

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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AT EASE IN ZION

WHEN I was a small boy the Salvation Army used to come to our Street on a Sunday morning and bang on their drum and rattle their tambourines. Their goings-on provoked a rare comment on religion from my father, who was seldom in a place of worship, and his comment was 'Religion is all right, if it is kept in its place.' My mother shared this view and reckoned that religion taken *too seriously* would eventually result in a visit to the mad-house. Indeed there were in the village at that time a few who were reckoned to have 'gone crazy with religion' and a few who tagged on to 'Gospel Halls', and the Salvation Army, who were almost certifiable. I remember the late brother Crosthwaite saying that many of his relatives predicted his coming insanity if he persisted (as a young man) in studying the Bible as intensely as was his practice. As we know he died in his eighties and was anything but addled when he died. I suppose the accusation is as old as the hills because Festus, when Paul was defending himself before Agrippa, interrupted Paul's wonderful discourse and said, with a loud voice, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." (Acts 26:24). In Glasgow a few weeks ago the Queen opened the newly built Gallery (costing some £20 Million) to house the vast collection of priceless art treasures gathered in the lifetime of Sir William Burrell. This Glasgow millionaire lived a spartan life that he might dedicate all his time and money to his obsession of collecting art treasures from all over the globe. At the end he gave his collection to a reluctant Glasgow Town Council who could not find a building large enough to display it - thus having to build this specially large museum. No-one suggested that this man should have his head examined, or that he must be mad - everyone understood that this was his life's endeavour; it was his meat and drink; his monomania. He was not insane - he was just fully monopolised by his sole interest in life. His *zeal* could well be copied by disciples of Jesus. His *single-mindedness of purpose* could, with profit, be copied by all of us. "Religion is all right, if it is kept in its place" — but *where is its place?* Exactly *what place* should Christ have in our lives? Second place; or no place at all? What place does Christ have in *my* life; or in *your* life? Have we ZEAL for God?

ZEAL

Probably nothing is more lacking in the churches today than zeal. The word 'zeal' means unflagging and uncompromising enthusiasm; ardour reaching boiling-point; burning energy and enterprise. Consequently it should consume us

(eat us up) i.e. "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up". This is a quotation from Psalm 69:9 which came to the minds of the disciples when they saw Jesus make a scourge of small cords and drive everyone out of the temple. Jesus had seen, with great disgust, the temple packed with jostling market traders, cattle, oxen, sheep, doves and changers of money. As He overthrew the tables and poured out the money of the changers, He cried, "Take these things hence: make not My Father's house an house of merchandise, and his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten Me up." Does the zeal of the Lord's house have any affect upon us? Are we consumed with zeal for Christ's kingdom? From the above quotation we can see that zeal, includes by definition, "*an anxiety for God's honour*"; the kind of concern and anxiety exhibited by Jehu (11 Kings 10:16) and Phinehas (Numbers 25:11-13). Indeed God made a special covenant of peace, and everlasting priesthood, with Phinehas "because he was zealous for his God." Satan in his subtlety convinces us that 'we should keep religion in its place' and not think too much; and not pray too much; and not preach too much; and not study too much; and not give too much and not do too much.

True Zeal and Misguided Zeal

The apostle Paul expressed great pleasure in the zeal which manifested itself in some of the Corinthian Christians and urged that, in their *zeal for spiritual gifts*, they should, "Seek that ye may excell to the edifying of the church". Zeal must have a true motive (i.e. to the upbuilding of the church. 1 Cor. 14:2). He also taught two things to the Galatian Christians about zeal (1) "It is good to be zealously affected always in a *good* thing" and (2) "Not only when I am present with you". (Gal 4:17). Some show a surprising zeal in the presence of some special visitor to the congregation, and lapse into inactivity again when the visitor goes away. Notice that Paul recommends zeal in the pursuit of only a *good thing*. He, more than any other, knew what it was like to have a misguided form of zeal, and all his remaining life he counted himself as 'chief of sinners' because he persecuted the church of God. Paul had a great zeal for God, but at one time it was gravely misguided. (Gal. 1:13, 14). James and John expressed their misguided zeal when they asked Jesus if they should bring fire down from heaven to consume the Samaritan villagers; on account of the indifference shown by the Samaritans to the preaching. Jesus rebuked such zeal "for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them". Similarly, the apostle Peter exhibited great zeal when he drew a sword and smote off the ear of the High Priest's servant but, again, Christ rebuked this form of violent enthusiasm. In Rom. 10:2 Paul declared "Brethren, my heart's desire for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge." The Jews had a zeal for God, but an imperfect knowledge. These cases illustrate that zeal can be misguided through imperfect understanding; it can be misdirected zeal: and can be an unwise form of zeal. Indeed nothing can be worse than zeal without knowledge except, perhaps, to have knowledge without zeal. We are so often warned against "zeal without knowledge" - is it not time to warn against knowledge without zeal?

The Laodicean Church

When John, in the Revelation, wrote to the seven churches of Asia he could summon no words of commendation for the church at Laodicea — only words of condemnation. What was their condemnation? They were lukewarm; neither cold nor hot. They were not absolutely cold, mark you; but neither were they hot. All zeal in the church had evaporated. What had Jesus to say to such a church "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would that thou wert cold or

hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth". Are there any congregations like this today? Many congregations are, perhaps, just 'keeping house' for the Lord. Many have just enough energy to make the wheels go round - 'ticking over' so to speak, but not likely to go anywhere. Give a congregation, of fifty members, three hundred and sixty-five days in the year to prosecute the Lord's business, surrounded by a large population from which recruits for the Kingdom of God can be found, and what could the Lord rightfully expect? It has been said that some congregations are like the old Mississippi River Steamboats which had small boilers but large whistles and each time the whistle was blown the boat had to stop until it could get up steam again. What was Jesus' instructions to the Laodicean church, "Be zealous therefore, and repent." Jesus demanded repentance in the form of ZEAL. Real zeal. *Where* do we get zeal, we might wonder? *How* do we get zeal, we might ponder? If zeal is the opposite to lethargy, (and it is), then clearly zeal will come to us only when he have shaken ourselves from slumber. Some find it difficult to awake from natural repose, and so no doubt many will fail to stir from spiritual slumber. Our adour for God must be allowed to grow until it reaches boiling-point. There is obviously no possible substitute for zeal. If it is not there, nothing else will do. Often we *talk* about *when* we shall evangelise, *where* we shall evangelise, *how* we might evangelise but that is as far as it goes. Have churches become 'talking-shops' rather than hives of activity. Some churches try all manner of gimmicks to get the church's work done, (even bringing in business consultants to try and run the church like a Limited Company) but at the end of the day nothing can be a substitute for true zeal in the heart of each member; nothing can replace 'fire in the belly' of every child of God. Imagine a locomotive sidetracked for years in a shunting yard, and the speculation of some on how to get it going. Someone suggests removing all the grime from it, and giving it a new coat of paint. Another adds the suggestion that all the brasswork should be polished up. Another suggests that someone go round it with an oilcan. Another suggests that if all the weeds were removed from the track the train might go. Another suggests that the answer is to get a handsome young driver, with smart suit, and stick him in the cabin (pulpit?) and then the train would get places. A passing railway-porter stops when he sees the small crowd fusing around the train. On being asked for his opinion, the old railwayman replied, "Why don't you light a fire in the boiler, and get up steam." And that, brethren, is precisely what is needed in the churches today. We can talk until the cows come home about-modern ills in the world, about changes in socio-economic patterns, about competition from T.V. etc. etc. but what is needed is for *every* church member to stir from lethargy, and replace sleep with burning energy and enterprise for God. Churches lacking zeal and failing to evangelise their neighbourhood will almost assuredly go into extinction. We must have an urgent concern for the thousands of souls going to a Christless grave every day in the year.

There is no substitute for zeal. Nothing less will do. The country is full of secular unemployment but should there be any such thing in the churches? Can any of us afford to be 'redundancies' in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ? We have been saved to serve.

Jesus had the answer to those who think that there is plenty of time, "Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." (John 4:35).

EDITOR

DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM

JESUS of Nazareth once said to His disciple Thomas: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man comes unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

There are but two ways in life: one, the way of God; the other, the way of Satan. Jesus commanded: "Enter through the narrow gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. But strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leads unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matthew 7:13-14). Notice that, the narrow way - the way of God - has to be found. The Hebrew writer said: "Without faith it is impossible to please God: for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6).

Truth in the final analysis is not propositional but personal. Jesus of Nazareth is absolute truth. Before Pontius Pilate Jesus declared: "Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice". Pilate said unto Him: "What is truth?" and did not wait for an answer. The tragedy is that the Truth had been standing right in front of him. Truth to the ancient Greeks was synonymous with "reality". Here is the problem with the world: the vast majority is not in tune with reality; it is not in harmony with Jesus the Christ the Son of the Living God. In Him are found peace, true joy and true love. Life is a union. Death is a separation. James once wrote: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2:26). The Bible teaches that a person can be alive in this world and yet dead at the same time - spiritually dead or separated from Almighty God. "But she that lives in pleasure is dead while she lives" (1 Timothy 5:6). "Jesus came that everyone might have life, and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). He came to unite the sinner with God. His own resurrection from the dead made it possible. Jesus is alive! Life is in Jesus.

Ian S. Davidson, Motherwell

GLEANINGS

WE QUOTE—PETER MACKENZIE

GRUMBLING

"Grumblers are a very numerous class, as plentiful as the frogs in the plague of Egypt. There are two classes of troubles we should never grumble about - those we cannot help, and those we can help. If we can alter a thing, our business is not to grumble, but to remedy it; if we cannot alter, then what is the good of grumbling about it? Grumbling isolates a man. It makes him a mere cypher in society. It is a mark that shows he is disjointed and out of order. It is no use making a burden heavier by useless complaints. Members of families should avoid grumbling. Husbands of families should study each other's weaknesses, and never quarrel about a last word. They should deal with irritating topics as skaters do with dangerous spots on the ice, marking them off, and going very delicately over thin places. You will be as welcome as the flowers in May if you are always pleasant and cheerful. Life is too short to waste any part of it in croaking and melancholy, and all Christians should obey the Divine command, "Rejoice always, and again I say, Rejoice"."

WITH WHOM WE HAVE TO DO

"Him with whom we have to do." Hebrews 4:13. These words seem to meet every sort of need of comfort. If it is perplexity, or oppressive puzzle what to do,

when we cannot see through things; - or if it is being unable to explain yourself to others, and trials or complications arising out of this: just fall back upon "Him with whom we have to do," to whose eyes all things are naked and opened. He is your guide, - why need you puzzle? He is your shield, - why need you try so hard or wish so much to explain and vindicate yourself? If it is sense of sin which does not let you be comfortable, turn at once to "Him with whom you have to do." Remember, it is not with Satan that you have to do, nor with your accusing conscience, but with Jesus. He will deal with all the rest; you only have to deal with Him. And He is your great High Priest. He has made full Atonement for you; for the very sins that are weighing on you now. The blood of that Atonement, His own precious blood, cleanseth us from all sin. Cleanseth whom? People that have not sinned? People that don't want to be cleansed? Thank God for the word "cleanseth us," us who have sinned and who want to be cleansed. And you have to do with Him who shed it for your cleansing, who His own self bare your sins in His own body on the tree."

F.R. Havergal.

THE PERFECT LIFE

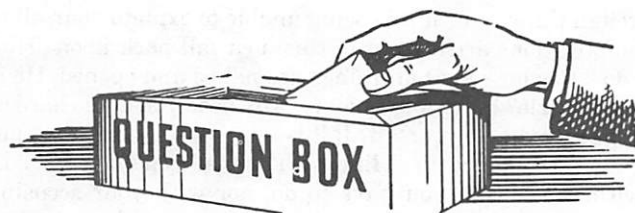
"Christ is the inspiration of this life. The great apostle wrote: "For me to live is Christ." "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." "I count everything but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." These and kindred passages make clear to us Paul's consciousness of the Saviour's nearness to himself, his sense of the Christ - power over his own life. Was there a problem to solve? - then Jesus was the solution. Was there weakness in himself?-then Jesus was the strength. Every difficulty was surmounted, every obstacle overcome, every burden lightened, and every mission performed, by the inspiration of that presence that dwelt in him. In the closing verses of the 8th of Romans the apostle stands as it were on some high mountainpeak, and as his eye sweeps the horizon he sees all his enemies encompassing him- death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, or any other creation. Then with a shout of victory he cries: "I am persuaded that none of these things shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus". One writer very beautifully expresses this thought of Christ's power in the life of the believer: "For me to live is Christ - not a set of rules, but a life principle within me; not the conditioning of my days by time-table maxims and rules, but the ever present Christ, stretching to the farthest territory of my being, and by his presence there ordering all my life within the bounds of his own sacred will."

H.G. Harward

YOU ARE SLIGHTED?

"You are slighted, ignored, brushed aside. Or your employer, or employee, does not show you proper consideration. Or your neighbour does not treat you with the respect which is due to your position, your abilities, your character. You feel it very much, in fact you are quite upset about it. Why? Is it because you came to minister and were deprived of the privilege? No, not that at all. It is because your feelings, your rights, your gifts, your position, your dignity, your importance were not recognised. YOU were not ministered unto. And you came to be ministered unto. Hence the storm!"

J.H. Horsburgh



Conducted by
Alf Marsden

“Would you please explain the meaning of the words ‘apprehended’ and ‘attain’, as used by the Apostle Paul in the context of Philippians 3:11 onwards.”

This is a question which illustrates quite well the wisdom and precision of the Holy Spirit in indicating through Paul the progression of the Christian experience, and also the perception of fundamental truths. Too often we are all guilty of too cursory an examination of the text with the result that the initial interpretation which invades the mind, and which is usually based rightly or wrongly on past understanding, is the interpretation which we accept without further investigation. In this way error, or a less enlightened understanding, is compounded. It is sad to relate that this very point was a source of great disappointment to the Lord Himself in His dealings with the people of the nation into which He was born and who should have understood better, and His own disciples who seemed not to have understood the nature of His mission until after His resurrection. However, we are indebted to the Apostle, especially in his Philippian letter, for revealing to us how *he* felt about his Lord, and this we shall study in some greater depth.

To Apprehend

The verb ‘to apprehend’ means ‘to lay hold of’; the further idea is ‘to lay hold so as to possess as one’s own’; ‘to appropriate’. The Greek word used is KATALAMBANO. It is this idea of laying hold of ‘to possess as one’s own’ which seems to dominate the mind of Paul. He says, in the latter part of verse 12 “but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus” Paul would never forget how the Lord had appropriated him on the Damascus road; how he had heard the voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” How he asked for identification and was told, “I am Jesus whom thou persecutest”; and how his response had been complete and immediate, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do”? He knew that the Lord had laid hold on him and possessed him for Himself, and when he was told to go into the city he went, and did there precisely as instructed. Furthermore, we know from the text in Acts 9 that when Ananias advanced valid reasons against the choice of the Lord he was told peremptorily, “Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel (v15). Paul wanted with all his heart to possess Christ *as his own*, in the same way that Christ possessed him. As a student of the O.T. scriptures he would no doubt recall how Israel had covenanted with God, “And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the Lord gave the rest round about” (2 Chron. 15:12-15).

I think that we can now see a little more clearly what Paul meant when he said, “If that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.” His whole spiritual desire was to possess the Lord as completely as the

Lord had possessed him. This is why I personally like the word 'appropriate'. It doesn't really matter how clever we are with words, how we think we understand the Bible, how good our sermons are, or how well loved we think we are among the brethren; unless we have appropriated the Lord as Paul wanted to appropriate Him, then the rest is of little value. Sometimes people misunderstand when we say that once Christ is personally appropriated in the sense in which Paul desired, then it doesn't really matter how many of the brethren defect; the possession of Christ would be all in all to those who possessed Him. One of the saddest commentaries, and one of the most astounding, on the appropriation of Christ is found in Romans 9:30-34 where Paul there says, "What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained (KATALAMABANO, appropriated) to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained (appropriated) to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith...". Oh, how many Christians have pierced themselves through with many sorrows because they have appropriated *their own desires*, rather than the treasure of Heaven, the Risen Christ.

The words of Paul in Phil 3:13 are interesting. "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended". He hadn't yet reached the summit of his great spiritual desire (perhaps like many of us). "But one thing (I do), forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus". I have placed 'I do' in brackets because there is no verb in the Greek, but that doesn't really matter because the single-minded concentration of Paul is urging him to reach forward all the time and with all his energy to the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Everything in the past has been banished from his mind. His spiritual desire is for that place in Heaven so that he can ever be with his Lord. Would that every time we quote Paul we should remember his great spiritual desire, and appropriate Jesus to ourselves, i.e., to ever be possessed of the Lord, and ever long to be where He is.

To Attain

The original word KATANAO signifies to reach, to arrive at. So what Paul is saying in Phil. 3:11-12 is "If by any means I might attain (reach, arrive at) the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect". At this point we need to exercise a little care in the interpretation. The context illustrates quite vividly the overriding passion of Paul; he wanted to know *all* about Jesus; to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, the fellowship of His suffering, conformity to His death, everything. From among all these paramount aims he says, "if by any means I might attain (reach) unto the resurrection of (from among) the dead". Paul here is not referring to the *general* resurrection nor is he denying it, but he *is* testifying to the fact that the power of the Gospel has brought him out from among the dead (in sin) and that now he is striving in his present life for complete identification with Christ in *His* Resurrection. In verse 12, the word 'attained' has not the same meaning as in v11. The original word in v12 is LAMBANO which means 'obtained'. So the first part of v12 would read, "Not as though I had already attained (obtained), either were already perfect." Paul was humble enough to know that all of his previous experiences, even being taken hold of by Christ on the Damascus road, had not suddenly made him absolutely Christlike. He knew that the goal was still before him, not behind him; he also knew quite well that to achieve Christlikeness he had to work at his salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12-13). What a Church there would be here on earth if all of the saints were

striving toward the upward call of God in Christ Jesus, and in so doing ultimately reaching through the new life complete identification with the Risen Christ. I am sure that this is how both Christ and Paul envisaged the Church for which Christ died.

There is just one further verse to consider in the context. We read in v16, "Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing". Bagster's Englishman's Greek New Testament gives 'rule' as KANONI which denotes a straight rod as used for measuring; a measuring instrument. The metaphorical use of the word is illustrated both in Phil. 3:16, and Galatians 6:16. In the Galatian passage the word is governed by what is said in vv14,15, which read, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, etc". So what Paul is saying in Phil. 3:16 can be paraphrased like this, 'look, we have reached a certain stage in our Christian lives. having come so far, let us go on *in the same path*'. This is a much-needed lesson for us all, especially the innovators. Sometimes Christians tend to grow weary at the so-called monotony and routine of the Christian life, but Paul says to us all, 'press on; respond to the upward call; work; endure; make your calling and election sure; above all, keep on the same road you have travelled on up to now.'

In conclusion, I must say that this study has greatly encouraged me personally. I pray that it will do the same for you.

(All questions please to Alf Marsden, 377 Billinge Road, Highfield, Wigan, Lancs)

SCRIPTURE READINGS

JANUARY 1984

1—Zech. 6	Rev. 6
8—Ezek. 9	Rev. 7
13—Ex. 9:13-29	Rev. 8
20—Joel 2:15-32	Rev. 9
29—Jer. 15	Rev. 10

PAGES OF HISTORY

HISTORY proves the truth or otherwise of prophecy. Divine prophecy is infallibly right. We may not always understand the significance of symbols or figures of events long passed by. When the Lamb broke the seals of the scroll, the first four at least portray events which "must shortly come to pass" (1,1). We expect history, if we have it accurately, will prove revelations TRUE. We shall accordingly summarise the dates approximately which we believe show fulfilment. Exact dating is not possible as is illustrated by the remaining

uncertainty even of the birth of our Saviour, and periods only can be indicated with certainty.

Scroll 1 AD100 to 182 — Victorious period under emperors of a Cretan family origin beginning with Nerva - Cretans famed as bowmen - Outstanding time of peace within the Roman empire, peace within and greatest extension and conquest abroad - Britain to the Persian Gulf - disciplined legionaries - wise leadership ending with Commodus. The white horse significant of successful war.

Scroll 2 AD192 to 284 — Civil war between ambitious military leaders - rivals for mastery. Bloodshed, internal strife. Thirty four emperors, only two of whom died natural deaths. The Roman sword against the same. The red horse.

Scroll 3 AD200 onwards. Unrest, famine and poverty due to continuing internal strife and misrule. Conditions worsening in these times. The Black horse.

Scroll 4. Continuing misrule developing into worse conditions within the empire. Neglect and poverty leading to pestilence, disease, failure in law and order, death, even danger from wild animals with anarchy among the people. Concluding with attempts at restoration of order by Diocletian AD 284.

Scroll 5. The scene is of earthly loss but heavenly gain. Faithful Christians out of their sufferings and death into glory and reward calling for justice, but required to wait because they are to be joined by others. Time is nothing to them any more. Are they still waiting in blissful peace? Let us view the story. From the earliest days of the gospel the saints have suffered. There was by the time John wrote (say AD96) already a glorious army of martyrs with uncertainty in conditions in a heathen empire. Hatred of the heathen majority demanding punishment for professors of a new religion, resentful of a new morality requiring love in place of hate, enlightenment in place of ignorance, purity in place of vice. Governors locally not knowing how to cope with the disagreements, some like Gallio (Acts 18:14) and the Asiarchs (19:31) but most inclined to persecution, and by Nero's time and Domitian's giving government approval to it from AD64 intensifying persecution with inhuman cruelty. Conditions improved slightly in times indicated in Scroll 1, but AD192 brought the most awful cruelty, and finally Diocletian declared war on Christians and determination to destroy the church. He issued an edict in AD303 which required all governors to slaughter Christians, and the most terrible atrocities were committed upon them, even to driving them into their meeting houses and burning them alive.

Scroll 6 The picture of terror we think depicts the fear produced by the powerful influence exerted by the faith, presenting a complete politically and

socially motivated change, reversing pagan superstition and popularity, temples and priests losing influence. The four angels holding back the winds seem to be identical with the four trumpet angels in scroll 7. Meanwhile those who are to bear the final effort to destroy the church are being spiritually prepared sufferings. We see first those Jewish Christians who bore the brunt of the earliest persecutions, and then the multitude of all nations who are to suffer in the same warfare with the same glorious reward, assurance of heavenly favour and support. They all give glory with the heavenly hosts to the God of our salvation.

Scroll 7 The final revelations begin here. The last seal is broken. The silence is followed by presentation of incense before God's throne, representing the prayers of God's people, ascending from earth and bringing trouble upon it when symbolically cast upon it by the angel. The seven trumpets are now to be sounded, introducing prophecies of which we shall endeavour to show fulfilment.

Trumpet 1 —AD294 The mighty heathen empire seems to be falling apart (6:12-17). The astonishing basic religious change was coming with Constantine advancing upon Rome from Britain with his legions as one of six rival emperors all heathen but he triumphed over his rivals, and professed Christianity, preceded in this by his mother — mothers please note! We have seen the determination to destroy the faith by edict of Diocletian AD303, but in the short period from that date in 313 an edict was issued by agreement between Constantine and Licinius, one of the rivals, at Milan, giving relief and approval empire-wide so that Christianity became the religion of the Empire. It had been divided as West and East by Diocletian, and in 327 Constantine moved from Rome to Byzantium,

renamed and rebuilt as Constantinople. He remained Roman Emperor until his death in 337. Our four trumpets seem to symbolise four attacks made upon Rome which destroyed its authority, and they leave the western part no longer the power it had been. We now summarise the first trumpet as referring to the attack by the Goths under Alaric. They sacked the city in AD409, but Alaric died and they returned, or integrated in the regions they had invested. Their invasion was characterised by wanton destruction of vegetation.

Trumpet 2 The Vandals invaded the western part of the empire and through Spain from North Africa took over the waters of the Mediterranean thence attacking Rome. The barbarian hosts attacked Rome and sacked the city about AD422.

Trumpet 3 Attila the Hun with his warriors from Central Asia attacked Rome from the north and Rome was sacked again. The conflict seems to have been upon the rivers and Attila subsequently founded the Hungarian nation on the Danube. (AD440)

Trumpet 4 The fourth invasion and defeat of Rome came through Odoacer who with his armies attacked Rome and sacked the city in AD476, which marked the end of its western dominion. Authority thence fell into religious hands, the Popes. They claimed power over the remaining national sections. Professing Christian Emperors continued to rule the eastern empire from Constantinople for many centuries - until 1453. The three woes indicate attacks upon that remaining empire. We summarise again.

Trumpet 5 Armies of horsemen from Arabia, pictured as locusts. Mahomet claimed to be a prophet from God, and his fanatical followers overran Palestine, Asia Minor and attacked Constantinople, went westwards into Spain through North Africa. This was a most savage religious war against

Christianity. Multitudes were killed or enslaved - accept the Prophet or suffer. Unlike the previous wars the trees and other-vegetation were not to be hurt. Torture was practised. There was a limit for the leading Caliph changed the policy to agreement and peace and ruled from Bagdad. The dates indicate 150 years from AD632 to 782 - five months are that number of days. The Eastern Empire was weakened but not destroyed and was the seat of the Greek Orthodox Church nurturing much learning in the capital city.

Trumpet 6 The Turks from Central Asia established an empire from the Caspian sea to Indian ocean converted to Mohammedanism, and in 1057 advanced westwards into the middle east, besieged Constantinople in 1453. They meantime overran the Mediterranean countries in a long campaign of unrestrained violence and cruelty, including especially cruel enmity and violence against Christians. The period involved is 396 years which can be indicated by an hour, a day, a month and a year (9:15).

We have depended much on the work of others. History by a sceptic, (Gibbon) has been used, and our personal knowledge of it is minimal. However we trust our readers will give humble effort as we have to consider that what is difficult to understand is well worth most careful and very open-minded consideration. One very short portion could well occupy study for a long time. We approach REVELATION with profound respect.

"The Little Book"

The mighty angel of superb appearance holds a LITTLE book OPEN in his hands. His mission is world-wide — sea and land — universal. The apostle is to eat it and thus to become full of it so as to give out its message. Does he not do so by writing what we have here? but what the seven thunders said is not for us. (Deut 29:29).

R.B. SCOTT

BELIEF : (16)**The Gospel**

IN order to conform to the Lord's commission to the apostles (Luke 24:47), preaching the gospel must be equivalent to preaching repentance and remission of sins. Are there other passages which help us to understand what this entailed, without destroying the fundamental requirement of repentance and remission of sins in Jesus' name? Are there passages which help us to understand the relation of obedience to the gospel message?

Various Forms

It should be realised that our Lord's final commission, as related by the four gospel writers, was given in four different forms. This does not mean that each states different instructions. It simply means that *the same thing* was expressed in different ways, all meaning the same thing. This is only true if varying forms of expression do not contradict or violate the basic meaning of the words. What are the various forms of the last commission given by our Lord to his apostles?

Matthew 28:19-20

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations; baptising them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you".

Mark 16:15-16

"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved."

John 17:17-21

"Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, so have I also sent them into the world; and for their sakes I sanctify (hagiazō) myself, that they also may be sanctified (hegiasthenoi) through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word,

that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

Acts 2:38

"Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and we shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 3:19

"Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out..."

Here, in these passages, is the most important message ever given by God to mankind, through His Son. What is involved in these Scriptures, in the light of belief, godly sorrow, repentance, obedience, baptism, remission of sins, sanctification and the salvation of the soul? See our next article.

Exercises in Belief

Deuteronomy 18:18-19; Hebrews 1:1-2, 2:1-3, 2:9-13; Mark 1:15; Acts 15:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 15:1-4; 2 Timothy 2:8.

W. BROWN

(To be continued)

**JESUS' ENDORSEMENT
OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**

THE history of the earthly ministry of Christ testifies that he endorsed the Old Testament Scriptures. He even endorsed the threefold division of the Old Testament—the law, the prophets, and the Psalms. "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me" (Luke 24:44). Hence, Christ endorsed the Pentateuch and the history of the Old Testament; he gave full endorsement to the prophets; he frequently said concerning the prophecies that they "must needs be fulfilled". This could not be truthfully said if the Old

Testament was written by uninspired men. Christ fulfilled the prophecies concerning himself; he was the antitype of the types of him in the Old Testament. Frequently Matthew refers to the birth of Jesus and says that this was done that "it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet" (Matt. 1:22).

Christ endorsed David and said that he spoke by the Holy Spirit. "And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, how say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David? For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, the Lord said to my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Mark 12:35-36). Christ then endorsed the Psalms and that which David prophesied. A further endorsement of the Old Testament is observed in that Christ spoke of it as "the word of God" (John 10:35). "If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken." Christ could not call the Old Testament Scriptures the word of God if they were not inspired. Again, the fact that he came to fulfill the law and the prophets shows that he regarded "the law and the prophets" as inspired. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17). Again, we have John bearing testimony and saying, "...The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10). Again, Jesus said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). The evidence that Jesus endorsed the Old Testament is cumulative; however, we need no further proof of the testimony of Jesus to the inspiration of the Old Testament.

Dr. Harry Rimmer has calculated the number of quotations that Christ used from the Old Testament. Matthew contains 1,181 verses; 603 verses are the words of Jesus; this is fifty-one percent of all the verses. Eighty-three of these verses are Old Testament

quotations, or fourteen percent of the verses used by Jesus are from the Old Testament. Mark contains 609 verses; 275 of these are quotations of Jesus; thus forty-five percent of the verses in Mark are the words of Jesus; thirty-four of these verses, or thirteen percent, are from the Old Testament. Luke contains 1,251 verses, of which 570 are the words of Jesus; this is forty-five percent of the verses; forty-two of these verses, or seven percent of his quotations, are from the Old Testament. John contains 879 verses; 417 of these, or forty-nine percent, are quotations from Jesus; twenty of these quotations of Jesus, or five percent, are from the Old Testament. The four gospels contain 3,290 verses, and 1,865 of these are the words of Jesus; this is forty-eight percent of all the verses; of his quoted conversation, 179 verses are literally Old Testament words. *Ten percent of the daily conversation of Jesus was Old Testament verses literally quoted.* Truly Jesus endorsed the Old Testament as inspired.

Selected

UNLEAVENED BREAD?

In the recent August issue of the "Scripture Standard", under 'Scripture Readings' on Luke Chap. 22, the writer suggests that the Lord's Supper was instituted at a meal *other than* the Jews' Passover Feast. His words were, "Was it not His passover, and not THE PASSOVER meal?"

I trust that these following comments of mine will add weight to his suggestion:-

- 1 At that meal the bread was used differently to that prescribed by Old Testament Law.
- 2 No roasted Passover Lamb was mentioned as part of that meal, for, as the writer says of the Jewish Friday, "The day when the lamb's were slain for the feast." The lambs were slain at the going down of the sun (Deut. 16:6). That time coincided with the death on the cross of the Lamb Of God. As the Jew's Passover

Feast commenced after sunset of the day on which the lambs were killed, it fell on the sabbath, which began at sunset. The Jews' Passover Feast was held one day after the Lord's Supper was instituted.

3 Churches using un-leavened bread for the Supper in the belief that this memorial meal was instituted at the Jews' Passover Feast should examine the validity of the practice. Some may be surprised to learn that the corresponding term for 'un-leavened bread' is not found in the Greek New Testament. In addition, various Church Histories testify that un-leavened bread was introduced into European churches centred in Rome in medieval times.

Brethren, Let us 'Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good'. (1 Thess. 5:21).

Arthur Arnott,

R.S.D. 233

Gladysdale, Victoria,

Australia, 3797.

perform his day's work. He put on his apron and went to the bench to make a pulpit from which the Gospel would be preached to the poor. He employed the screw, the gimlet, the sandpaper, the saw, the hammer, the plane, and all the other tools.

After the day's work was over and the pulpit was finished, brother Saw arose and said, "Brethren, I perceive that all of us are laborers together with God."

Oh! How many of us Christians are like those tools, fussing at each other, because the other fellow does not do things just the way we think he should in matters of opinion. There was not an accusation against one of those tools that was not absolutely true; yet, the Carpenter used every one of them. There was not a place where he used any one where any of the others would have done at all. Oh, how careful we should be in finding fault with one of God's tools. No, sin is not to be winked at, but brethren, there *are* some things judgmental.

From: 'The Light'.

CARPENTER'S TOOLS

THE Carpenter's tools had a conference; brother Hammer was in the chair. The meeting had informed him that he must leave, because he was too noisy. But he said, "If I am to leave this carpenter shop, brother Gimlet must go too. He is so insignificant and makes very little impression."

Little brother Gimlet rose up and said, "If you wish, I will go, but brother Plane must leave also. All his work is on the surface; there is no depth to it."

To this, brother Plane replied, "Well, brother Rule will also have to withdraw if I do, for he is always measuring folks as though he were the only one who is right."

Brother Rule then complained against brother Sandpaper and said, "What about him? He is rougher than he ought to be, and he is always rubbing people the wrong way."

In the midst of the discussion, the Carpenter walked in. He had come to

SPLIT AMONGST 'JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES'?

A report in a local paper here, "The Dalkieth Advertiser" states that there is unrest among many 'Jehovah's Witnesses'. It said, "A split amongst Jehovah's Witnesses could soon take place in this country according to three former Witnesses. George Croll of Easthouses, and Leonard Smith and James Jones of Mayfield, told *The Advertiser* that since 1979 thousands have left the Watch Tower Society, (the organisation's formal name) in Canada, the USA and more recently in Europe. Recently several former Witnesses held a peaceful demonstration in Leicester when the Governing Body arrived from America for their Annual Meeting - the first to be held in Britain. The protesters claim the Leader's visit was an attempt to rally support in the face of growing

discontentment among the 2,500,000 international membership.

In 1975 the sect faced a dilemma - the 'present world' did not vanish as Witness publications had said, and questions arose in the minds of some believers. Mr Croll said "We were told lies about the date, and when it was found out to be a lie, the date was changed. But anyone who did not believe was disfellowshipped and branded as an evil person."

Editor

ACTIVITY

THIS is the state of being active, busy, industrious. At the close of 1 Corinthians 15 Paul has this to say "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

The world around us is in dire need of such people to-day; men and women who know what they believe, and are so convinced, that nothing will change, move, or hinder them from following the Saviour whom they have chosen to serve. The world to-day does not believe, because of the inactivity of those who profess to be disciples of Jesus. It requires more than lip service to convince the gainsayer, the unbeliever, the sceptic. It demands that our gospel shall be revealed in our lives, in our homes, at work or in times of leisure.

This is the great height we must strive to attain. Too long have we moaned and lamented on the smallness of our numbers, the apathy of the people. Listen to the clarion call of God's Word. "Now is the accepted time, Now is the day of Salvation." Arise! Shine! for "thy Light is come". Let us strive, let us be active in the work of the Lord "Forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the work of our Lord. We shall indeed reap if we faint not."

"So let our lips and lives express

The holy gospel we profess,

So let our works and virtues shine

To show forth doctrine so divine.

Thus shall we best proclaim abroad

The honours of our risen Lord,

When His salvation reigns within

And Grace subdues the power of sin.

Tom Kemp, Hindley

BE DEFINITE!

A great deal has been written and preached concerning the lost and how to win them to Christ. I believe that most members of the church really want to see people saved. I think we also generally agree that we are not winning as many souls for the Lord as we would like. What is the trouble? There are many factors: people are "self-centred", everybody is "pleasure mad", and a great segment of society is interested only in "material things". It must be admitted that all this is so, but is this the whole story of why we are not winning souls? I am afraid that it isn't.

Could it be, that in our quest for souls we have become so interested in the salvation of people in general that we make no definite effort toward saving a single individual?

We sing, pray and talk about "saving the lost" and we make great plans to send forth a message to the condemned, but in the meantime we are so absorbed with the task of saving souls "in general" that we do not have time to be concerned about even "one person". It is easy to generate enthusiasm about a "great plan" for saving the lost, as though the world will be saved in mass; but it chills our spirits when we are confronted with the responsibility of "personal evangelism". Salvation is an individual matter, and comes about when individuals are instructed in divine truth and "one by one" turn to the Lord. We need to realise that the individual should be our chief concern.

Brother, sister, why not be definite about bringing some lost soul into

contact with the Truth? Determine now to make a definite effort, to convert a definite person. We talk to people about everything else; why not about the Truth? If you feel that you just can't express yourself to others, then do what you can to bring them to hear the preaching of the gospel so that they may be taught by others. Don't be too "general" in your outlook, 'What is everybody's business is nobody's business.' If the world is saved, it will be chiefly, "person by person", or "one by one". And remember, if you are too busy to save a soul you are TOO BUSY!

"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life and he that winneth souls is wise".
Proverbs 11:30.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER

TEMPER CONQUERED

LIFE is doubly difficult for the man with the hot heart and the blazing temper. A friend met such a man. "I see," he said, "That you have succeeded in conquering your temper." "No", said the man, "I didn't conquer it. Jesus conquered it for me."

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Stretford, Manchester: On Saturday the 5th November, 1983, Valerie Williams, a fellow student of sister Danielle Frank, was baptised into Christ at Scholes. Please pray the Lord to help them as they endeavour to preach Jesus to their fellow students at Manchester Polytechnic. A. Ashurst

OBITUARY

Dalmellington, Scotland: We are very sorry to announce the death of our sister in Christ, Miss Anne Black, on October 5th, 1983, in her 79th year.

'Annie', as she was affectionately known, gave her life to Christ 45 years ago. Since then she has faithfully attended to the things of the Lord, except that in latter years her health failed and she was unable to do so.

She has now gone to receive that reward, given to them who are faithful. The funeral service was conducted in the home of brother William Black, and at the graveside by our brother Ian Davidson, assisted by brother Hugh Davidson, and brother David Chalmers. Harry McGinn (Sec.)

Longshoot, Wigan: We are sad to report the passing of two sisters from the congregation here. Sister Nellie Greenhough, aged 89 years, and sister Bessie Parker, aged 81 years, had been members of Longshoot and formerly at Jackson's Square for many years. They had both been confined to their homes in recent years due to their frailty, but often spoke of the church when visited. We commend those who mourn their passing to the comfort and love of the Lord. D. Melling

Slamannan, Scotland: It is with much sorrow that the church here announces the death of sister Mary Sneddon, at the age of 74 years. She is sadly missed. Our sister was a faithful servant and witness for the Lord over a good number of years. She regularly attended meetings, and right up to her death she kept excellent health.

We rejoice that she has gone to a 'place prepared' for her and that she reached her full 'three score years and ten'.

The funeral service was carried out by Brother Alex Brown (Dennyloanhead) to whom goes the thanks of the family and congregation here. Our sympathy goes out to the members of our sister's family left behind. She has 'finished her course' and henceforth is laid up for her a crown of righteousness. John B. Wilson (Sec.)

EVANGELIST WANTED

The Slamannan District of Churches require an evangelist and all interested brethren should apply in writing to the District Secretary, Hugh Davidson, 21 Glen Lyon, St Leonards, East Kilbride, Scotland, GT4 2JJ.

NEW CHURCH BUILDING

The church at Tranent had a meeting on Saturday evening, 19th November, 1983 on the occasion of the opening of their new meeting-house. Their previous meeting-place was taken over by the Local Council, under Compulsory Purchase legislation, and was recently demolished to accommodate a new roadway. The new premises consist of a former Medical Clinic, suitably altered and renovated by the Local Council. The Tranent brethren have installed kitchen facilities and made the place very pleasant and comfortable. The auditorium was filled for the opening meeting. Brother James Sinclair chaired the meeting and the speaker was James R. Gardiner, from Haddington.

Tea was served later and a wonderful time of fellowship was enjoyed by the brethren come from all areas as far away as Peterhead. J. Colgan (Sec.)

FREE OFFER

Last summer, brother Ian Davidson, of Motherwell congregation, interviewed on tape Bro. Carl Ketcherside of St Louis, Missouri, U.S.A. The interview was conducted at Schipol Airport, Amsterdam, Holland. If anyone would like to hear the cassette and find out more about this "controversial" American brother then please write directly to brother Davidson, at 21 Glen Lyon, St Leonards, East Kilbride, Glasgow, G74 2JJ. (This is a free offer).

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES
1984**

WE are sorry to announce an increase in the subscription rate for 1984. The new rate will be £5.50 per year. We have held the price for two years but now find it necessary to cover our increased costs with a higher charge.

Due to the fall in the value of the pound against the dollar the Canadian and U.S.A. rate is unchanged.

Reading cards will be available later in the year and will be sent out to the Churches as soon as possible.

JOHN KNELLER

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