

The Scripture Standard

'What Saith the Scriptures.' (Rom. iv. 3.)

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From Rome to England,

WE have seen how the Church journeyed from Jerusalem to Rome, thus fulfilling apostolic predictions. Lord Bacon said, 'If Paul's description of the "man of sin" was published, and a reward offered for his apprehension, we would at least be justified in arresting the Pope upon suspicion.'

The Romish Church has fulfilled the predictions of prophets and apostles. She has changed 'times and laws,' instituting feasts and festivals, changing the ordinances of the Lord, and making His commands of none effect by her traditions. The attempt to 'wear out the saints of the most High' is seen in the fact that between A.D. 1471-1781, the Spanish Catholics burned thirty-two thousands of their fellow-countrymen, and sent two hundred and ninety-one thousand others to dungeons, mines, and galleys.

When, in A.D. 1517-1520, Martin Luther was dealing sledge hammer blows at the Papal system, King Henry wrote a book in defence of the Church, for which Pope Leo X. gave him the title, 'Defender of the Faith,' a title still found on the coins of the realm. But Henry, desiring a divorce from his wife, Catherine, a zealous Catholic, which the Pope refused to grant, solved the problem by throwing the Pope over, and proclaiming himself 'head of the English Church.' In 1534, Parliament confirmed this, and in 1535 the Pope excommunicated Henry, from which time the State Church of England has had a separate existence, though retaining most of the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome.

The following from the pen of Bro. David King (in his day one of the most able defenders of New Testament Christianity) shows many points of similarity between the Church of England and the Church of Rome:—

1. Both were constituted by fallible men, and the Bible is not the final standard of appeal in either of them.

2. Both acknowledge a visible human head, the Pope in the one; the reigning monarch in the other.

3. Both are supported by coercive taxation—tithes, dues, and parliamentary grants.

4. Both have forms of prayer, which the congregations cannot alter; also articles of faith of human composition.

4. Both have long grades of officers, with titles and powers unknown to the New Testament—Archbishops, Lord Bishops, Chancellors, Prebendaries, Canons, Deans, Rectors, Vicars, and others too numerous to name.

6. Both falsely pretend to supernatural powers. The bishops claim to confer the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands; and the clergy generally pretend to absolve from sins.

7. Both practise sprinkling for baptism, and thus claim to do by the authority of the Lord what He never authorised to be done.

8. Both falsely declare that by the application of water to babes they make them regenerate and heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven.

9. Both have manifested a cruel and persecuting spirit, inflicting fines, imprisonment, and death.

10. Both set up a human and unauthorised priesthood.

11. Both delight in pomp, ceremony, and theatrical devices, calculated to mislead the ignorant.

12. Both prefer almost exclusive claims to ministerial efficiency, not on the ground of superior learning or purity, but from the superstitions and unsupported notion of apostolic succession.

13. Both enjoin fasts and feasts, command to abstain from meats, and enjoin days to be religiously observed in honour of so-called saints, some of whom were destitute of even ordinary virtues.

In the foregoing, and in as many more particulars, the State Church and the Church of Rome are alike; and both Churches, in these and numerous other respects, *are unlike the Church of God.*

The title, 'Head of the Church,' assumed by Henry VIII., was altered during the reign of Queen Elizabeth to 'Supreme Governor of the Church,' which is still claimed for the reigning monarch.

That the English Church is completely under State control was seen in the attempt, made in 1927-1928, to get a revised Prayer Book sanctioned by parliament. This, although revised by the bishops, accepted by convocations and the Church Assembly, was twice rejected by the House of Commons.

This was an attempt to weaken the Protestant position, and to make legal the unlawful Romish practices of many bishops and clergy.

The Lord Jesus is the sole Head and the only lawgiver for His Church, and possesses all authority in heaven and on earth.' Mr. G. W. Russell, a leading English Churchman, said, 'We believe that the subjection of the Church to the State is an invasion of the Sovereign Rights of the Lord Jesus as King of the Universal Church and Master in His own house.' As to compulsory support, the story of resistance by conscientious objectors to Church rates, tithes, and grants for religious education, who suffered imprisonment and the 'spoiling of their goods,' rather than pay for the

support of a religion which they believed to be unscriptural, bears abundant and eloquent testimony. Article VI. of the Church of England declares that 'Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatever is not read therein, nor may be proved - thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, to be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.'

If that Article was accepted and acted upon, the English State Church, and every other sectarian body, as at present constituted, would cease to exist.

That learned and eloquent Churchman, Dean Farrar, said, 'We must return, not to the corrupted fifth and sixth centuries, not to priestcraft and ritualism, but to the first century and to primitive Christianity, if we would, have 'beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.'

To plead for that return is the aim of *The Scripture Standard.* EDITOR.

'Have Faith in God.'

RETURNING home from Sunday School in an open car was a small boy, greatly pleased with a picture card bearing the text, 'Have faith in God.' The precious card slipped from his fingers into the road, causing him to cry in distress, 'I've lost my faith in God! Stop the 'car!' The good-natured conductor got the car stopped, the card was regained, while the passengers smiled. One of these remarked on 'the blessed innocence of childhood.' Another, more thoughtful, said, 'Oh, that we grown-ups would call a halt when we find ourselves rushing along a road where we are in grave danger of leaving our faith in God behind.'

Is not this the root of all the trouble in Christendom to-day, the cause of lethargy and looseness, lack of progress, and departures from the faith? It may seem presumptuous, but we do suggest, that many professing

Christians do not really believe in God.

'He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.' (Heb. xi. 6). This surely means more than mere belief in the existence of God. It implies belief in Him, not as a God of our own conception, brought down to man's level, but as revealed in the Bible, an Infinite God.

Such a belief in God involves belief in His Word. Asked by a teacher how I would answer a boy who said he did not believe the Bible narrative about the walls of Jericho falling down flat, I replied that I was more concerned about the person who first planted the seed of doubt in the boy's mind. If the boy had been taught rightly about God, such a doubt would never have arisen in his mind.

The belief that the Bible is the Divine revelation of God ought to be a settled question with every Christian, but, sad to say, we often hear Christians (not so much men of the world) cast-

ing doubt on that Word. 'Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.' (Ps cxix. 89). If settled in heaven, why should it not be settled by Christians on earth? There are things difficult to comprehend, but with a true conception of God the Bible becomes much easier to understand.

Further, God has revealed sufficient of Himself to enable us to believe that which our finite minds cannot grasp. The inspired Paul said, 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!' Is it any wonder that when Paul thus felt, that there are things beyond us? Unbelief was the sin of God's ancient people; and Christians to-day need the warning of the writer to the Hebrews: 'Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.' Rather let us cry, 'Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.'

WALTER B. JEPSON.

Raccoon John Smith His Noble Work

AMONG the innumerable John Smiths, known or unknown to history, one is of particular interest to those familiar and sympathetic with the New Testament Restoration Movement. Closely associated with the Campbells, Barton Stone, and Walter Scott, Raccoon John Smith—so called because his early years were passed where raccoons abounded and were hunted—was one of the most successful pioneer preachers of the Movement in America. Possessed of no special education, with no college experience, he was the instrument of a wonderful work in advancing New Testament principles and winning souls according to apostolic example.

The recent anniversary of his birth, a century-and-a-half ago, October 15th, 1784, recalls for us to-day inspiring lessons from his noble, consecrated career,

Reared in an ultra-Calvinistic environment, after prolonged perplexity of soul whether he was of the elect or non-elect, he confessed the Saviour and was baptized in early manhood. Soon the yearning for service gripped him, and ere long he developed into a proclaimer of exceptional power. He served Churches and groups of the community with great acceptance, sometimes remunerated, often not. His voice was such that dwellers in the uplands stated that they could hear him at a distance of one to two miles. Suddenly occurred a terrible catastrophe: his homestead was destroyed by fire, his two older children were burned to death, and his wife succumbed to the shock a few hours later. John himself lay for months prostrate with fever, his life long in the balance. Recovering, he recommenced his preaching activities.

Eventually, he met Alexander Campbell, and, finding his teachings to coincide with his own investigations of Holy Writ, he identified himself with the new movement for a return to primitive Christianity. Thenceforth, he gave time, talent and substance unstintingly to propagation of New Testament truth, devoting himself to the work, in addition to farm duties. God richly blessed his single-minded, whole-souled endeavours in gaining souls, planting Churches, and resolutely maintaining apostolic principles and practices. For more than forty years, he continued his labours thus. He died in 1868.

In middle age and advanced years, John Smith was pre-eminently a man of the Word, studyiflg, searching, and unreservedly regarding it as the sole authority in Divine worship and service. After the tragic death of his little ones, his mind revolted at the Calvinistic teaching of unconditional election and reprobation, entailing the possibility that his innocent children were lost for ever. 'I am in the dark,' he said. Upon his knees, he vowed to search the Scriptures until the matter was clear to him. He began at once, spending his nights so for months, not unfrequently continuing until daybreak.

As a child, he sat at the feet of the sacred writers. In 1832, he declared that, for years past, he had stood for the ancient Gospel and order of things as presented in the Book. From this he could not depart for any man or set of men in the wide world. 'While for the sake of peace and Christian union, I have long since waived the public maintenance of any speculation I may hold, yet not one Gospel fact, commandment, or promise will I surrender for the world.' We are reminded of Wycliffe's words: 'Though there were a hundred popes, and all the friars made cardinals, we must withhold our conference unless so far as they are founded on Holy Scripture.' Entreated by highly-positioned dignitaries to withdraw his statements against papal errors, Luther declared

his conscience to be 'chained up with the Holy Scriptures.'

John Smith possessed the true martyr spirit, prepared to risk and sacrifice all for the truth. When duty demanded that he should relinquish his previous unscriptural tenets, and accept and advocate New Testament practices, he counted the cost, the losses almost certain to be entailed. Former friends would shun and ostracise him, and opposition and, perhaps, fierce persecution and hatred be encountered. Penury and poverty faced him. Despite all, whatever the worldly consequences, heeding the dictates of conscience, he 'must obey God rather than men.' His friends, trying to dissuade him, urged: 'Your more influential brethren will abandon you, you will get nothing for your preaching, your debts will press you to the earth, and your farm and house must eventually be given up.' Nobly, he replied, 'Conscience is an article I have never yet brought into the market, but if I should offer it for sale, Montgomery County, with all its lands and houses, would not be enough to buy it, much less that farm of one hundred acres.'

His passion for souls and devotedness in other respects to the Master's work knew few bounds, preaching, teaching, and frequently pleading the Saviour's claims from house to house. Often, after a busy day thus or in toil on the farm, he used part of the night answering questions and meeting objections raised by his public discourses, and in helping enquirers to full decision. His labours were almost incredible. During the five years 1825 to 1830, in which he laid the foundation of the Restoration Movement in Kentucky, he received no remuneration or recompense whatever, except remission of a small indebtedness by a merchant in the vicinity. His Bible investigations engaged him not unfrequently long past midnight, and when his wife remonstrated, for his health's sake, he explained that, to give forth truth, he must be seeking constantly for further understanding of the truth himself.

To set him free completely for Gospel efforts, his heroic wife, undertook the farm management, for lengthy periods, entirely herself.

Though rugged in some ways, and imperfectly educated generally, Smith was a great preacher, thoroughly conversant with the Word, convincing by his keen logical reasoning, and sometimes moving audiences to tears by the fervency and eloquence of his descriptions and appeals. His opening remarks on a certain occasion showed a further trait of his character, when, through shortness of notice, only thirty persons attended his meeting: 'I am rather a singular sort of a man. One thing in which I differ from most preachers is, that on occasions like this when very few come out, I preach my very best sermons; whereas, others keep theirs back for

big meetings, associations and the like. This I think, is not right; I always preach as well as I can.'

The total number of converts he was privileged to obtain is not known, but within one period of six months he reported seven hundred conversions and five new Churches organised. He had similar successes at other times. Thousands of converts were secured, and scores of Churches established in Kentucky and adjoining areas, and of these a large proportion were, under Divine direction, due to John Smith's labours. 'Unlearned in books, his mind-drew all its nourishment from the Book of books, and in his love and knowledge of the Scriptures lay the foundation of all his greatness, the secret of his influence and his power.'

CHARLES BAILEY.

Is Baptism of Faith?

THE SCRIPTURES reveal two widely different ways in which man could be acceptable to God. They stand in strong contrast:

Old Covenant	New Covenant
Moses—Sinai	Christ—Zion
Law—letter	Grace—Spirit
Ministration of	Gospel of
Death	Grace
Works	Faith
Deeds of the	Obedience of
Law	Faith

The first required perfect obedience. It supposes the position where man has not broken the law—has not sinned, and does not require forgiveness. We read, 'He is a debtor to do the whole law.' Transgression brought death, and the law could not give life. By this way, no man has ever been just before God; Men sin, and their highest obedience to law is without atoning merit. It is therefore concluded that, as no man has been justified by the deeds of the law, all whom God has accepted as righteous since the beginning of the world

were received by grace, and in virtue of the second or new Covenant.

It is written, 'Without faith it is impossible to please God,' so it further follows that, in every case, salvation must be through faith, besides being by grace. When the Apostle said to the Ephesians, 'By grace are ye saved through faith,' he referred not to what was peculiar to their case, but what applied to all in every place and in all times, whom God has received. Under the New Covenant, God by His grace, through the atoning death of Jesus Christ, can forgive all who believe.

Commandments were given under both Covenants. Those of the Old show man what he must do if by his own merit he is to stand guiltless before God. Those of the New, except the command to the world to believe on Christ, are for those who have learned that redemption is through the blood of Christ, and are given to test and encourage our faith in God, and to show our love to Him. Willing obedience to (the 'law of the spirit

of life in Christ Jesus' manifests faith and love, such as under the Gospel are reckoned for righteousness, and make us possessors and heirs of the blessings purchased on Calvary.

Previous to Pentecost, in anticipation of Christ's sacrifice, God often spoke to individuals quite apart from the Law. During His personal ministry, Jesus dealt with individuals. These personal instructions have no general application to conduct now. The test of Abraham to offer up Isaac was suited to the circumstances. The command given to Naaman met his case. When Jesus said to the rich young man, 'Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor,' He was not laying down a rule for all men, and all time, but only for present personal application. We cannot claim, therefore, that the promise made, under very peculiar circumstances, to the thief on the cross, must also be for us. While we do not receive specific guidance from incidents occurring previous to the resurrection of Jesus, yet they are of profit by way of figure and admonition. Each case manifested whether living faith was present or not.

Since the enthronement of the Lord in heaven, and the opening of the Kingdom at Pentecost, all come under His general commands and promises given through His Apostles. These commands for all the world and every creature, are in keeping with the reign of grace, and adapted to a life of faith. Many instructions, especially the moral, are common to, and suitable for, both Covenants, but it pleased God to entirely annul the old Law and to re-enact in the New Covenant those standing good for both dispensations. In the New Testament, therefore, we have all things the Lord requires, comprehending commands new and old. In Hebrews vii. 12, we read, 'For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.'

Some say, if we are saved by grace, salvation must be without conditions, but the Scriptures, while affirming

that it is by grace, name conditions, so such reasoning cannot be sound. Naaman knew that he was cleansed by the favour and power of God, and also that this blessing came when he complied with the conditions stated by the prophet of God. He would never conceive his dipping to be a work, of merit, or the water of Jordan the, source of his salvation from leprosy. The man whose eyes Jesus anointed with clay received his sight when he washed at the pool. The washing was not a cure in itself, but it brought him to where Jesus, in His mercy, saw fit to give him more joy of life.

That baptism is of faith, and not, of the law, not a work of merit, is made clear in Titus iii. 5, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.' It is not the washings of the Law, or of John the Baptist, that are referred to. but the washing associated with the new life (regeneration), to which we are begotten through the Gospel. The 'bath of regeneration' (baptism) is contrasted with 'works of righteousness.' Many, like the Jews, have great confidence in their 'works of righteousness,' and, without having definitely associated themselves with Jesus, or staked their claim to pardon through the Cross, hope to enter into heaven. They have a 'zeal of God, but not according to knowledge,' and 'seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.' This Scripture shows we are not assured of salvation in that manner. In it, baptism and renewing of the Holy Spirit, on the one side, are declared to save, and works of righteousness are set right opposite, as things that do not save. Lord Rosebury said, 'Scotsmen seemed to have as much faith as would damn them, but not sufficient to save them.' They do not decide for Christ in the God-given way. We fail to understand why, when passages which join bap-

tism with forgiveness are quoted, there should be any suggestion that salvation is thereby made of works, or that God does not require obedience to the initial test He has placed at the threshold of a life of faith.

Calvinism in part remains in our land, but as a rule all religious bodies ask for a decision in some form, in order to come to Christ. Decision for Christ implies willingness to follow Him. In this, the elements of a covenant are acknowledged—a committal to a life of obedience on one side, and the gift of salvation on the other, are understood. Logically, a life of obedience becomes a condition of salvation, not of receiving, but of the possession being maintained. The decision brings the possession, and the fulfilling thereof retains it. This does not cause doubt, for we can be as certain that we are living to Christ as that we decided for Him and gave our pledge to follow Him.

To ask for a decision for Christ in any form is nearer to the New Testament way of conversion than is the teaching that all that is required is to accept of the salvation. The latter is a contracted view of Christ, seeing only the atonement, while the former not only views Calvary, but the resurrection, and the glory of the Throne on High. Peter, the Apostle, said, 'God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.'

A covenant is only sealed and held binding, if the terms stated by the disposer of the benefits are accepted and fulfilled. God offers a gift to every creature, and He has stated His terms. The Lord's great commission for the world, and the words of the Apostle at Pentecost, instruct us as to what is required of man. God has not promised to accept our faith on the strength of what we judge is a proper belief. He sets the test. Abraham's faith was tried. The angel stayed the knife, and said, 'Now I know that thou fearest God,' and the blessing followed as the angel said, 'Because thou hast obeyed my voice.' By an act of faith, Abraham received

blessings and promises, and by an act of faith you may come to Christ in whom is salvation. The conditions are, 'He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved.' Let us not waver through a weak, dead faith.

You ask, what about the good people who have not been baptised? Let me say that God only asks man to judge by the tests He has specified, and if we go beyond we may be entering in where angels fear to tread. If you know the will of God and refuse to obey, then the peril of your position is given in no uncertain words by Him who loves you.

The pious dead will come before the court on whose bench humanity has no standing, but where unerring Divine judgment will discriminate.

JOHN ANDERSON.

From the Treasurer.

ONCE AGAIN, I must thank you for steady support during the past month. Subscriptions to the Gift Fund are still coming in, and these are very welcome, bearing in mind possible developments. A good few pre-payments have been received, and our magazine agents are doing splendidly, and quite a number have increased their orders for the March issue.

The February issue has been received with enthusiasm, and many requests for extra copies have been received. I am now hearing from readers over seas, and their letters are in the same strain of appreciation and thanksgiving.

Our circulation for March will be up by fifty per cent, over what we calculated upon at the beginning, and our warmest thanks are due for such loyal support and interest.

Just two points. Will those who write to the Editor or myself, on any matter calling for a reply, please enclose stamped addressed envelope, when possible? The Editor and I have written some 250 letters already in connection with the S.S. No light task, in addition to other detail work and earning our daily bread. Then again, should any agent or reader not receive copies by the end of the month, please send a card to me. Every care is taken in despatch, but even then some may get missed. A. L. FRITH.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Matrer sent for insertion in S.S. should be written on one side of the paper only.

Changes in British Journalism.

(From 'Christian Standard,' U.S.A.)

In Mr. John McCartney's letter in your issue of January 5th, he mentions that a new magazine, called *The Scripture Standard*, was to be published by certain British brethren. The first number of this magazine is now before me. It consists of sixteen pages, neatly printed. Brethren in the United States are not well informed about conditions in the British Isles. Those desiring to be better informed should subscribe for this monthly. The price is 60 cents per year, and orders should be sent to A. L. Frith, 10, Poulton Street, Fleetwood, Lancashire, England.'

J. STRAITON, FORT WORTH, TEXAS.

[Bro. Straiton is well known to many on this side of the Atlantic as a loyal advocate of the Restoration plea. We thank him for the above notice].

Notes on Hebrews.

THE thoughts that occupy the concluding verses of chapter two lead the writer to the High Priesthood of Jesus, but, after mere mention of this, he passes to other subjects till, in chapter iv. 14, he deals with the subject. His thoughts are occupied meanwhile with the failure of the people under Moses. His faithfulness did not guarantee the obedience of the people he led, and the writer quotes Psalm xciv. as evidence of their failure. It is noteworthy that here again the passage is attributed to the Holy Spirit, while later a portion of the passage is again quoted, with the preface, 'Saying in David.' David is not credited as the author, but the Holy Spirit, who spoke in, and through, him.

The R.V., in verses 18-19, brings out an important distinction between the Greek words that are in the A.V. translated, 'believed not,' and 'unbelief.' The more correct rendering is, 'To whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that were disobedient? And we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.' Unbelief and disobedience are therefore synonymous terms, or so closely related as to be equivalent. They are as inseparably linked as are belief and obed-

ience. Where obedience does not result from belief, then unbelief is obvious.

Good news of rest in Canaan was of little profit to the Israelites, and their disastrous failure leads the Holy Spirit to warn a later age, and through them also to admonish us, as to the possibility of failure to reach that rest which remains for the people of God.

The Word of God is no dead letter. It is instinct with life, and will not return unfulfilled to Him who gave it. Christians have a two-fold rest from sin; yet are on trial for that final rest, which is for those who do not, through an evil heart of unbelief, fall away from the living God j.s.

Bible Readings.

OLD TESTAMENT.

Balaam is one of the most mystifying O.T. characters—a prophet, yet so greedy—that he is prepared to betray God's people. Balak desired that a curse be pronounced, but the prophet is controlled by the Spirit of God to speak a blessing. Balak's anger is understandable.

What of verbal inspiration here? The words the prophet would fain have uttered are suppressed; and his explanation that even if Balak offered him a house full of gold he CANNOT do otherwise than commanded by the Lord, exhibits a forcible example of speaking as he was 'moved by the Holy Spirit.'

Balaam, however, subsequently showed Balak how that by means of his beautiful young women, he could betray the young men of Israel and bring God's wrath on them. Balaam's fate and the reason of it are found in Num. xxxi. 8 and 16.

The mixed multitude Ex 38 Who the Israelites seem to have been the chief complainers of the lack in the wilderness, of the comforts of Egypt, and their scorn of the manna which God provided. Bdelium probably was pearls.

The mixed multitude may not have endured the slavery in Egypt, and therefore knew nothing of the hardships. God's anger against the people's ingratitude raises Moses' displeasure. Little wonder that he was almost overwhelmed with the burden of leading and controlling this unruly people; but with what tenderness does the Lord deal with him; distribute the work among others; and give a promise of flesh meat for the people.

Ex xvi, Soon after leaving Egypt did deep resentment against Moses and Aaron arise in the hearts of the people. - Forgetful of their degradation in Egypt, they thought only of the food they had enjoyed there.

God makes provision by the miraculous 'rain' of manna. Nothing seemed more unlikely to happen in a desert; but the Lord who redeemed, if 'strong to smite, is also strong to save.' Here was communistic, gathering and distribution (see 2 Cor. viii. 15). No hoarding was permitted, and on the Sabbath day none should be gathered. A portion of the manna was preserved in the Ark of the Covenant as a memorial to future generations.

Ps lxxl I Whatever historical association may have called forth this psalm, it recalled all the

wondrous deeds by which God selected, protected, encouraged and legislated for His people Israel. Shall we not realise that His care is over all His people to-day; and that if He provided manna for His ancient people, He has granted greater, manna from heaven in the gift of Jesus Christ, our Saviour?

Psalms xxiii The beauty of this short Psalm gripped the

imagination in all the ages since it was penned. We find reflections of it in the writings of the Apostles Peter, John and Paul. Because the Lord is our Guide, Helper and Shepherd, there is no want to them that

fear Him—no want of rest, refreshment, guidance, company and comfort in sickness, blessing, mercy and goodness in life and an everlasting habitation.

NEW TESTAMENT.

John v opening verse is finely

2A-41' illustrated in Heb. v. 8-9, and the 'hearing' of the former is equivalent to the 'obeying' in the latter. The 25th verse refers to the spiritually 'dead' in view of what is said in 28-29, where the literally dead rise to be judged. All life springs from previous life, and the Saviour recognizes this principle. That the Pharisees remembered His words of 31V. can be seen in chapter viii. 13-14. The words 'of myself appear to mean 'alone,' in view of the argument based on the witness of John the Baptist (33V.), Moses (46V.), God (37V.), His works (36V.), and the Scriptures (39V.) How true are the words of 44V., when it is borne in mind that over sixty sham Messiahs deluded the people.

John This chapter' contains a great miracle, a great enthusiasm,

a great storm, a great sermon, a great apostacy, and a great trial of faith and fidelity.'

The feeding of the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes is an outstanding miracle, recorded by all the Gospel writers. Many of the crowd were no doubt, making their way south to the Passover at Jerusalem—a time at which the grass would be green (Mark vi. 39). All were satisfied; and their desire to make Him king can be understood, when they realized the power and goodness of the Saviour, as also that they should have said He was the long-expected prophet.

16-40'

when the shadows began to fall, the

disciples set sail for the western side, when the great storm arose. Matthew's account is more full of the coming of the Saviour on the waters,

and of the trial of Peter's faith. With Jesus in the boat, the wind ceased and immediately they reached the eastern shore of Lake Galilee. The wonder of the crowd to find Jesus there, although He had not accompanied the disciples, broke forth once more. The Lord saw through the curiosity and self-seeking of those more interested in the loaves and fishes. In reply to the question (28V.) Jesus makes a wonderful declaration, 'This is the work of God [not a work that God does, but which they had to do] that ye believe on him whom He hath sent.' Faith then is a work! The Saviour turns away the thoughts of the crowd from the perishable, to the life-giving bread.

John There were murmurings at the 6 1-7 seeming extravagance of His claims. How could He have come down from heaven? Jesus, in reply, says, 'no man can come to me except the Father . . . draw him, and I will raise him at the last day.' Astounding! The drawing is the effect of their being taught of God. He again contrasts the bread (even that manna which God rained down in the wilderness) and the bread everlasting; and emphasizes that only by His death shall man live for ever. Note that the resurrection is at the *last* day; and His ascension to heaven would be the demonstration to many of them of the truth of his statements—which are said to be spiritually discerned and understood.

John 10 The picture seems to be 1-21. drawn from communal sheep folds—surrounded by walls and under the charge of a porter; each shepherd calling out his own sheep.

The Pharisees claimed to be Shepherds of Israel—but the sheep did not hear them. In other words, they had never influenced the people for God. Jesus is the Shepherd in relation to the flock, and the Door in relation to the fold. The thieves' purpose is to kill and destroy—Jesus

comes to give life—abundant life. Wonder of wonders! the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. No such Shepherd had ever appeared before—or since.

'Other sheep' not of this fold, refers to Gentiles and those afar off, who, being brought nigh, should become one fold—one Shepherd. Despite the many races, there is the unity of the fold (the one body of Eph. iv. 4). The voluntary nature of laying down his life for the sheep is asserted. He is not compelled, but love for the sheep constrained him.

Nyasaland, Central Africa.

THE work is increasing, schools have to be maintained, materials provided, and teachers supported. Bro. Frederick, writing on Dec. 24th, 1934, said, 'I thank you for the new magazine which will publish Nyasaland work. I am pleased and thank the brethren. I again bring before your notice the work and need of the school. I shall open it in February, 1935. Please remember the need of the teachers who seek your help. During the first week in January, I am going to Ncheu district, to see the new place which has been approved by the Government. This is the prayer-house at Bunyenga's village, which is near the village of Bro. Joshua Choma. On Dec. 23rd, twenty-two converts were baptized before more than three hundred people. God is blessing the work near and far. Some of these converts came distances of fifteen to twenty miles, crossing big streams to get there.'

Brethren, here is work calling for help, financial help. I have exhausted the funds sent me, and much more could be satisfactorily used there, with good returns for the sowing. Contributions should be sent as before to W. M. KEMPSTER, 36 Kingsley Road, Bedford.

Coming Events.

A Conference of those pleading for Christianity as at the beginning will be held (D.V.) in the Meeting House, Albert Street, Newtown, Wigan, on Saturday April 20th, 1935. Afternoon meeting at 3. Tea at 4 o'clock. Collection at tables. Evening meeting at 6.45. Chairman, Bro. Ed. Price (Wigan). Speakers, Bren. G. H. Hudson (Birmingham) George Hassell (Leicester), and W. Hoyle (Liversedge). All members of Churches of Christ are invited.

News.

Bathgate—The Church rejoices in the addition of five to their number, two have been restored, and three have obeyed the Lord in His own appointed way, being baptized at Armadale on the 24th January. They were received into the Church on Lord's Day, 27th. All are young, and we trust they may become useful in the service of the Church, and remain faithful to their Master.

. C. FLEMING.

Birmingham, Summer Lane—Since last report, we have had further cause for rejoicing in seeing other precious souls won for the Master. Brother Entwistle continued his faithful work among us, doing splendid service at the weeknight gatherings and in the young men's Bible class. In the class, he dealt with such subjects as 'The Inspiration of the Bible,' which proved of great value to those who heard him. At a special meeting for parents of scholars, held on Tuesday evening, 29th January, at the close of Bro. Entwistle's address, Mrs. F. M. Farnsworth made the good confession and was baptized on 31st. On 3rd Feb., she was received into fellowship along with Ellen Ricketts, a scholar who was immersed on January 27. Our Brother J. Scouller, of Glasgow, followed, and served us well for two Lord's Days. At the close of his address on 3rd February, when he made the appeal, two women came forward and made the good confession. One of these Mrs. G. Cartwright, was baptised on the 7th, and at that meeting another one, Mrs. Gladys Davis came forward desiring immersion, and she was buried with her Lord on Lord's Day, 10th. At that meeting Bro. Scouller made a very telling appeal, and while we sang our closing hymn two youths from the school came forward and made the confession. - These were joined by a third, so that, God willing, next Lord's Day evening we shall immerse Harry Linford, Leonard Drew, Dennis Lister and Mrs. A. E. Williams, who confessed her faith in Christ Jesus on 3rd February. So the Lord continues to own and bless the work of His labours, and we are encouraged.

FRED C. DAY.

Blackpool—Since the new year came in we have been well served by Bren. Buckle, Pritt and Slater Wilson, of Blackburn, and Edward Ellis, of Liverpool. Despite much influenza, there have been good meetings,

and the cause in Blackpool is steadily growing.

On Wednesday, February 13th, we had the joy of hearing the confession, and witnessing the immersion of a young man, Reginald Wrest, lately come to reside in Blackpool.

There was a meeting larger than the church membership, and it was an inspiring service. Bro. and Sis. Scouller came during the evening, and for some days Bro. Scouller will labour with us. Prayer meetings have been held nightly, good times experienced, the spirit of expectancy and revival is in the air.

There will be meetings nightly, open air witness, press notices that cannot escape notice, and house to house canvass. Our desire and prayer is that there may be showers of blessing, and much joy in harvest.

Bro. Wrest was received into fellowship on Lord's Day, February 17th. He was given the right hand of fellowship by Bro. L. Ives, who spoke with deep feeling. Our hearts were made glad in receiving Bro. Edward Bannister, now resident in Blackpool, but formerly of Wigan. He was in fellowship there at Albert Street for many years, and was earnest for the Master. We rejoice in his return. Another member, Sis. N. Marsland, after a few years in Morecambe, has returned, and was warmly welcomed. The morning service on this occasion was most inspiring, all but five of the membership were present. Some forty gathered around the Table, including visitors. Bro. Scouller spoke to great effect.

A. L. F.

Doncaster—A very inspiring meeting followed the Church Annual Tea, at Doncaster, on Thursday, January 17th.

Bro. E. W. Jepson presided, and in a very helpful way reminded us of our responsibilities as Disciples of Christ, and urged us, in view of the spiritual hunger around us to 'Give ye them to eat.'

Bro. J. Holmes gave a most powerful yet comforting and encouraging address based on the promise 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee : because he trusteth in thee' (Isa. xxvi., 3-4). The theme suited the speaker, and in one of the most impressive and moving addresses we have listened to, he appealed to us to trust in the Lord all our days, for He is the 'Rock of Ages.'

Bro. Robt. Macdonald followed with a very practical and forceful message, exhorting us to measure ourselves by the standard of Jesus our Lord, and in a most capable way he completed a very fine meeting. A good spirit prevailed throughout, we felt the joy of Christian fellowship, and rejoiced that we were privileged to have contact with Brethren whose love for the Lord and His Word was so great, and whose desire for all was that we might glorify God in our lives..

J. GARNETT.

Iford, Essex—We rejoice in the addition of five new members. On January 13th, a lady recently returned from Canada, for many years an earnest believer, was immersed into Christ. The Lord's Day following, this lady and her husband were joyfully received by the Church at the Lord's Table. After their experience of the confusion of sectarianism, they gratefully acknowledge the simplicity and beauty of the New Testament Faith.

On February 10th, we witnessed the good confession and baptism of three young people, two of them daughters of recent members, and one a younger brother of one of our brethren. The Meeting House was filled to its capacity, and an encouraging service was held.,
c. w. ROBINSON.

Pennyveine, Dalmellington, Ayresshire—Since making our home here we have met to break bread each Lord's Day, and have had many opportunities of speaking at meetings in the district. We hold a Bible Class each Thursday evening in our home. We rejoice that the Lord has been with us and has blessed our humble efforts.

Two, one an elder of the Church of Scotland, having learned 'the way of God more perfectly,' were baptised during January; and now meet with us. So there are four each Lord's Day gathered to remember Him. Another has decided to obey the Lord, and (D.V.) will be immersed and meeting with us before this report appears. These decisions have led to much questioning and discussion, and we may try later to tell of these. 'Brethren pray for us' that the seed sown, interest manifested, and opposition aroused in some quarters, may all turn out unto the furtherance of the truth. We meet at 12.30 on Lord's Days, and at 6.30 on Thursdays.

Later—Six confessions and baptisms on Feb. 17th. The little company now numbers ten. Praise the Lord.
w. STEELE.

Slamannan—The combined Church and School Social was held on February 16th, the Meeting Hall being well filled. Bro. W. Hunter occupied the chair. A number of songs and recitations were given by scholars and adults. Addresses were given by Bren. D. Morgan (Fife), E. Walker (Edinburgh), and W. Crosthwaite.

Obituary.

Bathgate—We are sorry to record the death of our esteemed and dearly beloved Bro. Williamson at the age of fifty-five years. He had been connected with the Church here since boyhood, and had always taken a prominent part in the life of the Church, not only in Bathgate, but throughout the Slamannan district. We shall miss him very much, for our brother was always 'ready to every good wrk'; an able speaker, sympathetic, with good judgment, and sound common-sense. He has left behind him a memory which we shall not readily forget. He was laid to rest

in Bathgate Cemetery in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection. Bro. Crosthwaite conducted the services at the house and the Cemetery. We commend the sorrowing widow and family to our kind heavenly Father, and pray that He may sustain them in their very great loss.

C. FLEMING.

[Bro. Williamson was among those who welcomed us to the Slamannan District ten and a half years ago; and he has been a loyal supporter of our work. A faithful comrade has fallen in the fight, and we are all the poorer for his departure.—ED. J.]

Burnley—We deeply regret to record the passing of Bro. George Miller, at the age of eighty-four years. He had passed the allotted span before identifying himself with Christ in the appointed way. He bore patiently for years a gradual decline in health. It was the writer's privilege, along with other brethren, to minister to him during the time he was compelled to keep his bed. The interment took place on February 4th, Bro. T. H. Haynes conducting the services at the home and the graveside. To the sorrowing family we tender our sympathy, and commend them to the great Comforter.

c. s. SLATER.

Glasgow—Bro. Alexander Stevens, seventy-nine years of age, departed this life on 10th February and was buried at Bo'ness. Our brother was originally in the Church at Bo'ness, but over twenty years ago he removed to Glasgow and was an earnest member of Henrietta Street Church. Those left to mourn we commend to their heavenly Father. The service at Glasgow was taken part in by Bren. A. Gardner and Anderson, and by Bro. Crosthwaite at the grave. J. A.

Hastings—Sister E. J. Smith, departed this life on January 31st, in the seventy-fourth year of her age. Immersed at College Street, Chelsea, she was transferred to Hastings in 1886, and remained in faithful fellowship until her death. Our sister held the things of this life with a light hand, and gave to the Lord's cause generously according to her means. Two years ago she responded to a call of duty and returned to her home, Ashford, Kent, from whence she travelled on Lord's days in all weathers to Hastings for the Breaking of Bread, a distance of twenty-six miles, until the last six weeks of her life. So it can be truly said of her that she was 'faithful until death.' 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.'

JOHN HILL.

Wigan, Albert Street—With deep regret we record the passing away of our Sister Breakell, the wife of our Bro. John Breakell, at the early age of thirty-one years. She had been a consistent attender at our Lord's Day Meetings, both Church and School, when health permitted. She was laid to rest on Saturday, January 19th, Bro. W. Lister conducting the service. Our deepest sympathy goes out to our Bro. John Breakell and his son in their sad bereavement.
w. s.