

# *The* **SCRIPTURE STANDARD**

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

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## **Talks on the Tabernacle.**

### **Introduction**

Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary' (Hebrews 9:1)

THAT statement makes clear that the tabernacle and its services belonged to the covenant God made with His ancient people, Israel.

In our issue of April last we wrote of the two covenants (agreements) made between God and His people.

It would be a considerable help to the better understanding of the scriptures if we continually kept in mind that all God's promises to the Jews were conditioned on their obedience to His Word. When they were brought out of Egypt, God said: 'Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me (kingdom of priests, and an holy nation . . . And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do' (Exodus 19:5-7). they broke that covenant, and continued not in it, and God made a new and different covenant, making the first one old, obsolete (Jeremiah 1-34, Hebrews 8:8-13). 'The law (old covenant) was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ' (John 1:17).

As Christians, we are under a new and better covenant. We are under, law not to Moses, but to Jesus only, and the Apostles He chose and inspired,

to whose testimony and teaching we are indebted for all we know of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **The Old Covenant was a Primary Stage**

Paul shows clearly, in his epistle to the Galatians, that those under the old covenant were in a state of childhood and bondage. The was our schoolmaster (tutor-slave) to bring us unto Christ.' As

children at school begin in a primary department and are led on to higher ards, so God, in that primitive age, by types and shadows sought to re His people to receive spiritual realities. The Epistle to the Hebrews is an

inspired commentary on the old covenant worship and service. A

real grip of the teaching of that epistle would supply a key to unlock most scripture problems.

### **The Tabernacle was built by Divine Command**

God chose Israel, revealed Himself and His Word to them, intending that, through them, blessings would flow to all nations. He gave instructions to Moses concerning materials to be gathered for the tabernacle: and 'the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, . . . Let them make me a Sanctuary that I may dwell among them' (Exodus 25:1-8).

### **It was built for a Divine purpose**

God was revealing Himself for closer fellowship. Previously their thought of God was of One everywhere present, from whose-presence there was no possibility of escape. Now, specially, He is going to dwell among His chosen people. In the tabernacle, God was limiting Himself that they might see and know Him better. The incarnation was limitation. 'The word became flesh, and dwelt [tabernacled, margin] among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only-begotten from the Father) full of grace and truth' (John 1:14). Under the new and better covenant it is no longer I will 'dwell among them,' but 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them.' The perfect future fellowship is thus described: 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away' (Revelation 21:3-4).

### **It was built according to a Divine pattern**

Time and again, Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, 'See, saith he, that thou make all things, according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount' (Hebrews 8:5). Under that covenant they were not allowed to 'add unto' neither 'diminish ought' from the word and commandments of the Lord. The Old Testament Scriptures tell how swiftly and severely daring innovators were dealt with. There are beacon warnings for us. 'If they escaped not . . . much more shall not we escape,' if we tamper with the word of the Son of God. As there was a Divine pattern for the type (the tabernacle), so there is a Divine pattern for the anti-type, the Church of the living God. The Church is not a human but a Divine institution. It was the Lord Jesus who said, 'I will build my church.' The New Testament Church, built by the Divine Architect, and His inspired master-builders, the Apostles, is seen perfected and complete in the New Testament Scriptures.

If the New Testament Church is not the pattern for all time, then we have no pattern, and we are fools for pleading for a return to it. The Church of the apostolic age was the best and most powerful Church the world has ever seen. Back to the Jerusalem model must be our rallying cry. On the ground on which the first Church stood, and on that ground alone, can the unity for which our Lord prayed be attained and maintained.

We hope, D.V., in following articles to write of the building of the Tabernacle: the Way into the Holy Place: A Look Inside: the Priesthood: and the Holiest of All,

THE EDITOR.

## The Fellowship we have in Nyasaland.

THAT someone among us could leave off what he was doing here and travel to Namiwawa, Nyasaland, has been the wish and prayer of many of our brethren.

Never have I doubted the faithfulness of the brethren in Nyasaland. I cannot understand why I should be expected to trust a man with a white skin above one whose skin by natural pigment happens to be black. Yet it is true that some who would sow distrust have been busy, and because of this we wanted to go out and see with our eyes what was happening.

Our prayers have been answered. That which was lacking in us has been made up by the visit of brother A. T. Phillips, of Dugger, Indiana, U.S.A.

It is pleasing to be able to quote from a letter he sent on November 28th, 1949, to Brother R. B. Scott, of Kentish Town:

'I spent some time in Capetown (seven weeks) and then four months in Northern Rhodesia and now at Umtali, Southern Rhodesia. There are no Christians (New Testament) for two hundred miles of here, so we have decided to spend some time here starting a new work.

'What I am writing you about is the Nyasaland work (I spent ten days in that country). I understand you dear brethren have been helping these poor people in a fashion. May God bless you. Your help has not been in vain, for I found the strongest Christians there than anywhere among the natives of Africa. It really did my heart good to go there and know their faith and strength, and this is to encourage you in your help for them.

[Co-operation] 'people are trying to proselytise them as hard as they can, but they will not yield. I glory in their faith, for they haven't had a white missionary for almost thirty-five years to help them. I am sending them £20 to help them finish their Church building. I baptised twenty-nine when I was over there.

'Of course, you may be doing all you can, but I just wanted you to know that what help you had given them was not wasted or misplaced to my knowledge, and that I personally would encourage you to help them *in* any way you see fit.

'God bless you, brethren in England [American for Britain—W.S.]. May your light shine and your faith be strong in these last days, when our Lord may appear at any time, and the question: "Will He find faith on the earth?" *is* a question that should be answered in our hearts now, that we be found not wanting and our garments white and clean.'

'His grace, mercy and peace be upon you all. Our love to you all.'

(Signed) A. T. PHILLIPS.

With this first-hand information sent us, by this servant whom the Lord has favoured us to have, I look forward to increased interest in the fellowship of preaching the gospel in Nyasaland, and concrete evidence of this interest. I thank all again who have consistently joined in this opportunity to do the Lord's will, in making the gospel available to the men of Africa for whom Christ died.

I am pleased to quote a P.S. to Brother Phillips' letter:

'In our six months' stay in Africa, we have baptised one hundred and ten. - May they be precious jewels in our Master's Kingdom. Pray for us, that we always be found faithful, preaching the Word, having hearts of compassion and love.'

Again, brethren, I thank you all and hope, while the Lord tarries in His coming, that we will have joy in fellowship for His name's sake.

W. STEELE.

## Instrumental Music in Worship.

'THE general introduction of instrumental music can certainly not be assigned to an earlier date than the fifth century. . . . The first organ is believed to have been used in church service in the thirteenth century. . . . The early reformers when they came out of Rome, removed them as monuments of idolatry.'—*McClintock and Strong's Encyclopaedia*.

'The custom of organ accompaniment did not become general until the eighteenth century. . . . At first the organ only accompanied the singing . . . for a few lines and then stopped.'—*Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia*.

'Our church does not use musical instruments, as harps and psalteries', to praise God withal, that she may not seem to Judaize.'—Thomas Aquinas, Roman Catholic, 1250.

'It is to be observed that the church did not use organ in Thomas' time; whence, even to this day, the Church of Rome does not use them in the Pope's presence. . . . Musical instruments are not to be suffered in the ecclesiastical offices we meet together to perform for the sake of receiving internal instruction from God.'—Cajetan, learned Catholic Cardinal, sixteenth century.

'I have no objection to instruments being in our chapels, provided they are neither heard nor seen.'—John Wesley.

'Musical instruments . . . would be no more suitable than the burning of incense . . . and the restoration of the other shadows of the law.'—John Calvin.

'I am an old man and an old minister, and I here declare that I never knew them to be productive of any good in the worship of God; and I have reason to believe they are productive of much evil. Music, as a science, I esteem and admire: but instrumental music in the house of God I abominate and abhor. . . . I register my protest against all such corruptions in the worship of the Author of Christianity.' — Adam Clarke, Methodist Commentator.

'Sing unto him. This is the sweetest and best music. . . . We might as well pray by machinery as praise by it.'—Charles H. Spurgeon.

'I presume to all spiritually-minded Christians, such aids would be as a cow bell in a concert.'—A. Campbell. 'He was utterly opposed to it, and took occasion at a later period to remark in regard to it that it was well adapted to "churches founded on the Jewish pattern of things" and practising infant sprinkling.'—*Memoirs*, Vol. 2, p. 366.

'The genius of this reformatory movement . . . is not favourable to choir singing and instrumental music. . . . No choir singing or instrumental music should ever be allowed to interfere for a moment with this privilege and right of the saints.'—Isaac Errett, 1861.

'The Godless choir and noisy fiddler fill the air with soulless strains.'—I. B. Grubbs.

'Such a practice is wholly unwarranted by anything that is either said or taught in the New Testament.'—Robert Milligan, 1868.

'I affirm that an "instrumental accompaniment" is an addition to this ordinance, and affects its character, and is therefore an infringement of the divine prerogative . . . and cannot be tolerated for a moment. . . . I can not engage in singing as an act of worship when there is an "instrumental, accompaniment" for this would nullify the ordinance. . . . The introduction of the organ is no mere impropriety; it is a gross insult to the Lord Jesus Christ and a sin against the God of Heaven. . . . Thus has the Holy Spirit so hedged the kingdom of the Master about, that there is absolutely no door of entrance for the instrument, and he who brings it in must break

down barriers interposed by divine wisdom. . . . It is the accompaniment of pride, and of fashion, and vanity, and theatre-going, and the like.'—J. B. Briney, 1869.

'It appears to me to be the unquestionable duty of all writers and speakers . . . to combine all their power and influence against the introduction of another organ.' 'It is a departure from apostolic practice.'—J. W. McGarvey.

'If we had the genus, music, in the New Testament worship, then we could choose instrumental music or vocal . . . but we have no such instructions; . . . the instruction is to sing, and this is all we can do in faith. All expedients are related to the thing to be done as species related to genus. Instrumental music is not related to the thing to be done, (sing) as species to genus. Therefore, instrumental music in church is not an expedient.'—O. A. Carr, 1909.

'All acts of worship under the Old Covenant not reproduced in the New Covenant by precept, example or necessary implication are excluded from the New Covenant. Therefore, instrumental music (as an act of worship) is excluded from the New Covenant.'—O. A. Carr.

'Since instrumental music as a part of church worship is nowhere mentioned in the word of God, it is for this reason "without faith" . . . is usually displeasing to God according to Heb. 11:6, and is a sin according Rom. 14:23. . . . Worship must be done "in the name of the Lord." Only what Christ has commanded can be done "in his name." Since, therefore, instrumental music in the worship . . . is not commanded by the Lord, it . . . cannot be rendered "in the name of the Lord," and on this account is excluded from the church worship.'—G. G. Taylor, 1907.

'The music God prescribes for the worship of His churches is the music should use without addition, subtraction or change in the worship of churches. The music God prescribes for the worship of His churches the singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, therefore the singing **Palms**, hymns and spiritual songs, is the music we should use without addition, subtraction or change in the worship of the churches.'—J. "A." ing, 1908.

'The great sin to-day in putting an organ into the worship that God ordained in the Church is in presumptuously adding a purely human invention to the worship of God.'—E. G. Sewell, 1903.

'The invention of instruments of music by David- is plainly condemned and placed among the sins offensive to God.' 'The Jews had used instruments in the days of their prosperity . . . the Greeks and heathen nations all used them in their worship. They were dropped out with such emphasis that they were not taken up till the middle of the Dark Ages, and came in a part of the order of the Roman Catholic Church.'—D. Lipscomb.

'It is held by some that . . . *psalms* carries with it the use of an instrumental accompaniment. We should not regard it, however, as "authority" an instrument in worship, if such authority were needed.'—J. H. Garrison.

'There is no command in the New Testament to use instruments of music in worship.'—Silas Jones, Eureka College.

'I think the New Testament does not "authorize" instrumental worship by the use of *psalms* . . . or any other word.'—Sherman Kirk, Drake Univ.

'I did not ask whether *psalms* included the use of an instrument in its meaning in New Testament times, for I never believed that.'—J. B. Briney,

*Psalms*: 'In the New Testament, to sing a hymn.'—Thayer. 'To chant, sing religious hymns.'—Sophocles, a Greek, thirty-eight years professor of

Greek at Harvard. 'In New Testament, to sing praises.'—Green. Bagster uses the same words.

'Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord' (Eph. 5:19). 'Teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual song, singing with grace in your hearts unto God' (Col. 3:16. Rom. 14:19-23; Eph. 4:1-3; John 15:1-7 and 2 John 9).

## The Devils Half-way House.

By Archibald G. Brown

Our brother, Archibald Brown, is one of the valiant in Israel, and he has struck a mighty blow at a giant evil. This earnest warning ought to be poured like grape-shot upon the enemy, for at present, in many cases, the prince of darkness feels himself as much at home in the Church as in the world.—*Charles H. Spurgeon.*

THE watchman who would be faithful to his Lord, has need to carefully note the signs of the times and emphasise his witness accordingly. Concerning the testimony needed now there can be little, if any, doubt. The evil is in the professed camp of the Lord, so gross, so brazen in its impudence, that the most short-sighted of spiritual men can hardly fail to notice it.

During the past years it has developed at an abnormal rate. It has worked like leaven, until now the whole lump ferments. Look which way you may, its presence makes itself manifest. *Amusement for the people is the leading article advertised.* The hideous fact has been proved up to the hilt, that 'amusement' is ousting 'the preaching of the Gospel' as the great attraction. 'Concerts,' 'entertainments,' 'fancy fairs,' 'dramatic performances,' are the words honoured with the biggest type and most startling colours.

'Amusement' has now become a recognised weapon of our warfare, and developed into a mission. There has been a steady 'downgrade' in this respect. From 'speaking out,' as the Puritans did, the Church has gradually toned down her testimony; then winked at and excused the frivolities of the day. Then she has tolerated them in her borders, and now she has adopted them and provided a home for them under the plea of 'reaching the masses and getting the ear of the people.' The devil has seldom done a more clever thing than hinting to the Church of Christ that part of her mission is to provide entertainment for the people, with a view to winning them into her ranks.

All this is terribly sad, and the more so because truly gracious souls are being led away by the specious pretext, that it is a form of Christian work. They forget that a seemingly beautiful angel may be the devil himself, 'For Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light' (2 Cor. 11:14).

My first contention is, that providing amusement for the people is nowhere spoken of in Holy Scripture as one of the functions of the Church. Now surely, if the Lord had intended His Church to be the caterer of entertainment, and so counteract the god of this world, He would hardly have left so important a branch of the service unmentioned. If it is Christian work, why did not Christ at least hint it? 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature' is clear enough. So would it have been if He had added, 'And provide amusement for those who do not relish the Gospel.'

There is the glorious benediction for those whose testimony, so far from amusing the world, rouses its wrath: 'Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your record in heaven for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.' Were the prophets persecuted because they amused the people, or because they refused to? That which has no authority from Christ, no provision made *for* it by the Spirit, no promise attached to it by God, can only be a lying hypocrite when it lays claim to be 'a branch of the work of the Lord.'

But again. Providing amusement for the people is in direct antagonism to the teaching and life of Christ and all His apostles. What is to be the attitude of the Church toward the world according to our Lord's teaching? strict separation and uncompromising hostility. While no hint ever passed his lips of winning the world by pleasing it, or accommodating methods to its taste, His demand for unworldliness was constant and emphatic. When many of His disciples went back, because of the searching nature of His preaching, I do not find there was any attempt to increase a diminished congregation by resorting to something more pleasant to the flesh, **I do** not hear Him saying, 'We must keep up the gatherings any way; so run after those friends, Peter, tell them we will have a different style of service to-morrow. Something very short and attractive; with little, if any, preaching. To-day was a service for God, but to-morrow we will have a pleasant evening for the people. Tell them they will be sure to enjoy it, and have a happy hour. Be quick, Peter, - we must get the people somehow; if not by Gospel, then by nonsense.' No, this was not the way he argued. Gazing in sorrow on those who could not bear the Word, He simply turns to the twelve and asks, 'Will ye also go away?'

Lastly. The mission of amusement utterly fails to effect the desired end among the unsaved; but it works havoc among the young converts. Let us see the converts who have been first won by amusement. Let the harlot and the drunkard to whom a dramatic entertainment has been God's first link in the chain of their conversion stand forth. Let the weary heavy-laden souls who have found peace through a concert no longer keep silent. Let the men and women who have found Christ through the reversal of apostolic methods declare the same, and show the greatness of 'Paul's blunder when he said, 'I am determined not to know anything save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.' There is neither voice nor any to answer. Out of the thousands with whom I have personally conversed, mission of amusement has claimed no convert.

But what are the baneful effects? I will here solemnly as before the Lord give my personal testimony. Though I have never seen a sinner saved, I have seen any number of back-sliders manufactured by this new departure. Over and over again young Christians and sometimes Christians are not young, have come to me in tears, and asked what they were to **do**, as they had lost all their peace and fallen into evil. Over and over has the confession been made, 'I began to go wrong by attending worldly amusements that Christians patronised.' The mission of amusement fee Devil's half-way house to the world. • This thing is working rottenness His Church of God, and blasting her service for the King. In the guise Christianity, it is accomplishing the devil's own work. Under the pretence of going out to reach the world, it is carrying our sons - into the world. With the plea of 'Do not alienate the masses by your strictness,' it is seducing the young disciples from 'the simplicity that is Christ.' Professing to win the world, it is turning the garden of the into a public recreation ground. To fill the Temple with those who see **no** beauty in Christ, a grinning dragon is put over the doorway.

Cease to amuse, and seek to arouse. Shun the clapping of a delighted audience, and listen for the sobs of a convicted one. Give up trying to 'please' men who have only the thickness of their ribs between their souls and hell; and warn, and plead, and instruct, as those who feel the waters of eternity creeping upon them.—*The Truth*, U.S.A.

## Calling on the Name of the Lord.

IS this exercise, whatever it may import, essential to salvation from sin? We affirm that it is, and present the following proof:

Joel makes the following prediction, which Peter applies to the day of Pentecost: 'And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call' (Joel 2:32).. Peter, as already stated, repeats it as follows: 'And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved' (Acts 2:21). The language of Paul tends to the establishment of the same truth: 'For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him: for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved' (Rom. 10:12,13).

From these testimonies it must be evident that whatever this phraseology may imply, 'calling on the name of the Lord' is essential to salvation from sin.

What, then, is the import of this language? In order to determine this question, we must examine its use in the Word of God.

Its first occurrence is Genesis 4:26: 'Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.' The force of this, however, seems to be set aside, so far as our question is concerned, by the marginal reading, 'Men began to call themselves by the name of the Lord.' And hence it would appear that from this time the inhabitants of the earth were distinguished as the 'sons of God' and the 'children of men'; for it is said the 'sons of God' married the 'daughters of men.'

Of Abraham, it is said, 'And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west and Hai on the east; and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord' (Genesis 12:8). On a subsequent occasion, Abraham returned to this altar, as we read in Genesis 13:4, where it is said he returned unto the place of the altar which he had made there at the first; and there Abraham called on the name of the Lord.

Again: we read, 'And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God' (Gen. 21:33).

Of Isaac, also, it is said, 'And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord' (Gen. 26:25).

Now, let us enquire, What did Abraham and Isaac do when they 'called on the name of the Lord'?

It may be replied, perhaps, that they invoked His name. This is correct, no doubt, as far as it goes; but this is not all they did. They built altars and offered sacrifices to God, asking Him to accept their offerings, and bestow His blessing upon them. This act is so plain that it needs not to be argued. These sacrifices were positive Divine instructions.

We have a full illustration of the position already taken, in the great test submitted by Elijah between himself and the prophets of Baal. Altars were erected, and bullocks offered; and the prophets of Baal directed to call on the name of their gods. 'And call ye on the name of your gods,' and I, said Elijah 'will call on the name of the Lord' (1 Kings 18:24).

Naaman was wroth when Elisha sent him to the Jordan to dip himself seven times, and said, 'Behold, I thought, he will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper' (2 Kings 5:11). This phraseology also occurs in the following places: David says, 'O give thanks unto the Lord: call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people' (Psalm 105). Again: 'I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people' (Psalm 116:13, 14).

It must now be clear to every reader, that the exercise of 'calling on' or invoking 'the name of the Lord' was always associated with obedience to some positive Divine law. In this respect there is a marked difference between this exercise and ordinary prayer, or prayer on ordinary occasions.

God put His name in Jerusalem, and placed it in certain institutions, and when the devout worshipper attended to these ordinances, he invoked the name of the Lord while doing so. 'Then there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I commanded you; your burnt-offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the heave-offerings of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vowed to the Lord (Deut. 12:11).

Again: 'An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offering, and thy peace-offerings, thy sheep and thy oxen; in all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee and I will bless thee' (Exodus 20:24).

(1) To call on the name of the Lord, in Scriptural usage, is to invoke His name. (2) But this invocation of His name was generally, if not always, associated with obedience to some positive Divine law. And (3) The law or institution was one in which the Lord had 'placed His name.'

With this view of the subject, how beautiful is the language of the Prophet: 'For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.' We now enquire, with what positive divine institution is this exercise associated, under the Gospel?

Peter, in quoting the language of Joel, and applying it to the day of Pentecost, taught the convicted multitude to 'call on the name of the Lord.' But we have other testimony, which brings us directly to the point in question. When Ananias went to the convicted Saul, who, under the influence of his faith in Christ, was now deeply penitent, he said to him: 'And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord' (Acts 22:16). Baptism, then, is the positive Divine institution, under the Gospel, with which the exercise of 'calling on the name of the Lord' is associated. The penitent believer is commanded to be immersed, 'calling on the name' of that Lord into whom he is immersed!

Calling on the name of the Lord presupposes faith; for, said Paul, 'How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?' The true penitent, then, under the influence of a living faith in Jesus Christ, not only confesses his faith in the Messiah, but he bows his whole soul, body, and spirit, to His authority; and as he does so, he 'invokes the name of the Lord'—that Lord whom he has just confessed, and into whom he is now baptised.

How often do we witness the poor penitent sinners being invited to the 'mourner's bench'—called, in modern style, 'the altar of humiliation'—and there they are taught to pray till God shall bless them with the pardon of their sins! Now, if 'God has placed his name there,' and promised in His Holy Word to pardon sinners at such a time and place, it is all right; but if He has done neither, the whole thing is a human invention!. Prayer, without "obedience, when the ability to obey is possessed, will never be

heard! 'Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth' (John 9:31).

But these sin-convicted mourners are not only taught to come to the 'altar of humiliation' and there wrestle with God, Jacob-like, till He bless them; but they are actually taught to pray for faith! as if they could pray at all without it. Have teachers yet to learn, that 'without faith it is impossible to please God?' 'Only believe,' say they, 'and the blessing is yours.' Such advice is not at all appropriate to such characters, nor to such a place, for, unless their present exercises are hypocritical, they do believe; and now they require some faithful Peter or Ananias to lead them on in the path of obedience. No unbeliever can make acceptable prayer to God.

Oh, for some Peter to point believing penitents in the way of salvation! To announce to all who enquire, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' 'Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.' Oh, for some 'devout Ananias' to pour into the ears of every contrite soul the spirit-stirring, heart-cheering and conscience-easing exclamation, 'And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord!'

How beautiful and appropriate that the penitent believer, who is about to be 'baptised into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,' should go down into-the water with his heart lifted up in prayer, and his whole soul engaged in 'calling upon the name of the Lord!' The Lord has placed His name in this holy institution, and, wherever He places His name, there He will meet with those who 'diligently seek Him.' This is an 'altar' of Divine appointment, the one to which we before alluded is of human origin. In conclusion, let me urge upon all truly penitent persons not to tarry. Do you believe, with all your heart, that Jesus is the Christ, and are you really penitent on account of sin? Is the language of your heart, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' Then let us say to you, 'Arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.' Be 'buried with Christ, by baptism, into death,' that you may arise in His image, and 'walk in newness of life.' Over this scene angels in heaven, and saints on earth will rejoice, and God and Christ will be glorified.

## Is Any Sick ?'

'YOU tell me, stranger, that James 5:14, 15 is your authority for healing the sick through prayer?'

'Certainly! It says "the prayer of faith shall save the sick."'

'Well, there must be something wrong about this, for I knew of a cripple woman who followed your preachers around for a number of years and, last account, she is still a cripple! How would you explain that?'

'The woman, I am sure, lacked faith.'

'Looks to me as if she had a great deal of faith or she would not have been so persistent. She was spending her all seeking healing.'

'I know several that were healed.'

'Let us not leave this case. Suppose we, admit the lady had no faith, which is against reason—what difference would it make? James says "the prayer of faith shall save the sick." Your preachers are the ones who did the praying, and you claim they are men of faith, therefore they shall save the sick; and here is a failure! What about it?'

'I can send you evidence (if you give me your address) of cases of healing.'

'Let us settle this case first! Why is this woman still a cripple?' 'We sometimes fail. I cannot explain the reason.'

'But there is no failure! "The prayer of faith shall save the sick." You will have to admit James 5:14, 15 simply belonged to the miraculous age, or that your preachers are not men of faith.'

'Our preachers are men of faith! I can send you evidence—'

'Say, do you believe in Christian Science?' 'No; it's from the devil!'

'They present the same kind of testimony as you; yet you do not believe they heal? 'O they may heal—through the power of the devil.'

'What evidence have you that the devil does not operate through your **preachers**? It certainly can't be God—for, mark you! James says "the prayer of faith shall save the sick"—and your preachers make failures! This cripple woman I spoke of . . . they anointed her with oil, and prayed over her a great many times—with no results . . . By the way, several denominations claim this power, and give the same evidence—yet you say they are imposters.'

'I would not say that. God works through them the same as us, in healing the sick. 'Then you are a unit in healing power? Yes; we all have the same spirit.'

'And yet that "same spirit" teaches different things through these denominations! Really, does the Spirit of God teach contradictory things?'

'I do not think so.'

'Yet you claim it is "the same spirit"! How about it?'

'I do not understand that.'

'You oppose medicine and physicians?'

'Yes, sir!'

'Jesus said "they that are whole need no physician" which implies, they that are sick need one. We read of "Luke the physician." We read in Prov. 17:22—"a merry heart doeth good like medicine." Also in Ezek. 47:12—"the leaf thereof shall be for medicine," and in Jer. 30:12, 13—"thy bruise is incurable and thy wound is grievous; there is none to plead thy cause that thou mayest be bound up. Thou hast no healing medicine."'

'I never noticed those passages.'

'Seems to me your teaching in regard to healing in a miraculous way is out of harmony with the Good Book. Miracles were for a purpose. Jesus said, "the works that I do—they testify of me." The Lord worked with the apostles, confirming the Word. We have no evidence that any miracles have been performed after death of the apostles. Had miracles existed all the way down, they would have lost their force in confirming the fact that Christianity is Divine.'

'Looks that way . . . But I must be going. This has been a losing fight with me. I am going to study this matter more closely!'—*American Christian Review*.

## A Chapter on Mistakes.

1. Persons who write long articles for family newspapers, or religious papers make a great mistake when they expect them to be generally read.

2. Writers who select subjects of doubt and controversy are mistaken if they suppose that a protracted discussion will interest a majority of readers.

3. Writers who extend obituary notices much over half a column are mistaken if they imagine that they secure the attention of one-half the general readers.

4. **Writers** are badly mistaken if they think that the majority of readers are as interested in purely local matters as they are. The readers have their local problems too.

5. Those who write only a few lines to indicate a respect for the dead are greatly mistaken if they suppose their brief notices will be overlooked

6. Those who send glowing reports of their work are seriously mistaken if they think that their efforts are being accepted by the reading public at their own exaggerated appraisal. The average reader knows that he can no more judge the size of a preacher than that of a car by the blow of the horn.

7. Writers who think that the other fellows who have sent in articles are not so desirous of having their productions appear in print as they are, are gravely mistaken.

8. Writers who imagine that the average reader will check up on all unquoted references to Scripture are mistaken.

9. Writers of careless habits are greatly mistaken if they suppose the editor has nothing to do but to correct their miserable punctuation and orthography, and re-model one-half their clumsy sentences.

10. Writers of indolent habits are greatly mistaken if they think printers can decipher scratches and crow tracks as readily as they can well-formed letters.

11. Writers of verses, both amorous and religious, are greatly mistaken when they suppose that an editor will always think as highly of their productions as they do. His taste may be at fault, however.

12. Writers are pitifully mistaken when they think they have written the last word on any subject. Their predecessors have felt the same way about their writings.

13. A writer whose article may be declined is greatly mistaken if he charges the editor with prejudice or partiality.

14. A writer who thinks that the mantle of some great leader has fallen on him is greatly mistaken if he thinks that his readers do not know better.

15. Any reader who supposes we may mean him, in any of these paragraphs, is greatly mistaken, as we write not with individual reference. However, if any reader finds, in the foregoing, sentiments that are germane to his case, he has our permission to make due application of them;

16. Unless we are seriously mistaken, it will be well to stop at this point. *Here and There.*

## Why so ignorant of the Bible?.

YESTERDAY the *News Chronicle* was able to show, through the Gallup Poll, that only three British people in five could name the four Gospels, the first four books of the New Testament. Why is it that while the Bible still sells better than, say, Shakespeare—at around 18,000,000 copies a year, which is far below demand—there are wide gulfs of ignorance about it?

This newspaper, with a long tradition of knowledge of the social and cultural habits of our nation, put this question yesterday to a group of men whose opinions in this matter would be of vital interest and importance. Here is one reply:

### The Bishop of Rochester (Dr. C. M. Chavasse):

I'M not surprised that the Bible is still more or less an unread book. Fifty years ago undigested higher criticism did great disservice to the Church by inclining people to believe that the Bible was unscientific and unhistoric:

The result was that the Bible became suspect and ceased to be generally read and studied. To-day the Bible has been vindicated as perhaps never before as the Word of God.

Science tells us the 'how' about life and creation. The Bible tells the 'why'—that God is behind all life.

There are three other factors which have seriously militated against Bible study:

1. Only since the passing of the recent Education Act has scripture teaching become a recognised part of national education.

2. The secularisation of Sunday gives the Church no chance to give boys and girls Bible teaching.

3. The chief cause of all for the Bible being an unknown book is, of course, non-Christian homes.—*News Chronicle*, January 4th, 1950.

[We publish what we consider the best reply.—Ed., S.S.]

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

Acts of the Apostles 3:19 to 6:42

Peter's Speech continued—Having set forth the facts regarding the treatment of the Christ, Peter gives the divine instruction to those who accept the testimony. 'Repent and turn' (see R.V., where the word 'convert' has been rendered 'turn' as on almost every occasion of its use in A.V.) means naturally what was commanded after the first gospel address 'repent and be baptised'—otherwise the instructions are contradictory. They are actually complementary and explanatory. Repentance is a change of mind and heart following upon sorrow for sin, and the turning is the effect—as made\* visible by obedience—first in baptism, the initial act, and afterwards by a holy walk in life, which manifests the Spirit received. The result of obedience to 'Repent and turn' is threefold: (1) Forgiveness of sins; (2) Seasons of refreshing from God; (3) The second coming of Christ with restoration of all things according to prophecy.

Peter further quoted Moses, and the other prophets to whom the Jews looked with respect, mentioning also, in particular, the promise to Abraham of blessing for the whole human race. Finally, the blessing in view is the turning away from sin. We are reminded of a fundamental fact, 'This is the will of God, even your sanctification.' Numbers of the hearers did 'repent and turn,' increasing the infant Church to five thousand.

Arrest and Defence of the Apostles.—The success of the new teaching, and the very plain speaking of the preachers, contradicting the false report put around

by the Rulers, now exasperated them, so that persecution was begun at this very early stage. Here is the testing for faith. Set before the array of power and wisdom in the Sanhedrin, these comparatively ignorant and certainly humble men were expected to tremble. Little wonder that 'they marvelled' to have their crime fixed upon them—'Ye crucified . . . God raised from the dead.' The terms of salvation are the same for all sinners, rich and poor, learned and unlearned.

The Decision of the Court.—It was impossible to deny the miracle. The man himself was there. They knew—after enquiry, too—the apostles were with Jesus in His lifetime. In the circumstances 'threatening' seemed the only step to take, and the answer given proved that useless. So further threatening was given. At this stage the people were on the side of the truth, as they were also in the earlier days of the Lord Jesus.

The Church's Prayer.—The apostles would know well from what their Master had told them, and what had happened to Him, that the threats were serious. They are in danger of death, facing unscrupulous and powerful foes. We note the prayer is an appeal to God for strength to go on with His work, and to 'confirm the word by the signs that followed' (Mark 16; 20). There is no sign of what would be natural, 'desire for punishment of the wicked. Perhaps they realised already that whatever was done against them—or the righteous anywhere—would turn out to be 'whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel fore-ordained to come to pass.' We remember it is always true 'The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men' (Dan. 4:32). Psalm 2 indeed tells the story of the victory of Christ already now won although not consummated materially. The prayer was answered at once,

**Condition of the Church.**—The onset of opposition seems to have stimulated the members of the Church to greater effort and a more fervent love and unity. The term 'all things common' does not seem to indicate a complete communism as 'distribution was made according to need.' Widows would be much in need, and would perhaps form a good proportion of those who received help from the common fund. It would hardly be possible for the apostles to do anything but attend to this distribution if every member of the Church depended for his living upon it. It was most wonderful for property owners to sell up in order to feed their poorer brethren—an exhibition of 'great grace.' Those who gave and those who received rejoiced together in the new-found happiness. Barnabas is obviously singled out for special mention on account of his eminence and usefulness subsequently. What a sad comment this great outpouring of love is upon present conditions, and perhaps more especially upon conditions prevailing during the industrial revolution of last century.

**Ananias and Sapphira.**—Any action which brings honour and praise to the doer is likely to induce giving with wrong motives, and giving with wrong motives is often enough selfish getting. The Saviour Himself indicated this in saying 'Verily, they have their reward' of those who got praise of men. These two connived at deception in order to get credit they did not deserve. They were not under obligation to sell part or all of their property, and if they had sold part and said so, this would surely have been acceptable. But they were doing a wrong which God saw fit to punish summarily for the sake of others, including ourselves. Are we seeking to appear more generous than we really are, or indeed holding any false position for the sake of the credit with men? We note the result upon the Church. Fear may not be the highest motive but it is a healthy sign when it leads us to do right, and seek God's will. It was necessary that the apostles should have the respect and obedience of the Church. It is specifically stated that they held a unique position, and resorted to Solomon's portico in the Temple. God was indicating His choice of them for the Church, and we note that exhibition of special healing power was also granted to mark them out even more clearly from 'the rest.'

**Arrest, Release, Arrest.**—Occupation of part of the Temple precincts where the High Priests held sway, and respect of the people, excited the Rulers once more to take action. God gave them a special warning in sending His angel to release His servants. The whole council was called, a special 'whip' seems to have been made so as to bring all possible force to bear this time. The report of

the officers did give them a shock but nothing would deter them from their purpose now. This reminds us of the fixed determination to do away with our Saviour.

**The Second Trial.**—Peter set forth a principle of action we should all observe when he said 'We ought to obey God rather than men.' The outstanding success of the apostles is stated by their enemies—'filled Jerusalem.' His statement of the case is even more severe than in the first case, and we could almost imagine this scene to have ended as it did with Stephen. However a wise man arose to keep back that evil day (for them as for their victims). Probably they felt their insecure position while the disciples had the sympathy and respect of the people, but they did not entirely act upon the advice of Gamaliel. He did not suggest any punishment, but they gave a severer one than is ever used in really, civilised society to-day—scourging. Jesus said, 'Blessed are ye when men shall . . . persecute you . . . rejoice?' . . . and they did. It was an honour. Again the attack has failed, and the work goes on, by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit.

R. B. SCOTT.

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The committee expresses its thanks to all who are contributing to the furtherance of the Gospel. R. MCDONALD, Treasurer.

#### PRELIMINARY NOTICE.

#### HINDLEY BIBLE SCHOOL.

Saturday, May 27th, to Thursday, June 1st. Book Early.

Further particulars from L. Morgan, 'Glon-Iris', 44 Lord Street, Hindley, Lancashire.

#### 'REVIVAL'.

#### YOUR TRACT PROBLEM SOLVED.

One brother writes: Many thanks for the regular and prompt delivery of this very useful, truthful, and attractive messenger. It has solved our tract problem. Published each month: 250 copies for 12/6, 500, 25/-. Addition of place and meetings, 2/6 extra. Back numbers available, samples sent on request, L. Morgan, 'Glen-Iris', 44 Lord Street, Hindley.

## COMING EVENT

Kirkcaldy, Rose Street.—Annual Social will beheld (D.V.) on Saturday, 25th February, at 4 p.m. A cordial invitation to all brethren. Speakers: T. Nesbit, (Tranent) and F. Worgan, (Evangelist).

ItBlley.—Church Anniversary, February 15th-26th, 1950, Tea 4.80, Evening Meeting 7 o'clock, Chairman: Bro. W. Wintersgill (East Ardsley). Speakers: Brethren A. Gardiner and A. E. Winstanley (Evangelists).

Kelson, Southfield Street.—Bible School Anniversary, February 11th and 12th. Public Meeting and Prize Distribution, Saturday, 6 p.m. Speaker: Bro. A. Allen. A hearty invitation to all.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Aylesbury, Bucks.—November 18th 1849 brethren gathered from various parts to rejoice with us on our first Anniversary. Bro. W. Hurcombe was chairman; Bro. Day of Laindon, Essex, eighty years of age, spoke of fellowship he had enjoyed with parents and grandparents of some present, and it was a joy to him to see the work in this town.

Bren. B. Scott and L. Morgan gave words of help and advice. Bro. and Sis. Morgan stayed over the Lord's Day; and Bro. Morgan was greatly used of the Lord. Sister Hurcombe, the only woman who was free, gave her best to provide for the comfort of all.

We thank all the brethren who have helped us during the past year. Bro. W. Hnrcombe, Evangelist, has been with the Church from August to December. We commend the faithfulness and steadfastness of our brother. In face of many difficulties, he kept on with the Lord's work. The seed has been sown and the lime of harvest will come. He has the fchanks and best wishes of the Church here.

We thank the brethren who sent us fifty hymn books. The letter with them was mislaid. So please pardon us.

w. J. COLE.

Birmingham, Priestley Road.—The Church rejoices in the addition to its numbers of Sidney Meredith, who was immersed into the Name above every name on Thursday, January 6th. We pray that many others may follow his example. His mother, brother, and sister are already members. We look for the rest of the family.

R. H. CROSS,

Bristol, Bedminster.—It is with joy we record the baptism on Lord's Day morning, January 8th, of Margaret Jones. One of our older scholars, she has been a member of the school for many years. Her request to be baptised reflects credit upon her teachers and their faithfulness in the instruction given. We are happy that she has joined her sister Jean in the fellowship of the Church here. Our prayer is that she, by faithfulness to her Lord, may seek to obtain that crown of life which fadeth not away. We ask for the prayer of the brethren upon the labours of Bro. Alex Allan, who is serving the Church here for a short while, that his faithful sowing of the Word, the good seed, may result in an abundant reaping.

w. WILLS.

East Grinstead.—At the close of another year of service for the Master, the Church at East Grinstead extends to the brethren at Kentish Town our grateful thanks for all the help given during 1949.

W. HILLMAN

Hindloy.—We are pleased to report two added to the Church from Ince. Bro. and Sis. Larkin were united with their Lord in baptism on Lord's Day, January 1st. They came to the meetings through an invitation given by Sis. Tattum. Bro. Geoffrey Lodee was our speaker, and during the singing of the hymn, the wife stepped out, and after a conversation in the writer's home, her husband decided for Christ.

We have held two cottage meetings in their home since and on both occasions have had nearly thirty present, with non-members attending.

We are thankful to our Heavenly Father for these blessings, and pray that the door in Ince may yet be opened wide.

L.M.

Kentish Town.—Since reporting for the January issue we have had the joy of witnessing two further baptisms. Two young men have joined us in the heavenly pathway—Walter Coles and Francis Moody. We thank God for this further blessing, and pray for our brethren all needed strength, and much usefulness in the best service of all.

R. n. SCOTT

Slamannan District.—The New Year social gathering was held in Blackridge Church meeting-house on January 2nd, 1950, under the presidency of Bro. David Dougall (Evangelist), at present serving the Churches in this district.

The popularity of this occasion was shown by the number present, well over two hundred being in attendance. Although faced with the difficulty of attending to the material wants of such a large gathering, credit is due to the Blackridge brethren and sisters for the way they provided for so many.

Bro. Deugall, in his remarks, spoke of the prosperity wished by each other at this particular time, and gave us an outline of the Bible's prescription for prosperity, quoting Joshua 1:8, where Joshua was told how to prosper; Psalm 1:1-3, telling how man everywhere may prosper; and James 1:25, where James exhorts all how to be prosperous. Bro. Dougall exhorted all present to read God's Word, meditate on it, apply it to our lives, then we would have a prosperous future, both spiritually, and materially.

The speakers were Bro. Tom Kemp (Evangelist), at present serving the Church at Newtongrange, and Bro. Prank Worgan, at present serving the Church at Blackridge.

Bro. Kemp's text was 1 Tim. 4:16, and His message to everyone was to take heed unto themselves by being humble in all things and holy, without which no man would see God. We should seek character rather than reputation, and by taking heed to the Word of God we would, like Timothy, not only save ourselves, but our families and those who hear and have contact with us.

Bro. Worgan spoke from Phil. 3:13-14, exhorting that this should be a resolution for everyone. He exhorted that we should forget past failures, which discourage us, forget past successes, which retard us. But we should live for to-day and not rest on the works of those who have gone before us. All things in the past, including grievances and differences, should be forgotten, so that we can all reach forth unto those things which are before.

During the meeting we were favoured with choir pieces from the Motherwell Choir, and solos, a duet, quartettes and a recitation, each by members of the Slamannan and Motherwell Churches. All were much appreciated.

If the lessons told in song and word are taken to heart by those present, then we shall indeed have a happy and prosperous year in the work of the Lord.

HUGH DAVIDSON

## OBITUARY

Glasgow, Hospital Street.—We regret to announce the death of our beloved sister, Susan McDonald, at the age of sixty-seven years, who has been a member of Hospital Street Church of Christ for a number of years. She was a quiet and faithful member, and was present at the Lord's Table as often as health permitted. Of late, she had been in poor health, but was in attendance up till three weeks ago. Then pneumonia set in and owing to the weak state of her body it was too much and death claimed our dear, sister.

Bro. Andrew Gardiner (sen.) officiated at the funeral, helped by Bren. A. Morton and E. Hendry. We laid our sister to rest in the sure and certain hope of eternal life.

A. B. MORTON

Newport.—Our sister, Mrs. Ada Priest, passed away after a painful illness. She will be sorely missed by her husband and family and also by the little band of Christians in Newport Church. She's gone, the one we loved so dear, to her eternal rest. Bro. J. Blandford, of Newport Church, officiated at the graveside.

Wallaestone.—We much regret to record the death of our sister, Mrs. Thomas Forsyth, who departed this life on December 18th, 1949, in her 72nd year. During the last three months her health was such as prevented her attendance at the meetings for worship. She was interred in Falkirk Cemetery on Tuesday, December 20th, the service in the house and at the graveside being conducted by Bro. David Dougall, Evangelist. Our deepest sympathy is with our Bro. Forsyth in his great bereavement, and the family.

R BROWN

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