selfish ends at the expense of others. These nations have not been at war, but they have shown little concern for each other. The peace between them is the absence of war.

## PERSONAL PEACE

So much for "international peace." There is another commonly held idea of peace, in the individual. He is looked upon as a man of peace who in times of disension, confusion or uproar keeps his head, maintains calmness. Thus Kipling says of him.

"If you can keep your head when all around you  
Are losing theirs, and blaming it on you."

We have all met the person, who when all around seems chaos, remains quite self-possessed. Dickens caricatures such a one in his *Bleak House*: Mrs. Jellyby sits at home writing her letters to the natives of far-off Borriaboola-Gha, in whom she takes an absorbing interest, while her own half-starved, ill-clad children play round her feet, and her poor husband, miserable, neglected, sits in his corner leaning his head against the wall.

But that is not individual peace. Peace is not that negative quality which does nothing when there is much to do. Peace is not the absence of conflict, but that which acts in the conflict; that which is not moulded by events but moulds the events. It is not a feeling of resignation, that we cannot do anything about things. It has been truly said that "the men who move the world are the men whom the world cannot move."

## The Peace of God

I once heard a preacher tell of an artist who painted a picture of a raging torrent, in its might carrying everything before it. He gave it the title "Peace"—a strange title indeed for such a scene. Yet, when one looked closer, on a stone in the midst of the torrent a tiny bird could be seen, singing merrily and quite unconcerned by the apparent danger and confusion all around it. I was reminded of this conception of peace when reading the life of the great preacher and Bible expositor, Dr. Campbell Morgan. He tells how he never understood the meaning of the term in Rev. 1:15, "His voice as the sound of many waters"—until he first stood above Niagara Falls. He was amazed at the mighty volume of water plunging continually over the cliffs into the vast depths below. But what most fastened itself upon his mind was not this vastness, but the colossal din of the falling waters. Every other sound was obliterated; everything else was shut out. But then he was aware of a profound sense of utter peace in the midst of that tremendous sound, a peace all the deeper by reason of that which might seem to destroy it.

Does not this illustrate to us the peace of God—not absence of war between nations; nor an inherent calmness or a natural characteristic? Paul speaks of this peace of God in Phil. 4:7: "And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." This is not a pious homily, but a powerful, positive statement. The closer we examine it, the more power we find in it.

This peace of God "passes understanding": people cannot understand it; even those who share it cannot, for it is "of God." It is God Himself given to us: the "God of peace" of whom Paul speaks in verse 9—a very remarkable transposition of the term—"peace of God"; "God of peace."

The peace of God "possesses us"; we do not possess it. It is from without, from God. Paul was writing to Philippi, a "colony of Rome" (Acts 16:12). For services rendered to the Empire at the battle of Philippi some 120 years before, the city had been honoured with many privileges. It was a specially strong point of the Empire. Daily guards, garrisons of soldiers, marched through the streets. They were a guarantee of the citizens' security, safety and peace. They were assured by the garrison; they put their confidence in it. Paul uses these truths as illustrating the state of the Christian kept by God's peace. That peace is a guard, a garrison, in which God's people can trust and be confident.

But this peace does not come automatically. Alas, we all know Christians whom it does not possess, or who show few signs of its possessing them! This verse is not meant to be treated as a "golden text," framed and separated from what goes before and what follows. The verse begins with the word "and." That links what Paul says with what he said previously. In verse 6 he writes, "Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And . . ." If the conditions are fulfilled the rest will follow. We are reminded of Peter's statement in his 2nd letter, chapter 1, verse 8: "For if these things are yours and abound, they keep you . . ." "These things" are faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, godliness, brotherly affection and love. Another way of stressing Christ's teaching: "Seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness and all other things shall be added." Show forth the virtues of Christ and the rest will follow. Confide in God continually in all

things, giving Him thanks as the "giver of every good gift and perfect boon," and "the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

The writer of those words knew what he was talking about. We cannot urge against him that he was in comfortable circumstances, needing nothing and having no reason for fear or anxiety. We cannot brush away what he teaches by saying that he would have written differently in our own world and times and experiences. Paul was writing as an old man from a Roman prison. He was hungry, cold and alone. Yet there is no complaint, although he is completely innocent of any crime other than preaching the love of God to men. Under such circumstances he writes from his own deep experience of "the peace of God."

Like "the crown of life" (2 Tim. 4:8) this peace is not for Paul only, but "also to all who have loved Christ's appearing."

Nor is this peace of God, which passes all understanding, a means of escaping from or refusing to face the awful realities of evil in the world. In the ultimate there are none so "practical" as Christians who know this peace. "If you want peace, prepare for war" we are told. Well, that is just what the powers of the world have done, and they have got it. Time after time the meeting of violence with violence has been proved futile. It demonstrates not who is right, but who is stronger. By that philosophy might is right. Even in the crisis through which we seem now to be passing we have heard often that it is wrong to talk about victor and defeated. The issues are too serious for such grandiose declamations. "In war, the only victors are the slain," a poet has written.

It is all a question of with what weapons Christians are to meet evil. These words of Paul give the answer—with prayer. This seemingly impractical means is the most powerful one of "pulling down the strongholds of sin." We are convinced that the prayers of God's people played a vital and decisive part in preventing the outbreak of World War Three a few weeks ago. We feel that now, and only eternity will reveal what God has wrought through the prayers and dedicated lives of His own.

EDITOR.

## *Origins and Growth of Denominationalism*

### VII: THE REFORMATION

THE name inseparably connected with the great Reformation of the 16th century is that of Luther. We should remember, however, that in 1356, fully one hundred and fifty years before Luther, our own John Wicliffe preached and wrote against Popery. His greatest work, the translation of the Bible into English, certainly paved the way for the Reformation.

However, in Luther's time, conditions were in every way more favourable towards the work that Wicliffe did. Two factors which helped Luther were:

#### 1. The Revival of Learning (The Renaissance)

At the height of her power Rome had never encouraged secular learning. Indeed, quite the opposite is the case. The only study that she tolerated was of a religious nature. But in the 15th century, all over Europe men began to desire more learning. They turned to the study of literature, particularly the Greek and Latin classics. This, in turn created an interest in the arts and sciences, and Rome began to suspect that this was an omen of trouble to come. She was right. In Italy itself the scholars were not interested in religion, but only in secular studies. However, in Western Europe, that is, England, France and Germany, and to the north, also in Switzerland, the awakened interest was more religious. Men began to study the scriptures in Greek and Hebrew and their studies brought to light the rotten foundation upon which Rome's edifice was built. The first doubts were sown and the first questions asked.

#### 2. The Art of Printing

Whoever the inventor of printing might have been—and there are many candidates for the honour—it is certain that its discovery revolutionised the method of disseminating knowledge. Previously, books had had to be copied out laboriously by hand, which meant that they were both rare and expensive. But the printing press changed all this.

It is significant that the first book to be printed was the Bible. And here the distinction goes to John Gutenberg, at Mainz, who in 1454 published his 42-line Bible. (Incidentally, this press is still working at Mainz, and one can purchase a

page of the 42-line Bible for a few shillings). When the Bible was placed in the hands of the people in this way, the Church of Rome regarded it as the work of the devil. And since the Scriptures themselves have always been the greatest enemy of error, studious men began to discover how far the Church of Rome was removed from the Church of the New Testament.

#### Luther finds the Bible

It was the Bible which opened Luther's eyes. The son of a German miner, he had out of deep spiritual distress become a monk, hoping to find salvation by following the prescription of Rome: penance, piety and physical suffering. But he had failed. Then, in 1505, in desperation he turned to one of the Latin Bibles his monastery at Erfurt had bought, and as he read the letter to the Romans he found the words, "the just shall live by faith." He did not know at the time where this would ultimately lead him, but the seed of truth began to germinate. As new thoughts on salvation came to him he wrote tract after tract explaining the doctrine of salvation by faith. Men were interested. His lecture-room at Wittenberg University was crowded with students, whilst people flocked to hear his sermons.

The crisis came when the Pope, Leo 10th, needed more money. His predecessor, Julius 2nd had left him an inheritance of 700,000 gold ducats (about £5 million today). To this Leo had added another £25 million, by selling positions in the church and appointing 39 new cardinals over the French Church. Yet, when he died, half the bankers in Rome were ruined and the jewels had to be sold from his tiara to pay his debts.

This man, then, sent a German monk, Tetzl, throughout Germany, selling indulgencies to raise money. The gullible people were informed that their sins were forgiven "the moment your money chinks in the Pope's chest." Luther determined to protest and, on 31st October, 1517, he nailed his famous thesis of 95 points to the door of his church in Wittenberg, a practice which, in those days, indicated that the holder of these views was prepared to defend them against all comers. This was the beginning of the Reformation.

#### The Principles of the Reformers

Bishop Cummins, writing of the Reformation, says, "Its essential basis was a return to primitive Christianity; a reformation or restoration of the life, faith, purity and spirituality of the apostolic church. Its great foundation stones were these:

- "1. The assertion of the sole and supreme headship of Christ over His church.
- "2. The exaltation of the Scriptures above all tradition or church authority, as the Word of God and the final arbiter in all controversies.
- "3. The restoration of the universal priesthood of all believers.
- "4. The restoration to its rightful place in the Christian system, of the doctrine of salvation by faith and not by works, showing salvation as coming from God and not from man.
- "5. The changing of the Mass of the medieval church into the Lord's Supper or Communion of primitive days."

Clearly, there is nothing wrong here. And had the reformers adhered to this plan all would have been well. But they failed because they attempted to achieve their goals by the wrong method. Instead of abandoning the Church of Rome, they sought to *reform* her, and reformation has always failed. It has invariably produced fresh division. Indeed, before the reformation was out of its swaddling clothes, so to speak, it began to split up into sects, and there were bitter rivalries among the reformers themselves.

The reformers stand indicted on the following counts:

(a) They affirmed the Bible to be their sole guide. Yet as early as 1530, Luther drew up the Augsburg Confession of Faith, thus causing division. And other Confessions were soon to follow.

(b) Whilst declaring there should be no Pope or human head over the Church, they bestrewed upon Kings and Emperors the position they denied the Pope. Since the Act of Supremacy was passed in 1534, in this country of ours the reigning monarch has been regarded as the head of the English Church.

(c) Having gained freedom from the bondage of Rome, they placed the Church under State protection. They created State Churches. If it was a sad day when Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire, what must we say of the action of the reformers in uniting Church and State?

(d) Whilst claiming to believe in the priesthood of all believers they did not uproot the priestly class, which their own commonsense ought to have told them was the source of much of their trouble.

(e) Though claiming to be guided by the Scriptures, they permitted many of the unscriptural practices of Rome to remain. They revered images. They sprinkled babies. They perpetuated the superstitions surrounding the Lord's Supper. Philip Melancthon, Luther's co-worker, was with him at Wittenberg when a group of people came asking for Bible authority for sprinkling babies. Melancthon said, "I fear that Satan has attacked us in a very tender place!"

(f) They also made the fatal mistake of following the evil example of Rome in resorting to the use of physical violence to force home their views.

Thus, whilst we are grateful for what the Reformation achieved, we cannot but be sorry when we think of what might have been done.

### The Lutheran Church

From all this the Lutheran Church emerged. We do not, at this time, intend to speak of the many rifts which appeared quite early among Luther's followers. We wish to restrict ourselves to the orthodox Lutheran Church, which today is the official religion of Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland, whilst having a large following in Germany and Switzerland.

1. **Origin.** Given officially as 31st October, 1517, when Luther published his theses.

2. **Name.** In spite of the fact that Luther said, "Leave my name alone . . ." ("Life of Luther," by Michelet, p. 262), the Church is proud to use his name. "After whom was the regenerated Church named?" "After Martin Luther . . ." (*Historical Lutheranism*).

3. **Rule of Faith.** Not the Bible alone, as we might have supposed, but the *Book of Concord*. This is a collection dating from 1580 and consisting of the nine following documents: The Apostles' Creed; the Nicene Creed; the Athanasian Creed; the Augsburg Confession; the Apology of the Augsburg Confession; the Schmalcald Articles; the Formula of Concord; and Luther's Smaller and Larger Catechisms.

4. **Her Doctrine.** (i) The Church is composed of different branches, which are the various denominations. (See John 15:1-6, where individuals are called "branches" of the True Vine).

(ii) The Lord's Day is the Christian Sabbath. (Ex. 20:10 says the Sabbath is the seventh day. Acts 20:7, speaks of the "first day of the week").

(iii) The "mode" of baptism does not matter. (Romans 6:4-5: "buried . . . in baptism").

(iv) Infants need to be baptized. (Matt. 28:18-19; Acts 2:38).

(v) "Original sin is the depravity which is born in us." (Matt. 18:3; Matt. 19:14; Ezek. 18:20).

(vi) The body and blood of Christ is with and in the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper. This is the doctrine of Consubstantiation.

(See Luke 22:19.—Christ was physically present "outside" the emblems).

(vii) The Ten Commandments are binding upon us today. (2nd Cor. 3:7-11. Notice that the "ministration of death, written on stones" has passed away).

FRANK WORGAN.

## Signs of the Times

AFTER the first great war—and perhaps before it—there was a saying passed to and fro as such sayings are: "The best is yet to be." Should the small spot of "light in our dark sky" signify the coming of disarmament, that saying of modern times will then indeed come true, as will the song of the angels which ushered in the birth of Christ: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace," also the ancient prophecy "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

In last month's article reference was made to a conference of scientists. They who had met from 35 different countries returned home, it is reported, with a definite mission: to discover before their next meeting, how disarmament could be achieved. This appears to be a new method of securing peace. Hitherto, the idea generally held by many people has been that the best security for peace is to be well prepared for war—security through strength. The new and better way to prepare for peace, is by getting rid of the weapons of war. A sign of sanity, surely?

Difficulties that lie ahead of such a programme are very great. For one thing, the economic problems of all nations—some more so than others—are bound up in the stranglehold of the manufacture of arms. The amount of money involved is



colossal: the livelihood of millions of workers would be directly affected. The solution of the problem would see the lifting of a terrible burden nations have to bear, and would go a great way to relieve that poverty and hunger of many millions of people referred to in last month's Editorial.

We dare to believe, despite difficulties, that in our sky there is a glimmer of light showing ahead of us—not so big as a "man's hand"—but it is there, and will grow. "Disarmament or Death," is a desperate alternative. With such a choice before them men can but choose to live.

The surprising thing, in view of what is taking place almost everywhere—in which people of all nations are involved—is the silent unconcern of so many about it. There seems to be little or no outcry against all the wicked things which are being said and done in our name. Religious magazines have little or nothing to say, or we would be told of it in the daily press. There is apparently no protest against the evil that is wrought by the making and testing of bombs, as though it is no business of ours what Governments do, nor the dangers in which their actions place the people they govern, and the world at large.

We think it to the credit of the "S.S." Editor that he has thought well to include articles bearing upon this nation's responsibilities in this matter. Two articles from daily papers have appeared. The first, a lamentation written by a Jew at the silence of religious leaders, about nuclear contamination. Apparently, this was received by us who read the magazine with the indifference that the writer complained of. So also with the second article, which had for its title, "This Outrage Against Mankind," dealing with the cultivation for war purposes of highly-infectious diseases. Whether the silence about these articles was one of agreement with their insertion or disapproval, one wondered.

Last month, quoting two lines from a hymn we used to sing at the time of the first great War, and wishing to confirm remembrance of its words, it was looked for in the new hymn book, but it was not included. There may have been good reasons for its omission, but this prophetic hymn, based on Isaiah's prophecy of a disarmed world, will be silent because of the inconvenience of its not being there just when—as never before in the world's history—disarmament is on the horizon.

Why does the Christian world wait in silence, and for what does it wait? For God, in mercy, to save us? Or if not to save us, to save this earth of His creation from desecration? What evidence have we that He will do anything to save mankind from its folly? Referring last month to the infinite knowledge of God, words of Jesus to His disciples were quoted: "Not a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father's knowledge." Yet the sparrow falls; and there it lies, to be removed by human effort or by the way nature provides. There is a silence of God about death.

As this truth bears upon what we wish to say, we may be allowed to illustrate from personal knowledge and from what history teaches, what we have in mind. In a certain church some few years ago, there was a man and his wife who had a daughter they greatly loved. She became ill, and in their growing concern they prayed fervently that the child might be spared to them. She died, and in the bitterness of their grief the mother was heard to exclaim: "God doesn't care." To their prayers He had been utterly silent, and the child's death was a great shock to them.

Early in the first War, there was in the church at Heanor a young brother, highly esteemed by all who knew him. He heard the call of his country, became a soldier and was sent to France. He had not been long there when he wrote home, "Mother, do pray to God to stop this dreadful war." It did stop—for him. He was killed in action very soon afterwards. Despite that mother's prayers, and the prayers of thousands of other mothers and fathers, that war went grinding on, only to cease, apparently, of its own inability to go on any longer. Through all those years, despite the prayers for its end to come—humanly speaking—God was silent, inactive, as though helpless before so great a calamity.

During those years, a book, written by a well-known public lady was reviewed in what was then the "Bible Advocate." It dealt with the great amount of slavery that still existed in various parts of the British Empire. Slavery was said to be the greatest crime that could be committed, the holding of human beings, body, soul and spirit in bondage by their fellow creatures. This has gone on almost from the beginning of time until now, and despite the cries that must have risen to God, as far as we can judge, He has never lifted a finger to save any one of its victims. Through all the years God has been silent about slavery.

Then there are those who—humanly speaking—had the highest claims on God that could be made—those martyrs of the faith, of whom we sing, "who met the tyrant's brandished steel, the lion's gory mane," dying because they believed in God, with God's name on their lips as they died. As far as we can know, God did nothing to save any one of them. He let them die.

What reasons have we, therefore, to believe that God will save us in the extremity of danger with which we are faced. What answer can we give to such a question?

It may be that Paul, because of the unique nature of his personal experience, had in a sense, to seek an answer to this question. Did he not see one, who—because he believed in God and His Christ—died a martyr's death, and for whose death he had some responsibility? Were his thoughts ever free from what he then saw? There were three parties to that event: God who allowed it, Paul (and others) who contrived it, and Stephen who suffered it, and the part each played must have raised, in a mind as active and keen as was Paul's, a three-fold question. Why? and an answer to each why?—to satisfy his own conscience—had to be, and doubtless was found. Becoming an apostle, he wrote inspired letters to churches, and to one of them—within what peculiar circumstances we are not told—he gave an answer to the question we are now putting to ourselves.

The church at Philippi stands out from other churches to whom Paul wrote, because of a real affection he had for its members, and they for him. He wrote to them (2:12) "Therefore, my beloved as ye have always obeyed . . . **work out your own salvation, in fear and trembling . . .**" Those to whom that was written, were in the faith, they had already yielded obedience to God, and were in a state of being eternally saved. They had shown themselves to Paul—a man of discerning mind—as faithful Christians, yet to them, there was a salvation they had not achieved, yet to be won there and then. **It was something that God could not do for them—they must do it for themselves, in fear and trembling, if need be.**

As Bible students will know, the passage, as quoted, is incomplete and therefore incorrect. What Paul wrote was this: "Work out your own salvation in fear and trembling, for *it is God that worketh in you* both to will and to do of His good pleasure." So that God is not truly silent, nor is He inactive, but in His wisdom He limits Himself to the inspiration of those who have a call to do His work. And there is the answer to our question. If this earth and life upon it is to be saved from the doom with which they are threatened, it is we—God's people, now living—who must save them—as the Philippians were instructed to do in their day. It is a salvation which must come from the declaration to men of whatever God's will for them is—and that cannot be done by standing aloof in silence, not by those who claim to be the servants—the ministers—of God.

That there is a salvation apart from that of the individual believer—one of "the earth"—is made abundantly clear in the full Gospel story. Jesus taught His disciples to pray for it! Thy [the Father's] will be done on earth as in heaven," the Kingdom was established on earth to produce it; Paul exhorted the Philippians to fight for it, pointing out the enemy to be fought to secure it; names them specifically and unmistakably. The enemy is not the world's hungry millions written about last month, nor is it the millions of "common" people the world over, who, if left to themselves would never combine to fight anyone. It is not those; it is not "against flesh and blood," that this fight is to be waged. The enemy as Paul plainly states are "principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places." How aptly do these words of Paul, written nigh on two thousand years ago, apply to this age. Do they not describe perfectly those responsible for the preparation of weapons intended for the annihilation of their fellow creatures in their homes and workshops in the cities of the world? Do they not describe the devilish nature of nuclear weapons, and those who allow themselves to be trained to carry out their frightful purpose? These are the enemies of man and of God, and it is against these that the fight must be waged, wearing the whole armour of God and armed with the sword of the spirit which is the word of God. That again we cannot do, and be silent—inactive.

Someone says: All this is pure politics. So it is! And being his words, Paul was therefore a spiritual politician, pleading the policy of God, calling upon us to stand by his side and fight, "with our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace."

There is a factor in this struggle of our times which, I believe, has never before appeared. The men who today represent the forces of evil of which Paul wrote are themselves stricken with fear. They are positively afraid of the weapons they have created. From across the Atlantic come words which express this fear, spoken to the class of men of whom Paul speaks, "the rulers of this world"—men of the United Nations. To them, President Kennedy said words we have quoted before: "The weapons of war must be abolished before they abolish us"—not intentionally, we suppose, having the personal application to his audience which can be read into his last word. In this land, as from the same fear, there are other words previously quoted, "Disarmament or Death." These declarations made by, and to, rulers of this world, are a self-condemnation for things already done and things being done. Our silence with respect to them is a betrayal of ourselves and of God and His Word.

W. BARKER

# SCRIPTURE READINGS

DECEMBER, 1962

2—Numbers 14:26-45	Hebrews 3
9—Psalm 95	Hebrews 4:1-13
16—Exodus 28:1-30	Hebrews 4:14 to 5:14
23—Genesis 22:1-19	Hebrews 6
30—Genesis 14	Hebrews 7

## "LEST WE DRIFT FROM IT"

(Hebrews 2:1)

HERE is a graphic word-picture of a ship held from drifting by her anchor. While the anchor holds fast she is perfectly safe. Our anchor cannot drag, but we may slip it (Heb. 6:19). So the Hebrew Christians, converted from their Jewish faith to faith in Christ, are safe if they pay close attention to "what they had heard"—the gospel, the message from God through His Son, their anchor.

However it would be easier to drift off, because they are being persecuted by their unbelieving brethren, and being made to feel, by reference to the older and longer-standing faith, as though they are holding to something unproved and less authoritative. The majority of the Jews are still holding to that faith, with its material, local and elaborate worship and ritual. We can almost hear what we hear sometimes about our own plea and position, "How can that faith be right which has so few adherents, and no official recognition or support by the established religious authorities"? They may thus be deceived into thinking they are suffering without justification. New Testament Christians now are quite clear of the Jewish influence which exercised so dangerous a power at that time, but the danger of discouragement is the same today for any taking an unpopular stand. There is a subtle enticement to take the easy road of giving way to digression, sinking convictions for the sake of love and peace.

It is a normal human propensity to avoid trouble at all costs, and therefore the position becomes critical when temptation is strong. Holding fast to the gospel as originally delivered and practised is and always will be hard work—only successful if undertaken with the whole heart and in fullness of faith. It has been said that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance, but it is just as true of real Christianity.

So the great letter we are now reading was written for the purpose of encouraging complete confidence in the new faith, and warning against the fearful consequences of going from it. The general theme is the superiority of Christ over Moses, as representatives of

the new and old faiths respectively. In the first two chapters the pre-eminence of the Son over angels is demonstrated, and His fitness to be High Priest proved by His taking human form, and suffering therein for sinners. Then, as throughout this letter, certain instructions are given following what has been proved. We take four of these, covering chapters 3 and 4.

Ch. 3:1. 1. **Consider Jesus.** Thinking of Jesus, pondering, meditating on His position as messenger of God (apostle) and leader (high priest), we find Him faithful to the commands given by the Father to accomplish our salvation. The church is His house—the household of faith, whereas Moses served in God's house—the tabernacle. It is plain that a Son is in a higher position than a servant. While we steadfastly contemplate Him, we shall hold fast to the truth.

Ch. 3:12. 2. **Guard against unbelief.** Daily encouragement of one another is the remedy against this danger. If doubts are allowed to enter the mind, it is easy to fall away further. Satan knew this when inspiring a doubt in Eve's mind as to what God had said, and thousands have lost faith through the word of doubters. We think we may compromise a little—"the deceitfulness of sin" is at work. Stop! remember at that very point that the secret is to hold to our original confidence. Tell one another this often, for we cannot continue to be partakers of Christ unless we maintain our full confidence to the journey's end. So keep on reminding one another that there is not the faintest doubt that New Testament Christianity is the only real faith. Accepting variations and modifications cannot but harden us against plain scriptural truths. The example of developing murmurings and doubts is clearly shown by the Jews in the wilderness who saw the impossible happen at the Red Sea after the plagues of Egypt, and were fed with manna, yet disobeyed, and failed.

Ch. 4:1. 3. **Fear failure.** This is not an ignoble fear but a wholesome wisdom to guard against failure through not being watchful. It may be too that through self-confidence we get indifferent to the gravity of the loss of heavenly rest. The earthly rest in Canaan was enjoyed by the children of the doubters, whom they said would be a "prey." The heavenly rest that remains for the people of God is more than the rest to their souls here in Christ. It is something so utterly enjoyable that we may be filled with holy fear of missing it through carelessness.

Ch. 4:11. 4. **Strive to enter the rest.** The different translations give "labour," "Give diligence," "strive," "be eager to know," and this certainly indicates we have to put effort into getting the rest



which God gives. Disobedience brought about failure in our illustration, and that disobedience developed through lack of faith. Application to the word of God and application of that word to our lives will bring us by the grace of God safely through our journey to the heavenly rest. That is our guide. God is surely our Helper.

Turning from these points the writer then most fittingly draws our attention to the High Priest who can sympathise with every human weakness, and enable us to wrestle successfully with every human problem. So we come back to our first point: "consider Him."

R. B. SCOTT.

## CORRESPONDENCE

IT is with deep regret that the church at Wendewende reports the sad deaths of our beloved brethren Mathias Montfort, Anny Kacingue and Harry Kapiri, who died here on 29th September, 1962, when the church roof fell whilst in the progress of the service. Then seven who were seriously injured are receiving medical treatments at St. Joseph Hospital and Chira Azuia Hospital. We have not as yet heard from the doctors of either hospitals as to their present condition. Brethren who visited hospitals this morning say that there is hope they will all recover.

The church at Wendewende has been mainly responsible for expenses incurred in the transportations of the casualties there and back from the hospitals. The bill tolls up and there is very little received from some congregations. Yet the church at Wendewende is financially poor to meet all that is required by the hospitals. Whilst we bitterly weep for those that lost their lives in this sad accident. We are also touched with pity for those who are still undergoing pain in the hospitals and the financial burden so pressing. Our appeal is for you to pray and help in this sad moment of ours.

We are thankful to hear from Bro. Winstanley that the church in Scotland is going to send us Nyanja Bibles. We are eagerly and patiently waiting for their arrival. We assure the church and Bro. Winstanley, that we shall abide by the instructions as to how they shall be distributed.

The work of the Lord on this soil continues to progress forward, despite our lack of white missionaries. Our appeal for missionaries remains fresh and is repeatedly coming to you from time to time. Brethren do pray for us.

E. C. SEVERE.

## For the Younger Ones.

### ARE YOU AN ANDREW?

THERE isn't a lot said about Andrew in the Bible, even though he was an apostle. But what we are told about him shows that he was a fine man. One day he was with John the Baptist when Jesus came along. John said, "There is the Lamb of God!" So Andrew followed Jesus and spent some hours with him. Then "he went and found his own brother, Simon, and said, 'We have found the Messiah' . . . and he brought him to Jesus." Notice what he did: (a) went and found Simon, then (b) brought him to Jesus.

Well now, are *you* an Andrew? Do you find, and bring others to learn about Jesus? I'm sure you attend meetings to study the Bible, to learn what Jesus taught and said and did. Well then, here's

### Something to do

Talk to your friends about the meetings you attend. Tell them what you learn there; tell them some of the wonderful stories of Jesus. Then ask them to come with you. Don't just say, "Come." Say, "Come with me." Some, like Peter (or Simon) will be glad to come. In this way you will be "an Andrew."

"Find another, find another,  
Just like Andrew found his brother.  
I another soul would bring,  
To the feet of Christ, my King."

### MISSING WORDS

CAN you supply the missing words?

(1) For . . . . . so loved the . . . . . that he gave his only begotten . . . . . that whosoever believeth in . . . . . should not . . . . . but have everlasting . . . . . For God sent not his . . . . . into the . . . . . to condemn the . . . . . but that the . . . . . through him might be . . . . . (A verse in John 3).

(2) Repent and be . . . . . every one of you in the . . . . . of Jesus . . . . . for the remission of . . . . . (A verse in Acts 2).

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Beulah Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield.**—We rejoice greatly that the Lord has added four more souls to the church. Keith Gore, grandson of Bro. and Sis. Hitchen, and Tom King, son-in-law of Bro. and Sis. Frank Longden, on Wednesday, 20th September, both confessed the Lord and were immersed into His name. Our souls were gladdened even more when Mrs. Marian Wilson, a young woman who had

been only a short while in touch with our assembly, also was immersed into Christ on Friday, 29th September. Her joy and ours was increased when her husband, David Wilson, also was baptised on 2nd October. It has been a wonderful time of reaping: our hearts are warmed and our faith and confidence in Him enlarged. We have seen His power and are thankful. May God bless the new servants and keep them in the true and living way. Tom Woodhouse.

**East Ardsley.**—The brethren celebrated their anniversary on Saturday and Sunday, October 27th and 28th. On the Saturday tea was taken when brethren from various sister churches met together. A goodly number gathered for the evening meeting, presided over by Bro. J. Robottom (Wortley), who gave a good lead to the meeting with a bold message on "Yielding Oneself to God." There followed two very strong and uplifting messages from Bro. Paul Jones (Birmingham) and Bro. Robert McDonald (Dewsbury).

On the Lord's Day, Bro. Jones served the church, when a time of uplift and blessing was enjoyed.

**Ilkeston.**—We rejoice to report another addition to our numbers. After the Gospel Service on Lord's Day, November 4th, Elsie May Gee, stepmother to Bro. H. Gee, asked to be immersed into the ever-blessed Name. Her desire was fulfilled on Wednesday, November 14th. May God richly bless her and keep her faithful as she enters the new life in service to her Lord F.G.

**Ince - in - Makerfield (Lancashire).**—From the 7th to 19th October we held "campaign for Christ" meetings, with Brother Dieter Alten from Hamburg, Germany, doing the preaching. The gospel was boldly proclaimed, and many visitors responded to the invitations which had been made through posters, handbills, newspapers, and personal workers, and so heard the Word.

We were greatly encouraged by the support of fellow Christians from near and far, and we are grateful to all who helped in any way.

Our hearts rejoiced as two of our Bible school scholars obeyed the gospel. Our two new brothers are Jack Jackson and Geoffrey Partington. To God be the glory. One young lady who attended our meetings continues to show interest by attending our mid-week Bible studies. Pray with us that she may become a Christian.

An outstanding feature of this campaign was a meeting held in Queen's Hall, Wigan, on Saturday, October 13th. This meeting was organised by the Albert Street, Scholes, and Ince churches, and was well worth the effort and expense. The estimated attendance was 300 and included in the number were about 80 visitors who are not members

of churches of Christ. A forceful address on "Christian Unity" was delivered by Bro. Alten. Much publicity was given to this meeting, including a B.B.C. announcement on its weekly programme "The Week Ahead."

**Kentish Town.**—We have enjoyed the services of Bro. Tom Nisbet during the months of September and October. Our brother took the full load of the preaching on Lord's Days and Wednesdays and exhorted the church in turn with other brethren. His visiting work in the neighbourhood resulted in several contacts and friendly intercourse with neighbours, so that meetings were larger than usual. Saturday meetings, the Autumn Rally, the Anniversary and final meetings on October 27th were encouraging, through the kind support of brethren from other churches. At the last of these Mrs. Esla Small made her decision. She was baptised on the Lord's Day, the last of our brother's ministrations. We rejoice in this and hope for further fruit to the effort.

**Summer Lane, Birmingham,** has just concluded an intensive mission. From 3rd to the 11th of November Brother C. Philip Slate, Wembley, has been serving us. Every one has been helped by his word and work in the Lord. We would like to thank the brethren from sister churches who came to support us on the two Saturday evenings. We pray that we may water aright the seed which has been sown, that in due course the Lord might give the increase.

It is a pleasure to announce that three young people were immersed on Lord's Day, 4th November. They were Marcella Mountford (the younger daughter of our school superintendent) with Marion and Jean Kendall (daughters of one of our deacons). On Saturday, 10th November, John Hardy, the son of our school secretary also obeyed his Lord. All four were received into fellowship on Lord's Day, 11th November. Praise be to God for these young souls. May they be kept from the evil one. P.J.

**Peterhead.**—We rejoice to report that Bertha Brown, a former pupil of the Sunday school, who has been attending our Gospel meetings for quite a while, made the good confession and was baptised on Saturday, November 10th. On the same evening, Elizabeth Cowie was restored to her Lord. We pray that this may be the beginning of a fruitful harvest. James Buchan.

**Wallacestone.**—The church here held its Annual Social Meeting, on Saturday, 20th October. There were approximately 160 brethren, representing 12 churches, present, also many non-members. The speakers were Bro. Jack Nisbet (Haddington) who spoke on "Faith-Fullness" and Bro. D. Dougall (Wallacestone)

who spoke on "Unity." We were also favoured with solos, duets, quartets, and choir pieces by brethren from the churches at Newtongrange, Motherwell, Slamannan, Kirkcaldy, and Wallacestone. A very profitable and uplifting time was had by all present, and much praise was offered to Him who merits it.

Gerald Fox.

## OBITUARY

**Brother James Holmes**, of Goole, passed away on Saturday, November 10th, after a short illness, aged 82 years.

Behind that bare announcement of his passing lies the story of one of the strongest defenders and advocates of the restoration movement of the Churches of Christ.

Brother Holmes was baptised and joined the Church at Birstall as a boy, and in early life, under the influence of some of the pioneer advocates of the restoration plea of the Churches of Christ, he quickly grasped the grandeur of our movement, and remained loyal to it to the end of his life.

Over 40 years ago, he was largely instrumental in forming the Church at East Ardsley, a Church which has continued to this day.

In the first world war, Bro. Holmes adopted the conscientious objectors' position, and spent some time in prison. Circumstances afterwards compelled him and his family to remove their home to Goole.

Bro. Holmes was a true Christian gentleman, a man that loved his Lord, and served Him most faithfully and devotedly. He loved the Word of God, and knew its contents well, and never compromised its teaching.

In earlier life he was a most acceptable preacher, his messages were carefully prepared, and delivered with a clear ringing voice.

In his isolation from the Churches, he was a very lonely man, especially after the loss of his wife, Agnes, of beloved memory who died a few years ago. He was a brave, courageous man, and his faith and trust in God never wavered. Many of the older brethren, will share with me, the loss we feel in the passing of such a stalwart follower of Jesus Christ, and will join with me, in expressing our deep sympathy with his son, Albert, and his wife in this time of bereavement.

J. Garnett.

### Bro. James Holmes (of Goole)

THE passing of Bro. Holmes removes another stalwart in the faith. I saw him only three times—first in 1933, at a meeting at Morley, then at his home at Goole and lastly at a Doncaster meeting along with Bro. Crosthwaite.

He was one of the small band of young

men in our churches who stood out against conscription in the first World War, and was imprisoned at Wormwood Scrubbs. As a result of his stand he lost his job, and upon return had to find another means of earning a living—no mean task in those lean years following the war.

He wrote a splendid letter, both in substance and style, even in his advanced years. In fact, his writing showed little or no sign of age.

It was unfortunate that for many years he was in isolation at Goole, with no opportunity for fellowship. It is a sobering thought that the small band of brothers and sisters in Christ who, for many long years, fought so valiantly for truth, and in difficult days, becomes less and less.

A. L. Frith.

I WISH to add my own appreciation of our late Bro. James Holmes. My first meeting with him was the same occasion as Bro. Frith's last—at Doncaster in March, 1953. I had then heard something of him, and had corresponded with him over the new Hymn book. When I lived in south Yorkshire for a few years, and especially after I became editor of the "S.S." in 1955, we wrote each other more regularly, and I found it possible to visit him occasionally in Goole.

Those visits, for the talks we had on the deep things of the Spirit and on past history of the churches of Christ, are among my most precious memories. I last met Bro. Holmes five-and-a-half years ago, and I remember that on parting I recited the verse of the hymn.

"And if we meet no more  
On Zion's earthly ground,  
O, may we reach that blissful shore  
To which all saints are bound."

We did not meet any more; but we are equally certain that we shall meet again, never to part.

I remember especially his boyish blue eyes, in their frankness and wonder showing his childlike character and simple faith.

Bro. Frith mentions his handwriting. It was evidence of a noble and beautiful character. His letters were a joy to receive, and his smile a blessing.

"As some rare perfume in a vase of clay  
Pervades it with a fragrance not its own,  
So when Thou dwellest in a mortal soul  
All heaven's own sweetness seems around it thrown."

To the end Bro. Holmes was deeply interested in and concerned for that cause for which he had stood so firmly, yet without a shade of harshness—the churches of Christ. He suffered as a Christian: his following of Christ cost him much. But in this life he received in blessings and peace far more than he had lost for Christ's sake, and we know that in the world to come he has everlasting life.

Editor.

**A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER**

MAY we respectfully draw readers' attention to the need there is to renew their subscriptions.

The "Standard" is published at 8d. per copy, plus 2½d. postage. For one year that is 10/6d. If two copies are taken together 18/6d. per year, three copies 26/6d. To Canada and the States \$1.50c. per copy per year. Dollar bills are greatly preferred, because cheques drawn on U.S. and Canadian banks lose about 10 per cent when cashed in England.

Mission stations and brethren who receive free copies should acknowledge same once a year, if they wish to continue receiving the paper.

It will be necessary to cease sending copies where the subscription has not been renewed during the past three years, and no acknowledgement received during this period.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR 1963**

AS announced last month, Bro. R. B. Scott is again compiling the list of suggested readings and will write the notes. Church secretaries and others who require reading cards should apply to Paul Jones, 41 Pendragon Road, Birmingham 22B, stating number required and enclosing cost of postage and one penny for each card.

**Ince - in - Makerfield (Lancashire).**—Please note new times of meetings on Lord's Days: 10.30 a.m. Bible Classes, 11.30 a.m. Breaking of Bread, 6.0 p.m. Gospel Preaching.

**NOTICE**

Will any Church desirous of entertaining the Spring Conference or Autumn Rally, 1963, please communicate with Bro. R. McDonald, "Aldersyde," 10 Mardale Road, Bennett Lane, Dewsbury, Yorks?

**COMING EVENTS**

**Slamannan District.**—The New Year's Social Gathering of the Churches will be held (D.V.) in the Slamannan Church Meeting House, on Tuesday, 1st January, 1963, at 12 noon.

Speakers: Bro. E. Jess (Dalmellington), Bro. A. Winstanley (Tunbridge Wells). Chairman: Bro. Joe Nisbet (Tranent). All welcome.

**Ince - in - Makerfield (Lancashire).**—Gospel Effort, April 12th to April 21st, 1963 (D.V.). Preacher: Bro. Gary Adams (Holland).

This effort will include the holiday weekend (April 12th-15th), when we are planning additional meetings and activities with special interest for young Christians.

Amongst other activities Brethren A. E. Winstanley and Frank Worgan will be conducting discussions on the following subjects:— "The Christian's attitude to modern amusements," and "The Christian's attitude to war." Monday afternoon, April 15th, a ramble will be organised. Early notice of these meetings is announced to enable young Christians (and older ones, too), to plan to be with us. Accommodation will gladly be arranged if you will write, giving details, to Bro. Brian Stevens, 2 Wigan Road, Ormskirk, Lancashire. Fuller details later.

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Articles, letters, appeals etc. for insertion must be sent before the 10th of the month to the Editor, **C. MELLING**, 133 Long Lane, Hindley, Lancs. News items, obituaries, coming events, personal notices, change of address, etc., to **W. BARKER**, Station Road, Eangley Mill, Nottm. Payments to **PAUL JONES**, as above.

**EVANGELIST FUND:** Contributions to **R. McDONALD**, "Aldersyde," 10 Mardale Road, Bennett Lane, Dewsbury, Yorks.

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

**NYASALAND Mission:** Contributions to **W. STEELE**, 31 Niddrie Road, Portobello, Edinburgh, Mid Lothian.

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