

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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Why Not? (3.)

THE LORD'S PRAYER IT'S CONVENTIONAL USE

VISITORS to our meetings are surprised when we do not repeat what is termed the Lord's Prayer. After the opening prayer they hesitate and remain standing in expectation that he who has prayed will lead the congregation in reciting "Our Father, which art in heaven . . .", and somewhat confused and surprised when this prayer is not said. We stress the words we have used—repeated, recited, said. For that is what this prayer has come to be—a repetition, a recitation, a prayer said. It has become part of a liturgy, something to be muttered through by a company of worshippers; a ritual, with its words and meaning little understood. It is said, recited, repeated, not prayed. It acts as a convenient form of words to be uttered when people do not know how or what to pray. I remember speaking to a certain Bible class when the chairman of the meeting, an inexperienced member of the class, confessed that he did not know how to open with prayer and to get himself out of this dilemma asked that we open with the "Lord's Prayer." There the prayer was used as a makeshift to fill up for the lack of prayer of that worshipper of God.

On another occasion I slipped into Liverpool Anglican Cathedral during a short service of evensong. This lasted only twenty minutes, yet in that brief period the "Lord's Prayer" was repeated by the congregation three times. It was impressed upon me that this was very near to that vain repetition against which Jesus Christ warned His apostles in the same breath as teaching them the prayer. In other words that which was intended to prevent vain repetition has itself become such. How many understand and, less still, mean the invocations in the prayer? Yet many of those who repeat the prayer are surprised, even pained, that we omit it from our worship.

One extraordinary use of the prayer is that in certain circumstances in the Roman Catholic Church it is used as a "penance," a kind of punishment, for sins committed. When confession has been made to a priest the one confessing may be told to repeat so many "Pater Nosters" ("Our Fathers") to atone for the sin! Did the Saviour ever intend His prayer to be administered as a punishment, something unpleasant to be undured?

A Perfect Prayer

The prayer itself is found in two forms, in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4. It is a perfect prayer for its time and circumstances. I fear we may deal with the prayer irreverently and in condescending manner, as though admitting the prayer to be very good as far as it goes. Let us remember that it was Christ who uttered the words, and He knew what He was saying and why He was saying it. Jesus did not give His apostles precepts about prayer, but in simple words taught them the proper objects of prayer. In direct manner the child of God can approach the Father. The prayer embraces spiritual desires in few words. For those unable to put their desires into words this prayer unfolds rich depths of meaning. Though the words are childlike, it needs a lifetime of spiritual experience to fill them with meaning, and only eternity will reveal God's answers to these petitions.

The prayer is perfect. But that does not mean to say it is to be used as it has been used through the centuries. The law given by Moses was perfect, holy and

good (Romans 7), but it was not intended for other peoples than the Jews. It was perfect in its application to them, in training and preparing them to do God's will and reveal His glory and purposes to other nations. But the law received its fulfillment, its purposes accomplished, in Jesus Christ. The same with the baptism of John the Baptist. It was valid, had its purpose and meaning during John's ministry. But under Christ John's baptism was fulfilled and passed away. After the death and resurrection of Christ those baptised into John's baptism were baptised into that which was no longer valid, had no further purpose or meaning (Acts 19 : 1-7).

Its Purposes

So with the "Lord's Prayer": it is perfect, but was never intended for, and thus cannot with meaning be uttered by, Christians. It was taught to Jewish disciples, under the Old Covenant. Christ had not yet died for the sins of the world; men could not approach God through His shed blood, nor pray through Christ as their High Priest, "eternal in the heavens", nor pray "in the Holy Spirit," for the Spirit was not yet given.

Reading the prayer in its setting, we suggest reverently that it was never the Saviour's intention that this prayer form a part of liturgy, be uttered as a ritual, or be the permanent invocation of Christians, any more than Paul meant the prayers for those to whom he wrote his epistles to be repeated as a "benediction" at the close of meetings of Christians (Eph. 6 : 23 and the close of epistles to Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians and 1 & 2 Thess). Paul was there uttering the sentiments of his heart for those who were dear in Christ. To make these thoughts into a prayer necessarily to be spoken to terminate a meeting, even after prayer has already been offered, is to force them into a setting they were never intended to have. The same applies to the repetition of the "Lord's Prayer" in this Christian, gospel age.

David King has these words to say in his essay "What the first church was steadfast in" in "Memoirs of David King" pp. 443-4: "We have seen that the church in Jerusalem 'continued... in the prayers.' The words thus cited have been quoted as authorising a liturgy. They say 'the prayers' must mean a form of prayers received from the apostles... in the New Testament there is no form of prayer. Saying prayers from memory or reading them from a book has no apostolic sanction.... The Lord's prayer, so called, is deemed by many a prescribed form of prayer. In the State Church it is often used some six times in one service; and I have here a 'Plain Guide' to church worship, by a church priest, which says of this prayer, 'We must use it whenever we pray.'—'Always use the Lord's Prayer when you pray.' Let us, however, remember that 'saying prayers' and praying are by no means the same thing, and that 'saying prayers' is often worse than doing nothing, because it leads people to consider that they pray when they do not, and thus prevents them from recognising their prayerless and godless condition. But the Lord's prayer is not given as a form of prayer for the use of his church. ... The prayer was given, not as a form for all time, but as a model for that period—not even as a complete model for us; that is to say, it was given as a model prayer for Jews, under the dispensation which then existed. It is still perfect and precious.... but it is not complete as a model for the church of Christ...

"To us it appears somewhat wonderful that orthodox churches should adopt as a form of prayer one which makes no allusion to the Lord Jesus Christ nor to the Holy Spirit."

EDITOR.

Fred. C. Day: An Appreciation

I FIRST met Bro. Day in November, 1944, when he visited Wigan to speak at an anniversary meeting of the church in Scholes. This was the beginning of many experiences of rich fellowship and mutual service in the cause dear to his heart. I had heard much about Bro. Day and his teaching and preaching powers. But to know the man himself was a privilege and a blessing which had still greater effect upon those with whom he came into contact.

It was a memorable experience simply to hear him teach the word of God and preach the gospel. Before trying to expound the scriptures he took great pains to be accurate in his understanding. In this way he brought out treasures which were not revealed by a cursory reading—striking expositions of particular words and passages which remained in the minds of his hearers. First and foremost Bro. Day was a great teacher. His lucid explanations of the word of God revealed the spiritual and vital treasures contained there for the seeker. He had a keen,

inquiring mind and insight; his expositions were never trite or formal, but fresh and lively. Without notes he opened up the word, whether in teaching or in preaching, in a way which came only from long and deep study. Those long passages of scripture he recited in his messages were the result of his love of the word and his placing it as supreme above all other reading and study.

He was a wholehearted and devoted exponent of New Testament Christianity, and an utterly loyal adherent to the cause of restoring it in these days. In 1943 he was one of the five brethren who discussed with five from the Co-operation of Churches of Christ the state of the churches today compared with the pattern revealed in the N.T. Together with Bro. Crosthwaite, Bro. Day drew up the printed reply to the "Private & Confidential" circular sent out to churches by the Co-operation. He played a great part in the compilation of the new hymn book, published in 1957: as one of the brethren working on that project (Bro. A. L. Frith was the third) I well remember how Bro. Day's wide knowledge of hymns and tunes was evident in small details; many of his suggestions for omission or inclusion of hymns and for corrections or alterations were adopted. These may not be apparent to the casual user of that hymn book, but they reveal the quiet and efficient way in which Bro. Day did all his work.

Many of us possess his little work "Thoughts on the Psalms"; this little masterpiece is a reprint of talks Bro. Day gave in 1946 at the first Bible School at Hindley. The book keeps fresh those expositions of an Old Testament book which Bro. Day knew and loved so well.

But perhaps more than the outstanding achievements mentioned, his steady, quiet, day-by-day work and life in the church and out are showing and will show their results in fullest measure. It is said that, to know a man thoroughly you must see him in his home. With many others who enjoyed the hospitality of Bro. & Sis. Day, I testify to the richness and benediction of such times. The true greatness of a man is shown in the simple, humdrum things of life. Whether in the home, the church or elsewhere, Bro. Day served his brethren and his fellow-men in the simplest and seemingly meanest duties. His greatness as a leader was because he became, as Christ taught, the servant of all. His humility, his self-effacement, were characteristics which went to make him a true man of God and a Christlike soul.

While in this life we see some of the results of service to God, only eternity will reveal the true value of such service. "The day shall declare it" when "the things that remain" will be revealed in their true character, when we shall see things as God does, and shall be like Christ, seeing Him as He is. Only at that great day shall we see in true perspective the results of the teaching from God's word given by such brethren, and the many souls saved eternally through their ministry of the word ascribe their salvation to the Lamb's sacrifice as made known through the preaching of men. Bro. Day rests from his labours and his works follow him.

On one occasion I heard him exhort on the passage, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Psalm 17:15). Bro. Day showed that there can be no awakening in the likeness of Christ unless in some measure our lives and desires here and now are in His likeness. His own teaching is fulfilled in his experience: as he lived as a servant of Christ here, so in heaven and in eternity will the glory of Christ shine through him and through "all who have loved His appearing."

EDITOR.

A WARRIOR has gone to his rest—
His Captain has summoned him home—
There's a gap in the foremost rank,
The end of his campaign has come.

The warrior has laid down his arms
Untarnished—his armour still bright.
No quarter gave he to the foe.
He strove all his life for the right.

Not man-made the armour he bore—
Nor forged on the anvil his sword—
For Righteousness was his breastplate
His sword was the Word of the Lord.

Firm faith was his shield against sin;
Salvation his helmet, so sure,
No flaw could be found in his mail,
For his trust in the Lord was secure.

He bore the crest of his Saviour;
"Redemption" his rallying call.
"The Lamb who was slain for sinners
"Who suffered and died for us all."

A warrior has gone to his rest;
For such warriors to God we give thanks,
And pray Him to raise from amongst us
More warriors to fill up the ranks.

J.J.S.

Origin and Growth of Denominationalism

XII: THE SO-CALLED "JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES"

(Much of what is written here may be found in any good exposé of the "Watchtower" and its teaching. This article is intended merely as a summary for the benefit of those to whom other sources of information may not be available.)

THE FOUNDER. Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916) had a Bible class in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in the year 1870, when he was 18 years old. It was this group which, in 1876, gave him the title "pastor." Since about that time, there was a general interest in the second coming of Christ, Russell wrote a tract, entitled "Object and Manner of the Lord's Return," which was published in 1874. In that tract, he denied both the visible return of Christ and the destruction of the earth by fire.

"Watchtower." A few years later, in 1879, Russell created an organisation known as "Zion's Watch Tower" and began to publish the "Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society" and was responsible for the publication of the Russell firm's important works, namely six volumes of "Studies in the Scriptures." Incidentally, this is the title that was later given to these books. Originally, the set bore the title, "Millennial Dawn," with each volume having its own separate title. But it was found that these titles were so sensational, as was the doctrine they contained, that an attempt had to be made to allay the suspicions they aroused, and to make the books sound harmless and respectable. Hence the change of name. This name-changing technique was typical of Russell. His organisation used a variety of names both for itself and its publications, in order to put the public off its guard. Such titles as "People's Pulpit," "Everybody's Paper" and "Brooklyn Tabernacle" were used, but it was really the "same horse but with more spots."

Russell, the man. Our reason for referring to Russell's character is that we believe, with the Lord Jesus, a tree must be known by its fruit; and that "a clean thing cannot come from an unclean," as Job affirmed. Russell married Maria Ackley in Pittsburgh, and together they ran the Society. But in 1897 she left him and sued for separation in 1903, on the grounds of his gross familiarity with other women. She was granted a separation order and alimony in 1906. The reason that she sought a separation and not an outright divorce is that she needed the financial support of Russell. However, she found this extremely difficult to obtain, and in 1909 again brought him to court for failing to maintain her, as the court had ordered. It was revealed at that hearing that, in order to thwart the court order, Russell had transferred all his assets to various societies over which he had control. But he did not escape, and finally had to pay his wife the sum of \$6,036.

Russell's anxiety to make money led him into a number of disreputable schemes. In 1913, in the "Watch Tower," he offered a "cure for cancer" for sale to "believers only"! Another of his audacious ventures involved him in the now-famous lawsuit with the "Brooklyn Daily Eagle." Here is a quotation from the obituary column of that newspaper, issued November 1st, 1916. "After the 'work' had been well started here, 'Pastor' Russell's Watchtower publication advertised wheat seed for sale at \$1.00 a pound. It was styled 'Miracle Wheat' and it was asserted that it would grow five times as much as any other brand of wheat. There were other claims made for the wheat seed and the followers were advised to purchase it, the proceeds to go to the Watchtower and to be used in publishing the 'Pastor's' sermons. The 'Eagle' first made public the facts about this new venture of the Russellites and published a cartoon picture, the 'Pastor' and his 'Miracle Wheat,' in such a way that 'Pastor' Russell brought suit for libel, asking for \$100,000 damages. Government departments investigated the wheat for which \$1.00 a pound was asked, and agents of the Government were important witnesses at the trial of the libel suit in January, 1913. The 'Miracle Wheat' was low in Government tests, they said. The 'Eagle' won the suit."

This was not the only law case in which Russell was involved, for later in March, 1913, he sued J. J. Ross, of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, for alleged libel. Ross had published a tract under the title, "Some Facts about the Self-styled 'Pastor', Charles Taze Russell," giving details of Russell's moral character, the error of his doctrine, and his standing as a scholar. The case is especially noteworthy because Russell lied whilst under oath, claiming, first, to know Greek and then being forced to admit that his claim was false.

He also swore that he had not been required by the court to pay his wife a maintenance allowance, but Mr. Staunton, appearing on behalf of Mr. Ross, soon compelled Mr. Russell to tell the truth. The outcome of the case was that Russell again lost.

In these days, "Jehovah's Witnesses" try to dismiss these facts as being the fabrications of the enemies of Russell. But these facts are recorded in the police files of the Court of Hamilton, Ontario, dated December 9th, 1912, and February 7th, 1913; and again on the files of the High Court of Ontario for March, 1913.

Changes. The unpleasant publicity which Russell's frequent lawsuits brought with them, coupled with the constant harrying of the "Brooklyn Daily Eagle," did the "Watch Tower Organisation" no good at all. Thus, when Russell died suddenly, on November 9th, 1916, his death came as an almost welcome relief to the Society. Immediately, J. F. Rutherford took over the leadership and formed for himself a double purpose. First, he must eradicate all the unpleasantness caused by Russell—which meant that Russell must be allowed to slip into oblivion. And second, he must attempt to build up the Society. In the pursuit of these two aims he worked with great energy. Tracts and booklets poured from his pen, and, believing that the best method of defence is attack, he conceived the idea of falling upon what he called "organised religion," thus gaining the favour of many people who, for one reason or another, had been disappointed or offended by the churches. Undoubtedly, Rutherford was a very aggressive man. But eventually even he overstepped the mark when, trying to eradicate the influence of his predecessor, Russell, he denounced the "pastor's" so-called "pyramid prophecies," as found in the third volume of "Studies in the Scriptures." Rutherford called them "an attempt to find the will of God outside of the Scriptures." This was too much for some who still held Russell in high esteem, and they left the movement. Today this break-away group continues to follow the original doctrines of Russell, and goes under the name "The Dawn Bible Students' Movement" with headquarters in East Rutherford, New Jersey. The radio programme sometimes heard on Radio Luxembourg, under the title "Frank and Ernest" is prepared by these "Russellites."

However, Rutherford now held undisputed sway over what remained, and he set about reorganising his inheritance. Hitherto the Society had known a class, or caste system, devised by Russell. But now Rutherford declared that the time had come for the fulfilment of the prophecy in Isaiah 62:2. A new name was about to be given! As further authority for this move, the parable of the Workers in the Vineyard was quoted (Matt. 20:1-15). The parable was explained as follows. The labourers who came into the work at various hours of the day were the various classes, hitherto recognised in the organisation. The twelve hours of the day were the twelve years from 1919 to 1931. The equal reward which they all received—that is, the one penny—was the name "Jehovah's Witnesses"! And so, at the Conference held at Columbus, Ohio, July 24-30th, 1939, this became the name by which the disciples of the "Watch Tower" were to be known.

After this bold, "inspired" exposition of the parable, no one dared to claim that he was being treated unfairly, and, with one swift blow, another part of the memory of Russell was destroyed.

Progress. Whatever we may think of Rutherford's teaching, we cannot deny that, under his leadership, the "Watch Tower" gained ground rapidly. Before he died of cancer in 1942, he had seen the Society develop into an organisation more complete and efficient than the "organised religion" he used to attack. In one year alone—1936—Rutherford supervised the publication of 24,456,111 volumes. And in the space of 15 years, his published works exceeded 250 MILLION copies!

Would you believe that the publishing department of the "Watch Tower" movement is capable of turning out 20,000 bound volumes of 384 pages per day, plus, an extra 60,000 booklets of 64 pages per day! Although the society is very loth to publish figures, it is known that the "Watch Tower" is printed in 17 languages each month, whilst the 32-page "Golden Age" is published in 15 languages every week. There is a lesson here for us, brethren. Certainly, we stand rebuked by these facts.

Today. Since the death of Rutherford, Nathan H. Knorr has been the president of the Society, but he does not receive the publicity that former presidents enjoyed. The present policy of the movement apparently calls for the leaders to be veiled in anonymity. The "Watch Tower Society" never ceases to pour out books and tracts, but an examination of these publications reveals that they contain nothing really new. They are merely rearrangements of old material, although it is impossible to discover who is responsible for the rearranging. You may have noticed that in recent years no author's name ever appears on a "Watch Tower" publication. This is true, even of the "New World Translation" of the scriptures, which "Jehovah's Witnesses" use. It may be that no Greek scholar would dare to allow his name to be associated with that version, because of its many abuses of the Greek text. It may even be that the "Watch Tower Organisation" knows that the author of that version has no standing as a Greek scholar.

FRANK WORGAN.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

MAY 1964

3—Genesis 42:1-25	Mark 10:32-52
10—Genesis 43:1-25	Mark 11:1-25
17—Genesis 44:14-34	Mark 11:26 to 12:17
24—Genesis 45:1-20	Mark 12:18-44
31—Exodus 3:1-20	Mark 13

THE ASTONISHING JESUS

Astonishment and amazement at words and actions of Jesus are recorded vividly about fourteen times in Mark's gospel, and the other evangelists join him with the same expressions respecting the feelings of these who heard and saw Him, the word "wonder" being used more in Luke's account. This is not at all surprising. Jesus is not the only person who has caused such feelings among his fellows, but He is quite unique in providing complete justification for them. We who live so far from the time and place fail to wonder enough. Nevertheless we have the adequate word to create the sentiment. A hymn writer has expressed his, and I trust our thought—"Transported with the view I'm lost in wonder, love and praise."

A look at some of the occasions particularly recorded will help. We can roughly divide them into wonder at the works, wonder at the words and wonder at the person of Christ. A number of different words are employed in both the original language and the translations, almost indicating a difficulty in adequately describing what was felt.

Most of the wonder was at the miracles that Jesus wrought. We read—"They were all amazed" (1:27); "They were all amazed, and glorified God, saying we never saw it on this fashion" (2:12); "They feared exceedingly" (4:41); "All men did marvel" (5:20); "They were amazed straightway with a great amazement" (5:42); "They were sore amazed in themselves" (6:51); "They were beyond measure astonished" (7:37). Translations have varied these words somewhat in an endeavour to put more emphasis—such as "astounded," "overcome with amazement" and so on. The point is of course that in Jesus we have a revelation of the God whose glory so surpasses human comprehension that we can only wonder and wonder. We should be filled with awe, reverence and godly fear.

But it was also the teaching of Jesus which caused astonishment. The first indication of this is recorded by Luke (2:47 and 48), when the boy Jesus was found in the Temple among the rabbis, obviously showing a grasp of the truth.

His understanding had been developed, we cannot doubt, by careful and prayerful attention to the word of God, which some present had spent a lifetime in studying. Immediately after, we read of his parents' astonishment at finding Him thus occupied, having spent three days in extreme distress of mind. Perhaps their anxiety and their surprise were much mistaken—had not their knowledge of His origin and His behaviour in the home been sufficient to teach them the divine care?

However we dare not judge them. The teaching collected by Matthew in the "sermon on the mount" gives us one address, enshrining those points which must have been continuously repeated in some form at different times as opportunity offered, especially in His intercourse with His closest disciples from day to day. They produced astonishment by running counter to normal human ideas, and calling for self-discipline. Love for enemies, doing good to those who hate us—overcoming evil with good—these are not popular themes. "They were astonished at His teaching" (Matt. 7:28). On a visit to Nazareth we read: "Many hearing Him were astonished, saying, Whence hath this man these things?" (6:2), and at the same place they "wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of His mouth" (Luke 4:22). The officers sent to arrest Him reported "Never man so spake" (John 7:46).

Another form of astonishment meets us twice in Mark's gospel—astonishment at the appearance of Jesus. The people meeting Jesus as He descended with His three apostles from the mount of transfiguration (9:15)—"They were greatly amazed." The word is used only by Mark in the New Testament and occurs in 14:33, where it describes the Saviour's feelings as the agony of Gethsemane came upon Him—"greatly amazed" (R.V.) and in 16, 5 and 6, where it describes the terror of the women when the heavenly messenger spoke to them. So the crowd meeting Jesus after His transfiguration were filled with fear at His majesty. There must often have been a measure of this fear and reverence in His presence, as we have seen when He stilled the storm, walked on the water, healed the demoniac. In our May readings (10:32) we have record of the effect on His followers of Jesus going ahead on the way to Jerusalem. We connect this with the apprehension of His disciples recorded by John (11:16), when Thomas said "Let us go with Him and die with Him." They realised in some way that He was going into danger of death, and yet they could not believe He could be so treated. Jesus however "Set His face stedfastly to go to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51). It was the fulfilment of His Father's purpose to

save sinners through the sacrifice of Himself which filled His mind and heart, and His superb courage transfigured His person as He led the way. "They were amazed, and they that followed were afraid."

Jesus at this time again impressed upon His apostles the fearful details of His coming death and the fact of His subsequent resurrection. Their minds must have been closed to this latter instruction, for they certainly did not expect Him to rise from the tomb. "We hoped that it was He that should redeem Israel" (Luke 24:21)—but they knew they had been mistaken! Then He walked and talked with them. This was the most astonishing thing about Jesus—AND IT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT FACT IN THE WORLD'S HISTORY.

R. B. Scott.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Editor,—May I ask for space in which to make a report on the response to my appeal for funds for the African work, in the February issue of "Scripture Standard"?

I am happy to say that, so far, a total of £43 5s. has been contributed to help in the purchase of Bibles and other literature, whilst other brethren have kindly contributed Bibles and New Testaments.

All of these gifts have been acknowledged, with the exception of two sent anonymously—although I am sure that the Lord knows the givers, and I am almost sure that I know, too! I do not think that these kind brethren and congregations would care to have their names published in this place, but one comment I will make. I think it significant that the churches which have undertaken to help in this work are all small in membership. And their help has been most generous.

These gifts have enabled me to order Bibles from the British and Foreign Bible Society, which will despatch the Bibles from their various depots in Africa. So far, 73 Bibles have been sent to native churches and individuals in Nigeria, Cameroons and Tanganyika. There has been a little delay because I had to wait to discover in which language these brethren prefer to read the Scriptures. It came as a surprise to me to learn in the African countries no fewer than 270 languages are used. Or, more accurately, the Scriptures are printed in 270 languages. And, although some of my correspondents have asked for African versions, most congregations and individuals really prefer the Bible

in English. This was my second surprise.

Brother Udoh, a preacher in Tiko, West Cameroon, informs me that there are six newly-established congregations in that area, with about 35 in each congregation. Let us pray for these brethren. The correspondence course continues to enrol students. Since my last report there have been thirteen new enrolments.

Once again, sincere thanks to all those who have contributed in any way to the African work. I am always ready to receive help for this work.

Frank Worgan.

Dear Bro. Carlton,—I nearly came out to see you regarding Bro. Barker's article in this month's "S.S." chiefly with reference to his statement, "There was no Son of God and no Christ before Bethlehem" or I take it birth. This is an old dispute that has caused much controversy in past centuries and even amongst our brethren, and I am really surprised that it has been resurrected.

I would like our readers to give careful thought to a few scriptural references which appear to settle the pre-existence of Christ for me. First Daniel 3:25, John 17:5, Phillipians 2:6-8.

I could comment on these, but my own comments would probably spoil the written words of inspired sages. If you would care to publish this comment in your own way I don't mind, but I think it needs something saying as we have so many young Bible students, and doubt is so easy to spread.

JOHN BREAKELL.

Comment by W. Barker

Judging from the above letter, Bro. Breakell was so moved by certain words in my article in last issue of the "S.S." that he would have liked to have "had it out" forthwith and face to face with the editor, presumably for allowing the words objected to to appear in the magazine! However, he calmed down somewhat and wrote the letter. I wish he had not written it for reasons which may be obvious.

The letter shows him as concerned about the pre-existence of Christ, and he thinks that what I wrote called in question that belief. He is wrong. Believing in the pre-existence of Christ, I am not likely to write against that belief.

The N.T. passages to which he refers us are not in dispute, but that from Daniel is a different matter. Here it is, enlarged a little for sake of connection, and abbreviated slightly to save space: "Then Nebuchadnezzar, the king . . . rose up in haste . . . and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered, True, O king." "He then

answered . . . Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire . . . and the form of the fourth is like to the Son of God."

Whatever application to the pre-existence of Christ there is in that quotation, it must lie in its last few words. The speaker of them was Nebuchadnezzar, a heathen king, steeped in idolatrous practices. Can it be thought that such a man would be chosen above all others to make so great an announcement as those words convey? He was a man begotten with an over-weening sense of his own importance. He worshipped a god of his own making and called on his people and all others who came his way to bow down and worship—or die. He was, as history records, a man on the verge of madness, such as, in these days, would be spoken of as a magalomaniac.

The story tells of three men who defied this man, refusing to worship the image he had made, and their defiance so infuriated him, that he became beside himself with rage and frustration and set about to contrive their death in the most terrible fashion he could think of. Yet he feared them, and a feeling seems to have grown upon him that they would escape him. They had said they would. Thus his agitated mind begun to form ideas of how that escape would come about. Being a man who saw visions his hallucination became real to him. Hence his question: "Did not we cast three? I see four," and there is not the slightest evidence in the record that any other than Nebuchadnezzar saw the fourth man. When the three Jews were drawn out of the fire and their clothing was examined, no mention is made of the fourth man. It is as though he never existed. Was he in the form of the Son of God in imagination only, that of Nebuchadnezzar?

That, confessedly, is—and readers will probably think—my imaginative reading of what occurred. However, there is nothing imaginative in what follows.

When I had reached this far in my thinking, there came to my mind—like a flash—the remembrance of a brother who wrote a number of articles in the precursor to the "S.S." His name was W. H. Clarke, and he came from Kentish Town. I associate with him one piece of advice constantly offered: "Verify your references." Just what is needed here. The passage was looked up and the book chosen showed a reference mark to those four words, the indefinite "a" was substituted for "the," a significant change indeed. A Bible Commentary was next looked at and these words read: "Rev. Vers, a son of the gods. Nebuchadnezzar could not have used the expression in the definite Christian sense suggested by

the authorised version." Now, for good measure and certainty. Rotherham: "and the appearance of the fourth is like to a son of the gods." Just the sort of words that a man like Nebuchadnezzar would be expected to use.

Now: the words which caused Bro. Breakell to write his letter: "There was no Son of God and no Christ before Bethlehem." May I here ask a question, and supply the answer? "In all the relationships of father and son which have come into being since time began, what is the one thing that has characterised every single one of them? Answer: The father existed before the son was born. That fact makes the pre-existence of the Son of God an impossibility. The Bible way of speaking of the pre-existence is the better way. John's words cannot be improved: "In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God; [that is pre-existence and co-existence] and the Word was God." There could be no Word without God, and there could be no God without the Word. A wordless God is an impotent God, no God at all.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

APRIL REPORT ON THE CAMEROONS EVANGELISATION FUND

Since my last report, in the March issue, donations to the above fund have slowed down somewhat, but still we are delighted to say that an additional £4 has been contributed. This brings the fund to a total of £28, and Brother Elangwe wishes me to convey to the brethren in Britain his heartfelt thanks and gratitude for the help they have provided and the help they may yet provide.

A very commendable feature of the fund to date has been the fact that some brothers and sisters have contributed more than once. Brethren who have not yet participated in the fund are asked to remember this fine work in their prayers, and also invited to send a gift, no matter how small it may be, to assist in the propagation of the gospel in the Cameroons.

Please send any financial or other help to: James R. Gardiner, 88 Davidson Terrace, Haddington, East Lothian, Scotland.

J. Gardiner.

Ince - in - Makerfield (Wigan).—Friday, March 27th saw the beginning of a special series of meetings over the holiday weekend. Three afternoon meetings were held and the following subjects were

ably dealt with: "The Honest to God Controversy," "The Christian and the New Morality," "Computers and Paul's Epistles." The talks and the discussions which followed were most helpful. We saw God as the Creator, the One in whom we live and move and have our being, and the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We were brought face to face with the need to show the beauty of Jesus in our daily living, and our faith in God's word was made stronger.

The weekend's activities included door-to-door and open-air work, and a questions answered session, as well as evening Gospel meetings addressed by Bro. Jerry Porter of Glasgow. The Gospel meetings continued nightly for a total of nine nights. The seed was faithfully sown, and we pray that the hearts of the good number of visitors who attended may prove to be "good ground," bringing forth fruit in due season.

Three car loads of visitors from Glasgow, mostly new Christians, spent the weekend with us.

Our sincere thanks to all who made the meetings such a great success—the speakers, the brethren from near and far who supported us, and the sisters who so efficiently catered for our physical needs.

Ilkeston.—We rejoice to report the addition of three young men to the church here. Alan Gregory, grandson of Bro. and Sis. F. Gregory; David Brown, son of Bro. and Sis. J. Brown; and Dennis Faulks, son of Bro. and Sis. F. H. Faulks. All three are elder scholars in the Lord's Day school. They expressed their desire to be baptised after one of a series of gospel meetings addressed by Bro. Frank Worgan, evangelist. These gospel meetings were arranged by the churches of Christ in the Midlands. To God be the praise.

The Eldership

THAT this is an office of high standing in the church of God is testified by Paul (I. Tim. 3 : 1). A little time spent on considering the office would lead to a wider understanding, and to a better appreciation of those who fill this important position. To maintain a perfect balance, we must combine both the duties of elders and duties of churches towards elders. Let us take first:

Duties of Elders

Ruling. The duty of elders is to rule (1 Tim. 3:4; 1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Thess. 5 : 14; Rom. 12 : 8; Heb. 13 : 17). To rule well, elders must possess a thorough knowledge of God's word, for the church they are ruling is the ground and pillar of the truth (1 Tim. 3 : 15).

Teaching. Elders must be able to teach (1 Tim. 5 : 17). "To labour in the word and in teaching" again proves how essential is a complete grasp of the truth.

Admonishing. Elders must be able to admonish (1 Thess. 5 : 14). If an elder admonishes with slackness, or refuses to admonish, how can he be ruling with diligence? This he must do (Rom. 12 : 8).

Cares and Responsibilities of Elders

Let us look at the commitments of elders: "For they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give an account." (Heb. 13 : 17). This is no ordinary commitment; so grave a responsibility requires very deep thought and deliberation. Paul stresses the gravity of this commitment in the words "that they may do this with joy and not with grief". If their charge contains so great a responsibility, then it should be accorded the gravity it deserves. Paul called the elders of the church at Ephesus and said (Acts 20 : 28-32), "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood. I know that after my departing, grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock, and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples after them. Wherefore watch ye, remembering that by the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears. And now I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all them that are sanctified." As Paul is being finally taken away from them, he bestows on the elders the care and watchfulness over the church that had hitherto been his. Surely they that rule well are worthy of double honour; we should esteem them very highly.

Duties of the Church to Elders

Submission. As we have established from God's word that the primary duty of elders is to rule, it immediately becomes binding on us, the church, that we be not unruly. "Submitting ourselves to those that have the rule over us." (1 Cor.

16 : 16). For if we refuse ruling, are we not denying them joy and ensuring their grief when they must give an account concerning their keeping of our souls? We, the church, must co-operate with the elders (Gal. 6 : 6). "In sanctification, therefore, he that rejecteth, rejecteth not man, but God, who giveth his Holy Spirit unto you" (1 Thess. 4 : 8). As Paul admonished the church at Ephesus with tears, let us resolve that we cause no tears to our elders by our stupidity, or for any other reason; that is unworthy of any who have put on Christ Jesus. Rather let us seal their joy, today and on that great day when they must assuredly give account.

Watchfulness. We are to be watchful, even as the elders keep their watch over our souls. We too are to watch. "Continue steadfastly in prayer, watching therein with thanksgiving" (Col. 4 : 2). After telling the church at Corinth to receive Timothy (1 Cor. 16 : 10). Paul continues in verse 13 : "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all that ye do be done in love." How much easier the work of elders would be, if the whole church would really and truly heed these two verses. What happy contentment would ensue for all! This is the duty too of the church to elders, and to God (1 Cor. 15 : 58).

Remembrance and Acknowledgment. (Heb. 13 : 7 & 24). "Remember them that had the rule over you, which spake unto you the word of God; and considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith." Our remembrance of the elders must be with consideration, following their example, which leads to our common inheritance, eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Honour. (1 Tim. 5 : 17). "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially those that labour in the word and in teaching." Is it not to our shame, as the general body of the church, to allow the elders to perform such menial tasks as—caretaking, stoking, etc.? (We can't deny that we allow them to do these things; why do we?). Serving tables as it were—instead of serving the word of God. (Acts 6 : 2-7). Would not the church everywhere likewise increase in strength and multiply if the general body of the church shouldered its burdens, giving the elders the freedom to fulfil theirs? Therefore let us be content to be ruled, admonished, nurtured in the faith by the elders, while we "by love serve one another" (Gal. 5 : 13).

Some might ask, why no reference to Paul's instructions to Titus, regarding the eldership? There Paul commands sharp, authoritative rebuke of the Cretans—whose mouths must be closed, lying, idle, gluttonous.

As none of these things obtain in our churches, neither does the same admonition apply. Therefore the omission. The elders can rule us solely by love, if only we live up to our duty and privilege. What and who hinders us? God is waiting to bless us if we do. (Gal. 6 : 9-10). Let us not neglect in word or deed to encourage each other to love and good works.

J. A. GREGORY.

What About To-morrow?

Yes! What about tomorrow? What will happen? Where will I be? What will I do? Our age has created a civilisation in which many are afraid to live. Some say, "I hate to face tomorrow." Indeed, we are living in a world full of violence and hatred, not knowing when all this may reach our community. Only when men believe in, and obey the Lord can they forget their anxiety about tomorrow. Members of the church of Christ enjoy the "peace that passeth all understanding." (Phil. 4 : 6-7). In loving for Christ we learn to live today, in such a way as to be ready tomorrow.

If I were not a Christian, I would be terrified in this reckless, atomic age. As a Christian however, I can remain calm. For this reason, we urge you to obey God today, that you may spend all of your tomorrows with Him!

(Selected).

OBITUARY

Birmingham (Summer Lane).—It is with profound regret that we record the passing of our esteemed and well-beloved brother, Fred C. Day. After a short illness in hospital, following a stroke, he passed away on Lord's Day, March 22nd, 1964.

He died as he had lived, quietly and inconspicuously. We can truly liken his passing as a gracious little bow and a quiet withdrawal. It was always his effort to cause as little inconvenience as possible; most surely he succeeded in this effort to the last.

As we look back over the life of our brother we see a grand example of one who buffeted his body to bring it under subjection, and, having gained the mastery of the physical, using it for the spiritual. None realised more than Brother Day that one day he would have to lay down the cause for which he strove so ardently, and realising this inevitable time, he did all he could to prepare others who should be able to continue the struggle after he had gone.

The number of young brothers who have profited from his training cannot be reckoned, both in the Bible School and in the Young Men's Improvement Class. Like ships that passed in the night, so brethren came under his influence and received a blessing. God grant that all may make good use of the blessings so imparted.

So many things remain as a memorial to our brother's work that we know his name will be remembered among the churches. May it be that as we remember him we might strive to follow his example. He truly applied himself to the understanding of Jesus' words, "With God all things are possible." Through God he made himself a man of God.

THANKS

Dear Brother Melling: May I thank sincerely all who sent letters and messages of loving sympathy to me on the death of my husband? It would be impossible for me to answer these individually, but I do want all to know how grateful I am. It has been a great help to me, and to the family, to know that brethren in Christ have remembered us before the throne of grace. It has shown once again how wonderfully sweet is the fellowship of the saints. May the Lord bless you all.

In His love,

Edith L. Day.

St. Catharines (Canada).—On November 19th Sister Laura Burdett, answered the call that awaits us all. Her stay of 92 years on earth was a longer journey than

most of us will make. While here her life was an adornment in the kingdom of God. She was faithful to her trust through years of anxiety, while she waited on her companion without complaint. She could always see the good in others. She loved the church and her brethren in the Lord.

Sister Burdett was born in England, where she married and her family was born. She was baptised at Geach Street, (Summer Lane), Birmingham, before coming to the land of her adoption. In Canada for a period she resided in Saskatchewan, later moving to St. Catharines, where she has been a faithful member of the church since 1914. Until near the end her mind was clear and she took a great interest in her family, friends and church. Most of her friends in life had crossed the river of death, and those who remained did not think of her leaving home, but going home.

In her immediate family, she leaves three sons and one daughter, together with other relatives and a host of friends in and out of the church.

Wigan (Albert Street).—It is with deep regret that we record the passing of our Sister Ellen Hurst who fell asleep on Saturday, March 14th. She had been a member for sixty years, but for a time owing to her disability was prevented from being able to attend. We commend all who mourn her passing into the care of our Heavenly Father, the only source of comfort and love.

HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP

Period: August 10th to 22nd, 1964 (including travelling time).

Place: Biel, Switzerland, in a Motor Association Hostel.

Limit: Party will be limited to 52—this being number of beds in hostel.

Board: We estimate that this will cost £5 10s. per adult (i.e. age 14 and over) and £3 for under fourteens.

Travel: Party rates for the journey (by rail) London-Biel return as follows:—

Age	£	s.	d.
4-10 years	4	13	0
10-14 years	7	3	6
14-16 years	8	15	0
16-21 years	9	2	0

Adult Party: Cost per adult for party of 10-24 adults, £13 10s. Cost per adult if 25 or more adults £12 6s.

Bookings: Must be accompanied with fee of £2 for 14 years and over; £1 for under fourteens. Bookings on "first come first served" principle.—A. E. Winstanley, 43a Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

COMING EVENTS

Newtongrange intend, D.V., holding a special mission during the months of April, May and June.

Speaker to be Bro. C. A. Norred, Birmingham, Alabama, U.S.A.

Gospel meetings will be held on Sundays at 6 p.m., Thursdays at 7.30 p.m. and Saturdays at 7 p.m. Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. will be occupied with training young men for the work of the Lord.

We invite all brethren who may be in the district to be with us during this period, but we earnestly desire the prayers of all our brethren everywhere for the success of this mission.

W. M. Allan.

Liverpool.—Brother S. F. Timmerman, Jr., of Brussels, in transit to Montreal, Canada, the Lord willing, will speak at a meeting in the Co-operative Hall, Derby Lane, Stoneycroft, Liverpool, 13, on Saturday, May 23rd, at 7 p.m. and again on Lord's Day, May 24th, at 3 p.m., when Liverpool Christians meet for Bible study.

Further details from R. A. Hill, 31 Mossley Hill Road, Liverpool, 18.

Bedminster (Bristol).—The 101st anniversary of the forming in Bedminster of a church devoted to New Testament Christianity is being held on May 9th and 10th, 1964. Bro. Robert McDonald will be the special speaker. Tea on Saturday at 4.30 p.m. All welcome.

A.L.D.

HINDLEY BIBLE SCHOOL

Hindley Bible School: Saturday, May 16th to Monday, May 18th. Saturday 3 p.m.: Speakers, Brethren McDonald (Dewsbury), Edward Jess (Scotland). 7.15 p.m.: Singing Together; 7.30 p.m.: Gospel, Bro. Tom Nisbet (Scotland).

Lord's Day: 10.30 a.m.: Speaker, Bro. D. Dougall; 2 p.m.: Bible School, Bro. J. Parker (Albert St., Wigan); 3 p.m.: Open

Airs; 6 p.m.: Questions Answered; 7.30 p.m. Speaker, Bro. D. Dougall (Scotland).

Monday: Prayer Meeting 10 a.m. to 10.30 led by Bro. John Dodsley (Kirkby-in-Ashfield); 10.30 to 12 noon: Forum, Theme: Practical Christianity, led by Bro. Geoffrey Lodge (Dewsbury); Lunch 12 p.m.; 2.30 to 3.15: Questions Answered, led by Bro. Carlton Melling. Panel of brethren to answer questions; 3.15 to 4: To Get You Talking, led by Bro. Alfred Marsden (Albert Street); 6.30 to 7 p.m.: Open Air Messages; 7.15 p.m.: Singing Together; 7.30 p.m.: Speaker, Bro. Tom McDonald.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Opening of new meetinghouse

First public meetings in new building on Saturday, May 16th (D.V.). 3 p.m.—Speaker C. Philip Slate. 4.30 p.m.—tea. 6 p.m.—Speaker Frank Worgan, who will serve in a fortnight's mission. The building is on the corner of Cambrian and Upper Grosvenor Roads. For complete directions on how to get there please write to me: A. E. Winstanley, 43a Church Road, Tunbridge Wells.

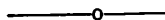
Doncaster.—Church Tea and Meeting, Saturday, June 20th. Tea at 4.15 p.m. Meeting 6 o'clock. Speaker: Bro. Frank Worgan.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Bro. and Sis. Harold Baines, Breth. David and Robert Chappin, 21 High St., Haddenham, Aylesbury, Bucks.

CHANGE OF SECRETARY

Wigan (Scholes).—James Melling, 2 Pyke Street, Wigan, Lancs.



WHEN Christ is enthroned in the innermost being, He transforms our desires, and ambitions, and longings, and the fruit of His indwelling is seen in love, and joy, and peace.

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