

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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THE UNTRANSLATED WORD — AGAIN

In last November's issue my editorial was entitled "The Untranslated Word" and in it I tried to show that the translators of the K.J.V. (King James' Version of the Bible) missed a great opportunity by failing to render the Greek 'baptizo' as 'immerse' or 'dip'. They retained 'baptize' (and the noun 'baptism') and thus perpetuated for centuries a great deal of confusion and misinformation about this extremely important ordinance of God. There is no dubiety about what 'immerse' or 'dip' means, but there is, quite obviously, a wide and varied interpretation of what 'baptize' means. Thus the translators did not really translate 'baptizo' but merely transferred it (as had been done before) in an anglicized form (changing an 'o' to an 'e'). In that same article I also showed that if the translators had been allowed to translate 'baptizo', scholarship would have demanded that they render it 'immerse' (for they were honest men). I mentioned the fact that the translators were circumscribed in their work by the Rules drawn up by King James. I also referred to the fact that the N.T. itself indicated quite clearly that 'baptism' involved the immersion of the candidate, and that every Greek Lexicographer, of any note, has defined the Greek 'baptizo' as meaning a submersion and overwhelming. I also drew attention to the fact that the Septuagint, in some twenty instances, renders 'bapto' and 'baptizo' as 'dip'.

THE CHALLENGE

It is only fair that I should inform readers that the accuracy, and basic premises, of my article was quickly challenged, and by no less an association than the Trinitarian Bible Society of London. Through the good offices of brother Roy Edwards, of Kentish Town, my article was passed to the Trinitarian Bible Society (T.B.S.) and they very kindly sent me one of their articles (Article No. 43) pointing out wherein they considered my article in error. The T.B.S. of 217 Kingston Road, London, is a highly commendable body whose aim and object is to "circulate the Protestant and Uncorrupted Versions Of The Word Of God." They publish a very varied and wide-ranging list of valuable articles, at very reasonable cost. Since receiving Article No. 43 I have been engaged with them in a lengthy but interesting correspondence. The basic objections of the T.B.S. to my article were: (1) That I was mistaken in saying that the translators of the KJV were inhibited in any way in their work, or that the Rules (drawn up by King James) prevented them from changing 'Baptize' and 'Baptism' (used in previous versions) even if they had wanted to. (2) They also denied that King James exerted any undue influence on the scope of the translators actions. (3) They considered that the words 'Baptize' and 'Baptism' were so highly suitable, generally understood and historically recognised that the translators had no intention whatsoever of changing them, especially for something inferior. (4) They also thought that the

words 'dip' and 'immerse' were not entirely adequate or suitable translations of the Greek 'baptizo'.

Their Article on the subject (Article No. 43) was fairly lengthy but I have selected four short quotations from it which represent their views. I shall give each quotation in turn, and comment upon it.

(No. 1) **ARTICLE No. 43** states that **"The Rules drawn up before the commencement of the work did not contain any specific reference to baptism"**.

Here the T.B.S. state quite categorically that the Rules drawn up for the guidance and control of the translators of the KJV did not contain any specific reference to baptism, and I suppose it all depends upon what we mean by 'specific.' Whether the Rules mention 'baptism' or make 'specific' mention of baptism would seem to be fairly academic. I repeat what I said in my November article: that the translators did not have an entirely free hand in their work but were governed by the fourteen Rules, drawn up, or approved, by King James. One vital Rule was that the translators must not touch or tamper with 'old ecclesiastical words' and the two 'old ecclesiastical words' proscribed, given as examples by the translators themselves are 'church' and 'baptism'. And so; clearly it was because of the Rules that the translators were not allowed to touch 'baptism'. The PREFACE originally produced with the KJV, but seldom seen now, is worth reading, and a little fragment is worth a mention in the present context. The translators said, "... Lastly, we have on the one side avoided the scrupulosity of the Puritans, who leave the old ecclesiastical words and betake themselves to other, as when they put 'washing' for 'baptism' and 'congregation' for 'church': as also on the other side we have shunned the obscurity of the Papists, in their azimes, tunike, rational, holocausts, praepuce, pasche and a number of suchlike, whereof their late translation is full, and that of purpose to darken the sense, that since they must needs translate the Bible, yet by the language thereof, it may be kept from being understood". Thus the translators admit to steering a middle course between the aims of the scrupulous Puritans and the devious Roman Catholics. The Puritans wanted to be scrupulously accurate and the Catholics (in their recent Rheims Version) had retained obscure ecclesiastical terms to confuse the common people. Obviously the Puritans wanted to alter some of the 'old ecclesiastical words' and, for example, change 'church' to 'congregation' and 'baptise' to 'wash'. Surely this shows that the religious world at that time was not (as the TBS maintain) unanimous in accepting 'baptise' as an adequate rendering of 'baptizo'.

We might also ask (if it was generally understood in 1611 that 'baptise' meant immersion) why those who wanted to practice immersion at that time were persecuted in England and forced to flee the country. Names like John Smyth, Morton and Thomas Helwys come to mind. And why did the Socinians, the Mennonites and the Baptists arise just prior to this period if immersion was the recognised practice? Indeed the Baptists were so well established by this time that in 1644 they published their own Confession Of Faith. And why did the English Prayer Book of 1549 stipulate 'trine immersion', and insist that the clergyman shall "take the child and dippe it in the water" if 'baptise' was synonymous with immersion? Why not just say "the clergyman will baptise the child"? And so I respectfully suggest that the TBS are mistaken in Article No. 43 and that the Rules, drawn up by King James did prevent the translators in changing 'baptise', and thus I stand by what I said in my November article.

(No. 2) **ARTICLE No 43** states that **"King James did not attempt to superintend the work in any way"**. I really don't know how the TBS can be so adamant about this without advancing any proof. Nobody can deny that King James took much more than a passing interest in the translation and decreed that "special pains" should be taken with the work and "that the whole Church and Kingdom should be bound by the new translation and none other". It is generally thought that King James was

persuaded at Hampton Court (in 1604) by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the Puritans, to launch a new translation but Spottiswoode, the historian, tells us that the decision was actually taken in 1601. The King attended a meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, at Burntisland, that year and “did urge the need for a new translation, pointing out the many errors in the current translations and reciting whole verses of the Psalms in the latin tongue, all of which bred not a little admiration in the whole Assembly”. Can we imagine that this man would not keep a close watch on the work of the translators? F. F. Bruce in *The English Bible* says that the fourteen rules which governed the translators “were sanctioned, if indeed not drawn up by James himself”. Historians also tell us that James “held the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings in its extreme form”. In view of the above how can we say that the King **did not attempt to superintend the work in any way?**

(No. 3) **ARTICLE No 43** states that **“There is no need to change the word (baptise) for it is universally recognised as being the most appropriate in the English language”**. This is perhaps the most interesting claim made by the TBS readers can judge for themselves how far it is true by looking at the state of the religious world, not only in this generation, but as it was in 1611. Is the ‘English’ word ‘baptise’ the best and most appropriate rendering of ‘baptizo’ and much more appropriate than ‘immerse’? A Greek knows from ‘baptizo’ what he is required to do, but an Englishman can not learn from the anglicised version ‘baptise’ what he has to do. Indeed it is only through recourse to Greek Lexicons and its N.T. use, that any of us know what ‘baptizo’ means. Those without access to Greek Lexicons have little choice but to accept the meaning offered by the clergy: and this obviously varies between the denominations. It is not any exaggeration to say that ninety-per-cent of the ‘christian’ world **do not** understand the true meaning of ‘baptise’ and that the word means whatever we want it to mean. Obviously all this confusion and ignorance would have been cured instantaneously if the translators had been allowed to replace ‘baptize’ with ‘immerse’. What a transformation this would have made to the ‘christian’ world: now and in 1611.

In subsequent correspondence with the TBS I have been informed that, in their view, ‘baptism’ means much more than simple immersion and that ‘dip’ or ‘immerse’ could never adequately be substituted for ‘baptize’. In addition, the TBS aver that ‘baptism’ denotes ‘a ceremony’ which ‘dip’ could never fully define, and that was why the translators quite deliberately left ‘baptism’ quite undisturbed in the KJV. How true is all this? Certainly when the ‘man in the street’ thinks about ‘baptism’ he thinks in terms of “a ceremony” with a robed cleric standing by the font, the dewy-eyed parents with babe in swaddling-clothes, the grandparents and friends, the God-parents; the oration prior to the christening and the later meal and celebratory drinks. All this ‘the man in the street’ gleans from current practice in the denominations, **not** from the Greek ‘baptizo’. When the disciples immersed 3,000 on Pentecost it is doubtful that 3000 ‘ceremonies’ took place. Certainly baptism is a **formal** and a **solemn** act but **physically** it requires nothing more than immersion in water (as witness the baptism of the eunuch by Philip, and all other N.T. examples). Certainly there is much more to baptism than mere immersion in water. It gives entry into the Kingdom of Heaven (John 3:3): it washes away sins (Acts 22:16); it is a new birth (John 3:5): it ‘puts on’ Christ (Gal. 3:27) it is a declaration of a death, burial and resurrection with Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:1-5): it ‘saves us’ (I Peter 3:21) and much more. But we learn **none of this** from the word ‘baptism’, or indeed from the Greek ‘baptizo’. We learn all these aspects of baptism **from the other portions of scripture (as quoted) and not from the word itself**. No Greek Lexicographer ever claims that ‘baptizo’ means ‘a ceremony’ or that it gives entry to the Kingdom, or ‘puts on’ Christ, or washes away sins etc.: nor, for that matter does it mention that it must be carried out in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. ‘Baptizo’ simply means to ‘dip’, ‘immerse’ or ‘overwhelm’.

Of course we can be immersed without being baptised (as when enjoying ourselves in the swimming pool) but we cannot be scripturally baptised without being formally immersed ("into the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit").

And so, again, I must disagree with the TBS on this matter. I believe (as indicated in my Nov. article) that **there was, and is**, a need to change the word: and certainly can not agree with the TBS that 'baptism' "is universally recognised as being the most appropriate word in the English language". Clearly it is not, and never was. Hugh J. Schonfield in his recent (1955) translation of the N.T. *The Authentic New Testament* consistently, and throughout, translated 'baptize' and 'baptism' by 'immerse' and 'immersion' and seemed to think that this translation was entirely adequate and satisfactory. I have asked the TBS to explain wherein Mr. Schonfield fell short of the mark in his use of these words, but have not had a direct response to this question.

(No. 4) **ARTICLE 43** states that "... it cannot be questioned that they (the translators) translated the word correctly, with scrupulous fidelity to the Greek, with full knowledge of the English word, then already at least 400 years old . . ." It is difficult to understand why the TBS insist on this affirmation when the translators themselves tell us that 'baptism' and 'Baptize' were amongst the old ecclesiastical words they were not allowed to touch. And so my reply to this claim by the TBS is fairly short. The translators did not translate the word (baptism) because they were not allowed to. Like 'Church', and other old ecclesiastical terms, 'baptism' was brought over into the KJV without any alteration whatsoever, and certainly with no reference to "scrupulous fidelity to the Greek."

CONCLUSION

It is only right that we should all be held accountable for what we write or say, and I am very much obliged to the Trinitarian Bible Society for taking notice of my November article and for their interesting criticism. I am bound to say, however, that notwithstanding a lengthy but friendly correspondence with the TBS, and a very close re-examination of the things I said in my November article, I feel no cause to withdraw any of the views stated. If the TBS really think that 'baptize' is "universally recognised" as rendering a correct impression of its N.T. meaning, then they are not living in the real world. The Church of Scotland, for instance, certainly do not believe that 'baptize' means to 'dip' and sacked, fairly recently, one of its ministers for being immersed. The Rev. Ronald Riach, as a result of his studies, got one of his Church Elders to dip him in the sea at Castletown Harbour, and was excommunicated for his pains. It must be difficult to calculate, in terms of human tragedy, the damage done to countless thousands of souls of succeeding generations, by the failure of Bible translators to give the Greek 'baptizo' a proper rendering. Contemplate, if you can, the complete and comprehensive transformation of the 'Christian' religion today, (and that of previous generations) if the learned men who translated the KJV had been allowed to change, for the better, that vague and obscure 'old ecclesiastical word'.

EDITOR.

GLEANINGS

"Let her glean even among the sheaves." Ruth 2:15

THE MORNING COMETH

The watchman said, "The morning cometh". (Isaiah 21:12)

SEE THE GLORY OF THE LORD

"And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the Lord". (Exodus 16:7)

"Mrs. Royle opened her eyes sleepily and became aware that her husband was almost fully dressed. "It isn't time to get up, is it?" she asked, and Royle replied that it was five o'clock, whereupon the heavy lids closed again, and she probably did not

hear the question — “Wasn’t it Moses who said that “in the morning ye shall see the glory of the Lord?” At any rate she made no answer. The room was full of light and the air vibrated with the song of birds. It was the thrushes that had wakened Royle, and he had lain for half an hour listening to the tuneful rivalries of mavis and blackbird and warbler before determining to rise and climb the hills to see what entertainment the world might offer when day stood “tiptoe on the misty mountain tops”.

William Riley

IN THE MORNING

“So I think I know the secret learned
From many a troubled way,
You must seek Him in the morning,
If you want Him through the day.”

THE BIBLE SPEAKS

“Their office was . . . to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord . . .”
I Chronicles 23:28, 30 (AV).

“We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.” John 9:4 (RV).

“New every morning.” Lament 3:23.

“Joy cometh in the morning.” Psalm 30:5

“Mercy in the morning. Psalm 59:16.

“In the morning bread to the full.” Exodus 16:8.

“They gathered it every morning.”

“In the morning sow thy seed.” Eccl. II:6

“I AM . . . THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR” Revelation 22:16

“Dan Crawford used to tell about his Africans: when they were on the march and night was coming on, they would lie down to sleep; but, before dropping off to sleep there would pass from group to group around the fires the word *Lutanda* (morning star). It was a laconic agreement to be up and ready to move when the morning star appeared.

GLEANINGS

C.G.

“Up, up! the day is breaking, say to thy cares ‘Goodnight’;
Thy troubles from thee shaking like dreams in day’s fresh light”.

Paul Gerhardt

HE BEING DEAD, YET SPEAKETH

“We hail Thee, Lord, this resurrection morning,
We sing Thy conquest o’er the darksome grave,
We praise Thy grace, our life and love adorning,
We trust Thy power, omnipotent to save.
We tell our hearts of thy divine compassion,
Which brought Thee down from heaven to earthly night,
That man, redeemed from every land and nation,
Might rise to walk in Thy supernal light.
We own Thee, Saviour, standing now before Thee;
We bow our hearts in worshipful employ.
All-worthy Thou, that all Thy saints adore Thee —
The Fountain of our love, and peace, and joy.
At God’s right hand we know Thee interceding:
And we are bold in drawing very nigh.
Assured of pardon, through Thy priestly pleading,
We lift our hearts and voices up on high.

O Saviour Christ, be with us on life's ocean;
 And make us brave till storm and stress shall cease.
 Our Pilot Thou, through all the wild commotion,
 Guide Thou our bark into eternal peace."

Joseph Collin.

SOMEONE HAS SAID

"The signs of the times are such as reveal the power of spirituality side by side with the development of evil; but, thank God beyond the night that comes is the larger day and gladder age for man."

C.M.

Selected by Leonard Morgan.

STEWARDS OF THE GOSPEL

"For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; for woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel." (1 Cor. 9:16). Paul keenly realised his responsibility in being God's steward. Listening to him again: "For if I do this of mine own will, I have a reward: but if not of mine own will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me." (1 Cor. 9:17). In studying the labours of Paul we learn the office of a steward of the gospel requires much. A brief study of the apostle's missionary tours will teach us what is meant to be a faithful steward of the gospel.

Faithful stewards are ready to preach the word in season and out of season. When under difficulty, Paul preached the gospel. Any child of God, who lives godly and who teaches His word rightly, is a faithful steward. It seems that Paul was trying to teach the Corinthian brethren that he was a steward or possessor instead of being a chief, a head, or a ruler. Instead of his being a king and having many working under him, he was spiritually chained to the Lord Jesus Christ and was ready to serve when commanded from on high.

As worldly stewards manage estates under the direction of their officers; as they provide for the household of their chiefs, so God's stewards should be obedient to the Bible, under a king superior to all other kings, and to see that God's family is fed on the Bread of Life, and to see the world hears the gospel. God has entrusted us with much, but his way is easily understood. The word "depart" will be on the lips of our heavenly Master too and for those stewards who are found unfaithful. God's goods must not be wasted. An incorruptible crown awaits everyone who is found faithful in that day when the sheep and goats shall be separated; in that day when the wheat and tares shall cease from growing together. "That a man be found faithful" refers to Christians.

A greater manifestation of love than that of Christ's for lost souls, the world has never seen. As stewards, should we not love lost men enough to carry the gospel to them? How many congregations fully realise the seriousness of stewardship? How many individual members are interested enough and willing, to support the gospel? A keen sense of responsibility is developed in the study of the stewardship of the gospel. At once the steward should recognise that God is his owner and that he is only a possessor. Besides, he must go further in that he must confess and acknowledge that God owns him. This acknowledgement is essential in that you invite others to be Christian stewards. For the mother is greatly delighted to receive from her child an acknowledgement and a recognition of her love. God smiles upon that steward who recognises and proclaims the love of God to a lost world. Angels are made to rejoice when one of God's stewards leads a man to repentance.

Faithfulness is one of the fruits of the spirit, says Paul. The unjust stewards will hear the sad word "depart", at the day of judgment. God our owner, has a right to

direct how the thing he owns shall be used. He has told and directed us how to preach the gospel. Denominations claim to preach the word, but not the way the owner has commanded. After all authority had been given to him, Jesus instructed the apostles to preach the gospel, and he did not leave them to guess as to how to preach it. Many claim to be God's stewards, and yet fail to preach the word in its purity and simplicity. Some will preach faith and repentance firmly and strongly, but will leave off preaching baptism, which is the act that places one into Christ. Such is an evidence of unfaithfulness.

Christian stewards are in God's family and therefore, they will tell others how to enter therein. To be faithful is a grand and glorious thing. It takes work to be faithful. The word "do" is found in God's library many times. The Christian religion requires a doing. God's talents in stewards are buried when nothing is done. Doing nothing is a bad occupation; it brings a reward of sadness and punishment. He who does nothing is deceived. Diabolus pays death eternal to those who participate in the wages of sin all their lives. What can an unfaithful steward promise himself? God has done the best he could do with the material with which he has to work.

Stewards should see a greater vision for Christ and be true to the trust given them. The commandment, "Go ye into all the world," is as powerful and as binding today as it was in the First Century. Missionary work is to be done. If we cannot preach like Peter, Paul and John we can tell of the love of Jesus. Of course we cannot speak with the tongues of angels, but we can teach the truth and give of our means in support of the gospel, and therefore cause many to be led to Christ.

*"Take my love; my Lord I pour,
At thy feet its treasure store:*

*Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee"*

To sing this song with the spirit and understanding makes one to realize the correct interpretation of Isaiah's words to Jehovah, "Here am I; send me," and will make that one to see the contents of God's expression, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"

The life of a steward swiftly passes. When kings, queens and officers of this world command, we sometimes do not have to obey; but when God calls, by death, we must go, whether we are prepared or not. Whereas, stewards must not forget the commandment and requirement "that a man be found faithful," and that this requirement is to all stewards of God. It is a wonderful and sweet consolation to think and to know that God's faithful stewards have an inheritance to that kingdom eternal. Will it not be sweet and musical, in that great day, to hear the melodious voice say to the faithful, "Well done, good and faithful servant?"

*"Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise."*

At the great and final judgment, we must give an account of our stewardship. "May we strive and labour to sit under that tree whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, and whose branches bear twelve courses of fruit."

J. V. Traylor.

ON TO PERFECTION

I. Corinthians Chapter 13

Let us examine this beautiful chapter. We are fully persuaded that it is the greatest thesis on Spiritual Love that has ever been written. This is clear to us even on the first time of reading. Isolated from the whole letter this appears to be its chief lesson: but when put into context with the other chapters we learn another lesson that it

teaches, that of on to perfection; “When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” Verse 10.

The church at Corinth was in its infancy and was in much need of teaching, requiring the sincere milk of the Word of God. There were errors of understanding which required correction, and time and space do not permit to list them all. I shall deal specifically with one that is referred to in this chapter. Turning first of all to chapter 12 we see Paul referring to Spiritual Gifts, that is, Gifts bestowed by the Spirit of God for the edifying and establishing of the church. This was necessary, for unlike ourselves today, they had not the New Covenant Scriptures in existence. We learn that **different gifts** were bestowed to a variety of christians. Each gift was for the benefit of the whole body of believers. These gifts are named in chapter 12 (verses 8-12).

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| 1. The word of wisdom | The ability to reveal divine truth such as possessed by the Apostles. |
| 2. The Word of knowledge | The ability to teach divine truth unerringly that which had been revealed by the Apostles and Prophets. |
| 3. Faith | Not that faith which comes by hearing, but that faith which carried miraculous powers. |
| 4. Prophecy | The Prophet was one who under divine impulse spoke words given by the Holy Spirit. |
| 5. Discerning of spirits | The power of reading hearts and determining whether men spoke by the Holy Spirit or not. |
| 6. Divers Tongues | Different languages spoken without prior knowledge of the same. |
| 7. Interpretation of Tongues | The ability to translate other languages. |
| 8. Healing | The power to cure sickness and bodily ailments. |
| 9. Miracles | Able to demonstrate the wonder working power of God. |

All these gifts were supernatural, imparted by the Spirit of God who distributed them according to His Own Will.

Many of the members of the church did not receive these gifts, with the result that they became disappointed and envious of those who possessed them and because of this Paul had to lead them on to chapter 13, “*Covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.*” ch. 12-31. On to perfection: the possession of any gift without love is profitless. Though I, Paul, speak with the tongues of men or of angels, though I have the gift to prophecy, and through miraculous faith can remove mountains; if I give away all that I have to the poor and sacrifice my body on the altar, *without love* it is useless and without profit. Then He paints that beautiful word-picture of Spiritual Love, what it is and what it can do, and follows this by saying “*Love never faileth.*”

It never runs out or ceases; but Prophecies, Tongues and Knowledge will. At this moment of time we know very little, but there is a day when we shall know all the mind and will of God. The Perfect, the mature, the entire Knowledge. The words “*We know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when that which is complete is come that which is in part shall be done away*” remind me of the many parts of a jigsaw puzzle which when rightly put together make a complete picture. The parts are all there but cease to be parts for they have become complete. Thus Paul illustrates progress — from childhood to manhood; growing up; becoming mature. This is a figure of the church, which when fully established and set in motion has no need of spiritual gifts to confirm its existence but has the Word of God as its divine guide. The chapter ends “**AND NOW abideth, Faith, Hope, Love, these THREE, but the greatest of these is LOVE.**” Love is “*the more excellent way.*” Have we moved on to perfection?

Tom Kemp, Hindley.

A RESPONSE TO BRO. J. BREAKELL

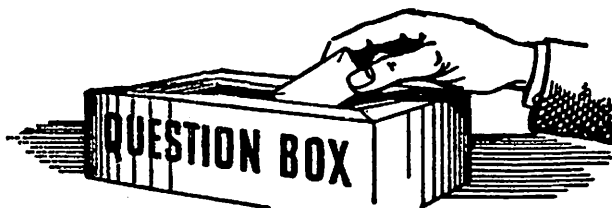
I do not normally respond to remarks made concerning the answers I give in *Question Box*, but on this occasion I feel I must correct the impression left by Bro. John Breakell in his response.

I believe that John cannot have failed to notice what I said in the concluding paragraph of the answer I gave; I shall quote it verbatim, "But whatever we do, and with whatever situation we find ourselves in we **must not compromise the truth**. We must 'contend earnestly for the faith', but that should not lead to a continuance of the internecine (self-destructing) struggle." Unquote. Any other words which I could add in explanation would seem to be superfluous.

I wonder how many times brethren have 'co-operated' with other religious groups? Have they met with them when it has been convenient. Have they taught and preached for such groups. Have they attended Mission Campaigns organised by such groups? I could go on asking questions the answers to which I already know. It seems to me that we get more satisfaction in looking back at the battles that have been fought with **each other**, than in looking forward to the unending battle against Satan. Brethren, in our relationships with each other let us aim for objectivity rather than innuendo.

Furthermore, if brethren want to know the true facts about the Albert Street assembly then they would do well to contact the saints who had to make an extremely difficult and heart-searching decision.

Alf Marsden.



Conducted by
Alf Marsden

**"A question which troubles me somewhat is, 'Shall we recognise one another in Heaven?'
Could you please help?"**

This is one of those questions with great emotional significance. When a loved one dies the great expectation is that we shall meet them 'on the other side'. Will the meeting be in Heaven? Shall we know them when we meet them? Will they be as they were when we knew them here on earth? If they have changed will they still be recognisable in spite of the change? These are questions of absorbing interest to Christians, and even though there may not be a definitive answer which says, "Yes, we shall know each other," there is enough evidence in the Bible to point our minds in the right direction.

In order to further the learning process we should always lead the mind from the known to the unknown. We **know** that recognition can only take place because of the bodily form, and the inherent characteristics of that bodily form, e.g., it would be impossible to recognise a disembodied spirit. So we further know that we are talking about physiognomical form by which recognition is possible. This, of course, would involve there being a **body** of some sort.

It is Paul himself who poses the question and provides some of the answers. In 1 Cor. 15:35 he says, "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" He then severely rebukes the imaginary questioner and supplies the answer to the "how" question, "that which thou sowest is not quickened (made alive) unless it die." We know that the sower sows seeds not plants, and we are told that the seed dies before the new plant comes. With particular reference to

natural man he says, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." Now here we have a definite statement. We know and are familiar with the natural body, but Paul distinctly says, "there is a **spiritual body**." Now if we had to give a definition of the word 'body' we would have to say, "the material frame of man or animal," but the resurrection body cannot be material in the same sense as the natural body, i.e, made of flesh and blood, because we are told that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (v50). This being the case we must understand that the development of the spiritual body must be glorious beyond our conception; as Paul puts it in his letter to Philippi, "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:20,21). The frame of this new spiritual body may be beyond our comprehension, but we can be well assured that it is not beyond the power of Christ to perform. The spiritual body will be a body for glory.

Before we go any further with our study there is one thought which springs to mind. During discussions on this subject I have heard it said by many Christians, "Well, if I do eventually get to Heaven and I find my loved ones who have died before me are not there, then I shall be immensely disappointed and saddened. How shall I be able to live eternally in that condition." Dear fellow-Christian, I think we have learned that salvation is a very personal matter and that judgment will begin at the 'household of faith.' Furthermore, Christ died for all; He loved all, as the Word says, "greater love hath no man than this, than that a man will lay down his life for his friend." But Christ laid down His life for His **enemies** as well, and we believe that many millions of people who choose to remain in sin will never see Heaven. Are we then to conclude that there will be so much sorrow in heaven over lost souls that joy and happiness would be an intrusion? I think not. This would be an attitude of the natural mind, but we are spiritual. There are many blessings laid **out** for us in the Word; we **must** believe that there are many more laid **up** for us in Heaven.

Standing at the Judgment Bar

There are many who say that all recollection of our earthly existence will be wiped out when we die, but the Bible does not seem to support that view. It is recorded in Matthew 7:22,23, that the Saviour said, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Obviously, Jesus here is projecting a scene which will take place at the judgment, and the people referred to pleading for divine favour in the name of Jesus. It is also very evident that such people are able to recall the things done while here on earth in the natural body, and the associations they had with others while doing those things. This is a rather significant point, I think.

There is also an important aspect of the foregoing which we should stop to consider. There is a vast difference so far as the Lord is concerned between attempting to do things **by using** His name, and by doing things **in His name** (by His authority). It is the difference in doing something by the name of Jesus for self-glorification, and of **obeying Him** because we love Him. This is why those who tried to curry favour **by using** His name were banished. The distinction is brought out quite well by the construction of the original text.

In Matt. 25:31-46 we see a new dimension of the same basic teaching. This is not the case of people **not being able to remember**, but rather of misinterpreting actions while on earth. They would no doubt remember when the Lord pointed things out.

Fact or Parable?

There are some who say that the teaching in Luke 16:19-31 is not factual, but should be classed as a parable. But does it really matter regarding the interpretation of it? Why should Jesus portray an incident by parable if there was no possibility that the incident could actually occur? Personally, I believe it to be factual.

The first point we notice is that Lazarus and the rich man died. It seems that Lazarus was carried by the angels straight into Abraham's bosom; the rich man was buried and evidently found himself in the torment of hell. From that place he saw and recognised Lazarus. That could only be possible if he had seen Lazarus on earth while they were both still living there; the scripture records this as being the case (vv19-21). There is also mention of 'water' in the place where Lazarus was, and 'flame' in the other place.

The first words recorded as spoken by Abraham were, "Son, remember." Now how could the rich man have done that if all recollection of events on earth had been wiped out? It is also stated that the rich man remembered his father's house and his five brethren there, because he asked for Lazarus to be sent to warn them about hell; the whole recorded dialogue indicates that communication of some kind was possible. The whole episode highlights the difficulties inherent in the preaching of the Gospel, for the rich man says, "if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." Well, one has risen from the dead and told about the horrors of hell, the Lord Himself, but sad to say many millions have not heard Him. We make great play on the 'wide gulf' which cannot be bridged, especially when preaching the Gospel; if this is factual, which it undoubtedly is, why should it be thought that the rest of this incident we have considered is non-factual?

In addition to the above, Paul records an experience of being caught up into Paradise (2 Cor. 12:1ff). He says that he did not know whether he was in the body or out of the body; he couldn't tell. Many have concluded that this was a trance in order to reveal more to Paul. But what greater revelation could have been given him than that on the Damascus road, and what was the purpose and benefit of the revelation to us, if he was not allowed to discuss it subsequently? In any case he 'saw' things, he 'heard' things, and his bodily condition — whether old or new — he could not distinguish. Surely this is some sort of a pointer to the 'spiritual body' that the same Apostle teaches us that we shall have in the future.

There are other indicators, such as the incident recorded on the Mount of Transfiguration, which lead me to believe that recognition will be possible in Heaven, and that this will not mar or destroy the joy and happiness we shall find there.

(All questions, please to:

Alf Marsden, 20 Costessy Way, Winstanley, Wigan WN2 4JX)

GOPHER WOOD

Most of those who read this will realise the gopher wood of which we speak was that used by Noah in building the ark. He was commanded by the lord to use such (Genesis 6:14).

Now for some questions of interest about this gopher wood.

1. ***DID GOD HAVE TO SAY GOPHER WOOD TWICE OR MORE TO MEAN GOPHER WOOD?*** As you read the instructions you will find gopher wood mentioned only once. Was that enough? Did God say what he wanted to say in that one statement or would he have to say it twice for the use of "gopher wood" to become necessary? You know as well as I do that God meant what he said even though the term "gopher wood" was used only once. By faith Noah could use the gopher wood and do so according to that which God commanded him (Genesis 6:22).

2. *SUPPOSE THE LORD HAD NOT MENTIONED GOPHER WOOD BUT DID MENTION SOME OTHER KIND?* If you had been there would you have argued for gopher wood? If so, on what basis? You know it would not be on the basis of what was commanded for we have supposed that gopher wood was not mentioned. Would it not be on the basis of silence? Wouldn't it be argued that God didn't say, "Don't use gopher wood?" Isn't this the way you would have tried to convince Noah that it would be all right? Would you have recommended that he assume some other kind of wood would be all right on the basis of God's silence? He was silent on pine, oak, cherry, and others. Which of these would you suggest? We all know these would be a human substitute and we would not endorse Noah's use of any of them.

3. *WOULD THE USE OF GOPHER WOOD BE A MATTER OF EXPEDIENCY LIKE THE TOOLS HE MIGHT USE?* Noah would need hammers or mallets. He would need cutting tools to fashion the wood. These would expedite doing what was commanded. He might or might not use a hammer. He might or might not use a certain kind of cutting tool. These he could use at his discretion but you would not put gopher wood in that class, would you? Gopher wood was commanded.

4. *WOULD GRACE ON GOD'S PART PROTECT NOAH IF HE USED OAK WOOD RATHER THAN GOPHER WOOD?* Granting Noah the benefit of being sincere, would you go far enough to say grace takes care of this matter? We see grace in this chapter (Genesis 6:8). The evidence of grace is found in the instructions given wherein there would be provided a way of escape. Would we argue that a substitution of oak for gopher would be ignored because of grace? To say such means God's instructions are fruitless and faulty and that we do not have to obey them.

5. *WOULD A DESIRE ON THE PART OF A MAJORITY JUSTIFY THE USE OF ANOTHER KIND OR AN ADDITIONAL KIND OF WOOD?* Suppose the boys with their wives decided they would prefer another kind of wood or an additional kind of wood. What then? Would you support them in their desire to add or substitute. You know you would not. God's law cannot be altered by the majority.

6. *WHAT IF DIVISION TOOK PLACE IN THE NOAH FAMILY OVER THE USE OF ONLY GOPHER WOOD?* If Noah's children decided they were going to use "oak" and "gopher wood" and Noah opposed such who would cause the division? Would Noah cause it by opposition to this addition or would they cause it by adding that which plainly was not authorised? You know the answer to this as well as I do. Division in the church has not been caused by those who stand for God's word.

7. *HOW WOULD UNITY BE REACHED IN THE NOAH FAMILY AS TO THE USE OF THE KIND OF WOOD?* Should Noah ignore what God said (Gen. 6:14)? Should he say it was only a matter of interpretation and let it go at that? Should he get everybody together and agree to disagree and go on building the ark? Would this ignore God's instructions? Would you want to take a chance on that kind of an ark in the middle of a flood? Not me, brother! Count me out, and no right thinking person would ever agree to follow any course which differed with Almighty God.

W. Clark.

They on the heights are not the souls
 Who never erred, nor went astray,
 Who trod unswerving toward their goals
 Along a smooth, rose-bordered way.
 Nay, those who stand where first comes dawn
 Are those who fell - got up - went on!

SCRIPTURE READINGS

June 4 Deut. 6:1-15 Mark 12:28-44
 June 11 Dan. 12 Mark 13:1-23
 June 18 Ezek 3:15-27 Mark 13:24-37
 June 25 2 Kings 4:1-17 Mark 14:1-11

The Shema

"Which is the first commandment of all?" asked one of the scribes of Jesus. The Master's reply was to quote from the book of Deuteronomy (6:4-5). The Jews call this the *Shema*. *Shema* is the imperative of the Hebrew verb "to hear," and it is so called from the first word in the sentence. In one of my books on Judaism the writer states "*Shema*: the cardinal principle of Judaism, recited at daily prayers and before death." Another writer says of it: "Judaism's confession of faith, proclaiming the absolute unity of God."

The full *Shema* is Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 11:13-21; Numbers 15:37-41. Orthodox Jews enclose these passages in phylacteries, small leather boxes worn on the forehead and the wrist during prayer. They also place them in a little box called *Mezuzah*, which, as William Barclay has pointed out, "was and still is fixed to the door of every Jewish house and the door of every room within it, to remind the Jew of God in his going out and his coming in." But why do they do these things? the answer is that they interpret literally: "And you shall bind them for a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them upon the posts of your house and on your gates" (Deuteronomy 6:8-9).

Jesus also quoted from the book of Leviticus. On the second commandment He declared: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18). I like what he went on to say here: "There is none other commandment greater than these." (12:31). Any individual in Jesus' day fully practising these sayings was certainly "not far from the kingdom of God" (12:34). Alexander Campbell has pointed out: "Love is the supreme law of the kingdom of Christ — love to the king and love

to each other. From this law all its religious homage and morality flow." Love has always been what it is all about. After all, God himself is love.

The Widow's Mites

At present I am studying *Women's Place in Society and the Church*. One exercise I have still to complete on this subject is the marking of every passage of Scripture that specifically refers to women. This is one of them (12:42-44).

The treasury was in the Court of Women. Albert Barnes has written "In that court there were fixed a number of places or coffers, made with a large open mouth in the shape of a trumpet for the purpose of receiving the offerings of the people; and the money thus contributed was devoted to the service of the temple — to incense, sacrifices, etc."

This poor widow cast in two mites, which equalled a farthing. A mite (Greek *lepton*) was the smallest of all coins and was worth about one third of an old British farthing — a pittance to most, but everything to the widow. "What trust there must be in the Divine Providence to perform such an act as this!" as Adam Clark has declared. He went on to say: "Two important lessons may be learned from her conduct: 1. A lesson of humiliation to the rich, who by reason of covetousness on the one hand, and luxury on the other, give but little to God and the poor. 2. A lesson of reproof to the poor, who, through distrust of God's providence, give nothing at all. Our possessions can only be sanctified by giving a portion to God. There will be infallibly a blessing in the remainder, when a part has been given to God and the poor. If the rich and the poor reflect seriously on this, the one will learn pity, the other liberality, and both be blessed in their deed. He must be a poor man indeed who cannot find one poorer than himself."

The Destruction of Jerusalem

The destruction of Jerusalem was a horrifying event in history. In fact, Jesus said of it "For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of creation which God created unto this

time, neither shall be" (13:19). God shortened the suffering for the elect's sake (13:20).

The event took place in A.D. 70 and was the work of the Roman army under Titus, who later became Emperor. One writer who must be studied in all this is Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian, who was present at the fall of the city and who, in fact, acted as interpreter for the Romans. His graphic account of the whole affair makes one literally weep over the pages. The amazing thing about the whole episode is this: that there is no record of any Christians having perished in the destruction of Jerusalem. This should not surprise us because, after all, they had received plenty of warning from the Master (13:14-16; Matthew 24:15-18,33; Luke 21:20-33).

Alexander Campbell in his debate with Robert Owen said this of Jesus' great prophecy: "It was written, published and read through Judea, and mentioned in the Apostolic epistles for years before it happened; and a general expectation of this event pervaded the whole Christian communities from Jerusalem to Rome, and, indeed, through all the Roman provinces. The allusions to these predictions are frequent in the Apostolic writings. It was necessary they should, for this reason: the Jews, as long as they possessed the government of Judea, the temple and the metropolis; as long as they had any particle of influence at home or abroad, they used it with relentless cruelty against the Christians. The Apostles had to succour the minds of their persecuted brethren, and exhort them to patience and perseverance by reminding them of the speedy dispersion of them among the nations. So that all the Christians throughout the Roman Empire looked for the catastrophe; and so it came to pass that such of the Christians as were in Jerusalem and Judea, about the time of the siege of Titus, fled according to the directions given by the Saviour; and thus not a believing Jew perished in the siege."

How many perished during the terrible events? It is estimated that one million,

three hundred and fifty thousand were put to death in the city and the adjacent provinces. That is about double the population today of the city of Glasgow, Scotland.

The Anointing of Bethany

Here is another incident featuring a woman. We read that she broke open an alabaster box and poured out the contents (ointment of spikenard, very precious) upon His head (14:3). On the word 'alabaster' W. E. Vine has commented: "It was a vessel for holding ointment or perfume; it derived its name from the alabaster stone, of which it was usually made. 'Cruse,' R.V. is a more suitable rendering than 'box'." He went on to write this on 'spikenard': "Nardos is derived, through the Semitic languages, from the Sanskrit *nalada*, a fragrant oil, procured from the stem of an Indian plant. The Arabs call it the Indian spike. The adjective *pistokos* is attached to it in the N.T. There is evidence that it was regarded as a technical term."

Jesus said of her at the time: "She has done what she could; she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burial" (14:8). Whether she fully appreciated the significance of her action at the time may, I think, be open to question, but Jesus certainly took the opportunity to speak once again of his impending death.

Betrayal

Judas Iscariot's name will go down in the annals of infamy. This chosen apostle of Jesus betrayed Him into the hands of His enemies and did it all for money — thirty pieces of silver. In the book of Zechariah we read: "And I said unto them, if you think good, give me my price; and if not forbear. So they weighed thirty pieces of silver" (11:12). In Psalm 41:9 we have these words: "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, has lifted up his heel against me."

On my notes on Judas, I have these adjectives on his character: avaricious, covetous, critical and deceitful. He was also a thief while he acted as treasurer for

the apostles (John 12:1-6; 13:29). Altogether, he was a very wicked person despite his association with the Son of God. Jesus later well described him as the son of perdition (John 17:12). Judas in the end showed remorse for what he did and, after casting down the blood-money in the temple, went out and hanged himself (Matthew 27:3-10; Acts 1:18-20). Overall, his story is a tragic one. But, make no mistake about it, he was totally responsible for his actions, even although Jesus foresaw all his dastardly deeds.

Ian S. Davidson, Motherwell.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Wigan (Longshoot): Sunday, March 12th, 1989 was a day to remember for the congregation here, when we had the joy of witnessing the addition of five young people. John Whitton, Andrew Layland, Debbie Parker, Alison Melling and Anthea Melling crowned Jesus as Lord of their lives, by being baptised. We praise God for their faith in Jesus and pray that they will grow to be faithful and useful workers in the service of the Master.

D. Melling.

Haddington, East Lothian: The second of our four Saturday evening Gospel Meetings took place on the 8th April when a goodly attendance heard a very excellent gospel message from our speaker for the evening, Ian Davidson, Motherwell. We thank all those from sister churches who came and swelled our ranks. It was unfortunate that the Social Meeting at Kirkcaldy was on the same evening but this was unavoidable and we were only too pleased to get the support that we did get. Again we had tea and chat after the preaching and a very enjoyable time of fellowship was had by all. God willing, Bro. Jack Parker will be the speaker on the next occasion: May 6th, and Graeme Pearson on May 20th. All welcome.

R. Nisbet

Kitwe, Zambia: In the early hours of the morning of Thursday, April 6, 1989, rioting erupted in the Riverside area of Kitwe

where the Woodhall home is located. On three occasions the Zambian paramilitary police put down the rioters with teargas charges. The rioting was student organized. The rioters erected their own road block and there was stoning of vehicles. The paramilitary sealed off one section of Riverside in order to contain the riot. The Woodhall family kept in touch with others through use of their house based CB radio. There is a congregation of the church of Christ in Riverside which numbers about thirty and was planted by the Woodhall family in January 1988. Riverside was the location of bad riots in late 1986.

Angela Woodhall.

Kirkcaldy, Fife: We held our Annual Social on the 8th April. Thanks to all those who took part in the programme. Our speaker Bro. G. Pearson delivered a thought-provoking lesson on the "Care of The Poor". A rich time of fellowship was had with around 150 in attendance.

R. Moyes (Sec.)

OBITUARY

Kirkcaldy: The Church at Hayfield Road is sad to announce the death of Brother William (Bill) Wardrop on 24th March 1989 age 73. Brother Bill died peacefully a few days after admission to Victoria Hospital Kirkcaldy.

Although Brother Bill had a heart condition this did not keep him from services. He served the Church in many capacities including teacher, preacher, deacon, and a singer with the choir, and he will be missed by the Kirkcaldy congregation. We ask that you remember his widow Sister Nettie, and daughters Anne and Christine in your prayers.

The service at Kirkcaldy Crematorium on the 28th March was conducted by brother Robert Hughes.

Text: Rev. 14:13. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.

Our Goliaths can be feared or fought; succumbed to or slain.

COMING EVENTS

Buckie: ANNUAL SOCIAL on 20th May, 1989 at 3.00 p.m. Speaker Bro. Nat Cooper, Dundee. Any items for the programme will be greatly appreciated. Requests for accommodation to The Secretary, Hunter Pirie, The Bield, 23 Harbour Place, Portnockie, Buckie, Banfshire. Soon as possible.

Newtongrange: The Church which meets at Newtongrange, intends (D.V.) to hold its ANNUAL SOCIAL on Saturday, 14th October, 1989 in St. Davids Meetinghouse at 4 p.m. Chairman: Robert Hunter, Speakers: Mark Plain, Tranent, Harry McGinn, New Cumnock.

A fine time of fellowship is assured. Try to be with us.

A. P. Sharp. (Sec.)

TEXT OF LECTURES AVAILABLE

Brother Roy Davison writes saying how much he enjoys reading "Scripture Standard" and asking to print the following:-

"CROSSROADISM and The World Wide Hierarchy Weighed and Found Wanting" - The text of a series of 5 LECTURES on the above subject given in Ghana and Togo, in West Africa, by Roy Davison, Postbox 47, Wellen, B3830, Belgium. If possible please enclose £3 to cover costs.

A MATTER OF TIME

The story is told of three demons who were sitting in a coalbin in hell discussing ways to undermine the faith of a man about to make a decision to follow Jesus Christ. The first demon said, "I know what I'll do. I'll go up there and tell him there is no God." The others shook their heads. "He won't accept that," they said. "He knows there's a God; he talked with him this morning." The second demon spoke up. "I'll reassure him by telling him there is no hell" The others shook their heads again. "He knows there's a hell," they said. "He's been there." Then the third demon said, "I know what will work. I'll just go up there and tell him there's no hurry." The others clapped. "That will do it," they said (*Hugh Jones*).

On Offence

The offender never pardons.

- George Herbert.

Love the offender yet detest the offence.

- Pope.

We never can willingly offend where we sincerely love.

- Rowland Hill.

We are so desirous of vengeance that people often offend us by not giving offence.

- Mme. Deluzy.

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