

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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## FALLING AWAY AND RESTORATION

HEBREWS chapter 6, verses 1 to 8 is one of the most terrible passages in the Bible. We are apt to think that the "God of the Old Testament" is very different from the "God of the New." Whereas in the O.T. we think God is portrayed as vengeful, merciless, stern and harsh, in the N.T. He is shown as kindly, loving, merciful and forgiving. It is popular to adopt the idea that Jesus changed the picture of God by revealing Him as very different from Him who in the O.T. appears as Judge and as He who punishes His people for their sins.

But this is a superficial and false view of the Bible. In the O.T. are passages every bit as lovely as any in the New in showing God as compassionate, "slow to anger and plenteous in mercy." And conversely in the N.T. we have statements, some of them from the mouth of Jesus himself, every bit as dreadful and threatening as any in the Old. He is the same God in both Testaments, under both Old and New Covenants. He changes not, but He does manifest himself in different ways.

The very reading of Heb. 6:1-8, without any exposition in detail, is sufficient to strike terror into the hearts of readers. It was intended to show that "God is not mocked," that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," that "our God is a consuming fire" and that "all things are bare and open in the eyes of him with whom we have to do." Scholarly and devout Bible expositors have tried to soften its meaning. This is not to say that they are guilty of "watering down" this passage to show it in a softer light, or that it does not really mean what it seems to say. But there is a strong tendency, in the attempt to place such fearful statements in their setting, to explain that what is written applies only to those of biblical times and not to us. For instance it is said that we cannot commit "the unpardonable sin," or the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. So as regards Heb. 6:1-8: in our days we cannot be guilty of such falling away as in those first days of Christianity, and therefore it is never impossible to restore "to repentance." In other words, it can't happen to us.

### Addiction

It may seem an outrageous and irrelevant change of subject to refer here to what is termed addiction. There are various kinds of addiction, which are growing alarmingly in the world. Foremost to the mind comes addiction to drugs, or to cigarette smoking, or to gambling. These are comparatively new phenomena, and only now are their awful power and their dreadful consequences being realised. It is true that addiction is treated more and more as disease. But even so, the results obtained by medicinal treatment of addiction are meagre, frustrating and disappointing. For addiction is a compulsive indulgence in what is harmful, and to break off is an agonising experience which very few can endure. The addict *must* go on, or so he feels, for it means life to him. In reality it means death, after the complete disintegration of the man, in which he loses

all sense of decency, responsibility and humanity. He has become a slave to that to which he is addicted. The smoker must have his cigarette at the expense of everything else; the alcoholic his drink; the gambler his bet.

And this terrible end had its beginning in the first puff, the first drink, the first bet. Never did the addict intend that he should become a slave of that in which he indulged. But, as a "Wayside Pulpit" said: "Sin first comes as a visitor; then it stays as a guest; and finally it becomes the master of the house." "Can you see that cigarette?" said an art master in control of a college department, "That's my master." The addict likes to think he is in full control, and the terror is that he doesn't know he is losing his control. One of the fearful things about addiction is that others see the deterioration when the addict himself thinks he is on top of the world, master of himself. Often the smoker thinks that, if he wants, he can give up at any time; the drinker feels he is driving with complete control and efficiency when all the time he is a menace to himself and others; the gambler knows that he has a system that will infallibly bring him wealth in the end; having lost almost all, he imagines that the little he has left will turn the scale. Things are always going to come out right, but they never do. The addict thinks "It can't happen to me," but it does happen to him.

### The Secret Growth of Sin

And this brings us back from our seeming digression to our main subject. Whatever exposition we make of Heb. 6:1-8, whether the one falling away be finally and irrevocably lost or whether, by the grace of God he finally returns to God, one thing is certain: it is that his falling away was not a complete and intentional turning from God, but that it began little by little. Remember, the words are written not to the out-and-out sinner, "the lost," but to Christians. To "those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God, and the powers of the age to come." If those who had had such experiences needed warning against falling away, all Christians certainly do. The warning means it can happen to me, and to the very greatest of us. Paul was careful lest, "after having preached to others, I myself should become a cast-away." He warned, "Let him who thinks he stands be careful lest he fall."

Sin asserts its mastery over man not blatantly and demonstratively, but little by little, insidiously. Often we hear it said that in anything, smoking, drinking, drug-taking, gambling, "it's the abuse of it, not the use of it" that leads to trouble and makes it wrong. The simple answer is that the use leads to the abuse. If the practice had never been started its results would never have followed.

The same applies spiritually. Bro. John Scoullar of Glasgow, a splendid Bible expositor of many years ago, used to say, "All falling away begins with absenting oneself from the Lord's table." If we look back over our own experiences of church backsliding we shall find this is largely true. Probably not in every case, for there are other symptoms of falling away—distaste for prayer; for Bible study; for fellowship with one's brethren even apart from the Lord's table; disinterest in the things of God; criticism of the church and its members—attempting to blame others for my own shortcomings. When these Christians first showed such signs they never intended to break from God and His church. But each absence from meetings made easier the next, and made it harder to resume the fellowship. The result is that such a Christian becomes more and more involved in the world which crucified his Lord, and himself is crucifying Christ afresh, as Hebrews puts it. As long as he is living so he cannot be renewed to repentance, he cannot grow into maturity.

### Not Some Time — But Now

Too often God is taken for granted. It is appalling to observe the nonchalant way in which even Christians go about their Lord's business. Any time will do; "time is on our side." We act as though the whole future is ours and we can choose the proper time when we take up in earnest our service of God. Next week, the week following, or some other time—"Lord I will follow thee, but first . . ." This is not imagination, but fact. We remember visiting a former Bible school colleague; the time was early December.

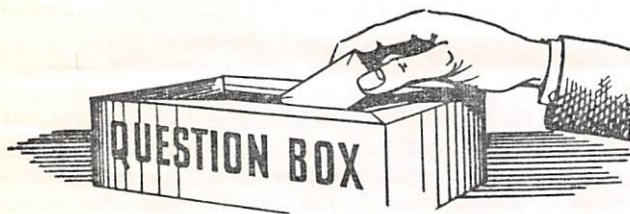
He promised us that he was waiting for the New Year, when he intended to resume his fellowship in the church. That was thirty-five years ago, and the man is still to make his appearance. A few weeks' time has grown into thirty-five years, without action. Recently with a fellow elder we called on a man who had not been present at meetings for about twenty years. When we spoke of his hoped-for return among us he smiled and said "I'll think about it." On leaving the house we said to the brother visiting with us, "Do you know, I remember he's been saying 'I'll think about it' for the past twenty years!"

There is a saying that "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." Good intentions, but never acted upon.

In this same epistle, still writing to Christians, the author says, "Today, when you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts." Today, now. If we are falling or have fallen away, now is the time to return. If we never take the first step towards being lost, if we "abstain from all appearance of evil," we shall never be in any danger of finally being beyond possibility of renewal to repentance.

The way is pointed out whereby we can keep ourselves from falling. Reading on in Heb. 6 we find this way of escape: "Though we speak thus, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things that belong to salvation. For God is not so unjust as to overlook your work and the love which you showed for his sake in serving the saints, and still do. And we desire each of you to show the same earnestness in realising the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

EDITOR




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Conducted by  
James Gardiner

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**"The bible teaches that two elements should be on the Lord's table—the bread and the fruit of the vine. Is it not so, therefore, that those who insist on the use of one cup are guilty of saying that three elements are necessary on the table—the bread, the fruit of the vine and the container. Are there three elements on the table or two?"**

We occasionally come across this question these days, and although some of the brethren may feel that the "cup question" has been fully discussed already, I shall try briefly to make a few helpful remarks. It is perhaps a fitting comment on the state of the churches today and the permissive attitude to God's word in these times, that the view that one cup should be used on the Lord's table is now often regarded as old fashioned, ill informed and a view usually held by the "backward brethren." It is passing strange also that many of us held the view quite strongly until fairly recent times, but now the above question is not uncommon. The word of God has not changed: some of the leading brethren in this country have changed, and no doubt 'new light' has become available. I confess to being simple minded enough to believe that if we follow Christ's example in all things we can't go wrong. It should be remembered that when all the discussion is over, about the number of elements on the table and all the rest of it, no one can point a finger at those who endeavour to follow the example of Jesus, given to us in the New Testament, and say that they "do err" who use one cup at the Lord's table. The grave doubt hovers over, not the use of one cup, but the use of a multiplicity of containers at the Lord's table.

The objection raised by the question is not directed towards the use of one cup, of course, but towards the *insistence* of some that only one should be used. I personally

fail to see how we can do other than insist upon that which we believe to be the New Testament mode of carrying out an ordinance of God. I always understood that members of the Lord's body were committed to sweeping all the inventions, devices and innovations of man aside, and to striving to restore New Testament Christianity in all its beauty and simplicity. I confess I have never been able to see how incorporating into the worship the recent invention of a Presbyterian minister was a step in this direction, and I never cease to be amazed that New Testament Christians would have anything to do with such a clearly modernistic departure from the New Testament pattern.

### **"Whatsoever He Saith Unto You, Do It"**

I may say that it is not incumbent upon those who use one cup, or insist upon the use of one cup, to say whether there be two elements or three elements on the table. When *Jesus* instituted the feast He passed the bread and He passed *a cup* containing fruit of the vine to His disciples, and *He* said, "This do." If I do what *Jesus* did I cannot possibly err. If I adopt the system invented by a Presbyterian minister I may very well go very far wrong. If the use of one cup involves *three* elements, as per the question, then three elements were on the table *two thousand years ago* when Christ instituted the feast, and the fact has not, apparently, given rise to any worries until within the last few years or so. Brethren in this country have for many years been using one cup at the Lord's table and have never given a thought as to whether two or three elements were involved. Quite frankly I never realised for a moment that following the example of *Jesus*, in the matter of the Lord's table, was beset with such dangers. I insist upon the use of one cup because *Jesus* used one cup, and whether I can see any reason for His choice of vessel or not, I am prepared to follow His example. The apostle Paul was also of the view that the ordinances of God should be observed as originally given, and should not be tampered with in any way—and he included the Lord's table in his contention (1 Cor. 11) "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you brethren that ye remember me in all things and keep the ordinances *as I delivered them to you.*" He goes on to correct some on the "head covering" question, and then gives correction to some for irregularities taking place at the Lord's table. He had already given instruction on how the Lord's table was to be conducted and he goes on to reiterate the fact that it was most important that they should observe the feast *in the manner shown by Jesus at the institution of the feast.* Paul insisted upon it—why should not we? Paul goes on to explain why he is insistent: "For I have *received of the Lord* that which also I delivered unto you . . ." Paul was not, of course, present with the disciples at the institution of the feast and did not see what took place, but *Jesus* revealed it specially to him. And what did *Jesus* reveal to Paul? He revealed in precise detail exactly what He (*Jesus*) had done at the institution of the feast, Paul's account being exactly similar to the gospel records. *Jesus* passed the account to Paul and Paul passed it to the Corinthians with the admonition that they continue to strive to keep the ordinances *as they were delivered.* I believe that today as well, we should strive to keep God's ordinances exactly as they were delivered to men by Christ and His apostles. Is it not presumptuous of man to superimpose upon the simplicity of Christ the invention of some fellow-man and to introduce it into a holy ordinance of God?

### **The Fruit of the Vine and the Cup of the Lord**

If therefore the use of one cup incorporates a third element on to the Lord's table that "third element" has been there for almost two thousand years. Does, however, the insistence upon one cup upon the Lord's table constitute a third element upon the table? I don't think that it does. It must be remembered, I suggest, that "fruit of the vine" is not always, or indeed often, synonymous with the "cup of the Lord." It is inaccurate, in my view, to say that the two elements on the table are bread, and fruit of the vine. I would suggest that on the Lord's table we have "*bread*" and "*the cup of the Lord.*" The fruit of the vine is not "the cup of the Lord" in isolation. The fruit of the vine could be contained in a barrel in a wine cellar, and in that place and vessel it could not be described as "the cup of the Lord." Similarly it could be contained in a bottle on the shelf of a wine shop: in that place and vessel it could not be described as "the cup

of the Lord." The fruit of the vine is not "the cup of the Lord" until it is contained in a cup and on the Lord's table, and is blessed and dispensed. We could proceed a step farther and visualize a situation, ridiculous though it may be, where the previously mentioned barrel is placed on the Lord's table, or the bottle is taken from the shelf and placed on the Lord's table. In either case we have a situation where "*fruit of the vine*" is on the Lord's table, but "the cup of the Lord" isn't. I believe therefore that this element called "fruit of the vine" requires some qualification, and that it is not sufficient to say that the two elements on the table are bread and "fruit of the vine." In my humble view, therefore, the two elements on the Lord's table are bread and "the cup of the Lord," and the vessel (cup) is *not a third* element but an integral part of the second.

When we have non-members present at the breaking of bread at Haddington we often try to point out to them that the churches of Christ desire to get back to the simplicity of New Testament times and to restore to the world the purity and simplicity of such holy ordinances as the Lord's table. I personally don't think we could honestly make this claim and at the same time have twenty or thirty "cups" reposing on the table (and have to explain to the curious visitor that the "cups" owed their existence not to any New Testament precedent but were fairly recent innovations patented by a Presbyterian clergyman).

I hope these few comments will not give offence to anyone but rather will be a means of stimulating further serious thought on the matter, especially when our avowed intention is to restore Christianity "*as it was at the beginning.*"

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(Please send more questions to: James R. Gardiner, 88 Davidson Terrace, Haddington, East Lothian, Scotland)

## WILL TOMORROW BE DIFFERENT ?

IT was New Year's Eve. The winter sky was clear and the evening air crisp as little Tommy and his parents walked hand-in-hand towards the lighted church at the far end of the street.

After several moments of thoughtful silence the boy looked up at his mother and earnestly inquired, "Mummy, will tomorrow *really* be different ?"

Not sure what was in his mind his mother asked, "Why—what do you mean ?"

"When daddy was reading at the supper table tonight," Tommy explained, "he said that tomorrow God would give us a brand new year. Will He ?"

"Yes, dear, it will be a brand new year," she assured the inquiring five-year-old.

Tommy thought awhile, and then with the brilliant insight reserved only for candidates for kindergarten, he inquired eagerly, "Well, if it's new, will it be different ?"

Perhaps each of us would do well to ponder Tommy's question. Will the brand new year ahead be any different from the old ? Or will it be merely a carbon copy, a repeat, a rerun of the year now coming to an end ?

Our heavenly Father does not expect the new year to be the same as the old. Not for those who will spend the new year in the fellowship of His Son ! For them He expects the coming year to be not only new but also *different*.

He expects next year to be different for you and me, because we are to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). We are to "grow up into him who is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:15).

For those who are growing up in Christ the future can never be exactly the same as the past. Each day, each year, is different. Each day, each year is richer in the

personal experience of His grace. For with every passing scene of life the believer is *growing up* into the stature of Jesus Christ His Saviour.

We are not doing violence to the words of Paul if we paraphrase them to read: "Therefore if any man is in Christ he is constantly becoming a new creature; old things are constantly passing away; all things are constantly becoming new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

And so, to little Tommy's question we would answer: "Yes, the brand new year which God will give us tomorrow will be different."

It will be different because you and I and all who believe in Jesus are going to do everything we possibly can, with God's help, to make it different.

(From "GIVE YOUR LIFE A LIFT" by H. W. Gockel. London: Concordia Publishing House, 1968. 32/-).

## "PROVE ALL THINGS"

Turning to 1 Thess. 5:21 we find these words: "But prove all things, hold fast that which is good." Now here is a test of the wisdom of studying our New Testament on a one text basis and attempting to edify either the church or oneself. For it goes without saying that, if there is one thing we cannot do, it is to "prove all things." Therefore we walk by faith. Paul writes, "By faith we understand the ages (Patriarchial and Mosaic) were set in order by the word of God" (Heb. 11:3). No one of us can prove it. "No man can say Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3), and this to converted idolaters. They would need the testimony of the Holy Spirit to prove it, and this could only be obtained through the Apostles, and by ourselves through their writings.

In our own experience we have heard and read of many attempts to prove this that and the other, with no one any the wiser. Look at the attempts to prove the existence of God. It is wearying to read them. Take Gen. 1:1—"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Here is something for all to think about. Some say that Moses is taking the existence of God for granted making no attempt to prove it; others that God revealed this fact to Moses at some time; others that there were writings handed down from the Patriarchs containing this information.

It needs no stretch of the imagination to see that such language could not be used to, nor understood by, anyone except they had a revelation from God. This also applies to Heb. 1:1—"God having of old time spoken unto the fathers. . ."

When Paul is at Athens addressing the philosophers he is careful to address them as those having no revelation from God. Starting from their own standpoint of "an unknown God" he is able to say, "The God that made the world . . ." (Acts 17:24). How could he address them as those of Heb. 1:1? Compare Acts 14:15 and 1 Thess. 1:9, where it is a case of "turning to the Living God."

Another thing to be observed in the reply of Paul is his declaration that this God is to be sought (Acts 17:27). Here again we come up against persons of one-text mentality who quote Job 11:7—"Canst thou by searching find out God?" No, say they. Yes, says Paul. But who is speaking in Job 11:7? Not Job but Zophar, and what has God to say about him?—"Ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, as my servant Job has" (Job 42:7). Then why listen to him?

This seeking works both ways. Says Ezra, "The hand of our God is upon all them that seek him for good" (Ezra 8:22). Says Jesus, "For the Father seeketh such to worship him" (John 4:23). Should anyone call to mind Rom. 3:11, he will see that Paul is showing the extent to which the Jew had degenerated, for in Rom. 9:22 he says, "vessels of wrath fitted for destruction," and it is all he can say.

"Prove all things," says Paul. What things? Before this directive we have that little connecting word "but": this follows another directive, "Despise not prophesy-

ings," which would apply to those who had the gift of prophecy. They could prophecy but these were to be proved. "What?" say some, "attempting to prove what a gifted prophet uttered?" Well, they evidently said good and bad things for others to hold fast to the good. Besides if the Apostle John is to be heard upon this topic we shall be instructed, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are from God: because many false prophets have gone forth into the world" (1 John 4:1). Who would do the proving? Of course, those having the gift of "discerning of spirits" (1 Cor. 12:10), and how necessary: "false teachers" (2 Peter 2:1); "false brethren" (2 Cor. 11:26); "false prophets" (Mark 13:22; 1 John 4:1). There were those who said the resurrection is past. What is Paul's counsel: to debate? No, but to "stand aloof from" and not discuss the matter (2 Tim. 2:16-18). What is the counsel of the Apostle John to a sister in Christ should a false teacher come to her door? Invite him in to debate?—"Receive him not into the house" (2 John 10).

Some will refer us to Jude 3, that we are "to contend for the faith." It should be observed that the Greek word here translated "contend" is not the same as that of verse 9. It is only found this once in the New Testament. The word in verse 9 concerns matters in dispute—in this case the body of Moses. That of verse 3 is more of a "defence" for the purity of the faith internally in the church. This purity of faith to be maintained against all attempts of false brethren. Those who were "sensual, not having the spirit" (verse 19), those who had "come in by stealth" and those who made a "denial of Christ" (verse 4), who are described as "rocks" whose design was to make "shipwreck" of the faith of humble souls. It was these they were to contend against, that the church might be without spot or any such thing. "Prove all things" says Paul to those who had the power to do it.

The Master had to contend with those who demanded proof of their own choosing: "If thou be the Son of God come down from the cross" (Matt. 27:40); "Teacher we wish to see a sign from thee" (Matt. 12:38), wilfully ignoring all the proof that had been presented to them.

Whilst to "prove all things" applies to those able to do it, we can all be fully engaged in acting on the advice of Paul in Gal. 6:4: "But let each one prove his own work."

ALFRED JACKSON

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### OCTOBER 1969

5—Psalm 40	Heb. 9:23 to 10:18
12—Exodus 25:1-22	Heb. 10:19-39
19—Genesis 4:1-16	Heb. 11:1-22
26—Exodus 3:1-17	Heb. 11:23-40

### SHADOW AND REALITY

(Hebrews 10:1)

IT is evident that the writer of "Hebrews" had a great respect for the Law of Moses. There was never any question as to its divine origin and authority. So the term "shadow" would at first sight appear to be inconsistent. A shadow is a very imperfect representation of anything—merely a shape. We have only to consider some of the words of Jesus in this connection (e.g. Matt. 23:2; Luke 16:31; John 5:45) to

recognise that the writer is not belittling the Law, but is contrasting it with a much more wonderful revelation. We might compare the view from inside a tunnel with the view from a mountain top, or the heavens seen by the naked eye (wonderful enough in all conscience) and seen through a powerful telescope. The apostle Paul writes of "seeing through a glass darkly" in comparison with seeing face to face. Such is the glory of the Old Covenant compared with the New.

We read in Exodus chapters 25-31 and 35-40 the instructions for construction of the Tabernacle. The whole design originated with God and was to be carried out with the utmost human skill, and exactly. There were priests and sacrifices of all kinds among the nations around, but the arrangements for Israel were absolutely unique. We are not surprised to find in them a foreshadowing, in almost innumerable details in material and ceremonial

points, of the New and Better Covenant through Christ our Lord. Perhaps the most striking contrast with the heathen religions was the complete absence of idols, the insistence upon the invisible, almighty and all-seeing God, creator of heaven and earth.

Accompanying the central place of worship was the insistence upon purity of life. The view of sin as dirt, defilement and productive of death, and insistence upon cleanliness of body, clothes, buildings, utensils, is up-to-date indeed. We could do with some shamefastness and sobriety, too, as required generally by the Law and as demanded especially of the priests and any who approach to worship. How great a contrast all these ordinances were to anything else in the world of that time!

Every feature of the ceremonial placed supreme importance on the deadly nature of sin. What we would regard as extreme severity marks many of the requirements of punishment. "Every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution" (Heb. 2:2). The gravity of sin was more-over symbolised in particular by the demand for blood in expiation. "Almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (9:22). Here is a shadow which yet is a reality—the penalty for sin is death, so in place of himself the sinner has to present another life, that of one of his animals. From a moral and spiritual view this could not annul the sin. Obedience to the law in this respect saved the sinner by substitution, but still the Day of Atonement continued and all the daily sacrifices to keep the relationship with God right, and maintain the consciousness of sin. We cannot see, as the new Jewish converts to Christ did, the glory of the Old Covenant. The material glories of Temple and Priesthood were a reality to them, and the spiritual and eternal realities had if anything a discouraging effect, for they "endured a hard struggle with sufferings, sometimes being publicly exposed to abuse and affliction" (10:32).

#### Faith with Works is Alive

(James 2:17)

The invisible God had for them a material representation in a nation and a form of worship. Having been enlightened

by the gospel, and having witnessed the wonders of the new age—miracles wrought by the apostles, the work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, a Saviour exalted to God's right hand in glory beyond human sight—trust in temporal things is replaced by faith. Temptation to revert to the material religion of forms and ceremonies would be strong, and so we must realise the surpassing glory of a High Priest Who has entered into heaven through victory over sin and the offering of a perfect life in sacrifice. How "weak and beggarly" in comparison to the heavenly glory is the "glory and beauty" (Ex. 28:2) of a human High Priest, a sinner like ourselves, presenting animal blood and incense in a Temple with purely material objects, only feebly representing the spiritual realities.

Our readings this month bring us the most solemn warnings, and bid us not to be moved by material advantages or disadvantages. These are the things which draw Christians away from God, produce divisions and lead to loose living. There are repeated exhortations to set our hearts upon heavenly realities. We can see the need, if we are to be like the heroes of faith, to look earnestly to the coming of the Lord Jesus. "Self-expression" is the obsession of a permissive society, but self-denial is the order of the Commander-in-Chief—and He exercised it in supreme measure: "therefore God has highly exalted Him" (Phil. 2:9).

R. B. SCOTT

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#### THE ANT AND THE STRAW

A biologist tells how he watched an ant carrying a piece of straw which seemed a big burden for it. The ant came to a crack in the earth which was too wide for it to cross. It stood for a time as though pondering the situation, then put the straw across the crack and walked over on it.

What a lesson for us. The burden can become the bridge to progress.

*"Good Reading"*

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#### WILL HISTORY REPEAT ITSELF?

Edward Gibbon in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," published in 1788, sets forth five basic reasons why



that great civilisation withered and died. These were:—

1. Undermining of the dignity and sanctity of the home, the basis of human society.
2. Higher and higher taxes; spending of public money for free bread and circuses for the populace.
3. The mad craze for pleasure; sports becoming more exciting, more brutal, more immoral every year.
4. Building of great armaments when the enemy was within—the decay of individual responsibility.
5. Decay of religion, faith fading into mere form, losing touch with life, losing power to guide the people.

The warning "History repeats itself" has an ominous meaning in the light of the above.

"The Truth"

#### A PRAYER TO "CLOSE THE DAY"

The camel at the close of day  
Kneels down upon the sandy plain,  
To have its burden lifted off,  
To rest again.

My soul, Thou too should'st to thy  
knees  
When daylight draweth to a close,  
And let thy Master lift thy load,  
And grant repose.

Else, how can'st thou to-morrow  
meet,  
With all to-morrow's work to do,  
If thou the burden through the  
night  
Dost carry through?

The camel kneels at break of day  
To have its guide replace the load.  
Then rises up anew to take,  
The desert road.

So should'st thou kneel at morning  
dawn,  
That God may give thee daily care,  
Assured that he no load too great  
Will make thee bear.

(Author unknown)

#### The Apostles' Authority and Doctrine

Jesus said to them (the apostles), "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

This is the covenant of the "regeneration" and during the whole of it the laws and decisions laid down during the great Forty Years by these apostles, infallibly guided in the all-important work of founding and organizing Churches of Christ by the Holy Spirit, are binding, authoritative and fixed. Though these men are dead, they yet speak through the Apostolic Epistles, and thus govern the spiritual Israel of God. During the period between Pentecost and the death of the beloved John, development in Church order and constitution was *Divine Progression*; after that period it was nothing less than the outworking of the "Mystery of Iniquity." There is not the faintest hint of the conception of the Church as that of a "great basal idea upon which different styles of superstructure might be reared." It was *One Flock*, with *One Shepherd*, visible and indivisible.

Sydney Black

#### Giving

There was no need for commands and rules as to how much the members of the church in New Testament times should part with, how it was to be contributed, and such like. They gave *what* was needed, *when* it was needed, and *all* that was needed. (Wm. Crockatt at Ann. Conf.. of Churches of Christ, 1897).

#### Hospitality

This house is mine, but more than mine 'tis God's. Come in, therefore, and take of happiness or amusement, books, or other friends. Share all there is—He would not offer less. And do not thank *me* for the warmth or food, or anything to please you in this place. Thank Him who gave it to be given again. Give Him your gratitude; give Him your grace.

Kathleen Partridge

### Reconciliation

"Moreover, if thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone" (Matt. 18:15).

This is a plain teaching rule, and a command of Christ. That it is ignored by many is evident. Almost all the division and discord in the church are the result of this ignorance. Nine-tenths of all the shameful reflection on the church would never be if this rule given by Christ were strictly adhered to. And to refuse to observe shows malice in the heart. Many do not want these things settled in Christ's way.

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Christ has no body now on earth but  
YOURS,

No hands but YOURS, no feet but  
YOURS.

YOURS are the eyes through which  
Christ's compassion is to look out  
on the world;

YOURS are the feet with which He is  
to go about doing good,

And YOURS are the hands with which  
He is to bless us now.

*Teresa*

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### My Resolve

I am only one. But I am one.

I cannot do everything, but I can do  
something.

What I can do I ought to do,

And what I ought to do, by the grace of  
God I will do.

## CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editor,

It is a surprise to learn from the "S.S." for September [Bro. A. Jackson's article] that we have arrived at the New Jerusalem, and that it is no longer appropriate to sing "We're marching to Zion," as we have already got there. Of course, the

writer is correct if we accept his mode of exposition. Although we are assured in Heb. 12:22 that we have "come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," etc., this cannot mean that we have already arrived there in bodily presence, so that there is no need to sing the well known hymn: "We're marching to Zion." Even as God promised the city of Zion to the Jews, so He has promised a city to the church. But like the Jews we can only see it afar off, and until we get there we shall have to fortify our faith with the singing of suitable songs pertaining to our pilgrimage.

Many of the Jews never saw Jerusalem, although it had been promised to them. Why? Because they sinned; and until the journey had been completed, none of them entered. So is it with the church:

"We are pilgrims on a journey;  
We must labour while 'tis day.  
Work for Jesus. Work for Jesus.  
Till the sunlight fades away."

We must continue the journey till we are at Jerusalem's gates, for as yet we walk by faith. But faith that is seen is not faith: it is knowledge—a vastly different thing. A thing may be real to us, but if it has not been the object of one of the senses, we can only know it by faith. True, God's promises are equal to the knowledge we get through the senses; but until the things promised are received by experience, we must continue to enjoy them by faith. This is what Paul meant in Heb. 12:22. We receive them by faith, and that this is different to receiving them physically is evidenced by the fact that he immediately warns them in verse 25: "See that you do not refuse to hear the voice that speaks." Personally, I have no doubt that the Jews sang of their journey to Zion, just as we do, and legitimately so. Actually, we have not arrived at the city, but by faith we can see it afar off.

As for Rev. 21 and 22 representing the church, I think Bro. Jackson is wide of the mark, and the reason for his error is not far to seek. He is using the "spiritual" mode of exposition and not the "historical." I contend that the whole book is an historical outline of the future history of the church during her long pilgrimage through history, and to when she settles in the New Jerusalem, which

will be the eternal abode of all the saved. Of course, it is not all church history, but includes much history of the nations she is concerned with, and of other developments of a false religious character. So much so, that as the human hand fits the glove that has been made for it, so does history, both of Asia and Europe, answer to the outline John presents to us. When I point out that the prophet had a preview of the two armies that have been stretched across Europe for the past twenty-four years, and tells us of what the outcome will be when the battle is fought, and of the tragic consequences for the world which will follow, then we shall have some idea of what the book contains. The sooner we get to know the message of John's Revelation, the sooner we shall be able to make massive progress. To help the church to do this, I have composed a full length exposition which I have called: "Christ is King! Behold he cometh!" So far, I have not been able to get a publisher for it. The reason is not far to seek, in view of what I have just hinted at. I am trusting, however, that it may be a useful medium for strengthening all churches when the holocaust is over.

Yours sincerely,

J. B. KENDRICK,

423 Poolstock Lane, Wigan

#### MALAWI APPEAL FUND

Dear Brethren,

While we still await news from the Malawi authorities with regard to our residence permit to work with the churches there, I would like to take this opportunity to thank personally all those who have contributed to the appeal for assistance in paying our fare to Malawi, and also for the many words of encouragement and confidence expressed in the letters received by Bros. Baird and Read. Many of you I do not know and have never met, but with God's help, I will do my utmost to fulfil your faith in me.

At present the appeal fund stands at £413. Any further help which you can give financially or otherwise will be grate-

fully received by the Wallacestone or 21st Street, Oklahoma City, Okla., U.S., congregations, as also by myself. We earnestly solicit your prayers, brethren, that soon we will be able to commence our service for Christ in Malawi.

Yours, in Christ,

James Grant

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Hindley.**—It is with great joy that we report the adding to the Lord's church of Patricia Barker, grand-daughter of Bro. and Sis. James Barker. We pray that she may be kept faithful and prove of valuable service to her Lord and Saviour.

T. Kemp

**Kentish Town.**—We report with joy the baptism of Fred Proud on Lord's Day, August 31st. Brother Winstanley baptised our brother and preached at the evening service.

**Kirkby-in-Ashfield (Beulah Road).**—We are extremely happy to report two new members added to the church here. On Wednesday, August 27th, John and Isabel Lamb made the "good confession" and were immersed into the precious Name. We pray that God will bless them both and keep their feet on the path of life."

T. Woodhouse (Secretary)

**Woodstock (South Africa).**—With great rejoicing we give God the praise for the success of a series of gospel meetings from 7th to 10th August. At the meetings a combined total of 166 visitors and 156 members attended. On the 8th Mrs. Beverley January, wife of Bro. January, was baptised; on the 9th Violet Lotter was baptised; and on the 10th Mrs. Deborah Paulse, a 76 years old mother, was baptised.

"Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised." "The word of the Lord shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he pleases."

Later: On 17th August Mrs. Evelyn Herboldt was baptised into Christ.

## COMING EVENTS

**Kentish Town.**— Anniversary Meetings on Saturday, October 4th, 3.0 and 6.30. Tea at 5.0. All visitors welcome. Brother Breakell is to be with us for a three weeks' mission. Visits and prayers are appreciated.

**Newtongrange.**— Annual Social 11th October (D.V.). Tea 4 p.m. Evening Meeting: Speakers Bros. A. Marsden and G. Foc. A warm welcome to all who can join us in happy Christian fellowship.

M. Ferguson, 17 Lowfield Road,  
Mayfield, Dalkeith, Midlothian.  
Tel. 031 663 1899.

**East Ardsley (Main Street).**— Anniversary Services, Saturday and Sunday, October 25th and 26th, 1969. Tea 4.15, meeting at 6 p.m. Speaker: Bro. A. E. Winstanley; chairman, Bro. J. Robottom. Bro. Winstanley will serve the church on the Lord's Day.

Come and join us in our celebrations.

**Blackburn (New Wellington Street).**— Preliminary notice. Meetings are being arranged during the period November 22nd (Saturday) to 30th (Lord's Day) inclusive, Bro. John Dodsley (Kirkby) to be the speaker (God willing). Fuller details later.

The first hour of the morning is the rudder of the day.

## "ALL ONE IN CHRIST JESUS"

Forgive, O Lord, our severing ways  
The separate altars that we raise,  
The varying tongues that speak Thy  
praise.

Suffice it now. In time to be  
Shall one great temple rise to Thee,  
Thy church our broad humanity.

White flowers of love its walls shall  
climb,  
Sweet bells of peace shall ring its chime  
Its days shall all be holy time.

The hymn, long sought, shall then be  
heard,  
The music of the world's accord,  
Confessing Christ, the inward Word!

That song shall swell from shore to  
shore,  
One faith, one love, one hope restore  
The seamless garb that Jesus wore.

L. E. Terry

God bless thy year: Thy coming in, thy  
going out; Thy rest, thy travelling about;  
The rough, the smooth, the bright, the  
dear:

God bless thy year.

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