

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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## YEA OR NAY?

By the time you read this, the General Election will all have been resolved and the country will be stuck for another five years with whichever party is successful. At the moment however, all the parties are still "slugging it out" and have another week in which to capture the undecided voter, and convince the country at large, that our future is safe in their hands. The ever-recurring themes are "Trust", "Sincerity" and "Integrity" and Tony Blair has been stressing the fact that he alone can be trusted to keep his promises; whereas all other politicians are hucksters and charlatans. Reference is continually being made to the "Broken Promises" of the last government as if it was some new phenomenon amongst the men of politics. As usual, it has all become very personalised, and accusations of "Lies, damned lies and statistics" have been filling the air. By now the cynical public are finding it all very boring and wishing it was all over. It is difficult not to be cynical when we hear of politicians' talk of "trust, sincerity and integrity", especially when for the past year newspapers have been completely pre-occupied with articles on "sleaze" in the corridors of power and high office. Sir David Steele, an elder statesman and a politician all his life, when asked on T.V. the other evening, to describe the biggest lies he ever told during his long political career, replied that he would require formal notice of such a question, and indeed any question which would require such a lengthy answer. The reason why politicians have to struggle to get the public to accept their claims on "sincerity and integrity" is, of course, because bitter experience reveals that there is not much of it around in the political world. "Broken Promises" is a cry which is perennial amongst a longsuffering public and which swells the ranks of the cynical. Amongst all this clamour from the men of politics, whose promises are quite often in the realms of fantasy, how refreshing it is to contemplate the promises of God. Herein is truth, sincerity and integrity. With God's promises there are no ifs or buts, but "Yes" and "Yes again".

### NOT IFS NOR BUTS

"When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay? But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, Who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. *For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us,*" So said the apostle Paul to the Corinthians (II Cor. 1:17), from Macedonia concerning his change of plans to visit Corinth. Evidently there were some brethren in Corinth insinuating that his promises were unreliable and perhaps he would not come at all.

Paul asks the Corinthians if they think that he would break a promise lightly, or was he so fickle that his yea could just as easily be nay? Paul asserts that whatever they might think of him, in his change of plans, his preaching of Christ was never yea or nay but YEA. "For" says Paul, "**All the promises of God in Christ are YEA, and in Him Amen**". There is no uncertainty or vacillation in Christ, or in the preaching of Christ either by Paul, or Silvanus or Timotheus. Paul had good reasons for his change of plan but we can see how quickly his brethren were ready to assume the worst. Nevertheless when church members break, or fail to honour, promises it does not reflect well either upon them or upon the Church. We are not too surprised when men outwith the Church enter into an agreement and just as readily renounce it. Indeed when some politicians make a promise it is the occasion of great hilarity amongst those listening. Imagine people actually laughing at any promise of ours. Broken promises and breach-of-promise are the tools in trade, every day, amongst politicians, business men and nations: which is why so much has to be contained in small print and why there are so many lawyers around. On a personal level we have all, no doubt, been let down by friends on many occasions with unfulfilled promises and just as often we, in turn, have not always been guiltless of the same thing.

### GOD'S PROMISES

But not so with God's promises. Solomon could say to the Jewish people, "**Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest to His people, according to all He hath promised, there hath not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses**". (1 Kings 8:56). Joshua said, "**There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel: all came to pass**". God's promises to man began in Old Testament times embodied mainly in the statements made principally to Abraham and to the early Fathers. Paul continually prayed for his kinsmen in the flesh "**Who are Israelites: to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises. . .**" (Rom. 9:4). Gentiles were, of course, at that time "**without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise . . .**" (Eph. 2:12). But God's promises to Israel derived specially from Abraham. The promises to Abraham were three-fold (a) land - (hence the 'Promised Land') (b) a son and a progeny as numerous as the sand on any seashore, and (c) blessings which would accrue to ALL nations, through the Messiah. These were '*the promises*' to which Paul makes such constant reference. Abraham 'staggered not' at the promises of God "**Through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. And being fully persuaded that what God had promised he was able to perform**", (Rom. 4:21). In one of Paul's references to these promises he makes the point that Christ was the true and complete fulfilment of all of God's promises, viz. "**Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds as of many; but as of one, which is Christ.**" (Gal. 3:16). When God made the promise to bless all nations through Abraham's *seed* he did not mean 'children' or 'descendants' but meant 'seed', in the singular, and in the person of Christ. ALL nations (Jews and Gentiles) were to be thus blessed, and so, in effect, the gospel was being preached in that very promise (given 430 years before the Mosaic law) to Abraham. Thus Paul says in the same chapter (Gal. 3) "**And the scriptures, forseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all the nations be blessed. So then, they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham.**" (v.8) and "**Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law . . . That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith**". (v.13, 14).

This latter verse not only confirms that the promises made to Abraham have accrued to the Gentiles through Christ, but also introduces us to one other momentous promise - the promise of the Holy Spirit.

### BETTER PROMISES

The 'Spirit' here represents all the blessings connected with the Christian religion, and includes the miraculous agency of the Holy Spirit: and all his influence in renewing the heart, in sanctifying the soul and in comforting the people of God (For he is the Comforter). These influences of the Spirit were obtained by virtue of the sufferings and death of the Saviour and were the sum of all the blessings promised by the prophets. Thus says Paul, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:29). Is that not truly wonderful? Jesus then is the consummation of all Jewish hopes and dreams of the past (could they but see it) but Jesus not only fulfils the promises of old but He surpasses them with even better promises. The writer to the Hebrews claims that Jesus has obtained a more excellent ministry than Moses and that He is the mediator "of the better covenant which was established upon *better promises*". (Heb. 8:6). Clearly these better promises come to us through the gospel and indeed *the gospel itself* was an age-old promise as Paul points out (in Rom. 1:2) "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God (which He had promised by His prophets in the holy scriptures) concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord". Again, in Paul's speech in the synagogue in Antioch, he said, "And we declare unto you the glad tidings *how that the promise* which was made unto the fathers God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children in that He hath raised up Jesus again, as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son. This day have I begotten thee." (Acts 13:32).

### GREAT AND PRECIOUS

The apostle Peter describes these 'better' promises as '*great and precious*'. Talking of God's power and our calling he says, "Whereby are given unto us *exceeding great and precious promises*: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." These great and precious promises are numberless and some are probably impossible to identify. James ranks the kingdom of God amongst these. He says that God hath chosen the poor of this world, albeit rich in faith, and made them "heirs of *the kingdom* which God hath promised to them that love him". (2:5). In the previous chapter the same apostle says, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation for when he is tried, he shall receive the *crown of life*, which the Lord has promised to them that love him". (1:12) John says, "And *this is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life*." (1 John 5:25). Paul says this promise of life eternal was made "before the world began but God hath in due times manifested his word through preaching which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour." (Titus 1:2).

And so the 'great and precious' promises of God, in these latter days, include *the gospel; the kingdom of God; the crown of righteousness* (eternal life) *the Holy Spirit and Jesus Himself*. From those basic promises numberless others are derived and in day-to-day transactions God promises to the faithful the umbrella of His love; His *succour* in sickness; *exaltation* to the truly humble; *courage* to the fearful; *abundance* to the feeble; *final victory* to the oppressed; *assurance* to the perplexed; *light* for dark days; *sufficiency* to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness; rest to all those 'who labour and are heavy laden; and *resurrection* to the dead and the slain.

### SLACKNESS - OR YEA AND NAY

God's promises are free and are available to all. God is kind, compassionate and most gracious, and all his great and precious promises are based upon His infinite

grace. No one prompted God to make them, or could have forced God to make them by arm-twisting or holding a pistol to the head. Many promises made by men have to be extracted from them by threats and coercion, but not so with God. Whereas man deserves death and disgrace, God gives him Life and Sonship. Nor is God *slack concerning His promises* albeit they are based entirely upon His generosity. The apostle Peter assures us that **"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."** (II Peter 3:9). In making the point (That God's promises are sure and steadfast) Peter also warns us in this verse that some will perish and will not come to repentance. Thus God's promises are conditional. The crown of Life and the kingdom of God mentioned in the quotations from James are, you would notice, for those **"that love Him"**, and to those who **"endureth temptation and are tried"**. **"Let us therefore"**, says the writer to the Hebrews, **"beware lest a promise being left us, of entering into his rest, any of you should come short of it."** (Heb. 4:1), and again, **"For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."** (Heb. 10:36).

We should, perhaps, regard promises as sacred things and treat them with the gravity that God does. To breach them does not show us in a very good light and often reflects badly upon the Church. In the passage at the beginning of this article (from II Cor. 1:17) Paul hoped that he would not be regarded as one of those 'yea and nay' individuals, whose promises or undertakings might be carried out, but just as surely might *not* be. Concerning promises may we like our heavenly Father - i.e. not 'yea and nay' but decidedly and most definitely Yea, and YEA again. **"For all the promises of God in Him are YEA, and in Him, Amen, unto the glory of God . . ."**

Amongst clamour from men of politics, whose promises are quite often in the realms of fantasy, how refreshing it is to contemplate the promises of God.

EDITOR.

## WHY WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE

The captain of a sailing vessel hired a new sailor who had boasted of his experience at sea. Trusting him, the captain one night placed him in charge of the pilot wheel. "Do you see that star straight ahead? That is the North Star. You are to keep the ship going directly towards it. Understand? If anything goes wrong, call me immediately." "Aye, aye, sir; that I will," was the response. The new "pilot" committed two unpardonable errors. He drank some whisky and then fell asleep. When he awoke he looked frantically for his guiding star. He discovered it at his starboard aft, about 130 degrees off the proper course of the ship. In great excitement he rushed to the captain. "Captain, wake up! Give me a new star to steer by; we've gone past the first one." The captain hurried past the half-drunken sailor and turned the ship in time to avoid crashing on the rocks.

The North Star is the most fixed star in the northern hemisphere. It has been used by navigators during all recorded history for true north. Not until the year 7500, according to astronomers, will another star replace it as the pole star. The Bible claims to be more substantial than the North Star! **"For ever, O Lord, thy word is firmly fixed in the heavens."** (Ps. 119:89). But like the undependable sailor, some sceptics imagine that they have "progressed" far beyond the Bible. They say that it is outmoded; that it is far behind our modern society. But they have not been able to find a superior substitute for the Bible.

As in all areas of life, we need an authority in spiritual matters. The Christian

believes that the Bible is the only authority in religion. He holds this view because he believes that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. Let us consider some of the reasons why this is his belief.

#### I) *THE BIBLE CLAIMS TO BE THE WORD OF GOD*

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. 3:16). ". . . holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Pet. 1:21).

The Bible is either what it claims to be, or else it is one of the greatest frauds ever known. Which do you believe it is?

#### II) *IT IS REASONABLE TO BELIEVE THAT GOD WROTE THE BIBLE*

The majority of people believe in a God who is good, wise and loving. Is it not reasonable to believe that such a God would give man a guide to show him how to live on this earth? Surely, God would not be a loving God if He left man to grope in the darkness of earth's jungle of sin and ignorance.

Men would not have written it if they could and could not have written it if they would! Men would not have written it because it exposes them as sinners. Men could not have written it because they could not have made its amazing prophecies. (see point on prophecies)

#### III) *THE BIBLE IS INDESTRUCTIBLE*

Many different groups and individuals have tried to destroy the Bible. It has been attacked by Jews, Gentiles, heathens, kings, scholars, infidels and popes. If men unaided by God had written it, then men could destroy it. Its indestructibility is evidence of its inspiration.

#### IV) *THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE*

A tree is tested by its fruit. So the Bible can be tested by its influence. Think of the influence of the Bible on the following:

1. *Slavery.* About half of the people were slaves in the Roman Empire. The influence of the Bible ended slavery.

2. *The position of women.* Women were little better than slaves in the ancient world. Wives could be beaten or divorced for no reason at all. But the Bible reveals the true position of woman by the side of man.

3. *Our laws.* The greatest statesmen and lawmakers have been influenced by the laws of the Bible. Freedom has flourished where the influence of the Bible has been known.

4. *Literature.* The great writings of men such as Milton, Dante, Browning, Tennyson, Scott and Shakespeare abound with Biblical references. Try to imagine the loss to our literature if all such references were removed.

5. *Education.* Many of the greatest centres of learning were founded by Bible-believing men. The Bible has promoted learning and freedom of speech.

6. *Art and Music.* The great paintings of Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci and countless other artists were inspired by this Book. The same can be said for the music of such composers as Handel, Bach and Haydn.

No other book has had such an influence on mankind. Why has the Bible been the fountainhead of civilization? Is it not because the eternal God inspired the writing of its pages?

#### V) *THE UNITY OF THE BIBLE*

Although it is bound within one cover, the Bible is not just one book but a collection of sixty-six books. Forty writers had a part in its composition. Sixteen hundred years passed between the writing of the first and last books. Yet the Bible is united in its purpose, facts, doctrine and story. The harmonious sound of a great symphony orchestra implies the work of a composer. A beautiful structure of steel and

concrete implies the work of an architect. The amazing unity of the Bible implies the work of God.

#### VI) THE AMAZING PROPHECIES OF THE BIBLE

A scoffer was ridiculing the prophecies of the Bible, saying they were all written after the events they claimed to foretell. A Christian replied, "There is one prophecy you'll have to admit was written before its fulfilment." "What's that?", asked the scoffer. ". . . there shall come in the last days scoffers . . ." (2 Pet. 3:3), was the reply.

But this scoffer was wrong in his argument. There is historical evidence that the Old Testament was translated from Hebrew into Greek 280 years before Christ. Thus the many prophecies made in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New Testament could not possibly have been written after their fulfilment.

Twenty-five prophecies, written in the Old Testament from 500 to 1,000 years before their fulfilment, were all fulfilled literally in one twenty-four hour period covering Christ's last sufferings. Many of these predictions were fulfilled by pagans who knew nothing of them, or by powerful foes of Christ who would not knowingly fulfil one verse of Scripture concerning Jesus of Nazareth.

1. **Christ was to be sold for thirty pieces of silver.** Zech. 11:12; Matt. 26:14-15.
2. **He was to be betrayed by a friend.** Ps. 41:9; 55:12-14; Matt. 26:47-50.
3. **The money obtained was to be cast to the potter.** Zech. 11:13; Matt 27:3-10.
4. **His disciples were to forsake Him.** Zech. 13:7; Matt. 26:56; Mark 14:27.
5. **He was to be accused by false witnesses.** Ps. 35:11; Ps. 109:2; Matt. 26:59,60.
6. **Jesus' face was to be smitten and spat upon.** Isa. 50:6; Matt. 26:67
7. **He was to be dumb before His accusers.** Isa. 53:7; Matt. 27:12-14.
8. **He was to be wounded and bruised.** Isa. 53:5; Matt. 27:26.
9. **He would die under judicial sentence.** Isa. 53:8; Matt. 27:1-26.
10. **His hands and feet were to be pierced.** Ps. 22:16; Lk. 23:33; Jn. 20:25.
11. **He was to be crucified with thieves.** Isa. 53:12; Mark 15:27,28.
12. **He was to pray for His persecutors.** Ps. 109:25; Isa. 53:12; Lk. 23:34.
13. **The people were to shake their heads at the Crucified One.** Ps. 22:7; Ps. 109:25; Matt. 27:39.
14. **The people were to ridicule Him.** Ps. 22:7,8; Matt. 27:42,43.
15. **The people were to be astonished.** Ps. 22:17; Isa. 52:14; Lk. 23:35.
16. **His garments were to be parted and lots cast for His vesture.** Ps. 22:18; Jn. 19:24.
17. **He was to cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"** Ps. 22:1; Matt. 27:46.
18. **They were to give Him gall and vinegar.** Ps. 69:21; Matt. 27:34; Jn 19:29, 30.
19. **He was to commit Himself to God.** Ps. 31:5; Luke 23:46.
20. **His friends were to stand afar off.** Ps. 38:22 Luke 23:39.
21. **His bones were not to be broken.** Ps. 34:20; John 19:33,36.
22. **His side was to be pierced.** Zech. 12:10; John 19:34,37.
23. **His heart was to be broken.** Ps. 22;14; John 19:34.
24. **Darkness was to cover the land.** Amos 8:9 Matt. 27:45.
25. **He was to be buried in a rich man's tomb.** Isa. 53:9; Matt. 27:57-60.

It has been estimated that the chance of all these prophecies happening together by accident is one in 33,000,000. And these are only 25 out of about 333 prophecies made about Christ!!

The Bible contains many prophecies which were fulfilled in history. Here are a few examples: (1) **The destruction of the great city of Tyre.** Ezek. 26:3-14. (2) **Great slaughter to take place in Sidon.** Ezek. 28:20-23. (3) **Egypt no longer to be a world**

power. Ezek. 29:12-15. (4) **Babylon to be destroyed.** Isa. 13:19-21. (5) **The history of the Jews foretold.** Deut. 28:37; 49-68. Isa. 53:1-3; Hosea 3:4.

#### VII) THE BIBLE IS CREDIBLE

1. It is historically accurate. Archaeological studies are continually confirming the truth of the Bible. Dr. Nelson Glueck, distinguished Jewish archaeologist said "no archaeological discovery has ever been made that contradicts or controverts historical statements in Scripture."

2. It is scientifically accurate. When someone suggests a contradiction between the Bible and science, ask two questions: 1. Does the Bible really teach this? 2. Does science really teach this?

Conclusion: Many more reasons could be given for faith in the Bible. Daily reading, combined with prayer, will reveal the inspiration of the Bible to each individual.

K. THOMPSON

## KINGDOM AND CHURCH

Do you have doubts relative to the Church and Kingdom being the same institution? If so you might be benefited by reading the following from the pen of W.P. Skaggs, and Published in *Christian Leader*, September 7, 1920:

"Some of the brethren seem to be becoming rather doubtful about the Kingdom and Church. The time was when we all knew the Church and Kingdom to be the same institution, but now they are getting to be somewhat unsettled about the matter. What's the matter? Has some new evidence been discovered? If so I think someone that has the record should produce it. See? Brethren know they are in the Church, but don't quite know whether or not they are in the Kingdom. Of course there are many things we do not know, and there are many things for us to learn, and this may be one of them. But for me, I am quite sure that the Church and Kingdom are the same, at least so far as this life is concerned.

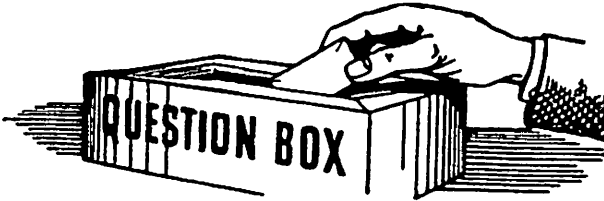
"If they are not the same, then of course, they are different in some point of being. It seems to me that this difference must of necessity be either in regard to (1) the Head, (2) the Laws, (3) the Subjects, or (4) the Territory. This difference cannot be in regard to the head, for the head of the Church and the king of the Kingdom is the same. Christ is the head of the Church (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18), but Christ is king of the Kingdom (Act 17:7; Rev. 1:5; 17:14). (2) This difference cannot be in the laws, for the laws of the Bible furnish all things that pertain to life and godliness. If there are different laws in the Kingdom then they do not pertain to life and godliness. I mean the laws that are different from the laws for the Church. (3) This difference cannot be in the subjects, for everyone born again is in the Church (1 Pet. 1:22,23), but those born again enter the Kingdom (John 3:3-5). Indeed the Church is subject to Christ (Eph. 5:24). The Church or those called out from sin, compose the citizenship of the Kingdom (Eph. 8:19); "So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." (4) Neither can this difference be found in the territory of the Kingdom. The Lord rules in the heart. 'Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which ye are called in one body and be ye thankful.' (Col. 3:15). Again, 'I will put my laws into their minds, and on their hearts also will I write them.' (Heb. 8:10).

"I think it would be well to consider these questions. Has the Lord two spiritual governments on earth? If so, are they both necessary to my salvation? If not, then which one is necessary? And how may I become a member of it?"

"True, the Church has not accomplished all its mission in the world. There is much

yet to do. The future may find the world full of the glory of God, and the kingdoms of this world the Kingdoms of the Lord and his Church, but this does not prove a difference between the Church and Kingdom, but only a greater work accomplished."

C. DORRIS




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Conducted by  
Ian S. Davidson

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**"Which books are helpful to the Biblical student?"**

Solomon once said: ". . . of making many books there is no end: and such study is a weariness of the flesh" (Ecclesiastes 12:12). I think the study he refers to here is that of books by men. Personally, I never tire of reading or studying the word of God.

There are too many religious books around. Many of them should be ignored because they are poor in content and not helpful at all to the Biblical student. For example, I recall reading many years ago around fifty books on the Holy Spirit for a special project. I was more confused afterwards than at the beginning! A lot of these works, in my opinion, should never have seen the light of day because the authors were clueless on the subject. The sad thing is that some of them were best sellers! The Biblical student, therefore, must be very discerning in all his purchases.

It is important, I think, that every Christian possesses a good Bible Atlas. A knowledge of the geography of the Bible lands goes a long way to making those big names (especially in the O.T.) meaningful. Not all Biblical sites have been identified. The archaeologists face many challenges and teams are work-all the time in Israel and elsewhere to make new discoveries and thus improve our knowledge and understanding of "The Land of the Book".

It is also important to own a good Bible Dictionary. Subjects dealt with are Aaron and Zuzim and everything in between! Personally, I prefer the British publications and, especially, the *New Bible Dictionary*, which is also available in illustrated form. The scholarship is the best around and I like the fact that the contributor of each article is clearly identified. Sometimes you get an Anglican slant or a Presbyterian slant or whatever, but on the whole subjects are well researched and profitable to read.

Commentaries come in all sizes. Of course, there are individual commentaries on every book of the Bible, as well as commentaries in one volume of the whole Bible. The former are much more detailed than the latter, although not always better. The decision to purchase is very often based on one's view of the author. For example, I would not hesitate to purchase a commentary by F.F. Bruce because I know I shall get a work of erudition and edification every time. (I like writers who regard the Scripture as God's revelation. Not every Biblical commentator holds to this view.) The best-known commentaries are those by Adam Clarke and Albert Barnes, both Presbyterians. They are rather out-of-date now, but still contain tremendous material for the Bible student. *The Daily Study Bible* (of the N.T.) by Prof. William Barclay (a theologian from my home-town of Motherwell) has sold in incredible numbers throughout the world, and is as popular as ever.

Commentaries by those from a Church of Christ background still sell well in the brotherhood. Names such as J.W. McGarvey, Moses E. Lard, Robert Milligan, B.W.



Johnstone, David Lipscomb, H. Leo Boles, Guy N. Woods, George W. Dehoff and Jim McGuiggan immediately spring to mind. There are, of course, many others.

Further, **Concordances** can also prove helpful to the earnest student of the Scriptures. *Cruden's Complete Concordance* (on the Authorised Version) is still a best-seller, as is *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, which contains about 311,000 references in the Hebrew and the Greek. There is *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* and, more recently, the *N.I.V. Exhaustive Concordance*.

It is appreciated by most that the O.T. was originally written in the Hebrew language and the N.T. in the Greek language. There are books published in these areas to assist the non-specialist. The best-known work is *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* by W.E. Vine. I must admit I use it all the time. For example, on baptism he writes: "*Baptisma*, baptism, consisting of the processes of immersion, submersion and emergence (from *bapto*, to dip) . . ." Other volumes I use are *The Englishman's Greek Concordance of the New Testament*; R.C. Trench's *Synonyms of the New Testament* and *Nelson's Expository Dictionary of the Old Testament*. William Barclay's *New Testament Words* is also a must for those who wish to improve their knowledge of Koine Greek.

### HISTORY AND PROPHECY

All Biblical students should have a great interest in history. After all, four-fifths of the Bible has to do with prophecy and history. Prophecy is history foretold; history is prophecy fulfilled. Personally, I like to read books on Jewish, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Egyptian, Greek and Roman history. To get started, the best thing to do is to purchase a children's book on, say, the Egyptians, and take things from there. Never begin with the detailed and profound works because they can put one off for life. It is important to grasp the outline, the basics and the terminology of any subject before moving on. I cannot stress this enough.

Roman history is one of my favourite subjects. I realised early on that that it is an important back-drop to the New Testament. After all, the apostle Paul himself was a Roman citizen and Jesus and His fellow Jews knew what it was like to live in a land under Roman occupation. I like the writings of Michael Grant on both Greek and Roman history, although I could never recommend any of his books on Christian subjects. F.F. Bruce is different altogether. For example, his *New Testament History* and *The Spreading Flame (The Rise and Progress of Christianity from its First Beginning to the Conversion of the English)* are quite brilliant and reveal a man possessed with a Himalayan range of learning. I know him quite well and miss him a great deal.

**Bible Handbooks** are good additions to anyone's religious library. I would recommend *The Lion Handbook of the Bible*; *Halley's Bible handbook*; *Handbook of Life in Bible Times* by J.A. Thompson; and *The Hodder Bible Handbook* by Unger and Larson.

### ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeology should be a subject of interest to all disciples of Christ. Again, there are good beginner's books around to whet one's appetite. I subscribe to the *Biblical Archaeology Review*, which helps me keep pace with all the changes and developments in the Biblical Archaeological field. B.A.R. is published in America.

The works by earlier British brethren should not be overlooked, although the writings of Alexander Campbell in America have tended to overshadow them. (Incidentally, I would recommend Campbell's publications to anyone, especially his *Christian System*.) David King is probably the best-known British writer. Others include Alexander Brown, Lancelot Oliver, R.K. Francis, James Anderson, John McCartney and the controversial William Robinson. Sister Rose Payne of Reading,

England is doing a sterling work republishing some of their material. Her efforts are to be highly commended.

I could go on and on. Finally, other writers I would recommend are John R.W. Stott, Michael Green, I. Howard Marshall, Francis Schaeffer, C.S. Lewis, Tony Campolo, W. Carl Ketcherside, A.M. Hunter, Alan Millard, Kenneth Kitchen, Henry M. Morris, Donald Wiseman, Edwin Yamauchi, E.J. Young, and G. Campbell Morgan. (If I have omitted your favourite religious writer then I apologise, but an article double this size would still not do the question justice.) However I trust I have been helpful in some small way to the questioner.

(Meantime, all questions, please, to Ian S. Davidson, 21 Glen Lyon, St. Leonards, East Kilbride, G74 2JJ.)

## EVANGELISM

Christ's mission on earth was to "seek and save the lost" (Luke 19:10). He said of himself, "Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28). Paul wrote, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners . . ." (1 Tim. 1:15).

Jesus knew what his objective was and he died to accomplish it. The writer of Hebrews said of Him, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of Death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb. 2:9). In his death Jesus exemplified a truth he had earlier taught his disciples. He had said, "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:23-24). Every person who has ever been saved, and every person who will ever be saved is a fruit of Jesus' death.

What Christ has done, he now invites his followers to do. After making the statement concerning dying wheat and producing fruit he said, "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be; if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (John 12:25-26). Jesus is telling us that to follow him we must do what he did. He laid down his life for others, so we too must lay down our lives for others.

In the words of the Great Commission we are told by Mark, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15). The Commission is clearly stated. God's desire is for "every creature," every person, to hear the gospel of Jesus. But, even with the clear-cut instruction to tell others about the crucified and risen Saviour, the job is not being done. What is it that keeps God's people from telling others about Jesus? What hinders us?

### FAILURE TO BE SPECIFIC IN GOAL SETTING

Our goal should be to share the gospel of Christ with "every creature" - every person within our own city first then the country, then the state, then the whole world (Acts 1:8). How many are you going after in your community? One thing is sure, we won't reach any more than we go after. Likely we will reach less than we go after. Too often we limit ourselves by the size of the church building, but it is apparent that the New Testament Church had no such physical limitations. It reached a membership of 3,000 the first day. In a short time there were 5,000 men. They went after every person in Jerusalem and literally "filled" their city with the doctrine of Christ (Acts 5:28).

Jesus is Lord! He is the goal giver. He has given us the assignment - "every creature." "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). In the first century God's people were faithful and "preached the gospel to every creature under heaven" (Rom. 10:17-18; Col. 1 5-6, 23). As we look at their strategy we see that they started in Jerusalem, went out into Judea, then Samaria, and finally to the "ends of the earth." They were involved "daily" (Acts 2:46; 5:42) and had a strong emphasis on "personal involvement" (Acts 8:4). There was emphasis placed in "prayer" and "the ministry of their word" (Acts 1:14; 2:42; 3:1, 4:24, 31-33; 6:4; 12:5).

The people we read about in the Book of Acts were a "community" of believers. They were a "fellowship"! They started out as a small group of 120 (Acts 1:15), but quickly expanded to 3,000 (Acts 2:41), and then 5,000 (Acts 4:4) and then there were "multitudes" added to their number (Acts 5:14), and then they "multiplied" (Acts 6:7). Those who were being saved knew they were "passing from darkness to light" (Col. 1:13). Having received salvation themselves they could not stand by idly while their friends and relatives walked blindly into eternity unprepared to meet God. They had truly "found it" and they engaged themselves in the business of helping other to "find it".

Acts 4:12-13 serve as a kind of commentary on the Book of Acts revival. Here Peter was before the most esteemed religious leaders of the city. They were down on him, being "grieved" that he preached Christ as the Messiah. Before this pompous assembly he shared the simple gospel of Jesus closing his remarks with the statement of verse 12, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Verse 13 describes the reaction of the Council, "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

Peter and John did not display arrogance before their esteemed audience, but they did display a polite confidence. They knew the words they shared were true, so they had an unembarrassed freedom of speech. We stand today where Peter and John stood in the Book of Acts. As Peter says "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

J. WOODELL

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

July 6	Exodus 12:1-20	Mark 14:12-26
July 13	Zechariah 13	Mark 14:27-42
July 20	Psalms 41	Mark 14:43-52
July 27	Proverbs 12:1-17	Mark 14:53-72

### THE LORD'S SUPPER

This simple feast is called "the Sacrament" by the Catholic Church and "the Eucharist" by the Greek church. Alexander Campbell has written: "The former was a name adopted by the Latin church; because the observance was

supposed to be an oath or vow to the Lord; and as the term *sacramentum* signified an oath taken by a Roman soldier to be true to his general and his country, they presumed to call this institution a sacrament or an oath to the Lord. By the Greek church it called *the Eucharist*, which word imports *the giving of thanks*, because, before participating, thanks were presented for the loaf and the cup". Brother Frank Worgan wrote many years ago: "Reference to the New Testament shows us that such names as these are permissible: The breaking of the bread, or loaf; The Lord's Supper; The communion, fellow-

ship, joint-participation in the body and blood of the Lord. These are simple names which explain themselves, and using such we shall maintain the simplicity and purity of Scriptural language".

The feast is a memorial feast. "This do *in remembrance of me*" (1 Cor. 11:24,25). It is a declarative feast. "For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, *you do show forth the Lord's death . . .*" (1 Cor. 11:26). Further, it is an anticipative feast. ". . . you do show forth the Lord's death *till He come*" (1 Cor. 11:26). To quote brother Worgan again: "Memory, witness and hope are blended together in this feast. It forms a link between two comings. The past when redemption was purchased - the future when deliverance shall be consummated".

I believe that the loaf and the fruit of the vine are simply emblematic of the body and shed life-blood of our dear Lord. G.Y. Tickle, the great British hymn-writer, wrote a verse thus:

*When to thy table, blessed Lord,  
The saints draw near with joyful feet,  
To celebrate around the board  
Thy wondrous death in emblems meet,  
Thou, in the midst, art there to bless  
With more than earthly happiness.*

It should never be a burden, but a privilege, for the saints to gather on the first day of every week to remember the suffering and the death of the Saviour. He Himself foresaw the importance of His people remembering the sacrifice made on their behalf, lest they forget. The partaking of the Lord's supper is not just the central object of their coming together, but THE object of the whole meeting.

#### GETHSEMANE

The hymn-writer put it this way:

*Nor e'er Gethsemane forget,  
But there Thy conflict see;  
Thine agony and blood-like sweat,  
And so remember Thee.*

Jesus prayed earnestly in the garden of Gethsemane that the cup (of suffer-

ing) might be taken from Him (14:36). It is interesting to read that the Father answered this prayer by giving His Son sufficient strength to overcome the suffering (Luke 22:43). Peter, James and John managed to sleep through all the agonies of the Master (14:37,40). At the time, I am certain they did not fully realise what was going on. Jesus' words should never be forgotten: "**Watch you and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak**" (12:38). It was a lesson for His apostles then; it is a great lesson for us today.

#### JESUS TAKEN CAPTIVE

Judas gave Jesus a kiss. This was the pre-arranged signal to identify the Master to His enemies. So "**the men seized Jesus and arrested Him**" (14:47). John in his record reveals that the one who used the sword was Peter and the servant's name was Malchus (18:10). Luke tells us that "**Jesus touched his ear and healed him**" (22:51). The arrest resulted in the apostles forsaking Him and fleeing the scene (14:50).

There has been a lot of comment on the following verses: "**And there followed Him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: and he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked**" (14:51-52). Some commentators are of the opinion that these words refer to Mark himself because he is the only one the gospel writers who records the event. Others think he might have been the proprietor of the garden. I tend to agree with C.E. Graham Swift when he wrote: "No good reason can be shown for the recording of the incident unless it is based on personal reminiscence".

#### JESUS BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN

The trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin was a complete travesty. They broke every rule in the book to condemn Him. Justice never entered into the proceedings. Because Jesus confessed He

was the Christ, He was, therefore, accused of blasphemy by the high priest and worthy of death (14:64). The Master was then treated shamefully, brutally and cruelly. The depth of the wickedness of man is clearly seen in the events that followed. Satan was now in full sway. He had his instruments of evil and was using them as only he knew how. It must be remembered here that Satan throughout history had done everything to prevent the Messiah entering the world. (And he got very close on occasions.) After Jesus was born, he made every effort to kill him. Thirty-three years on, he was now pulling out all the stops." The sentence of death by the Sanhedrin must have been music to his ears.

#### THE DENIAL OF PETER

The scene now centres on Peter (14:66-72). I have been thinking about him a lot recently since my return from Rome, where, of course, he is much venerated. (I wonder what he himself would make of St. Peter's today?) His denial of the Master is well known to all. He was obviously terrified of the consequences of admitting to the fact that he was an apostle of the accused. Crucifixion awaited. Dear reader, how would you have acted in the circumstances? It is easy to be judgemental. The wonderful thing is that, later on, Peter's cowardice turned to courage and his shame to glory. The tradition is that he was crucified upside down for his faith. Jesus Himself had foretold a martyr's death (John 20:18-19).

#### PROPHECIES FULFILLED

God sees the end from the beginning and the beginning from the end. He, therefore, foresaw the suffering of His beloved Son at the hands of His enemies. We read: **"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him: He was despised and we esteemed Him not. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: yet we did**

**esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed . . . He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth . . ."** (Isaiah 53:3-8). **"Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, who did eat of my bread, has lifted up His heel against me"** (Psalm 41:9). **"I gave my back to the smiters and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting."** (Isaiah 50:6).

Jesus Himself predicted on occasions His suffering and His death. Did this foreknowledge make it any easier for Him to face Judas, the Sanhedrin, Pilate, etc? Personally, I think not.

IAN S. DAVIDON,  
Motherwell.

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### NEWSLETTER FROM RUTH COLES IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

I flew at the end of February, 1997 with British Airways from Edinburgh to London and thence to Perth, Western Australia. When I arrived in Perth, I was last off the plane and whisked through immigration and customs at the head of the line. I found that embarrassing, but no one seemed concerned. My luggage was collected and I was delivered to my waiting friends, Pat Thew and Helen Howe of the City Beach congregation.

I was still having trouble with my back so Pat took me to the General Hospital nearest to her home. When I arrived at the Hospital, I was surprised to learn that because of an arrangement between Australia and the U.K. I would not have to pay for my treatment. Then when the staff heard that I was Scottish they told me that a Scottish doctor was in charge of the Outpatient team on duty

at that time and they would ask her to see me. I had several X-rays which confirmed that the problem was in fact muscular but they found an old fracture on my 11th vertebrae which I knew nothing about. I think that it must have happened when I fractured five ribs in the Waria Valley in 1975. I remained in Perth for an extra week so that I could have physiotherapy. Pat is also a registered nurse and she really took good care of me. I then flew to Brisbane where I spent three days with Peter and Hilda Searson. Hilda is the eldest daughter of Tom and Rens Bunt who spent two years with Reg and me in the Waria Valley. I was able to visit with Rens and recalled the times we spent together in the Waria Valley.

I left Brisbane for Papua New Guinea on 20th March and arrived in Port Moresby to an unusually quiet airport. I was met by a very nice man who was a member of the airport staff and as before, I was whisked through immigration and customs and my luggage checked through to Lae without any trouble. Unfortunately, my plane was late and unknown to me there were riots taking place in the town as people were protesting against the Government's decision to employ mercenaries to quell the rebels in Bougainville, who want independence from Papua New Guinea. The mercenaries had just arrived that morning from several countries throughout the world. I sat in the airport for nearly five hours on a hard plastic chair which did not help ease my back pain. However, I eventually arrived in Lae and was met by Velma and several Waria brethren.

I received a letter from Sehequ in Orouba the day after I arrived informing me of the devastation caused in the Waria Valley by a cyclone which hit the coast of Papua New Guinea early in March. The high winds tore through the Waria Valley uprooting thousands of acres of trees and destroying whole

villages in its wake. Some people in the Kira had lit small fires in their garden areas and the high winds caught these and swept down the mountain burning all of the villages where Reg and I worked. It also destroyed all the materials in the bush for building their houses and many gardens were destroyed.

I discussed the situation with Tobey Huff, a missionary in Lae, and we decided to contact congregations in the U.S.A., Australia and the U.K. The first to respond was Pleasant Valley Church of Christ in Little Rock who supported Reg and me for fourteen years in P.N.G. They sent \$4000.00 which helped us to get food, tarpaulins and clothing out quickly in chartered aircraft to the people. Tobey went with a charter of supplies this past weekend and he said that even during the war in Vietnam, he had never seen such devastation. We have received to date about \$18,000.00 but we estimate that we will require over \$30,000.00 so that we can keep sending food in on a regular basis. New gardens will take about five months to mature. Tobey is hoping to buy a chain saw with an Alaskan mill attached so that the people can cut timber to build new houses. There are a number of men who are skilled in the use of the mill as this is what Reg used in cutting timber for the Church building. Miraculously the Church building was not damaged at all for which I am very thankful. Tobey said that in spite of their loss the people were cheerful and were getting on with their lives. There were three people baptised on Sunday 20th April. Since Reg and I left the Waria Valley in 1985 because of Reg's ill health, the brethren have remained faithful and kept the work going and growing. There are three congregations in the Valley with isolated members meeting in three other locations. The brethren have written letters to me expressing their thanks for the help which they have received from overseas congregations.

We need your contributions to enable us to help our deserving brethren in the Waria Valley. I know all of the people personally and they are not people who are always asking for help, on the contrary they are people who are always ready to help others in need. If you can help please send your cheque to Tobey Huff marked Church of Christ relief Fund, P.O. Box 409, Lae, Papua New Guinea.

RUTH B. COLES  
P.O. Box 1827, Mt. Hagen,  
W.H.P., Papua New Guinea.

## TEST YOUR BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE

1. Which two men held up Moses' hands during a battle?
2. What was Nehemiah's job in captivity?
3. Who was the mother of Joseph and Benjamin?
4. Who tricked Joshua at Gilgal?
5. When Daniel arrived in Babylon, who was king?
6. Name Moses' parents?
7. Name the Ephesian Paul was "supposed" to have brought into the temple?
8. Who was the Roman Emperor when Jesus was born?
9. Who was the Roman Emperor during the preaching of John the Baptist?
10. Quote the last verse of the Bible.

## OBITUARY

**Tranent:** It is with sadness that the church in Tranent report the death of our sister Elizabeth (Betty) Colgan. On the sixth May in the Eastern General Hospital Sister Betty died peacefully after a long illness at the age of seventy five years. Sister Betty was baptised at the age of fourteen and was a faithful member until her death. Sister Betty was well known in the community for her courage and strength and above all for her faith in our Saviour. Her presence will be

sorely missed in the congregation meeting in Tranent.

Brother John Knellor and Brother David Scott officiated at the service. We commend her family to God with the words of the hymn:

*I've reached the land of corn and wine,  
and all its riches freely mine;  
Here shines undimmed one blissful day,  
For all my night has passed away.*

JOHN COLGAN

## COMING EVENTS

### HARDING STUDENTS CAMPAIGN at BUCKIE

from 3rd to 15th JUNE, 1997

### BUCKIE ANNUAL SOCIAL SATURDAY, 7th JUNE, 1997

*Speaker:* John Renwick

### CAMPAIGN MEETINGS SUN. 8th, MON. 9th, TUES. 10th, WED. 11th, THURS. 12th and SUN. 15th.

*Preacher:* John Renwick

### SUNDAY SCHOOL PICNIC SATURDAY, 14th JUNE, 1997 with Harding Students

## GHANA UPDATE

As it is now over a year since Bill and I returned from Ghana we thought we should give an update of how the work is progressing.

There are now another 6 congregations as a result of the outreach work carried out by the brethren in Ghana. Two are as far north as one can travel in Ghana, another in Volta, one in greater Accra and one in the west. There is another in Ashanti Region but we have no details about this yet. In the past year there has been a good response in glasses, clothes, books and money which we have tried to distribute as fairly as possible. Unfortunately the appeals for solar panels only raised enough for 2 units which means we will not receive a discount. (we needed 5 for

a discount). We personally have experienced Gospel meetings and Bible studies in the dark and we greatly admire the zeal of our brethren to persevere in such conditions (sometimes six nights a week). We wonder how many would attend services in our country during a single power failure. The construction of meeting places has been very encouraging in the past year, there are nearing completion. It is also encouraging to see some churches are now standing on their own feet. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who volunteered to type tracts and handbook pages for use in Ghana. The first drafts are now completed and anyone wishing to be involved in proof-reading before the final typing would be welcome. Funds are low for the printing of Ghanaian tracts and assistance would be very much appreciated. Please make cheques payable to Graeme Pearson (Ghana Appeal), and send to G. Pearson, 13 Fairways, Dunfermline, Fife, KY12 0DU, Scotland. Tel: 01383 728624.

P.S. Many thanks to IMB for £100 received on 13th May (Receipt 845).

**BRITISH RESTORATION MOVEMENT REPRINTS**

Sister Rose Payne continues to do sterling (nay, Herculean) work in the reprinting of old books, debates and

tracts of the British Restoration Movement. She has now reproduced a long list of such literature (too long to print in the S.S.) and keen Bible students could do no better than send for the list. She has just completed a reprint of the King-Bradlaugh Debate of 1870 (a mammoth task). All six nights of the debate are reprinted (123 pages) and costs only £5. Most of Bradlaugh's atheistic objections to Christianity are ably dealt with, and similar objections are around today. Computer users may now be able to read some of these books on <http://members.tripod.com/~arches>

Miss R.M. Payne,  
1 Kenilworth Avenue,  
Reading,  
RG30 3DL.

- 10. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen". (Revelation 22:21)
- 9. Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1,2).
- 8. Augustus Caesar (Luke 2:1).
- 7. Trophimus (Acts 21:29)
- 6. Amram and Jochebed (Exodus 6:20).
- 5. Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 1:1).
- 4. The Gibeonites (Joshua 9:3-15).
- 3. Rachel (Genesis 46:19).
- 2. A cupbearer to the king (Nehemiah 1:11).
- 1. Aaron and Hur (Exodus 17:12).

**ANSWERS**

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