

Scripture Standard

Volume 88-1
March 2021

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**Pleading for a
total return to
New Testament
principles.**

**contend
earnestly
for the faith**
Jude 1:3

CANNOT BE DEPICTED part 2

Allan Ashurst, Stretford

Both ghastly Haman and wonderful Jesus were publicly executed by being affixed to a tree. Haman's repels but Jesus' draws. (John 12:32)

How do we visualise Jesus? Is it His attractiveness or His personality? Is it wise to show children pictures in story books and to say "That is Jesus"? (Isaiah 52:13-15; 53:1-2)

Pictures and statues supposedly depicting Jesus are foolish for several reasons:-

1) He is portrayed misleadingly since we would not recognise Jesus in a crowd of Jewish men. He is depicted as having long hair, a short beard and with handsome Latin features. Jewish men were not to disfigure, nor shave the edges of their beards. (Leviticus 19:2, 21:5) They were not to let their hair grow long, but keep it well trimmed. (Ezekiel 44:20)

2) He is portrayed attractively in a way that leads to idolatry. What goes through the mind of those who gaze at such images and pictures, revering, worshipping and praying towards them? Being influenced by images and pictures can lead us astray.

3) It is not without reason that YHWH told them,

that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them."

Exodus 20:4-5

Such was His anger that the LORD told them to

“...destroy their altars, and break down their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images, and burn their carved images with fire...”

This was because they were

“...a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.” (Deuteronomy 7:4-6)

Those baptised into His name are now His

“... chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light;”

1 Peter 2:9

“into the name” Greek is singular - Matthew 28:19-20

“called” by the gospel message - 2 Thessalonians 2:14

HOW IS JESUS REVEALED IN SCRIPTURE?

He developed like a delicate parched plant. He had no stately form, outstanding good looks or charisma. Isaiah 53:1-2

He looked like any ordinary Jew and when pursued could melt in a crowd. Also, when they went to arrest Him they needed Judas to identify him. (Matthew 26:48-49)

So what was it that drew the crowds? It was His teaching. Even the guards whom the Pharisees sent to arrest him were astounded at his teaching and returned empty handed, giving the reason that

“No one ever spoke the way this man does.” John 7:32-46

His teaching and example was the opposite of the popular world view.

So why did those who went to arrest him fall down if it wasn't His charismatic presence? It was when He said “I AM” that they drew back and overbalanced. (John 18:6)

GETTING TO KNOW JESUS

So if we cannot see what He is like, how can we **know** Him?

His glory is His personality: “full of grace and truth.”

The Word became flesh and resided amongst us, and we have discerned His glory, a glory as of an only begotten with a father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14

The Scriptures require us to **know** the Lord.

grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 3:18

Are not the Scriptures adequate to help us to **know** Him?

Every Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that the man of God might be complete, being fully equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Also, **knowing** Jesus we will know the Father. (Jeremiah 31:34)
This is what eternal life is all about. (John 17:3)

And, **knowing** Jesus we will willingly strive to do what He wants us to do. (1 John 2:4-6)

Jesus is the drawing power. Being nailed to the tree He was cursed for you and me. (Acts 5:30,10:39; Galatians 3:13 quoting Deuteronomy 21:23) Shortly before His crucifixion, He said,

“And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all to Me.” John 12:32

Peter wrote that Jesus

“Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness - by whose stripes you were healed,”

1 Peter 2:24 predicted in Isaiah 53:5

If we truly **know** the love of God for us in Christ Jesus, it will move us to keep the words and teaching of the Lord Jesus.

Whoever says “I **know** Him” but does not keep His

commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him. He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.

1 John 2:4-6

And we **know** that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

1 John 5:20

God has highly exalted Him and given Him the name above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Philippians 2:9-11

It is evidence that we trust in Christ Jesus as our Saviour if we, as a fruit of faith, seek to walk as He walked. Consider deeply and meditate on more passages below about growing to **know** our Lord and Christ:

“Therefore let all the house of Israel **know** most certainly, that God has made both Lord and Christ, this same Jesus, whom you have crucified.”

Acts 2:36

“I **know** that Messiah comes, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things.”

John 4:25

But grow in the grace and **knowledge** of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 3:18

Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not **know** Me, Philip? Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

John 14:9

So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to **comprehend** with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to **know** the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:17-19

Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of **knowing** Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ.

Philippians 3:8

BURNING BUT NOT CONSUMED

Jonathan Ashurst, Lexington KY

**“So he looked, and behold,
the bush was burning with fire,
but the bush was not consumed.”**

Exodus 3:2, NKJV

When Moses saw the bush, burning but not consumed, the sight intrigued him. Perhaps it challenged core assumptions he had made about life. Today, the One behind the mystery would rekindle hope he thought had died long ago. Hope that his people had not been forsaken. Hope that Heaven’s bounteous generosity had reached even him.

**“Now it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown,
that he went out to his brethren and looked at their burdens.”**

Exodus 2:11

As a former prince of Egypt, Moses had grown up in the heart of a consumeristic society. For the first forty years of his life, he witnessed an empire flaunt power at the expense of his own people. He knew there was a better way; his Israelite mother had taught him so. He tried to intervene, but only ended up killing an Egyptian. Instead of working deliverance, his burning rage had instead consumed a life.

**“But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh
and dwelt in the land of Midian; and he sat down by a well.”**

Exodus 2:15

After failing to rescue his brethren from their oppressors, he found himself a shepherd in the wilderness. He had intervened to stop shepherds from bullying young girls away from the well. He learned that strangers could also be kind; his father-in-law showed him so. Here in the wilderness he experienced generosity and contentment. Even when the sun consumed by day and the cold and wind by night.

**So God heard their groaning,
and God remembered His covenant
with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.**

Exodus 2:24

Forty years in Egypt, forty years in Midian. What would the next forty years hold? Moses knew better things were coming for his people; the LORD had promised them so. He did not know what his own life would hold, settled as a sojourner in this far-away land. Perhaps he found comfort in remembering that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph had all been sojourners too.

**“I will now turn aside and see this great sight,
why the bush does not burn.”**

Exodus 3:3

Then he saw the bush. It was burning, but not consumed. Could it be possible for anything to thrive without destroying? He was intrigued, so he set aside his routine and turned aside to look. The LORD had captured his attention. So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said,

**“Moses, Moses!”
And he said, “Here I am.”**

Exodus 3:4

Sandals cast aside, Moses' fiery zeal would be transformed. His

longing for justice and mercy would be redeemed. It was too heavy a burden for him to carry alone. His Maker had come to deliver both Moses and his people. The hubris of the oppressing nation would be consumed, in a powerful series of ultimatums.

**“So I have come down to deliver them ...
and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land,
to a land flowing with milk and honey...”**

Exodus 3:8

Here, speaking through the bush, was Someone defined not by what he had, but by who He was. As Ruler of All, He had the right to consume and the right to preserve. He would work justice through mercy. He would generously save all those who trusted in Him. Here at the bush, Moses was overwhelmed, and transformed, by the generosity of His Creator.

**“I will certainly be with you.
And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you:
When you have brought the people out of Egypt,
you shall serve God on this mountain.”**

Exodus 3:12

The same Mighty One seeks and equips you and me. Filled with His Spirit, may we shine brightly today. May we shine like the bush, that the world may see the glory of our Redeemer.

I WOULD HAVE TOLD YOU

Allan Ashurst, Stretford

Several years ago I wrote a letter to my wife from Wigan to Tunbridge Wells, having been to a meeting where a well-known brother from Birmingham had been giving a message. He spoke on, “If it were not so, I would have told you.” Reflecting on that, something really struck me.

I was brought up in a community of people who considered they were Christians and were very devout, but had problems with the Bible, the Apostle Paul, and things that happened in the Old Testament under God's authority. They would pick and choose the Scriptures that they felt God really wanted them to know. So, when it was pointed out to me in 1952, that it wasn't sufficient just to believe, I was baptized into Christ.

At this meeting in 1955, brother Day, a wonderful brother, was preaching on "If it had not been so, I would have told you." Although it took me many years to come to accept the whole of Scripture as the inspired Word of God, I think I would have hastened to believe it much sooner if I had thought on that verse where Jesus said, "If it were not so, I would have told you."

Now that doubts are being raised again about Genesis and Evolution and children are being fed with false supposed scientific information, it struck me: if I had known and realized at that time that, "if it were not so" (Genesis), Jesus would have told us.

Our confidence then is in the Old Testament Scriptures which were able to make Timothy wise unto salvation, enabled to do every good work. (2 Timothy 3:14-17)

Although the New Covenant has replaced the Mosaic Covenant, Jesus said of Old Covenant Scriptures,

"These are they that speak of me." John 5:39

"All things were made by Him and for Him." Colossians 1:16

So everything that was originally written down and spoken, everything that the prophets spoke and wrote, was done by inspiration of the LORD God, and in it are those things that Jesus said, "speak of me." So we can go right from Genesis chapter 1 and 2 and even to the end of the book of Revelation without any feeling of reserve, but wholeheartedly take it into ourselves what it is saying, for these are they which speak of Jesus.

More online at <https://youtu.be/sg2XnU1lfog>

PROCRASTINATION

A short story by Jonathan Ashurst, Lexington KY

You are running. You've gone down this trail before, for exercise, for fun, for a chance to clear your mind. You've marvelled at creation, satisfied your natural curiosity, and built friendships while going down this trail. But this run is different. Right now, you're not just running: you are running away. From the ominous footsteps behind you.

They are running too. The faster you go, the faster they follow. Your worst enemy is closing in on you. And you feel desperate.

Desperate to get away from your worst fears, your darkest nightmares. You don't know what would happen if you turned around, but you can't bear to think of it. So you just keep running. As fast as you can.

The steps get closer. And closer. You cry out in agonized fear, which morphs into frustrated anger.

Then, you trip.

Time seems to slow down as you feel yourself losing balance, teetering, flying through the air.

The ground hits and hits hard.

The jolt makes you feel as if everything in you was knocked out of place. The pain takes a moment to register. You're hurt, but you don't have time to be in pain. Your awareness is focused on the footsteps as they approach, slowing down, stopping, right next to you.

The noise of your enemy trying to catch breath reminds you to breathe too.

As your lungs fill with air, pain sears through the points of impact...wrists, knees, arm. You wince.

It feels like it's all over. There is no escape now. You are more afraid to keep cowering than to see.

So with all the courage left in you, you force yourself to look up.

But you are shocked to realize it's not your worst enemy that's been chasing you: it's your best friend.

"You're fast!"

You look down, ashamed of yourself, embarrassed, but relieved. Your friend gets down and helps bandage up your wounds.

It hurts a bit, but you're just glad for the company.

"Here, let me help you up."

Back on your feet, you look at each other and laugh. Your friend gives you a big bear hug. You feel as if a great burden has been lifted from you.

"We should run together, later."

You nod your head in agreement.

"But for now, let's just walk for a while."

And so you do. One step at a time. Together.

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart,

and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Matthew 11:28-30, NKJV

IN THE BEGINNING GOD MADE MALE AND FEMALE

Allan Ashurst, Stretford.

WHEN WAS THE BEGINNING?

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:1

That is when God created man. He created them **male** and **female** ... in the day that they were created. (Genesis 5:2,

Genesis 1:27)

HE TOLD THEM “TO MULTIPLY.”

Then (at the creation) God... said to them, “**Be fruitful and multiply**; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

WHY ARE THERE MALE AND FEMALE?

When this question was raised, my wife Gretchen would reply, “Why are there male and female!” The answer, to be fruitful and multiply, seemed obvious to Gretchen, but I didn’t grasp it at the time. She marvelled at the wonder of her role in reproduction: carrying a child for nine months and being the one to bring the next generation into the world.

HUMAN REPRODUCTION HAS ALWAYS REQUIRED BOTH MALE AND FEMALE.

So God made him a female companion as his counterpart.
(Genesis 2:18)

THIS FORMED THE BASIS OF THE ONE MAN TO ONE WOMAN MARRIAGE.

Jesus ... says to them, have you not read that He, who makes **(them), from (the) beginning makes them male and female.**
(Matthew 19:4, c.p. Mark 10:6)

This destroys the theory of human beings having evolved.

THE HUMAN RACE CAME FROM
ONE MALE AND ONE FEMALE.

BIBLE QUESTIONS?

Brother Frank Worgan is happy to receive Bible questions
by e-mail or letter.

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EASTWOOD BAPTISM

Rejoice with the congregation at Eastwood at the baptism of Scott Rowe, friend of Andrew Wheatley. He was immersed on 27th January.

TREASURER NOTE

Brother Kim has moved to Yorkshire to take care of his elderly mother and is sorry that this has prevented him from acknowledging payments.

GHANA APPEAL

The Church of Christ at Dennyloanhead is very grateful to all sister churches, individual brothers and sisters who contribute to the Ghana Appeal. Please send donations to:

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THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD

FOUR ISSUES PER YEAR

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION – UNITED KINGDOM£5.00

OVERSEAS RATES ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE TREASURER

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