

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

VOL.53 No.2

FEBRUARY 1985

BREAKING THE BREAD

I thank brother Jimmy Grant very much indeed for his contribution (published in last month's issue) on the above subject. As he rightly says, personalities are not in any sense involved in this discussion; it is simply a matter of ascertaining a proper understanding of what is involved in Breaking the bread. It would have been helpful if other brethren had contributed - as Solomon says, "in multitude of counsellors there is safety".

(1) A brief scrutiny of any Greek Lexicon reveals that the word "break" (or "broken") in the N.T. is represented by various (about half-a-dozen) Greek words depending upon the context and usage. With regard to *bread*, however, the Greek is always *Klao* and its use is severely confined to about 13 N.T. references (always referring to breaking bread). It (*Klao*) literally means "To break; to break in pieces; to break off pieces". We have a good illustration of the meaning of the word in Matt. 14:19 where Jesus took 5 loaves into His hands and broke them into fragments prior to distribution. *Klao* is again used in Matt. 15:36 where Jesus dealt similarly with the 7 loaves (Mark 8:6 & 8:19 are parallel passages). In another 3 or 4 cases, *Klao* is used in bread being broken as a meal where (as stated in my previous article) the bread was broken prior to being eaten; e.g. Acts 27:35. Note that the bread was not broken *by being eaten* (such as taking a bite out of the loaf) but was broken *before* being eaten. This, I suggest, is a most important distinction. The remaining instances (use of *Klao*) refer to the institution of the Lord's Supper (in Matthew, Mark & Luke and also in Paul's accounts in 1 Cor. 10:16 & 11:24). Those who allege that the meaning of *Klao* is different as between Matt. 14:19 (breaking of 5 loaves) and Matt. 26:26 (institution of Lord's Supper) require, I believe, to furnish proof of such a change. If the Holy Spirit had intended a different meaning, He would, I believe, have employed a different word (there are plenty to choose from). Where then, we might well ask, is the evidence that *Klao* changes in meaning as between Matt. 14:19 and Matt. 26:26?

Bro. Grant quotes Thayer as defining *Klao* as "A fragment, broken piece" and I would be obliged if he could refer me to the page. I can find no such definition in Thayer. Robinson, on the other hand defines *Klao* "to break off or in two, 'to break bread' for distribution preparatory to a meal, the Jewish bread being in the form of thin cakes (like biscuits)." (page 447). In Bauer's English/Greek Lexicon (page 433) *Klao* is defined as "the breaking of the bread by which the father of the household gave the signal to begin the meal. This was the practice of Jesus .. those of the loaves that were broken through .. likewise the religious meals of all the

Christians". Bro. Grant mentions Vine but Vine (Expository Dictionary: page 147) defines *Klao* as "To break; to break off pieces". This is exactly what Jesus did with the 5 loaves - He broke off *pieces*. Vine goes on to say (page 148) that "fragment, broken piece" is *not* from *Klao* but from *Klasma* which, he says, "is always used of *remnants* of food e.g. Matt. 14:20; 15:37".

Thus, whether we break bread *in pieces* or break *off pieces* it amounts to the same thing - *dividing the loaf into fragments*, and Vine employs the plural "pieces". *Klao* means the same thing where-ever it is used: "to break into pieces".

(2) Bro. Grant says he believes *he knows exactly* what Jesus did at the institution i.e. that Jesus *broke to partake* and instructed His disciples to do likewise. To say that Jesus "broke to partake" is surely adding two words to the N.T. We must "prove all things" by God's word and we really ought not to teach something unless we can prove it from the N.T. The Word of God is *utterly silent* on the assumption that Jesus *broke to partake*. The N.T. says only that Jesus broke the bread but instructed *His disciples* to eat it. He *broke - they ate*. We claim to be silent where the Bible is silent. I know of no Lexicographer or Commentator who teaches that Jesus *ate* the bread or *drank* the fruit of the vine. Nor is it a matter of "necessary inference". "This do" does *not* support the idea that Jesus ate the bread. If "This do" was intended, by Jesus, to convey (by itself) an instruction to 'eat' and 'drink' why did Jesus find it necessary to ADD *the instructions* "Take eat" and "Drink ye". The disciples ate and drank because Jesus specifically instructed them too - not because He had done so. Of this we can be sure, this much can be proved. But to state that Jesus *ate the bread* requires certain proof, especially when Jesus declared His intention not to.

In my last article I produced scripture (Luke 22:22) wherein Jesus at the Jewish Passover, (and *moments prior to the institution of the Lord's Supper*) said that He would *not* eat (Passover bread) *any more* thereof, "until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God" and that He would *not* "drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine" until that day when He would drink it new with them in His Father's kingdom". These were His words at the last Jewish Passover and *minutes prior* to Him taking the bread (and breaking it) and passing the cup in the institution of Lord's table. Did Jesus change His mind and partake of the bread, and drink of the fruit of the vine, minutes after He declared *that He would not eat the bread or drink the fruit of the vine* (in a religious context)? Did He? Would we expect Him to? Can we believe that moments after saying "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine" that He did so? We must be given evidence that He changed His mind. It is not enough that "God's ways are not our ways". We all have opinions on certain matters but we are not allowed to express them *as facts* unless we are in a position to prove them such. We know what Burns said about facts.

(3) Brother Grant says that the expression 'Breaking Of Bread' "implies not only *Breaking* but also *Eating*" and with this I wholeheartedly agree. We must *bless* the bread (thanks); *break* the bread and *eat* the bread. This I have maintained from the beginning. In 1 Cor. 10:16-17 (as Bro. Orton remarked in his article) Paul uses the three phrases "*we bless*" (the bread); "*we break*" and "*we partake*". I agree with Bro. Orton that these three elements are necessary - we must "bless" we must "break" and we must "partake".

(4) Bren. Orton and Grant seem to object to the Presiding Brother at the Lord's table breaking the bread into *two portions* before passing it. I am willing to supply the loaf if some brother will volunteer to break it without breaking it into *two (or more) portions*. Into how many pieces did Jesus break the bread? We cannot tell except to say that it had to be, at least two, and possible more. Indeed, we regard it as self-evident that two parts are *the very minimum* into which a

loaf of bread can be broken. Even when a brother breaks a portion off the loaf, and eats that portion, he has merely eaten one of the *two portions* into which he broke the bread. Thus *each member* breaks the loaf into (at least) *two parts* before he eats. Thus in a congregation of, say fifty members, the bread (loaf) is broken into, *at least*, one hundred portions before the last member partakes. Thus Paul has every right to use the term *Klao* in 1 Cor. 10:16-17. *Each member* does break it and eat it.

Is anyone going to seriously suggest that Jesus, when He broke the bread, did not break it into (at least) *two pieces*, portions or fragments (use what word you may)? It was impossible, even for Jesus, to *break it* without ending up with more than one piece. We are not told *where* He broke it - whether near the middle or where-ever, but He *did break it into pieces* (at least 2 in number). How, then, can we object to the Presiding Brother doing likewise? Indeed we would have grounds for complaint if the Presiding Brother *did not* break it into two, or more, pieces. As I say, I shall be happy to provide the loaf if someone will be prepared to demonstrate the breaking of it into a lesser number than two parts, or pieces. At the institution of the feast by our Lord, *every* disciple ate bread which *had already been broken* whereas I understand by Bro. Grant's method, every member eats broken bread *except one*. Surely there must be something amiss with a procedure which results in such a distinction.

(5) Bro. Orton's reason for taking this attitude is described, by himself, in his article, viz. "The loaf must remain whole as a symbol of Jesus body because the scriptures said that 'a bone of him shall not be broken' (John 19:36) and to fit in with the passover lamb which had to be eaten whole (Ex. 12:46)". How Bro. Orton expects the loaf to remain whole (he says the loaf *must* remain whole) when *each member* of a congregation breaks it into two (or more) portions I cannot guess. The two terms "whole" and "broken" are diametrically opposed. Apart from this complete incongruity of terms, where does the N.T. say that the bread at the Lord's Table *must remain whole*? Where? Also where in the N.T. does *any writer* draw a connection between John 19:36 and the bread on the Lord's Table? Where? We require such information if the opinion is to be taken seriously. Jesus, of course, at His betrayal and death, fulfilled a *large number* of O.T. prophecies. Ex. 12:46 is not a prophecy and John 19:36 is but a fulfilment of Psalm 34:20. In John 19 and elsewhere there are many other prophecies fulfilled in Jesus but few had any reference to the Lord's Supper. It is true Christ is, in a sense, our Passover crucified for us; nevertheless Jesus *scrapped the Passover* and introduced 'The Lord's Supper' (something quite new and unique). He *did not* teach us that "*the loaf must remain whole*" - rather the opposite - we **MUST BREAK THE BREAD**. Surely this is why the feast is called 'The Breaking of The Bread' - because we meet to *Klao* the bread. Jesus knew better than anybody about the Passover, and about all the prophecies concerning Him, yet He did not teach His disciples that the bread must remain whole - instead He did *the very opposite* and solemnly, purposely, and pointedly **BROKE IT**. We need proof that either Christ, or any of His apostles, ever taught that the loaf must remain whole. Where is it? If we can't produce it, perhaps we ought not to teach it.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

WILLIAM BARCLAY, (who was no slouch with the Greek) says, in his own "New Translation Of The N.T." of Matt. 26:26 "During the meal Jesus took a loaf. He said the blessing over it, and broke it into pieces, and gave it to His disciples". Barclay clearly believes that Jesus broke the bread into pieces.

DAVID KING (in his Memoirs) says, (page 436) "But the Saviour took the bread in its oneness - a loaf some translate it - and this one bread He blessed, and as thus blessed, it was representative of His body, the subsequent breaking being

needful only in order to divide it among His disciples". David King seems to believe the bread was divided up by Jesus for the purpose of distribution among the disciples.

E. M. ZERR (Bible Commentary) (page 26) "*Brake it*. The term is from the same original Greek word as 'brake' in Matt. 14:19 and it has no more spiritual significance in one place than the other. The only reason for breaking the bread is that more than one person may partake of it in decency."

MACKNIGHT (A New Translation from The Original Greek) (page 208) "This do' implies two things (1) That they were to take and eat the bread in remembrance of Christ's body broken for them. (2) That they were to give thanks, and break the bread before they ate it."

ALEXANDER CAMPBELL (The Christian System) (page 325) "The loaf must be broken before the saints partake of it. Jesus took a loaf from the paschal table and broke it before He gave it to His disciples. They received a broken loaf, emblematic of His body once whole, but by His own consent broken for His disciples. In eating it we remember that the Lord's body was, by His own consent, broken or wounded for us. Therefore he that gives thanks for the loaf should break it, not as a representative of the Lord, but after His example; and after the disciples had partaken of this loaf, handing it to one another, or while they are partaking of it, the disciple who brake it partakes, with them, of the broken loaf: thus they all have communion with the Lord and with one another in eating the broken loaf."

J. W. McGARVEY (Standard Bible Commentary) (page 117) says (on 1 Cor. 11:24) "Many ancient authorities read: 'This is my body which is broken for you' etc. Some regard this as a contradiction of John's assertion that no bone of Him was broken (John 19:36). But the word differs from that used by John, which may be properly translated 'crushed'. 'Broken' is involved in the phrase 'He brake it', used here, and in the three accounts of the Supper, and hence they err who use the unbroken wafer."

Conclusion

(a) The meaning of *Klao* is "to break, or break off pieces" as in Matt. 14:19 (breaking the 5 loaves). We require real evidence that the meaning changes as between Matt. 14:19 and Matt. 26:26 (institution of Lord's Supper).

(b) The N.T. *does not* say, or even suggest, that Jesus ate the bread when He instituted the remembrance feast. If the N.T. is silent on the matter we, perhaps, ought also to be silent, or adduce the proof that Jesus actually *ate* the bread after He had broken it. Jesus, *at the Passover*, said that He would *not eat*, (or drink) again *until that day* what day?

(c) Objections to a Presiding Brother breaking the bread into two (or more) portions are completely groundless. Indeed it is quite impossible to break a loaf into a lesser number of portions than two.

(d) The N.T. *nowhere* says that the loaf is to be preserved whole. *Rather the reverse*. The church must break the loaf - *not* preserve it whole. John 19:36 was just one, of a very great many, of prophesies which had their fulfilment in Jesus, & at *nowhere* in the N.T. is John 19:36 linked with the bread, and certainly no inspired writer in the N.T. invokes it as a reason for preserving the loaf whole. Rather they all, including Paul, stress that the bread *must be broken*.

These above remarks are offered merely for what they are worth, in the hope that they will encourage brethren to investigate the matter, or at least give it further serious thought. None of us are infallible (far from it) and if the above comments contain any erroneous assertion or any inaccurate assumption I urge that the error be identified immediately and I shall be happy to publish material of a contrary view. When our Lord instituted the feast He used the most basic of

materials and couched them in the very simplest of form - yet think of the controversies which have raged (and still do) around this modest ordinance. Surely we should be able to agree on something which Jesus tried, so hard, to keep simple.

EDITOR

UNJUSTIFIED CRITICISM OF K.J.V.

TO please God we must read His Word and obey it. We must have confidence in the written word which is becoming increasingly difficult to those who are young in the faith because the written word is constantly being criticized.

One of the most popular versions to be criticized today is the Bible we commonly use, the King James Version. The purpose, therefore, of this address is to strengthen our confidence in this version that we use and to give an answer to some of these unjust criticisms.

I will begin with a criticism that I personally have stated many times concerning the King James Version on the word "baptism". I would like to make it perfectly clear that while I use the King James Version every day, I have found some minor faults with it but the criticism on the word "baptism" which I had was not justified by the facts.

It has been suggested that the Greek word "baptizo" should have been translated "to immerse" and that the translators failed to translate the word but merely transliterated it because of the ecclesiastical views held by King James I. The criticism is not supported by the facts, which are as follows:-

The rule of procedure drawn up before commencement of the work did not contain any specific reference to baptism and King James did not intend to superintend in any way. The six translation committees worked at Westminster, Oxford and Cambridge. Each member completed his own rendering of the whole portion assigned to the committee and then submitted it to the other members. When agreement was reached the committee sent its' portion to the other committees for revision and approval, and finally a small sub-committee under Miles Smith, checked the whole.

The primary meaning of the English word "baptize" is "to immerse" and the translators used the word in this sense. The English word "baptize" is not a direct transliteration from the Greek but it is not a word, which many think (I include myself in this general belief, until recently) was coined by the translators.

They did not invent the English word to avoid using the word immerse. The word "baptism" was, in fact, used in English literature as early as the year 1200 A.D. and was well established in the language for nearly two hundred years before Wyclif used it in his translation in 1382 A.D. In his version we find "to be baptisid", "baptym", "baptysing", "baptem", "I baptise", "He shall baptise", etc.

The Greek word "baptismos" was first taken into the Latin tongue. The Latin "baptisma" meant immersion. There is abundant evidence that this word was commonly used meaning immersion long before the Authorized Version used it. For an example, Tyndale used the word in 1524 in the New Testament. It is found in the Great Bible of 1538, in the Geneva Version of 1560 and the Bishops Bible of 1568.

The word was not only used in English but in French, Spanish and Portuguese and, in every case the primary meaning is to immerse. Whatever may have been the King James Version translators' view of the ordinance of baptism it cannot be questioned that they translated the word other than correctly with scrupulous fidelity to the Greek, with full knowledge of the meaning of the English word, then already at least 400 years old, without any favouritism to King James I and without

grinding any ecclesiastical axe of their own.

They were not perfect men, they did not produce a perfect version, but it cannot be denied that they translated the Greek "baptizein" correctly by the English word "baptize".

The Missing (?) Verses — Mark 16 vs. 9-20

Whenever the subject of baptism is carefully studied Mark 16 vs. 9-20 will certainly come up. Mark 16 verse 16 contains a very strong passage in favour of water baptism being essential to salvation, so those who say that baptism is not essential will usually cast a doubt on the genuineness of the verses.

As you know our English translation of the Bible is made from Greek manuscripts, ancient versions and other sources. There are hundreds of these manuscripts available today. They are graded by textual critics on their age, their completeness, their consistency. Usually those which are the oldest and more complete are the best.

That is the problem concerning Mark 16 vs 9-20. *The two oldest and best Greek manuscripts* do not have the verses. Some of the textual critics think that the words were written later, that a part of Mark's original was lost and that later copyists tried to supply an ending. Actually, when all the manuscripts are viewed it is found that four different endings are current among the manuscripts.

A brief definition of some of the common terminology one meets in this subject may be helpful. A "roll" is a manuscript usually about 30 feet long and about 9 or 10 inches broad. It was attached to a wooden roller and the scroll would be read by unrolling it. Usually made from papyrus.

Papyrus is a reed which grew in abundance along the River Nile. It was cut in strips and pressed together to make a type of heavy paper. *Vellum* or parchment was all kinds of animal skins which were dressed for writing on. A *Codex* is a manuscript prepared like a book.

Something that is referred to as being "*Genuine*" means that it is a manuscript written by a named author. Suppose the Apostle Peter had written the 4th chapter in Paul's letter, then the 4th chapter would be inspired but not genuine for it is Paul's letter. We have to be careful in the use of this word as it has a different meaning to the common use of the word.

"*Canonical*" means that it is accepted as a part of the Bible. Manuscripts are Greek documents only. Versions are documents in any other language. Inspiration is the term applied to writings which are produced by the direct agency of God through His Spirit. Paul writes but God inspires what Paul writes. Lectionaries are manuscripts containing selected passages of scripture for reading in public worship services, many are very old.

"*Church Fathers*" are the early Christians who wrote down Scripture in their writings. Many of these writings are older than our oldest manuscripts. There are over 86,000 quotations from which we can construct the entire New Testament.

The function of the "*textual critic*" is plain, he seeks by comparison and study of all the available evidence to recover the exact words of the authors' original composition. The New Testament text critic seeks, in short, to weed out the chaff of bad readings from the genuine Greek text. He knows that the only way to have a reliable English translation is to make sure that the original fountain-head is free from all impurities.

It is true that *Vaticanus* and *Sinaiticus* do not have Mark 16, verses 9-20 and it is also true that they are our oldest, and in many ways, best manuscripts, but the following facts are also true:-

Codex Vaticanus acknowledges that something is missing because after verse 8 a whole column is left blank. In fact that is the only blank spot in the entire manuscript. Also it has been shown that the twelve verses fit the space.

Tischendorf, who found the Sinaiticus manuscripts, was of the opinion that the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus manuscripts were written by the same scribe. If so, then the two manuscripts would really be only one witness not in favour of the last 12 verses. There are modern Bible critics who also believe this.

There are also many missing verses in the two manuscripts. Just because there is a missing verse does not mean something does not belong there, or that we should take it out of our English Translations which are based on the manuscripts which contain the missing verses. For an example there is John 21 v 25; Heb. 9 v 15; Mark 1 v 1; John 9 v 38; Luke 6 v 1; Luke 22 v 43; John 17 vs 33 & 34; Eph. 1 v 1; 2 Tim., Titus and Revelation. Why should Mark 16 vs 9-20 be left out while all the others, and many more, are put back in.

When we say that the oldest *manuscripts* do not have the 12 verses we are NOT saying the oldest *documents* do not have them. Most of the ancient versions, many of which are older than *Vaticanus* and *Sinaiticus*, or which are based on older documents, have the verses. (Namely, *Peshito*, *Syriac*, the old *Italic*, the *Sahidic* and the *Coptic*) The testimony of the ancient versions is overwhelmingly in support of the last 12 verses.

Another source of ancient documents is the *Lectionary System*. After the custom of the synagogue, where portions of the Law were read at stated intervals, the early Christians adopted the practise of reading passages of the New Testament books at services of worship on designated days. These passages were copied and only recently have scholars begun to appreciate their value for constructing the original text.

Now it is a fact that in these Lections Mark 16 vs 9-20 has a regular, conspicuous and honourable place. Dean Burgeon, who has written a book on the last 12 verses of Mark, says "All the twelve verses in dispute are found in every known copy of the venerable Lectionary of the east."

Consider also that of the five oldest manuscripts which are available *Sinaiticus*, *Vaticanus*, *Alexandrinus*, *Ephraemi Rescriptus* and the *Freer Gospels*, the latter three include the verses. While Vaticanus and Sinaiticus date from the fourth century we should also bear in mind that so does the Freer Gospels, which contain the verses.

I think enough evidence has been presented for us to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered, using the last 12 verses of Mark's gospel with confidence.

Let us not allow our faith to waver by those who make rash statements. Let us take comfort in 2 Timothy 3 vs 16 & 17, where we read:

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

GRAEME PEARSON, Glasgow

GLEANINGS

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

"TEXAS STAR"

"A gentleman living in Texas was an unbeliever. One day he was walking in his garden reading a book. He read this sentence: "God works according to the rules of geometry." He closed the book, and began to think. "I always thought," said he to himself, "that things were made by chance. Is there a rule about everything?" Just then he saw close by a sweet little flower known as the "Texas Star." He picked it up, and began to examine it. He counted the petals. He found there were five. He counted the stamens; there were five of them. Then he examined another flower. It was the same

with that. Another and another were examined. It was the same with all. There were five petals, and five stamens, and so on, in every case. "How is this?" he said to himself. "If these flowers were made by chance, some of them would have three petals, and some two, and some none. But now they all have five; never more, and never less. Here is work done by rule. If it is done in this way, there must be some one to do it. And who can that be? Oh, I see!" And then he picked up the little flower, and kissed it, and said: "Bloom on, little flower; sing on, little birds; you have a God, and I have a God. The God that made these little flowers made me." "

Dr. Newton

THE BIBLE IS A BOOK

"The Bible is a Book. As such, it has the essential characteristics of a Book - its limitations and its advantages. The Bible has the limitations of a Book, in that it may be shelved and not read; mis-interpreted and abused; and yet may utter no other than a silent protest. It will not thunder its contents into unwiling ears. At the same time the Bible has the advantages of a Book, in its fitness to be copied, translated, multiplied, and indefinitely preserved; and in its patience to bide its time until willing minds shall do it justice.

The Bible is a Book: not a man. "The fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?" In their persons - No; in their writings - Yes. The fathers and the prophets are dead; but the Bible lives.

The Bible is a Book: not God. God is from everlasting; the Bible had a beginning. God can do all things, consistent with His wisdom: the Bible will do that for which it was sent - so much, no more. The question is, not what can the Bible do? but what may God be pleased to do with the Bible? It is a question more curious than practical, Will the Bible live for ever? It is very much alive at present; and will certainly live on as long as its Divine Author has any more work for it to do. It will yet be honoured - its predictions all be fulfilled - its lessons all be learned. The light of the Bible will never be put out, save as lamps give place to the sun!"

J. B. Rotherham

LIBERTY WITHOUT MURDER

"We want no flag - no flaunting rag - In Liberty's cause to fight;
We want no blaze or murderous guns To struggle for the right;
Our spears and swords are printed words - The mind's our battle plain;
We've won our victories thus before, And so we shall again.

We yield to none in earnest love of Freedom's cause sublime;
We join the cry - 'Fraternity!' We keep the march of Time.
And yet we grasp no spear nor sword our victories to obtain;
We've won without such help before, And so we shall again.

Peace, progress, knowledge, brotherhood, The ignorant may sneer -
The bad deny; but we rely To see their triumph near.
No widow's groans shall mar our cause, No blood of brethren slain:
Kindness and Love have won before, And so they shall again."

Mackay

FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE.

Reprinted from: ASCRIPTION OF GLORY

"Every Christian has abundant cause to render unceasing praise to God. Every good gift comes from Him. The far-reaching scheme of salvation is His. To Him may we render constant gratitude.

'Amen' is a Hebrew word meaning "firm, faithful, true". It is employed in the New Testament 152 times. In 101 of these it is at the beginning of a sentence, where it is always translated 'verily'. In the Gospel by John there is always the repetition, 'verily,

verily.' At the end of a sentence it is an exclamation of assent, or an emphatic intimation of a desire that what has been expressed may be realised - so let it be."

Alexander Brown

PRAYER AND WORKS

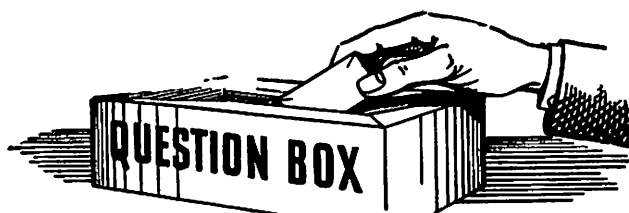
"Sir Wilfred Lawson used to tell of a little girl who prayed that the trap her brother had set might catch no sparrows. On being asked by her mother why she was so confident that her prayer would be answered, she replied: "Because I went into the garden and kicked the trap to pieces." "

MEN OF ACTION

"Horace Mann once remarked: "I have never heard anything about the *resolutions* of the apostles, but a good deal about the *Acts* of the Apostles"."

T.W.T.

Selected by LEONARD MORGAN



Conducted by
Alf Marsden

"In view of what Paul says in Ephesians 1:13-14 and 4:30 would you say that redemption is a state which is still in the future?"

I find that one of the more serious, and in many cases unrealised, problems with which the Christian neophyte is faced is that of acceptance without understanding. Let me hasten to add that I am fully aware that acceptance of the Gospel *without* complete understanding is almost inevitable, but I am equally aware that the first question put to the Ethiopian eunuch by Philip was, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" It is plain that *the stated* facts of the Gospel are easy to follow and obey (see 1 Cor. 4:1-4), but once having embarked on *that* road, the hearer of the Gospel or the Christian neophyte very quickly becomes confused when the stated facts are distorted; it is *then* that we need the assurance of understanding so that we can avoid the quicksand of distorted truth.

Why do I mention this? Simply because I find a disturbing lack of understanding of the great themes of the Bible; faith, repentance, redemption, justification, sanctification, etc., among present-day Christians. I know that there are those who will say, "Well, what you are saying may be true, but so long as you live a good Christian life (whatever that may mean) then everything will turn out fine". But if such a person has ever seen the face of a child or an adult, beleaguered by facts about many things, light up when the dawn of understanding comes then this surely must be a vindication of what I am saying. Anyway, let us look at one of these great themes - redemption.

Man's Condition

In order to understand subsequent teaching we *must* start here. In the first two chapters of the Roman letter Paul catalogues the moral degradation to which Gentiles had sunk, and in doing so he illustrates their ungodly nature. He then, in the latter part of chapter 2 and all of 3, turns his scathing attack upon the Jews, those self-righteous ones who were so critical of others and so hypocritical themselves. His tragic conclusion is "There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth,

there is none that seeketh after God" (3:10-11), and further on he says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (3:23).

So the drama of man's miserable condition is unfolded starkly. He is held in bondage by Satan. He is incapable of doing anything himself to alleviate his condition. The law, although "holy, and just, and good" (7:12) could do nothing except to illustrate the true magnitude of sin; Paul says, "But sin, that it might appear sin, worked death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful" (7:13). The law was good because it pointed out with great clarity the awfulness of sin, but it could not save man from his sin, not from sin's terminal consequence. Nowhere else, apart from the Roman letter, does Paul put the great dilemma of man's condition before us quite so bluntly and forcefully. How could a *just* God countenance His own *unjust* action, as He would have to, if He justified the ungodly? But God had to do *something* because of the promises He had made so long before, so He sent His own standard of righteousness; as Paul puts it, "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of (objective genitive, in) Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference" (3:21-22). Paul gives the reason for this action on God's part, "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (3:26). So man's condition *could* be alleviated, but what a price had to be paid!

Redemption (the Ransom)

There are two words in the Greek language which signify the meaning of the verb 'to redeem'. One is the word EXAGORAZO which denotes 'to buy out', and which has the meaning of the purchase of a slave with a view to his freedom. The other word is LUTROO, and this word is used to signify the release of someone by paying a ransom price. You will no doubt recall the words of Jesus to His disciples as recorded by Matthew, "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:27-28). So we have the idea of being *bought out* of a state of lawlessness, in which we were held in bondage by sin, and the ransom which had to be paid was the life of Christ, God's righteousness, hence Paul, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Rom. 3:24-25).

We must now bring the teaching together. Everyone was and is held in the bondage of sin. We had to be redeemed so that we could become the purchased possession of God, and the purchase price was the blood of Christ, therefore, Peter can say, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you" (1 Pet. 1:18-20). We are saved by grace through the blood of Christ, and as redemption is a necessary part of salvation, and if we are *now* through our acceptance of Christ and obedience to Him new creatures *in* Him, then I believe it logical to argue that we are *now* redeemed.

The Sealing

We must now turn our attention to the passages in the Ephesian letter. In the first few verses of this letter Paul sings the praises of God and His bestowed grace in Christ Jesus. "In whom *we have* redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (1:7). He then goes on in verse 13. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in

whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory". The One who does the sealing is God, as Paul explains in his second letter to Corinth, "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath annointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. 1:21,22). The 'earnest' is the 'down-payment' of all that God has promised, and the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts is the witness to us that God is sincere. We are authenticated as God's children, and His gift of the Holy Spirit signifies to us the pledge for the final inheritance in Christ.

Simply because there is the idea of permanency in sealing, we must never accept the idea of 'once saved, always saved', God nowhere promises that. We must never forget that the tomb of Christ was sealed, but He came out. Circumcision was also looked upon as a seal, but the fact of being physically circumcised could not stand in the place of faith in Christ. No, the earnest of the Holy Spirit in our lives is God's guarantee to us that *He* will never break *His* promises, but as for us, we must follow the exhortation of Paul in Eph. 4:30, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption". We can and do grieve the Spirit; we can even quench the Spirit, thereby demonstrating that we care nothing for the promises of God, but we must take note of the warning of the writer of the Hebrew letter, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good work of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Heb. 6:4-6).

We are redeemed now. What *is* in the future is the final inheritance in Christ. There are many blessings laid *out* for us here, but there are many more laid *up* for us in heaven; God has guaranteed that by giving us His Holy Spirit. Let us wait in faith for the realisation of those blessings.

(All questions please, to Alf Marsden, 377 Billinge Street, Hayfield, Wigan, Lancs.)

SCRIPTURE READINGS

MARCH 1985

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 3—1 Kings 17:8-24 | Matt. 9:18-34 |
| 10—Psalm 23 | Matt. 9:35 to 10:15 |
| 17—Jer. 1 | Matt. 10:16 to 11:1 |
| 24—Mal. 3 | Matt. 11:2-19 |
| 31—Gen. 18:16-33 | Matt. 11:20-30 |

APPROVED BY MIRACLES AND SIGNS

EVERY one of us should take time to read Mark 5:21-43, Luke 8:40-56 to get the fuller impression of the two wonderful ministries of Jesus, Jairus's daughter and the woman with the haemorrhage, and meditate upon them. Jesus seems to have just returned across the sea from the miracle of Gadara, and to have met a tumultuous crowd (Luke 8:45), but was

brought out by an urgent appeal from a person of some eminence with a heart-breaking appeal. His response was immediate but on the way one deeply afflicted woman, with assurance of faith in her heart by hearing of His work, dared just to touch the hem of His garment. Can we not easily understand with sympathy her desire for secrecy? She was to have a greater privilege than she dreamed of - a *word* from the Healer Himself! What the delay meant to Jairus we can only guess, and the answer to the anxiety was "only believe"! How great a wonder he was to witness. We do not know what Jesus meant by sleep as distinct from death, but obviously all the normal signs of death had been witnessed so that all the normal fussing around had begun with what sincerity is doubtful. Jesus would have none of it. Mark gives us the fullest detail including the actual words used by

Jesus. "They were amazed straightway with a great amazement" - words are hardly found to express the feelings of those present, and again Matthew reports what must have been a universal saying "It was never so seen in Isreal". The people were indeed SEEING GOD in the flesh! The incarnation which has been recently CELEBRATED we shall surely never appreciate until this mortal shall have put on immortality. The amazing fact of our being made in God's image, to have likeness to the ALMIGHTY CREATOR AND UPHOLDER, of the universe. HE is revealed to us in His word. He got up and followed the humbled RULER straightway through the pressing and crushing crowd (Matthew was there and these are his words) and HE even felt the touch of the deeply trusting woman, but "HIS garments", insisted upon HIS public acknowledgement. Casting out the mourners from Jairus's home and ensuring the privacy of His touch "He took her by the hand" (Matt., Mark and Luke) and she arose in the room with her parents and His closest disciples only. He requested privacy, asked for it - but it was impossible. He rejoined the crowd to hear the cry of the blind who by words, at least, acknowledged His Messiahship. From them He demanded a confession of faith before healing. His power was seen by friends of the demon-possessed man, and they brought him to Jesus, his possession was ended, with it his speech restored. Jesus asked for quietness but He was disobeyed - human weakness could not hold back the truth. Neither could it stop the ill-will and deliberate denials of the Pharisees. There is hardly a greater bigotry than jealousy of real power - the power of Jesus.

COMPASSION

The experience with the great multitudes which must have been a frequent one with Jesus brought much sorrow to His heart. The religious needs were not being met. The synagogues were doubtless earnestly attended and the religious leaders much respected but it was a matter of *formality*. How much was the

practical outcome of Mosaic instruction practised? Millions of Jews attended Jerusalem at the Feasts, thousands of animals were sacrificed and heaps of money were lavished upon buildings and the dress of the priests. There were doubtless those like Zacharias and Elizabeth who walked "in the ordinances of the law blameless," but the heart of the people was upon their outward observances. The preaching of the law of love and sincerity was something they were not given so that national pride, and supposed superiority over Gentiles replaced humble confession of sin, and love to neighbour; witness for instance their hatred of the Samaritans. Hence the sorrow for the multitudes and their misunderstanding of righteousness. But while Jesus bade His disciples pray for harvesters, He was anticipating the work He was planning for them, however partial it might be, it was the practise they needed for their "greater work" (John 14:12).

SENT OUT AND EMPOWERED

How privileged were the chosen messengers! They could not possibly have conceived the responsibility or life's work in which they became involved. Jesus gave them terrifying powers. How unfitted are the children of men for such. Only His majestic holiness exercised upon them as He lived and worked with them, and finally His BEQUEST of the Holy Spirit could accomplish the needed change from weak human nature to divine guidance so that He could say "He that heareth Me" and thus bestow divine authority. We humbly acknowledge our dependence upon THEIR word. They received in their first commission the practice of utter dependence upon help from heaven. Worldly props would have spoiled the experience, and so they went out as lambs among wolves. I wonder if we, today, recognise the same with certain limitations expressed by Jesus when leaving them (Luke 22:35 & 36) are really in the same position. Jesus sent seventy out as well. Read a few verses in Luke's gospel chapter 10. The appropriate

prayer is still operative, and being answered. The lambs are in need of succour in many places. Have we read of the Waldenses and Albigenses in the dark ages, and seen good and noble causes ruined by digressions and worldliness under apparently favourable conditions? How awful is the picture of the very people immeasurably blessed by the very presence of the Lord and His messengers. Observe especially the repetition involving the multitudes listening to Jesus (9:35;11:1).

THE GREATEST PROPHET

Into the horrible prison comes the news of the multitudes, the incredible casting out of demons and fantastic healings by word and touch. The work of the humble disciples and their equal powers. John's expectations were being disappointed. The ministrations of a healer among the poor evidently did not seem to indicate a scion of the house of David or restoration by a mighty Messiah. What a great defender John had in Jesus. We might well shed tears for so awful a fate but we trust the message went home to his heart, that there was no stumbling in that heroic truth-bearer, facing death for his faithfulness - death into glory! His work had been accomplished, the nation had been roused to expectation but alas! what a fickle, unresponsive generation it was. Children can be humble and teachable but how 'childish', and the wise have reward.

CONSOLATION FOR THE WILLING

Our readings have faced us with deepest disasters in human response to divine loveliness. There is the most solemn warning against careless appreciation of the highest honours offered by divine power and goodness, and conclude with perhaps the sweetest and loveliest words the Saviour uttered in the invitation and the promise. It seems practically certain that Jesus made yokes for oxen, and had thought for them. He knew burdens too. He bore the cross for us. Nothing else can relieve the burden of sin.

R. B. SCOTT

A CHURCH OF THE RIGHT KIND

DAVID KING

[This article, from *Memoir of David King* was written about 1880, but is just as applicable today.]

In order to meet the necessities of the age, a church must be thoroughly evangelical. Its mission is not to make men philosophers, although it teaches the best philosophy; nor to make scientific explorations, although it is the best friend to science; nor to organise governments, and write constitutions, although its inculcations lead to the wisest political economy. But to baulk profligacy, to dethrone superstition, to emancipate from spiritual bondage, to break in twain the prison bolts, to soothe human pain, to turn the human race on to the high pathway to heaven - this is the church's mission, and failing in this, it fails in all. It may be a bronze candlestick, but not a *golden* candlestick. But mere outward proprieties will not make a useful church. There are scores of churches where there is no discord in music, and no breach of taste in the preaching, and where the congregation, like the Amalekites that Gideon saw, sleep in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude. Splendidly executed anthem and solo roll over the cultured taste of gaily appalled auditory, and the preaching may be like the pathos of a Summerfield, or the thunderclap of a George Whitefield. Upholstery may bedeck to utter gorgeousness, and chandeliers flash upon a fashionable congregation, in which you see not one poor man's threadbare coat, and yet that church may be a ghastly sepulchre, full of dead man's bones - an ecclesiastical icehouse. I arraign and implead formality and coldness, and death, as the worst of heterodoxy.

Again, religious enterprise must be a characteristic of every church that would do its duty in our day. Invention

and discovery have quickened the world's pace. The age, no more afoot, is on wheels and wings. We rise, after a short night's sleep, and find that the world has advanced mighty leagues, the pulse of the world beats stronger, the arm of industrious achievement strikes harder, the eye of human ingenuity sees further, the heart of Christian philanthropy throbs warmer. In such a time, a torpid, lethargic, timid church, is both a farce and a folly. If it march not when God commands it to strike, if, when the mountains round about are full of horses, and chariots of fire, it shrinks back from the conflict, God will mark it for ruin. One enterprising church! How many tracts it might scatter! How many hungry mouths it might fill! How many poor churches it might help! How many lights it might kindle! How many songs it might inspire! How many criminals it might reclaim! How many souls it might save!

Oh, my brethren, the field is white to the harvest! Then, with sickles, come on and lay to the work. In this age of the world, with so many advantages, and so many incentives to work, a dead church ought to be indicated as a nuisance. There is a great work to do! In God's name do it. "Why stand ye here all the day idle?"

VALUES

TELL me the things you value most, and I can tell you what you are, and which way you are going. Do you value only the things that can be bought with money? Do you value pleasure above purity, fame more than faith, or self above service? Do you estimate the applause of the crowd above the approval of God? Do you value things because they shine and dazzle now, or do you estimate them by the way they may appear in after years? Do you realize that some experiences, duties, and obligations which may seem burdensome for the present may bring happiness and peace as you go toward the sunset? Do you know that many things that give fleeting thrills of joy now may later

"bite as a serpent, or sting like an adder?"

Young people may not value the rebuke of parents, or the advice of judicious friends, when they start down some dangerous path, but later when remorse and tears bring sad remembrance, the disillusioned ones will wish they had known more about values. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches", and "He that hateth reproof is brutish", said a wise man a long time ago (Prov. 22:1; 12:1). After this wise man had much worldly pleasure and fame, he described these things the world values so much, "vanity and vexation of spirit" (Ecc. 2:11). He learned true values the hard way, and left a record of his conclusion: "Fear God and keep His commandments for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecc. 12:13).

Parents who value any service of the church less than the same time spent in school lesson preparation are not manifesting wisdom in training their children. If education, wealth, or pleasure can be had without the sacrifice of faithfulness to the Lord and his church, well and good; but if such sacrifice is required, the cost is too great. Jesus said, "What doth it profit a man, if he gain the world and lose his soul?"

Selected

A GREAT ACHIEVEMENT

HAD it been published by a voice from heaven, that twelve poor men, taken out of boats and creeks, without any help of learning, should conquer the world by the cross, it might have been thought an illusion against all the reason of men; yet we know it was undertaken and accomplished by them. They published this doctrine in Jerusalem, and quickly spread it over the greatest part of the world. Folly outwitted wisdom and weakness overpowered strength. The conquest of the East by Alexander was not so admirable as the enterprise of these poor men. ... Charnock.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Kirkcaldy, Scotland: Since last I wrote we have had cause to rejoice in the Lord. The Lord has again given increase in that the Gospel message has been responded too and we have more brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, who have put on their Lord in baptism: Margaret Clunie on 30th October; David Carscadden on 23rd November; Derek Beavis on 25th November; Ann Birrell and John Cleave on 12th December. Please pray for all new babes in Christ that they may grow into new servants of God.

ROBERT HUGHES, Sec.

Kitwe, Zambia: December 1984/January 1985 has been a good time for us. A new congregation has been established in the bush about forty miles south of Solwezi in Zambia's Northwestern Province. This is a further breakthrough amongst the Kaonde people. Furthermore, a new preaching point is hearing the gospel at another village near Kasempa, about 180 miles along the dirt roads west of Kitwe - again amongst the Kaonde people.

In Northern Province at Chinsali (about 480 miles from Kitwe) church services have been re-commenced. Services had stopped after the departure of a short-term missionary. The major problem was to convince the Zambians to carry out the services themselves. On the Copperbelt, at Mufulira, a Youth Camp is being held. The Zambian preachers are working very hard. We were glad to have, assisting us for a month, brother John Ramsay, missionary in Zambia's Southern Province.

CHESTER WOODHALL

Manchester: The work with brother Masood is going very well. The work is

exciting and not without physical danger. I enclose an article from "The Manchester Evening News" about the rapid rise in 'House Churches' in Manchester and I hope to find out more about them. We are hoping that it is a move towards New Testament Christianity.

ALLAN ASHURST

(The newspaper article reports the great worry of the denominations over this rapid rise of 'House Churches' and that a meeting was held, attended by 200, from all denominations (except the R.C. Church) including the Bishop of Chester who launched an attack on such churches. The Bishop is to meet Mr. Goos Vedder, Senior Elder of 'The Covenant Community Church Of Manchester' which began in September and has now some 150 adults attending services. House-churches seem to have no formal organisation but meet in people's homes, hired buildings like schools - meetings being conducted informally. Nationally 'House-churches' have grown in numbers from 6000 to 18000 in two years. The movement, sometimes called 'Harvest Time' believe the existence of denominations is a mistake and that Christians should get out of them.)

(ED.)

Slamannan District, Scotland: The Annual New Year's Social took place at Slamannan Church Meeting-place and a very enjoyable time was had in meeting one-another again. After tea and uplifting congregational singing we had exhortation in song from sister May Wilson and the Dennyloanhead Male Voice Quartette. We remembered those hospitalised who would have been present otherwise and especially our bro. John McCallum having just undergone a major surgical operation. We received two excellent addresses from the two speakers Ian Davidson, Motherwell, and Jack Nisbet, Ulverston. We look forward, God willing, to our next such gathering and fellowship.

H. DAVIDSON

COMING EVENTS

The 95th Anniversary Meeting, God willing, will take place on Saturday, 30th March, 1985, at 6.30 p.m. At Oxford Street, Chapel, Brighton. Visiting Speakers: R. B. Scott

M. Taylor.

Tea will be served at 5.p.m.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Bro. Tom Nisbet has had to give up house at 9 The Butts, Haddington, and his address, until further notice, will be c/o Belhaven Hospital, Dunbar, East Lothian. Any cards, letters etc. should, therefore, be forwarded to the hospital.

Ed.

THANKS

Brother John and Sister May McCallum, through the "S.S." would like to thank all brothers and sisters in Christ for their expressions of love and kindness in 'Get-well' Cards, letters, 'phone calls, and personal visits - and for all assistance given during and after the serious operation and illness of brother John.

These have been very much appreciated and up-lifting during this trying time.

We are pleased to report that John is now slowly but steadily recovering at his home.

COMING EVENTS

CHURCH SOCIAL: The Tranent Church Social will, (D.V.) be held on Saturday, 23rd March, 1985, at 4 p.m. in the Primary School Dining Hall. The Speakers on this occasion will be:

John Geddes, Buckie

Robert Hughes, Kirkcaldy

A cordial invitation is given to attend.

J. COLGAN, Sec.

GOING HOME

One day, I'm going to leave this place,
And go across the sea,
Where Jesus, with His smiling face,
Is waiting now, for me.

He'll take my hand, and walk with me
Across the shining sand,
And gently lead me, all the way
Into His golden land.

My loved ones, there, I'll meet once
And hand in hand we'll stroll; [more,
For ever, on that lovely shore,
OUR songs of praise will roll.

Sadness and pain, no more I'll know,
My heart will be at peace,
And with a wondrous joy will glow—
When my spirit finds release!

HE who offers God second place offers
Him no place. John Ruskin

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is published monthly.

PRICES PER YEAR - POST PAID BY SURFACE MAIL

UNITED KINGDOM and COMMONWEALTH..... £5.50

CANADA & U.S.A. \$10.00

AIR MAIL please add £1.50 or \$3.00 to above surface mail rates

DISTRIBUTION AGENT & TREASURER:

JOHN K. KNELLER, 4 Glassel Park Road, Longniddry, East Lothian, EH32 0NY
Telephone: Longniddry (0875) 53212 to whom change of address should be sent.

EDITOR: JAMES R. GARDINER, 87 Main Street, Pathhead, Midlothian,
Scotland EH37 5PT. Telephone: Ford 320 527

"The Scripture Standard" is printed for the publishers by Walter Barker (Printers) Ltd.,
Langley Mill, Nottm. Tel. Langley Mill (0773) 712266