

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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## THE LETTER THAT KILLETH

JUST once in the course of His writings Paul makes the declaration that "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. 3:7); and probably no remark made by him has been so badly mishandled or misapplied.

If a man insists upon preserving the ordinances of God in the precise and very form of their original appointment, such as, say, the ordinance of baptism or the Lord's supper, he is accused, by some, of contending for the letter that killeth, while at the same time, the man who makes the charge, and who changes the ordinance, claims that he is following the spirit that giveth life. All of those; and they form a great majority; who make free with the word of God, while at the same time paying lip-service to its authority, employ this device to excuse, and account for, their departure from the scriptures. Those who remonstrate with them are denounced as literalists and sticklers for the letter that killeth. Some would say, "what do the mechanics of the actual baptising matter" as long as we sincerely want to follow God. Sprinkling or pouring, or immersion — what difference will it really make? Some also have a fairly loose attitude towards what follows at the Lord's table. Does it matter? Of course it does! Woe unto the man who plays ducks and drakes with God's ordinances. It is, of course, true that we should not be so obsessed with the mechanics that we miss the purpose of either baptism or the Lord's table. May it be that we shall not be numbered with those who can't see the wood for the trees, but we have no authority for altering one tiny fraction of God's word. Some would say, "Amen" to that statement and then promptly go and alter the ordinances of God.

Perhaps the emergence of "lady elders" is the latest incredible product of this permissive religious scene. "The spirit of the law regarding the eldership is that the church should have proper government; so what does it matter about the letter?" "If we can't get male elders then surely God will be quite happy with female ones?" "If we can't get men with all the qualifications then surely if a man has most of the qualifications, he should be acceptable?" Such are the kind of remarks we hear.

In most of the important matters God has been as we might expect, quite coherent and literate. Yet many times men treat God as they would treat an idiot child. They give God, not what He asks, but what they think will be better than what He asks. They know better than God, what He needs and what is best for Him. "Oh yes, God has asked for this to be done this way but we know a much better method; a method which is a great improvement on the one mentioned in the New Testament." Is this how we would regard and treat God? "Oh yes, I know what the letter of the law says but the "spirit" of the law allows me to alter the letter?" Is this so?

But what does Paul mean by his statement in 2 Cor. 3:7? We have only to glance at the context to see. He says, "God made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones, came with glory, so that the children of Israel could not look steadfastly upon the face of Moses for the glory of his face, which glory was passing away; how shall not rather the ministration of the Spirit be with glory?" Here it seems perfectly clear that by 'the letter that Killeth' he means the law of Moses, which, as he had abundantly argued elsewhere, could not give life, but brought under condemnation those that were under it; and that by 'the Spirit' he means the new covenant in Christ, which alone can give life.

The passage has, therefore, no connection at all with the justification of a loose attitude to what God has commanded. Men who are teachers in Israel ought to know this and ought to lead the way in the protection and preservation of the few ordinances God has given to His followers in these last days. EDITOR

## GREAT DOCTRINES OF SCRIPTURE

### XII ETERNITY

HAVE you ever complained because there are not sufficient hours in the day or days in the week or even weeks in the year for you to accomplish some particular task or perform some important work? When you do, let these thoughts remind you of the words of I.I. Leslie.

After the march of time shall cease,  
 After earth's strife shall end in peace,  
 After the changeful disappears,  
 Cometh the long, eternal years,  
 After all that here we see,  
 What will there be, what will there be,  
 After all that here we see,  
 After all, ETERNITY.

If you look for the word 'eternity' in either the Authorised or Revised Versions of the Bible you will not find it. The noun does not appear, but the verb 'eternal' is widely used. How can we describe 'ETERNITY'? It is entirely spiritual. We can only appreciate it by comparison, or illustration or metaphor, using material things for examples. ETERNITY is not a period, for a period begins and ends but there is no beginning or end to eternity. Neither is it a place, for a place must have some boundary to determine its extent and to segregate it from that which it adjoins. ETERNITY knows no bounds and neither has it any neighbour. ETERNITY is the state or sphere in which God dwells and to which man looks in either hope or dread according to the way he spends his period in the material realm of Time.

#### God Is Eternal

and much of what we know of God is applicable to ETERNITY. Without beginning or end. God did not create eternity. Eternity IS! There is no time in Eternity, no minutes, hours, days, weeks, years. It is difficult for us to grasp this; even the hymn-writer quoted above needed to use poetic licence to describe this elusive subject. Just as Almighty God proclaimed His name to Moses, "I AM THAT I AM", never was or will be but always 'AM', present, without possibility of past or future, so with Eternity, this also can only be spoken of as 'NOW', and while man may look forward in joyful anticipation of his partaking in eternity and for him it may appear to be in the future, nevertheless it is still 'NOW'. In like manner, as God cannot be confined

to space or position so neither can Eternity. If you would ascend into the heavens at the speed of light and travel for a million years you would not be able to reach the limit of Eternity. It is without time and without extent and it has no physical properties. Paul gives a very good definition in 2 Cor. 4:18. "For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal". That is, applicable to ETERNITY.

It may be asked, "What is the relationship between

### Time And Eternity

Let us be quite distinct, time is not part of eternity! God did not create eternity but He did create time. Just as He will call time to an end, but eternity is, without regard to time. Time is applicable only to material matter and was created so that man and his environs could be regulated, God dwells in eternity whereas man dwells in time. In this, man is seen to be but of temporary existence.

Notwithstanding the temporary existence of man, we would contend that,

### God Created Man For Eternity!

Referring to Genesis 2:7. God first made the tent or dwelling place; "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground". Then God supplied the animation, "And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life". With everything now ready the tenant came to dwell; "And man became a living soul." It is this part of man with which God is concerned. Man is composed of three parts; the material part which is his body, and two spiritual parts, his spirit which is God given and which will return to God at His call; and his soul, the real man, the real person. It is the soul of man that God has created for eternity.

While Eternity is the sphere of Gods existence and must therefore be nothing but good, yet, in man's anticipation

### Eternity Is Good And Bad

The New Testament speaks at great length of Eternal Life, and by reading the context of the many references it will be appreciated that this is very good and is held out as a most desirable reward. The writer to the Hebrews speaks of many eternal subjects: The *Eternal Covenant*, that glorious agreement made by God with men, under which man through faith might enjoy and *Eternal Inheritance*, even as a joint-heir with the Lord Jesus Himself. Peter adds his word with the promise of *Eternal Glory*. All of which are in sharp contrast to *Eternal Judgement* when the sentence of *Eternal Damnation* is passed and these go away into Eternal punishment, even the *Eternal Fire* of Hell, (Gehenna) which God has prepared for the Devil and his angels. Man is destined for Eternity but there is either good or evil in Eternity for man.

It is good that all men realise that time will end and

### Man Will Transfer From Time Into Eternity

This transfer can be understood by reading John 5:28-29, along with Matt. 25:46. John assures us that even though we die, yet shall we all hear and answer the call of resurrection. The soul of a man will return from Hades and enter upon an eternal existence either for his good or ill. Jesus in His parable illustrates how every soul shall appear before Him and He will pronounce sentence. Either, Come ye blessed of my Father, or Depart from Me ye cursed. "And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life. WHERE WILL YOU SPEND ETERNITY?"

(Last Article In Present Series)

PAUL JONES

# A SCRIPTURE GEM AND ITS SETTING

By Lancelot Oliver, reprinted from Bible Advocate 1907

THE gem is the thirteenth verse of Romans 15. "Now, the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit".

This verse has this suitability for being the subject of our meditation — that it is a prayer. The apostle was a man of prayer. By putting together his references to his own prayers and to those of others, we find that this man, who was a most powerful centre of evangelistic effort in his days, had set times when he prayed for the churches he had p'anted and for those planted by others; for individuals who had laboured with him in the Gospel; and others engaged in Paul's company, (for instance Epaphras) were always striving for them in their prayers, that they might stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. It is such personal enthusiasm, self-sacrifice and constancy in prayer that really matters in the work of evangelisation. When I compare our present condition as to Gospel work with the New Testament, it seems to me the personal element was more in evidence then. There was machinery. it is true, but it was more in the background and centred more around the preachers themselves.

One result of Paul's habit of prayer was that in dictating his epistles, as he brought an argument or statement to a close, he was apt to drop upon his knees, and bring his thought to a climax in a short prayer. I find two features in all these prayers. First, that they recognise conditions as necessary to the reception of the blessing asked for; and, secondly, that they stand intimately related to the teaching at the close of which they appear. This little prayer will be found to exemplify both these observations.

## Preparation For Blessing

Look at the prayer in itself, and see how thoroughly it recognises that there are laws and relations in the spiritual world, just as there are in the natural; and that God, in bestowing a blessing, does not bestow arbitrarily but in accordance with our nature and the relations in which spiritual realities stand to each other.

To note this, let us look through the words. First we have a description of Him whose aid is implored: "Now the God of Hope". This is one of Paul's most interesting tendencies. When he is thinking of God as the Author of any special blessing, he will coin a name like this. Thus, higher up he calls our Heavenly Father, "the God of Patience and of Comfort", and elsewhere he describes Him as "the God of Peace". So, here, when he is wishing God to make these Christians in Rome abound in hope, he approaches God as the God of Hope. And this is the way in addressing God in prayer throughout the New Testament. From the opening description of God in each prayer, you can almost infer what request will follow. Why do we not follow this simple and natural way of addressing God?

But now, note: So far is Paul from thinking that "The God of Hope" will in an arbitrary and miraculous way make Christians "abound in Hope", that he shapes his prayer on the assumption that God will give hope by giving the conditions out of which alone hope could come. "The God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit."

You see, as the apostle puts it, abundance of hope can only be realised as a result of being filled with joy and peace, and these, in their turn, can only come in believing. And; finally, all this is strengthened and rendered effective through the condition introduced by the words, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The relation is not so much logical as psychological. The time would not allow us to dwell upon the relations here assumed, and, perhaps our experience will be enough to confirm the gradation here marked by the apostle from the first step of believing, through joy and peace and the power of the Holy Spirit to abundance of hope. The God of Hope cannot give us hope except along the line of spiritual evolution. So he begins by working in us faith, faith in God, faith in His Son Jesus Christ our Lord. This is done by the Gospel and its evidences, in a manner absolutely true to the laws of our mind and heart: And believing we rejoice and have peace. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"; "whom not having seen ye love; on whom though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." "to you who believe is the blessedness"; "joy and peace in believing", not in unbelief. Even the infidel will admit that there is no joy and peace in the negation of God and Christ, and the life everlasting. If it were ever to be that I came to feel the faith of the Gospel was not credible, I could not welcome that result; but as I sadly bade farewell to Christianity, I should feel that I was also bidding farewell to joy and peace and hope, and all that makes life worth living.

Note then, that faith worketh joy and peace, and joy and peace work abundance of Hope: "the God of Hope fill you with joy and peace in believing that ye may abound in hope". That Joy and Peace produce, in their turn, abundance of hope we know to be true also by experience. When we lose our joy in Christ, and our sense of peace with each other, the hope within us is diminished and becomes less bright and sure.

#### **The Condition — "The Power of The Holy Spirit"**

Finally, observe the apostle is careful to add still another condition — the whole of this varied and complementary experience is "IN THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT".

In such a connection as this it makes but an ill fit to think that by "the power of the Holy Spirit" is here meant the power of working miracles as a sign to the unbelieving. It is the power of the Spirit in the life of the Christian. Power is the very thing which the fact of the Holy Spirit being in the Christian and the Christian being in the Holy Spirit, gives to the believer: "The law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death". A similar relation of abundance of hope and the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer is found in Romans chapter 5, where, as in our verse, the apostle is tracing the connection of our spiritual experience with the confidence and glorying of our hope. "Tribulation", he writes, "worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope putteth not to shame, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which was given unto us."

Our second point which this prayer illustrates is that the prayers of Paul are not merely a close, like the dot at the end of a sentence, but are a part of the argument or statement which they complete. The threads are here brought into close contact and knit together.

It must be confessed that a verse like this is apt to satisfy us without paying regard to its relation to, and dependence on, the preceding. Yet the verse is even more significant and helpful when the thoughts in it are seen to be forming in the preceding context. Observe then, that all the great verities of verse thirteen are found in the preceding twelve verses.

Hope appears quite abruptly at verse four. The apostle had said that the strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves. This he seeks to impress by reference to the example of Christ, who, he declares, pleased not Himself. Christ's unselfish care for others he proves by a quotation from the Old Testament — "As it is written, the reproaches of them that reproached Thee,

fell upon Me." The apostle pauses to justify this use of the Old Testament: "For", he affirms, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope," It is this bringing in here of Hope, as produced by the Old Testament, which is unexpected. When we might have expected him to say, that the Scriptures help us to learn Christ's unselfish care for others, he prefers to say that the Scriptures give patience and comfort, and, through these, produce in us hope.

Two things lie under this: (1) That Paul desired to lead his readers to the fact that Hope, abundance of hope, is one of the greatest blessings bestowed through Christ; and (2) That there is a close connection between Christians loving and caring for each other and their possession of a strong buoyant hope. Hence, after he speaks further about Christians living in a joyous unity, he finishes his quotations from the Old Testament which, foretold how Jew and Gentile would rejoice together, by one which brings his discourse back to the great word Hope.

"There shall be the root of Jesse, and He that ariseth to rule over the Gentiles; on Him shall the Gentiles hope."

Hope, then, as resulting from the peace of Christians with each other, is the very essence of those preceding twelve verses. We will see this better if we note this PEACE as referred to in these verses. After intimating in verse four, that through the Scriptures we have Hope, he proceeds, "Now the God of Patience and of comfort, grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus": This can mean no less than that we should care for one another as Christ cared, not for Himself, but for us: this is "The same mind according to Christ Jesus".

#### Unity

Attend now to the consequences of such mutual love and care: "that with one accord", (that is, out of a unity of heart) "ye may with one mouth GLORIFY the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ".

ONE heart and so, ONE mouth! This is the praise the apostle thought of as characterising the Church of Jesus Christ. The music of the voice is acceptable, but only when it springs from unity of heart. Hence the apostle adds, "Wherefore receive ye one another, even as Christ also received you, to the glory of God."

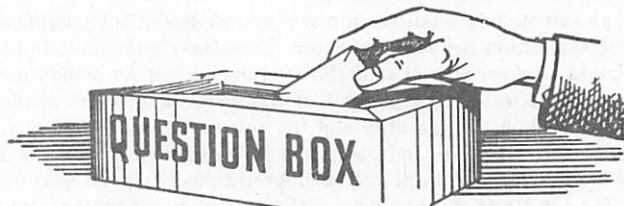
It is a pleasing view of "peace among men", this conception of men of all sorts, weak and strong, Jew and Gentile, receiving each other in the same loving manner as Christ received them, and uniting their voices in heart-felt praise to God. They are filled with a peace that is also Joy — "Joy and peace in believing".

This is the idea which Paul dwells on from verses 8-12. Christ, he seems to say, has been impartial — has done what was needful for Jews, and also for Gentiles; all are benefited by Him, hence all can unite in praising God. "For I say", he exclaims. "that Christ hath been made a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, that He might confirm the promises given unto the Fathers." So far, the Jews specially are cared for, but he proceeds — "and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy".

At this point he quotes a number of passages in confirmation; quotations which present the Jews and Gentiles uniting in praise to God: "Therefore will I give praise unto Thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto Thy name": "Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with His people": And again, "Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise Him."

The context, then, presents the same thoughts as the prayer — men and women at peace with God, and with each other in Christ Jesus, uniting in praise to God for the blessings they equally shared in common, and all placing their hope for the future on the same God. So that the prayer really asks that what was already realised should continue and increase.

"Now the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit."




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Conducted by  
James Gardiner

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"In Daniel Chapter 5 we have the account of the writing on the wall at Belshazzar's feast. If, as some say, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin", are Chaldean words why could not the Chaldean wise men interpret the writing, and why is 'Upharsin' changed to 'Peres' when Daniel gives the interpretation to the king?'

IT has been suggested by some bible students that the Chaldeans were able to decipher the writing but were frightened to do so. As it happened, the writing was not favourable to Belshazzar and the Chaldeans were reluctant to give bad news to the king. Kings in those days had a disturbing habit of beheading those who brought to them bad tidings. The Chaldeans (together with the magicians, astrologers and the sorcerers) had come very close to execution at the hands of Belshazzar's father, King Nebuchadnezzar, in the matter of failure to describe and interpret King Nebuchadnezzar's dream. On that occasion (Daniel 2) King Nebuchadnezzar had called the bluff of the wise men and Chaldeans by not asking for an interpretation of his dream as described to them, but rather by asking them for a description of the dream and then an interpretation. They failed, as we know, and the king commended that they be cut in pieces and their houses made a dunghill. The timely intervention of Daniel, who entirely satisfied the king by giving a complete description and interpretation of the elusive dream, saved the wise men and Chaldeans from their fate and allowed them to continue in their rather fragile office for another term. Daniel, incidentally, became not only ruler over the whole province but also became chief of all the wise of Babylon (which proves that Daniel did succeed in saving their lives) Dan. 2:48.

Thus one could be sympathetic to the point of view that the Chaldeans would be walking warily in matters concerning the interpreting of puzzles for the king, and would be reluctant to tell the king the meaning of the writing. However, I personally can not subscribe to the idea that these Chaldeans could have interpreted the writing but because of the nature of the message chose not to. Verse 8 of chapter 5 tells us quite clearly that not one of all the king's wise men could read the writing or make known to the king the interpretation thereof. It was not a question of them choosing not to do it — they could not do it. Daniel 5:8 says so.

#### Chaldeans

One may be wondering why, at any event, Chaldeans should be mentioned in the same breath as magicians, sorcerers and astrologers and perhaps a brief aside on Chaldeans is called for. The Chaldeans appear to have been but one of the tribes or nations that made up the community at Babylon (see Isaiah 23:13) and it would seem that at this time particularly they spent a great deal of their time and attention in the practice of the occult arts and secret sciences. The Chaldeans were so much devoted to these pursuits, and became so celebrated for them that the name "Chaldean" came, amongst Greek and Roman writers, to denote all those who laid claim to extraordinary powers in this direction. It is very improbable that the whole nation of Chaldeans were devoted to astrology and these other arts but as a people they had such a high reputation for their devotion to such arts that it became their best known characteristic. Such were found amongst the king's wise men, magicians and sorcerers.

**Daniel Could Read Chaldean**

If the deciphering of the writing had required solely a knowledge of the Chaldean language, which is what the question seems to suggest, then the Chaldeans could have easily read it. It should be remembered that the Chaldeans had no advantage over Daniel in this respect for, if we go to chapter 1 of Daniel we read there of the training that Daniel had received in the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. After three years training and education we find that when Nebuchadnezzar examined the students he found that Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah were, in all matters of wisdom and understanding ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in the realm. Consequently Daniel could, without any help from God, have interpreted the writing if it had been written in the Chaldean language in a straightforward manner.

From all of this we can safely deduce that when the writing was upon the wall it was not written in a straightforward manner in the Chaldean language for the Chaldeans could not read it (Dan. 5:8). All this may seem like stating the obvious but I am trying to reach the point where it can be said with a fair degree of confidence that although Daniel gave the interpretation in what was basically the Chaldean language it does not necessarily follow that the message was written in that language. If one is visiting Germany and is being shown around by a German friend, there is little point in the friend telling one in German what the sign boards say. He would read the German and tell us the English equivalent.

Certainly the characters on the wall, were not familiar to the king or to any of the wise men. Thus we have a double mystery to be solved by the wise men — the mystery of the language in which the words were written and the mystery of what the words meant. Obviously those acquainted with the Chaldee language could not read it and in spite of the various theories (including the idea that the language employed was the Hebrew) which exist conjecture in the matter is fairly useless. After all said and done it may have been that the words were merely transposed (albeit they were Chaldean words) and if they had been so transposed, truly it could have been said in Dan. 5:8 "that they (the wise men) 'could not read the writing'". It is difficult enough with the words in their proper order to know that they had application to King Belshazzar and to know what that application was. How much more difficult with the words out of order.

**Miraculous**

Whatever the technical details the whole tenor of the account of the incident, to my mind, denotes that it was necessary for God to unravel the mystery through Daniel. It required divine intervention and this fact renders the mechanics of the matter of academic interest only. Just as God gave Daniel the power to explain the dream to Nebuchadnezzar (Belshazzar's father) so again God gave Daniel the power to interpret the writing on the wall. Truly we have here in this incident in Dan. 5 a miracle that ranks with any others in Daniel, or for that matter in the Bible. The crux of the matter is that God concealed, in some way or another, the meaning of the writing from the magicians and Chaldeans, and revealed it unto His servant Daniel. We can but speculate as to how the concealment was accomplished but one supposition is probably as good as any other.

Regarding the latter part of the question concerning why Daniel should change "Upharsin" (in verse 25) to "Peres" (in verse 28) when he gave his interpretation, I understand that these are but different forms of the same word. I personally am thoroughly ignorant on the matter of languages, of course, but I am told that "Upharsin" is the plural and "Peres" is the singular of the same word. There is then, nothing sinister in the employment of either or both.

I trust these few remarks may be helpful to the questioner.

(Questions please to James R. Gardiner, 88 Davidson Terrace, Haddington, East Lothian, Scotland.)



# SCRIPTURE READINGS

DECEMBER 1973

2-1 Samuel 1:1-17 2 Tim. 1:1-14  
 9-1 Samuel 1:18-28 2 Tim. 1:15 to 2:13  
 16-1 Samuel 2:1-11 2 Tim. 2:14-26  
 23-Psalm 119:1-16 2 Tim. 3  
 30-1 Kings 19:1-18 2 Tim. 4

## OUR FINAL GLIMPSE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

"HIM would Paul have to go forth with him"(Acts 16:3). This is our introduction to Timothy. The letter we are reading was written probably 17 years after this choice was made. The intervening years were filled with evangelistic effort, involving apostle and disciple in partly told and partly untold hardship, privation, persecution, labour, joy and sorrow. They shared these experiences together like father and son, and so developed the closest ties of friendship and love. The probable date of the letter is 67 A.D. and this is generally recognised as the year of Paul's martyrdom at Rome. That he anticipated this is clear both from the urgency of the call to Timothy (4:9) and his words (4:6-8).

Paul had already suffered at least two years of imprisonment as recorded in Acts (28:30 & 31) with some relaxation of conditions. Doubtless during that time he was chained to a soldier (Eph. 6:20 & Col. 4:18) but "he received all that came in unto him" without hindrance. While we do not have direct evidence of further journeying, there are indications quite unmistakable in the letters to Titus and Timothy. Tradition reliably states he was released after his trial, and continued to work among the churches, and one includes a visit to Spain. However reference to certain passages throws light on some journeying which cannot be accounted for from Luke's account. We can look at Phil. 2:24; Philemon 22; Titus 1:5; 3:12&13 and various references to persons and places in our present readings.

A second arrest took place and Paul was brought to Rome at a time when the first severe persecutions against Christians were being allowed if not encouraged by government. The emperor Nero had set fire to Rome and put the blame upon Christians, an easy prey as their growth in numbers and influence impinged on Roman society. The call to holiness and the practice of it cannot be popular, and most certainly not in a wicked and degraded society as at that time. So the conditions would be more severe. He had the favour of the centurion, and the favourable comments of Festus and Agrippa on the first occasion but now he is suffering "hardship as a malefactor" and bonds. He is undoubtedly feeling his age also, and anticipating early death. He had felt his age much earlier (Philemon 9), but now he writes "I am already being offered" as though the sacrifice is indeed on the way. The word 'offering' bears the meaning "poured out as a drink offering". A poet has written "Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage" but they are hard to bear, and the enfeebled body of the apostle with his "thorn in the flesh", and "the marks branded on his body" (2 Cor. 12:7; Gal. 6:17) was in no condition to withstand the cold, dark, discomfort of a Roman -dungeon.

However the soul soars upward in thanksgiving and praise, and remembrance of the loving concern of his son in the faith fills him with joy because he is assured of his faithfulness. His mind turns back to the early days of their companionship, and the home from which he came. Paul had happy memories of many faithful men, but Timothy had a special place as being "likeminded" (Phil. 2:20), and completely unselfish. Deep sorrows mingle with the encouragements to strength and faithfulness. There remains an undertone of anxiety that Timothy should be very strong and bold in his work for God. There is no doubt that he received some special gift through the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, including Paul himself (1 Tim. 4:14 & 2 Tim. 1:6). This would make him a

more effective teacher, preacher and leader in the churches over which he had charge as the representative of the apostle, but "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets" and the use of the gifts depended upon the will of those to whom they were given. Thus Paul is urging Timothy to make full use of his divinely given powers. "Stir up", "stir into flame" the gift, he writes. The task before Timothy was one only the divine strength could enable him to fulfill. It is not surprising the letter is full of warning and encouragement to put every effort into the ministry.

Some turned away from Paul and caused him deep sorrow, and indeed the burdens he bore must have at times deeply distressed him. However we take a look at one faithful and kindly brother in the person of Onesiphorus. The reference to his household rather than to him indicates he had passed away in the meanwhile but he had brought joy into the prison, not without sacrifice on his part for diligence was necessary to find the prison, and courage both to seek and to visit the prisoner. It was in character for he had already shown the same spirit in Ephesus with the same result. While there were desertions and partings among the close followers of the apostle what joy he must have had in their work and their company. Again Dr. Luke was there to minister and comfort. Do we think he did the actual writing in the case of this letter, and did the useful Tychicus take it?

We hope that Timothy did arrive in time to bring joy to his "father", but in any case he had to face a sorrow deeper than words, lighted up with the eternal and unfailing promise. And we have this wonderful letter. R.B. SCOTT

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1 Do you enjoy praying, or do you merely "say prayers"? Praying is talking to God. We tell God our needs, our sorrows, our joys. We enjoy this if God is real to us.

2 Do you enjoy doing what is right? Sin has never lost its hold upon us until we hate sinning.

3 Are we becoming less critical of other honest people? We are surrounded by those of different opinions. Most of these are honest people. We should give them credit for being honest. We must have convictions and stand for them; in matters of faith, we must teach others, but in a spirit of meekness, and be willing to learn from them.

4 Are you kind to others? Does it hurt you when you have wounded another? Do you ever intentionally say something cruel? People have enough burdens without our adding to them. "Love suffereth long and is kind" (1st Cor. 13:4).

5 DO you forgive? No person who is unwilling to forgive another will ever know the peace of God: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Matt. 5:7).

6 Do you trust God, or do you worry? It has been said that worry is a mild form of atheism. Jesus told us to trust Him. he used the expression "little faith" in rebuking people for their anxieties (Matt. 6:30).

7 Do you enjoy worshipping with others? The fact that a person "goes to church" is nothing unless he worships. And worship does not mean to sit still and wait for a certain feeling to seize us. It means exerting an effort to praise God. By effort we can dismiss petty thoughts and direct our minds upwards as we sing, pray, learn, commune and give.

20th Century Christian

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ONE is not rich by what one owns, but more by what one is able to do without with dignity.

IMMANUEL KANT

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Kentish Town:** Efforts were made in the two weeks following our anniversary by holding extra meetings and showing Fact and Faith films. Bro. Melton served us in faithful preaching and teaching. A few new faces appeared and the members enjoyed the meetings, but the Neighbourhood response was disappointing. R.S.

**Stretford, Manchester:** The church meeting at 60 Kenwood Rd, Stretford are rejoicing over the decision of Mr. Fred Hanson to give his life to the Lord Jesus and his subsequent baptism on Friday 2nd November at Argyle St. Hindley.

We are grateful to the brethren at Hindley for providing the facilities, their generous hospitality and their support.

Fred is another contact of our brother James Parr. He was impressed at the change Jesus had accomplished in James, and decided that the same could be done for him. Fred is a resident at the Salvation Army Rehabilitation Centre, Manchester, and has benefited under their kind influence. Three of the Salvation Army Officers took him to Hindley and witnessed his baptism. We thank them for their help.

We thank and praise our heavenly Father for this occasion of rejoicing, and ask you to pray with us for Fred's future spiritual growth and wellbeing.

ALLAN ASHURST

**Sinde Mission, Zambia, South Africa:** Dear Friends, Thanks be to our heavenly Father for His great gift of salvation through His Son, Christ Jesus our Saviour! May His name be proclaimed among all people so they become one of His family, trusting and knowing the goodness of our God! Many months have flown by, each day writing an account of how we use our time and talent, whether for self and the pleasures of this world, or for our Creator, Thanks be to God, today we can determine, like the Apostle Paul, "to press on unto perfection" by

continuing steadfastly in the faith, with our attention fully drawn to following the Lord.

Have you ever prayed to the LORD to lead wherever HE sees best, and then follow as HE leads? Often it means a great change from our usual daily routine. Just now the LORD has the Tonga Bible for revision and Iris Elder is co-ordinator of all the material so is busy all the time. It seems the Lord has led me to help her with the typing of the manuscripts, so I have been typing for her the past few weeks, as she has an electric typewriter which is such a time-saver. If it be the Lord's will, an electric typewriter run by battery can be found, then I can type at home for her. The book of MARK is supposed to be finished by the end of this month! With the Lord's help, the revision will be completed in several years from now. Please pray for wisdom and guidance to all the translators and all working on this, that all may bring honor and glory to God always, and that many more will read and come to a knowledge of God. Thank you for your prayers.

Christian women at Lusaka begin their meeting today as women from different areas gather there to feast on God's word and sing and pray together, Next month, Lord willing, many women will meet at Kabanga for more spiritual food. Please remember these also in your prayers.

BaStephen, BaPhinison, Danny and Joel go out to the village churches and souls are being strengthened and saved. Johnny and Beverley are going out in the Mukuni area and many have come to the Lord since they began their Bible classes Johnny also went out preaching in another area and many turned to the Lord. Praise God for the power of His word!

Your wonderful letters of encouragement, your fellowship and prayers have been such a blessing. May God bless you and keep you able to serve Him each day with joy!

"Keep pressing on toward the heavenly goal!"

Yours in His wonderful love,  
Elaine Brittell.

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**BAPTISM****What is Baptism?**

Water is the element - Acts 10:47; 8:38  
Takes much water - John 3:23  
John baptized in the Jordan River - Matt. 3:6  
Jesus came up out of the water - Mark 1:10  
Baptism takes place after going "down  
into the water" and before coming "up  
out of the water" - Acts 8:38-39  
It is a burial - Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12  
(Note: Neither sprinkling nor pouring is  
New Testament baptism).

**Who Is To Be Baptized?**

Those gladly receiving the word - Acts 2:41  
Those who believe - Mark 16:16  
Those who repent - Acts 2:38; Matt. 3:7-8  
Those who confess - Acts 8:37  
Those having freedom of choice - Luke 7:30  
Those guilty of sin - Acts 2:38; 22:16  
(Note: Infants are not proper subjects of  
baptism).

**Why Be Baptized?**

John's baptism was for remission of sins  
Mark 1:4 Matt. 3:6  
Baptism a condition of salvation - Mark  
16:16  
For remission of sins - Acts 2:38  
To wash away sins - Acts 22:16  
It is a command of God - Acts 10:33, 48  
Baptized into Christ - Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27  
Frees from sin - Rom. 6:3, 7, 17, 18  
Baptism saves - 1 Peter 3:21  
(Note: According to the New Testament  
none are saved from their sins before  
and without baptism).

*Baptizo* Is the Greek for *Immerse*  
*Immersion* Is *Baptism*  
*Rantizo* Is the Greek for *Sprinkle*  
*Sprinkling* Is *Rantism*  
*Cheo* Is the Greek for *Pour*  
*Pouring* Is *Cheism*

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