

# *The* **SCRIPTURE STANDARD**

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

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## LIKE UNTO ME

"And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him". Deut. 18:17-19.

The above prophecy came under discussion at our congregational bible study recently and when one considers the phrase, "Like unto thee" in verse 18 one is amazed at the many similarities between Moses and Christ. Clearly this prophecy refers to Christ although some men have had the audacity to apply it to themselves, e.g. Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon Church.

The amazing similarities between Moses and Christ begin at a very early age in respect of both men, in infancy. Both men had their lives miraculously preserved as babies. Pharaoh's instructions to the midwives when dealing with the Hebrew women was thus: "And Pharaoh charged all his people saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive" (Ex. 1:22). We are familiar with the mode of Moses' escape, how that when his mother could conceal him no longer (after 3 months) she hid him in a basket made of bulrushes, pitched within and without, and left him by the side of the river whereupon Pharaoh's daughter found him there. And so Pharaoh unwittingly raised up in his own palace the child he was later to wish had been destroyed. In the case of the Lord Jesus Christ we read that Herod sought His life as a baby. The Wise Men had been instructed to find the child and report back to Herod. "And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed unto their own country another way. And when they departed, behold an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. And he arose and took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt. And was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord by the prophet saying, Out of Egypt have I called my Son" (Matt. 2).

Both men were mighty in wisdom and learning. Stephen in his defence speech (Acts 7) comments on learning of Moses, "And when he (Moses) was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up and nourished him for her own son. And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. And when he was full forty years old, it came

into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel". And so Moses was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians (which was very considerable) and was 'mighty in words and deeds'". It is interesting that exactly the same phrase, "mighty in words and deeds" is used of Jesus. When Jesus walked and talked with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus and asked them what seemed to be troubling them, we read that, "... one of them whose name was Cleophas answering said unto him, Art thou a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are to come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people". Jesus was wise from an early age and astounded those with whom He came into contact. We may recall that He was but 12 years old when He was left behind by his parents at Jerusalem at the Passover, and when his parents returned in search for Him, He was in the temple, "sitting in the midst of the doctors both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at His understanding and answers". (Luke 2:46) "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man". (v. 52).

Both men were humble and even poor, by choice. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter: choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a reason: esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect to the recompense of reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the king; for he endured as seeing him who is invisible". (Heb. 11:24). Consider also the lowly and humble status of Christ. Paul in Phil. 2:5 commends to us the humility of Jesus thus: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God. But made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross". The vast wealth of the Vatican defies calculation yet Jesus owned nothing.

Some other remarkable similarities between Moses and Christ will occur to the reader. Both, for instance established memorial feasts. Moses the Passover (Ex. 12:14) and Christ the breaking of bread (Luke 22:19). Both had seventy helpers (Num. 11:16), and (Luke 10:1) It is recorded that on occasion their faces shone (Ex. 34:35 and Matt. 17:2). Both fed multitudes - Moses with Manna and quails and Jesus with loaves and fishes (Ex. 16:15 and Matt. 14:21). Both are recorded as having control of the Sea - Moses parted the Red Sea and Jesus walked on the sea and stilled the storm (Ex. 14:21 and Matt. 18:26). Both performed miracles. Both had disciples - John 3:28 records a clash between Moses' disciples and Jesus' disciples. Both were Deliverers - Moses delivered physical Israel from political slavery and Jesus delivered spiritual Israel from the bondage of sin. Both were founders of dispensations. Both fasted for 40 days (Ex. 34:28 and Matt. 4:2). Both spoke as the oracle of God. (Deut. 18:18).

Most of all both were Lawgivers. Most references to the 'law' in the scriptures is a reference to 'The law of Moses'. "And he (Joshua) wrote there upon the tables of stone a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel". In John 7:22 in a conflict between Jesus and the scribes and pharisees, Jesus said, "Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken, are ye angry with me because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath?" Jesus was the definitive lawgiver, of laws not written on tables of stone but on the fleshy table of the heart of man. James describes the laws of Jesus not as those of bondage or servitude, but as 'the perfect law of liberty' (not a contradiction in terms), and Jesus has reintroduced to us that 'royal law' (upon which all the law and the prophets hung) i.e. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The apostle James, decrees for all time and settles any nagging doubts for ever when he says, to those who pronounce judgement on their brethren, "There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy, who art thou that judgest another". Christ's laws are gracious as John says, (John 1:17) "For the law was given by Moses but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

Both were prophets and Jesus still is. Moses gave testimony to the fact that he would be followed by another prophet, not dissimilar to himself, to whom the world must hearken. This prophecy from Deut. 18 is quoted at the beginning of this article. The Israelites were terrified by the sound of God's voice and asked God to speak, in future, through Moses. Moses in turn says that, in the future, God would speak through Jesus. If only Jews today would accept this prophecy of Moses. What did Moses say? — that the prophet would be 'like unto me' and 'unto him shall ye hearken'. Thus Moses commands Jews today to obey Christ. The Jews profess to be waiting and looking for that prophet, as they were in Jesus's day. When Jesus came to Bethsaida He said unto Philip, 'Follow me'. "Philip findeth Nathaniel and saith unto him, We have found him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph".

In spite of the claim of such men as Joseph Smith, the apostle Peter, in no uncertain fashion attributes the fulfilment of Moses' prophecy to Jesus Christ. In Acts 3:22 Peter says, "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me: him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which shall not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken have likewise foretold of those days. Ye are the children of these prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away everyone of you from his iniquities". Here the apostle links up the two prophecies or promises (one made to Moses and one made to Abraham) and states categorically that Christ fulfilled them both. Jesus was that prophet like unto Moses unto whom all must hearken or be condemned, and Jesus was the one through whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed. This was, and apparently still is, a pill difficult for Jews to swallow and seems an eternal stumbling block. Peter and John were seized for stating this and put in prison until next day. Stephen testified the selfsame thing to the Jews and they gnashed on him with their teeth, cried with loud voices, stopped their ears, ran upon him, dragged him out of the city and stoned him to death. Yet accept this Jews, and indeed all men, must for surely the lesson was evidently taught at the transfiguration when Christ was transfigured before the very eyes of Peter, James and John, when His face shone as the sun and His raiment was like white light. Even as the disciples tried to make some lame comment a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold a voice out of the cloud which said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, Hear ye Him".

If the Jews doubt the testimony of Peter and Stephen, surely they must be impressed by this statement from heaven itself.

EDITOR

## THE LEVITICAL OFFERINGS

### INTRODUCTION

We are about to deal with the first five offerings that are mentioned in Leviticus chapters 1 to 7. But before we go into them separately and in detail, I would like first of all to give an introduction to them and hope you will first of all familiarize yourself with them in all their varied details by reading about each one in turn.

These five offerings then, are basic to most, if not all, of the Old Testament offerings from Abel onward. They all find their roots in these. After the fall of man in Eden's garden and the introduction of sin into the world, it was necessary for God to devise some means by which sin could be atones for and for man to approach God on a righteous basis. This is immediately seen in Abel's offering in Genesis 4 and finds it's commendation in Hebrews 11, as the more excellent sacrifice, by which he was declared righteous, God testifying to Abel's faith in the blood offering which he brought and rejected Cain's bloodless offering, yet in grace, giving

him the same opportunity in the words "if thou doest not well, a sin offering croucheth at the door" Gen. 4 v 7. Genesis is rightly named the 'Book of Beginnings' It is the seed plot of the whole Bible for in it we usually find the first mention of all the great truths of the Word of God.

And so it is with the offerings. We have the first sin offering in Gen. 4 and the first burnt-offering in Gen. 8. And they are put in that order because this is the order of human experience. Before we can offer what is represented by the burnt-offering, the sin question must be settled first. So the sin offering is mentioned first as in the story of Abel, then the burnt-offering of Noah in Gen. 8; for after judgement had fallen upon a godless world in the flood, Noah stepped out of the Ark on to a cleansed earth and offered burnt offerings and the Lord smelled a sweet savour. Now in Leviticus the order is revealed; the burnt offering comes first and the sin and trespass offerings come last and the reason is, that in the Genesis order it is man's approach to God; in Leviticus it is God's approach to man. This will be explained more fully as we deal with each of the offerings.

Now all these offerings are typical of the one great offering and sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ in all the varied aspects of His work upon the cross in relation to God's requirements and man's need. But how do I know they are typical of Christ? Well the New Testament always confirms the Old and we find the answer in the Epistle to the Hebrews. There we read they were patterns of heavenly things and of the better sacrifice of the Lord Jesus. Again, the sacrificial law was a shadow of good things to come. The Hebrew epistle makes this very clear as it contrasts the O.T. offerings, the Tabernacle, the Priesthood, etc., with our blessed Lord Jesus.

There are three sets of laws in the Old Testament; the moral law embodied in the ten commandments, the ceremonial law, with its feasts and functions and rituals and the sacrificial law with all the variety of sacrifices required on different occasions and for various reasons. Christ is the substance and fulfilment of them all. He supercedes them all and they are therefore no longer required. These then were only temporary until Jesus came. They were only pointing forward to what God had divinely planned and they found their end in the Cross of Christ. This in itself is amazing because all the minute details in all the various offerings shows God's careful planning and anticipation of their completion in the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But why so many different offerings? Because one animal sacrifice alone could never portray and include every aspect of the Cross. That is why there are so many. Sin has had such far reaching consequences and affected the whole of God's vast creation in such a variety of ways, that, in order to represent the various ways in which the Lord is able to meet the curse of sin and effect its cure, He gave these offerings that so clearly speak of Christ. They speak then, of God's effective way of dealing with all the aspects and avenues of sin in its totality.

You will notice then that these first five offerings of Leviticus are divided into two groups. The first three are sweet savour offerings which speak of the perfect humanity and sinless perfection of the Lord Jesus and His delight in doing the will of His Father. The other two are non-savour offerings for sin and trespasses, that which was in man, imputed to Jesus "Who was made sin for us" on the cross and there was nothing sweet about this. Four of these are animal sacrifices and one inanimate, the meal offering which was never offered by itself but always with an animal sacrifice. And the reason is because it represents the perfections of the Lord Jesus as a Man and His perfect Life alone could not save us, He had to die! For without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. So the apostles Life of Jesus was necessary to qualify Him to be the sacrifice without spot or blemish.

Now each of these four animal offerings, the Burnt, the Peace, the Sin and Trespass offering find their place in each of the four Gospels. We know that each of the four writers of the Gospels had a definite task of presenting the Lord Jesus in a special way and that is why each deliberately omit some things that the others tell us about. Each one is looking at the

Lord Jesus from a different angle and each one bringing out some special glory peculiar to Him. For instance Matthew presents Him as a King and only Matthew tells us about the wise men seeking a King. Whereas only Luke tells us about the shepherds and all the human circumstances that surrounded His birth, because Luke would tell us of His humanity. But the emphasis in John is the Diety of the Blessed Lord, that which was from the beginning was God! Mark is the gospel of the perfect Servant of Jehovah and the clue seems to lie in the way that each of the Gospels begin. And so with these four offerings. The burnt offering finds its place in the gospel of John whereas Luke is the gospel of the Peace offering. It is interesting to note that neither John or Luke record the "cry of forsaking" on the cross but Mark and Matthew do, for Mark is the sin offering and Matthew the trespass offering. This then is the evidence. of our sin and trespasses, the "Holy did hide His Face" which drew from the Lord that cry "My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me". We shall see these things more clearly as we deal with them individually.

Observe too, that the word ALL is common to each of them, only in relation to different things. In the burnt offering it is ALL the animal; in the meal offering, ALL the frankincense; in the peace offering, ALL the fat; in the sin offering, ALL the blood and in the trespass offering, ALL restored plus one fifth.

One thing we must notice too, is that all these offerings are related to the Altar either by Fire or by Blood and there is one specific verse we must consider in the Law of the burnt offering, Lev. 6:13, which states 'the fire shall ever be burning on the altar, it shall never go out!' The fire is symbolic of Divine Presence, IT SHALL NEVER GO OUT! Fire and blood are therefore very important to the offerings, for it is the blood, symbolizing death, that meets the requirements of God's holiness, which the fire represents. The fire speaks of three things. (1) The Divine Presence (2) Holiness in judgement against sin (3) Purifying that which it sanctifies.

(1) The Divine Presence. Moses at the burning bush! in Exodus 3. And the voice of God "I am the God of thy fathers, etc. Take off thy shoes from off thy feet for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" And Moses was afraid to look upon God. The Fire of the Divine Presence! With Israel, the Pillar of Fire by night and Cloud by day, what a comfort and yet what a warning to the people of God! God's presence with them. And the Lord descended upon Mount Sinia in fire and the smoke ascended as of a great furnace. The Divine Presence! It must have been a terrifying sight!

(2) Holiness in judgment against sin. The flaming sword at the Garden of Eden after man had sinned to debar his way to the Tree of Life. The judgement of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire! The sin of Nadab and Abihu in Lev. 10 and fire came out from the Presence of the Lord and devoured them! There are many other examples of the Fire of Divine Holiness in its judgement against sin and in the New Testament we are reminded that "our God is a consuming fire!

(3) Purifies that which it sanctifies. When the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost on the disciples, it was in 'tongues of fire' to burn out the dross, to purify and to make holy. When the Holy Spirit came on the Lord Jesus it was in the form of a dove, for there was nothing in Him to purify. He was God's Holy son! At the judgement Seat of Christ in 1 Cor. 3 the believer's works are examined, tried and rewarded for in verse 13 we read, 'the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is, yet he himself shall be saved yet so as by fire' So the Holiness of God purifies that which it sanctifies.

Leviticus is the book of Holiness! It breathes the very nature of God! In it the word Holiness is mentioned 87 times. In Genesis we have a Creator God! In Exodus a Redeeming God! and in Leviticus a Holy God! and all these offerings and what they represent were necessary to maintain a redeemed people in Holiness before Him. "Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am Holy" was the Divine Command to His people in Lev. 19.

And what of the altar? According to the dimensions in ex. 27, it had to be foursquare, each side facing one of the four points of the compass. Although given to Israel yet God had in mind the broader view of Calvary, being made available to the four corners of the earth in its outreach to men of all nations. And the foursquare Altar finds its ultimate in the City Foursquare of Revelations 21, for this is the dwelling place of those of all peoples and tongues and nations who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb!

John D. Hartburn. Durham.

## GLEANINGS

“Let her glean among the sheaves” Ruth 2:15

OUR THEME – SEEING THE INVISIBLE!

OUR TEXT:- “He endured, as seeing him who is invisible” Hebrews 11:27

CAMPBELL MORGAN:- “As we read the wonderful illustrations of faith given us by this writer, he says of one man, that “he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible”. A great and glorious statement! Such an absurd thing, is it not, you worldly-wise man? Seeing the invisible! That is faith. That is the sphere in which faith operates in the spiritual world in the midst of which we are always living, even in the dust of the city. The unseen things, the hidden forces that are everywhere, if we could see them. We cry out, “Master, what shall we do?” But the man who can see, says, “Lord, open his eyes”, and the Lord in the ancient story opened his eyes, whose eyes that are more than human sight, and “Behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about”. The young man had not seen them, but they were there, unseen things. What a wonderful story that is, and how perfectly it illustrates this; the faith of Elisha, and the sight that came to his servant. Some of us may be thinking of those lines of Wesley, in his great hymn:-

“Lo, to faith’s enlightened sight,  
All the mountain flamed with light.  
Hell is nigh, but God is nigher,  
Circling us with hosts of fire”.

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD:- “Let us then be glad, and rejoice in the salvation of our Lord; for faith had never yet cause to have wet cheeks, and hanging down brows, or to droop or die. What can ail faith, seeing Christ suffereth Himself (with reverence to Him be it spoken) to be commanded by it, and Christ commandeth all things? Faith may dance because Christ singeth; and we may come into the choir, and lift our hoarse and rough voices, and chirp, and sing, and shout for joy with our Lord Jesus”.

T. H. MILNER:- FAITH IS LOOKING TO JESUS. “Faith is to the mind what looking is to the eye. By looking at any outward object, that object is brought into contact with the sense of sight, and thereby produces an effect on the person looking at it, corresponding to the nature of the thing looked at. So, by faith or belief in any person or testimony, that person or testimony is brought into contact with the mind of the person believing therein, and effects follow corresponding with the nature of the thing or person believed upon. This is perhaps one of the most simple and expressive of any of the Scripture illustrations of faith. No act is more simply or easily understood than that of looking at an object. And such is faith. Hence John 1:29, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world;’ and Heb; 12:2, ‘Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of the faith.’ Under this view, the mind of the sinner is to be brought into contact with the Saviour and his saving work, just as the eye gazes upon outward objects. Faith is, for the mind to be directed to Jesus, to keep before it the unspeakably precious truth that the Redeemer has borne away our sins, and opened a new and living way of access to God for all who come to God by him”.

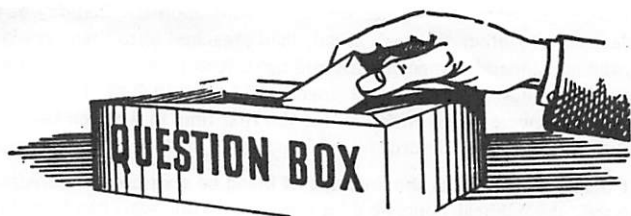
H. G. HARWARD:- What is faith? ..... "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen". This is sometimes called a definition of faith. But the Bible defines by example rather than by stated terms. It shows what the thing is by its manifestation in the lives of men. Therefore this chapter illustrates rather than defines faith. This principle has to do with unseen things – not with the objects of sight and knowledge. The things known to us through the senses are not matters of faith ..... Robinson translates Heb. 11:1 – "Faith is confidence as to things hoped for; conviction as to things not seen". This is very clear. Faith is thus defined as relating to two classes of objects – things hoped for, and things not seen. In all faith the elements of conviction and confidence must be present".

"Whom having not seen ye love".

J. H. JOWETT:- "Love may be born of spiritual fellowship. If only we can get into intimacy with the Master's spirit, love may wake into being and song. It is just for this opportunity of individual communion that the Master is craving. He has little fear of our not falling in love with Him, if we will only listen to His story. He wants to visit the heart and whisper His evangel in the secret place".

"The sublime purpose of the communion shall be to woo thee, that in His tender fellowship the springs of thine own love may be unsealed and thou mayest become engaged, by the bonds of an eternal covenant, to the Lord of life and glory. "We love him because he first" wooed us The early love may be timid and shy, half afraid of itself, and trembling in some uncertainty, but it shall put on strength and sweetness in the deeper and riper fellowships of your wedded life. Wedded to the King, you shall come to realise more and more the freedom of His forgiveness, the triumph of His power, the sweet pressure of His presence, the alluring glory of the living hope, and with this enrichment of your intimacies your heart will become possessed by a more intense and fervent affection for Him "whom not having seen ye love".

Selected by Leonard Morgan.




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Conducted by  
Alf Marsden

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"IS it right for a christian family who find themselves isolated in a community where there is no church to invite people from other religious groups to break bread with them in the hope that thereby they will be able to win them into the church".

I am sure that many who have found themselves in this situation have asked themselves this question. It is difficult for those of us who have never been isolated in this manner to appreciate the loneliness which comes from separation from those of like mind and like faith. I can well understand the desire not to offend those who think themselves christians by having to tell them that they are not following God in the way which He indicated and consequently are not fit candidates for joining us in celebration of the Lord's Supper. In such circumstances we allow them to feel accepted with us, and we lay aside our anxieties by determining to teach them the way of the Lord as they meet with us. Please don't misunderstand me; I know many fine and good-living people who consider themselves to be christians without following the word of God in all details. It is not our business to judge them; we leave that to God. What we have to do is to please God and not men, and that means teaching and practicing

those commands that have emanated from our Heavenly Father and His Son. If we do that, everything else will be right. So let us examine the teaching regarding the Lord's Supper or, as it is known, the Breaking of Bread worship, and perhaps the best way to do this is to ask a series of questions and to look to the Bible for our answers.

**Q Where did the Feast originate?**

**A** It is of divine origin. As Paul explains in 1 Cor. 11:23 "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread" ... etc: (Read on to the end of chapter). Jesus, after eating the Passover feast with his disciples, initiates the new feast which is to be continued in his kingdom (Matt. 26:26ff). Now we know that Jesus always did the will of God, and he said on one occasion, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me" (John 7:16). Paul wrote under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and he also said that the Feast came from the Lord. Therefore, we can rightly say that it is of divine origin and consequently extremely important. We also notice that bread was broken, hence the name for the Lord's Supper "the breaking of the bread".

**Q WHO Participated in the breaking of the bread?**

**A** "Then they that gladly received his word were baptised: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they (the ones who gladly received the word and were baptised) continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:41,42). So the ones who continued in the apostles teaching were the ones who had responded to the gospel as preached by Peter on the Day of Pentecost. They, with others, comprised the church, because at the end of that chapter we read, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (v.47). Therefore, the saved were the ones who had obeyed the gospel; the gospel demanded faith, repentance, and baptism; the ones who had obeyed were the ones who continued in the breaking of the bread; the breaking of the bread was a remembrance function of the church.

**Q When was the breaking of bread held?**

**A** On the first day of the week. In Acts of Apostles we read, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber where they were gathered together" (Acts 20:7,8). Incidentally, we are taught that the disciples were called christians for the first time in Antioch (Acts 11:26), so disciple and christian are both descriptive of those who had obeyed the gospel.

**Q Why is it so important that communion in the breaking of bread be restricted to christians?**

**A** As we have already stated, the biblical concept of a christian is one who has been fully obedient to the gospel. Such a person is baptised into Christ (Rom. 6:1-6), and consequent upon that becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17-19). In this new state Peter teaches that the christian is a partaker of the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:3-5); this means that he shares jointly with Christ Jesus in the blessing of salvation (this having been wrought by Christ), and is also a recipient of all associated heavenly blessings. With this in mind, Paul teaches that there is an expression by the christian of continued communion in emblematic form in the breaking of the bread and the drinking of the cup (1 Cor. 10:15-21; 1 Cor. 23-34). It is of course, a spiritual participation in the body and blood of Christ and this is symbolised by the bread and the cup. Dare we then say that anyone may have communion with Christ who has not obeyed him. And is it so wrong to ask anyone to be obedient to God?

#### Conclusions

There are two ordinances in the Church which to my mind are inviolate; baptism and the breaking of bread. As we would expect, the Lord gave explicit commands regarding both. Concerning the gospel he said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth, Go ye therefor, and teach all nations, baptising them in 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; and, lo,



I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20). Baptism, as we so often remind the truth-seeker is not the sprinkling of babies, but the immersion in water of the penitent believer.

Concerning the Lord's Table Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me" (1 Cor. 11:24,25). Paul then goes on to teach, "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (1 Cor. 11:27). The church has a duty to protect those who are unwilling to obey the gospel against themselves especially if they want to be partakers at the Lord's Table in an unsaved condition. We must discharge that duty.

If I were isolated, and people of other religious groups wanted to share communion with me, I think I would first want to teach them how to be obedient to the gospel, explaining to them lovingly what God expected of them, and I feel sure that if the people concerned are genuine truth-seekers then they will see where God is trying to lead them and they will arise and obey the gospel. Then we shall enjoy true partnership with each other and with our Father and Creator. May this be so, for the sake of the one who died for us.

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

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

MAY 1979

6-Daniel 3:8-28	Acts 4:1-22
13-Psalm 2	Acts 4:23-47
20-2 Kings 5:9-27	Acts 5:1-16
27-1 Kings 22:5-28	Acts 5:17-42

### TRUTH VERSUS AUTHORITY

THE impact of the preaching of the apostles upon the people of Jerusalem inevitably became the concern of the religious leaders, especially those who had successfully, as they thought, destroyed Jesus, and His influence. For three years He had been regarded as a prophet from God, and the memory of His word and work must have been fresh in the minds of the common people to whom He had brought such blessing. The day of Pentecost as the other appointed Feasts guaranteed maximum publicity for the whole Jewish nation. The City and the Temple formed the central point. Here religious AUTHORITY had its headquarters, and it must assert and exercise its power. It had committed itself to opposition to Jesus. Could there at this time have been opportunity for repentance? We observe that as evidence of the truth increased so did opposition. The more the goodness of Jesus became obvious during His ministry, the harder became the hearts of the religious leaders. His authority and influence reached

its zenith when He rode into Jerusalem on the ass's colt. A poet has written of His influence like this - "What means this eager, anxious throng, which moves with busy haste along - these wondrous gatherings day by day - what means this strange commotion pray? In accents hushed the throng reply "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by"." Yes! but He is "of Nazareth" - despised Nazareth - is unlearned (by certain standards), and has not His diploma for preaching! So, enraged "authority" plots His destruction, and succeeds. But now Peter and John "uneducated and unlearned men" (J.B. P 4:13) are preaching the resurrection, and have worked an astonishing miracle, uncommonly like those of the prophet from Nazareth. The whole nation is in danger of accepting the truth! Authority must act. The men are arrested we think without violence as in 5:26, and for the same reason. They did not resist. They had the truth and expected the opposition (Matt. 5:11; 10:19). They had no fear - in complete contrast with Gethsemane and the courtyard. The very Spirit of God spoke through them. Their accusers were not spared any part of their crime. These eminent men should surely have recognised there and then that they were faced with truth - "we cannot deny it" they said, and yet must forbid its spread. They imagined it could be stopped by threatening, but could hardly believe it in face of the challenge. Indeed in a short time they tried beating with as little success.

### The United Prayer of the Church

One of the things which the believers continued stedfastly was "the prayers" (2:42),

certainly an indispensable part of the church's worship. The first recorded prayer was offered in special circumstances, and could be a model for such circumstances. It may be a mystery just how they prayed together. Did one man lead their thoughts or was it a miraculous unanimity in voice and thought? When prayer is offered in the assembly of the Lord's people it should be made "of one accord" by being spoken loudly and clearly so that every member prays. This prayer begins with praise, the ascription of power to God. It proceeds with quotation of scripture, and applies its fulfillment in the opposition of man to Jesus as foreordained by God. Herod, Pilate, the Rulers of the Jews exercised their free will individually and collectively and fulfilled the purposes of God. The petition calls upon God to "look upon" the threats, and to provide strength to speak boldly and to give miraculous power in the name of Jesus. God answered immediately by a sign and subsequently through those who prayed and the church in general.

#### Work of Faith and Labour of Love

Luke at this point gives a picture of "the multitude that believed". He did describe the initial results in chapter 2. It was a minority that accepted the gospel. Baptism brought them all together as a company of people with a new outlook on life. They immediately took care of one another in a very new way - a real communism. Their worship continued every day in the Temple, and their other activities in godly behaviour in their homes. Their hearts being filled with love, their actions towards their neighbours bore the fruits of kindness and liberality. So they had "favour with all the people", and "day by day" souls were won. When persecution threatened and numbers greatly increased they remained so united that outstanding generosity was exhibited (4:32-35). The apostles powerfully preached the gospel and the wonderful new spirit of love and moral purity. Because of his subsequent work and special generosity Barnabas has special notice, and it may be the hypocrisy of Ananias and Sapphira was the result of praise accorded to special givers. They wanted the praise without the sacrifice.

#### Unique Authority of the Apostles

We have already emphasised the position and responsibility of the apostles. After

a night of prayer Jesus called His disciples (learners) of whom there were many, and from them He chose twelve whom He named apostles (messengers). Others were present such as Joseph Justus and Matthias (Acts 1:23) but the honour and the duties were limited to the twelve. It became vitally important that "the twelve" should be recognised as having charge of the church, and the incident of Ananias and Sapphira served this purpose also. to make a distinction within the church about which there could be no possible mistake. Thus at the beginning it was by the apostles' hands that signs and wonders were wrought. "Of the rest no man durst join himself to THEM". At this time it was the apostles doing the same work as Jesus with the sick. It is clear that after the appointment of the "deacons" the miraculous powers were passed on through the laying on of hands OF THE APOSTLES (6:6; 8:17). Thus the authorities arrested only the apostles. They were required to bear the first suffering for Christ. All the twelve were put in prison. All the twelve were given the forty stripes save one (Acts 5:40; 2 Cor. 11:24). They set the example of rejoicing when brutally hurt because of faithfulness in declaring the whole counsel of God. John in chapters 13 to 17 inclusive reports the words of Jesus more especially for the apostles. Paul's claim to have been added to the number "out of due time" (1 Cor. 15:8) only confirms the very special responsibility and authority belonging to all of them. The word is applied once to Jesus Himself as God's special messenger with full authority (Heb. 3:1), and used for Barnabas as "sent out" with Paul (Acts 14:14) in the ordinary sense of "messenger, one sent out" as he was by the Antioch church. It may be applied also to James the Lord's brother in Gal. 1:19 where it can well mean "but only", and in no other place is James so named. That they did pass on their miraculous powers to others, there can be no question, but never their exclusive authority. No real differences arose among them after Jesus washed their feet (John 13).

R. B. SCOTT.

#### GIFTS

Gifts - These are not always well received. The New Testament speaks of good gifts. "Every good gift & every perfect gift is from

above and cometh down from the Father of lights with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning". The greatest & finest gift God could give to this sinful world was His only Son, to redeem us.

An unblemished sacrifice was required in the Old Testament times. The priests & people of Israel were reprov'd in Malachis time, by the Lord, because they had "brought that which was torn & lame, & the sick" as an offering. The Lord's stern reproof was, "I HAVE NO PLEASURE IN YOU, NEITHER WILL I ACCEPT AN OFFERING AT YOUR HAND". Let this never be said of us. How different was David's attitude towards sacrifices, when he said: ..... "neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing". In this connection, the writer once read a little remark, "What would we think if we were to be presented with a bouquet containing all faded and wilting flowers"?

Let us always give of our very best to God, and remember that he hath said "I AM A GREAT KING". Sister E.C. Payne, Reading.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

### "OLD PATHS" MISSIONARY IN ENGLAND

Chester and Angela Woodhall were at one time associated with churches that follow the "old paths" in England and Rhodesia. They went to Zambia in Central Africa in 1971 where their family has expanded to three children, Frankie, Kim and Ian. They plan to take a four month furlough beginning in May and spend some of the time in England. They have been based on the Copperbelt in Northern Zambia. Their area of service stretches into six provinces and includes the southern part of the turbulent nation of Zaire. There are now 56 congregations in the area they serve. At least 14 church meeting places have been constructed by the Zambians without any mission payments. Over 60 students have completed a leadership training by extension course. Woodhall produces 30 Christian radio and TV

programs every month. Baptisms over the years have reached the thousands. The Woodhall family can be contacted on the field at P.O. Box 2297 Kitwe Zambia and on furlough c/o Mr. and Mrs. Hopkins, 1 Wyndley Drive, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, Phone No. 021-354-5512. Speaking appointments accepted. Submitted by Angela Woodhall.

## OBITUARY

**Bedminster, Bristol:** It is with deep sorrow that we record the death of our Bro. Rowland Wills on Monday February 26th.

Bro. Rowland had been a christian since boyhood, and remained a faithful servant of the Lord.

We commend his family to the kind mercies of our Heavenly Father.

L. Daniell.

**Newtongrange, Scotland:** It is with regret that we record the great loss in the passing away of our dearly beloved Brother in Christ, W. H. Allan. He died in hospital on March 4th, in Edinburgh. Bro. Allan was a faithful and loyal member of the church here at Newtongrange.

Bro. Allan has been a stalwart of the church for many years. Always ready and prepared to serve the church in any capacity be it leading the church in praise or exhortation or study. Bro. Allan was always at worship right up to his recent hospitalisation. Although our brother has gone his spirit will still be amongst us.

We commend the family, who are left to the kind mercies of our Heavenly Father and also tender to them our sincere love and sympathy. A. P. Sharp.

### THANKS

**Dalmellington, Scotland:** Bro. and Sis Chalmers through the S,S, would like to thank all brothers and sisters in Christ for thier kind expressions of sympathy in Cards, letters, Phone calls and personal calls, after their recent sad bereavement of their son, John. These have been very much appreciated and very uplifting at this time.

D. Chalmers.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Reading: As from 1st April, 1979, the church will D.V. meet in Southcote Hall, Southcote Lane, Reading (adjoining Public Library, corner of Coronation Square). Sundays 3 p.m. as before.

Miss R. M. Payne,  
1, Kenilworth Avenue.  
READING, RG3 3DL

## Quotes on - BELIEF

If life is a comedy to him who thinks and a tragedy to him who feels, it is a victory to him who believes.

Anonymous

Man prefers to believe what he prefers to be true.

Sir Francis Bacon

He that believes only what he can comprehend must have a very long head or a very short creed.

Charles Caleb Colton

We are born believing. A man bears beliefs as a tree bears apples.

Ralph Waldo Emerson.

One person with a belief is equal to a force ninety-nine who have only interests.

John Stuart Mill

Man can believe the impossible but man can never believe the improbable.

Oscar Wilde.

Better trust all and be deceived

And weep that trust, and that deceiving  
Than doubt one heart that, if believed  
Had blessed one's life with true believing  
Fanny Kemble

Unfounded beliefs are the homage which impulse pays to reason.

Bertrand Russell

Birds sing on a bare bough  
O' believer, canst not thou?

Charles H. Spurgeon

Strong beliefs win strong men, and make them stronger.

Walter Bagehot.

He does not believe that does not live according to his belief.

Thomas Fuller

And as with guns we kill the crow  
For spoiling our relief  
The devil so must we overthrow  
With gunshot of belief.

George Gascoigne

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