

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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"Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us looking unto Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith"

Be Inspired. . .

By the faith of a father who trusted God so much that he was willing to offer his only son as a sacrifice. This son, whom he loved dearly, had been born to him in old age, and yet...

"When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. Then Abraham put forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here am I." He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked and behold behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called the name of that place **The Lord will provide...**"

And so he continues to do. God's provision for His children is for all time. Our eternal future is safe with Him. "For I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day."

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Practical Christianity

Forgiveness

(David Yasko)

A while back in the Houston Chronicle there was a correction from a Foreign Students Dinner that was held at the University of Houston. The paper said, "In last Sunday's style section a picture showed a group of foreign exchange students gathered around a table of Chinese food. Mi Phai Phin was a student pictured at the centre of the table. We incorrectly listed her name as one of the food items on the table. We regret the error." They were just trying to make a wrong right and that's exactly what this article tries to address. We are going to look at offering forgiveness. The fact of life is that we are going to be hurt by things people say to us, do to us, or think about us. It is inevitable. Sometimes even the word "forgiveness" brings pain from the past.

1. Why should I forgive?

Why in the world should I forgive somebody who hurts me? In Matthew 18, Jesus told a parable of the unforgiving servant. In that story Jesus gives us three reasons why we should forgive the people who hurt us.

a) Because God has forgiven me

Paul says in Ephesians 4:32 "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." When I take stock and remember just how much God has forgiven me through Jesus Christ, I just can't help be a little more open in the forgiveness arena. When I remember how he keeps my slate clean it makes a difference to how I treat you. On the other hand, if I don't feel forgiven, I sure don't want you to feel forgiven. So to deal with that, God makes us a promise. He promises we will never have to forgive anybody for more than he has forgiven us. He says, "I'll make it easy on you. When you don't think you can forgive anymore, just look at how much I've forgiven you. I guarantee you I will have forgiven you for a whole lot more than you'll have to forgive others."

b) Because resentment doesn't work

In fact, resentment is unbelievably self-destructive. Now the guy who wrote the book on resentment was named Job. Job was the Bill Gates of his day, only he had character. He was totally godly in everything he did. He had wealth, he had

fame, and he had it all and one day he lost it. All of it. All the wealth, all the fame, all the respect. Gone. He found himself living in poverty with a terrible disease. The only thing that didn't get the chop was his wife and she was a nag. Then his friends came by and told him it was all his fault. If anybody had a right to be resentful, it was Job, but three times in his book we're told resentment doesn't work. Look at Job 5:2 **"Resentment kills a fool."** Write beside this verse "it's unreasonable." Have you ever been so full of resentment and hate that you did something stupid? Job 18:4 **"You tear yourself to pieces in your anger."** Write beside this verse, "It's unhelpful." Why? Well who's getting torn up in that verse, the ones we're mad at or us? US. No matter how much we resent that person who hurt us. (It could be our parents, our ex-husbands and wives, a friend that betrayed a confidence.) All the resentment in the world isn't going to change the past. Resentment is just stewing without doing and it hurts us. Chances are, they've forgotten it anyway. Job 21:23-25 **"One man dies in full health completely secure and at ease, his body well nourished his bones rich with marrow. Another man dies in total bitterness, never having enjoyed anything good."** Write beside that, "it's unhealthy." Doctors tell us that resentment is the most unhealthy emotion we can have.

When we hold on to our bitterness it only gives us unhealthy consequences. Unchecked, it eventually leads to physical breakdown. That backache we've got may be the result of unchecked resentment. Guy went to the doctor and said "Doctor, I've got colitis." Doctor said, "Who have you been colliding with." It's not what we eat, but what eats us that tears us up on the inside. The Bible says resentment doesn't work.

c) **Because we need forgiveness**

All of us have said and done things that have hurt other people and we want them to forgive us. Forgiveness is a two way street. We cannot expect other people to forgive us if we are unwilling to forgive everybody else. Jesus says it like this in Matthew 6: 14 - 15 **"For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive men their sins, your Heavenly Father will not forgive your sins."** Let's boil it down: we cannot receive what we are unwilling to give. Let's go further: God says, 'how can you expect me to forgive you when you're not willing to forgive other people.' God makes offering forgiveness a condition of salvation. When we are unwilling to forgive, we are burning the bridge we will need to walk across. I have talked to thousands of people about letting go of hurt. They'll say, 'But Dave, you don't understand. You don't know what they did to me. You don't know how mean they were. You don't know how deep they betrayed me. You don't know the abuse I've suffered.' And you are right, I don't. Still God says, 'for your own sakes, we have to learn how to let go of it.' We are not helping ourselves by holding it. Occasionally I hear somebody say, 'But I could never forgive that person.' What that tells me is they don't really understand what forgiveness is. If we really understood it, we would probably

be more able to do it. Add to that a lot of faulty concepts about forgiveness out there and it can get messy.

So let's think about what forgiveness is not. Forgiveness is not minimising the seriousness of the event. It's not saying, "it didn't hurt," or "it's no big deal." It did hurt and it is a big deal. There's a difference between forgiveness and acceptance. Forgiveness is reserved for the intentional hurts. There's a difference between being wounded and being wronged. Wrongs are intentional. Wounds are often accidental. We can accept the fact that we will be hurt by omission or accident. Forgiveness is reserved for the intentional hurts. When we minimise a wrong, we cheapen forgiveness. Forgiveness isn't the instant restoration of trust. Forgiveness is instant; but trust has to be rebuilt over time. If somebody has hurt us over and over and it's been intentional, we are obligated to forgive them. The Bible tells us that. We are not obligated to instantly trust them. I've had people tell me, "Well, if I forgive this abusive spouse, then I'll have to let them back in the house." No you don't. Forgiveness means, "I'm letting go of the hurt." They have to do some things to rebuild the trust. Now, only the one who was wronged has the right to forgive. We don't have the right to forgive people for the hurts they did to other people. God does but we don't. If somebody in your family has been attacked, I don't have the right to go to the perpetrator and say, "you're forgiven." He didn't hurt me. Could I go to Oklahoma City and stand on the steps of the courthouse and publicly forgive Timothy McVeigh for bombing the Federal Building and destroying so many lives? No I can't. He didn't hurt me. Only the people who've been harmed have the right to forgive.

There is a difference between forgiveness and restoration. Forgiveness is not resuming the relationship without any changes. We think, "If I forgive them I've got to let them continue to hurt me." Just because somebody says "I'm sorry" doesn't mean they automatically move back into the position they just left. They have to earn their way back. Forgiveness isn't the same as reunion of a relationship. In order to bring about a reunion, three things have to take place. First there has to be repentance. Then restitution. Then a rebuilding of trust over a period of time. Now, we need to forgive whether they take those steps or not, but forgiveness is not the same as reconciliation. See forgiveness is what we do and our forgiveness isn't based on their response to us. Maybe there are some readers who have been hurt so bad by somebody we love, that the thought of forgiving them is almost impossible to think.

Next month's article will consider how we should forgive.

(The writer, David Yasko works with a congregation in Seattle, USA. He holds a Doctors Degree in Conselling Psychology. David lived in England for some years up until 1981 and worshipped with the congregations in Ilkeston and Corby. Whilst over here he met and later married his wife, Julie (nee Atkin) who is the daughter of Enid and the late Bro. Eric Atkin from Ilkeston. Editor)

Word Study Paradise

Ian Davidson (Motherwell)

The Persian Empire was one of the greatest of the modern world. The name Persia is first encountered as Parsua in Assyrian texts of the 9th century BC. "It later came to designate especially the area around Persepolis north of the Persian Gulf, known as Pars (Fars). The name persists in the designation of the modern Persian language as Farsiu. Iran, which has been the official name of the country since 1935 is cognate with the name Aryan. The Iranians are Indo-European speaking and not Arabic speaking like their Muslim neighbours in Iraq (ancient Mesopotamia) to the west. Modern Persian, though it is written in Arabic characters, is an Indo-European language related to Sanskrit, Greek, Latin and English." (*Edwin M. Yamauchi, Persia and the Bible*)

Paradise is a Persian word (Old Persian, *pairidaeza*, akin to Gr. *peri*, around, and *teichos*, a wall). The Greek word in the New Testament is *paradeisos*. *Paradeisos* is an Oriental word, first used by the historian Xenophon, denoting the parks of Persian kings and nobles", (W E Vine). It's interesting to note that the Septuagint translators used it of the Garden of Eden. The Greek word is only found 3 times in the New Testament. These passages are as follows:

- **"And Jesus said unto him (the thief on the Cross), Verily I say unto you, Today you shall be with me in Paradise"** Luke 23:43.
- **"And I (Paul) knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell; God knows) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter"** 2 Cor: 12: 3,4.
- **"He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says unto the Churches; To him who overcomes will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God"** Rev. 2:7

Like most words, the word paradise grew and developed in meaning. Once it meant 'a garden with a wall'. But Jesus for example used it for the place or state righteous souls go to immediately after death.

The account of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31) is important here. Both, on death, ended up in Hades (v23). But there was "a great gulf fixed" (v26) between them. Lazarus is "in torments" (v23) and the beggar is in "Abraham's bosom". (v22) I suggest that "Abraham's bosom" and "paradise" speak of the same place or state. Certain Jews perhaps preferred the former phrase. Jesus used the term "paradise" on the cross because He spoke to a non-Jew. Peter quoted a Psalm of David on the day of Pentecost: **"...because thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One**

to see corruption.” (Acts 2:27 c.f. Psalm 16:10). On death, the souls of Jesus and the thief went to Hades (or, more precisely, the paradise of Hades). Their bodies were entombed. I believe the words, “...neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption,” refer exclusively to the physical body of the Christ. This body did not see corruption. The Lord’s resurrection fulfilled David’s prophecy. Jesus and the thief would be comforted in paradise, just as Lazarus is comforted (Luke 16:25b). He is still there!

What then do some commentator’s say on all this?

- “Paradise was, in the beginning, the habitation of man in his state of innocence, in which he enjoyed that presence of his Maker, which constituted his supreme happiness. Our Lord’s words intimate that this penitent (thief) should immediately be taken to the abode of the spirits of the just, where he should enjoy the presence and approbation of the Most High.” (Adam Clarke)
- “Paradise is the resting place of the redeemed before the final judgement, and is opened to those who trust in Jesus.” (I. Howard Marshall).
- “About two centuries before Christ was born, the Hebrews rose to the great belief in immortality – to the faith that the friends of God do not perish but are in His holy keeping for ever. But where? Not, as they had once believed, in a dim and dreary underworld, called ‘Sheol’, beyond the jurisdiction of the Almighty, but in a hidden paradise prepared by God for the righteous. So “paradise” became another name for the abode of the blessed after death.” (AM Hunter)
- “In Luke 23:43 the word “paradise” is used by Jesus for the place where souls go immediately after death of the concealed paradise in later Jewish thought. The same idea is also present in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.” (FC Fensham)

Do 2 Cor. 12:3,4 and Revelation 2:7 speak of heaven itself? I think so. I agree with C.K. Barrett that “paradise came to be used of the abode of the blessed after death or after the final judgement.” Paul equates paradise with “the third heaven” (2 Cor. 12:2) or the dwelling place of God. The quote in Revelation brings Eden to mind because the tree of life is mentioned. After the fall, God prevented Adam and Eve from eating the fruit of this tree. But, in heaven or paradise, the saved are entitled to eat of it. What a contrast! It reminds me of the poems by John Milton: Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained. What we lost in Adam we regain, with fuller measure, in the second Adam.

When I think of the Garden of Eden words like idyllic, beautiful, delightful and perfect spring to mind. There has been no greater place on earth. Eden was probably destroyed at the time of the Flood. But this first paradise cannot compare with the paradise of Hades or the paradise also known as heaven. These speak of unique comfort and joy.

Editorial **Looking to the future**

I want to use this editorial to tell you something of the future plans for your magazine. Let me stress at the outset that the magazine 'belongs' to the readership and that my role as Editor is to try, to the best of my ability and with the considerable support of other contributors, to provide an informative and instructive magazine for you the reader.

The magazine is now in its 70th year of publication. It was a complete surprise to be approached with a view to taking over as editor from James Gardiner but after long thought the conviction grew that it represented an opportunity to continue an important work for the Lord. The remit from those who have been involved with the magazine over many years is to refresh the style and content, increase the readership and continue to provide an effective medium for the teaching of, and reflection on, God's word. Some challenge, but I want to stress that in no way is that remit intended as an actual or implied criticism of any of the wonderfully committed and fruitful work that has been carried out over the years. On your behalf I thank in particular James, John Kneller, Frank Worgan, Ian Davidson and Sis. Moncrieff (the latter performs the important task of proof reading), for their sterling work, and many others before them who have made the Standard the long-serving magazine that it is. I would also include here a word of thanks for our printers who provide great service in the printing of the magazine. I am delighted to say that with the exception of James who is taking a well-earned 'retirement' all of those mentioned will be continuing to provide input to the magazine.

So what can you expect? The thrust of the magazine will continue to be as a medium for teaching and discussion about the revelation of God as contained in Scripture. So articles that improve our knowledge and practice of Christianity will continue to be at the heart of the content. Knowledge of the unfolding revelation of God's divine plan for mankind is of course vitally important. As we learn more about how God has dealt with mankind through the ages we can better appreciate what is required of us today. The popular Question Box feature will continue dealing as it does with issues that concern readers and which require informed explanation. The Scripture Readings feature has had a long run and, for the last 18 years, Ian Davidson has provided well-researched background. Ian has agreed to put his efforts into a new, regular 'Word Study' feature, which should be of interest to all serious Bible students. From time to time series of articles will appear and this month Ian is also starting a study of Biblical Archaeology based on some of his own experiences and research. Some of the 'features' we have in mind will bring teaching on:

- Foundations of the Faith
- Events from the Life of Jesus
- Contemporary Issues

- Practical Christianity

In this latter context this issue contains an article on Forgiveness.

Walk worthy of the calling

Earlier I stressed improvement in knowledge and **practice**, because we have to be practitioners of Christianity as well. Not just hearers of the Word but doers also. Personal Christian experience, shared with brothers and sisters in Christ, can be just as powerful a tool (if not more so) as an intensively researched treatise on some aspect of Scripture. What could be more compelling as teaching the practice of Christianity than the example of Jesus himself when he washed the feet of his disciples or turned away the accusers who would stone a woman to death or when he astounded his disciples with his teaching on forgiveness.

The practice of Christianity is what all of our study, reading, teaching and preaching should result in. Because real Christianity doesn't happen in an intellectual vacuum; nor is it enacted in our church buildings; it actually happens at the 'coalface' – in the streets of our towns and cities, in schools, workplaces, within families. It happens in response to difficulty, persecution and sorrow. It is demonstrated when a Christian turns the other cheek, performs an act of service, suffers for doing right, walks in love and lives peaceably with brothers and sisters in Christ. What I'm driving at is that there is a place in your magazine for helping your fellow Christians by telling them how you coped with situations that may be common to many people. Have you had doubts about your faith and come through, or felt lonely at school or in the workplace because of your beliefs, or gained strength from your faith to cope with the sickness or death of a loved one? If you have had experiences in your Christian life that can be helpful to your fellow travellers, then let's share them. Write them down and help us all to grow.

Editorial policy

Editorial policy in terms of what will and will not be published is inevitably a thorny issue. However I have no claim to be an authority on the interpretation of scripture – far from it. I believe that the readership of the Standard is generally mature and capable of reading and considering the teaching that brethren offer. Like you, I have my views on matters of faith and doctrine and in some of those find that I am in disagreement with brethren with whom I have worshipped for many years. Some of my views have changed over the years through reading, study or listening to alternative points of view and some haven't. I will publish articles the content of which I might personally disagree with in whole or in part. Why? Let me make this inclusive. So long as we only read or listen to that which concurs with our own view of things we have no

chance of learning anything new. The only time any of us can learn something new is when we listen to someone else (through the written word or otherwise). The skill of listening is a much-neglected one. If we consider, and accept something that we have not appreciated before then we can thank God that we have gained knowledge; if we consider and reject some teaching then we have probably strengthened our conviction. Whichever way, we gain. Only in the exceptional circumstances of considering something to be blatantly unscriptural or having an 'offensive tone' would it not be published.

Provoke one another

.....to love and good works. I am wholly committed to the magazine providing inspiration and upliftment to readers. There are many challenges facing us today as we preach the Gospel and try to elevate the name of Jesus in our secular and consumer-driven society and the last thing we need is the energy-sapping need to deal with internal strife. Let's use our energy to build up and encourage with the written word. Let us celebrate the variety and richness of Biblical knowledge, Christian experience and faithful teaching that exists in the Lord's Church. Let us reserve our energy for upholding the Christian way of life, fighting the pernicious theory of evolution and countermanding those, some of them 'religious' people themselves, who would deny the very fundamentals of the Christian faith. We need to provide an environment of spiritual leadership in which our young people can themselves grow spiritually strong and become confident in their own knowledge of the truth when much that is around them in the media, social structure, international politics and much more speaks nothing of the love of Jesus and the need for salvation. So there is much for us to do and I hope and pray that together we can provide a useful outlet for Bible teaching.

I would like to finish with two pleas. Firstly News and Coming Events will continue to be published. However, The Christian Worker provides an extremely good coverage of events and I feel it is the best medium for advertising those matters. I would encourage readers and congregations to use both the Standard and the CW for their respective purposes.

Secondly, this magazine relies on input from its readership constituency. I will be trying hard to achieve a wider input as I don't want to be in the position of sitting by my letterbox as the 15th of each month approaches hoping and praying for some article to drop onto the doormat. The work of the regular contributors is extremely valuable but there is always room for contributions from Christians who are young or old, male and female. **"Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how new may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.....let us encourage one another and all the more as you see the Day approaching."** (Heb 10:23-26. NIV)

Biblical Archaeology

Ian Davidson (Motherwell)

In June 1990 I visited Jerusalem to attend *The Second International Congress on Biblical Archaeology* which marked the centenary of the first stratigraphic excavation in Palestine. The opportunity arose as the result of my membership of *The Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society*. This society, based in London, was founded in 1961. The founders were Dr. Alec Lerner, Leon Shalit and Dr. Richard Barnett. Dr. Barnett was the man who aroused my interest in archaeology. At one time he was Keeper of Western Asiatic Antiquities at the British Museum. On one of my frequent visits to this great museum I purchased two of his books – *Assyrian Palace Reliefs and Illustrations of Old Testament History* – which I later read avidly.

The founders of the Society were all personal friends of General Yigael Yadin, a man of charisma and enthusiasm, who became a driving force behind the fledgling Society. At one time he was Chief of Staff of the Israel Defence Forces and I remember watching him quite often on television as he dealt with difficult political questions on modern Israel. (In 1990 I stopped by his house, but, by this time, the great man had passed on.) Eventually, he returned to civilian life as Professor of Archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the chair previously held by his father, Dr. E.L. Sukenik. Yadin became well known for the important finds he made in the Bar Kokhba caves in the Judean Desert and for his excavations at Masada. He also was in charge of a major archaeological expedition digging at Tel Hazor in northern Israel with spectacular results. Yadin will always be associated with the Dead Sea Scrolls and I have in my library his book – *The Message of the Scrolls*, first published in 1957. He is a giant in the field of Biblical Archaeology and I should have liked to meet him above all others. But it was not to be.

I could comment much more on *The Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society*. Suffice to say that it sponsors regular lectures, held mainly in the British Museum and publishes an annual Bulletin, the most recent of which contained a Preface by the Rt. Hon. Viscount Allenby of Megiddo. The Society continues to support archaeological digs in Israel during these uncertain and difficult times.

So Mary and I flew *El Al* from London to Tel Aviv. The security was something else. It took all day to fly from Glasgow via London to Israel and yet, we were still in the Roman Empire. Scotland or Caledonia and ancient Judea were part of one of the greatest empires the world has seen. I could now appreciate better the size of the Roman Empire. The car journey from Tel Aviv was also very revealing. It was uphill all the way! Jerusalem is set high in the hills of Judah about fifty kilometres from the Mediterranean and thirty kilometres west of the north end of the Dead Sea. Of course, it is one of the world's famous cities and is considered sacred by many of the adherents of the world's three great monotheistic faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Professor F.F. Bruce told me before I left that "nothing can quite come up to Jerusalem". He was right.

The Congress in Jerusalem lasted eleven days and was very intensive. There were lectures all day until late in the evening and field trips all over the place on special days. We got to visit sites and meet numerous eminent Biblical archaeologists. It was tiring but I loved it all.

But what is Archaeology? I think Vos can help us here. He writes: **"The word *Archaeology* means literally a study of ancient things, but the term has come to be used in a fairly specific sense. Usually it applies to a study of excavated materials belonging to a former era ... Biblical Archaeology ... is an examination of ancient things that have been lost and found again, as those recovered objects relate to the study of Scripture and the portrayal of life in Bible times".** The archaeologist's method of procedure is scientific. Indeed archaeology is a composite science because it seeks assistance from many other sciences. **"In endeavouring to reconstruct the past of ancient peoples, the archaeologist will seek first to understand their environment. Geographical, geological and climatic factors will loom large in a consideration of this nature ... Second, the archaeologist must find out about the people themselves – the type of houses they built; the forms of government or social organisation they constructed; the religious practices in which they engaged; the tools they used; the art they created; and by interpretation of material finds, the very outlook on life that they possessed"**. (Vos). Liam de Peor has said: **"The archaeologist's object is no less than the study of mankind"**.

There are limitations of archaeology, mainly due to the vast span of time and area to be covered and the hazards of preservation. No biblical site has, or ever can be completely excavated. **"As archaeology, a branch of history, deals primarily with materials, it can never test such great Biblical truths as the existence and redeeming activity of God and Christ, the Incarnate Word"** (D.J. Wiseman, Emeritus Professor of Assyriology, University of London).

The time-divisions in archaeology are as follows: Stone Age (pre-4000 BC); Chalcolithic (4000 – 3150 BC); Bronze Age (3150 – 1200 BC); Iron Age (3150 – 330 BC); Hellenistic (330 – 37 BC); Roman (37 BC – Ad 324); Byzantine (AD 324 – 636); Islamic (Ad 636 -). There are many sub-divisions, especially within the Bronze Age and Iron Age. It was in Palestine that the archaeological technique of sequence dating was first worked out. The system will always be associated with Sir Flinders Petrie, Archaeologist and Egyptologist. He and William Foxwell Albright are undoubtedly the outstanding figures in the history of Biblical Archaeology.

To Be Continued

The heavens are declaring God's glory and the expanse is displaying His handiwork.

Day after day is uttering speech and night after night is showing knowledge.

There is no language and there are no words where their voice is not being heard.

(Psalm 19:1-3)

The Ultimate Reason is the Supreme Designer

Fortuitous Chance
(Allan Ashurst, Manchester)

Richard Dawkins, a Fellow of New College Oxford, is an evolutionary biologist and the "Charles Simonyi Professor For The Understanding Of Science" at Oxford University. Put simply, his mandate is to explain science to the layman. He claims that everything developed "by fortuitous chance" from nothing over millions of years of "evolution". He says that what we see to be evidence of design in creation is only "the appearance of design."

My office and site experience in Architecture has taught me that, in the majority of cases, if work is not carefully designed and supervised, if anything can go wrong it usually will. If a construction detail is overlooked by the designer, in most cases there will be problems when trying to build it on site. Very rarely "by fortuitous chance", we will be "lucky". But everyone who has been involved in design knows that the "lucky break" could not have happened if, to begin with, some design had not been in place.

For example - a plumbing engineer might design a layout for service pipes, a ventilation engineer design a layout for air condition trunking and an electrical engineer design a layout for electrical trunking, all to go in the same ceiling void. The architect might have designed the void large enough for that to happen but the designed routes have not been co-ordinated to ensure that pipe and trunking runs do not collide. The chances are that, when the work is being carried out on site by three different teams of fixers, routes will clash. Sometimes but very rarely "by fortuitous chance" the service routes do not clash but that could not happen if there were not designed items in place already - in this case; a building, its ceiling voids, pipes, ducting and layouts for the pipes and ducting.. So one cannot avoid the fact that even "fortuitous chance" does not occur unless initially there are designed items on which that "chance" can operate. "Fortuitous chance" cannot come first. There must be design before there can be fortuitous chance.

Even if, for the sake of argument, it is allowed that in a primeval initial chaos fortuitous chance initiated a spark of order in the midst of that chaos, then the chaos around it would swamp it, immediately negate it and destroy it. For spontaneous evolution to commence there would have to be an abundance of fortuitous chances happening in the same location in the same instant, all miraculously coordinated into some sort of rational order which would: 1) render it immune to the negating effect of the overwhelming chaotic chance occurrences going on all around, and, 2) enable it to function.

The Crystals Argument

Sometimes, theoreticians offer the formation of snowflakes, ice crystals and other mineral crystals as examples of order and design spontaneously arising from chaos. What those "theoretical scientists" overlook is that a true scientist confronted with phenomena such as these would not assume that they occur by chance.

Research scientists would assume that if they had all the factors at their finger tips they would understand the reason why these crystals form as they do. They certainly would not write it off as order arising spontaneously by "fortuitous chance" from chaos. * Scientists involved in research, work on the basis that there is reason for everything they observe and they look for explanations based on reason not on chance. They do not write-off what they do not understand as being fortuitous chance operating on chaos. They look for answers, not cop-outs. They expect to find design - not just "the appearance of design" - to find reason, not just the appearance of reason.

[* Some scientists reason that the regular arrangement of snowflakes and crystals is determined by the directional forces in the atoms as arranged in the molecules, being influenced by the environment in which the crystal grows.]

The Polished Beach Pebbles Argument

The theoretical scientist, Richard Dawkins, has publicly claimed that just as a polished beach pebble is formed by accident and yet has the appearance of design - so - given enough time - everything that has appearance of design could have come about by chance. He overlooked the fact that much design is already in place for polished beach pebbles to be formed - gravity, air, water and minerals formed from atoms and molecules. Without these there would be no pebble.

Supposing we selected at random any polished beach pebble and could ascertain all the factors involved in its formation from a rough stone. Would any research scientists reject as self evident that with the necessary skills, time and facilities at their disposal it would be possible to deduce how that beach pebble came to be the shape it is? This is feasible because design is already in place for such "fortuitous accident" to happen.

To be continued

News and Information

Ghana Appeal

Twelve years ago the Ghana Appeal was started with the main objective of relieving hardship and suffering. Because our resources were so limited this could only have an appreciable effect if concentrated in one area and because we had already been in contact with Ghana, that country was

chosen. Care has been taken to use the funds effectively.

Our Ghanaian brethren have been enthusiastic in sharing their faith and evangelism soon became an important aspect of the Appeal. As a result of this, new congregations were established and their number has grown considerably. These infant Churches need Bibles and teaching material, as well as study with mature church leaders. These studies are being arranged for leaders in these new churches who will then teach their own congregations. It is very encouraging to see

this growth in the Lord's Church – but funds are needed for traveling expenses.

It is encouraging to see the caring love amongst brethren in cases such as sisters in Christ working together to help those in need amongst their congregations.

Recent medical cases include a thirteen year-old boy who was whipped around after being caught in the machinery of a corn mill. As well as having head injury his arm was broken in three places. Two operations and other essential medical treatment have also recently been effected – your donations continue to save lives among our brethren. We also paid the hospital bill for a child who died.

As Paul wrote to the Galatian church, "therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." (Galatians 6:10) Those wishing to help please make cheques payable to: **Dennyloanhead Church of Christ Ghana Fund** and send to the treasurer:

**Mrs. Janet Macdonald,
12 Charles Drive, Larbert,
Falkirk, Stirlingshire. FK5 3HB.
Tel: 01324 562480**

2002 at Dennyloanhead

We thank God for every blessing that he showers upon us daily and we would like to share with you the following events which have brought changes to the family of God which meets at Dennyloanhead, Scotland, in the past year. First of all we remember to you our beloved sister Chris Brown who slipped into unconsciousness in

her sleep and passed away peacefully on Thursday 10th January 2002. The pain of her absence remains among us but our hearts are warmed at the knowledge that her soul has gone to be with the One to whom her heart always belonged. We remember her with love, as she was a spiritual sister, mother and grandmother to us all, constant in her kind, gentle and loving care of the brethren here and in her faithful example of service. She was tireless in sharing the gospel with friends, acquaintances and neighbours and both she and her sister, Ina, delighted in talking about God's word on a daily basis. We thank God for her life of 93 years and the blessing of her time amongst us. Our prayers are with Ina who continues to serve God with great faith and courage.

We would also like to share with you our joy and welcome into the family of the Lord, Stewart Malcolm who gave himself to the Lord through baptism on Monday, 10th June. We thank God and rejoice in another lost sheep that has returned to the fold. We have been blessed with another family addition, our brother Dale Meikle who has joined us from Mutare in Zimbabwe. Despite very difficult family circumstances in Zimbabwe, he has been a diligent and willing servant of God with the family here, and it has given us great encouragement and joy to share in fellowship with him. We would also ask you to join with us in praying for his family and all the family of God in Zimbabwe, their fellow countrymen and government leaders.

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who

belong to the family of believers.”
Gal. 6:9,10.

We pray that God will continue to bless us and all His family in this New Year that lies ahead as we seize every opportunity with praise and thanksgiving and give Him the glory always.

Claire Snedden

Obituaries

Sister Annie Dougall **Wallacestone, Scotland**

It is with deep regret that we record the passing of Sis. Annie Dougall, widow of the late Bro. David Dougall. Sis. Dougall died at Barleystone Court Nursing Home on Friday 11th October at the age of 91 years. She was laid to rest on Friday 18th October. Bro. Ian Davidson officiated at the Funeral Home and Bro. John Kneller at the graveside. “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord”.

James Grant, secretary.

And in connection with the above notice is this message of thanks.

Janette and Isa, daughters of the late Sis. Annie Dougall wish to thank everyone for all the support given during their recent bereavement. The expressions of sympathy by way of cards, telephone calls and visits were greatly appreciated. It is a privilege indeed to belong to such a wonderful family as the Church of the Lord.

Sister Joyce Nyirenda **Anaya**

Stretford, Manchester

Sister Joyce was born on 8th July 1932 and went to be with the Lord

Jesus on Wednesday 20th November 2002. She passed away suddenly of heart failure in Wythenshawe Hospital Emergency Department (Manchester).

A member of the Church of Christ in Mpambe, Nkatabay, Malawi she met with the Church in Stretford whilst on extended stay with her daughter’s family in Manchester.

Joyce was brought up in the Church of England faith. When she was shown the Bible teaching on baptism by the brethren in Malawi, she did not hesitate, saying, “I cannot go against the Word”. Her life was fraught with difficulties but her faith was always strong. Discussing life after death the Sunday before she died she said, “I am prepared”.

Much loved by her family, friends and the brethren here, she will be greatly missed. In Malawi, as a midwife, she brought hundreds of children into the world and was renowned for her goodness and kindness to numerous people.

This love and devotion to the Lord was the hallmark of her life.

The Church in Stretford

Brother Harold Shambley **Longshoot, Wigan.**

Harold wasn’t widely known outside the churches in the Wigan area but he was one of the Lord’s loyal and dedicated footsoldiers. Quiet and unassuming, Harold was humble and self-deprecating in his humour, but he possessed a faith that enabled him to handle with characteristic fortitude and grace a number of illnesses over the last few years. He enjoyed the love and companionship of his dear wife Joyce and he was a devoted father to his children Alan and Karen. Bro. Doug Melling led the funeral serv-

ice and paid a fitting tribute to a man who was loved and respected by everyone. He will be greatly missed but he has his reward.

Brother Len Daniell

We have been notified by Bro. Les Daniell of the death of his father, Bro. Len Daniell of Bedminster, Bristol on the 1st December 2002. Len was 93 years old and despite poor eyesight and the need to live in a Home for the Elderly for the last two years (very happily Les informs us), Len was nevertheless a regular attendee at the Church services thanks to the help of brethren providing transport. Len was an active and stalwart member of the Bedminster congregation, led a thriving Sunday School (up to 200 children at one point) and enjoyed, at the time, the fellowship of the 'Old Paths' meetings and anniversaries whose views Len continued to hold to throughout his later years.

Please remember the family of Bro. Len and the congregation in Bristol as they mourn Len's loss, but rejoice that another man of faith has now achieved this life's ultimate goal.

Coming Events

**Merchant Street, Peterhead
2003**

11th & 12th January

Speaker: David Murray, Aberdeen

8th & 9th February

Speaker: Alistair Ferrie, Dundee

1st & 2nd March

Speaker: John Mooney, Livingston

**On each occasion meeting times
will be:**

Saturday 7.00pm

(followed by refreshments)

Sunday: 10.00 am Bible Class

11.00 am Breaking of Bread

6.00 pm Gospel Meeting

**Annual Social: 12th & 13th April
2003**

Saturday 12th April

3.00 pm and 6.00 pm

Speakers: Joe Nisbet, Aberdeen

Graham Gorton, Manchester

*These brothers will also speak on
Sunday 13th at the times noted
above.*

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