

Believers'

MAGAZINE

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EDITORIAL **Searchlight**

The changing pattern of assembly life is a cause of deep concern to many believers in assembly fellowship, especially to those who have a caring role in the local situation.

In daily living, change is inevitable, in fact, some aspects of it may be very welcome. Change for change sake, however, is of doubtful advantage, especially where it touches spiritual values, which are not really affected by a changing scene.

Amongst English-speaking people, the steady drift away from the AV of the Scriptures is a move which has few short-term advantages, and many long-term pitfalls. Certainly the language of the AV is slightly archaic, and some words have changed their meaning, but this is off-set by a faithfulness in translation and a dignity which cannot be said about many of the modern translations. Sadly, the memorising of texts is losing its impact. Although many quotations made publicly may be faithful to the versions from which they are taken, the common identity is lost and an increasing amount of confusion is creeping in, especially in Sunday School work.

If the intention of the producers of the many modern versions was to give everyday readers of the Scriptures a clearer understanding of the book, the

result seems to be pointing in the opposite direction. Amongst christians in assembly fellowship there does not appear to be an upsurge of Bible knowledge as a consequence of changing from the AV. What is very evident, however, is a sense of frustration amongst audiences, when a speaker reads from a version which is different from what is in general use.

Some treat hymns and hymn-books as if they were inspired, and this, of course, is indefensible. However, to discard hymn-books which have served christians well, and which are generally sound doctrinally, is a very serious step to take. If in the opinion of responsible brethren, some hymns should be deleted and some should be added, so be it; this is change which would be acceptable. A wholesale discarding is another matter. The chorus books now being used for general christian service in many meetings are no substitute for what is time-honoured and generally acceptable to christian companies.

On the defensive side, some brethren take up the position that since assemblies are autonomous, interference in any assembly's affairs by other persons or assemblies is totally unacceptable. As a general rule this stand has much to commend it. There is, however, an important point to take into consideration. If freedom is pushed to the limit, it may result in isolation.

F.E.S.

Zephaniah (2)

by W.M. Banks, Hamilton

The call to repentance (ch. 2:1-3). In the first chapter a solemn picture emerged. Spiritual declension (vv.1-6) by no matter whom (vv.7-13) must inevitably result in judgment (vv.14-18). Is there no way back? There always is! In the opening paragraph of ch.2 (vv. 1-3) the prophet shows the way.

The appeal he makes is marked by urgency — gather, gather (v.1); before, before, before (v.2); seek, seek, seek (v.3). There is no time to waste. The word for “gather together” (v.1), means “to gather together stubble as fuel for burning”. By implication it is clear that a confession of unworthiness and therefore sinfulness was involved. Even the word for “nation” (v.1) which implies Gentile or “pagan neighbours” indicates that they were in such a condition that they could have no special covenant claim upon God. They must come simply with confession of their need on their lips. However time was short. Judgment was about to fall. God’s decree was about to be implemented and His fierce anger was about to come. Therefore response had to be swift. The unsaved are often warned about the necessity of “being in time”. Perhaps the urgency for believers has been lost. We dare not be complacent about present conditions. If urgent action is not taken it could be too late.

But what has to be done? The

verses are almost a summary of repentance. We urge the need for it with the unsaved. How necessary it is among believers as well. Remember the appeal to Ephesus in Rev 2:5 and Laodicea in Rev 3:19 and many others besides? Perhaps the reason we see it so seldom in the unbeliever is because it is absent from the believer!

The prophet urges to seek the Lord, to seek righteousness and to seek meekness. He is regulating our lives Godward, manward and selfward. The idea is reminiscent of the earlier prophet Micah. “What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” (Mic 6:8). Will there be a response, if Zephaniah’s appeal is heeded? There was in his case. He was hid during Manasseh’s anger. The Lord hid him. “It may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord’s anger” (v.3). Those who turn in response to the appeal can be assured of Divine intervention and preservation.

Judgment against nations surrounding Judah (ch.2:4-15). Having dealt with his own nation the prophet now moves out to consider the nations immediately surrounding. The Gentiles are not going to remain unaffected; they are not going to escape the judgment of the day of the Lord. Sin must be dealt with no matter where it is found. Perhaps it

appears today as if the nations of the world are out of control — doing as they please. Not so! God is still on the throne and behind the seeming chaos he is cognisant of the details, particularly their treatment of His own people.

The Philistines in the west are first addressed in vv.4-7. The language used indicates no possibility of escape — “forsaken”, “desolation”, “rooted up”, “destroy” — but rather a scene of utter destruction. Where people once lived the sheep are going to roam freely (v.6). The reason is not directly given but it may be learned from the names used. It has been observed that “the names of their cities expressed boastfulness”. Gaza means “the strong shall be desolated”. Ekron that the “deep rooted shall be uprooted”. In other words their fundamental characteristic was one of conceit. And as always, here it comes before destruction.

There is no doubt about the sin of Moab and Ammon (vv.8-11). Their destruction is consequent on “their pride” (v.10). The connection with Sodom and Gomorrah (v.9) is interesting. Moab and Ammon existed as a consequence of Lot’s incestuous relationships after his escape from Sodom and Gomorrah. Now however the offspring of Lot were to be made like the cities from which their father came. What a solemn lesson. The effect which Sodom and Gomorrah had on Lot’s family at the first was to find its consummation in judgment on their family at the end. Longfellow has well summarised:

“The mills of God grind slowly
Yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stands

waiting,
With exactness grinds He all”.

Having dealt with the Philistines in the West and Moab and Ammon in the East he briefly mentions Ethiopia or Egypt in the South. They would not escape either but “be slain by My sword” (v.12). The North is not to be excluded and Assyria, that terrible nation, with its capital Nineveh must become “a desolation, and dry like a wilderness” (v.13). Who dares say “I am, and there is none beside Me”? (v.15). “Every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his head” (v.15).

The common sin of all the nations mentioned is clearly pride. Sadly it is not a rare feature among God’s people today. Indeed it seems to be on the increase. Let us learn from the nations surrounding Judah!

Warning to Judah and Jerusalem (ch.3:1-7). It is perhaps in consequence of the common sin of pride so blatantly displayed in the nations around and the solemn judgment pronounced upon it that the prophet now turns again with words of warning to his own people. If they persist in showing the same features in continuing to sin, how can “the just Lord” (v.5) fail to implement judgment upon them? His exposure of their sins is devastating. In unmistakable language the city is arraigned. Rebellion, pollution and oppression are salient features. She obeys not, receives not, trusts not, does not draw near to her God. Every department of spiritual life is affected. Equally every class of leadership is deficient — the princes, judges, prophets and priests.

The princes were lions, roaring lions, ruling with dictatorial authority;

her judges wolves, evening wolves, hungry for position and place; her prophets "braggarts and traitors" quick to exalt self and use others for personal gain, political tricksters, handling the word of God deceitfully; the priests polluting the very sanctuary they should have been beautifying and perverting the law they should have been proclaiming with clarity. What an indictment! Leaders among God's people should take note. It is little wonder that the nation was in such a spiritual decline. Is the source of the problem the same today?

Such conditions could not go unpunished and in v.5 "the just Lord is in the midst" of His people "morning by morning" to bring His judgment to light. Yet "the unjust knoweth no shame". Even the example (vv.6-7) of Divine wrath against the surrounding nations was not enough to influence His people. They still "rose early, and corrupted all their doings" (v.7). They were totally insensible to Divine pleading and determined to continue in wilful disobedience to the clear intervention of God.

To be continued

THE UNKNOWN YEAR

John Griffen

*What shall it hold for us, the unknown year?
Shall sunshine flood our path as on we move?
Causing our hearts to know naught else but cheer,
And all the joys of life thus daily prove,
Or shall the darksome clouds bedim our sky?
And bring the changes which we so oft dread,
Shall sorrows of the way our patience try?
And make us wonder why we thus are led:
Whate'er it be, into the year we go,
But let's proceed with faith and firm resolve,
To nobler live, a bit more kindness show,
And do the right whate'er it may involve:
We will forget the failures of the past,
And strive to do our duty, come what may,
The trivials of life aside we'll cast,
And try to help our brethren on their way:
The wishes which we make for others' good,
May they not be just thoughts or words so vain,
But let us act upon them as we should,
Knowing that this will bring nought else but gain.*

The Priority of Personal Perspective

by H. Reid, Brazil

One of the most saddening pictures in Scripture, one that tends to captivate our attention, is found in 1 Samuel: the official leader of God's people, Eli, is almost without vision. He undoubtedly represents the nation, which had long since lost its sense of discernment and the spiritual aptitude to distinguish God's overwhelming desire to receive the unadulterated worship of a separated people. In his position Eli, without question, should have been sensitive to the real spiritual needs of the people, but he allowed himself to get into a situation deservant of divine rejection. It seems as if his own family, by its attitude, had confiscated all his moral strength, resulting in God relieving him of the highest honour in the nation.

Israel, morally and spiritually reflected in Eli personally, was in a condition of definite decline and decadence; in the words of Scripture: "in those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes". The result was that anarchy and immorality penetrated the life of the nation which was to be the model of sanctification among the nations.

In our present environment, detailed in Paul's second letter to Timothy (3:1-5), the Lord would certainly desire the saints to have a vision which is crystal clear of their mission in the world. On one occasion the Lord Jesus invited the disciples to

"lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35). The disciples, perhaps a little preoccupied with the material things of life, were confronted by this challenge to pay less attention to mundane things and to concentrate more on the increasing spiritual needs of a lost humanity fast hurrying on its way to eternal doom.

A question emanates from this text to our hearts. Do we really care? Or have we an armchair philosophy, carefully and somewhat subtly prepared to exempt us from being actively involved? Materialism has a dulling effect on the spiritual conscience, and lethargy and indolence are the fruits that it very soon produces. If such is our condition surely we need divine intervention as Israel in 1 Samuel; we should be careful to make it the top priority in our petitions that the Lord of the harvest would open our eyes to the real need of the nations, and give us spiritual strength to find the centre of His will for our lives. There is another perspective to the question; a spiritual battle is constantly being fought in the heavenlies (Eph 6:12); the design and most assuredly the desire of the devil is that we be more concerned with our own material wellbeing and worldly advancement than with the extending of the kingdom of God's dear Son.

Elisha's prayer (2 Kings 6:17) again draws our attention to the need for vision. It is interesting to note that

there we are confronted with a vision of the powerful potentialities that are at the disposal of all the servants of God. Elisha's servant saw in an instant of time the encompassing host of the Lord; what a divine defense! The voice of that man of God echoes across the centuries. "Lord I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see". Elder brother in the assembly, should this not really be our prayer for the young men of today, that the celestial Surgeon operate on the eyes of those who have no vision. The wise man said, "Where there is no vision the people perish" (Prov 29:18). Too often we forget the magnitude and might of God's militia (Heb 1:14). Would that we could grasp Paul's words to the suffering Roman assembly, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom 8:31).

Lack of vision contributed largely to the untold mental suffering of the two on the road to Emmaus. Their hopes were pinned on a temporal, material kingdom which would in due course liberate the Jews from the Roman yoke. In Luke 24 we encounter them, disappointed, dejected and totally disanimated. To make things worse they were leaving the field of the battle, Jerusalem, having rejected the company, and were on a downward road. In these conditions, the great Sympathiser joined in their conversation and went with them, but, in the words of Holy Writ, "their eyes were holden that they should not know him" (v.16). They were in evident need of a clear and concise exposition of the Scriptures. It should never cease to amaze us that the patient, listening Christ is always demonstrating His omnipresence in

accompaniment of the downcast, and especially those that have an inclination to depart from the assembled company among whom they were once so active and happy. It seems so evident that their lack of vision was inseparably linked with their condition of heart; they needed the reviving, heart-warming word of truth.

How often in our conferences and meetings the scourge is used to try and drive the sheep back into the fold, when what is really needed is the support and comfort of the shepherd's rod and staff. We cannot but be impressed by the manner in which the Lord treated this problem of weakness and departure; He did not cut them off and leave them isolated, to drift to their eventual doom; He gave them a heart-warming revelation of the truths of Scripture, showing them the divine mission of His own blessed person. What would any one of us not give to have heard that Bible study? Would it not have a warming effect on our hearts as well? What a change we see as He broke the bread: "their eyes were opened, and they knew him" (v.31). The uphill road back to Jerusalem at that advanced hour, with thieves and danger on every hand, was no obstacle so long as they could get back to the fellowship. Imagine the excitement when they opened the disciples' door, and as they related their heart-warming and eye-opening experience. Perhaps, if we are really honest before the Lord, we sometimes lack this enthusiasm and disposition once so characteristic of the local assemblies.

Lukewarmness is also associated with lack of vision. The material

blessings of the Lord to His people have taken His place in many lives, and have robbed the Lord of the harvest of valuable labourers and uncountable hours of service. The church in Laodicea falls into this category, perhaps this catastrophe, of letting possessions and riches dissolve their sense of values and discernment as to spiritual things. The attitude of life of the Laodicean laxity is most evident in their collective declaration, "I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing" (Rev 3:17). May the Lord save us from such nauseating sentiments; we shall never cease to be a needy people, dependent on the risen Lord for guidance, strength and divine direction as we cross this wilderness waste. Such blindness the Lord has utterly rejected, therefore He counsels, "anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see" (v.18). The eyesalve of God's word is the only balm which can restore our perspective of the great need that surrounds us, and eventually give us an aptitude for His service.

When the risen Lord gave His post-resurrection command to His disciples they were clearly appointed to go to the mountain (Matt 28:16). In the last chapter of John we find them down at the sea! It seems that Peter's influence had predominated the thinking and behaviour of the servants, hence the great waste of time and talents during the night (21:3). This lack of productive service no doubt reminds us of the Lord's words in John 15: "for without me ye can do nothing" (v.5). May the Lord help us to learn this invaluable lesson, that we really do need His presence and

power if we are to "bring the net to land full of great fishes" (v.11); He is the only one that gives the increase.

Before realising His presence the morning mist of the Galilean shore somewhat dimmed their vision: "the disciples knew not that it was Jesus" (v.4); but when the "sun of righteousness" enlightened their minds, Peter, who was really the inspiration of the weary night's fishing, forgot all about the "multitude of fishes" and cast himself into the sea.

In conclusion, could we meditate on a consoling vision? The time which remains is so very short: the coming of the Lord is imminent. Many who pass through this vale of tears, see the empty chair and suffer silent loneliness at home because the voice of a loved one has ceased. Beloved brethren and sisters, it is only for "a little while"; much sooner than we expect our eyes will be contemplating "the king in his glory". In the words of the apostle John, who had no doubt felt the great lack of fellowship of His brethren because of his forced banishment into exile, "We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). There will be no vision to compare with that one. What a marvellous perspective the Lord has graciously given to each one of us. Let Paul comfort our hearts as we face the thick of the battle, in the homelands or on the foreign field: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us" (Rom 8:18). May this anticipation engrave itself on our hearts as we wait expectantly for the parousia. Maranatha!

YOUNG Believers'

Conducted by Howard A. Barnes,
Bromborough, Wirral

Pauline Epistles

PART 5: EPHESIANS

INTRODUCTION

Paul spent three years in Ephesus preaching and teaching (Acts 20:18 - 35). This spiritual investment had borne fruit and the assembly formed there was quite mature, having elders and able in this epistle to receive deep spiritual teaching.

Paul was very much aware though that this assembly and all others would become the object of Satanic attack. He said some years later (in Acts 20:28-30) "after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you . . . also of your own selves (i.e. from among the elders) shall men arise . . . to draw away disciples after them". This epistle was written by Paul with this warning in mind and also because he had heard of the problems in the district from false teachers (see last month). The epistle from Laodicea mentioned in Col 4:16 was probably this epistle to the Ephesians, copies of which would have been sent to the assemblies surrounding Ephesus. Therefore reading Ephesians after Colossians is a good idea because as we shall see they are complementary.

THE EPISTLE'S GENERAL CONTENT

Like Colossians this epistle

reveals the mysteries of the faith. In these two epistles Paul uses the word "mystery" more often than in all his other writings put together. These "mysteries" to the false teachers were those closely guarded secrets of their religion that only the initiated knew. The mysteries of our faith (1 Tim 3:9) are open secrets, knowable to all who care to read the Bible.

Whereas Colossians stresses the person and headship of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Ephesian epistle complements that truth by emphasising the body of Christ, that is all believers from Pentecost until the catching up of the church. The word "church" appears more frequently in this epistle than in Paul's other writings (nine times in six chapters). The subject appears mostly in the fifth chapter when Paul is dealing with the relationship between husband and wife, showing that for the believer, his/her faith should permeate all relationships.

The blessedness of the church as being "blessed with all spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ" (1:3 Newberry margin), is balanced by the sevenfold occurrence of the word "walk", that is our life down here, for instance, "walk worthy of the vocation (i.e. heavenly calling)" (4:1) and "walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us . . . walk as children of light" (5:2,8). The truly heavenly minded person is a lot of earthly use!

PARTICULAR POINTS

The first chapter highlights the work of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit relative to the believer. In one long sentence full of relative clauses the apostle expands the theme (see RV for proper punctuation). Vv. 3-6 tell us that the Father "hath . . . blessed us . . . chosen us . . . predestinated us . . . made us accepted". This latter acceptance is "in the beloved" i.e. the Lord Jesus Christ (see Song of Solomon for the origin of the expression). In Him we "have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins" (v.7).

The work of the Father continues in vv. 9, 10 "having made known unto us the mystery of his will . . . that in the dispensation of the fulness of time he might gather together in one all things in Christ". Thus the Father had us in mind before time and also in the future. All this will be "in Him" i.e. the Lord Jesus Christ (end of v.10). This mention of Him allows the apostle to bring the subject back to the Son by telling us that in Him "we have obtained an inheritance" (v.11). This inheritance is for all believers, so that "we" of v.12 and the "ye" of v.13 could be Jew and Gentile for instance. Belief in Christ brings (instant) "sealing with the Holy Spirit" (see "The Seal and Earnest" in previous series) marking us out as His and assuring us of future blessing (v.14). Paul's prayer (vv.15 - 23) for them is similar to the one in Col 1:3-11.

Ch.2 is very much based in time. It reminds the Ephesians of their past — "dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience" (vv.1, 2). It was among these that they lived "in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and

of the mind". We see here the separate and yet combined influence of the world, the flesh and the Devil at work in unregenerate man. "But God . . . hath quickened (made alive)"; sin had killed but God makes alive. This life has a spiritual dimension for we sit "in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus" (v.6). None of this salvation is "of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (v.8). Although they were unregenerate Gentiles; they were now united with believing Jews as "one new man" (v.15) . . . "in one body by the cross" (v.16). Viewed in another way this one body, the church, is seen as "an holy temple in the Lord . . . an habitation of God through the Spirit" (vv.22,23).

In the third chapter Paul speaks mainly about himself. Not that he wants to glorify himself for he says he is "less than the least of all the saints". But grace was given to him to "preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (v.8), and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery" (v.9), "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenlies might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God" (v.10). What a surprise, rather than as the false teachers said believers should look to the spiritual beings called (by them) "principalities and powers", believers as the church now become the focus of attention!

The fourth chapter and onward are taken up by consideration of our walk and warfare. Our walk should have both negative and positive aspects "not as other Gentiles" (4:17,18) but "in love" (5:2), "as children of light" (5:8) and "circumspectly" (i.e. exactly, 5:15), whether in life in general (5:1-21), in the family (5:22 - 6:4) and at work (6:5 - 9). Although we have mighty enemies, we have adequate armoury (6:10 - 17).

Abijah's Speech

by F.E. Stallan, Linwood

The details of Abijah's short reign of three years are recorded in 1 Kings 15:1-8, and 2 Chron 13. The account in 1 Kings concentrates on the evil of his life but makes no mention of his speech. The record of 2 Chronicles concentrates on his speech and the great battle that he fought against Israel, but makes no mention of his wicked ways. By taking two portions together we have his speech and the background against which his words should be considered.

Without doubt, Abijah's speech was a classic. If it had been preached by a better man the influence of its ministry might have had a more telling effect on succeeding generations. As it stands, it is a reminder of the saying, "I cannot hear what you say for watching what you do". Unfortunately many a good word is dulled by the same principle, and those who minister the Word are most conscious of the snare.

In modern times many men and women in high offices have speech writers. If Abijah had one he certainly knew his business. If, however, the speech was Abijah's own work, it reflects a sound grip of the ways of God, a clear lucid mind capable of putting words together, and by the very framing of the words, possibly a gift of oratory as well to put the message across.

It has been well said that many people have two sets of rules; one set

for themselves, and another set which they apply to all others. Something of this nature is seen in the life of Abijah and it comes out very clearly in his speech to Jeroboam. On the face of it, all that Abijah said was true, but it is clear that he was not governed by his own ministry. If Jeroboam had been right with God he would have been able to point out that there were other considerations to be taken into account. As it was he had no answer to the words of Abijah. He was an idolator who had no knowledge of the living God. His strength, as he saw it, was in the size of his army, which was twice the size of Abijah's. The stand that he took, was in effect, a challenge to God and was in the end his undoing. Regardless of the position taken by either king, there were nearly a million and a quarter valiant men of Israel and Judah facing each other on the field of battle, a dreadful situation for the nation to be in.

The opening words of Abijah's speech, "ought ye not to know that Jehovah the God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David forever, to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt" were indisputably correct in content. What is not said, however, is how the kingdom came to be divided and why these two kings, reigning over two parts of a divided nation were facing up to each other with mighty armies.

It is very difficult to accept that

Abijah was unaware that the kingdom was divided as a result of his grandfather Solomon's sins. It is also difficult to accept that Abijah was unaware of his father's foolish answer to the people and his harsh treatment of them as recommended by inexperienced people. Instead, he pleads that his father, Rehoboam, was young and tender-hearted and that Jeroboam had taken advantage of the situation. In addition, it is most difficult to accept that Abijah was unaware that the division of the nation was of God, and all his words, however telling in content, would not rectify the situation.

What are the lessons to be learned from Abijah and his speech? One of the first would be a reminder that whatever is placed in the hands of man will deteriorate. The nation of Israel reached its high water mark under Solomon. He had every advantage and was signally blessed of God, but he lost his heart, dishonoured God, and finally allowed idolatry to become rampant in the land. Likewise with the present dispensation of grace. The Lord has His ministry on high, the Holy Spirit is indwelling believers down here, and the Word of God is freely available to most, yet divisions and heresies abound on every hand.

Another lesson to be learned from Abijah's speech is that however correct the content of what is said, if it does not take into account other

relevant considerations it is really only half-truth. Abijah ignored his father's mistakes and his grandfather's errors and went back to his great-grandfather David's reign. If the real matter of healing the division had been on his heart he would have sought the face of God, and perhaps in the mercy of God the matters would have taken another turn. As it was, God in righteousness came in because of his servant David and gave Abijah a resounding victory. It was, of course, of short-term advantage; it did nothing to heal the breach and in the end the two parts of the nation were as far apart as ever.

Looking over church history, locally, nationally and even internationally, many of the divisions which have taken place have been supported by great speeches in defence of the actions taken. Reading statements in isolation, with the advantage of not having been involved, the conviction often arises that if the same effort had been put into healing as was put into defence of division, more might have been salvaged for the benefit of all.

There is in it all one great comfort. There is a man, God's man, into whose hands will be placed the reigns of government. When He takes over, there will be no deterioration. He will reign in righteousness, and then, and only then, will there be lasting peace and blessing.

Christ bears the heavy end of every cross He lays upon His people.

Rutherford

These Stones

by E.A.R. Shotter, Northampton

Most of us will be familiar with the records of the temptation of the Lord Jesus in the wilderness. We realise that each temptation was directed against one aspect of the tripartite nature of His human personality — body, spirit and soul (or soul and spirit according to whether Matthew or Luke is read). We also know that the temptation was not that the devil could make Him sin, but that in the temptation the Father was showing forth the sinless One. Perhaps we could add to these items of general knowledge about the temptation, but that is not quite the purpose of these papers.

On many occasions, when the OT Scriptures are quoted, we do not look back and read them in their original, or local, setting and then see how they are applied by the Holy Spirit in their NT environment. To exercise ourselves in this way is profitable, especially when we embrace the whole context of the OT quotation. Often behind a quotation is another, or even a string of them, which leads on to a fuller meaning of the NT narrative.

We turn to our subject — the temptation of the Lord Jesus. The first thing, of course, which we must remember is that it is as Man that He was tempted. John, who writes of Him as the Son of God does not include the temptation in his gospel. As Man He is carried up by the Spirit into the wilderness, but also in it He was led of the Spirit (see JND, Matthew and

Luke). Being Man, in whom is no sin, He had, like all men, sinless infirmities, for we read He was in the wilderness forty days, after which He hungered, and hunger is one such infirmity. As God He could have satisfied that hunger as He provided later for the five and the four thousand respectively, beside women and children, in the wilderness. Here He would not meet His own personal needs without His God and Father's direction. The devil uses this. He directs Jesus from His Manhood to His Deity and destined Messiahship, but in doing so throws his own insinuations (though he knew who He was) as to that Deity and Messiahship, as he had done to Eve in Eden's garden concerning the veracity of the Word of God. How different are the effects here in the wilderness from those in the garden!

The Lord Jesus, quoting from Deut 8:3, states that "Man shall not live by bread only, but on every spoken word that proceedeth through the mouth of God", Newberry margin.

In Deuteronomy Moses is giving the commandments of the Lord to be observed and practised. He reminds them of the way in which the Lord their God led them through the wilderness forty years. Why forty years? Because of their disobedience and rebellion concerning the report of the spies' forty-day expedition into the land. Forty days brought forty years of discipline. Why? "To humble thee, suffer thee to hunger, feed thee with manna, and this He did to prove

thee' is the gist of what Moses was telling them.

Turning now to Exodus 16 we find the incident of the murmurings of the sons of Israel recorded, and the promise of the Lord to 'rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate (a portion of a day in its day: rate = word) every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no'. Jehovah is speaking here.

In Psa 78:17-31 we have the Holy Spirit's word through Asaph, and here again is a story of rebellion against His word, but 'Man did eat angels' food' or 'Every one did eat the bread of the mighty ones'. In Deuteronomy the word for man is *ahdahm* — Adam; and here *ish* — man of high degree. Psa 8:4 (which is the psalm of the winepress) asks the question, 'What is (frail, mortal) man, that thou art mindful of him?' and the son of man (*ahdahm*), that thou visitest him' . . . Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou (didst) put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beast of the field . . . Hebrews 2, of course, takes up this quotation in relation to the Lord Jesus, but shows us that that dominion is yet future. He having passed by way of the cross first.

Returning to the temptation we see that whereas God led His people into and in the wilderness because of their rebellion, the Holy Spirit led the Lord Jesus into and in the wilderness to show forth Him who said, "I was not rebellious, nor turned away back".

As He was tempted in all points as we are — sin excluded, for in Him sin does not dwell — He spent a like period, forty days, to confirm His approval — not that there could have been the possibility of disapproval — as the One tested and appointed as the Son of Man. Further, Mark tells us that during those forty days He was with the wild beasts. This is another indication of His Manhood, but it points us to His dominion as indicated by the psalm.

Who can this be but the second Man destined, after passing through death, to have all things put under *His* feet.

So the temptation to turn "these stones" into bread indicates to us the Obedient One who gathers His "certain rate every day" and so — as Man — could say, "It is written"; it also indicates His coming glory when He shall — also as Man — have dominion, and when the wild beasts and domestic animals shall dwell together, Isa 11; and again it indicates the final enactment of the Lord's own words, "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out".

As we have looked at the first temptation we see that it was directed against the Lord Jesus in relation to His physical being — His human body. It is as He tabernacles amongst us in that body that He reveals the Father to men, and walks in obedience to Him. In it too He presents the claims of the gospel, and shows divine compassion and divine righteousness toward men, as well as looking on to that millennial age mentioned above.

To be continued

We cannot have power with men if we have not power with God. The greatest mistake anyone can make is to seek to have power before men without having been in the presence of God.

The Throne of Grace

by E. Robinson, Eyemouth

The Lord sometimes leads into deep waters in order that you might *require* Him, to learn His value in a new way never to be forgotten. In the time of greatest sorrow you may know what it is to have the Living One for your resource and compensation in all His supreme and abounding tenderness of love. It is the time of learning the reality of this companionship of the Man of sorrows: and what a comfort! Even your nearest and dearest is unable, even if very willing, to enter into the depth of feelings in the innermost recesses of your heart. This is not sentimentality, but the reality of communion with the One who in far greater extremity of sorrow, beyond our conception, could turn to His Father and say "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do". Luke alone records this (23:34). His Gospel breathes out the very spirit of grace.

"The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ" (Gal 3:24), teaching and conditioning us to respect and bow to the will of God, exemplified so beautifully in Christ, of whom it could be said prophetically, "Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart" (Psa 40:7.8). We might well add "Selah", (a pause or musical note), as we

contemplate what rest of heart was afforded to God in the coming into manhood and the pathway of the Son of His love. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). They came because He was the very embodiment of these moral features; indivisible, in all their perfection of harmony, they blended so that we marvel as we realise that each magnifies the other as we view them without divorce. It is impossible by the very nature of God that grace be exercised at the expense of truth.

Jesus Christ": note the title employed, signifying another order of man by way of contrast, as is emphasised by Paul (1 Cor 3:11): "other foundation can no man lay that is laid, which is *Jesus Christ*". This fundamental dispensational change from law to grace is characteristically set out by Paul in his great teaching Epistle, Romans (5:21): "As sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord". This reigning of grace is the practical application of the truth of Heb 4:16: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need". How often is truth held as merely abstract, missing the gain if it be held only mentally. The

great truth is that there is a throne of grace, not just doctrinally but actively on our behalf, available, approachable, with mercy obtainable and this, not only initially for the forgiveness of sins (for which inestimable blessing we do not cease to give thanks), but where in time of need we may ever find grace to help.

Peter, the recipient of so much needed grace, is well-qualified to speak as he does: "But the God of all grace who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ Jesus" (the title used of Him as glorified) "when you have suffered for a little while, Himself shall make perfect, stablish, strengthen, ground, to Him be the glory and the might for the ages and the ages. Amen" (1 Pet 5:10,11).

The God of all grace! How blest are we, frail, forgiven sinners — and "this God is our God for ever and ever" (Psa 48:14). Again Peter ends his second epistle (3:18) with the exhortation: "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen" (JND). Paul, in his first letter to Timothy writes: "But the grace of our Lord surpassingly overabounded with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus" (1:14, JND).

In the world, many are paupers with the taste of the millionaire; alas, with many christians the reverse operates: the riches are there but sometimes a lack of appetite to take up and fully to enjoy the rich provision secured at tremendous cost by the Saviour, as Paul says, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (2 Cor 8:9). In the same vein John reminds us of the bountiful supply which continually flows from our risen Head (1:16), "And of His fulness have all we received and grace upon grace". Again in the epistle so full of the highest spiritual blessings, Paul writes "that we should be . . . to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has made us accepted in the beloved, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace, wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and intelligence" (Eph 1:6-8). From this throne of grace then there flows to us an endless, inexhaustible supply of pure grace, entirely independent of any merit, effort or worthiness on our part. And also with this throne is linked the idea of strength, power and stability. It is of God.

"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest". Untold sorrows characterise the human race, and this invitation is not confined to those who are laden with sin. Jesus addresses anyone who is bowed with any possible sorrow, any possible bereavement. Whatever the burden upon you, the Lord speaks to you.

E.D.

REGIONS · BEYOND ·

Guatemala — Land of Eternal Spring

by Don Cawthorne

Our long single storey adobie block-house faces due east so we see beautiful sunrises, and being only 1500 miles north of the equator there is little difference in the hours of daylight all year round.

From our home, built 9,500 feet above sea-level, we have a wonderfully panoramic view to the south looking down a wide gorge to a huge plain below dotted with scattered Quiche Indian homes. Further down this plain hidden by a mountain stands the town of Quezaltenengo, 15 miles by dirt road and 2,000 feet lower down, with a population of approximately 10,000 mixed Ladino and Indians. The Indian name for this town is Xelaju (pronounced 'shaylahoo'). The Spanish Conquistadores gave it the name of Quezaltenango which means the place of the Quetzal bird, the national bird of Guatemala, but sad to say its beauty caused it to be hunted for its feathers and is now almost extinct.

Freedom Abounds Guatemala is a land where freedom abounds, having a population of approximately seven and a half million people, one third of whom are of Spanish culture known as Ladinos, a term used for people of Spanish-Indian mixed-blood. These form the professional class from whom the Government is drawn — lawyers, barristers, engineers and doctors of various disciplines though not medical. The remaining two thirds of the population are pure bred Indians forming 23 tribes both large and small, each with their own distinctive language. Amongst these only Spanish is taught in schools, even the most rural, and only a tiny minority can read their own language when reduced to writing.

The whole country being mountainous has a whole range of climates from hot steamy tropical lowlands to more temperate upland climates, therefore a wide variety of crops can be planted, from an abundance of tropical fruits, to apples, pears, plums, raspberries, strawberries and blackberries. Possibly hence the term the "land of eternal spring". Even though mountainous there are no problems with communications or transportation as telephones have become commonplace and there are good roads connecting all towns. Also there is certainly no problem of over-population as the average expectation of life is 42 - 45 years.

From our arrival in Guatemala in July 1967 the government has been a military junta which has never interfered with the liberty of the people, either from a religious or general nature. At the last elections in early 1986 the military stood down and a democratic government was voted in peacefully. The country is in general quite stable apart from excessive and dangerous delinquency and sporadic attacks by Marxist guerrillas especially in the NW. The northern one third of Guatemala is largely impenetrable jungle, sparsely inhabited and accessed by a dirt road slicing through it to a town named Las Flores (the flowers) situated in the middle of a lake called Lake Peten Itza.

Call to serve among the Indians On our arrival in the capital city, Guatemala, we found the assemblies gathered there somewhat legalistic in their nature with various unscriptural prescriptions as it seemed to us, and at an early date the Lord pointed us to the Central Highlands to serve Him among the Quiche Indians, and to establish a local assembly built on proper NT doctrine. Our call was specific and clear to serve the Lord among the Indians.

The origin of the 120 legalistic assemblies is somewhat obscure, and one feels they could have been a real potential for God, but owing to numerous divisions this potential has evaporated. Between 1983 and 1986 we know of four divisions and, sad to say, those who have caused these further tragedies are leading dangerously toward modernism or alternatively to becoming members of a system. Recently one has said that where there is a departure from the Truth "one foot seems to slide into the Old Testament Scriptures". By my count there are approximately ten different groups of assemblies existing in this country.

Erroneous Statement During this year we read a most erroneous statement from a missionary source concerning Guatemala which said "there is a stampede from Roman Catholicism to Pentacostalism", and this is completely untrue. The RC church in Guatemala remains strong and RC's are the most difficult to win for the Lord or to the evangelical cause. There is no stampede of any kind except that the Indian population being pagans with only a veneer of Catholicism are those who fall most easily for the excitement, emotionalism and jazzed-up religious music and singing of modern Pentecostalism. Living as we do among these Indian folk we are in a position to know the truth of the matter.

Riding Ponies In 1969 the Lord in His own divine way led us to set up home amongst these Quiche Indians on the border

running between two mountain districts, that is Chajabal and La Cumbre. We realised that from this district we should have tremendous outreach to the surrounding areas, Chitakin, Chumasum, Nimasac and several others. We purchased two riding ponies and consistently visited these areas carrying our food and simple medicines and very soon we were known by name far and wide. We soon established a Clinic and Gospel Hall, and quickly had a congregation of between 40 and 50 adults and children, and were determined to plant a true NT assembly. In all this the Lord has added His rich blessing and though the assembly only numbers 48 souls at present, they are the result of much praying and preaching of the faithful Word. We could name between 50 and 60 souls who made professions of faith and were baptised over the years, but evidently the pathway of true assembly fellowship proved to be too narrow for them and they went out from us, 1 John 2:19. The Lord's Hand however moves in our favour, and our Hall which has a capacity for over 100 people is generally almost full.

Medical Help Though not qualified as either doctor or nurse we realised from the very beginning that our service here called for medical help amongst so much poverty. The Great Physician has blessed and led us even in this, also placing in our hands two exceptional manuals of instruction. The great number of people who come to us for free medicine and treatment speaks for itself concerning their confidence in us. I suppose we have extracted several thousand teeth and stitched up an uncountable number of injuries, and we are on call seven days a week for accidents.

Our main purpose is naturally that all these people who need our help also need to hear the Gospel, so on Clinic mornings we stipulate that they must be here by 8.00 a.m. to receive a number to keep order, and this gives us a ready-made congregation and the great joy of preaching to so many people at one time. The first arrivals are here by 6.15 a.m. Literature is freely distributed amongst them. Sick visitation is at times a necessity.

Guatemala's Great Need Regarding the present and future missionary activity, Guatemala's great need is for those prepared to live amongst the Indian population, who are greater in number than the Ladinos. And more important still to be determined to plant true NT assemblies. Sad to say we are surrounded by spurious religious groups, with public address systems and they are a menace to our Flock, but we ourselves have never had the need to use such annoying apparatus. Glad to say we have proved that there are still people who have a desire for the truth even during these days characterised by the features of 2 Tim 4:3-4.

Question

All questions should be sent to the Editor, Believer's Magazine, Office, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and should have the name and address of sender. Consideration of space may prevent the publication of answers.

QUESTION

Is there another company that rejoices as well as the angels when a sinner repents? (Luke 15:10).

ANSWER

The opening verses of the chapter alluded to make clear that there is joy and rejoicing in heaven when repentance takes place within the heart of a sinner. The first illustration of the lost sheep concludes with the general statement that "joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15:7). It is good to note that many passages of Scripture emphasise the interest of heaven in matters which take place upon earth.

In the verse within our question there is reference to joy being in *the presence* of the angels of God, and whilst no doubt the angels themselves rejoice at such news, the actual joy being described is that which is in the "presence of" the angels of God. In that same presence there are saints from down the ages in their unclothed state as well as other levels of unseen authority forming part of the creation of God (Eph 1:21). All in that blest place are filled with joy when on earth there is the evidence of the power of God with its resulting glory to God as seen when a sinner repents and returns in submission to God.

J.R. Baker

QUESTION

Is it unscriptural for a brother with the full consent of the elders, to open his home on a regular basis for the study of the Scripture?

ANSWER

For a particular matter to be unscriptural it must be able to be directly opposed by a specific Scripture. The present writer knows of no Scripture which would forbid such an action although it is needful to sound some note of caution.

The assembly is the place where the teaching of the Word of God should take place regularly in a given locality. The questioner has however spoken of the full fellowship of the elders. If such an arrangement exists the assembly would require to have full confidence in the brother, as one who is able to instruct the saints when they gather. The arrangement should also be open to all of the assembly so that no accusation of partisanship can be laid against the brother. In such circumstances the gathering would really be an assembly meeting and one wonders why it could not be held in the building normally used by the assembly. One of the dangers of these type of arrangements is that the saints can gather so informally as to dispense with the godly order associated with assembly gatherings, ie observing the covered head of the sisters. It is a small step next to further ask "why do we need to observe these things just because we are in the gospel hall?"

Having made the above points it must be remembered that there is no particular virtue in the actual hall we use. Some assemblies have had to have some of their meetings in a house and the others in a public hall. The important thing is, that irrespective of place the gathering be open to the whole assembly and announced as such. It would be sad if we made rigid rules which would forbid what the apostle Paul did in his teaching at Ephesus "publicly, and from house to house" (Acts 20:20).

J.R. Baker

Light from an Old Lamp

By the late John Ritchie

Man's Future State (9)

Divers and strange doctrines, subversive of the faith, had been brought into the early churches while the apostles and their immediate followers were still labouring amongst them. In the Galatian churches "another Gospel" was being preached (ch.1:6-8), and legal observances introduced (ch.4:9,21; 6:12-13). At Colosse, the saints were in danger of being beguiled through a heathen philosophy. At Ephesus, some had made shipwreck concerning the faith and had become blasphemers (1 Tim 1:20), others, evidently fraternising with men disciplined for evil doctrine, had their faith overthrown (2 Tim 2:18). And worse conditions were said to be at hand (Acts 20:29), when man would arise in the midst of these churches to speak "perverse things", and thus secure a following, while others ignorant would "wrest the Scriptures" (2 Pet 3:16). That some of the errors of these early times concerned the future life, we learn from Paul's last letter to Timothy, in which he warns against those who had erred concerning the truth, by saying that the resurrection was already past (2 Tim 2:18), while others had denied

that there was any resurrection (1 Cor 15:12). As the Gospel, in its simplicity, proclaimed by godly men in the Spirit's power, was less known, and the truth in its purity was less taught, doctrines and traditions opposed to the faith came in like a flood, many of them bearing on the state of the dead. In the writing of the so-called "Fathers" of the second and third centuries, prayer *for* and *to* the dead, purgatory, with masses for the deliverance of souls therein detained for purification, are named and generally accepted as if divine. When once the Word of God is lost, or tradition allowed to make it of "none effect" (Mark 7:7-13), it is easy to drift into error. And it needs to be remembered that some of the most dangerous forms of error which misled the unwary, are reared on perverted and misinterpreted Scripture. This was so at the beginning; it is so now.

And we need especially to be on our guard against accepting anything respecting those who have left the present world, except what God in His Word has told us, for here God has mercifully interposed a veil, beyond which man in mortal life is prohibited from passing, to inquire into the state of the departed. Sentiments, as expressed in many of our hymns and traditions, venerable with age, which inform us that the spirits of the dead are hovering around us as "a cloud of witnesses unseen", and that "footsteps of departed loved ones follow us along life's road", if accepted as true, prepare the way for worse. Visions of and messages from the unseen world, whether received in sleep or while awake, when accredited as of God, soon withdraw the ear

from listening to His voice through the Word, and lay those who accept them open to the awful delusions of Spiritualism, which professes to put living beings on earth into communication with their departed friends in the spirit world. That saints who have gone to be "with Christ" are still one in life and love with those who are in mortal flesh on earth; that those who, while here, had been "in the Lord Jesus Christ", are still known as "the dead in Christ" (1 Thess 1:1; 4:16) — death having wrought no change in their vital union with Him, or with His — we surely believe, but that there can be any present communications between them and us Scripture does not inform us, and it would be dangerous to speculate or venture forth on such forbidden ground.

Prayers for the dead. It was probably no more than a calling to remembrance of the faith of the departed, that originated the practice of naming "ancestors, fathers, martyrs" in prayer, ending with the request that they might "have a speedy part in resurrection glory". This through time developed into prayers for all the dead, including such as had died in a doubtful state. Out of this grew the *Purgatory* of Romanism, with masses for the dead, offered by priests, for payment by the living. And all this at first was based on perverted Scriptures. 1 Tim 2:1, truly bids us pray "for all men", but the context limits such prayer to be for the living. Paul's request for mercy to Onesiphorus (2 Tim 1:16-18, with 4:19) is made to mean that he was dead, of which there is not the least hint, and "the fire" in 1 Cor 3:13-14, is said by Augustine to be Purgatory. As

the Gospel and the blessing of present salvation (2 Tim 1:9), full forgiveness (Col 2:13), perfect cleansing (Rev 1:7), and present meetness (Col 1:12) for heaven were lost, it became easy to find acceptance for these traditions, which held the field for centuries, and are believed today by the greater part of Christendom.

How far this false teaching has spread we may gather from a charge given to his clergy by the late Primate of the Church of England, where he tells them that prayers for the dead are "not forbidden", while "what they may need in order to fit them for the final entrance into perfect happiness, we cannot tell". In full keeping with this was the call to pray for "the repose of the soul of their late father in God", the former English Primate, who, although "spiritual head of the Church of England", required *Requiem Masses* and prayers offered for his soul after death. But thank God, those who, apart from sacerdotalism and priestcraft, rest on the atoning work of the Son of God, know that in virtue of His work alone they pass in the hour of death to be "with Christ", or if they are found alive at His coming, "in a moment" they will be caught up to be for ever "with the Lord".

Prayers to the dead. Having introduced prayer for the dead it was an easy matter to sanction prayers to the holy dead, who it is alleged — by a false interpretation of Rev 8:3-4 act as supplicators and mediators between God and man; ever multiplying these, as Rome and Ritualism has done, full in the face of the direct testimony of Scripture that there is "one Mediator between God and men" (1 Tim 2:5). But we may rest assured that neither

the Virgin Mary who personally confessed her need and possession of a Saviour (Luke 1:47), nor any other of the "saints" who are with Christ, ever heard or heeded a single prayer from earth or hades offered to them, although the Romish doctrine is that they, and especially Mary, can do more for sinners than Christ. And this pernicious error is at present leavening the doctrine of Christendom.

Preaching to the dead. This is chiefly based on a Romish interpretation of 1 Pet 3:19-20, from which it has been deduced that either to the antediluvians, or to all who as spirits were then held "in prison", Christ in His disembodied state offered salvation. And upon this the doctrine is built that death does not close man's opportunity of salvation, or cut off hope of his future evangelisation. Men in high places, such as Dean

Farrar and Dr Plumtre, supported this but it is entirely opposed to Scripture. The passage simply says that "In the Spirit" RV (of Christ, which was in him, with which compare ch 1:11) during the period of God's long-suffering, Noah preached to the disobedient antediluvians, whose spirits are *now* in prison. The end of the Spirit's striving and of their opportunity came together. The context is full of warning, not of hope, and the case cited does not teach probation beyond the grave, but that the doom of sinners is irrevocably fixed at death. The alarming spread of erroneous teachings subversive of the Gospel, advancing false views of divine mercy, denying God's hatred and punishment of sin, while hardening sinners in it, calls for definite testimony on these subjects, from all who preach the Word.

Lord's Work Trust

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Telephone: (0563) 21098

Total Gifts received from 1st November to 30th November 1986

For the Lord's Work and Workers		Gifts Towards Expenses	
From Assemblies	£26,119.73	From Assemblies	£1,154.29
From Individuals	17,455.30	From Individuals	661.00
From Covenants	16,545.17	From Covenants	615.18
From Refund of Tax	57.16		
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	£60,177.36		£2,430.47
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Includes L.O.F. £376

Anon. £60

BOOKS



Gathering Unto His Name by **Norman Crawford**; published Gospel Tract Publications; price £4.95 cloth bound, £3.00 paper-back.

Norman Crawford is well-known on both sides of the Atlantic both as editor of *Truth and Tidings* and as a Bible teacher. Like most sound teachers, he is conscious of what he calls "questions of our time". He recognises for example a number are taking steps "back toward human systems" with the "grave danger of making the unique testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ merely another denomination".

The introduction to the book is most interesting, containing the author's principles of interpretation. Especially in dealing with church truth it is essential to be clear on what grounds certain lines are advanced. "The Law of Positive Pattern" is one such principle he espouses, so that in the book he will not

argue from the silence of Scripture but will accept what is positively asserted by the Holy Spirit through the apostles.

The author's honesty in dealing with thorny problems is commendable. He leaves no doubt about his convictions, but in a gracious way indicating from time to time his respect for those who also accept the all-sufficiency of Scripture, while differing from him on particular issues. It is no surprise that the first edition of the book sold out within a few weeks.

The reviewer is less happy that a glossary is contained. Again there is transparency in the author's approach to providing "a brief definition of terms". Many of the terms are developed vocabulary, phrases that circulate within assemblies, but so often leaving us open to the charge of slogan-mongering. The reviewer is happier to hold to the language of Scripture, to "words that the Holy Christ teacheth". Indeed that is the author's approach elsewhere in the book. However, the value of the book is not lost or endangered by the inclusion of the glossary.

T.W.

The LORD'S WORK and WORKERS

All items for "Intelligence" columns of this magazine should be addressed direct to Editor, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and posted in time to arrive on or before 4th or month previous to issue. Intimation of commencement of new assemblies should always carry commendation of nearest local assembly.

England & Wales FORTHCOMING

JANUARY 10

Bermondsey: The Gospel Hall, 97 St James's Road, London at 7.00 p.m. R. Catchpole.

Blackpool: Gospel Hall, Salthouse Avenue, off Rigby Road at 7.30 p.m. N. Mellish.

Leicester: York Street Gospel Hall (off Granby Street), at 7.30 p.m. A. Wiseman.

North Wembley: Uxendon Hall, at 7.00 p.m. D. Coulson.

Ely: Gospel Hall, Ship Lane at 7.30 p.m. T. Ledger.

Ludlow: Cleeview Gospel Hall at 7.30 p.m. A.T. Shearman.

Cheshunt: Mill Lane Chapel, High Street at 7.00 p.m. K. Totton.

JANUARY 17

Mitcham Junction: Gospel Hall, Percy Road at 7.00 p.m. D.E. West.

St Austell: Seymour Gospel Hall, Slades Road at 7.00 p.m. P. Hocking.

Bishop's Stortford: Gospel Hall, Dunmow Road at 7.00 p.m. D. Hands.

North Shields: Tyneside Sunday School Workers Conference in Gospel Hall, Coach Lane at 3.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. J. Anderson, A. McMaster.

Luton: Onslow Road Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. R. Towse. Mr Towse continues on Sunday at 4.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m.

Bracknell: Emmanuel Chapel: Netherton at 7.30 p.m. J. Scarsbrook.

JANUARY 17 - 18

Warrington: Hope Hall, Hawthorne Street, Bewsey at 7.00 p.m. J. Burnett.

JANUARY 18

Brierfield: Christian Rallies, Hebron Hall, Walter Street at 7.00 p.m. G. Bourne.

JANUARY 24

Warrington: Gospel Hall, Forster Street at 7.00 p.m. E. Hughes.

Cheltenham: Bethany Hall, Newton Road, Hesters Way. Missionary Conference at 4.00 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. L. Mullan, R. Brynd.

Four Marks: Gospel Hall, Winchester Road at 7.00 p.m. A. Leckie. Mr Leckie continues in ministry Sunday at 8.00 p.m. Mon - Thurs at 7.30 p.m.

Weymouth: Bethany Hall at 7.30 p.m. S. Gillham.

Hanworth: Gospel Hall, Hounslow Road at 7.00 p.m. M. Horlock.

Haywards Heath: Franklynn Gospel Hall, Eastern Road Special Anniversary Conference at 3.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. Sunday at 4.00 p.m. A.C. Gooding.

JANUARY 31

Mansfield: The Gospel Hall, Radford Street at 7.15 p.m. D. Howell.

London: Hope Hall, Kilburn Lane at 7.00 p.m. C. Roberts.

Bexleyheath: Bethany Hall at 7.00 p.m. G.B. Fyfe.

Leicester: York Street Gospel Hall off Granby Street at 7.30 p.m. D.E. West.

Brierfield: Christian Rallies, Hebron Hall, Walter Street at 7.00 p.m. T. Renshaw.

FEBRUARY 7

West Mersea: Assembly Hall, East Road at 4.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. M. Hayward.

Cwmbran: The Gospel Hall, Oakfield Road at 7.15 p.m. C. Jones.

Kingsteignton: Devon at 7.00 p.m. H. Bell.

Nottingham: Gospel Hall, Victoria Road, Netherfield at 7.15 p.m. N. Mellish.

Milton Keynes: New Bradwell, Gospel Hall, Caledonian Road at 7.30 p.m. A. Carew.

Maldenhead: Parkside Hall, St Luke's Road at 6.30 p.m. D.C. Hinton.

Westcliff-on-Sea: The Gospel Hall, Carlton Avenue at 7.30 p.m. A. Cundick.

FEBRUARY 14

Bermondsey: The Gospel Hall, 97 St James's Road, London at 7.00 p.m. G. Raggett.

Ely: Gospel Hall Ship Lane at 7.30 p.m. J. Farley.

Brierfield: Christian Rallies Hebron Hall, Walter Street at 7.00 p.m. G. Hart.

North Wembley: Uxendon Hall at 7.00 p.m. R. Carnall.

Ceshunt: Mill Lane Chapel, High Street at 7.00 p.m. C. Roberts.

Ludlow: Cleeview Gospel Hall at 7.30 p.m. J. Hall.

Conyventry: The Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street at 7.30 p.m. A. Shearman.

Scotland FORTHCOMING

JANUARY 4 - 8

Chapelhall: Gospel Hall Sunday 3.00 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. Mon - Thurs at 7.45 p.m. T. Bentley.

JANUARY 9 - 11

Renfrew: Albert Hall, Albert Road Conference Weekend. Details from W. Loudon, 25 Oxford Road, Renfrew, PA4 0SJ. Tel: 041-886-2506.

JANUARY 10

Bridge of Weir: Hope Hall, Maxwell Terrace at 7.00 p.m. T. Wilson, W. Banks.

Saltcoats: Bethany Hall, Ailsa Road at 7.00 p.m. W. Craig, I. Spiers.

Armadale: Conference in Academy, West Main Street at 3.00 p.m. J. Stubbs, J. Paterson, S. Foster. J. Stubbs continues in Gospel Hall Mon - Thurs at 7.30 p.m.

Gourock: Bethany Hall, Drumshantie Road at 7.00 p.m. A. Gamble.

Ashgill: Bethany Hall at 6.30 p.m. B. Gamble, I. Steel.

Larkhall: Albion Hall, Montgomery Street at 6.30 p.m. A. Prentice, R. Cameron.

Tarbolton: Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. R. McPheat.

Cumbernauld: Mossknowe Gospel Hall, Kildrum Ring Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Gamble (Jnr), G. Paton.

Bishopton: Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. J. Hunter, G. Waugh.

Wishaw: Ebenezer Hall, Young Street at 6.30 p.m. J. Rogers, J. Hay.

East Kilbride: Threshold Assembly Hall at 7.00 p.m. N. Hood, H. Morris.

Newmilns: Gospel Hall, Drygate Street at 7.00 p.m. S. Arbuthnot, D. Ferguson.

JANUARY 11 - 15

Girvan: Stair Park Gospel Hall at 8.00 p.m. J. Flanigan.

JANUARY 17

Plains: Elim Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Sinclair, W. Steveley.

Kilmarnock: Elim Hall, Cuthbert Place at 6.45 p.m. W. Prentice, A. Livingston.

Dairy: Townend Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. J.R. Baker, W. Cochrane.

Linhouse: Bethesda Hall, 16 Holmfauldhead Place at 7.00 p.m. H. Hunter, J. Rodgers.

Ayr: Gospel Hall, James Street at 7.00 p.m. J. Paton.

Whitburn: West End Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. W. McKellar, I. Ross.

Motherwell: Shields Road Gospel Hall, at 6.30 p.m. G. Waugh, J. McDonald.

Renfrewshire Gospel Work: Conference, Hope Hall, Bridge of Weir at 3.00 p.m. F. Beevers, A. Pollard.

JANUARY 24

Hamilton: High Parks Gospel Hall, Silvertonhill Avenue at 6.45 p.m. S. Arbuthnot, J. Gamble.

Kirkconnel: Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. G. Waugh, A.M.S. Gooding.

Glenrothes: Thornhill Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Paton, W. Craig.

Motherwell: Forgewood Gospel Hall, Annual Conference in Braidhurst High School, Dalriada Crescent at 3.30 p.m. J. Grant, J. Hay, R. McPheat. Mr Grant continues in ministry Mon - Thurs.

Kirkintilloch: Conference in Gospel Hall, 68 Townhead at 3.15 p.m. A. Naismith, P. Maiden, J. Speirs. Mr Speirs continues in ministry on Sun at 3.30 p.m. Mon - Thurs at 8.00 p.m.

JANUARY 31

Airdrie: Hebron Hall, North Bridge Street at 6.30 p.m. J. Hay, I. Speirs.

Uphall: Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. W. Craig, B. Greenhow.

FEBRUARY 7

Coatbridge: Hebron Hall, 20 Church Street at 6.30 p.m. G. Waugh, A. Deans.

Beith: Bethany Hall, Kirk Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Rodgers.

New Stevenston: Assembly Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Hay, J. Stubbs.

Livingston: Gospel Hall Deans at 6.30 p.m. M. Radcliffe, A. Wilson.

Bridge of Weir: Hope Hall, Maxwell Terrace at 7.00 p.m. Missionary Report.

Kilmarnock: Elim Hall, Cuthbert Place, at 6.45 p.m. K. Stapley, K. Dykes.

FEBRUARY 8 - 12

Chapelhall: Gospel Hall Lord's Day at 3.00 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. Mon - Thurs at 7.45 p.m. J. Flanigan.

FEBRUARY 14

Cumbernauld: Mossknowe Gospel Hall, Kildrum Ring Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Anderson, G. Waugh.

Ashgill: Bethany Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Hay, J. Smyth.

Larkhall: Albion Hall, Montgomery Street at 6.30 p.m. S. Foster, A. Brown.

Gourock: Bethany Hall, Drumshantie Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Gamble.

Saltcoats: Bethany Hall, Ailsa Road at 7.00 p.m. B. Cameron, T. Aitken.

Bishopton: Gospel Hall, at 7.00 p.m. J. Paton. Bible Reading Titus 3.

Chapelhall: Annual Conference in Public School Hall, Gibb Street, at 3.30 p.m. J. Flanigan, A. Leckie, J.R. Baker.

Tarbolton: Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. J. Hunter.

N. Ireland **FORTHCOMING**

JANUARY 10

Ballylntagh: 7.30 p.m. G. Hall.

JANUARY 17

Ballymena: 8.00 p.m. J. Harrison.

JANUARY 24

Ballymena: 8.00 p.m. J.R. Baker.

JANUARY 31

Ballymena: 8.00 p.m. Speaker to be announced.

England & Wales REPORTS

E. Lancs., E. Cheshire, Greater Manchester & Yorkshire: C.J. Raggett, 69 Wellington Street East, Higher Broughton, Salford, Manchester M7 0DN. Tel: 061 792 6643.

W. Lancs., W. Cheshire, Merseyside & North Wales: H. Barnes, 55 Croft Avenue, Bromborough, Wirral, L62 2BN. Tel: 051 334 2178.

East Midlands: K. Sherwin, 24 Grafton Street, Derby. DE3 6PB. Tel: 0332 46756.

West Midlands: R.A.A. Barton, 9 Beech Farm Croft, Northfield, Birmingham B31 2LG. Tel: 021-476-3561.

Gloucester, Wiltshire & Somerset: R.J. Greenman, Marlborough House, Rockhampton, Berkeley, Glos., GL13 9DT. Tel: 0454-260093.

S.E. Midlands: C.D. Stewart, "Endymion", Bicester Road, Launton, Bicester, Oxon OX6 0DP. Tel: 0869-253773.

East Anglia: A.S. Rodgers, St. Olave House, All Saints Road, Creting, St. Mary, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP6 8NQ.

Greater London: T. Baker, 5 Green Moor Link, Winchmore Hill, London, N21 2NN. Tel: 01-360-0471.

Kent & E. Sussex: R.J. Aitken, 204 Finsbury Hill, Strood, Rochester, Kent, ME2 4RJ. Tel: 0634-723615.

Devon & Cornwall: K.W. Rudge, 5 Manor Close, Fairfield Park, St. Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4HH. Tel: 0726-61265.

S. Wales: A.J. Maunder, 25 St Benedict Crescent, Heath, Cardiff, CF4 4DP. Tel: 0222-623884.

GREATER MANCHESTER, YORKSHIRE, EAST LANCASHIRE, EAST CHESHIRE

Manchester: A visit from D. Towse was appreciated by the saints — missionary reports were given in assemblies at Swinton, Mauldeth Road, Gorton and Flixton. The believers in these various places were encouraged to hear of the Lord's work in Zambia and our brother also helped in furthering the gospel during his stay in and around Cheetham.

One of the South Manchester assemblies has been encouraged over the past months with the response to meetings held for old folk where a tea has been provided and also where parents of Sunday School children have attended a tea followed by a gospel meeting, demonstrating yet another way of breaking

down barriers and building bridges in gospel work. The same assembly has arranged "coffee mornings" on Saturdays, opening the hall, and inviting people in on their way to and from the shops. This has resulted in a number of valuable contacts and helps to overcome the reluctance of many to enter a gospel hall.

WEST MIDLANDS

Missionary Reports: T. Glasscock (Spain) gave enlightening reports at Birmingham (Northfield) and Stowbridge (Wollaston) before going to the north of the region for further meetings. Biddulph in the Potteries, Shrewsbury, and over in Cheshire at Crewe and Macclesfield were among the assemblies he visited.

J. Rowberry (India) had an extensive itinerary in the region from late October through November. He gave reports at Birmingham (Aston and Northfield), Brownhills, Broadwas on Teme, Coventry (Church Street), Darlston, Solihull, Stowbridge (Wollaston) Walsall (Delves) and other assemblies. The saints at Camp Hill very much appreciated a number of visits from him to not only give a report but help in ministry and fellowship as well.

Birmingham Northfield: A. Carew spent a few days at Quarry Lane ministering on some basic principles including the Lord's Supper, Worship and Prayer.

Birmingham Perry Common: A special effort was made in October to get local residents to come and hear the gospel. There were special nights for friends and neighbours, families and senior citizens. The saints felt encouraged by the Lord as quite a few unsaved attended to hear the gospel preached.

A. Shearman gave a challenging message to a good number of senior citizens and the assembly trust that souls will be saved as a result.

Coventry Upper Hill Street: The saints appreciated ministry from B. Clatworthy when he spoke from 1 Peter 1. G. Orr (Brazil) has also visited this assembly and gave a report which touched the hearts of the saints.

Darlston: The saints have worked hard to establish their Annual Conference, and this year found encouragement through ministry from J.R. Baker (Scotland) and J. Harrison.

Lichfield: In November a group of believers met in a rented room in the Institute of Supervisory Management, 22 Bore Street, for the first time to remember the Lord. Each Lord's Day they now meet at 11.00 a.m., and are seeking the Lord's further guidance for the work. The prayers of the Lord's people would be very much appreciated. Further details can be obtained by ringing Lichfield 255331. Lichfield is one of a number of towns which have seen residential development in post

war years in and near the Trent Valley. The only other assemblies are a village meeting at Hamstall Ridgeware and at Brownhills and Mere Green some distance away.

Cannock, Rugeley and Tamworth are nearby towns with no assembly testimony.

Redditch, Batchley Estate: D. Gooding (Belfast) took his excellent model of the Tabernacle to this assembly for two weeks of meetings in November. There was considerable interest among believers from far and near, and the time spent was greatly appreciated. Opportunity was given for local school-children to view the model during the daytime.

Sollihull: The Annual conference saw the visit of W.E. Craig and J. Anderson. This was followed by a series of helpful meetings conducted by J. Anderson.

The assembly expect to be in their new accommodation in Lode Lane during the spring (DV).

AVON

Bethany, Filton: When this assembly was founded about 30 years ago in a suburban area, there was a good work among children and youngsters. However as work caused some of the saints to move away, numbers declined, leaving mainly older believers, and about 15 years ago children's work ceased. It is therefore a great joy to the saints that this winter it has been possible to start mid-week children's meetings again. A total of 32 different youngsters have attended so far with 18 to 20 coming each week, mostly brought by their parents. It is planned to have a parent's evening at Christmas. Prior to these meetings, it had been planned that F. Lonney would help with door-to-door outreach, possibly plus meetings in May 1987. Prayer is needed, not only for this, on top of the children's work, but for our brother who has been laid aside by illness for several weeks at the time of writing.

Rockhampton: A good number of youngsters attended camps near Cheddar and Chepstow last summer. Arising from the latter, 4 children who do Postal Sunday School lessons and attend midweek children's meetings in the nearby town of Thornbury professed conversion. A further outcome was the baptism and receipt into fellowship of 3 youngsters from "assembly families".

WILTS

Park, Swindon: S. Mountstevens had a second series of children's meetings recently. Two young ladies had professed conversion the previous time, and one of them a 14 year old in a catholic home, gave indications of reality concerning her belief. Also, last visit the man living adjacent to the hall was very irate

about the singing disturbing him, this visit his children came regularly and his wife was among the parents who attended prizegiving night. Senior citizens meetings brought a good response. Open air meetings continue regularly in several areas. Please pray for the ongoing work especially through the children.

SOUTH EAST MIDLANDS

Northampton, Spencer Bridge Road: R. McPheat had a short series of ministry meetings which ended with a profession of faith by a young girl. This followed the annual conference at which our brother had been joined by C. Lacey.

Bicester: S. Jennings conducted a weekend of profitable Bible Readings on Revelation chs. 2 & 3.

KENT AND EAST SUSSEX

Tonbridge: A series of meetings conducted by J. Page proved to be very profitable. A Bible reading on Zechariah 14 commenced the series which continued with ministry on the nation of Israel in prophecy and related subjects. The meetings came at the time of the homecall of G. Batchelor, who was very active in the assembly. The small assembly continuing the testimony would value prayer. A further series of meetings conducted by G. Jones on the subject of prayer encouraged the saints.

Wainscott: G. Jones gave excellent teaching in the minor prophets, Obadiah and Jonah in the few days he spent with the assembly.

Scotland REPORTS

Highland & North East Coast: Mr William Mowat, 97 Seatown, Cullen, Buckie, Banffshire AB5 2SN. Tel: 0542-40565.

Grampian and Islands: K. Dickson, 1 Woodlands Place, Inverberrie, Montrose, Angus, DD10 0SL. Tel: 0561-61527.

Strathclyde — North Glasgow: Mr Robert Gamble, 70 Gower Street, Glasgow, G41 5PU. Tel: 041-427 3058.

Strathclyde — Lanarkshire: Mr James Rodgers, 63 Clydesdale Road, Mossend, Lanarkshire, ML4 2QE. Tel: 0698-842122.

Strathclyde — South West: Mr James McLatchie, 29 Gleniffer Drive, Barrhead, G71 1JA. Tel: 041-881 1830.

Lothians and Borders: Mr Robert Miller, Dean Cottage, 38 Vogrie Road, Gorebridge, Midlothian EH23 4HL. Tel: 0875-20592.

FIFE

The Fife assemblies Gospel Outreach Work this year focussed in the town of Lochgelly. During the last week of August and all of September the Gospel was faithfully preached by John Campbell and Jack Hay in the Gospel Hall, Buller Street. There was a good response from the children throughout the five weeks and while their behaviour was difficult at times, many listened well to the Bible lessons. Not many adults from the town came in but a considerable number of unsaved were in night by night, being brought by our Christian friends. Many good contacts were made at the door in visitation work where our brethren were assisted by Hugh Keirs from Cowdenbeath. There are several of these contacts very worthy of follow up and prayer is requested that some of these will come through for the Lord.

GRAMPIAN REGION

Aberdeen: There have recently been a number of special ministry meetings throughout the city. J. Hunter in Fountain Hall, Woodside; A. Leckie in Fernielea Gospel Hall; and W. McLean in Victoria Hall, Torry. All were well attended.

Luthermuir: D. Gillies continues with visitation work in Stonehaven. He especially mentions for prayer a father, mother and crippled daughter who attended the tent meetings in the summer; a young policeman originally from Oban — that they might be saved, and also a young married woman from Auchentree who is now showing evidence of salvation but has many personal and family problems.

Orkney: Really encouraging news from one of the Islands. F. Reid is currently visiting Papa Westray with a total population c.80. The small assembly of 8 have very faithfully continued for many years and are now seeing blessing. Two teenage youths have made a profession and along with two other young men have been baptised in the sea and come into assembly fellowship — the first baptisms for 25 years!

N. Ireland REPORTS

Co. Antrim: Mr J.S. Wallace, 8 Cambridge Avenue, Ballymena, BT42 2EN. Tel: 0266-56389.

Counties, Armagh, Monaghan & Cavan: Mr T. Kells, 1 Mullyloughrane Heights, Portadown Road, Armagh BT61 9HP. Tel: 0861 523663.

Co. Down: Mr S. Thompson, 27 Knockbracken Road, Belfast, BT8 4SE. Tel: 0232-812229.

Counties Fermanagh & Sligo: Mr J.S. Beattie, Drumgay, Enniskillen. Tel: 0365-23744.

Counties Londonderry & Donegal: Mr W. Gibson, 3 Forest Park, Mountsandel Road, Coleraine, BT52 1JJ. Tel: 0265-51164.

Co. Tyrone: Mr A. Patterson, Ballyworthland Park, Dungannon, BT71 6BT. Tel: 08687-23116.

Belfast & Suburbs: Mr J. Graham, 48 Beechgrove Drive, Belfast, BT6 0NW. Tel: 0232-793473.

CO. ANTRIM

Ahoghill: J. Brown and J. Lennox concluded on 20th November a series of good meetings, with a number professing salvation.

Ballymoney: E. Wishart and A. McClean continue in the gospel. Fair numbers attending.

Broomhedge: J.G. Hutchinson and A. Aiken are seeing an interest in attendance, and some desiring salvation.

Moorfields (Near Kells): J. Martin and W. Jennings in portable hall. A number of believers' children attending. Interest growing.

Ballymena: J. Hunter had one week in Cambridge Avenue and one week in Harryville. Good numbers attended and the ministry was helpful.

CO. ARMAGH

Clare (Near Markethill): J. Hawthorne and T. McNeill continue in portable hall in the gospel.

Clonroot: G. Marshall and A. Davidson continue in the gospel with good interest.

Ahorey: Believers' meeting on 25th October was well attended. Helpful ministry was given by S. Jennings and H. Andrews. The assembly was greatly encouraged.

CO. DOWN

Bangor (Ebenezer): W.J. Nesbitt concluded seven weeks gospel meetings, with blessing in the salvation of souls.

Dromore: S. McBride has been encouraged with blessing in salvation. The meetings have been well attended.

Portavogie: J. Thompson and J. McCann have had good encouragement, in interest and blessing in the salvation of souls.

Mr A.M.S. Gooding visited Ballymagarrick and Banbridge for ministry, which was helpful and profitable.

CO. LONDONDERRY

Limavady: N. Turkington and S. Ferguson are in their sixth week (end of Nov) of meetings with good numbers attending.

CO. TYRONE

Martray: G. McKinley and B. Glendinning continue in the gospel with fair numbers attending.

Omagh: J. Allen and R. McKeown are being encouraged with good numbers of local people attending, and blessing in salvation.

Omagh Conference: Considered a good conference. Ministry shared by J.G. Hutchinson, J. Hawthorne, N. Turkington, S. McBride and J. Martin. Reports by S. Patterson (Eire) and J. McCann (Brazil).

BELFAST & DISTRICT

Newtownbreda: A. McShane and W. Bingham (Nova Scotia) have finished five weeks of well attended gospel meetings. A fair number of outsiders attending. A young woman professed faith in Christ on the closing night.

Shankhill: D. Kane has finished after preaching the gospel for six weeks. There were good numbers each night, with up to 20 locals present some nights, some of whom showed a definite interest in being saved.

Fortwilliam: The assembly has been encouraged by seeing a large number of locals attending two weeks of gospel meetings conducted by H. Andrews.

Parker Street (Off Templemore Avenue): Cottage meetings are now in their fourth week (end of Nov) in a house, with a few unsaved attending, and two or three showing a definite interest. The speakers are R. Eadie and D. Armstrong.

Addresses PERSONALIA

Lerwick: The assembly which meets at Shalom Sound Lerwick intimates that their new Gospel Hall at Oversound Road, Sound, is now under construction. There is no other religious building in this new housing area on the outskirts of Lerwick consisting of approximately 700 houses.

All correspondence for Gospel Hall, 18 Glasgow Road, Baillieston should now be addressed to Mr W.S. Hutchinson, Flat G19, 2 Woodend Court, Mount Vernon, Glasgow, G32 9QZ.

Change of address: Mr and Mrs Hutchinson, have now moved to Flat G19, 2 Woodend Court, Mount Vernon, Glasgow, G32 9QZ. Tel: 041-778 2661.

Change of address for Mr and Mrs N. Rodgers, Havundvn 159, 3700 Skien, Norway. All correspondence for Hope Hall, Bridge of

Weir should now be addressed to Mr T. Kent, 3 Glenartney, Old Bridge of Weir Road, Houston, Renfrewshire PA6 7EB. Tel: Bridge of Weir 613154.

All correspondence for Mr George Meikle should now be addressed to "Maranatha" 4 Blair Avenue, Bo'ness, Central Region, EH51. Bishop's Stortford Christian Assembly, Gospel Hall, Dunmow Road, Bishop's Stortford. With effect from Sunday 2nd November 1986 the time of our Breaking of Bread meeting is changed from 11.00 a.m. to 9.45 a.m.

All correspondence for Gardenstown Gospel Hall should now be addressed to Mr James West, 14 Castlehill Drive, Gardenstown, Banffs AB4 3YJ.

Sunday School Prizes: A large selection of books, Bibles, pictures, cassettes, pens, sundries. Evening appointments welcome. John Ritchie Ltd, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock. Tel: 0563 36394.

With CHRIST

WILLIAM H. TILEY, on 5th October, aged 88. Passed away suddenly when on holiday at Teignmouth. He leaves behind a faithful testimony having stood always for the Truth and the New Testament way Saints should gather. In fellowship in Rockhampton assembly since its start in 1934. Remember his widow in prayer.

JAMES M WILSON, called home suddenly on 24th September moved from Annbank to Central Hall, Kilmarnock in 1953. His godly character, example and fine qualities were seen in his work as an elder, Sunday School Superintendent and in his responsibility for Gospel Outreach. He and his wife Ruth were given to hospitality. Our brother showed great willingness to help in any way he could in the work of the Lord, and being so involved he is greatly missed. Prayer is requested for his widow, daughters and grandchildren.

Mrs M. JARVIE, aged 92. Baptised late in life and received into fellowship in Forgewood Gospel Hall, Motherwell. Was a valued member of the assembly and was known for her love, loyalty and liberality. Our sister was widely known as a result of her work as a midwife. She witnessed fearlessly to all she met, including members of the medical profession. Will be missed.

Mr A. HARTFORD, on 23rd October after a short illness passed into the presence of the Lord. For many years our brother was in fellowship at Girvan. His presence and contribution, especially at the Breaking of Bread

meeting, is much missed. Remember his family in Prayer.

Mrs ANNIE COCHRANE, on 2nd November, aged 78. At the age of 38 our sister learned of her need as a sinner and received Christ as her Saviour in 1948. Some time later was received into fellowship at Killykegan assembly and remained there until about five years before her homecall owing to failing health. She was a good woman and will be missed by all in the assembly.

NELSON TRUESDALE, Cregagh Street assembly, Belfast called home suddenly on Lord's Day 9th November on his way to remember the Lord. Saved through the preaching of Frank Knox in 1946. He was a regular attender at the assembly meetings, and a faithful personal worker. At the large funeral from the gospel hall many heard clear gospel messages. Remember his widow and family in prayer.

HENRY McPHAIL, on 21st November, aged 78. Our brother came to know the Saviour in his teens was baptised and received into fellowship in Shields Road Hall, Motherwell 61 years ago. He continued in a very quiet way over all those years. He loved the Lord and loved His Word. Will be missed by all in the home and in the assembly.

GEORGE L. DORRANS in his 87th year. Saved in his early teens and in fellowship with the saints at Portrush where he was a highly respected elder and a man with many talents. He had a good testimony with his neighbours and family circle. A large gathering at his funeral showed how highly respected he was. Prayer is requested that others will be raised up to carry on the Lord's Work.

Mrs JEANNIE GEDDES, on 5th June, aged 89. Saved in early life and in happy fellowship in the Buckie assembly, where she bore a quiet consistent testimony being a regular attender at all the meetings, until recent ill health prevented this. She was a widow of great age having lost her husband in earlier life. A faithful and loving mother, who brought up a family of six.

DAN PATIENCE, on 21st August, aged 77. Our brother was saved in Avoch, Ross-shire where he was baptised and received into fellowship in 1933. He was over 40 years in fellowship at Peterhead where he was able to give help in the assembly. He finally moved to Fraserburgh where he spent his last few years.

Miss SHONA REID, suddenly the result of a car accident on 5th September, aged 22. Saved when in her teens, baptised and in fellowship at Buckie. She was of a quiet disposition, faithfully attending all the assembly gatherings, and open air work — dearly loved, and greatly missed. The prayers of the saints were much appreciated by parents and relatives at her homecall.

Mrs NAN MAIN, suddenly on 21st September, aged 74. Our sister for many years was in happy fellowship at Rothesay. After her marriage she resided in Armadale where she bore a consistent testimony to Christ. She loved the Lord and the habitation of His house and gathered regularly with the saints till the moment of her homecall. Skillful with her hands she gave generously of the things she made, and in many homes of the Lord's people she will be remembered affectionately.

JOHN CALDERWOOD, on 4th October, aged 86. Saved and baptised in 1923 and received into fellowship at Ballywatermoy till his homecall. A highly respected elder with a shepherd care for the saints and a lover of the gospel. He will be missed in the assembly and district. While he and his wife, who survives him, were able, their home was open to the saints. Please pray for his widow and grandsons.

WILLIE McCAUGHEY, on 15th October aged 87. Saved and baptised and received into fellowship at Broughshane he was highly esteemed and had a good testimony among friends and neighbours. For many years he visited the surrounding countryside giving out tracts and speaking to the people about eternal matters. Our brother lived a quiet, consistent Christian life, and left a good testimony. His presence and advice will be much missed in the assembly. Regarding his life our brother used the words of Job, "And now, behold my witness is in heaven and my record is on high".

NIXON HUGHEY, on 20th October, aged 71. Saved in 1949 and the same year baptised and received into fellowship at Strabane. Our brother was a wise, godly overseer and was a great help in the assembly. His large funeral was a testimony of the high esteem in which he was held. Prayer valued for his widow, also his brothers and sisters not saved.

ROBERT H. SHIELDS, on 8th October, aged 89 after a period of failing health. Saved as a young man and in fellowship with the assembly in Springburn for many years. After his retreat he moved to Irvine and met with the believers in Bridgend Hall, Kilwinning. A quiet brother who bore a bright and consistent testimony.

Mrs JESSIE GOUDIE, on 31st October, aged 90. A member of the assembly now meeting in Bethany Hall, Paisley. Following the remarkable conversion of her husband she too trusted the Saviour and was in fellowship in the assembly for over 50 years. A quiet sister, but one who valued highly her relationship with Christ and by her consistency, bore witness to Him.

Mrs META MARSHALL, on 14th November, aged 63. Saved as a girl in her teens, baptised and received into fellowship. For many years associated with Ardstraw assembly during a time when the assembly was reduced to three. Then moving to Strabane she was marked by

the same faithfulness to the assembly there. During the last 8 years she was with the assembly in Coleraine where she was greatly respected. The large company that attended her funeral showed how much she was loved by the christians. Prayer requested for her family.

ARTHUR HARPER: on November 5th. aged 71. Saved as a boy of 14 after an open air meeting in Manchester. Feeling the enormity of his sins he was pointed to Christ by a converted Jew and found peace and rest from his burden and lived to prove the reality of this for 57 years. In 1957 he moved to Ireland and was in happy fellowship in the Craiaghill assembly, then later owing to employment he moved to Glengormley and Enniskillen assemblies where he was faithful and interested in building up the work of God.

Recently he moved to Newmilns and latterly Kirkconnel in Scotland where he was in happy fellowship and a help to the assembly until his work was done. One who feared God, loved God's word and God's ways, zealous in the gospel tract distribution and a true shepherd. Many travelled from Ireland to the funeral to revere his memory and to pay their last respects to a brother beloved. Remember his dear widow, three sons and three daughters in prayer.

Mrs MOORE, on 1st November aged 86. Saved in 1916 and for many years in Gransha assembly, Rathfriland. A good quiet woman, who with her husband was a great blessing in the assembly. Loved the Lord and His word and ways. Given to hospitality and encouraged those who preached the gospel. Prayer valued for her husband also advanced in years but still active in assembly activities.

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James H. Large is a well known Bible teacher and writer who has spent over 40 years preaching and teaching throughout the British Isles. He was the first editor of the magazine "Precious Seed", and now lives at a Christian eventide home in Scotland.

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Believers'

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EDITORIAL
Searchlight

When Paul was writing his New Testament epistles it is unlikely that he knew many of the secrets presently being uncovered for us by medical science; but the Holy Spirit of God, being perfectly acquainted with all these mysteries, inspired him to introduce to us the great doctrine of headship.

It is essentially a single doctrine, a single ray of divine light; and yet, just as a sunbeam is scattered by the gentle rain to display its hidden colours in a rainbow, so this sublime truth is revealed to us by Scripture as having a sevenfold glory:

- God, the head of Christ
(1 Cor 11:3)
- Christ, the head of all principality and power
(Col 2:10)
- Christ, the head over all things
(Eph 1:22)
- Christ, the head of the body
(Col 1:18)
- Christ, the head of every man
(1 Cor 11:3)
- the man, the head of the woman
(1 Cor 11:3)
- the husband, the head of the wife
(Eph 5:23)

The first five, in all their dazzling brightness, may correspond to the rainbow's red, orange, yellow, green and blue, the other two to the softer, less obtrusive

but no less beautiful indigo and violet. To contemplate these glories expressed in their fullest manifestation is like that most illusive experience of standing at the foot of a rainbow, bathed in a shaft of shimmering splendour and gazing heavenward along its arching form.

The subject of headship, then, is altogether one of glory: Christ the glory of God, the man the glory of Christ, the woman the glory of man. Someone will ask, does the woman alone have no glory? Graciously gifted of God with a natural veil to complete fittingly this resplendent display, she too may have a glory if she will, but it seems to be conditional: "if she have long hair (i.e. if she wear her hair long), it is a glory to her".

In times of storm the indigo and violet are often lost sight of against the lowering sky, or the foot of the rainbow no longer reaches to earth — only a part is seen, suspended amidst the clouds. Are we not living in spiritually stormy days? The truth of headship has not been lost sight of altogether; its graceful form and brilliant colours are admired by all. But only a part is seen, suspended as it were in the remoter skies of what we believe; its foot no longer touches earth — there is no practical expression of it. The loss is ours!

K.S.

Zephaniah (3)

by W.M. Banks, Hamilton

Promise of future blessing (ch 3:8-20). The prophet has been showing the awful judgment that awaits Judah and Jerusalem as well as the surrounding nations because of their failure to recognise the need to implement God's word and to fear Him. He had said "surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction" but instead they had "corrupted all their doings" (ch 3:7). Now however the picture is different. In concluding his prophecy Zephaniah calls upon his people to look forward to "the day" (v.8) when God's blessing would be outpoured upon the nation. No doubt they little deserved it but the unveiling of days of future glory should have had a present effect upon their lives as it should have in ours as well. Prophetic truth is always given for practical purposes.

This idea can be seen in a large number of NT passages. The understanding of the "mystery" of the change in 1 Cor 15:51-57 should lead to an attitude of being "steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Cor 15:58). An appreciation of the truth of the "rapture" (1 Thess 4:13-17) should lead to "comfort" (1 Thess 4:18). A knowledge of the "appearing" (1 John 3:2) should lead to purifying (1 John 3:3) and "the coming of the day of God" in 2 Pet 3:12 should result in us being "found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless" (2 Pet 3:14).

These are very practical truths indeed.

Before the people to whom Zephaniah speaks could dwell in peace and enjoy rich blessing the enemy had to be dealt with. The prophet thus begins in v.8 by indicating that God will take care of all who oppose Him. His people have simply to wait upon Him and give to Him the proper place in their lives. When the remnant returned from Babylon in Ezra 3:3 the first thing they did was to "set the altar upon his bases". The reason given was that "fear was upon them because of the people of those countries". So in the face of their enemy their priority was the altar. Let us ensure that God is given His rightful place in our midst then He will take account of the enemy. This prophecy will be literally fulfilled in "the valley of Jehoshaphat" (Joel 3:2) in a future day.

God's own people are to be affected as well. They are going to be given a "pure lip" (v.9). The change of language thus implied issues from a change of character. It will result in a fresh acknowledgement of their dependence on God and a fresh willingness to serve Him sacrificially. They are going to "serve Him with one shoulder" (v.9 Newberry). Hence as a united people they are going to energetically apply themselves to the task before them.

The remnant thus transformed will then be gathered (vv.10-13) and restored to the land bringing with them (or being brought as) an offering to the Lord. The word for offering (v.10) is that used for the "meal offering" of Lev 2 and it therefore indicates a dramatically changed condition in the lives of God's people. Their activities are now going to be in devotion to Him and their lives are going to bring Him pleasure. But how is this possible? Only by a process of purging, their past sins are going to be dealt with (v.11), the proud removed from their midst and the truly pious left. Their trust will be "in the name of Jehovah" (v.12) and as a result iniquity, lies, deceit and fear will all be gone (v.13).

The conditions thus obtaining will result in a praising people (vv.14-15). They will "sing", "shout", "be glad and rejoice", not so much with their lips but "with all the heart". Isn't that better! It will be a deep, calm and sincere joy and four reasons for it are adduced in v.15. Their burden of sin will be lifted, the enemy cast out, the King will be in their midst and as a consequence they will "not see evil any more". Little wonder they're praising!

In the chapter the Lord is seen "in the midst" for a variety of reasons. In v.5 He is in the midst for punishment, in vv. 11-12 for purging; in v.15 for power but now in vv.16-17 it is for pleasure. Therefore God's people should not be listless (v.16). According to v.17 the Mighty God in the midst of His people is going to do four things. "He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing".

We can understand our joy in God but this is God finding joy in His people. The reciprocal experience is expressed in the hymn

"We rejoice, and Thou rejoicest.
In the riches of Thy grace".

The same idea is also found in Eph 1. We have our "inheritance" in God (v.14), but God also has an "inheritance in the saints" (v.18). Indeed the apostle prays that the Ephesian believers may know what is "the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the Saints".

To emphasise God's delight in His own the prophet then says "He will rest in His love". It is interesting to note other translations of this phrase

- "He will be silent in His love" (Newberry, RVm)
- "He will be constant in His love" (Spurrell)
- "He doth work in His love" (Young)
- "He will make new His love" (Smith)
- "He rejoices in His love" (Schwally)

It is, according to Keil "an expression used to denote love deeply felt, which is absorbed in its object with thoughtfulness and admiration". God's electing love (for so the word for love indicates) is going to result in His being absorbed with the object of His affection. We enjoy being in God's presence yet to think — He enjoys our company as well; so much so that finally the prophet indicates that "He will joy over thee with singing". Here is God singing in the midst of His people! What a picture!

The final section of the book (vv.18-20) indicates that God's pur-

poses will certainly come to fruition. Six times over the "I will" of God is heard. The dispersed are going to be gathered (v.18) to know prestige at the hand of those who put them to shame (vv.19-20). God still has a glorious future for us as well!

Helpful references:

1. F.A. Tatford, Prophet of royal

Misunderstood Texts (1)

by John J Stubbs, Mayfield

"The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life".

We commence with this article a series on misunderstood texts of Holy Scripture, a theme which we believe should be of interest to those who love the Word of God and who desire not only to quote it correctly, but to give to Scripture the sense which the Holy Spirit intended. All too often some verses have been traditionally accorded a certain meaning which has been accepted without question, or a truth has been defended from a verse with which contextually the verse has nothing to do. A verse can be misquoted either by adding a word or omitting a word. It can be misapplied or a wrong emphasis can be placed upon a certain word. All such handling of the word of God can do harm to the truth and can cause the user of the Scripture to miss the true sense and bearing of the verse. By re-examining our use of Scripture we may discover some fresh aspect of divine revelation that otherwise would be lost.

Miles Coverdale in his transla-

tion. Prophetic Witness Publishing House. 1973.

2. G.A. Smith. The book of the twelve prophets. The Expositor's Bible. Hodder & Stoughton. 1903.

3. J.B. Hewitt. Outline studies in the minor prophets. A "Precious Seed" booklet. 1968.

tion, in speaking of the study of the Bible writes: "It shall greatly help ye to understand Scripture, if thou mark not only what is spoken or written, but of whom, and to whom, with what words, at what time, where, to what intent with what circumstances, considering what goes before and what followeth". This wise and timely counsel cannot be improved upon and every believer who studies the Bible to any degree must consider them of vital importance, if Scripture is to be understood and used rightly. These articles will deal with texts which are commonly misused.

At the head of this paper is a Scripture from 2 Cor 3:6. "For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life". Of all the misunderstood texts, this sentence coming from Paul is perhaps one of the most quoted among the many misused Scriptures. A typical situation is when a believer is accused by another of being too literal in the interpretation of Scripture, or too extreme in his obedience to what Scripture teaches. The argu-

ment would be something like this: "Do not be concerned too much with the letter. Never mind what the Bible says about women in the church or the order of a church, or as to separation from the world, for after all we should be more occupied with the spirit of the thing and not the literal, for does not the Bible say, 'For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life' ". This Scripture has been cited in this way. Perhaps some who read this article have used it to others without stopping to think of its meaning in the context in which it is found. It is a great pity that many a verse is robbed of its true significance because we have attached a meaning to it which we have heard from others. Let us not be afraid of taking a second look at a Scripture, especially in its contextual setting.

To condemn believers who desire to apply Scriptural principles by citing the above Scripture is to do both an injustice to the integrity of the word of God and harm to the believer concerned. Let us ask the question. Does this Scripture in 2 Cor 3:6 rebuke too close an adherence to the Bible? Certainly not. Look at the context carefully and it will be seen to specifically relate to the contrast between the ministry of the law and the ministry of the new covenant.

The tables of the law at Sinai were referred to in v.3. We must dismiss from our mind all idea of a book called the NT and understand that Paul is contrasting the Mosaic with the christian covenant, of which he is a minister. When Paul says "the letter killeth", the term must apply solely to the law and not in any way to the words of Scripture. One cannot

go too far in obedience to the Word. If God has spoken this should be enough for the believer.

2 Cor 3:6 is one of the numerous texts which have been first misinterpreted and have been made, for long centuries, the basis of erroneous systems. Some have even used it for example to insist that Scripture must be interpreted allegorically and not literally. This misinterpretation is really inexcusable, for the contrast is not between the outward and inward sense of Scripture at all, as we have seen. "The letter" refers exclusively to the law (see Rom 2:29; 7:6). It bears so little reference to the Bible that as one has rightly said, it is written before most of the NT existed and only touches on a small portion of the OT.

As illustrations of "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life", 3 000 were killed at Sinai at the inauguration of the old covenant, while the ministry of the Spirit is illustrated in the 3 000 saved on the day of Pentecost. Again, "the letter" standing for the law would have stoned the adulteress, but "the Spirit giveth life" said to her, "Go and sin no more" (John 8:1-11). When understood in their context, the words "for the letter killeth but the Spirit giveth life" should really cause us to thank God that we do not live in the age of the law but in the age of the gospel and therefore we should appreciate all the more the blessing and privileges of the New Covenant. The law kills because it passes the sentence of death on those who disobey it, but the Spirit gives life because it is through His agency that this blessing is received.

These Stones (2)

by E.A.R. Shotter, Northampton

Following Matthew's sequence of the temptations of the Lord Jesus, for the second, the devil takes Him to a pinnacle or wing of the temple. In the first, we see the devil solicitous of the well-being of Jesus as to His physical life ("Command that these stones be made bread"). Also it may have reference to His being the Prophet, for in the OT there are a number of references to prophets being given bread as food. Further, the devil commences at the lowest place, "these stones" (plural) were no doubt those on the ground in the wilderness.

Now, in the second temptation, discrediting the deity of the Lord Jesus with the "If thou be", he connives at His death. The pinnacle, or wing, of the temple on to which the devil took Jesus, is said to be an elevated place some 250 feet above the ravine through which the brook Kidron flowed in winter. The temple would be connected with the priesthood, and therefore it is toward the Priesthood of the Lord Jesus that the thrust appears to be made this time.

But notice how the devil takes Him there. Luke says "to Jerusalem", but Matthew (whom we are following in these articles) says, "unto the holy city". It would pay us all well to study the chapters in which Jerusalem is called "the holy city". They are Neh 11; Isa 48 and 52ff; Dan 9; and Rev 11. Also it occurs in Matt 27:53 and Rev

21:2 and 10.

Taking the first group listed above, in a chronological order we find Isaiah (speaking around 712 BC) brings charges against the house of Jacob (who call themselves of "the holy city") for their departure from Jehovah. He reminds them of former things and things of the present to themselves and why Jehovah has done these things, and shows them to be a rebellious people. Nevertheless, because of His great name, and that He will not give His glory to another, the triune God sends them a Kinsman-Redeemer.

The second reference of the group listed is in Isa 52:1. The passage continues on to at least the end of ch. 53, and here we have a development from ch. 48. The first part of ch. 52 admittedly looks forward to a day still future, but after this part we are brought to see something of the ways and work of the Kinsman-Redeemer — My Servant — as He is seen as the suffering Messiah on account of His people's transgression. As so often when studying Scripture we find here again a lead as to future references. Just as in the last reference transgression was to be met with redemption, so here the blessing in resurrection which is to be given to Him seems to extend beyond His earthly people to the great ones of the earth.

We now turn to the third reference

in Dan 9 (538 BC) to find him not only acknowledging the truth of that which Isaiah had foretold in our first two references, but from Jeremiah determining when these should be fulfilled.

In his prayer Daniel is confessing his sins and those of his people to his Elohim (the one and only object of worship), many times addressing Him as the triune sovereign Lord. Isaiah, who in each of his references had shown Him as the same, had spoken to the people of their not listening to His voice and obeying His commandments. Daniel is confessing this and appealing to the mercy and loving kindness of Jehovah the triune sovereign Lord for forgiveness and restoration. He calls the city "Thy holy mountain (or hill)" and "Thy Sanctuary", and when Gabriel is sent to him to speak of the weeks determined, he says "upon thy holy city". Initially these weeks take us up to the time of the crucifixion spoken of and described in Isa 53 (also of course in Psa 27). More fully, because of His cutting off Messiah had nothing — no repentance and return from His people — there is an unspecified period known as the Church age, following which the continuance and completion of the desolations would take place under the Desolator — known to us as the Antichrist. Those desolations completed, Messiah the Prince returns for His reign of righteousness.

In Neh 11:1 (445 BC) we find the rulers of the people in Jerusalem the holy city, together with ten per cent of the people. Space does not permit enlarging on the service of the various ones, but the study of this would be

valuable. The Babylonian captivity is now passed. Daniel's prayer answered, but the ultimate fulfilment must lie in a day yet future.

Turning to the NT, the holy city is mentioned in Rev 11, which not only tells of the measuring of the inner temple of God, the altar, and those who worship therein, but also the leaving out of the measuring of the court for it is given to the Gentiles and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months, tying in with the portion concerning the Antichrist in Dan 9. Following this we have the account of the killing of the two witnesses and their resurrection, and also we are told that this holy city is "spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified". Finally, in Matt 27:53 and Rev 21:2 and 10 we are told of the resurrection of some of the saints following that of the Lord; and of the Bride, the Lamb's wife as the holy city and as a great and high mountain, linking again with Daniel.

The calumny which the devil used against the Lord Jesus refers us back, not only to the previous chapter (Matt 3:17) where we read of the voice from heaven saying, "This is My beloved son, in whom I am well pleased", but also of the fact of His Person as being divine as shown in these two first temptations. It is not that the devil did not know Jesus as the Son of God, but that he was intent on bringing the fact into question, as he did with the word of God in Eden's garden: "Hath God said?" He was not prepared to accept the truth of it.

As in the case of Job, so in the case of the Lord Jesus Satan is used to

prove the worth rather than the worthlessness of the person involved, though we hasten to say that whereas Job could have fallen, the holy nature of the Lord Jesus would totally exclude sin being found in Him. The end in view is the graciousness of God, and seen in this connection the second temptation shows that grace in giving His Son as a Kinsman-Redeemer with all that is implied in

His gift.

Not only are we brought face to face with the impending death of the Kinsman-Redeemer, but as in other references already mentioned there is a hint of what lies on before — His resurrection, and that of those connected with Him; indeed all will be involved in one way or another.

To be continued

BOOKS



Express Checkout by John Allan and Gus Eyre; published Paternoster Press; price £2.95.

The publisher describes this 192 page paperback as a help to understanding Christian basics which might lead the reader to faith in Christ. Certainly, the book faces many of the questions college and university students discuss over endless cups of coffee: "There are lots of different religions which could be just as true as Christianity"; "It is incredible that Jesus never did anything wrong"; "We come back for life after life", etc.

In many instances the author answering reasons logically and always with quotations or illustrations from wide-ranging research. However, there are times when the approach adopted is a little trite or dismissive or fails to address the question adequately. At all times the language used is the normal of young non-Christians.

To most fundamentalists their reluctance to use this book of lively discussion will spring from its ecumenical approach (though the authors may dismiss the tag "ecumenical"). One author cites his having worked with "Anglicans", Baptists, Methodists, Pentecostals, Catholics . . ." during the previous five months.

Elsewhere the book places Elizabeth Fry, St Frances of Assisi, Teresa of Avila, Martin Luther King and others before the reader as Christians to be admired. This review is no place to discuss the iniquities of Roman Catholicism or the dangers of charismatic practices or of Christians in politics, but the reviewer's convictions about such matters cannot allow him to commend what could have been a useful book for general readership.

T.W.

Exploring the Psalms, Vol 3, Psalms 73-106, by John Phillips. Published by Loizeaux Brothers; price £12.00.

It is difficult to imagine that any writer could produce a fresh approach to the Psalms, considering the number of works, expository, devotional, etc., which have been written. Mr Phillips, however, has managed to produce a book which has a different approach, and yet, is a faithful handling of the Scripture.

This volume with the third book of Psalms, the Leviticus of the Pentateuch of David. Each Psalm has an alliterative breakdown, which makes one wonder if Mr Phillips will manage to keep this up when he reaches Volume 5. The danger

of overmuch alliteration is trying to make the Scriptures fit a framework which is not really inherent in the passage. With all due respect, however, this writer has not done despite to the text in his many alliterative outlines.

A refreshing approach in this book is the very racy way the writer handles the narrative. It is interlaced with illustrations taken from nearly every walk in life and quotations from a variety of writings. Apart from the appeal and value of these, they give convincing evidence of scholarship and careful research. Perhaps one problem of using very up-to-date illustrations and quotations is that they date quickly and new generations lose the force of them. For example, in Psalm 83:18 notes, Ezekiel is made to predict what will happen when God deals with Russia in a coming day. And again, against Psalm 101:4, there is a comment, "What a word that is for the United States today" (1986?).

F.E.S.

**"The 13 Judges" by A.M.S. Gooding.
Published by Gospel Tract
Publications, Glasgow: price £3.00.**

The book of Judges is largely neglected not only in personal reading, but by those who teach. Perhaps many do not understand its teaching yet it covers a period like our own day when "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" Mr Gooding, an able and experienced expositor of scripture has opened up the present day value of teaching from this period in the history of God's ancient people. The content of the book is from tapes of addresses given by the author in various places and whilst Mr Gooding has extensively edited the presentation, the direct style of our brothers ministry has not been lost. Many practical lessons of moral and assembly matters are drawn and this book will be of value to all who read it.

The application is of typical and devotional approach and many needed areas of home and assembly life are not only alluded to, but are directly emphasised.

J.R.B.

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YOUNG Believers'

Conducted by Howard A. Barnes,
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Pauline Epistles

PART 6: CORINTHIANS

INTRODUCTION

Corinth was an important commercial city with two sea ports. In the last desperate attempt of the Greek communities to rid themselves of Roman rule, Corinth was the leader. The revolt failed and as a consequence the city was utterly devastated and its population massacred. However its geographical position was too good to leave unused, so Julius Caesar had it rebuilt as a Roman colony exactly 100 years after it was destroyed. It later became the capital city of Achaia (the southern part of modern Greece). Originally re-peopled by Roman retired soldiers and the like, it soon attracted immigrants from all around the Mediterranean.

The city's fame and fortune quickly returned, but so too did its previous international reputation as an immoral city. This attitude to life was given official religious backing in the worship of Aphrodite (actually Ashtoreh of the OT), whose temple dominated the Corinthian skyline. In this religion no rules of sexual morality were observed. The booming business life of the city had brought Jewish businessmen, and they soon had set up their synagogue. Quite a number of Gentiles had become associated with the synagogue, finding no

satisfaction with the ungodly religion of the city.

PAUL ARRIVES

Paul arrived at Corinth after a disappointing visit to Athens. That city of philosophers had showed little interest in the gospel, and does not seem even to have let him finish his message (see Acts 17:32). He probably took the short sea route and landed at Cenchrea, and walked the eight miles to Corinth, soon coming in sight of its overshadowing citadel and the city nestling beneath.

Like anyone entering a third world city today, he would see the shanty town built on the outskirts of the city by the poorest inhabitants. They would have used wood, hay and stubble to build their mean hovels. As he moved to the centre of the city and looking up to the temple complex he would have seen much richer materials used for building, like gold, silver and precious stones. Slaves would have abounded in the city and many languages would have been heard in the streets, on the lips of sailors coming off the ships and intent on having a good time.

Some time before Paul's arrival a Jewish married couple called Priscilla and Aquila, driven from Rome by a general expulsion order, had set up business at Corinth as tentmakers. As far as we can gather they were already saved and soon Paul lived and worked with them as he too was a tentmaker. On sabbath days he went to the synagogue and "persuaded" the Jews and the Greeks (the latter meaning the non-Jews who attended the synagogue services). Soon Silas and Timothy arrive from Macedonia, and because of the gifts they brought Paul is able to be occupied for more of his time in preaching. This preaching stressed to the Jews that "Jesus was Christ"

(Acts 18:5), but because of the violent reaction against this message of a crucified Christ (1 Cor 1:23), Paul turns his attentions to the Gentiles (not however without seeing the conversion of the most prominent Jew — Crispus the chief ruler of the synagogue!). Paul didn't go far however, for Justus who lived next door to the synagogue allowed him to have meetings in his home.

The work prospered and "many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptised" (Acts 18:8). If we were not told otherwise we would expect this to be a very happy time for the apostle, but the next thing we hear is that the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision one night, saying "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city". Paul must have sensed the growing hostility in the synagogue next door to his preaching, especially when they saw so many converts from among the Gentiles, a number no doubt who had been associated with the synagogue. Perhaps Paul thought it was time to move on, and that staying might mean trouble from the Jews as had happened many times before (Damascus, Jerusalem, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Thessalonica, and Berea), and perhaps even another beating. When Paul later recalls these days in his first epistle, he says he was with them "in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling" (2:3). The One who commissioned him to preach knew the kind of person He had sent "far hence unto the Gentiles" (Acts 22:21), and appeared to him. This incident has some remarkable parallels with that of Abram in Gen 15 where for the first time a human being is told not to be afraid by God. Likewise Abram is told that God has work to do through him and He would therefore protect him.

The words of the Lord Jesus

are soon borne out in a striking way, for the Jews' effort to have Paul convicted of preaching an illegal religion fail, and Sosthenes, their new chief ruler of the synagogue was beaten up by the crowd. Paul was thus able to continue unhindered for eighteen months more. He eventually left and sailed for Syria, but stopped off at Ephesus and left Priscilla and Aquila there.

APOLLOS ARRIVES

While Priscilla and Aquila are in Ephesus, "a certain Jew named Apollos, born in Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures came to Ephesus" (Acts 18:24). Strangely, he only knew John's baptism (like some others we find in Acts 19). He believed the forerunner's message, but had not heard of the facts of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus. Soon he meets Priscilla and Aquila who "took him to them, and expounded unto them the way of God more perfectly" (Acts 18:26). He eventually moves on and armed with a letter of commendation, arrived at Corinth where "he helped them much which had believed through grace: for he mightily convinced the Jews . . . showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ" (v.28).

Paul eventually returns to Ephesus and stayed for three years during which time he was to do a great work for the Lord. It was there at last he met Apollos who had eventually returned from Corinth (1 Cor 16:12). However they soon receive bad news from Corinth about the spiritual state of the assembly from some members of Chloe's household (1 Cor 1:1) and also from Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus (16:17).

To be continued

Two Weeping Women

by Tony Renshaw, Heald Green

Luke 7 describes (among other things) two encounters, each involving the Saviour and a woman (vv. 11-17; 36-50). The two passages are often considered independently but they gain enormously by being studied together.

The first encounter took place out-of-doors and the second took place in-doors. The first woman was a respected member of her community (for many went with her to the funeral), whilst the second was a rejected member of her community (being described as "a woman who had a lived a sinful life in that town", v.37 NIV). The first was a heart-broken widow and the second was a heart-broken sinner. Each was in tears when she encountered the Lord, for the widow shed tears of bereavement and the sinner shed tears of contrition. Perhaps the first are more common than the second, for tears of grief flow more frequently than tears of guilt. It is significant that the Lord urged the widow to stop weeping, but He allowed the sinner to continue for He knew that her tears had a healing quality.

So far as Luke's narratives are concerned, each woman remained silent throughout her meeting with the Lord, but whilst the widow was a passive onlooker at the city gate the sinful woman was an active participant in Simon's house. In the first

incident the Lord took the initiative and approached the widow. In the second the woman took the initiative and approached the Lord. The widow did not seek God's help, but He gave it. This was quite rare. The Lord did not seek the woman's homage, but she gave it. This too was quite rare. The widow's grief drew the Lord towards her, and the woman's gratitude drew her towards the Lord.

The central problem in the first incident was death and the central problem in the second incident was sin. Sin and death go together and form the dominant problems for the whole of humanity: "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom 5:12); "for the wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23); "when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (Jas 1:15). But the Saviour has the last word. The widow's tears of grief were followed by the conquest of death. The woman's tears of contrition were followed by the conquest of sin. At the city gate, resurrection was followed by new physical life. In the Pharisee's house, forgiveness was followed by new spiritual life. Thus each encounter produced a great reversal. The widow's prospect of increased loneliness and sadness was transformed by the recovery of her

son. The woman's life of sin and shame was transformed by the Lord's pardon into one of peace and purpose.

At the city gate there was a miracle in the absence of faith. In the Pharisee's house there was faith in the absence of a miracle. This accounts for the contrasting reactions produced by these events on the onlookers. The miracle at the city gate produced a widespread and favourable sensation (vv. 16-17), whilst the pardon in the Pharisee's house produced a mild but critical sensation (v.49). There is nothing surprising about this for the world prefers miracles to conversions.

Now let us think more particularly about the first narrative. As already hinted, Luke's account of the raising of the widow's son is unusual in this, that it was not prompted or preceded by any appeal for the Lord's help or by any exercise of faith in Him. We gather that all that prompted the Lord to act was the widow's grief. If the widow had faith in the Lord, Luke does not say so: and he usually refers to faith when it was present as this chapter itself suggests (see v.9 concerning the centurion and v.50 concerning the sinful woman). In fact Luke is absolutely silent about the spiritual condition of the widow and her son, both before and after this encounter. Surely this is very significant. The Lord usually sought faith before He bestowed His blessings; but not invariably. He could and did act without it at times, as we know from His healing of the demoniac of Gadara and of Malchus in Gethsemane, and from His feeding of the five thousand and the four thousand.

In all those instances (and doubtless more besides) the need itself was sufficient to prompt Him to act.

Nain receives its only mention in the Gospels in this passage. It is possible that the Lord never entered the city itself and that His only reason for the visit was to raise the widow's son. We would love to know how these two souls fared afterwards. It is likely that the son outlived his mother and supported and cared for her throughout her remaining days on earth. Eventually he had his dying to do all over again.

We know a good deal more about the second woman, though despite the speculations of preachers and writers we know nothing of the *nature* of the sinful life for which she had such a poor reputation. Guessing is both unwise and unkind. The prodigal's elder brother had no evidence for his cruel assumption about the conduct of his younger brother in the far country (Luke 15:30). The fact that this woman came to the Lord with an alabaster jar of perfume indicates that she had been impressed already by some aspect of His ministry. If she had witnessed all the events which the disciples of John the Baptist had seen (vv.21-24) she may well have recognised the Lord as the promised Messiah. Her tears are less easily explained than those of the widow. She felt constrained to render her homage to the Saviour, but once in His presence may well have been overcome by a sense of her unfitness and guilt. She would sense also the hostile and critical atmosphere into which she had entered in the Pharisee's house. She wept until the Lord's feet were wet with her tears.

and then she bowed so low that she could wipe His feet with her hair before anointing them.

The whole procedure was repugnant to Simon as he silently judged both the woman and the Lord. The parable reached its target, though the Pharisee's word have a grudging sound: "I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most" (v.43). The Lord's words which followed do not require us to believe that the woman deliberately set out to remedy the discourtesy of the Pharisee, though that was the

Light from an **Old Lamp**

By the late John Ritchie

Man's Future State (10)

The condition and employments of departed saints. On a subject so transcendent as the present state and occupations of the christian dead, concerning which we can know absolutely nothing beyond what God has made known in the Scriptures, speculation is as irreverent as it is dangerous. In a sphere where man is forbidden to enter or human reason to pry, we are shut up to what God has revealed, and to the very words in which His revelation is made, being careful not to read popular meanings into them, or draw unwarranted inferences from them. Reason always fails in such a sphere. Faith rests in what God has revealed, and is satis-

effect of her actions. The Lord's words were full of grace and truth, for truth requires Him to acknowledge her "many sins", and grace prompted Him to pronounce forgiveness. It was rare for the Lord to forgive sins (the only other recorded example concerned the paralytic of Capernaum), and we may be sure that this dear woman was ready for salvation. The Lord's last words tell us all we need to know about her remaining days on earth: "Go in peace".

fied, remembering that Scripture was not given to gratify curiosity, or to inform us on things we have no need to know at present. Two opposing forms of error in our time, actively working under various names, seek to obscure the truth.

Sadduceeism, which regards death as the introduction to a condition of non-conscious existence, or the end of being, and thrusts its dead hopelessly out of sight, regarding them as being "no more", denying all that God has revealed of the state after death and before resurrection.

Theosophy, in its more popular form as Spiritualism, which regards the present union of spirit, soul and body, as an unnatural state, which hinders the spirit from its highest conceptions, and sees in death the means of deliverance from a cumber-

some body, and the dark grave a fit place of sepulture for the cast off weeds of a despised humanity. Some who accept the teaching of the Word, regarding the present disembodied condition of those who have died in faith, as being "with Christ", are in danger of being led beyond the limits of Scripture, by receiving the current traditions which abound in our religious phraseology and hymnology regarding the condition and occupations of the dead in Christ. And statements taken from the Word which refer to the after-resurrection and immortal condition, are very frequently applied to the present "absent from the body" state, confusing things that differ, and providing missiles for propagators of error to use against the truth. Such expressions as "Sudden death is sudden glory" — "Gone to serve in the heavenly sphere", and others of a similar kind, are not according to the Word, for "glory" to the saint is connected with the coming of the Lord, when those who have gone and they who remain will alike become partakers of it (1 Pet 5; 1 Cor 15:43), while activities of service in heaven, await possession of the body, which for the present the dead in Christ are "absent from". Rest and expectancy, rather than service and glory, characterise their present state. Words placed on the tombstones of the dead, telling of them as "wearing crowns and bearing palms", or having "entered upon a glorious immortality", however well meant in honour of their faith and hope, are wholly misleading, for none of those who, through all the ages, died in faith, have yet reached such conditions. They apply to the post-resurrection state, and are only true concerning

those for whom the Scripture says they have been prepared. Had this been known and remembered, it would have saved many from accepting the Romish error of the Intercession of Saints, which has held millions in its delusive grasp throughout the centuries. For while we believe that as sinners saved by grace, the Virgin Mother and also the Apostles are as "spirits" at home with the Lord, we are equally sure that their bodies remain in the grasp of corruption, awaiting, in common with all the dead in Christ, that coming hour in which they shall be "raised in incorruption" to enter on that sphere of heavenly service (Rev 22:3), which awaits them, but which they do not for the present share, nor can they until they receive their bodies of glory fitted for it.

Scattered references throughout the Word teach us, that with those who have ended their appointed course and departed, it is indeed "very far better" (Phil 1:23, RV), and that they have reached a stage of communion with their Lord and of knowledge in heavenly things, far beyond their highest experiences and holiest moments here. The spirit freed from its earthly house, may be capable of such intercourse with Christ, and with the spirits of the just, as we are for a brief moment permitted to behold on the holy mount when Moses and Elias, in company with the transfigured Lord, "talked with Him" of His coming "decease" to be at Jerusalem. To be "at home with the Lord" (2 Cor 5:8, RV) must be unmingled bliss. To be "in Paradise" with Christ, implies the full sharing with Him of all His present joys and pleasures there.

·REGIONS·BEYOND·

Honduras

by Allister Shedden

The Country Strange as it may seem, quite a number of God's people have no idea as to where Honduras is located on the world map. Actually it lies in the very heart of Central America, in the isthmus between Mexico and Panama, with its northern coastline being washed by the Caribbean Sea and having Guatemala to the north-west, El Salvador to the south-west and Nicaragua to the south.

Within its borders, Honduras has a population of over four million people with Spanish being the official language, though there remain to this day several indigenous tribes retaining their own dialect within their communities.

The Constitution of the country guarantees freedom of religion and the missionary enjoys tremendous liberty in the proclamation of the gospel.

The Challenge Prior to being conquered by the Spaniards, the Mayan civilisation was priest-orientated. Life revolved around the priest and his word was law. However, the numerous deities to whom human sacrifices were offered, were unable to liberate the Mayans from the grip of sin and death. After they were conquered and Roman Catholicism imposed upon them, alas! the RC priests had no hope to offer them. No good news of a Divine Saviour reached their ears; no blessed news of the forgiveness of sins; death was the entrance to a horrendous purgatory; no hope of eternal life. The poor Mayan died as he lived — without Christ, without God and without hope. The challenge of the hour appeared to fall on deaf ears. The Mayan was crying out: Come over and help us! God was asking: Whom shall I send and who will go for Us?

Today it is reported that 55% of the present population is 18 years old and under the annual growth rate is around 3.6%. What a challenge this presents! Precious souls for whom, the Eternal Son of God died and rose again. Will they hear the message of salvation? Will they, like their ancestors die as they live, without Christ, without hope?

The Commencement The Lord of the Harvest laid it upon the hearts of godly men, who counted not their lives dear unto themselves, to bring the Word of God to the Hondurans. The assembly testimony was commenced by the arrival in San Pedro

Sula of brethren from the USA in 1905 who had the simple faith to believe that New Testament principles as practised in the first century AD were sound enough to be practised in the 20th century. As recorded in Acts chapter 14, the missionaries preached the Gospel and then they taught (discipled) the new converts, confirming (strengthening) their souls by sound doctrine and exhorting them to continue in the faith. Not only so, they sought to leave each assembly in the hands of elders who would care for the flock of God and watch for their souls, with each assembly being responsible directly to the Risen Head regarding its witness, conduct and worship. Each assembly would then be responsible to evangelise in its own immediate neighbourhood under the sovereign direction of the Spirit of the the Living God, commencing at Jerusalem (Acts 1:8; 1 Thess 1:8) and duplicating the same pattern in every place where assemblies were planted. The Lord of Glory would be the true centre of each gathering (Matt 18:20), His Lordship acknowledged and His Word would be the final court of appeal on any matter relative to doctrine, worship, conduct or discipline. No Field Committee or governing body would control the "work" as such, though, within the happy fellowship among the various assemblies, counsel could be sought at the mouth of godly brethren or the missionaries, but any final decision would rest entirely on the oversight of the assembly in question before the Lord.

Messrs Knapp, Ghor, Hockings, Ruddock and Scollon were such men of vision and those who have followed in their footsteps give thanks to God that they were unwavering in these principles. After the war ended in 1945 other missionaries followed; Messrs Bowen, Shedden, Pugmire, Tidsbury and Hanlon were exercised to labour for the Lord in Honduras along with their wives. Some single sisters responded to the call of God; Misses Hockings, Johnstone and Atkins, who were to be a great help among the women. From the USA brother Hanna and his wife were commended in 1959 and then in 1974 brother David Dominguez. All of these dear brethren and sisters have maintained the principles throughout the years and it is our joy to see the assemblies themselves adhering to what they have been taught and appealing to the Word of God as the only source of information regarding spiritual matters.

The Continuity From the tiny acorn grows the huge oak and from one small, insignificant assembly in San Pedro Sula in the year 1910, there are now about 165 assemblies throughout the Republic. To God be the glory!

Bible Studies for Elders Where there is a healthy oversight there will be a healthy and happy assembly, fulfilling the purpose

for which it was brought into existence in the first place. Conscious of the need to instruct capable brethren in sound doctrine and to show them from the Word of God itself their solemn responsibilities before God and the congregation (2 Tim 2:2) Bible Studies of a week's duration are held in different localities in the country. Normally, two full-time workers or a full-time worker and a missionary are responsible for the teaching, covering all aspects of church truth, such as doctrine, discipline, reception, evangelisation etc., as well as other related subjects. Questions are asked after each session in order to amplify or clarify the matter raised.

Intensive Bible Studies This has a double purpose of giving "in depth" studies from the Word of God to believers over a period of three weeks and, thereafter, "working out" what has been learned in happy fellowship with the saints in some of the smaller and struggling assemblies in the neighbourhood for two weeks, with the emphasis on "evangelisation" and door-to-door visitation. Many assemblies have benefitted from this ministry and young Christians have thereby been prepared to work more closely with their elders when they return to their home assembly.

Radio An evangelical radio station transmitting from the capital city of Tegucigalpa is used for beaming out a 5 minute message each morning from Monday till Saturday. This radio station covers the whole of Central America and effectively reaches the more isolated assemblies in mountain areas. On Lord's Day, the message runs for half an hour, when consecutive Bible themes are taken up, mainly for the benefit of these isolated believers who are not so often visited as the others.

Printing As successive generations emerge from illiteracy, the need for a written ministry becomes apparent. Two magazines are now being printed, one "PREGOHERO" gives information about activities in the assemblies, though it also contains sound teaching, and "VERDADES BIBLICAS" a magazine similar to the "BELIEVERS' MAGAZINE". Hymn Books are also printed as well as Gospel tracts.

Bible Camps for Young Folks It has already been pointed out that 55% of the population is 18 years old and under. These young folks are not forgotten and at the three camp sites advantage is taken of the school holidays to reach out with the message of salvation. The children are divided into two different age-groups, from 12 to 14 years and 15 to 17, in an effort to suit the messages according to age and mental ability. The camps for boys are held separately from the girls so that four weeks are set aside for this ministry, which has been greatly blessed of the Lord over the years. Not a few of those who were saved during these camps are now in happy fellowship in local assemblies.

Question

All questions should be sent to the Editor, Believer's Magazine, Office, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and should have the name and address of sender. Consideration of space may prevent the publication of answers.

QUESTION

If our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified on the Friday and rose again on the Sunday morning early, was he not in the tomb two nights only? How can this be reconciled with Matt 12:40 which states "three days and three nights"?

ANSWER

On looking at the events in relation to the burial and resurrection of Christ, it is clear that our Lord rose from the dead before dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene found "while it was yet dark" that the tomb was empty (Matt 28:1).

It is also clear that the events of suffering and death had taken place three days previously, the words of the two on the road to Emmaus identify this "it is now the third day since these things came to pass" (Luke 24:21). As they spoke these words on the first day of the week (Sunday) then the second day would be Saturday making Friday the First of the three ie. the day of crucifixion.

It must be remembered that days in Scripture are arranged as evening to morning not as with us which is morning to evening. Our Lord Jesus Christ would thus have kept the Passover at the beginning of the 14th Nisan which would be in the evening of what we would call the Thursday, but which would really be the beginning of the 14th. We know both from the gospels and from 1 Cor 11:23 that whilst He was partaking of the Passover and instituting the Lord's Supper He was being betrayed. His trial was during the same night into the early morning and He was crucified later that day being as stated earlier the Friday.

The nation of Israel was still celebrating the Passover when He was dying little realising that God's true passover lamb was on the cross outside the city (see 1 Cor 5:7).

Another fact to be taken into consideration is that any part of a day is counted as a whole in scripture as it is still in law even in the UK. This can be seen in such scriptures as Esther 4:16 compared with 5:1 where the "three days night or day" actually would have only covered three days and two nights in our modern way of reckoning. A similar example is seen in 1 Sam 30:12 compared with v.1 and 29:10.

Putting all these facts together the three days and nights would be Friday Saturday and Sunday a part of each being included to make the three days and nights.

It is of interest to note that the expression within the question is only found in Matthew which has a presentation of truth to the Jewish mind in particular, such would be familiar with the OT examples and reckoning cited.

J.R. Baker

QUESTION

Is the inheritance of Eph 1:18 for Christ or is it for the saints?

ANSWER

In the prayer where the question is found the apostle makes his requests based upon earlier facts stated in the chapter. In v.11 it is taught that in our Lord Jesus Christ we have obtained an inheritance, thus now the apostle prays that the saints may now know in an experimental way what is the riches of glory in that inheritance. It is one thing to know that we have an inheritance in the future it is a far higher thing to know the wealth of such glory now as we await its realisation.

J.R. Baker

Women in the Church — Their Position

by H.A. Tickner, Muswell Hill

Christianity has emancipated women from the bondage of centuries. The teachings of Christ have raised them to higher levels of society than ever before. The marked evidence of this is seen in the contrasting ideologies of the Eastern and Western worlds of our times.

Recent years have seen a rapid increase of women's liberation moving into many areas of Western economy; a movement that is revealing itself in today's church. The history of the church shows that all too often the characteristics and elements of the world were allowed to creep into its life and testimony. The divine documents sent out from Patmos bear firm proof and warning of this. The emperor cult, the pagan faiths, the blending of religion and state, deep in the life of the Roman Empire and its cities, were already making their impact upon the character of the churches in Asia Minor. At the time of John's writing, Pergamon was guilty of allowing the compromising doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitans to break down its pilgrim testimony and worship, thus dimming the sharp lines of separation to which she had been called (Rev 2:14-15). Thyatira had embraced the corrupt

and vile marks of the city; she had permitted idolatry, seduction, fornication, impure worship — and that through a woman, Jezebel (Rev 2:20). Sardis rested back in pride on the greatness and glory of the city that was its historical past. She was seeking to live on a name of religion but her works for Christ were dead (Rev 3:1-2). The material wealth, ease and luxury of Laodicea had penetrated into, and had produced in, the church a soft comfortable religion — a contented sitting-back into an easy faith; neither hot nor cold with little or no real commitment and devotion to the One who pleaded for her return and repentance (Rev 3:15-16).

The marks of history are apparent in the church of the twentieth century. It is therefore no cause for surprise to see the subtle infiltration of women's lib evident in today's assembly life. Some academic circles have coined a new term of phraseology, namely *cultural relativity*, with its underlying encouragement and teaching for the church, in its life and message, to adapt to modern trends, to conform to current cultures. Of course, there must be a relativity to the deep spiritual and physical needs of men.

in sympathy, understanding and presentation of the divine answer to meet their needs; but never at the expense of adopting their culture!

In many areas, at home and abroad, there are increasing signs of unrest and uncertainty concerning the role of women in the church; particularly in the assemblies. The object of the papers before us is to seek to discern how the Bible defines this role in the divine pattern and order. The embrace of the subject will be fourfold: (1) Their Position; (2) Their Practice; (3) Their Prohibition and (4) Their Problems.

1. Their Position, heavenward, is of a threefold character:

a) A spiritual standing — “With all the saints” (2 Cor 1:1). Here the strength of the text reveals the united embrace of both the masculine and feminine genders. It is of interest to note that, unlike English grammar where the masculine and feminine have clear distinction, the Greek text is not so simple; some nouns can embrace both genders.

b) A spiritual location — “The saints in Christ Jesus” (Phil 1:1). Here the usage of the strong locative dative, links and places all saints, men and women, in a united position of standing and security for all time and eternity: “My sheep . . . I know . . . I give . . . I hold” (John 10:27-28).

c) A spiritual calling — “Called . . . saints” (Rom 1:3) gives equal status to both men and women, and to both is given the responsibility of conduct so to live as saints! The implication of the verb “to be” given in the AV of v.7 calls all believers into a life and exercise that is worthy of such a high

and noble title “called saints”. The demonstrations of this will be marked in separation from the world and separated to God, in the capacities of a united priesthood. “Ye (Gk. plural lit. yourselves) are an . . . holy . . . a royal priesthood” (1 Pet 2:5,9).

The Galatian confirmation underlines with strength the oneness of all believers (3:26,28), again in embrace of the verb *este*, “to be”, set in the second person plural: “Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. There is neither (a strong negative, lit. there cannot be) male nor female: for ye are all one (spiritual equality, see 1 Cor 11:11, 12, 13) in Christ Jesus”.

2. Their Position, earthward, in relation to society and church levels is clearly revealed in Scripture, unfolding for all time the divine pattern for the man - woman relationship, in which neither is complete without the other (1 Cor 11:11). However, in the realm of human life the pattern of woman’s dependence upon, and her subordination — *not* inferiority — to man, is seen in three major areas of God’s word:

a) Creation. Gen 2:7, 21-22 gives the precise detail and method in the creating of man; this being complementary to the broad statement of 1:26-27 shows that Adam was created first, out of dust, and Eve second, out of Adam. The NT confirmation of this is 1 Tim 2:13, “for Adam was first formed then Eve”. It is instructive to note the complementary verb (*plasso*, as in the English *plastic*, meaning “to form, to fashion, to mould”), and context of Rom 9:20-21, linking with that of 1 Tim 2:13. Thus the human pair were formed in such a manner

that the woman was to be a "helpfit" for the man (Gen 2:18). In this divinely ordered pattern, it was natural for the man to lead and the woman to follow; for him to be aggressive, for her to be receptive; for him to invent, for her to use the invention. As thus fashioned to be a help meet, the tendency to look to, and in deep dependence to follow, was embedded in Eve's very soul as she came forth from the Creator's hand. Here we would ask rhetorically, "Is it right therefore that this instituted order be reversed?" Not only far from proceeding Adam in being formed "out of" his body, Eve's very name *Ish-sha* is derived out of Adam's name *Ish* (Gen 2:23).

b) Transgression. In her heeding and responding to the voice of the serpent in the garden, the woman sinned first (Gen 3:1-4; 1 Tim 2:14). In this transgression she trampled underfoot God's command to her and Adam, "thou shalt not eat" (Gen 2:17); thus she ignored her divinely ordered position. In choosing to lead, not willing to obey the law, Eve embraced the deception first, Adam second. Here the woman "completely deceived" (lit. Heb.) was the first to fall into sin through the fatal step of disobedience. It is of great importance to note that woman's relationship as marked in the Creation and Transgression aspects of the OT narrative is taken by the Holy Spirit and structured in the NT records of Church truth and order (1 Tim 2:9-14).

c) Biblical. The divine manuscripts set the clear order of headship in 1 Cor 11:3, "the head of every man (Gk. masc. *andros*) is Christ the head of woman (Gk. fem. *gunaikos*) is man

the head of Christ is God". It is a divine principle that order and subjection pervades the entire universe and is essential to its well being; disturb this concatenation (series of links) and ruin would result; the same must apply in human relationships as set by heaven, and more so in church order.

The obvious meaning of v.3 is clear and simple; the woman is subject to the man, as the man is to Christ, and as Christ is to God. As we have stated the subjection of the woman to man is perfectly consistent with their identity, on the human level, as to nature. In like manner the subjection of Christ to God is consistent with His being of the same nature with the Father. Let it be clearly stressed that Christ's subjection is *not* in His relativity as the *Logos* — the eternal Word — or as the second person of the Trinity, but as *Theanthropes* the God-man in His humanity here on earth. The context of v.3 places Christ head of every believer, as indeed He is "head of the church", His body (Col 1:18; Eph 1:22-23).

The summary of the woman's position in the church can therefore be marked out in Scripture in a twofold capacity —

1. Heavenward — a standing with *all* saints *in* Christ Jesus, in the privilege of "holy priesthood".
2. Earthward — in her willing acceptance of divine teaching, in her obedience to church order and character set out in divine truth, and in her glad fulfilment of the responsibilities of the divine trust bestowed.

MARRIAGE HYMN

*As to Thee we turn. Lord Jesus.
Every heart would gladly own
That Thy path of true devotion
Made Love's holy nature known:
Love that sought and found its object
In the bride, joy of Thy heart.
That told forth the wondrous story
We should share with Thee Love's part.*

*Here we rest in joy, discerning
All the grace that brought Thee low:
Here we learn the fadeless glory
Thou dost on Thy church bestow.
In this hour of Love's committal,
Still our hearts to hear Thy voice.
As in grace we learn the pleasure
Thou hast found in Thy heart's choice.*

*In the joy of sovereign purpose,
Fraught with riches from above,
We would dwell in all the favour
Of eternal changeless love:
Changeless too Thy thought, Lord Jesus,
Thou would'st place on glory's throne
All that's formed in Love's responses
Of Thy flesh and of Thy bone.*

Neil Short

BOOKS

**"That the Word may Know" Volume
10 The Islands of the Sea, by Dr F.A.
Tatford. Published by E.O.S., Bath;
price £12.50.**

This is the last of ten volumes. The editor of the whole series completed the work up to reading the proofs of this book just prior to his homecall to be with Christ.

The high standard of presentation from a publishing and photographic point of

view has been maintained throughout.

The Islands of the sea is intended to cover gospel work in the thousands of Islands scattered throughout the world. Many will recognise the names of servants of God who laboured to preach and plant assemblies and have now gone to their reward. This book has value for all who purchase it.

J.R.B.

England & Wales

FORTHCOMING

FEBRUARY 7

West Mersea: Assembly Hall, East Road at 4.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. M. Hayward.

Cwmbran: The Gospel Hall, Oakfield Road at 7.15 p.m. C. Jones.

Kingsteignton, Devon: at 7.00 p.m. H. Bell.

Nottingham: Gospel Hall, Victoria Road, Netherfield at 7.15 p.m. N. Mellish.

Milton Keynes: New Bradwell, Gospel Hall, Caledonian Road at 7.30 p.m. A. Carew.

Maidenhead: Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road at 6.30 p.m. D.C. Hinton.

Westcliff-on-Sea: The Gospel Hall, Carlton Avenue at 7.30 p.m. A. Cundick.

Ealing: Grove Hall, The Grove at 7.00 p.m. A. Leckie. Mr Leckie continues in ministry from Mon - Thurs.

FEBRUARY 14

Bermondsey: The Gospel Hall, 97 St James's Road, London at 7.00 p.m. G. Raggett.

Ely: Gospel Hall, Ship Lane, at 7.30 p.m. J. Farley.

Brierfield: Christian Rallies, Hebron Hall, Walter Street at 7.00 p.m. G. Hart.

North Wembley: Uxendon Hall at 7.00 p.m. R. Carnall.

Cheshunt: Mill Lane Chapel, High Street at 7.00 p.m. C. Roberts.

Ludlow: Cleevieview Gospel Hall at 7.30 p.m. J. Hall.

Coventry: The Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street at 7.30 p.m. A. Shearman.

Warrington: Hope Hall, Hawthorne Street, Bewsey at 7.00 p.m. S. Downs.

Birmingham: Gospel Hall, Quarry Lane, Northfield at 7.00 p.m. J. Wedderburn.

Northampton: Gospel Hall, Osborne Road, Kingsthorpe at 7.30 p.m. H. Tickner.

FEBRUARY 15 - 19

Rockhampton: Gospel Hall, at 2.45 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. Mon - Thurs. Ministry at 7.45 p.m. N. Mellish.

FEBRUARY 21

Blackpool: Gospel Hall, Salthouse Avenue at 7.30 p.m. S. Downs.

Bishop's Stortford: Gospel Hall, Dunmow Road at 7.00 p.m. A. Gooding.

St. Austell: Seymour Gospel Hall, Slades

Road 7.00 p.m. G.B. Fyfe.

Mitcham Junction: Gospel Hall, Percy Road at 7.00 p.m. E. Hughes.

Luton: Onslow Road Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. W. Gardiner. Sunday at 4.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. W. Gardiner.

Cheltenham: Bethany Hall, Newton Road, Hesters Way at 7.30 p.m. J. Scarsbrook.

Warrington: Gospel Hall, Forster Street at 7.00 p.m. G. Bourne.

Redditch: Foxlydiat Crescent Gospel Hall, Batchley Estate at 7.00 p.m. A. Wiseman.

FEBRUARY 28

Coventry: Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street at 7.30 p.m. D. Hands.

Hanworth: Gospel Hall, Hounslow Road at 7.00 p.m. A. Wiseman.

Haywards Heath: Franklynn Gospel Hall, 87 Eastern Road at 7.00 p.m. C. Lacey. Also Sunday at 4.00 p.m.

Weymouth: Bethany Hall, at 7.30 p.m. L. Burston.

Leicester: York Street Gospel Hall, off Granby Street at 7.30 p.m. C. Stewart.

Bexleyheath: Bethany Hall at 7.00 p.m. A. Carew.

Chesterfield: Littlemoor Gospel Chapel, Dunston Lane, Newbold at 7.30 p.m. R. Maffey.

Brierfield: Hebron Hall, Walter Street at 7.00 p.m. G. Payne.

London W10: Hope Hall, Kilburn Lane at 7.00 p.m. G. Waugh.

MARCH 7

Westcliff-on-Sea: Gospel Hall, Carlton Avenue at 7.30 p.m. J. Harrison. Mr Harrison continues in ministry Mon - Thurs at 8.00 p.m.

Milton Keynes: Gospel Hall, Caledonian Road, New Bradwell at 7.30 p.m. J. Salisbury.

Maidenhead: Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road at 6.30 p.m. I. Steeds.

Nottingham: Gospel Hall, Victoria Road, Netherfield at 7.15 p.m. E. Hughes.

Kingsteignton: Devon at 7.00 p.m. H Bell.

Cwmbran: Gospel Hall, Oakfield Road at 7.15 p.m. G. Davies.

West Mersea: Assembly Hall, East Road at 4.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. R. Dawes.

Waltham Abbey: Eastbrook Hall at 4.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. D. Hinton.

MARCH 13 - 15

Warrington: Hope Hall, Hawthorne Street Bewsey. Bible Reading Fri at 7.30 p.m. Conference Sat and Sun J.R. Baker, J. Gillespie.

MARCH 14

Northampton: Gospel Hall, Osborne Road, Kingsthorpe at 7.30 p.m. H. Bell.

Ludlow: Cleeview Gospel Hall at 7.30 p.m. C. Raggett.

Cheshunt: Mill Lane Chapel, High Street at 7.00 p.m. W Farquhar.

North Wembley: Uxendon Hall at 3.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. A. Leckie, A. Naismith. Mr Leckie continues in ministry 16th - 19th at 8.00 p.m.

Brierfield: Hebron Hall, Walter Street at 7.00 p.m. B. Loughborough.

Ely: Gospel Hall, Ship Lane at 7.30 p.m. D. West.

Bermondsey: Gospel Hall, 97 St. James's Road, London at 4.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. F. Epps, B. Price.

Scotland FORTHCOMING

FEBRUARY 7

Hamilton: Low Waters Gospel Hall, Hall Street at 6.30 p.m. I. Spiers.

Coatbridge: Hebron Hall, 20 Church Street at 6.30 p.m. G. Waugh, A. Deans.

Beith: Bethany Hall, Kirk Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Rodgers.

New Stevenson: Assembly Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Hay, J. Stubbs.

Livingston: Gospel Hall, Deans at 6.30 p.m. M. Radcliffe, A. Wilson.

Bridge of Weir: Hope Hall, Maxwell Terrace at 7.00 p.m. Missionary Report.

Kilmarnock: Elim Hall, Cuthbert Place, at 6.45 p.m. K. Stapley, K. Dykes.

FEBRUARY 8 - 12

Chapelhall: Gospel Hall, Lord's Day at 3.00 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. Mon - Thurs at 7.45 p.m. J. Flanigan.

FEBRUARY 8

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road), at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

FEBRUARY 14

Cumbernauld: Mossknowe Gospel Hall, Kildrum Ring Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Anderson, G. Waugh.

Ashgill: Bethany Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Hay, J. Smyth.

Larkhall: Albion Hall, Montgomery Street at 6.30 p.m. S. Foster, A. Brown.

Gourock: Bethany Hall, Drumshantie Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Gamble.

Saltcoats: Bethany Hall: Ailsa Road at 7.00 p.m. B. Cameron, T. Aitken.

Bishopton: Gospel Hall, at 7.00 p.m. J. Paton. Bible Reading Titus 3.

Chapelhall: Annual Conference in Public School Hall, Gibb Street, at 3.30 p.m. J. Flanigan, A. Leckie, J.R. Baker.

Tarbolton: Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. J. Hunter.

East Kilbride: Threshold Assembly Hall at 7.00 p.m. J. Thomson, T. Wilson.

Wishaw: Ebenezer Gospel Hall, Young Street at 6.30 p.m. A. McFarlane, W. Park.

Newmilns: Gospel Hall, Drygate Street at 7.00 p.m. G. Paton, I. Wallace.

FEBRUARY 15 - 20

Chapelhall: Gospel Hall, Lord's Day at 3.00 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. Mon - Thurs at 7.45 p.m. A. Leckie.

FEBRUARY 21

Plains: Eilm Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Grant, A. Aitken.

Dalry: Gospel Hall, Townend at 7.00 p.m. A. Allen, A. Pollard.

Lighthouse: Bethesda Hall, 16 Holmfault-head Place at 7.00 p.m. S. Foster, J. Hay.

Ayr: Gospel Hall, James Street at 7.00 p.m. J. Burnett.

Whitburn: West End Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. D. Newell, W. Banks.

Motherwell: Shields Road Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. A. Gooding, R. Cameron.

Falkirk: Thornhill Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Rodgers, R. McPheat.

Mayfield: Gospel Hall, Stone Avenue at 6.30 p.m. J. Smyth, P. Kaye. Mr Kaye will continue Lord's Day at 2.30 p.m. Mon - Wed at 7.30 p.m.

Dundee: Meadowside Gospel Hall, 2 Euclid Crescent at 7.00 p.m. R. Gamble.

Larkhall: Hareleeshill Gospel Hall, Howard Street at 6.30 p.m. P. Harper, J. Sinclair.

FEBRUARY 21 - 26

Aberdeen: Woodside Assembly, J. Stubbs.

FEBRUARY 22

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road), at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

FEBRUARY 28

Hamilton: High Parks Gospel Hall at 6.45 p.m. A. Leckie, N. Hamilton. Mr Leckie continues Mon - Thurs at 7.30 p.m.

Kilbirnie: Gospel Hall, Schoolwynd at 3.00 p.m. W. Hannay, W.K. Morrison, J. Spiers.

Hamilton: High Parks Gospel Hall, Silvertonhill Avenue at 6.45 p.m. N. Hamilton, A. Leckie. Mr Leckie continues till Thurs 12th March at 7.30 p.m.

Kirkconnel: Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. K. Stapley, H. Cooper.

Airdrie: Hebron Hall, North Bridge Street at 6.30 p.m. I. Ross, J. McDonald.

Uphall: The Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. A. Legge, J. Stubbs.

Saltcoats: Bethany Hall, Ailsa Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Harrison, J. Gamble.

MARCH 1

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road), at 8.30 p.m. S. Arbuthnot.

MARCH 1 - 5

Plains: Elim Gospel Hall, Lord's Day at 3.00 p.m., Mon - Thurs 7.45 p.m. A.M.S. Gooding.

MARCH 1 - 7

Glasgow (Knightswood): Gospel Hall, Fulton Street. Sunday 1st at 3.45 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. Mon - Thurs. Bible Reading 2.15 p.m. Ministry 7.30 p.m. A.C. Gooding Sat 7th at 7.00 p.m. I. Grant, A.C. Gooding.

MARCH 7

Ayr: Woodpark Evangelical Church at 3.00 p.m. T. Jones, A. Gamble, S. Arbuthnot.

Edinburgh: Gorgie Gospel Hall Annual Conference in Tynecastle High School (Pentland Annexe) Gorgie Road at 3.15 p.m. - 5.15 p.m. Ministry T. Wilson, D. Gillies. 6.15 p.m. - 7.45 p.m. Bible Reading.

Kilmarnock: Elim Hall, Cuthbert Place at 6.45 p.m. D. McMaster, A. Young.

Bridge of Weir: Hope Hall, Maxwell Terrace at 7.00 p.m. F. Stallan, F. Beavers.

Livingston: Annual Conference in Deans Community Centre at 3.00 p.m. W. Banks, S. Foster, J. Rodgers.

New Stevenston: Assembly Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Brown, J. Cameron.

Belth: Bethany Hall, Kirk Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Burnett.

Coatbridge: Hebron Hall, 20 Church Street at 6.30 p.m. D. Newell, W. Todd.

MARCH 8

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road), at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

MARCH 14

Tarbolton: Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. G. Waugh.

Bishopston: The Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. J. Anderson, J. Sinclair.

Saltcoats: Bethany Hall, Ailsa Road at 7.00 p.m. K. Dykes, J. Hay.

Gourock: Bethany Hall, Drumshantie Road at 7.00 p.m. K. Stapley.

Larkhall: Albion Hall, Montgomery Street at 6.30 p.m. A. McGregor, I. Ross.

Ashgill: Bethany Hall, Annual Conference in Public Hall at 3.00 p.m. I. Spiers, S. Arbuthnot, J. Paterson.

Cumbernauld: Mossknowe Gospel Hall, Kildrum Ring Road at 7.00 p.m. W. Blair, T. Jones.

MARCH 21

Mayfield: Gospel Hall, Stone Avenue at 6.30 p.m. J. Gamble, A. Wilson (Cullen).

MARCH 28 - APRIL 2

Kilwinning: Conference in Kilwinning Academy, Dairy Road on Sat 28th at 3.00 p.m. S. Jennings, W. Stevely, T. Wilson, Mr Jennings continues in ministry Lord's day 29th at 3.15 p.m. and Mon 30th - Thurs 2nd April at 7.30 p.m.

Falkirk, Thornhill: The Publishers regret that the meeting announced in our January issue for 24th January was listed under Glenrothes in error.

N. Ireland **FORTHCOMING**

FEBRUARY 7

Ballymena: 8.00 p.m. R. McIlwaine (Prince Edward Island).

FEBRUARY 14

Ballymena: 8.00 p.m. Bible Answers to Important Questions, W. Ferguson, J. Hawthorne, R. McKeown.

FEBRUARY 21

Ballymena: 8.00 p.m. A. Gamble.

FEBRUARY 28

Ballymena: 8.00 p.m. S. Ferguson.

England & Wales **REPORTS**

WEST MIDLANDS

Coventry: Upper Hill Street. The saints very much appreciated the ministry from J. Scarsbrook who spoke from Luke 10 on the subject of Martha and Mary. The meeting ably reflected a year in which the saints have been well blessed with good ministry.

Crowle, Nr Droitwich Spa: C.S. Jarrett continues by God's grace to move amongst West Midland assemblies. A most profitable visit gave encouragement and help to all who gathered at this small assembly in the heart of the countryside.

Ludlow: B. Price and J. Riddle have visited the saints at Cleevie recently to minister the Word and encourage them. The monthly Saturday ministry meetings have now moved to the second Saturday of the month instead of the first.

DEVON & CORNWALL

Truro: The saints saw a full hall for the annual conference where ministry of a practical and exhortational character was fervently given by B. Price and K. Rudge. A little later the assembly thoroughly enjoyed two weeks ministry from G. Harrison. It was good to see a large percentage of young people at the meetings.

St. Austell: The month of November was devoted to outreach work in the gospel with the help of J. Baker. Brother Baker visited many homes and enjoyed several opportunities to present the gospel at length. The children's and young people's meetings were well attended and a good number of new contacts were made which have continued. The adult's meetings were never large but all the unsaved people the assembly were praying for came to at least one meeting. The gospel was faithfully preached each evening and further encouraging contact with some of those present at the meetings has been made since. The assembly had the joy of baptising six believers prior to the campaign — one a sister over eighty years of age. A real sense of the Lord's power was experienced.

Teignmouth: The long established assembly here worked at a special gospel outreach fortnight in October using the energies of P. Smith and P. Davey — both full time workers in Devon. 1,500 homes were visited and literature distributed. The adult meetings were disappointing but two children trusted the Lord and good contacts were made on the doors.

The Christian Village Workers: Summer work concluded with a report and thanksgiving meeting held at Teignmouth. Five assemblies were represented and heard how 25 villages were evangelised with literature and open air meetings, over 3,200 tracts and gospels were distributed. J. Baker gave some encouraging ministry to close.

The Teignbridge Postal Sunday School now has 16 scholars enrolled and this is an encouraging start to the new work.

Westhill, Plymouth: The assembly had the joy of baptising a family man in November. He had previously been linked with Jehovah's Witnesses and the saints are now praying for his two young daughters and wife.

Falmouth: The annual New Year's Day fellowship meetings for the assemblies in Cornwall were held at the Hall in Falmouth. Reports from each assembly and from S. Burditt and J. Hádley were received. A time of prayer enabled the work to be commended to the Lord. P. Glasgow concluded the meeting with ministry.

Scotland REPORTS

STRATHCLYDE

Airdrie: Hebron Hall. The saints were greatly encouraged at the centenary year conference to see Chapelside School Hall well filled for the occasion. Searching and edifying ministry was given by R. Gamble, J. Hunter and J. Paton. Consequently a young brother of 14 years has been baptised and received into assembly fellowship giving cause for thanksgiving.

Prestwick: Bute Hall. During late October/early November Albert Aitken and Jim Hutchinson had well supported meetings at Bute Hall. Some interest shown by some unsaved which it is hoped will bear fruit in salvation.

Tarbolton: Also during November at Tarbolton Reg Jordan preached faithfully in this village. At time of reporting meetings are continuing with hopes of a break through.

Crosshill: Robert Revie laboured in this small village during November. The very small assembly were encouraged and good contacts developed.

Prestwick: Glenburn. J. Hay preached the gospel during November with some interest. Four baptisms took place on the last evening of the meetings.

N.Ireland REPORTS

CO. ANTRIM

Ballycastle: E. Wishart expected to commence in gospel hall on 11th January.

With CHRIST

Mrs MEG MILLAR, on 19th September, aged 79. Our sister was saved and baptised in early teens and received into fellowship at Coatdyke assembly. Married Sam in 1932 and for approximately 40 years lived and served the Lord in Hove, Sam being in full time service for the Lord, in largely personal and visitation work. In 1968 they retired to Largs where they served the Lord faithfully. Mrs Millar loved the Lord and His Word. Predeceased by her husband. Remember her dear sister, Marion also her brothers David and Archie McMaster both evangelists.

WILFRED GEORGE TIDMARSH, on October 1st in California, aged 82. Commended in 1939 to the Lord's work in Equador. Dr Tidmarsh was a pioneer missionary to the primitive Quachua speaking forest Indians. He established a number of assemblies in this area of the Amazon Basin and also set up schools and clinics. He will be best remembered for his virtually single-handed translation of the New Testament into the local language, a task he only completed following his retirement in the late 1970's.

ARTHUR HARPER, on 5th November, aged 71. Saved at the age of 14 after an open-air meeting in Manchester. In 1957 moved to Ireland and was in happy fellowship in the Craighill assembly, then moved to Glengormley and Enniskillen assemblies where he was faithful in building up the Work of God. Moved to Newmilns and latterly Kirkconnel where he was in happy fellowship till his homecall. A Godly man who loved the Lord and His Word. Many travelled from Ireland to the funeral to revere his memory and remember a brother beloved. Prayer valued for his wife and family.

Mrs ANNIE REVIE, on 9th November, aged 50 after a long illness bravely and patiently borne. Saved when a young woman she was baptised and received into fellowship at Galston and Kilmarnock, then for the last 16 years at Perth, where she served the Lord faithfully. Together with her husband Willie she gave generous hospitality and succour to many in their home. She witnessed well for her Lord and not only in health but during her severe illness too. Believers, who visited to comfort and cheer her, came away blessed. From many places a large company gathered for her funeral showing the love they had for her. Prayer is requested for her husband and family.

JOSEPH WATT, on 23rd November, aged 81. Saved over 60 years ago at sea off Great Yarmouth. In assembly fellowship for the past 36 years — latterly at Sound assembly where he took a leading part. He is a man who will be greatly missed among us and we pay tribute to

this valiant man of God who will long be remembered for his timely words of ministry and his fatherly care for all the saints. Sincere sympathy is extended to his family.

Mrs IVY BAXTER, on 28th November, aged 72. Saved in her teens, baptised and received into fellowship at Hume Street, Smethwick. She moved to Locking in 1965 and was in fellowship at Hutton until her homecall. An energetic sister who with her late husband kept an open door. She loved discussing and reading the scriptures, and bore a bright testimony even when she knew that her illness meant a sudden homecall.

Mrs D. CRAWFORD, on 2nd December. Saved when a girl of 14 in the south of Ireland. 71 years ago, for some years in the assembly at Ballyhackamore, latterly in the Lessons assembly. A sincere consistent woman who was loved and respected by all.

Mrs LENA CRAIG (Limavady), on 2nd December, aged 82. Our sister went to be with the Lord after 40 years illness patiently borne. Saved in 1922 and in fellowship in Limavady for 58 years. A godly consistent sister, who took a great interest in the assembly, the welfare of the saints and salvation of sinners. Prayer valued for grandchildren and relations not yet saved.

JAMES ARMSTRONG, of Donacloney, on 2nd December, aged 81. Saved as a young man, he was fearless, uncompromising stalwart of Divine principles. For over 50 years our brother pursued a straight path without wavering. He loved the Lord and His Word. Prayer is requested for his wife and family.

JAMES WALLACE KINNAIRD, on 3rd December, aged 66. Saved at the age of 25. In 1981 received into fellowship at Victoria Hall and remained there until moving to N. Ireland where he was in happy fellowship at Ballymoney assembly. Prayer is valued for his widow.

Mrs LIZZIE ANN WORKMAN, on 4th December. She was saved at the age of 14 in the Braid district, baptised and received into fellowship at Buckna. In 1939 after her marriage was in happy fellowship in Killykerigan assembly till her homecall. She was a quiet godly sister whose manner in life commended the gospel to all who met her. Prayer is requested for her husband and family.

GEORGE GILMORE, on 9th December aged 84. He was saved 65 years ago at meetings in Blackhill Orange Hall. Afterwards received into Killmergan where he continued faithfully for a number of years. He moved to Ballymoney district in later years and was with the saints there, until prevented by ill health. Remember his family in prayer.

Mrs D. JAMIESON, on 11th December. Saved when Messrs Gould (Jun) and Beattie had meetings in the Cullion district near to

Donemana. With her husband she was for many years in the Snaird assembly. One who loved the gospel and the things of God. Prayer valued for her family.

GEORGE MARSHALL, suddenly on 13th December, aged 67. Our brother was saved 51 years ago, baptised and received into Lurgan assembly where he was in happy fellowship until his homecall. He was a very wise overseer, with a great love for the saints, and the assembly of God. From early days he had a great burden about souls, and this caused him to carry the gospel all over the province. Although engaged in secular work he conducted many series of gospel meetings and saw many saved. He was preaching nightly for 8 weeks at Clonroot gospel hall and went home after the meeting on Friday night. The very large funeral was a clear declaration of the high esteem in which he was held. He is survived by his wife and family. Prayer valued for them all.

JAMES R. TAYLOR, on 15th December aged 86. Saved early in life and received into fellowship at Hebron Hall, East Park where he laboured in Sunday School work as Superintendent for many years. He then moved to Knightswood where again he laboured as Sunday School Superintendent. The last 14 years was in happy fellowship with the saints at Glenburn. Remember his son Bert in your prayers.

Miss ELIZABETH KEIGHTLEY, on 11th November, aged 90. Saved in 1911 in the Drumenagh district and later received into the assembly there where she continued until her homecall. The last one of a family whose chief interest in life was the welfare of the saints and the preservation of the testimony. Her love for the gospel was appreciated by many. Lovingly cared for during her few weeks of illness, by two sisters from the assembly. All who knew her worth mourn her loss.

GEORGE RANKIN, on 12th November, aged 67. Our brother was saved as a teenager and was in fellowship in Denny assembly for forty years. He was a man who earned a good testimony in the town where he lived being well known and respected for his good works and labours among the local people. He was thus engaged on the night he took ill. The large number of unsaved people at his funeral was a fitting token to his life among them. Remember his wife and family in prayer.

ROBERT (BERT) MCHAFFIE, suddenly on 14th November. Saved in early life and met with believers in GLENLUCE assembly until his family moved to Drummore, where he was active in the assembly and also Sunday School work. Was devoted to the assembly and the Lord's work. The large attendance at his burial bore tribute to the high regard in which he was held.

Mrs ISA WILSON, suddenly on 20th

November. Our sister was saved in 1936 and married her husband Bill in 1940. In 1947 they were commended by the Windsor assembly to serve the Lord in China. Three years later they moved to Malaysia where together they served the Lord for over 30 years. Latterly they resided in Portstewart and had recently revisited Malaysia. Prayer is requested for her husband and family.

Mrs HILDA LARGE, on 21st November. Soundly converted as a young girl at the outbreak of World War One she was almost immediately pressed into Sunday School teaching because recruitment had disastrously reduced the staff. She never looked back. Soon after meeting her future husband they both engaged in pioneer evangelism in the Cardiff area (with the late T.J. Allen and her brother, the late Harry Lacey), in their spare time after business hours. Two assemblies were established which are flourishing today. Married in 1926 she continued her work among women and girls as well as being a recognised hospital visitor for the Cardiff assemblies. Commended, equally with her husband, in 1933 for full time service she worked actively alongside him, first in the South West of England and later in many other parts of Great Britain, never seeking publicity. During the second world war she kept "open house" in Barnstaple for young people but especially for Service Personnel. Later in North London she did the same for missionaries, students and nurses until at the age of 71 she was compelled to seek a quieter life in Seven Kings, Essex. Following a stroke in 1980 her health further deteriorated and the home had to be given up. After a brief stay in Newton Abbot she moved with her husband to Auchlochan in 1982. Having endured a long period of weakness and suffering she was overheard praying "Lord Jesus, please take me home" which the Lord graciously did on November 21st. Please remember her husband and their son Peter and his wife.

Miss AGNES SMITH (Dunover), on 24th December, aged 90. Our sister was over 70 years in Christ and in assembly fellowship until latter years. Manifested the grace of a meek and quiet spirit. Large numbers including unsaved neighbours attended the funeral.

Mrs LOGUE, suddenly, on 25th December, aged 67. Saved at special meeting in Creduff and in fellowship in the little assembly for 50 years. One who was faithful and helpful. Prayer valued for her husband and family.

SAM GILLESPIE, suddenly on 30th December, aged 75. Trusted the Lord in his late teens and associated himself with the assembly at Shields Road. For the past 31 years he was in fellowship at Roman Road Hall, Motherwell and for all this period served as Hallkeeper. Unassuming and faithful in his service he loved to gather with the Lord's people. Will be greatly missed.

Moorfields: J. Martin and W. Jennings continue into new year with meetings in portable hall. A number of unsaved attending.

Buckna: Annual Meeting of Believers — 26th December 1986. Hall full. Helpful, practical ministry by L. Mullan, A. McShane, N. Turkington, D. Gilliland, J.G. Hutchinson and J. Thompson.

Ahoghill: Annual Conference — 1st January. Large company gathered. Excellent ministry by A. Leckie, S. Emery, J. Hunter and N. Mellish. The saints were refreshed and encouraged.

For several nights before the Conference A. Leckie and J. Hunter ministered the word to profit, and S. Emery continued for a week afterwards. Meetings considered good and profitable.

CO. ARMAGH

Armagh: Gospel meetings commenced in gospel hall on 11th January. Preachers N. Turkington and S. Ferguson.

Clare: Gospel meetings concluded. Large numbers attended nightly to hear J. Hawthorne and T. McNeill.

Clonroot: Gospel meetings concluded abruptly due to the very sudden homecall of our dear brother George Marshall, who had preached faithfully for a number of weeks, and saw souls saved. Brother A. Davidson was his partner in these meetings.

Armagh: Saturday night ministry meetings finished for this series. These meetings were exceptionally well attended with excellent ministry.

Portadown: T. Bentley gave much appreciated and practical ministry on the life of Abraham for one week.

CO. DOWN

Lisburn (Plantation): J. Thompson and J. Hawthorne commenced in the gospel on 4th January in the new hall (recently opened). Prayer valued for blessing in salvation.

Gransha: Annual Conference — 25th December 1986. Hall comfortably filled. Ministry shared by A. McShane, D. Kane, W. Nesbitt, J. Hawthorne, N. Turkington and J. Martin.

CO. LONDONDERRY & DONEGAL

Burnfoot: G. Stewart and S. Patterson commenced gospel meetings in a portable hall in January.

Donegal: J. Kells and E. Stewart concluded meetings in a portable hall about four miles from Donegal town. The hall, seating 50 - 60 people, was nicely filled each night, with those from local assembly, and folk from around the hall. Quite a number of unsaved attended each night, and one or two Roman Catholics in

as well.

Magheracorran: S. Patterson had two weeks of meetings. These were intended to be for ministry of the word, using the chart "Egypt to Canaan", but since about 12 unsaved attended each evening the gospel was also freely preached.

CO. TYRONE

Cookstown: A. Aiken commenced gospel meetings in gospel hall on 4th January.

BELFAST & DISTRICT

Cregagh Street: The hall was filled on Christmas night when the word was ministered by W. Nesbitt, J. Hawthorne, T. McNeill and S. Jennings.

Belfast Christmas Conference: The meetings on 26th and 27th December were very well attended. The Bible Readings were conducted by T. Bentley and J.R. Baker, and the word ministered by J.R. Baker, R. McPheat, A. McShane, T. Bentley, W.J. Nesbitt, J. Hay and G. Waugh. Considered an excellent conference.

Castlereagh: Hall packed on 31st December for the preaching of the gospel by H. Andrews and R. Pickering.

Ormeau Road: A nice number gathered to hear T. Meehin and S. Emery (Workington) minister the word on the last day of 1986.

Albertbridge Road: The hall was full for the ministry of the word by G. Waugh, S. McBride, and S. Ferguson, and for the Bible Readings on Hebrews 10 conducted by G. Waugh, A. McShane and S. McBride.

Ballyduff: J.G. Hutchinson and R. Revie commence gospel meetings on 25th January. January.

Dunmurry: D. Kane and D. Morgan are expected DV to commence gospel meetings on 18th January.

Addresses PERSONALIA

All correspondence for Tarbolton Assembly should be addressed to Mr A. Hill, 1 Hodge Court, Tarbolton.

Change of address: All correspondence for Stenhousemuir Assembly should be addressed to Mr W. Moodie, 10 Carronvale Avenue, Larbert, FK5 3LL.

All correspondence for T. Bentley now to 44, Jalan SS 2/47, 47300 Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia.

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EDITORIAL **Searchlight**

Very few Amoses are prepared to tell Amaziah, "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a herdman, and a gatherer of sycomore fruit" (Amos 7:14). The prophets of 1987 don't want to be known as mechanics or miners, plumbers or painters; they all want to be preachers, and recognised as such. But to all such James is still crying, "My brethren, be not many teachers, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation" (James 3:1).

It is all too easy to meet the expectations of one's hearers, so cheap to find appealing sermons, but very costly to pay the price true prophets face. One can learn to walk like a preacher, talk like a preacher, stand like a preacher, strive like a preacher for place and prestige. But to all such Paul is still crying, "How shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Rom 10:15).

In other days the dangers faced by prophets were grave — imprisonment, banishment, or martyrdom. In other lands the sanctions applied to true preachers affect family and friends, employment and even housing. And in other ways, even in our land in our days,

there is a price to be paid and all too few are prepared to pay it. Of all who handle the Word of God at little personal cost our Lord is asking in the words of the unjust steward, "How much owest thou unto my lord? (Luke 16:5). If our much talking has cost us little, how much do we really owe?

Is it not as true today as in the days of Jeremiah that if the Word hasn't broken me, it won't break anyone else? Such a question must feature more prominently than invitations to preach at some "king's chapel" (Amos 7:13) or to lead lamentations at the passing of some Josiah (2 Chron 35:25) or to give the closing address like some latter day James at a conference of great note (Acts 15). Indeed, when our words have fallen to the ground, the old question may still be on many lips, "Is there any Word from the Lord?" (Jer 37:17) and some unacknowledged Jeremiah with the Word in his heart, as a burning fire shut up in his bones be compelled to be silent in the face of our empty eloquence (Jer 20:9).

T.W.

Joel

by R. Revie, Tarbolton

Although there are twelve Joels mentioned in the OT it would appear that none of them can be identified with the prophet as the son of Pethuel. The name Joel means Jehovah is God and comes second in the minor prophets. Unlike Hosea, who prophesied among the ten tribes, Joel was a prophet of Judah. It would appear that this prophecy came very early among the prophets and is only preceded by Jonah. Joel is contemporary with Isaiah, Jonah and Micah.

The division of the book cannot be improved in the three chapters of our bibles and would incorporate the following subjects.

Ch. 1—Immediate past—**Ruin leading to barrenness**

Ch. 2—Immediate future—**Repentance leading to brokenness**

Ch. 3—Distant future—**Recovery leading to blessing.**

Joel's prophecy might be called 'The prophet of the Day of the Lord' as this is referred to five times — 1:15, 2:1, 2:11, 2:31, 3:14.

The scope of the book deals with Israel in Joel's day, with the blessing that was to be seen at Pentecost and finally projects our minds to that day that is yet to dawn for Israel when they will be redeemed and restored.

The book refers to a plague of locusts which had swept through the land. This changes to the metaphor of an army in ch. 2 and then finally in ch. 3 the Lord intervenes and restores what the locusts had eaten and delivers them from their enemies.

There are many important truths in the book for believers and a correct understanding of the prophecy relating to Pentecost would save us from the pitfalls that so often beset this prophecy.

Ch. 1. Day of famine

vv. 1-4 *Message of the prophet* (a) It is divine in its origin — 'word of the Lord' was a technical expression for prophetic revelation. Oh that today we might have the same kind of authority as we bring the Word of God to the people of God. What a **duty** (b) It is broad in its application — in vv. 2-3 there are five generations involved. It is the prophet's desire that truth conveyed to one generation be passed on to each succeeding generation — What a **demand**.

(c) It is honest in its content — in v. 4 Joel gives a record of their true state. Joel uses an illustration of a plague of locusts sweeping through the land and clearing anything that was growing. The palmerworm, cankerworm, caterpillar and locust are not different insects. They are either different species of locusts or locusts at a different stage in their development. It is the same insect that is used to describe the judgment of God in the 5th trumpet during the tribulation — Revelation 9:3 — What a **devastation**. vv. 5-7 *A call to the drunkards* — this is the first of four words that Joel uses to describe the people — v. 8 Virgins, v. 11 Husbandmen, v. 13 Priests.

The locusts must have come just when the grapes were about to be harvested. As a result the drinkers of wine were the first to suffer. Two lessons can be learned from these verses. (a) Much effort had gone into the planting, pruning and watering of the vineyards but at the end of the

day there was no harvest. (b) It was in days of prosperity that the drinking of wine was so much in evidence but this day was obviously followed by one of poverty.

vv. 8-10 *A virgin in mourning.*

Because of the disaster the people are called to mourn. In Isa 3:26 God speaks of Israel in this way, desolate and mourning, fully aware of her true state. That was the lesson the Lord sought to teach the church at Laodicea.

v. 11-12 *Call to the husbandmen.* The harvest was gone, even the trees had been affected and now there was no joy in their service and no reward for their service. Paul uses this figure of speech in 1 Cor 3:7-9.

v.13 *Call to the Priests.* So intense was the problem that even the important duties of the priests offering the meat and drink offerings had been neglected. In the midst of such a plight the prophet reminds them of (1) The **dignity** of their service — 'ministers of my God' (2) **Place** of their service — 'House of your God'. (3) **Purpose** of their service — 'cry unto the Lord'.

vv. 14-18 *Challenge of the prophet.* The prophet emphasises a need to meet together to take stock of the situation. This involved:

(a) a time of fasting — v. 14 — Because the situation was so serious a period of self-denial from self-indulgence was to be set aside.

(b) a day of restraint — v. 14 — This idea is contained in the phrase 'a solemn assembly'. Perhaps much of the judgment had fallen on them because of the way they had lived.

(c) a gathering of the leaders — v. 14 — The ones who had the responsibility of leading the people were asked to convene a gathering.

(d) a general assembly — v. 14 — All

were to come to the House of God for a time of prayer and supplication. The word that is used here for 'cry' is different from both v. 19 and 20 — It means to shriek (from anguish or a sense of danger).

The day of the Lord — v. 15 — For the first time we meet this phrase which occurs frequently in all the prophetic books apart from the prophecy of Jonah. It is the day of manifestation and judgment under the hand of God. I judge that this day begins at the rapture and goes on to the end of the Millennium.

In vv. 16-18 there is a further description of conditions at that time. One important lesson from these verses is that when the physical realm is affected this in turn affects the spiritual. There was no joy and gladness in the service of God but a feeling of barrenness, futility and despair. Are many of our companies today not living in these same conditions?

vv. 19-20 *Prayer of the prophet.* This is the only personal glimpse we have of Joel and it portrays him as a man of prayer. When conditions are full of barrenness and despair what is to be done? Joel has the answer — We must seek the Lord in prayer.

Joel paints a true but gloomy picture—

(a) There was no pasture for the flock — Neglect of the Word of God.

(b) There were no trees to give shelter — Neglect of God's protective arm.

(c) The beasts, like the deer, were panting and crying for God — Neglect of a healthy exercise after God.

(d) There was no water for the flock — Neglect of the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Women in the Church (2)

by H.A. Tickner, Muswell Hill

Their Practice. The *practice* of women in the local church is marked by both a positive and a prohibitive characteristic. Although in 1 Cor 14 and 1 Tim 2 Paul is firm in his inspired statements and commands regarding the negative aspects to be embraced by the women in church order in the areas of leadership and public participation, he by no means, as is sometimes suggested, holds the womenfolk in low esteem. Scripture reveals indeed very much the reverse, as with fervent appreciation he sends warmest greetings and gratitude to the many women whose practical ministry had been of such immense value to him personally, and to the church and work of the gospel as a whole.

He notes the positive contribution made to many areas of the work by such sisters as Phoebe, Prisca, Mary, Tryphena and Tryphosa, Persis and the mother of Rufus, Julia and the sister of Nereus, Lois and Eunice, the grandmother and mother of young Timothy. See Rom 16; Phil 4:2; 2 Tim 1:5, etc. where in his comments Paul heartily commends these godly women for their devotion and love to their Lord and His work.

It is also instructive to note that in his greetings, the apostle in issuing his warm appreciation of the very practical ministries and contributions exercised by the assembly women,

also sets a standard for them to follow both in position and practice; a standard that has stood in church history, and still holds for the church of today. Outstanding amongst many, he names "Phoebe, our sister" (Rom 16:1). How significant it is that he heads the list of greetings with that to a woman! In commending her service as "a servant" — (a ministrant) of the church at Cenchrea, the Aegean part of Corinth, he uses the masc. acc. *diakanon*, deacon. In relationship to Phoebe, the term would be lit. "deaconess". It is of interest to note that the institution of the office of the diaconate was round AD 60, when, as recorded in Acts 6:1-7, seven men were chosen to serve (*diakoneim* — Gk. infin. "to serve"). At the same time Paul could recall with thankfulness, the inclusion of deacons in the administration of the Macedonian assembly at Philippi (Phil 1:1).

The constitution of the first diaconate was male, and as the Hellenist men of Acts 6, were chosen by the church in Jerusalem, with the particular office "to serve tables" (*diakoneim trapexais*). The NT reveals others to whose service *diakonos* or *diakonia* is applied. Amongst those were Paul (Acts 20:24; Eph 3:7), Stephanas (1 Cor 16:15), Archippus (Col 4:17) and Apollos (1 Cor 3:5).

Phoebe "a servant" (*diakanon*) is also included. It is clear from the text and from both titles deaconess and succourer that Phoebe's service did not intrude into leadership and teaching, but was of a financial and social character, which embraced the primitive church at Philippi, many of the Lord's people, and not least Paul himself. His deep gratitude for her

valued ministry, as a messenger in carrying the letter and greetings from Cenchrea to the Roman brethren, warmly recommends their reception of her "in the Lord" (Rom 16:2). What examples are here for the women of today's church to follow.

Prisca (Rom 16:3-5; Acts 18:26; 1 Cor 16:19) together with her husband identified herself — at the risk of life itself — with the work of Paul and the churches. In an auxiliary capacity she would have been behind the smooth running, care and amenities of "the church in their house"; with deep feeling the apostle counts Priscilla and Aquila as "my helpers" (*sunergous*, "fellow workers"). It is to be noted that in the Acts 18:26 record of taking Apollos to "expound to him the way of God more perfectly (accurately)" the AV text places Priscilla first, as she shared with her husband the ministry to Apollos in the privacy of their home, but in the salutations that come from them and "the church that is in their house", Aquilla is given the first place (1 Cor 16:19).

Lydia (Acts 16:14-15) sets the high example of the great ministry of hospitality in that she is constrained (*parebiasto*, "she urged") "come into my house and abide" (v.15). Without doubt as a woman of business and means she was indeed liberal in a practical way to the work of the Lord.

Mary together with *Persis* (Rom 16:6,12) exercised great help with "much labour" in many things. Here too, Paul would be thinking of "those women who laboured with me in the gospel" (Phil 4:3) that they also might receive help in the light of their valued faithfulness.

Women, "aged and young" are mentioned together in Titus 2:3-5; what responsibility is set upon "the aged women", in holiness of character to teach good (*kalos*, beautiful) things by example, so that younger women learning the importance of such spiritual values would thus maintain the Word of God, in life, and in home and family. The meeting of such responsibilities in today's world will not only glorify God and His Word, but will also react in blessing upon the local assembly.

Widows, (1 Tim 5), in the light of their status, and upon the good report of their ministries, are to be honoured (v.3) and provided for (v.8). He has in mind what Scripture teaches with respect to widows; they enjoy special care and protection (Exod 22:23; Prov 15:25; Psa 146:9) and are also the objects of Christ's tender compassion (Luke 7:11-17). What a respect to cherish: what a report for women in the church to emulate, bringing its mark of value to the spiritual well-being of home and assembly. The list enumerated in 1 Tim 5:10 in its practical ministry must rise also to the joy of heaven: good works — family care — hospitality to the needy — serving the saints — care of the sick and needy — diligent (lit. "a following after and using every opportunity for good"). The need for such standards that marked the sisters of the early church, is still the need for today's testimony, in today's church.

The few that have been mentioned are out of many, whose prior works made great contribution to the Church. Is it not possible that such manifested zealous energy and devotion, found its spring and source in

the service so rendered by women during the life of the Lord? The unique testimony of the gospel record concerns the place accorded to women as ministers to the person of Christ in marked contrast to that of men. He (Christ) ministered to men: but women ministered to Him! In this capacity, the women enjoy special honour and privilege. It has been noted that *diakoneim* means "to serve, to minister" and it is instructive to see the setting of this verb and its cognates in the Gospels in relation to women in their ministry to the Master. Martha "served Jesus" (Luke 10:40;

John 12:3); Peter's mother-in-law ministered (Matt 8:15; Mark 1:31; Luke 4:39); Joanna, Suzanna and many others "ministered unto him of their substance" (Luke 8:3); Mary gave in worship "precious ointment" (John 12:3).

To have received such ministry from devoted hearts in the days of His humanity was infinitely precious to the Son of Man; how much more precious is the reception of the service of love to the Man in the glory from those to whom has been given the honour of such special ministry, the women in the church!

The Books, especially the parchments (1)

by F.E. Stallan, Linwood

It is said that J.N. Darby was on the point of destroying his books, when he read the words of Paul to Timothy, 'The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, especially the parchments.' Paul's reference to the books gripped him, he changed his mind, and his library was saved.

Of course there is no apparent end to books; the problem with most people is finding time to read them, especially the ones which involve closer study and demand more concentration. Quite apart from this, there are some people who are not

readers anyway, and books are of little interest to them. Believers, however, should make a point of acquiring and reading a few, if only to come to an appreciation of why writers write, and what they write about.

The writer of this paper started from scratch when saved in late teens. A short time after conversion, a fairly well-known brother in Glasgow sent him a letter and with it included a list of books which he headed, 'Books every young man should possess.' However sound the advice, being a young man with a very limited income, the capability of acquiring a library quickly was just not possible financially. Apart from limited funds, many of the recommended books were not readily available and it took a few years before an impression was

made on the list. Although the letter and the list were sent over forty years ago, and the brother who sent it is now with the Lord, time and study have verified that the brother certainly knew what he was about. The indebtedness which his exercise has created in the writer, can perhaps be discharged in measure, if some young men and women are encouraged to follow a similar course of action and acquire a few good books.

The first recommended item was a Newberry Bible, portable edition. Believers of an older generation will recall that it was not possible to buy a Newberry portable edition during the war, because the plates had been lost during the bombing of London. This proved to be a real drawback; there were no new ones for sale and the owners of second-hand ones were not willing to sell. A few years went past, and then the search was ended when a brother in Glasgow offered a new portable Newberry for sale. For over forty years this has been the Bible the writer has used privately and publicly. It is now a bit tattered, but it is still in use.

Now what about the recommendation? Was it sound advice that was given? Should every young man possess one? As far as the writer is concerned, if the only worthwhile book on the list was the Newberry, it would have been well worth it to purchase the lot just to get the bible. Of course, the list was sound advice, but the bible was something special. Compared with others, for the student, it is in a class by itself.

The second recommendation was a Young's concordance. There is an old jingle which says, 'Crudens for the crude, Young's for the young, and Strong's for the strong.' However much truth is in the jingle, a very

valuable addition is not included, and that is Wigram's concordance. For the student, a Wigram's is a must, but in all fairness, the others are good companions and will give good service, especially the Strong's. For the record, the writer had them all, but gave the Cruden's away.

Now to the books, and heading the list was, 'All the works of C.H.M.' As it turned out this was a piece of sound advice as most brethren recommend C.H.M. on the Pentateuch and omit any reference to C.H.M.'s Miscellaneous Writings. The Miscellaneous Writings were published in seven volumes and they contain some excellent ministry from a very gifted brother of the last century. The writings of C.H.M. make easy reading, quite unlike some of Mr. Darby's, whose ministry, incidentally, was said to be as cold as the moon, in contrast to Mr. Kelly's which was said to be as warm as the sun.

In another class altogether was Sydney Collett's, 'Scripture of Truth.' This book was first published in 1905 and such was its popularity, it ran through fifteen editions in the next thirty years. Collett deals with the origin of the Bible, its language, translations, canon, alleged errors and contradictions, its plan, its science, etc., and although perhaps slightly dated in some sections now, it is still an excellent work of reference in defence of the Scriptures of Truth. The wisdom of recommending a book of this nature to a young believer has been quietly acknowledged over the years, because of the help derived. Since 100,000 copies were printed, there must be a few second-hand ones around yet; indeed, there may be some new ones on some shelves somewhere.

To be continued

These Stones (3)

by E.A.R. Shotter, Northampton

Continuing our thoughts on the second temptation of the Lord Jesus, as recorded by Matthew, we turn to consider the psalm and a companion to it as quoted by the devil (and incidentally misquoted by omitting the words 'To keep thee in all thy ways' from the quotation). This shows, in passing, how careful we should be in quoting Scripture, for 'every scripture is divinely inspired, and profitable ...', (2 Tim 3:16, JND)

The devil has now set Jesus on a wing of the temple. Scholars tell us that this pinnacle could have been one of two places. 1. A raised portion from which orations were made, and from which it is suggested that the Lord could have descended among the crowd and so appear to fulfil Mal 3:1, which applies to a still future day. 2. An elevated place (already mentioned) about 250 feet high looking out over the deep ravine through which the winter brook Kidron flowed. If we take the first of these we find that the Sovereign Lord's coming would be for judgment, as the refiner's fire is mentioned before the blessing. This would bypass the cross for which, at this advent, the Lord Jesus had come. If we take the second, and more popular, view it would appear that the devil was seeking to precipitate the cross by bringing the death of Jesus forward before the divine time; before He had shown forth His public works of compassion and love; and before He had preached repentance and that the kingdom of

heaven was at hand. In other words, the devil was intent upon destroying the King and ensuring the kingdom for himself, anticipating the third temptation.

Turning to the Psalm (91) misquoted by the devil, we see how far he has overstepped the mark for all through, up until the quotation cited, the psalm has promise after promise for the comfort and protection from destruction of the One who dwells under the shadow of the Almighty. Could Jesus have had more divine encouragement than this psalm affords one who walked as a lowly and dependent Man in that tent (see Psalm 91:10, Newberry margin) in which He tabernacled among us? After the quotation cited, the language changes somewhat. Now there is a scent of victory about the rest. Thou shalt tread upon lion and adder, young lion and dragon. Interesting! Peter calls the devil a roaring lion, 1 Pet 5:9; and John says of him: the great dragon, old serpent, Devil and Satan! (Rev 12:9). So the devil encourages the Lord also for, no doubt unwittingly, he is pronouncing his own death sentence through the very One he is conniving to destroy. In this will be fulfilled the judgment on the serpent, 'He shall crush thy head' (Gen 3:15, JND). Now the psalm speaks of deliverance and honour as also mentioned in Isa 53. If we now compare this psalm with Psa 17 — the prayer of the Dependent Man — we can see an anticipation of

this second temptation to which *Psa 91* is the divine answer. We commend the comparison of these psalms to the reader, as there is not space here to adequately expatiate upon them.

Assuming the second suggestion (the elevated place above the Kidron valley) Josephus tells us that for any man to look down into that ravine from such a height would cause giddiness, and in any case the depth was such that it was impossible to see the bottom of the ravine. Others describe the valley, at first fairly broad and flat, but contouring to a deep stone-laden ravine. On the other side of the ravine the steps of the Mount of Olives ascended. This physical scene is full of spiritual lessons.

Psalms 17 and *91* take on new meaning surely as we consider these physical conditions in the light of their spiritual implications. Do we not hear the words of other Messianic *Psalms* 'I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing' (*69:2*), and 'He brought me up also out of an horrible pit' (*40:2*)?

But again, Kidron is the place of the rejection of the King. Had not David passed that way before (*2 Sam 15:23*), and had not stones been cast at him (*16:6*)? The devil seems not to have taken into account that he was tempting One who was not capable of stumbling even though He may dash His foot against a stone — only one stone now, not stones! In due time, under the direction of His Father's will, He would come to Kidron for John tells us 'When Jesus had spoken these words [His high-

priestly prayer], He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron' (*18:1*). His rejection had to be completed and the Scripture accomplished in Him, 'And He was numbered among the transgressors' for the things concerning Him had an end.

From that pinnacle not only could He look down toward Kidron, but also up again to the Mount of Olives where was a garden called Gethsemane. He also went there in due time (*Luke 22:39*) to pray that the Father's will may be done. Wonderful Man of Calvary! Ever and always dependent on the divine timings and purposes, and never tempted to err from them, no matter how much He knew that He must pass that way when His hour was come.

But Olivet had other significations. Was it not to this place that He was to lead the eleven after His passion, His crucifixion, His burial and His resurrection, in order that the whole truth of the fact that He is the Son of God might be vindicated? Was it not from there that He ascended up to where He was before — at the right hand of the majesty on high?

Further, will not His feet again stand on that mount, not to dash them against a stone, but to take up His great power and reign in millennial glory and in righteousness? Then the Lord shall be King over all the earth!

Once more 'these stones' point us on to greater heights, and to see the absolute subjugation and victory over him who said, 'If thou be Son of God'.

To be continued

It is one thing to be an advocate of Christianity, and another to be the disciple of it. And though it may sound strange at first, far easier is it to teach its lessons than to learn them. J.G.B.

YOUNG Believers'

Conducted by Howard A. Barnes,
Bromborough, Wirral

Pauline Epistles

Part 7: 1 Corinthians (part 2)

INTRODUCTION

Paul had heard from a number of sources that the assembly at Corinth had problems; the behaviour and beliefs of a number of the members were causing concern. When a letter arrived from Corinth asking his advice on a number of other practical matters, Paul takes the opportunity of addressing all the issues in this one long letter.

The epistle can be divided into subjects following Paul's use of the word "now" (or "moreover" which is the same word in Greek); see 1:10, 7:1, 8:1, 10:1, 11:2, 12:1, 15:1, and 16:1. With this word he connects the epistle's various parts. The subjects dealt with can be grouped together, so that the first six chapters deal with the problems that had arisen because of their too high opinion of man's wisdom, and too low an appreciation of their own bodies and the seriousness of misusing them. Chapters 7-14 deal generally with the questions raised in their letter to him, while ch. 15 is a restatement of the gospel in general and the resurrection in particular,

about which some had developed the wrong ideas. The final chapter contains various practical instructions.

It is very important to note that before Paul comments on the bad things in Corinth, he warmly commends the good things. The first nine verses of the epistle if we had not read the rest describe an assembly with great potential; it was the church of God and composed of saints. Collectively they were enriched "in all utterance, and in all knowledge". Such was the reality of the testimony of Christ that they came "behind in no gift", and they were waiting for "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ", into whose fellowship they had been called. It was because of the way that God had clearly blessed the assembly that Paul views its problems with such concern. God's gifts were not resulting in His glory as they should do.

HUMAN WISDOM DIVIDES

Although God had treated them as one for His blessing, they had now divided themselves according to their own opinions into parties which bore the names of prominent (but absent) teachers. Some saw their ideas best expressed in what

they thought were the ideas of Paul, others of Apollos while some seem to have identified with Peter (Cephas). One group thought themselves superior to all by using the name "Christ".

All these groups were wrong in principle, for believers are not to be subdivided according to any criteria, whether religious or social. Paul gets to the root of this and later problems by blaming human wisdom, that is to say opinions arrived at without God's revealed truth.

Left to himself, man (Jew or Gentile), even using his greatest mental effort would never have thought up a gospel involving "the cross of Christ", whereas this was actually the revelation of God's power and wisdom. This fact alone discounts man's wisdom as being of any relevance in spiritual matters, especially when it is clear that the world's best advised men ("the princes") had "crucified the Lord of glory" (2:8). Just as human wisdom had failed in this regard, so would it in the prediction of the future state of Christians, but once again these things were the subject of divine revelation (see 2:9-12). Natural man cannot in fact receive "the things of the Spirit of God" (2:14), while on the other hand believers have that spiritual faculty of "the mind of Christ" which can.

GOD'S WORK AND WORKERS

It was the use of man's faulty wisdom that sought differences between God's servants, while actually they are united in the one

purpose of serving their Lord (3:1-8). When believers show such a tendency it only proves that they are spiritually immature, being only "babes in Christ", for this alignment with parties under the names of men only leads to "envying, and strife and divisions" (3:3).

Paul then goes on to explain the true nature of Christian work and workers. In ch. 3 the quality of the work is considered. Just as in Corinth, the materials available for building varied, so too did the things that were incorporated into the assembly. The slums of the city were built of wood hay and stubble. These things were cheap and also combustible. The fine temples built on the hill above the city had the most expensive materials — gold, silver and precious stones, these were not combustible. These served as an example of the value that God places on spiritual material as opposed to that of human valuation. At the judgment seat of Christ, when each believer gives his or her account of work done for Him, his fiery glance will tell of what sort that work is, and He will reward or withhold reward accordingly.

The fourth chapter deals with the correct attitude that the servants of God should have toward themselves. The secret is for them to always have before them that they are the "ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (3:1, 2). They are to realise that they serve the Lord and are responsible to Him for the handling of divinely-given things, and that the judgment

of others in respect of their service is a "very small thing". The world's opinion of the apostles proves once again the inadequacy of human wisdom in judging divine service, for "we are made a spectacle unto the world ... fools for Christ's sake ... weak ... despised ..." (4:9, 10), "we are made as the filth (refuse, Newberry margin) of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day" (v. 13). Thus human wisdom is not to be trusted in estimating the worth of service for God, but "every man shall have praise from God" (v. 5).

MORALITY, PERSONAL AND PUBLIC

Misunderstood Texts (2)

by John J Stubbs, Mayfield

"One shall be taken and the other left". It may be a surprise to some readers that we should put the above words of our Lord Jesus Christ in Matt 24:40-41 under the category of "misunderstood texts", and yet they have so often been used to show what will take place at the rapture of the church. We know that when the Lord descends to the air according to 1 Thess 4:13-18, that only those who are saved will be taken from the earth to be with Him. Others will be left to

In ch. 5 Paul denounces the liberal attitude to sexual immorality taken by the Corinthians. He commands that immediate action be taken to correct the situation—they had to "put away from among you that wicked person" (v. 13). This liberal attitude towards public behaviour was in contrast to the legal attitude of some who were taking fellow-believers to court: this was just as wrong, and brought discredit to the assembly in the eyes of the world (see 6:1-8). Lastly in this section Paul explains that we must also have the right attitude to our own bodies (6:9-20), which is "glorify God in your body".

experience the tribulation period with all its woes, but do these words apply to that event which we call the rapture? Many assume that they do. Indeed we may be so used to such a construction put upon the words that we could hardly entertain any other view. The words appear to fit so well what will actually happen at the rapture that the very idea of checking their contextual meaning seems unnecessary. In addition it has not helped that specific connection of the words when they have been misused

in gospel preaching as a solemn and urgent warning to the unsaved as to the possibility of being left behind when the Lord comes. Certainly the unsaved will be left when the rapture occurs, but the meaning of the Lord's words and the surrounding context forbid such a meaning being ascribed to them here.

Relevant and pertinent texts particularly bearing on a subject being defended or proved should always be cited. To cultivate such a habit will make the believer a wise and skilful user of the Holy Scriptures.

Let us then offer what we believe to be the true interpretation of these words in the light of the context. In order to do this we must mark the time note "then" at the beginning of v.40. This takes us back to v.36 and to the end of v.39 and clearly points, we submit, to the coming of the Son of Man, that is the time of His second advent. Those who have worshipped the beast during the time of the tribulation will be taken from the earth. The word of God here does not say how, but perhaps God will commission angels to do this. Those who will be taken will not go straight to judgment for this will take place at the Great White Throne after the millennium. The verses here do not mention anything about judgment and we must therefore be careful not to read something into it which is not there. It is evident from the context that those who are left will be left for the blessing of the glory of the millennial kingdom, whereas those who are left at the rapture will be doomed. Vv. 40,41 of Matt 24 should be compared with vv. 37-39, where it will be seen that the godless outside the ark were taken

away with the flood. They were not taken to blessing but cut off by God.

Some may still feel that the Lord's words in these verses could yet refer to the rapture because the word "taken" is used in John 14:3 and translated "receive". The word however, is used with more than one meaning in the NT as is the case with the taking of Christ for scourging and crucifixion in Matt 27:27. The word must be given the meaning "taken" in the light of the context. Moreover the whole discourse of the Lord Jesus in Matt 24 from v.4 onwards refers to the tribulation period and His coming to earth as the Son of Man. Everything in the passage points to the Jewish nation: "the abomination of desolation" (v.15); "the holy place" (v.15); "Judaea" (v.16); "the elect" (v.22). The church is not in view in this great prophetic chapter. Indeed the church dispensation will have run its course and the rapture will have already occurred by the time of the happenings mentioned by the Lord Jesus in vv.36-41.

Much then as many may be accustomed to our Lord's words being applied to the rapture, is it not better to give them their proper significance in the context and fitting connection with the event being particularly spoken of by the Lord Jesus? In these studies on "misunderstood texts" the plea will be for a second look at Scripture, for a more careful use of Scripture and for a clear grasp of the meaning the Spirit intended in the Scripture so misunderstood. This way we may well discover some jewel of thought or some aspect of truth otherwise missed.

Light from an Old Lamp

By the late John Ritchie

Man's Future State (11)

The future punishment of the lost.

An extensive circulation of literature, in various forms, dealing with this subject, much of which is calculated to mislead the untaught, and deceive the simple, calls for a plain statement of the teaching of Scripture on this solemn and awful truth. It is only by knowledge and acceptance of the testimony of God, whose revelation alone is of authority, that we can be preserved from the entanglements of error. The leaven of false doctrine, when accepted by a true Christian, soon manifests its working in a lowered spiritual condition, leading to a worldly life and companionship with others holding the same errors, irrespective of whether they are born of God or not; while upon the unconverted the result of such error is, that they usually become wholly indifferent to eternal things, and utterly hardened against the Gospel of God, and the salvation which it proclaims.

Amongst those who oppose the testimony of God's Word on Man's Future State, and the punishment of the impenitent, are to be found avowed infidels who blaspheme God, and wholly deny His revelation; church dignitaries, in high places,

who hold forth their views in the hearing of the rich and the great in Cathedrals and State Churches, men beneficed and pledged to proclaim and defend the faith, which, by their utterances and writings, they seek to overthrow and destroy. Principals of Universities, and Professors of theology, who have the future ministers of most denominations under tuition, poisoning their minds and shaking their confidence in the veracity of Scripture on this and other fundamental truths, with the result that few present day preachers ever mention "eternal judgment" (Heb 6:2) in their preaching. Even among "evangelicals" there is a growing tendency to "keep silence" on the truths which evangelists of former times proclaimed with no uncertain sound, and which were used of God in the awakening, conviction, and conversion of thousands. The "up-to-date" and would be popular preacher, if he believes in "wrath to come," takes care not to warn his hearers to "flee from it," lest he give offence, and scatter the crowd.

The enormous amount of false profession, rootless religion, and shallow Christianity of the present time, may largely be accounted for in the lack of that preaching which brings sin, its character, its judgment, and its punishment home to sinners' consciences, and them into the presence of that righteous God before whose judgment throne they must one day stand to give an account. Converts made by sentimental story telling, soothing solo singing, and soft preaching, are easily found, and just as quickly disappear, for, like the seed sown on the rocky ground, they have "no root," the hard rock beneath never having been blasted by the

Word which produces that conviction of sin, which precedes true conversion. Let all who preach the Word give a clear and certain sound on the judgment, as well as the grace of God, and while holding forth a free and present salvation "in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 1:12), fail not, and fear not to warn all Christ rejectors of that coming day of judgment and wrath, in which the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven "in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1:8).

The testimony of scripture. The Word of God is the supreme standard of appeal on this transcendent subject. Human reasonings and arguments are of no value whatever. Men are not capable of adjudicating on their own guilt, or the punishment it deserves. In human law, any man involved in a case would be disqualified from acting as a juryman, but in the matter of giving a verdict on sin, and what it deserves, men claim to be both jury and judge, while their true place is that of culprits in the dock. Here, the Word of the Eternal God, which is the final appeal, must stand for ever, and stand it shall, whether man receive or reject it.

It is remarkable with what frequency, and awful force, the punishment of sin, here and hereafter, is stated in Scripture. In the Old Testament, where the records of swift judgment overtaking transgressors are chiefly found, such as the primal curse and expulsion from Eden, the judgment of the flood, the destruction of Babel, the doom of Sodom and Gomorrah, the death of the first-born throughout Egypt, the extermination of the Canaanites by the

sword, and the judgment on and final scattering of Israel, there is a solemn witness to the righteous retribution and "severity of God" (Rom 11:22) against wilful and prolonged transgression. All this has been reasoned against, and rendered void in warning to sinners, by the unwarranted assumption that such judgments had no existence in fact, or that if they occurred, no such penalties being inflicted upon nations or individuals now, the methods of God's dealings must have changed, and severity having failed, mercy has now asserted her rule. That "grace now reigns" (Rom 5:21), and that "mercy rejoices against judgment" (Jas 2:13) in this Gospel age, is blessedly true. Were it otherwise, those who now blaspheme God's Holy Name, despise His Christ, and corrupt His Word, had long ago been where Korah, Belshazzar, Herod, and other rebels against God and His Christ now are. But it must not be forgotten, that this long-suffering of God (2 Pet 3:9) will have an end, and that the "acceptable year of the Lord," now running its course, is to be followed by "the day of vengeance of our God" (comp. Isa 61:1, 2, with Luke 4:18-20). Then, sins long forgotten, but recorded in "the books," will come up for judgment at the "great white throne" (Rev 20:11-15). Then, the long delayed "righteous judgment of God," which men who have despised the "riches of God's goodness and forbearance and long-suffering," which might have led them to repentance, must at last meet, revealing to them, then no longer deceived by human reasonings and blinded by Satanic lies, that awful "wrath" which in their impenitence they have "treasured up" against themselves to await that coming day (Rom 2:4, 5).

Cyprus Still Open for the Gospel

by Ian Ross

The Island This most eastern of the Mediterranean Islands was deemed sufficiently strategic to be the first land evangelised by Paul and Barnabas when they were sent out by the assembly in Antioch as recorded in Acts 13. Landing at Salamis and having preached the Word of God there they traversed the island to Paphos where the Roman deputy Sergius Paulus believed.

Today Cyprus still stands as perhaps the crossroads of the turbulent Middle East and is coveted by the great powers whose aim is to dominate this focal area of world affairs. Purchased by the British from the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century it remained a colony until 1960 when it became an independent republic with Archbishop Makarios the Primate of its independent orthodox church becoming its first president. In 1974 Turkey invaded the island and still remains in occupation of 38 per cent of the land mass.

The Assembly From the earlier years of this century there was an assembly in the capital Nicosia, of predominantly Armenian brethren and sisters and ministered to by such servants of the Lord as Messrs. Clapham, Kasparian and Morris. About the time of independence the centre of the assembly testimony moved, we believe under God's hand, to the large and thriving seaport of Limassol in the extreme south of the island. This assembly continues today with Cypriot and expatriate believers in the meeting and providing fellowship for overseas friends who come on holiday or business.

From this company the gospel is still being proclaimed and the claims of Christ presented in many ways. For instance one gospel message is printed in a Greek language newspaper each week, our address is given and there are continued enquiries and requests for scriptures. Many thousands of copies of the Bible and the New Testament have been distributed freely over the years. Annually more than 11,000 beautiful block calendars in Greek and other relevant languages are received free from friends in West Germany, local people in Limassol and surrounding towns and villages eagerly await their copy which will have a tear-off gospel message for each day of the year.

The Logos School Alongside all this we have in the heart of Limassol the Logos School providing an English language education for children from 5 years to 18. Founded in 1973 by Levon Yergatian a man of Cyprus and elder in the local assembly it has grown, from a mere 12 pupils to some 90 today. Some of our pupils come from lands outwith Cyprus, some from Muslim homes to live as boarders in the beautiful school premises. With believing staff the endeavour has been from the outset to give the best possible education while presenting the claims of Christ to our students. The modern school assembly hall, where at the commencement of each working day the Word of God is read and expounded to the pupils and staff, is also used evenings and weekends as the meeting place for the local assembly.

Of recent years many Christian friends from the U.K. and elsewhere have chosen to have their holidays in Cyprus and have found fellowship and the essential spiritual dimension to their vacation with those who meet in Limassol. Such friends are also a source of encouragement to those who serve the Lord on the island.

The writer of this report first served in Cyprus in the late 1950's where he met the present headmaster and some of the friends who are still in fellowship in Limassol. Later he went with his family back to Cyprus in 1973 and whilst in fellowship with the local believers assisted in direct evangelism and was used with Levon Yergatian to establish the Logos school. Both the headmaster and the writer are still serving the school.

The Need Some 30 per cent of our pupils come from poor and needy families, whose parents could not support them in the school. Believers in U.K. and elsewhere have in some cases taken it upon themselves to support and interest themselves in such young people. Through these kindnesses done in the name of our Lord homes have been opened to the Gospel and hearts touched by the love of Christ.

Mention would be made of our teachers and staff who have sacrificially given themselves to this work. We are constantly looking to the Lord for men and women of His choice to meet our commitments.

Down through the years we have seen Cypriots and others of all ages come to know and trust the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, obey the Lord in baptism and come into happy assembly fellowship here in Cyprus, a work commenced by Paul and Barnabas nearly 2000 years ago. "There remaineth yet much land to be possessed" (Josh 13:1).

Question

All questions should be sent to the Editor, *Believer's Magazine*, Office, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and should have the name and address of sender. Consideration of space may prevent the publication of answers.

QUESTION

Is it scriptural to have a central or district oversight for assemblies in a given area, and what scriptures can be brought to bear upon this question?

ANSWER

The early record of planting NT assemblies is found in the book of Acts and the appropriate doctrine in relation to these matters is in the epistles. In neither of these two sections of the NT is any foundation found for the concept of a central or district assembly oversight.

After preaching the gospel and planting assemblies in Lystra Iconium and Antioch (Acts 13 & 14) the apostle Paul and Barnabas were exercised to return to those parts again (Acts 14:21-22). The second visit was to strengthen and confirm the saints in their faith and to establish them in their collective assembly testimony. The language concerning elders is most explicit, "And when they had ordained elders in every church" (Acts 14:26). Here it is clear that there was a plurality of elders in each singular assembly. This emphasises the unscriptural position of having one Elder (Bishop) for many churches as seen, so much in religious christendom today. Many years ago the late W. Hoste made clear that the word 'appointed' used here, means to stretch forth the hand. Thus the apostle was pointing out to the saints those who were already emerging as elders by the work they were doing.

Some have taught that Acts 15 is good reason for a district oversight. They cite the visit of Paul, Barnabas and others to the assembly at Jerusalem from Antioch where false teaching had been

given (Acts 15:1). However, a careful reading of the chapter shows the very reverse. Paul and his companions did not go to Jerusalem to get the opinion of the brethren there nor to meet for a collective opinion. They went because the false teachers had emanated from Judea (v. 1). In the letter that eventually was written from Jerusalem this fact is stated, "Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you ..." (Acts 15:24).

Clearly there should be fellowship amongst assemblies but each is distinctly responsible to God for the local testimony. In Rev. 2 and 3 each assembly is a distinct lampstand and not merely a branch of one. To each of the seven Christ is personally presented in a unique way.

J.R. Baker

QUESTION

Is it true to say that there will be no unbelievers in Hell?

ANSWER

When such a statement is made in the preaching of the gospel the obvious reason is to warn the unsaved that when a person is gone into eternity then he will know that what he heard preached from the Word of God whilst on earth was absolutely true.

There is always a difficulty in trying to substantiate, from the Word of God, an unscriptural expression. If a man does not become a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ in time, then it is impossible for him to become one in eternity. It is helpful in these respects to note that amongst the classes spoken of who shall have their part in the Lake of Fire are those who are 'unbelieving' (Rev 21:8). Thus although by then they will know the truth yet eternally they will remain characteristically unbelievers. The eternal punishment of the lost is a solemn topic which should stir the saints to greater gospel activity.

J.R. Baker

BOOKS



What the Bible teaches - I Corinthians, by J. Hunter, II Corinthians, by A. McShane. Published by John Ritchie at £9.50.

In the series of expository works published under the title, 'What the Bible teaches', this is volume 4. The authors are well-known teachers and expositors of the Scriptures, whose ministry has been world-wide over many years. Those who have listened to their ministry and who have read the book will readily agree that the authority with which they teach orally is not lacking in their writings. This shines through, especially in the handling of difficult passages, of which there are many in both Epistles.

The Corinthian Epistles are being drawn into many controversial situations today. There are some who think they have found in them support for charismatic practices, and there are others who err on the omission side by turning the proverbial blind eye to clearly established Assembly principles. Mr Hunter and Mr McShane are not unaware of the challenge of today's problems and have applied themselves to a faithful coverage of the teaching of both Epistles.

Although there are many expository works on I and II Corinthians from which to choose, this volume has a fresh approach. Each author has included his bibliography, which, in both cases, can be seen to be extensive. This is a very valuable addition to the series which is proving to be very popular with Christians of all ages.

F.E.S.

HYMNS FOR CHRISTIAN WORSHIP AND SERVICE

This fine old assembly hymn book has been out of print for a number of years and assemblies often need to use worn out and incomplete books.

It is now proposed to reprint the book if there is sufficient demand. The selling price would be £3.95 plus P & P with discounts for bulk.

If you would be interested in buying some of these books please contact.

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Contact:

Jim & Jenny McCallum on
0704 38430

Together in Christ

by L. Goddard, Romford

"It was noised that he was in the house" (Mark 2:1) "Give this man place" (Luke 14:9).

The beauty of a home is order.
The blessing of a home is contentment.
The glory of a home is hospitality.
The secret of a christian home is godliness.
The crown of a home is loving-kindness.

For a long time it has been in my mind to pen a few thoughts in relation to this very important subject. Having gathered together all I have experienced and gleaned from the word of God, I am now able to do this.

From time to time journeying up and down the country by car I have slowed down to give way to the crowds coming out from their places of business, all making for home as quickly as possible. I have often thought, and sometimes said to my wife or a friend travelling with me, "I wonder what kind of homes these people are making for".

Home is an interesting subject. One verse that has proved a fruitful source for ministry is Prov 9:1, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars". It should be linked with the words of the psalmist, who said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (Psa 127:1). It is everyone's ambition to have a home of his own, and much thought and effort are

put into life and business to that end until the dream home is realised. There are seven thoughts (pillars or foundation stones) which I have in mind to bring before you in this and the following papers for your meditation:

1. the site
2. the foundation
3. the faith
4. the family
5. the food
6. the flag
7. the future

The Site When choosing a place to live whether it is the intention to build a house or to acquire one already built, the site is of prime importance. There are many details to go into if the home is to be a success, such things as the environment, local amenities and the garden. More important than any of these is whether there is an assembly near at hand where the truth of the word of God is taught.

The Scriptures speak of many sites that illustrate the wisdom of such builders as God, Abraham, Nehemiah, David and Solomon. As God chose the place for His Eden, so likewise each of these builders was directed of God to a site of His choice, whether it was for an altar, a temple or a house. The Lord Jesus Christ, the perfect builder, the perfect home-maker, is at

this very moment completing the plan which was begun at Calvary, preparing a place for those who are His. They are His because of His finished work at Calvary and their personal faith in Him; having accepted Him as their Saviour they can claim salvation as theirs. Of them He says, "I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2).

This, then is the first principle of true life and happiness: be in the place that has been prepared for you.

Look for a moment at the first home ever given to man (Gen 2:15): "The Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress and to keep it". Eden was the site of the first home in Scripture, and how beautiful it was. Why? because God created it, Out of what did God create it? Nothing — that's the power of God, the miracle, the mystery which only faith can accept. Man's finite mind cannot grasp nor understand, but faith lays hold of God's precious word and rests there without question or reasoning. Leave the critic, the agnostic, the atheist, and all believers in false science; they will believe only when it is too late to retract. True science supports the word of God by the wonderful discoveries which have been made in nature. For example, the late Wilson A. Bentley of Jericho, Vermont, the pioneer explorer, has given the world intriguing information about snowflakes. Dr E.J. Page refers to this in his leaflet *The Treasures of the Snow*, which owes its title to Job 38:22, "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?" It makes fascinating reading.

Yes, God provided the site for

man's first home out of nothing. What can we learn from this? Just this: when we come to a realisation of our own nothingness, (as Paul in Rom 7:18, "I know that in me . . . there dwelleth no good thing", or in 1 Cor 9:16, "I have nothing to glory of", or like the debtor in Luke 7:42, we "have nothing to pay"), then God is able to bring into our nothingness something worthwhile for Himself, something for His glory, something for our own good — a new creature in Christ Jesus. It is utter abandonment to be what God would have us be, and where He would have us be. Thus the first site to which God brings us is Calvary. Calvary will ever stand as a pillar of testimony to the character of God, in His love, His holiness, His hatred of sin, His love for the sinner. Have you viewed this site, where you can, if you so wish, commence plans for a home, not only for time but for eternity?

Behold the amazing sight —
The Saviour lifted high;
The Son of God, His soul's delight,
Expires in agony!
We see, and we adore
Thy deep, Thy dying love;
We feel its strong, attractive power
To lift our souls above.
In Thee our hearts unite,
Nor share Thy grief alone,
But from Thy cross pursue our flight
To Thy triumphant throne.

Doddridge

It is only hearts that are united in Him, having been to Calvary, that can pursue their flight together from the cross, first in the enjoyment of their own earthly home, then to the mansions above. If you have not yet together come to this site and given

yourself as nothing to God, come now; then He can, and will, make everything for you according to His purposes of love and grace.

HOME

O happy home, where Thou art loved the dearest,

Thou loving Friend, and Saviour of the race,

And where among the guests there never cometh

One who can hold such high and honoured place.

O happy home, where two in heart united

In holy faith and blessed hope are one,

Whom death a little while alone divideth,

And cannot end the union here begun!

O happy home where little ones are given

Early to Thee, in humble faith and prayer;

To Thee, their Friend, who from the heights of heaven

Guides them, and guards with more than mother's care.

O happy home, where each one serves Thee; lowly

Whatever his appointed work may be,

Till every common task seems great and holy,

When it is done, O Lord, as unto Thee.

O happy home where Thou are not forgotten

When joy is overflowing, full and free.

O happy home, where every wounded spirit

Is brought Physician, Comforter to Thee.

Until at last, when earth's day's work is ended,

All meet Thee in the blessed home above

From whence Thou camest, where Thou hast ascended,

Thy everlasting home of peace and love.

C.J.P. Spitta

Lord's Work Trust

42 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, KA3 1RH

Telephone: (0563) 21098

Total Gifts received from 1st January to 31st January 1987

For the Lord's Work and Workers

From Assemblies £18,689.11

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The LORD'S WORK and WORKERS

All items for "intelligence" columns of this magazine should be addressed direct to Editor, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and posted in time to arrive on or before 4th of month previous to issue.
Intimation of commencement of new assemblies should always carry commendation of nearest local assembly.

England & Wales FORTHCOMING

MARCH 7

Stoke: Gospel Hall, Fletcher Road at 7.00 p.m. H. Barnes.

West Mersea: Assembly Hall, East Road at 4.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. R. Dawes

Cwmbran: The Gospel Hall, Oakfield Road at 7.15 p.m. G. Davies.

Kingsteignton: at 7.00 p.m. H. Bell.

Nottingham: Gospel Hall, Victoria Road, Netherfield at 7.15 p.m. E. Hughes.

Maidenhead: Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road at 6.30 p.m. I. Steeds.

Milton Keynes: Gospel Hall, Caledonian Road, New Bradwell at 7.30 p.m. J. Salisbury.

Westcliff-on-Sea: Gospel Hall, Carlton Avenue at 7.30 p.m. J. Harrison. Mr. Harrison continues in ministry Mon.-Thurs. at 8.00 p.m.

Ealing: Grove Hall, The Grove, W5 at 7.00 p.m. J.B.D. Page.

Waltham Abbey: Eastbrook Hall at 4.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. D. Hinton.

MARCH 14

Barrow-in-Furness: Risedale Gospel Hall at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. G.B. Fyfe, P. Harding. Mr. Harding continues in ministry Mon-Thurs. at 8.00 p.m.

Brierfield: Hebron Hall, Walter Street at 7.00 p.m. B. Loughborough.

Bermondsey: The Gospel Hall, 97 St. James's Road, London, SE16 at 4.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. F. Epps, B. Price.

Ely: Gospel Hall, Ship Lane at 7.30 p.m. D. West.

Ludlow: Cleevieview Gospel Hall at 7.30 p.m. C. J. Raggett.

Cheshunt: Mill Lane Chapel, High Street at 7.00 p.m. W. Farquhar.

North Wembley: Uxendon Hall at 3.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. A. Leckie, A. Naismith. Mr. Leckie continues in ministry 16th-19th at 8.00 p.m.

MARCH 13 - 15

Warrington: Hope Hall, Hawthorne Street, Bewsey. Bible Reading Fri at 7.30 p.m. Conference Sat. and Sun. J.R. Baker, J. Gillespie.

MARCH 14 - 19

Northampton: The Gospel Hall, Osborne Road at 7.30 p.m. Sat and 4.00 p.m. Sun. H. Bell.

MARCH 21

Eastbourne: Marine Hall Seaside at 7.00 p.m. D. Towse.

Luton: Onslow Road Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. M.W. Baker.

Mitcham Junction: Gospel Hall, Percy Road at 7.00 p.m. T.W. Proffitt.

Leicester: York Street Gospel Hall off Granby Street at 3.15 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. A.C. Gooding, A.M.S. Gooding. Mr. A.M.S. Gooding continues in ministry Mon.-Thurs. at 7.30 p.m.

Redditch: Foxlydiate Crescent Gospel Hall, Batchley Estate at 7.00 p.m. D. Gooding.

Warrington: Gospel Hall, Forster Street at 7.00 p.m. D.J. Gooding.

Cheltenham: Bethany Hall, Newton Road, Hesters Way at 7.30 p.m. D. Prosser.

St. Austell: Seymour Gospel Hall, Slades Road at 7.00 p.m. A. Shearman.

Bishop's Stortford: Gospel Hall, Dunmow Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Riddle.

Blackpool: Gospel Hall, Salthouse Avenue, off Rigby Road at 7.30 p.m. P. Kaye.

MARCH 28

Brierfield: Hebron Hall, Walter Street at 7.00 p.m. D. Dixon.

Butt Lane: Ebenezer Gospel Hall, Banbury Street at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. D. Roberts, E. Hughes.

Worksop: The Gospel Hall, Church Walk at 7.30 p.m. H. Aspinall.

Weymouth: Bethany Hall at 7.30 p.m. I. Steed.

Haywards Heath: Franklynn Gospel Hall, 87 Eastern Road at 7.00 p.m. R. Towse, also on Lord's Day at 4.00 p.m. R. Towse.

Hanworth: Gospel Hall, Hounslow Road at 7.00 p.m. W. Gardiner.

Coventry: The Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street at 7.30 p.m. S. McKenzie. Mr. McKenzie continues in ministry Mon.-Thurs. at 7.30 p.m.

Bexleyheath: Bethany Hall at 3.00 p.m. A.C. Gooding, R. Townsend.

London: Hope Hall, Kilburn Lane at 7.00 p.m. M. Baker.

Northampton: The Gospel Hall, Spencer Bridge Road at 7.30 p.m. I. Jackson.

APRIL 4

Biddulph: Hebron Gospel Hall, St. John's Road, at 7.30 p.m. J. Milton.

Warrington: Gospel Hall, Forster Street at 7.00 p.m. S. Downs.

West Mersea: Assembly Hall, East Road at 4.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. B. Price.

Cwmbran: The Gospel Hall, Oakfield Road at 7.15 p.m. D. Ogden.

Kingsteignton: at 7.00 p.m. H. Bell.

Nottingham: Gospel Hall, Victoria Road, Netherfield at 7.15 p.m. A. Carew.

Maidenhead: Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road at 6.30 p.m. K. Rudge.

Westcliff-on-Sea: The Gospel Hall, Carlton Avenue at 7.30 p.m. D. Coulson.

APRIL 11

Milton Keynes: Gospel Hall, Caledonia Road, New Bradwell at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. B. Price, D. Sampson.

Crewe: Bethany Gospel Hall, Lime Tree Avenue at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. P. Davis, D. Lawrence.

Cheltenham: Bethany Hall, Newton Road, Hesters Way at 7.30 p.m. D. Steveley.

Cheshunt: Mill Lane Chapel, High Street at 7.00 p.m. D. Hinton.

Northampton: The Gospel Hall, Osborne Road at 7.30 p.m. J.R. Baker, also on Lord's Day at 4.00 p.m.

Warrington: Hope Hall, Hawthorne Street

Bewsey at 7.00 p.m. J. Naismith.

Ludlow: Cleeview Gospel Hall at 7.30 p.m. P. Kaye.

Bermondsey: The Gospel Hall, 97 St. James's Road, London SE16 at 7.00 p.m. T. Proffitt.

Ely: Gospel Hall, Ship Lane at 7.30 p.m. J. Scarsbrook.

Scotland FORTHCOMING

MARCH 1 - 26

Muirhead: Moorpark Gospel Hall, Special Gospel Campaign at 7.30 p.m. Sun.-Thurs. R. Revie.

MARCH 1 - 5

Plains: Elim Gospel Hall on Sun. at 3.00 p.m. Mon. to Thurs. at 7.45 p.m. A.M.S. Gooding.

MARCH 7

Beith: Bethany Hall, Kirk Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Burnett.

Kilmarnock: Elim Hall, Cuthbert Place at 6.45 p.m. D. McMaster, A. Young.

Ayr: Woodpark Evangelical Church at 3.00 p.m. T. Jones, A. Gamble, S. Arbuthnot.

Edinburgh: Gorgie Gospel Hall Annual Conference in Tynecastle High School (Pentland Annexe) Gorgie Road at 3.15 p.m.-5.15 p.m. Ministry T. Wilson, D. Gillies 6.15 p.m.-7.45 p.m. Bible Reading.

Coatbridge: Hebron Hall, 20 Church Street at 6.30 p.m. E. Nelson, G. Watson.

Bridge of Weir: Hope Hall, Maxwell Terrace at 7.00 p.m. F. Stallan, F. Beavers.

Livingston: Annual Conference in Deans Community Centre at 3.00 p.m. W. Banks, S. Foster, J. Rodgers.

New Stevenston: Assembly Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Brown, J. Cameron.

MARCH 8

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road) at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

MARCH 8 - 19

Aberdeen: Fountain Hall Assembly, 7 Don Place, Woodside. D. McMaster. Gospel Meetings.

MARCH 14

Wishaw: Ebenezer Gospel Hall, Young Street at 6.30 p.m. W. K. Morrison, A. Scott.

Newmilns: Loudon Church, Main Street, at 3.00 p.m. G. Waugh, G. Jackson, S. Foster.

Tarbolton: Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. G. Waugh.

Paisley: Bethany Hall, Queen Street at 3.30 and 5.00 p.m. J. Anderson, A. Gamble.

East Kilbride: Threshold Assembly Hall, at 7.00 p.m. J. Campbell (Edinburgh), A. Naismith (Edinburgh).

Bishopton: The Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. J. Anderson, J. Sinclair.

Saltcoats: Bethany Hall, Ailsa Road at 7.00 p.m. K. Dykes, J. Hay.

Gourock: Bethany Hall, Drumshantie Road at 7.00 p.m. K. Stapley.

Larkhall: Albion Hall, Montgomery Street at 6.30 p.m. A. McGregor, I. Ross.

Ashgill: Bethany Hall, Annual Conference in Public Hall at 3.00 p.m. I. Spiers, S. Arbuthnot, J. Paterson.

Cumbernauld: Mossknowe Gospel Hall, Kildrum Ring Road at 7.00 p.m. W. Blair, T. Jones.

MARCH 15

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road), at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

MARCH 21

Carlisle: Gospel Hall, Church Lane at 3.30 p.m. J. Grant, A. Gamble, N. Mellish. Mr. Mellish continues in ministry till Thurs. at 7.30 p.m.

Greenock: Ardgowan Square Evangelical Church, Ardgowan Square at 3.30 p.m. W. Barr, G. Jackson.

Mayfield: Gospel Hall, Stone Avenue at 6.30 p.m. J. Gamble, A. Wilson (Cullen).

Dalry: Townend Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. W. Dean, T. Wilson.

Plains: Elim Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. R. Cameron, A. Foster.

Motherwell: Shields Road Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. R. Cargill, J. Stubbs.

Linthouse: Bethesda Hall, 16 Holmfauldhead Place, at 7.00 p.m. D. Cook, J. Buchanan.

Ayr: Gospel Hall, James Street at 7.30 p.m. J.R. Baker.

Whitburn: West End Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Gillespie, B. Stapley.

Larkhall: Hareleeshill Gospel Hall, Howard

Street at 6.30 p.m. A. Scott, I. Wallace.

Sauchie: Ebenezer Gospel Hall, Parkhead Road at 3.00 p.m. J. Hunter, J. Harrison, G. Waugh.

Muirhead: Moorpark Gospel Hall at 2.30 p.m. S. Arbuthnot, J. Buchanan, R. Revie.

Dundee: Meadowside Gospel Hall, 2 Euclid Cres., at 7.00 p.m. J. Grant.

MARCH 28 - APRIL 2

Kilwinning: Conference in Kilwinning Academy, Dalry Road on Sat. 28th at 3.00 p.m. S. Jennings, W. Stevely, T. Wilson. Mr. Jennings continues in ministry Lord's day 29th at 3.15 p.m. and Mon. 30th - Thurs. 2nd April at 7.30 p.m.

MARCH 28

Hamilton: High Parks Gospel Hall, Silver-tonhill Avenue at 6.45 p.m. J.R. Baker, W. Park.

Kirkcunell: Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. J. Hunter, J. Gamble.

Airdrie: Hebron Hall, North Bridge Street at 6.30 p.m. J. Sinclair, A. Cundick.

Uphall: The Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Harrison, J. Buchanan.

Glasgow: Harley Street Gospel Hall, at 7.00 p.m. B. Currie, M. Radcliffe.

APRIL 4

Motherwell: Shields Road Gospel Hall at 3.30 p.m. J. Hunter, J. Gamble, R. McPheat. Mr. Hunter continues in ministry Sun. at 3.15 p.m. Mon.-Thurs. at 7.30 p.m.

Kilmarnock: Elim Hall, Cuthbert Place at 6.45 p.m. J.R. Baker.

Glengarnock: Hebron Hall at 3.00 p.m. G. Waugh, A. Meikle, K. Stapley.

APRIL 11

Barrhead: Annual Conference in **Carlbar** Community Centre at 3.00 p.m. J. Chalmers, A. Gamble, T. Meekan.

Lossiemouth: Annual Conference in Town Hall at 3.00 p.m. J. McDonald, J. Hay, E. Nelson.

N. Ireland
FORTHCOMING

MARCH 7

Ballymena: 8.00 p.m. S. Jennings.

MARCH 14

Ballymena: 8.00 p.m. J. Flanagan.

MARCH 21

Ballymena: 8.00 p.m. J. Burnett.

MARCH 28

Ballymena: 8.00 p.m. J. Paton.

England & Wales REPORTS

WEST MIDLANDS

Birmingham Perry Common: The assembly was encouraged by such good numbers for the Christmas Service with some having to stand. The Lord blessed the Word, the saints feel sure.

The year ended on an encouraging note when they had the joy of baptising a young married lady.

Potteries: 1986 saw the North Staffs Tent pitched in Clayton, a district of Newcastle under Lyme. Robert Revie laboured faithfully in visitation and preaching which saw a lady saved and excellent attention and consistent attendance by around 30 children. A 'Gospel Effort' is purposed for Biddulph this year.

Trent Vale marked the half centenary of the work there in October with a reunion for former members, and a Gospel outreach to the estate in which quite a number of former Sunday School scholars were contacted and came along.

Scotland REPORTS

GRAMPIAN AND ISLANDS

Aberdeen: The Aberdeen Assemblies joint New Year conference meetings were better attended this year. There was good interest by all ages in the ministry, round table Bible discussion, and missionary reports. For the first time in many years the concluding conference session was a Gospel meeting led by Peter Brandon. It was good to see the large building well filled and a number of unsaved present.

HIGHLAND AND NORTH EAST COAST

Buckie: The New Year conference meetings were well attended, when the ministry was practical, challenging, and edifying. The speakers for the occasion were G. Meikle, B. Currie and R. Miller.

LOTHIAN AND BORDERS

Gorebridge: J. Stubbs has commenced Gospel meetings in the village hall which is 3 miles away from the nearby assembly of Mayfield. The Hall is only available 3 nights in the week, but it has been encouraging to have unbelievers present each evening. R. McPheat, E. Nelson and R. Miller who all live in or near Gorebridge have been sharing in the preaching with brother Stubbs.

Port Seton: R. McPheat expected to be with the assembly for all the Lord's days in March for Ministry and Gospel meetings.

STRATHCLYDE: NORTH GLASGOW

Glasgow: With so many of the inner city companies being depleted owing to re-development it gives much joy to report that the Assembly who have met at Porch Hall for more than seventy years are now about to occupy their new Gospel Hall which is situated at the corner of Finlay Drive and Armadale Street about the middle of May. Further details of their opening Conference will be advised later. Special request for prayer has been made that the Lord will bless in the work of the Gospel and the testimony maintained for His Glory.

STRATHCLYDE: LANARKSHIRE

Chapelhall: The saints in the small assembly were greatly encouraged by the support they received during the week's ministry by brother Tom Bentley. The Hall was filled to capacity each night. The practical ministry based on the studies on the Life of Abraham as recorded in Genesis was very profitable. Good to see such an interest in the teachings of Divine Truth.

STRATHCLYDE: SOUTH WEST

Gourock: Early in January Robert Revie had good response from the Children's meetings at Inverkip. The adult meetings on the two Sundays were well responded to by the villagers. Some interesting contacts made in door to door visitation.

N. Ireland REPORTS

CO. ANTRIM

Ballycastle: Gospel meetings by Eric Wishart continue in the gospel hall. Fair numbers, and a few unsaved, but a very difficult place.

Kilnock (Near Randalstown): J. Brown and J. Lennox getting nice numbers in the Sunday School hall — an outreach work from Clonkeen.

Kilwaughter (Near Larne): R. McIlwaine (from Nova Scotia) and T. McNeill have had an encouraging start in a portable hall, in the district where R. McIlwaine's father was raised.

Moorfields: J. Martin and W. Jennings continue in portable hall, having completed eight weeks. Meetings are well attended and a number have professed.

Ballymena (Harryville): Ministry by Jeff Harrison for one week was most helpful and much appreciated.

Bushmills: The assembly enjoyed ministry by W.J. Nesbitt during a ten day visit.

CO. ARMAGH AND CO. MONAGHAN

Armagh: S. Ferguson and N. Turkington continue in the gospel with good interest and blessing.

Eirey Row: Gospel meetings commenced 8th Feb. with S. McBride. Pray for this border area.

CO. DOWN

Annalong: R. Eadie and D. Williamson are being encouraged with an interest in the gospel.

Lisburn (Plantation): J. Thompson and J. Hawthorne continue in the gospel with good interest.

Ballymacashon: N. Mellish had a week of profitable ministry meetings which proved an encouragement to the assembly.

Growell: The saints of the small assembly were cheered and blessed when J. Flanigan ministered the Word for one week.

CO. LONDONDERRY AND CO. DONEGAL

Ballylntagh: J. Allen had two weeks of ministry which proved to be most helpful and instructive.

Burnfoot (Co. Donegal): G. Stewart and S. Patterson continue in the gospel in a portable hall. Pray for this needy area.

CO. TYRONE

Cookstown: Gospel meetings conducted by A. Aiken have been most encouraging from the first night, with the hand of the Lord manifested in the salvation of souls.

Martray: G. McKinley and B. Glendinning have concluded twelve weeks meetings with blessing in salvation.

BELFAST & DISTRICT

Clarawood (Ballyhackamore): H. Andrews has commenced in this outreach in the Clarawood estate in the gospel. A woman professed on the first night of the meetings.

Dunmurry: D. Kane and D. Morgan continue in the gospel.

Glenburn: J. Hay has commenced in the gospel and has had an encouraging start with a few from the area attending the meetings.

Bloomfield: J. Hay expected for meetings at end of February. Prayer valued.

Ballyduff: J.G. Hutchinson and R. Revie are being encouraged by good attendances at the special gospel effort including a large number of teenagers each night.

Addresses PERSONALIA

All correspondence for Ian Crawford should now be addressed to "Glenisla" 1 Larch Grove, Hamilton, ML3 7NF. Tel: (0698) 286716.

All correspondence pertaining to the Assembly at Brookhouse Evangelical Chapel, Eldon Street, Preston, Lancs. should now be addressed to Mr. E.A. Saunders, 119 Brindle Road, Bamber Bridge, Preston, Lancs. PR5 6YH.

All correspondence for Bethany Hall, Queen Street, Paisley, should now be addressed to Mr. J.C. Armstrong, 20 Dunchurch Road, Oldhall, Paisley, PA1 3JW. Tel: 041-882 6683.

All correspondence for Mr. Joe Baxter, to 247 Deans South, Deans, Livingston, Lothian EH54 8ED. Tel: 0506 411433.

Logos School Limassol, Cyprus: Will require Teaching Staff for September, 1987. T.E.F.L. & Secondary subjects. Inquiries to Mr. Ian Ross, 41 Market Street, St. Andrews, Fife, KY16 9NT. Tel: (0334) 75539.

MITCHAM JUNCTION; Surrey (about 10 miles south of Central London): Visitors are welcomed at the Gospel Hall, Percy Road. Details of location etc. will be gladly sent on request. Please bring a letter of commendation.

With CHRIST

Mrs GRETA POLSON, on 18th October after a long illness borne with much courage and dependence on the Lord. She left a sweet fragrance of Christ especially in the hospital, where she bore a quiet, consistent testimony. Her early years were spent in Glasgow where she met the Lord and was baptised following her conversion. She, and her husband, Tom, who pre-deceased her, came to Largs and were in happy fellowship in Brisbane Hall for a number of years. Nursing staff and many friends attended the service for her, eloquent testimony to her genuine Christian character.

Mrs JEAN WINTON, Dalry, on 25th November, aged 64. An alcoholic having literally nothing she was helped practically by sisters in the assembly. Saved in March 1985, she was baptised a year later. Bore a bright testimony and manifested the power of the gospel, she loved the gatherings of the Lord's people. Remember her family who heard the gospel at her funeral.

Miss HELEN ALLAN, on 25th November. The Allan family are well known in the Airdrie area of Lanarkshire where they had been brought up. Helen and her sisters came to Largs and have been in fellowship in Brisbane Hall where they gave much help in sisters' meetings especially the missionary work. They also had the Knowe Hotel where many of the saints were refreshed and renewed while on holiday. At the May Readings the family had all the members on a Wednesday evening for fellowship and hospitality. At the service in Brisbane Hall friends came from far and near in great number to pay their respects to a gracious Christian lady.

Mrs MARY LEWIS, on 1st December, aged 71. Saved in early life, baptised and received into fellowship at Kingsmoss Co. Antrim, where she continued until her home-call. She had been a Sunday School teacher and always had a keen interest in all the activities of the assembly. She faithfully attended meetings despite poor health for some time. Prayer requested for the family.

Miss MARY GLASGOW, on 9th December, aged 93 years. saved in 1917 under the preaching of the late John Money Penny through John 5 v. 24. In happy fellowship for many years in Ballymena and latterly in Harryville. She was a quiet consistent sister.

Mrs GEORGINA McGRATH, on December 19th. Our dear sister was saved at the age of 19 and soon afterwards came into

fellowship at Ebenezer Belfast where she thus remained until her homecall. Her husband William, predeceased her in July, 1985. She will be sadly missed by the Assembly.

Mrs M. LOGUE, on 24th December. Saved in 1934 at meetings conducted by Messrs Lewis and Craig in Creeduff. In happy fellowship in the assembly ever since. She was consistent and faithful. Will be greatly missed in the small assembly and in the large family circle, some of them not yet saved.

Mrs ELIZABETH MITCHELL, on 25th December, aged 86. Saved in 1960 at the age of 60 under the preaching of Mr. R. Walker, baptised and received into fellowship at Loan Hall, Stevenston in 1961 and continued faithfully. Her cheerful outlook will be sadly missed by all in the assembly.

WILLIAM MAWHINNEY, on 27th December, aged 71. Saved as a young man in 1933 and for almost 54 years lived to prove the reality of God's Salvation. Over 50 years ago he turned his back on the religious denominations, was baptised and gathered to the Lord's name in the Old Mourne Street Assembly on the Albert-bridge Road. From the very beginning he was a valuable asset to the Assembly. He was a quiet unassuming brother and whatever work he found he did it with all his might. Our brother is best remembered as the Doorkeeper of the Albert-bridge Road Assembly. His warm welcome and pleasant manner endeared him to all and he will be greatly missed. The large Hall at Albert-bridge was full for his funeral service and it was an indication that he was a brother greatly beloved. Prayer is requested for his widow and daughter who are in assembly fellowship.

ROBERT MARRIOTT, on 28th December, aged 68. Saved in 1961 through the preaching of R. Watson and G. Marshall. Bob, as he was generally known lived a quiet but consistent life as a Christian and proved to all that knew him the reality of his conversion. He was in fellowship at Donacloney assembly until his homecall which came after many weeks of intense suffering, patiently borne. Prayer would be requested for his widow and family.

Mr W. CRYMBLE, on 1st January, aged 68. After a long period of illness. Saved in 1956, when John Hutchinson had a season of blessing in Banbridge. In the assembly ever since. Had a good testimony in the district and a definite interest in the gospel and Divine matters. The six months he was in hospital he witnessed to staff and patients to the saving grace of God. His funeral was exceptionally large.

Mrs J. HANNAH, on 1st January aged 89. Saved in 1930 whilst listening to an open-air meeting. The first baptism her daughter witnessed was that of her mother in 1930. In fellowship in Dregghon, then in Bethany Hall Saltcoats for a long number of years. A quiet woman with a strong faith in her God. During her long illness she desired only the prayers of the saints. Remember the family.

ISOBEL WILSON, on 2nd January, aged 80. Trusted the saviour as a young girl, she was a most faithful member of the assembly for over 60 years, being associated with Wellmeadow and Bethany Hall, Paisley. Our sister retained her interest in missionary matters throughout her life, and loved to gather with the Lord's people. Only declining health in recent months had kept her from assembly gatherings. She will be missed.

JOHN PATTERSON, on 3rd January, aged 87. Saved in 1934 and in assembly fellowship for many years in Broughshane. A consistent brother with a good testimony and a shepherd's heart, he was a great help in the assembly — a brother beloved. The large funeral bore testimony to the esteem in which he was held.

Mr J. KERNAGHAN, on 4th January very suddenly aged 75. Saved in 1930 at R. Curran's meetings in Mullafernaghan. In the Banbridge assembly ever since, where for years he was a respected elder and faithful in the ways and work of the Lord. His testimony in the area was clearly demonstrated at the very large funeral in Banbridge Gospel Hall.

Mrs MARINA McEWAN, on 4th January at her home after a trying illness. Saved during the Billy Graham campaign, attended the Tent Hall for a period, then came into fellowship at Summerfield Hall, spending the last 19 years in happy fellowship with the saints at Moorpark Gospel Hall, Muirhead. Testified for her Saviour at every opportunity whilst nursing the sick. The large attendance of villagers at the funeral service indicated the respect and testimony of our dear sister. Truly a virtuous woman of Proverbs 31. Prayers valued for the family.

JAMES S. BOGIE, on 6th January, aged 72. After a very brief illness. Trusted the Saviour at 14 and was for over 50 years in assembly fellowship at Wellmeadow and Bethany Hall, Paisley. Our brother's great interest was in the wellbeing of the assembly, which he served so faithfully. An elder, he was for several years Sunday School superintendent and during the last 20 years he carried out the duties of assembly correspondent. The esteem in which he was held, was evident at the large

funeral. Will be greatly missed. Remember his widow and family in prayer.

RICHARD CRAWFORD, on 9th January, aged 78. Saved when 8 years of age at Hebron Hall, Carlisle, where he was later received into fellowship. At the age of 17 he became associated with the Assembly at Rochdale and remained there for some 52 years. For many years he shouldered the bulk of the Assembly responsibilities as it began to decline in numbers. He refused to allow lowering of the spiritual tone of the meeting despite there being so few in fellowship towards the end. When the Gospel Hall at Rochdale had to close some 9 years ago through vandalism he led his flock into fellowship at the Werneth Gospel Hall, where he continued as a much respected overseeing brother attending to the Lord's work to the very end. He died peacefully at home after a prolonged illness. A faithful brother and a man of prayer. Remembered with affection by many throughout the region.

Mrs MARY SCROGGIE, on 9th January, aged 75. Our beloved sister was the wife of the late Willie Scroggie so well known for their days at Fairhaven Guest House, Newquay. She, as well as her late husband, was converted in the Tent Hall, Glasgow. They were both well known in Glasgow Christian circles and on going to Newquay greatly augmented their circle of friends. They retired to Largs where they were faithful and devoted servants of God, Mary being the ideal helpmeet to her husband. She truly loved the Lord and the place where His honour dwells, rarely missing any of the gatherings. She was well known and respected in the town.

NOEL IRWIN, Suddenly on 11th January. Our brother was saved about 50 years ago and for some years was associated with the Baptist Church before being received into the small assembly at Battleford, Bridge. When the assembly closed he moved to Armagh where he was a most valued and faithful elder. He was not a public man, but was ever active in personal visitation, using his many contacts in his extensive Milling and Farming business to present the claims of Christ. A kind and generous man, he ever sought to visit the sick and lonely and was most thoughtful towards the needs of others. A "Brother beloved" who will be sadly missed by all. Prayer valued for his wife and family.

ERNEST HARTLEY, on 15th January, aged 77. Saved as a young boy, he was received into fellowship in Shipley, West Yorkshire, when 15, remaining there till his homecall. Our brother was a respected elder and was for many years assembly correspondent. The home of him and his

wife who survives him was ever open to the Lord's people and His servants. Prayer is valued for his widow and all the family.

Mrs MARY MOORE, on 15th January, aged 91. Saved as a girl of twelve she later became a foundation member of the Ballylough Assembly where she remained in happy fellowship until her homecall. Her very keen interest in the assembly was evidenced by her hospitality and her wise words of counsel and encouragement when needed. She consistently witnessed to those with whom she came in contact and had the joy of seeing her own family saved and also many of her grandchildren.

Miss LIZZIE McDOWELL, on 17th January in her 86th year. Saved at meetings conducted in Cromkill School House by the late J. Stewart and the late W. McCracken, almost 70 years ago. A quiet sister, for many years in fellowship in Wellington Street Assembly in Ballymena and latterly in Harryville. Failing health and old age prevented her from attending the meetings for some years.

Mrs MARGARET ROBERTSON, on 18th January, aged 91. Our sister was saved and baptised in early life and was associated with the saints in Shields Road Assembly, Motherwell, for the past 37 years. Our sister was of a quiet and unassuming disposition and will be missed by her only daughter Nessie (Mrs J. Rodgers) and by all who knew her.

Dr WILLIAM HOWAT LINDSAY, on 18th January, after a long illness borne with patience and with neither complaint nor self pity. Brought up in the Ayrshire Assembly of Dreghorn and saved in his early teens, he became an ardent Bible student and to the very end could be heard to whisper every word being read to him from his beloved A.V. After qualifying in 1926, he was in practice in Manchester and later in Ealing, worshipping in the local Assemblies but being widely used in Ministry and Gospel preaching in the surrounding areas. Returning to Glasgow in 1948 he was associated with Victoria Hall for some twelve years and then with Cartbridge Evangelical Church in Busby. In addition to Ministry in all of these districts he was widely in demand as a Conference speaker, but those who had the privilege of sharing fellowship around the Lord's table will treasure most the quality of worship and ministry he brought to these gatherings. In 1967 his wife Anne and he retired to St. Anne's, remaining active among the Lord's people as long as health permitted.

Mrs ELIZABETH FORDE, on 19th January. Our sister was saved in July 1931 at

meetings near Cookstown, shortly afterwards she came into fellowship at Killycurragh assembly, and continued faithfully, until her homecall. A good, Godly woman, who adorned the Doctrine by Life and Lip, her love for the truth and the saints was evident to all who knew her. The assembly feels her passing keenly, and especially her family some of whom are not saved. Prayer requested for them.

Miss JEAN LOGAN of the Ballymena Assembly on 26th January aged 82. She was saved in her early teens and was in happy fellowship for well over 60 years. For many years taught in the Sunday Schools (morning and afternoon) and was leader of the sisters' Missionary Class. She also spent much time visiting and helping the sick, the elderly and those in need, until failing health restricted and eventually ended her activities about 10 years ago. A real Phebe, a sister beloved, a servant of the Church and a succourer of many. Her eldest sister is Mrs L. K. McIlwaine, who served the Lord, with her husband, for many years in Nova Scotia.

HENRY LENNOX, on 28th January, aged 74. He was saved before his 20th birthday at meetings in Drummenagh Gospel Hall and later received into fellowship at Bellaghy assembly and continued there until his sudden homecall. Had a deep interest in the Assembly's well-being and was a lover of the Gospel. He leaves a big gap in the meeting and will be sadly missed. The very large funeral was an evidence of the respect he and his family commanded in the district. Prayer requested for his widow and family.

Cornwall: Modernised Cottage to let for Self Catering holidays in St Austell. The cottage is near the shops and the coast and will accommodate 6 adults. There is good assembly fellowship in the town. Please ring St. Austell 61265 or write for details to K. Rudge, 5 Manor Close, St. Austell, Cornwall.

NETHERHALL BIBLE READINGS

27th April-1st May 1987

Leaders:— Albert Leckie, Airdrie
Jim Baker, Bishopton
Subject:— 1st Thessalonians
Enquiries to:— The Manager,
Netherhall, Largs,
KA30 8RP Tel: Largs
672084

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AYR BIBLE READINGS

Leisure Centre,
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2nd to 8th May, 1987

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Speakers: Mr J. Flanigan, Belfast and Mr A.J. Gamble, Glasgow.

Particulars from the Secretary, Raymond Millar, 15 Springhill Ave, Crossdene Estate, Crosshouse, Kilmarnock, KA2 0JP, Ayrshire. Tel: 0563 33691.

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Lake District: Bassenfell Manor Christian Centre. Ideally suited as a centre for house parties and outdoor pursuits, the Manor offers self-catering accommodation for groups of up to fifty. For details contact Mr & Mrs B. Pritchard at the above.

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EDITORIAL **Searchlight**

It is so easy for Christians to forget that they have been forgiven but the apostle John reminds those who have been born of God that "your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake" (1 John 2:12). It is good for every saint to constantly remember such a blessed truth, indeed the psalmist David rejoiced in the blessedness of being forgiven (Psa 32:1), counting it as the greatest reason for joy and thanksgiving.

Our forgiveness is completely undeserved, the earlier passage cited states that it is for His name's sake that we have been forgiven and the apostle Paul emphasises the same point because, God for Christ's sake has forgiven us (Eph 4:32). A true and constant realisation of this would keep every saint in a condition of humility. There is ever a danger as we progress in our knowledge of divine truth that we become proud and arrogant. It was to an assembly in such danger that written ministry reminded them of what they once were and of what they had now become through divine operations (1 Cor 6:11).

Believers are not so much directed to seek for forgiveness when we sin but rather to confess to the Lord. The word confess means to 'agree with' thus when we confess our sins we are agreeing with God's verdict upon our actions, and such agreement immediately invokes the

faithfulness and yet justice of forgiveness. Even in OT times the same order existed, "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin".

A consciousness of being forgiven will not only keep the Christian humble, it will foster within him a deeper love for Christ. In Luke 7 the woman who wept and kissed the feet of Christ was quickly assessed as a sinner by the Pharisee in whose house it took place, but the Lord Jesus makes clear that a sense of sin being forgiven puts a tender and genuine love within the heart (Luke 7:47). If we live near to the cross then our affection will be drawn out to the One who said "Father forgive them".

Those who know they have been forgiven should be ready to forgive others when faults are committed against them. How important it is for us to be "kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph 4:32). A helpful passage in this respect is in Matt 18 where the Lord Jesus emphasises that those who have been forgiven should always be ready to forgive.

J.R.B.

Joel (2)

by R. Revie, Tarbolton

ch. 2 Repentance leading to brokenness

vv. 1-2 The alarm sounded — Here we reach the kernel of the message that Joel brought. In its dispensational setting, ch. 1 covers the times of the Gentiles, commencing with the time of Nebuchadnezzar till the time that Christ sets up his Millennial kingdom. The second chapter however takes us to the time when the Day of the Lord is revealed. Before that day arrives, when there will be the manifestation of the King, Israel in particular is to be subjected to a severe time of judgment and desolation. There will also be a wonderful outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh and once again Jerusalem will become the administrative centre from which all blessing will flow to the nations. This chapter and the next one are still to be fulfilled and before this can take place Israel must be fully restored to their own land.

v. 1 — The alarm is to be sounded on a trumpet — It is worthy to note that when the rapture takes place there is the sound of a trumpet. At the height of the tribulation there is the sound of seven trumpets and now the 'Day of the Lord' is heralded in by the sounding of a trumpet. The previous trumpets have been sounded either in the air or in heaven but this one is sounded in Zion. The trumpets sounded are all different. At the rapture it is a gathering call; during the tribulation it is sounded to introduce specific judgments from

the Throne. Here it is sounded prior to calamities that take place on the earth. This is surely a reminder of what happened at Sinai (Heb 12:18-21). What a parallel there is with these first verses. Obviously Israel will have revived the custom of Num ch. 10 — the blowing of the trumpets.

During the tribulation it could be described as a day of clouds and thick darkness but this will give way to a scene described as 'the morning spreading upon the mountains'.

vv. 3-11 The invasion summarised — This time is referred to also in Dan 2. The army that invades Israel finds it like a restored Eden but they bring with them Tyranny and doom. Israel views the enemy:—

(a) As *fire* — Reminding us of the thoroughness of the carnage — nothing is left untouched.

(b) As *horses* — Whenever horses are referred to in scripture it is in connection with warfare.

(c) As *chariots* — These were also used in warfare and would suggest the power of the enemy. This is the simile used in Rev 9:9.

(d) As a *disciplined army* — They are seen to be running, climbing, marching and not breaking rank. They seem invincible and even when they fall on the sword it does not affect them. To such an onslaught the people show:—

Surprise — They are caught suddenly and their garden is spoiled.

Pain — It is to writhe in pain because

of the severity of the judgment and faces will turn pale with shock.

Nature is affected — Joel uses the symbolic language of the heavens, moon and stars being affected. This is similar to Rev 8:12. The Lord is using this evil force to humble the people and to bring them to a point where they cry for help.

vv. 12-17 The call given — There is first a general call in v. 12 and this is followed by a specific call in v. 16.

The first call is for: (a) a *sincere* repentance. The evidence of sincerity is seen not in an outward show of rending garments but an inward and true repentance. (b) an *understanding* of God's character. From Moses (Ex 34:6 and Jonah 4:2) these four characteristics appear together 6 times. It is all the more important in this section when all that Israel felt was the blast from the north to be reminded of the unchanging character of God.

v. 14 — reminds us that on the basis of the people's response God will act in a different way toward His people. Usually when man repents of his sin a different Hebrew word is employed. Essentially the word means a change of one's conduct, or a change of heart or disposition. When God did change His mind it was because of man's true repentance. Although it appears that God's purpose has changed, according to God's perspective nothing has changed.

(c) *A call to self denial* — here we have a repetition of ch. 1:14.

(d) *A call that is specific* — The young and the old are brought in and brought together. Those that may

have had legitimate excuse for staying at home are called in for this is an important gathering.

(e) *A call that is supplicating* — The priests are asked to intercede on behalf of the people so that the people may not be disowned and God's honour be at stake. This is a similar cry made by David in Psa 42:3, 10.

v. 18 — This seems to be a pivotal verse in the chapter. There seems to be a dramatic change. Often the little word 'then' in the prophetic books marks the change from Israel's judgment to her delivery.

vv. 19-27 The word of cheer — There are three exhortations in these verses which sum up the section, v. 21 — fear not, v. 22 — be not afraid, v. 23 — be glad.

Fear not — The reason for their fear was the northern army and that is to be removed. Because of this the reproach is to be taken away and this is replaced by a fresh appreciation of the Lord's power.

Be not afraid — There was going to be pasture instead of barrenness, trees bearing fruit and a plentiful supply for all. It would again be the land flowing with milk and honey.

Be glad — This gladness would come as the outcome of a fourfold blessing:—

(a) *Former and the latter rain* — Deut 11:14, Jer 5:24 and James 5:7. In recent times with the increase of the charismatic movement this phrase has been completely taken out of its context. Those following this teaching suggest that what was seen at Pentecost was the former rains and that at a

much later date there would be a greater outpouring of the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit. When each passage where this phrase occurs is studied, it will be obvious that no spiritual meaning is intended. The first reference is in Deut 11:14 and is a promise made by God to send the former rain when the seed was to be sown and the latter rains before the harvest.

This age we live in is going to end in apostasy and a turning away from God rather than a turning to God. We never read in the NT of another outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The sobering fact is that during the tribulation there will be many satanic signs of wonders and miracles and one wonders if what we see today could be a shadow of such a manifestation.

(b) *A time of restoration* — This time had been preceded by a time of leanness. Sometimes a time of barrenness in our lives can be followed by a time of blessing.

(c) *A time of re-appraisal* — A new awareness of who God is and what He can do. There is a fresh trust in God's ability to help and that there is a new awareness that God is still happy to be known as 'the Lord your God'.

(d) *An outpouring of the Holy Spirit* — Many feel that the verses from 28-32 which were quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost were fulfilled then. It is true that the Holy Spirit

was poured out then but there is a difficulty over verses 30 and 31. Some commentators get over this difficulty by spiritualising it and making it refer to the destruction of Jerusalem. I suggest that this is one of the prophecies that fall into the category of 'the law of double fulfilment'. There was an initial yet partial fulfilment at Pentecost which shall be superseded by a full and final fulfilment just prior to the return of Christ to earth to set up His kingdom. That would link us with Matt 24:29 and Rev 6:12-13. That it was not a complete and final fulfilment at Pentecost is seen in the careful way that Peter refers to it. He just says 'This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel' (Acts 2:16).

What Peter was telling the Jews was the fact that they were seeing at Pentecost an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the effects of which had been foretold by Joel. This prophecy can only take place with the children of Israel being restored to their land. That it is going to be earthly blessing is seen from the reference to Zion and Jerusalem in v. 32. A word of caution is vital here. If this great manifestation of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is not far distant the present 'Charismatic Movement' could be a spurious counterfeit of what is still to take place. That a counterfeit can be present where there is the absence of the real will be seen by many who will claim to be the Christ before the manifestation of the true Messiah.

To be continued

'Without me ye can do nothing' is a very sweeping statement, but very encouraging. It is the Lord's warning to us not to withdraw from Him, but it surely conveys the thought to us that He will not withdraw from us.

Women in the Church (3)

by H.A. Tickner, Muswell Hill

3. Their Prohibition

Previous papers have considered the *position* and *practise* of women in the church. This paper will seek to set some of the Bible issues relating to the silence of women in the meetings of the churches. It must be appreciated by the reader that here is a subject that has, and does give rise to a great deal of discussion and controversy, which is showing a marked increase especially amongst the assemblies of God's people.

The relevant Scriptures setting prohibition upon public participation by women in church services, are well known and have become the source and centre of much diverse interpretation in many areas of the church today. They are of course, to be found in Paul's first letters to Corinth and to Timothy: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law ... it is a shame for women to speak in the church ... the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Cor 14:34-37); "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (1 Tim 2:11-12). These letters are accepted as divinely inspired; lit "God breathed", *Theopneustus* (2 Tim 3:16) and in their writing Paul is seen faithfully and

skillfully discharging his responsibilities in teaching the pattern and conduct to be observed and obeyed by both men and women in the gatherings of the Lord's people. It should be noted however, that the major thrust of his ministry is directed to Corinth in particular, though of course, also applicable to all the churches in his usage of the plural noun in 1 Cor 14:34.

Paul's first letter to Corinth, graphically unfolds much that was wrong, revealing a deep need for correction. The areas of disunity through to disorderly conduct in the meetings demanded clear instruction with stern commandment to be accepted and obeyed. The relevant chs. 11-14 of the letter unfold the setting of conduct and order in the assembly meetings. In 11:3-16 the apostle — as has already been noted in our previous paper — stresses the importance of the position of Christ to God, man to Christ and woman to man, unfolding a clear sequence of subjection in each area. As Paul comes to Corinth he observes the women praying and prophesying with uncovered heads, and in dealing with this problem, in the context of the verses, he does not deal with the matter of public participation, i.e. "praying and prophesying", that will come later in the letter; but here his deep concern is for an acknowledgement of and adherence to the divinely declared position of subjection.

In seeking to interpret the teaching set by Paul in vv. 3-16 it is of vital importance to note that his silence at this point in the letter re women's participation, by no means gives sanction for them to continue to do so, nor implies that permission had ever been given them in the first place. In his orderly and scholarly fashion we see this master teacher dealing with one thing at a time.

So much has been written and said from vv. 3-16 concerning the subordination of woman to man, and of its acceptance and testimony by the wearing of the veil, that little can be added. It is, however, important to note that Paul does not brush aside the matter as trivial; for him there is a right and a wrong way of worshipping God. He then decides the question by the touchstone of christian doctrine. Not for him, as for many, is it a matter of taste or of national custom — his decision will run counter to Jewish custom and habit — but of christian ritual which must conform to, and express christian doctrine; as indeed on all points of importance, doctrine will give the needed guidance.

Having now given reason and guidance on the first burden of concern, the apostle turns to the weightier matter of women's conduct in the church gatherings. This is unfolded in ch. 14 of his letter. Again, here, as in ch. 11 the importance of the regulations expressing christian doctrine cannot be over emphasised, based as they are upon the position of women to men. Equality of spiritual privilege (Gal 2:28) does not nullify this principle which permeates church order, and Paul, under divine inspiration and without contradiction,

set such an issue in order, leaving him a clear path to deal with the question of silence, which, with authority, he does in ch. 14. In the context of the chapter and in the embrace of discussing spiritual gifts he writes, "Let your women keep silence in the churches for it is not permitted unto them to speak" (v. 34). It is of instructive interest to note that this is the third call for silence, the others being: a) "If a man speak in a tongue ... let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter let him keep silence in the church" (vv. 27-28); b) in maintaining orderly conduct only one teacher was to speak at a time (vv. 29-31). The apostle's appeal for such order in the assembly is called for in the light of divine character: "For God is not the author of confusion but of peace" (v. 33) thus giving an appropriate conclusion to what God seeks in the conduct of His people, that they might be edified (v. 26). It is of great interest to find that most commentators of high spiritual standing and scholarship link the words of v. 33 to what he commands in v. 34: "as in all the churches of the saints let your women keep silence in the churches"; he immediately calls for obedience to the command and insists that Corinth had not been granted authority to exercise a custom not marked in the other churches of God in reference to the deportment of women in the assembly (see ch. 11 v. 16). In the linking of v. 33 to what follows, Paul reveals a sense that is pertinent and good: "As in the case of all other churches let your women keep silence in the public assemblies", and then goes on to add to the exhortation not only the weight of apostolic authority given him "I write unto you" (v. 37) but also the authority of reason *and*

Scripture, "it is not permitted unto them to speak".

V. 34 commences with the imperative "Let" which linked with "be silent", *sigatosan* in the Greek text is underlined with strong emphasis, demanding obedience not evasion. "Permitted", coupled as it is with the firm negative "not", adds immense strength to the prohibition in the text, thus giving firm proof that none of the churches, including Corinth, had received permission for women to speak, and reminding the saints that it was only at Corinth that church procedure had been flouted, contrary to the spirit of Christianity of decency and order. These two characteristics called for in v. 40 display that which is harmonious and well organised in the worship and witness of the local church, and stand in marked contrast to the stigma of shame mentioned in v. 35, where the Greek word *aischron* in the accusative, points to that which is marked by ugliness and deformity, and exciting deep disgust. Of course, Paul recognises the need for women to learn and exhorts them to use the channels available in the home, "husbands" or "godly women" (Titus 2:2-5 etc.). The apostle strengthens his appeal for obedience to the prohibition, with "the commandments of the Lord" (v. 37) and with no small burden confirms it in his pastoral letter to Timothy (1 Tim 2:9-15). It is well to see that in v. 11 he links together what he has called for at Corinth, namely "silence" and "subjection".

The modern conception of the

opening phrase of v. 9 gives rise to the argument that the women are authorised to pray "in like manner" as the men in v. 8, but this is out of order in the context of vv. 8-9 where the emphasis is upon the action and attitude of the men, "to pray" (infinitive verb) with holiness, unity and faith; and that of the women "to adorn" (infinitive verb) with modesty and sobriety; thus will be displayed the marks of true reverence (v. 11).

The teaching continues in v. 12 with the use of a strange Greek verb *authenthein* which is used only once in the entire Bible; translated it gives the thought "to bear rule" or "to usurp authority". The grammarian Phrynichus, AD 180, sets the word in two parts: *autos*, "self" and *hentas* from *hemi* "to thrust out from oneself" or "to desire". Early Greek writings reveal the word being used in the following ways: the orator Antipon, "murderer"; Dio Cussus and Hesdotus, "suicide"; St. John Chrysostern uses it in the thought of "a sexual licence"; cannot the evidence of this description be seen in the Pergamas and Thyatiran churches (Rev 2:14, 20)? The associations of the word in the text with the foregoing observations must surely deter any who desire unauthorised authority in the light of Paul's usage as we have already seen in 1 Cor 14:35 of the word "shame".

The assessment of all Bible teaching demands sincerity of approach, honesty of application, and in the final issue, obedience to the Lord of the church who still pleads, "If ye love me keep my commandments".

Give me a soul that has boldness and joy in God's presence, and I will show you one that has victory over the world.

J. G. Bellett.

These Stones (4)

by E.A.R. Shotter, Northampton

The third and last of the temptations, which are known generally as the Temptation in the wilderness takes on a somewhat different character as far as the devil is concerned. No longer is it 'stones', as in the first temptation; nor yet 'a stone', as in the second. Here he does not mention stones at all. Also, in this temptation, the devil is not soliciting the physical well-being of the Lord Jesus, nor yet is he conniving at His death; but he is seeking to deprive Him of His kingdom and glory.

If the first temptation was aimed at His office as Prophet; and the second at His office as Priest; this one is aimed at His office as King.

There is also another important omission from this temptation which has not appeared previously. The omission is that there is no bringing into question the deity of the Lord Jesus. The temptation is not prefaced with 'If thou be Son of God'. As we have seen, the second temptation indisputably establishes that He is the Son of God because of His resurrection. As Rom I says, 'Declared Son of God with power, ... by resurrection from dead ones' (see Newberry). In this then we have a silencing of the calumny brought by the devil as to the Lord's deity.

Bearing in mind the fact that in the second temptation the devil brought the Lord Jesus to a pinnacle of the

temple, and that we have seen that the temple was linked with priesthood we may well ask how does the priesthood of the Lord Jesus come into the picture. The answer to this query is precisely at the point at which we have now arrived. His priesthood is not an earthly one, as the epistle to the Hebrews makes perfectly clear: 'If He were on earth, He should not [even] be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law', (Heb 8:5). The thing that marked out the priesthood of these earthly priests was that 'they were not suffered to continue by reason of death', (Heb 7:23).

In the second temptation we have noted that the devil is there concentrating on the death of the Lord Jesus, albeit not at the time of the divine appointment. We have seen also that when His hour was fully come Jesus did go forth; did pass over Kidron; did enter the garden where He incontrovertibly acknowledged His complete unity with, and complacency in the Father's will; did go on to Calvary and the tomb; and 'was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father', (Rom 6:4).

Now, according to Hebrews, He has an unchangeable priesthood which can never be transferred to another because He received it after His resurrection, when He was 'called of God [addressed, designated, declared,

and marked out] a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec', (Heb 5:10).

To get something of the impact of this in relation to these temptations in the wilderness, we must turn to Gen 14, and have at our side some means of ascertaining the meanings of the names mentioned there, such as *Scripture Proper Names and their Interpretation* (Ritchie) and/or the Proper Name section of *Cruden's Concordance*, plus others if available. In recording this incident the Spirit of God mentions thirty-two names of people and places regarding the battle of the kings and not one has any good connected with them. They are a fearsome motley mob. On the other hand, with one exception, and that already mentioned in the previous list, the twelve names connected with Abram's rescue of Lot all have a good import to them. Space obviously does not permit us to list them in full here, but we recommend to our readers the careful study of Gen 14 with these names in mind.

The field is put in array as their great leader Chedorlaomer sets out to subdue all the nations mentioned, to his dominion. Not only does he set out to do this, but completely succeeds in his efforts. Can we not see in this a very vivid picture of that spiritual battle which is continually waging (and with the same result) between the Satan and mankind? The result could be none other, without rescue from outside man, than the slavery of Satan.

In the present chapter help is secured from another, as the hymn-writer puts it: 'A second Adam to the fight, and to the rescue came'. We see Abram illustrating this 'Second Man'

and note that 'he brought back all the goods, and ... Lot'. When this has taken place Abram is met by Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God, who does not bring the victims of sacrifice. There is no sacrificing of sheep and oxen, even in thanksgiving for victory gained. He brought forth bread and wine, the symbols of life, and joy, and fellowship.

The sacrifice of the Lord Jesus is once for all and the battle of reclamation is for ever done. The slavery and bondage is completely broken, and He can now say, 'Behold, I and the children which God hath given Me', (Heb 2:13). We can now sit down with Him under the peace His victory has assured and enjoy fellowship in the acceptance of His priestly character, after the order of Melchisedec, the priest of the Most High God. He as 'Jesus the Son of God' is passed through the heavens. The devil can no more dispute His deity.

We must note one other thing. It is that Abram would not take 'from a thread to a shoe-latchet' from the king of Sodom, lest he should say, 'I have made Abram rich'. In like manner, the Lord Jesus takes nothing from the devil but, with another shaft from the word of God, His second reply is 'It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God'. The words 'the Lord' here being Jehovah. In this character He appeared to Moses, saying, 'I am come down to deliver', and also in this character the priesthood directed the worship of His people to Him.

This leads us on to the closing consideration of this series.

YOUNG Believers'

Conducted by Howard A. Barnes,
Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside

Pauline Epistles

**PART 8: 1 CORINTHIANS,
chapters 7-16**

INTRODUCTION

Having dealt with certain important issues that had arisen from what he had heard about the state of affairs in the assembly at Corinth, Paul now turns to those particular questions raised by the believers themselves.

ASSEMBLY QUESTIONS ANSWERED

In ch. 7 the question of the advisability of marriage is answered together with the obligations of those who decide to marry. The overriding considerations are that "the time is short" (v. 29) and a willingness to put the Lord's service first. There are obvious advantages in remaining unmarried, if the opportunities so gained are used in the Lord's service. If marriage is entered into then the consideration one has to give to a husband or wife obviously involves one in caring "for the things of the world" so that the other partner is pleased. This time and effort is available for the Lord in the case of the unmarried.

In the same way that Paul does

not give a simple yes or no answer to the question of marriage, but expands on the issues involved, so in ch. 8 he says that eating meat offered to idols has many implications, and also that the exact circumstances matter. What should be controlling the situation is love and not knowledge alone (v. 1). Cold calculated "correct" decisions might involve the stumbling of a weak brother who hasn't yet come into the full liberty of the truth. Paul was prepared to become a lifelong vegetarian if he could thereby avoid stumbling a weak brother, even though he knew that the gods to whom the meat had been offered before it went on public sale in the market did not actually exist.

Similarly in ch. 9 Paul, whose apostleship was undeniable (especially to the Corinthians), reminds them that he had been prepared to put aside his apostolic right to be financially supported by them: "we have not used this power" (v. 12). He insists that "when I preach the gospel, I make the gospel of Christ without charge" (v. 18). How different from those so-called gospel activities these days that charge an entry fee, and those workers who ask for payment in advance! Paul sacrificed his own personal rights in the matter of support, and was prepared to work in order to support himself as indeed he had done initially at Corinth (Acts 18:3). All the apostles had the right to support, and Paul's foregoing of this right in certain circumstances was not argument against his apostleship; rather it illustrates his devotedness to the Lord and to those to whom he preached. He wasn't concerned

with the loss of material reward down here, but rather with gaining spiritual reward "up there", (vv. 24-27).

Ch. 10 opens with an illustration of those whose end had been without reward, for Israel although they had been given many blessings, and enjoyed constant provision of all their needs (vv. 2-4), had at the last missed the blessing of entering the land, their bodies being "strewn along the wilderness" (v. 5 Newberry margin). Even those who had made considerable spiritual progress, like the strong at Corinth and even Paul himself are to beware: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (v. 12). Constant communion with Christ is the answer to this danger. Of course communion with Christ whether viewed as a day-by-day experience or specifically at the Lord's Supper brings with it clear obligations. Taking part in the worship of idols (actually devils, v. 20) is obviously wrong, so too is any "sin by association". Social gatherings known to be connected with idol worship must be avoided, although attending a normal social gathering of unbelievers is allowed. The golden rule is if whatever we intend to do is to God's glory and if it doesn't stumble believers or unbelievers it is allowable (vv. 31-33). In this we would then be followers of Paul and of the Lord Himself (11:1).

ASSEMBLY PROBLEMS ADDRESSED

Having answered most of the questions raised by the Corinthians (apart perhaps from the matter of collections, 16:1), he returns to his own concern over what he had

heard. The first is the behaviour of women in the assembly gatherings. Their position in the assembly should be regulated by their position in creation. The proper state for the sister is one of subjection, indicated by her long hair and her head covered in the assembly meetings. Her silence in such gatherings is taught elsewhere (1 Tim 2:11, 12). A realisation that her actions involve others (angels and men in general) should lead any spiritual sister to be happy to obey such commands. Here again we see that none of us exist or act in isolation.

Because of careless attitudes and behaviour at the Lord's Supper, Paul restates its truth and seriousness (11:20-34). The stress in this passage is on the word "Lord" (count the number of occurrences), in whose presence our behaviour and our attitude to others must be worthy of Him. Equally, spiritual gifts (chs. 12 and 14) are given with a view to the glorification of the Head and the building up of the body. If they are used for self-aggrandisement, then they are being misused however impressive they might appear. The emphasis here is on diversity as to the nature of gifts (ch. 12), but unity as to their purpose (ch. 14).

The secret of the successful exercise of gifts is found in ch. 13, especially those of an oral nature. Oratory inflates a man, but love deflates him. The absence of love makes our best efforts worthless (vv. 2, 3), but its inclusion makes everything possible (vv. 4-7). It outlives all the temporary gifts (prophecies, tongues and knowledge), and is to be our aim and object (14:1, "follow after love").

Ch. 15 is a redeclaration of the facts of the gospel, with special emphasis on real bodily resurrection. The whole idea of resurrection was rejected by many in the world, but it is a key point in the gospel and cannot be sacrificed just to make the gospel appear more palatable to society. Furthermore, living in the good of the resurrection of Christ

ensures constant victory for the believer.

Paul ends the epistle on the practical note of giving for the needs of poor saints. They had not given much respect to their own poor (11:21), but as this attitude is corrected, there will be a readiness to give to others (16:3).

The Books, especially the Parchments (2)

by F.E. Stallan, Linwood

To continue with the list of recommended books, two were made on the prophetic side. As to be expected, 'The exposition of the Revelation' by Walter Scott was one. The other one was not as well-known, but in its own way gave a very clear outline of the prophetic programme. This was A.J. Pollock's 'Things which must shortly come to pass.' The name, A.J. Pollock was held in high esteem by believers in the Glanton party. He wrote extensively, and produced many excellent little booklets, in which he set out to combat the teachings of the Cults. Many of his little booklets are still available and they are highly recommended. Incidentally, A.J. Pollock's book, 'The Tabernacle's typical teaching' is a real gem and well worth purchasing, if it can be obtained.

To return to the list of books, the

work recommended on the Tabernacle was not A.J. Pollock's, or for that matter, Henry Soltau's, but John Ritchie's. This excellent little book, easily read, was purchased new by the writer in 1941. With its companion works, 'From Egypt to Canaan' and 'Foundation truths of the Gospel' and many others, they have been well-thumbed over the past 45 years. Of course, there are many excellent works in circulation on the Tabernacle, and some of them have found their way on to the writer's bookshelf, but there still remains an affection for Pollock and Ritchie.

Indebtedness was really built up by the suggestion of 'The Law of the Offerings' by Andrew Jukes. This book, and two others, 'Characteristic differences of the four Gospels' and 'Types of Genesis' when acquired, proved to be quite different in

approach and substance from the writings of others. Although in many ways they were unique, with a tendency to lean slightly to the mystical, they were really thought-provoking and helpful. To anyone newly-come to the faith and doubtful about the differences in the records of the four Gospels, a read at this book on the Gospels will surely turn doubt into praise. Fortunately some of the works of Andrew Jukes have been reprinted and are therefore not lost to those who may have a desire to acquire them.

There was one recommended book which took a long time to acquire as it had been out of print for many years. It was eventually picked up for a few coppers in a second-hand bookshop. This book was, 'The Divinity of our Lord' by Liddon. In its day this work was considered to be a classic. It was the substance of one of the well-known Bampton Lectures of many years ago and it was judged to be a peerless treatise on the Divinity of our Lord. Considering some of the views being put forward today on the Person of the Lord by some high churchmen, it would seem that Liddon's book is among the Bampton Lectures which are lying unread on many ecclesiastical bookshelves.

The writings of Sir Robert Anderson were highly recommended, especially 'The Coming Prince' and 'The Gospel and its ministry.' The legal mind of Sir Robert Anderson shines through his works, which makes his books interesting reading for those who like that type of approach to problems. His book, 'The Coming Prince' is very well-known, mainly for the way in which it deals with Daniel's

prophecy of the seventy weeks. It is only fair to say that not everyone accepts Sir Robert Anderson's submission on the prophecy, although it is also fair to say, the alternatives put forward do not sound as convincing. For those who need assurance about some aspects of the faith, 'A Doubter's doubts about science and religion' may prove helpful, and for those who have doubts about the doctrines of Rome, 'The Bible or the Church' should settle matters convincingly.

On the devotional side the writings of J.G. Bellett have much to commend them. This man, one of the brethren at the beginning of the 'Brethren movement' early last century was said by some to be the sweet psalmist of the brethren. His little book, 'The moral glories of the Lord Jesus' would certainly bear that out, as would some of his other works, such as, 'The Evangelists' and 'The Patriarchs.'

There is not enough space to comment on the recommended writings of Wm. Lincoln, J.R. Caldwell, Campbell Morgan and many others, all writers of books suitable for young believers. It should be noted, however, that one's own appreciation develops over the years, and as an acquaintance with the truth of God from the Word of God gradually grows new horizons in reading are embraced. In recent years there are many works which have come on to the market which bear the hallmarks of sound scholarship and spiritual content. These books are not forgotten and will no doubt be the subject of comment and favourable review by others who may be writing for this series of papers.

Light from an Old Lamp

by the late John Ritchie

Man's Future State (12)

The final doom of the ungodly

In the NT and especially in the words of the Lord Jesus, as recorded in the four Gospels, the punishment of the lost, is stated in the fullest and clearest terms. On no less than *fifty-two* distinct occasions in the course of His ministry, did the Son of God refer to the doom of the lost, either in the Intermediate or in the Eternal state. The words in which He describes and warns sinners against "hell fire," are so plain and definite, that only those who want to get rid of them, by "handling the Word of God deceitfully" (2 Cor 4:2), to obscure or pervert their meaning, find any difficulty in apprehending their force and application. In the opening pages of the NT we find for the first time the dreadful words, "the wrath to come" (Matt 5:7). It is revealed from heaven (Rom 1:18), and cometh on "the children of disobedience" (Eph 5:6; Col 3:6). In the Book of Revelation we hear the wail of those who in the midst of awful judgments cry, "the great day of His wrath is come" (Rev 6:17). Then, it is poured out without mercy upon the ungodly (Rev 14:10-19; 19:14). In Luke 16:19-31, the curtain that hides the after-death condition is drawn aside, by the hand of the Son

of God, and we are permitted to see the condition and to hear the actual words of one who had lived in luxury and forgetfulness of God in the present world, now a disembodied spirit in hades, after death, and before resurrection, with living brethren on earth whom he wishes some one to warn, lest they share his woes in that "place of torment." Whatever may be the full import of the dreadful words, "in torment," "tormented in this flame," with the certain knowledge of a "great gulf fixed" between the lost and the abode of the saved, they do not, and cannot mean less than conscious and awful suffering, and hopeless woe. And when in describing the final and eternal doom of the lost, the Lord of Light and Love, who only spoke to the world the words which He had heard from God (John 8:26, 28, 38), uses such terms as "eternal punishment" (Matt 25:46, RV), "the unquenchable fire" (Mark 9:44, RV), it is without a single hint of mercy mingling with the punishment, or a ray of hope that it may end, or that those who endure it shall eventually escape by a last great death, or a final restoration to Divine favour. In the third of John — that great Gospel charter in which is unfolded to the fullest, God's love to the world, in the gift of His Son, the death of that Son to give life, and the simple way in which the sinner receives it—the present and final results to both receiver and rejector, are plainly recorded in the weighty, closing words as follows:—"He that believeth on the Son HATH everlasting life"—hath it now, and for ever (John 10:27, 28), and "he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). This last solemn declaration of

our Divine Lord, leaves no place either for the plausible theories of the Restorationist or the Annihilationist — for if he “shall not see life,” he can never be restored to God and heaven, and if “the wrath of God abideth on him” he can never cease to be, for wrath cannot be said to “abide” on a nonentity.

The doctrine of the epistles. The teaching of the Epistles is explicit and definite regarding the penalty of sin, and the future punishment of those who despise the remedy provided by God in Christ, and proclaimed in the Gospel. Concerning those who will be alive on earth when the Lord returns in judgment, we read, “The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power” (2 Thess 1:1-9, RV). This judgment on the living is also described in 2 Thess 2:8, 9; Rev 19:11-20, where Antichrist and his followers are overthrown. This is not by extermination—which meaning has been read into the words, “everlasting destruction”—for we find the two leaders in this last revolt, who are caught red-handed in their rebellion, and hurled alive into the lake of fire (Rev 19:20), still existent in that lake of fire, after a thousand years, when the devil, who led them on in their unavailing opposition, is cast in beside them—a trinity of hell, co-partners in rebellion against God, the first tenants of that burning lake. In the judgment of living nations by the Son of Man, those condemned to

“everlasting punishment,” are told that it was “prepared for the Devil and his angels” (Matt 25:41), which connects it with Rev 20:10, and leaves no ray of hope regarding its termination. The words, “everlasting,” “eternal,” “for ever,” “for ever and ever,” “the worm that dieth not,” “the fire that shall not be quenched”—all of which are used to describe the duration of the punishment of the wicked, can never under any honest system of interpretation be made to teach annihilation, extermination, or non-existence. Their awful force and solemnity must appeal to every reverent reader of God’s Holy Word, as conveying nothing less than that unending, undying, unmitigated woe, and wrath to come, out of which the Son of God died to deliver (1 Thess 1:10), and from which He lives to save (Rom 5:9) all who confide in, and confess Him as their Saviour and Lord. These solemn and awakening truths should not be ruled out from our testimony to the world, but they should be spoken with a deep sense of their awful reality, and with tender hearts in fellowship with Him who wept over sinners, while He foretold their impending doom.

BOOK REVIEW

Timothy and Titus by Philip F. Sykes and Robert H. Sykes. Published by Everyday Publications, Canada; price £1.40.

This little book of 80 pages covers the three Epistles verse-by-verse. It is a mini-exposition written mainly for young people. The authors, however, do not scale down the truth on that account; they handle the Word faithfully. The book’s format is good and the print is excellent. There are eight appendices, addressed mainly to ‘young men of God’. These are very helpful little summaries which are bound to appeal to young readers. At £1.40 the book is excellent value.

F.E.S.

REGIONS · BEYOND ·

A Visit to the West Indies

by Ray Dawes (Westcliff-on-Sea)

It was a great joy for my wife and I to revisit the West Indies after many years. We had kept contact with our many friends there and over the years some of them have visited us in the UK. We returned this time for a very special occasion, the wedding in Trinidad of our daughter in the faith Dianne Charles. We contacted Dianne when she was studying in Aberdeen, and saw her gloriously converted. A staunch Roman Catholic, she came to know Christ as Saviour. Later she insisted on going home to Trinidad to be baptised before her family and friends. Since then Dianne has gone on faithfully with the Lord and is now working as a dietician in Port of Spain.

The wedding was a real testimony to the many unconverted relatives and friends and was conducted in a dignified, reverent manner. There was a sense of the Lord's presence and blessing throughout. The proceedings were a little different from our conventional ways (refreshingly so), and at the reception of 300 guests all the speeches gave the Lord His pre-eminence. Dianne's husband Brian Browne is a spiritual young man and they have resolved to serve the Lord together. We are sure they will be a blessing to many and an asset to the assembly work.

Barbados This was our first port of call, but unfortunately our stay was very brief and we were unable to attend any assembly meetings, though we had fellowship with a number of saints. We stayed two nights with Mrs Sally McCune, formerly of Dominica but for health reasons now serving the Lord in Barbados. Mrs McCune bravely lives alone in the more isolated North of the Island in Bathsheba, and is tireless in her work amongst the women and children. Remember her particularly in prayer as she labours on alone.

The Bible has been a great influence on the people here as elsewhere in the Caribbean. We visited a 13th century church and there were scripture carvings on the old pulpit — 'We are ambassadors for Christ as if God by us did beseech you be ye reconciled to God'; lower down were the words, 'He that willeth to know of the doctrine shall know ...' Obviously the Gospel and the doctrines of the faith have been valued over many years in Barbados.

Antigua We were able to spend a week here with our dear friends Ada Lake and her daughter Genevieve. Ada was one of the early assembly converts and when she was baptised was put out of her house with two

children to look after. The Lord honoured her and both her children are saved and in fellowship. They have all proved faithful through the years.

The island has some 75,000 inhabitants. The foundation of the assembly work was soundly laid mainly as the result of the labours of Mr and Mrs Leslie Crossley (now with the Lord), and Mr and Mrs Jack Noble of Northern Ireland now living in Canada. There are just three assemblies comprising about 110 believers with other gospel points and Sunday Schools throughout the Island. Dalmar Edwards (a locally commended full-time worker), Laurent Gilkes and other local brethren do a tremendous work showing great perseverance and faithfulness in spite of set-backs and problems. Stan and Elma Riches from Canada are also full-time workers giving appreciated help. All these dear servants of the Lord love New Testament principles and seek to preserve and develop the assembly testimony. There has been much to discourage the saints in recent times; they need our support and sympathy in prayer and practical fellowship.

There is an open door for the Word in Antigua. The gospel and good Bible teaching is broadcast many hours a day. It is common to hear in shops and houses and from car radios the sound of Gospel preaching, Bible ministry, and spiritual songs.

Trinidad and Tobago In this twin-island republic there are 29 assemblies; 23 in Trinidad and 6 in Tobago. Among the full-time workers are Jim and Doreen Stewart, Dan and Audrey Ussher (all from Northern Ireland), John and Margaret Wright (with whom we stayed) and more recently Charles and Grace Geddes (all from Scotland). These together with many local gifted believers serve the Lord tirelessly. We were deeply impressed with the unity of all the workers and the happy inter-assembly fellowship. We had the privilege of meeting all the workers personally and enjoying their fellowship, including some of the dear sisters whose names are closely associated with Trinidad — Edna Jones and Eurmin King whose husbands were well-known full-time workers, and Nancy Spencer whose parents did such extensive work over many years.

I had the privilege of ministering the Word in various places and it was delightful to see so many from nearby assemblies supporting the meetings. In some places upwards of 400 saints were gathered to hear the Word, among them were many spiritually bright young people, notebooks and pencils were in evidence and what a delight to see some of the saints sitting on the edge of their seats absorbing the Word. There was great liberty in speaking in a reverent receptive atmosphere, so conducive for the Spirit of God to work. The saints were keen to discuss the ministry afterwards and this really encouraged our hearts.

A long week-end in Tobago was greatly enjoyed. One of the most beautiful islands in the Caribbean, Tobago is well-known as Robinson Crusoe's isle. A conference in the Gospel Hall, Scarborough (a spacious

well-appointed building) was attended by some 400 believers. Again the saints were so attentive to the Word that the ministry flowed freely. The sessions were long, the heat was intense, but nobody seemed to weary. A feature of this Hall at Glen Road, are the outside amplifiers, so that meetings are relayed to the outside audience and also into the nearby houses. In fact a local man was invited to the Gospel meeting during our visit, and he replied that he had already heard the messages in his home!

Two things which impressed us and must be recorded are, firstly, the variety of the saints we met in these two islands. Nationally, there are West Indians, Americans, Chinese, Indians, Europeans. Religiously their backgrounds are also diverse; there are converted Catholics, Anglicans, Hindus, Moslems etc yet all happy together as 'one in Christ'. What a proof that the power and relevance of the Gospel is the same today as ever it was.

Then secondly, the young people and children. The young believers in their dress, demeanour, conduct and conversation truly adorn the doctrine of our God and Saviour, and with a bubbly humour that endeared them to our hearts. They are an example to many young people in the UK. The appeal of the children in these parts is particularly irresistible, one cannot help loving them all. Credit is due to parents who turn them out so clean and so attractively dressed, and the children themselves generally speaking are so well-behaved in the meetings.

Please pray for the work and the workers, that the Lord will continue to bless His Word in these lovely sun-washed islands of the sea.

Lord's Work Trust

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Question

All questions should be sent to the Editor, Believer's Magazine, Office, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and should have the name and address of sender. Consideration of space may prevent the publication of answers

QUESTION

A recent BM article defines Christendom as "the sum of professing christian sects and denominations" but excludes the 'assemblies' which are equated with Christianity. Is this not an example of the 'I am of Christ' attitude which Paul condemns?

ANSWER

Christendom, whilst not found in scripture as a term, is described in various passages. 2 Tim 3 speaks of the last days when there will be "a form of godliness but denying the power thereof". Such began to be prevalent within a few centuries of apostolic times. A paganised form of Christianity or, perhaps rather, a christianised form of paganism became prominent throughout the sphere in which the christian faith had spread. W.E. Vine states that in medieval times the reformation restored a measure of purity but did not prevent a revival of the evil. There has been the continued presence of a mixture of christian profession with elements of paganism. The spread of Christendom was forecast by our Lord Jesus Christ in the illustrative parables of Matt 13.

The allusion to the 'power thereof' is a clear reference to the Holy Spirit. The power energising Christendom is from Satan. From all such, the clear exhortation in 2 Tim 3 is to "turn away". The latter expression is an imperative and the middle voice is used, meaning to 'constantly turn thyself away from'. The true people of God should not be in the midst of Christendom and whilst we must love all that God loves, we must also hate what God hates (see Rev 2:6).

We should love with true affection every child of God, whatever their spiritual affiliation, but we should recognise that denominationalism of any sort is part of religious Christendom. There is a great danger in using such terms as 'the Brethren' thus constituting another man made sect. The local assembly as taught in the NT is what we should cherish and such should not in any way be a part of Christendom as described earlier. The assembly should be a testimony to the sole authority of scripture and by its spiritual distinctiveness stand apart from all that grieves the heart of God. Such an attitude should, of course, be in the spirit of humility and not of arrogant pride.

J.R. Baker

QUESTION

What is the 'castaway' of 1 Cor 9:27, is it from salvation or something else?

ANSWER

The actual word used in the verse alluded to is 'adokimos' and means 'disapproved' or 'rejected' (RV). The context clearly shows that salvation is not in view but rather the whole matter of reward for service. Concerning salvation, the Lord Jesus said "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out" ie will not castaway. Again, He said "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish" (John 10:28).

The apostle Paul himself had the fullest assurance of eternal life (see 2 Cor 5:1; Phil 1:21; Rom 8:38; 2 Tim 1:12), but before he could be sure of his reward, the race had to be run and the crown won. Many who are eternally saved will "suffer loss" (1 Cor 3:15) at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Others sadly have in the present time of service been disapproved from the pathway down here. Perhaps 1 Cor 11:30 has a lesson for us in these matters also.

J.R. Baker

Together in Christ (2)

by L. Goddard, Romford

The Foundation

If the site has to do with a place, I suggest that the scriptural foundation has to do with a Person. If you were about to build, you would look for a builder with experience and character, one who could be relied upon, one who understood substances in their texture for strength, durability, proportions, environment and reliability.

The only spiritual builder standing up to all these, and many other, tests is the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul rightly writes, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 3:11); in v. 10 Paul says, "According to the grace of God which is given to me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation", (the person, the material, the substance used was Christ Jesus) "and another buildeth thereupon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon". Paul had discovered that Christ Jesus alone was the only safe and sure foundation, a foundation which would stand storm, tempest, earthquake or any other force, no matter what power or ferocity was rammed against it.

The Lord Jesus himself said, "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt 16:18). How true is the chorus we sometimes sing with the children:

Build on the Rock, the Rock that
ever stands,

Build on the Rock, and not upon
the sands,
You need not fear the storm, or
the earthquake shock,
You're safe for evermore if you
build on the Rock.

In Ezek 13:14 the prophet speaks about foundations being discovered. Tying up Scripture with Scripture, what an illustration we have of this in Matt 7, the two foundations. Sound your foundations; make sure for your life and your home that the Lord Jesus Christ is your foundation. He is indeed as a pillar hewn out, tested and tried to the uttermost; only rock is hewn. The Lord Jesus Christ stood all the blows of the hewing by God, by man, and by the devil and all his demons. He stands unweakened, steadfast, sure, unmoveable, a safe foundation for the strongest or the weakest. Your house, your home, will never crumble if built on Him.

Not only do we need a site and a good foundation; what about the structure? The principle of this I am going to call the faith.

The Faith

Every structure of importance must have its blueprint, its plan, its principles. To my mind a home is the most important structure associated with mankind. Where, then, can we go to find principles, fundamentals, that will ensure happiness and stability? surely to God's Word. There alone do

we find both a basis for faith and the content of the faith.

Listen to Amos 3:3 as it leads us aright at the very first thought of a home, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Again, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor 6:14). This brings us to the focus of God's will and the need to surrender our wills to His. Both partners must be of the same mind, that is believers. Unless we start our home with this first and

foremost principle it is doomed to be a spiritual failure.

In the Acts we have a pattern of a godly home; its first characteristic is worship. In 18:7 it is recorded that the apostle "departed thence and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue". If our first steps are in the will of God, we shall be able to walk in agreement as to God's way in choosing a site, even an Eden, for us. Being satisfied and confident about the foundation, we shall willingly and joyfully acquiesce as to worship.

HE IS NOT HERE

*He is not here, let heaven and earth rejoice
The sepulchre is not His final home.
The Lord is risen, oh hear the angel's voice,
Draw near my soul and view the empty tomb.*

*He is not here, the long dark night is past
The mighty conqueror is risen again.
No power in earth or hell could hold him fast
The stone, the seal, the soldiers were in vain.*

*He is not here, come see the wondrous sight
Behold the linen graveclothes neatly bound.
But He is risen, triumphant in the fight
With unshod feet, we stand on holy ground.*

*He is not here, redemption's price is paid
Upon the cross His precious blood He shed
By loving hands, He, in the tomb was laid
But God, in power, raised Him from the dead.*

*He is not here, well may we shout and sing,
For if our Saviour in the grave remain;
His cross alone could not salvation bring,
And faith and hope in Him would be in vain.*

*He is not here, and we with Him are free
Be glad! Let now redemption's song begin;
The "firstfruits" are in heaven – the guarantee
That all the harvest will be gathered in.*

Sandy King, Motherwell

Misunderstood Texts (3)

by John J. Stubbs, Mayfield

“Blessed are they that mourn ...”

Among the beatitudes spoken by the Lord Jesus in the sermon on the mount none have been more misunderstood than the one quoted above from Matt 5:4, for both in written and oral teaching they have been used with a view to bringing consolation and hope to the bereaved. It is certainly not our desire to take away any good that believers have derived from these precious words in times of sorrow, but we would ask the reader's forbearance to call attention to what we believe to be the real force and meaning of the statement. We have become no doubt so familiar with the words often printed on a sympathy card, that likely we have come to accept their supposed meaning without question.

The idea of those who mourn because of the loss of someone dear is, we believe, not implicit in the words. We do bless God that there are many precious verses in the word of God that can give the comfort so much needed by the sorrowing saint. Where would we be in this scene of death without the comfort of the Scriptures? If our Lord's words should not be understood to refer to comfort for the bereaved, then to what do they refer? The words do not refer so much to *bereaved* saints as *burdened* saints. Saints with a burden before God about wrong conditions,

about sin, about departure from God's ways. Saints who feel sensitive about that which is against God and contrary to His Word. The mourner here is not one who mourns over his departed loved ones or friends but who mourns over not only his own sins, but the sins of the professing people of God. No doubt the Lord's kingdom principles in Matt 5 to 7 will be valued by the saints during the tribulation period, who will mourn over the apostate conditions in the nation of Israel and long for the intervention of the Messiah. Such then will be comforted by the return of the Messiah. This we may add, is not to say that the Lord's words in so large a tract of Scripture will have no present application to the believer, for we believe they do.

The mourning in our text is not the natural mourning of the heart over a loss sustained. It is rather a spiritual mourning. If the poverty in the previous beatitude (v. 3) is in *spirit*, then this idea should be carried on to the next verse and means a spiritual mourning. It is a holy sorrow and grief which few of us know little about today, simply because we do not have that intimate fellowship with God that we ought. Consequently we lack sensitivity of spirit to such an extent that the result is we have no sympathy with the heart of God. Those who have such close communion with God see things as He sees them

and cannot but mourn over everything that offends Him. This feeling of soul is contrary to the man of the world, who just wants to have a good time here without facing the realities of sin and its effects. It is also contrary to the average believer who is content to pass through this world without being concerned about prevailing conditions in the assemblies and in the world. Similar in intent to this interpretation we put upon the text of Matt 5:4 are the exhortations of James 4:9, "Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness". If the believer has been going on personally with that which is unsuitable to God, or has remained indifferent to sinful conditions amongst others, and feels himself not free from it, let such bow to James' words and approach the presence of God in confession, sorrow and humility of soul, for the needed grace to become a sympathiser with God's feelings. This will lead to prayer and a concerned attitude in the midst of poor conditions.

The Lord Jesus Christ was a mourner in this world, not a mourner over His sins for He had none, but a mourner over the sins of man and the conditions resulting because of sin. He was the Man of Sorrows. The hymnwriter has said:

"A pilgrim through this lonely world,
The blessed Saviour passed;
A mourner all His life was He,
A dying Lamb at last."

Throughout Scripture we see that there have been other mourners. We may think for example of Mephibosheth in 2 Sam 19:24-30 who mourned over the absence of king David and could not be at ease until he returned. Some might have thought he carried things too far and was rather severe on himself, but the time came when he was comforted. Nehemiah in ch. 1 of his book weeps as he hears the state of the city of Jerusalem and in his prayer not only laments over the sins of the people but identifies himself with them in their departure. God had His own way of comforting His servant. Jeremiah and the Psalmist are other illustrations (see Jer 9:1 and Ps 119:36). The beloved apostle Paul wept much over the conditions of the people of God in his day. He could also rebuke the Corinthians for not mourning over sin in their midst (1 Cor 5:2). We may well ask, where are the mourners of Matt 5:4 today? There were so few mourners in Ezekiel's times that a mark was to be put upon them (Ezek 9:4).

The spiritual mourner will be comforted, says the Lord. When will they be comforted? In measure they will be now, but it surely looks on to that glorious future when in fulness they will be comforted as Christ will be over Israel after all their past failures and sin. For the true mourner there will be the blessed eternal comfort of that wonderful rest to come when every tear shall be wiped away, even the tears shed over that which has grieved the soul down here.

Wisdom does not forget to plan
but it does not presume on tomorrow

The LORD'S WORK and WORKERS

All items for "intelligence" columns of this magazine should be addressed direct to Editor, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and posted in time to arrive on or before 4th of month previous to issue.

Intimation of commencement of new assemblies should always carry commendation of nearest local assembly.

England & Wales FORTHCOMING

APRIL 4

Biddulph: Hebron Gospel Hall, St. John's Road, at 7.30 p.m. J. Milton.

Warrington: Gospel Hall, Forster Street at 7.00 p.m. S. Downs.

West Mersea: Assembly Hall, East Road at 4.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. B. Price.

Cwmbran: The Gospel Hall, Oakfield Road at 7.15 p.m. D. Ogden.

Kingsteignton: at 7.00 p.m. H. Bell.

Nottingham: Gospel Hall, Victoria Road, Netherfield at 7.15 p.m. A. Carew.

Maidenhead: Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road at 6.30 p.m. K. Rudge.

Westcliff-on-Sea: The Gospel Hall, Carlton Avenue at 7.30 p.m. D. Coulson.

APRIL 4 - 6

Bolton: Farnworth, Park Chapel, Trafford Street at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. J. M. Sinclair, R. Parnaby. Mr Sinclair continues till Monday.

APRIL 11

Milton Keynes: Gospel Hall, Caledonia Road, New Bradwell at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. B. Price, D. Sampson.

Crewe: Bethany Gospel Hall, Lime Tree Avenue at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. P. Davis, D. Lawrence.

Cheltenham: Bethany Hall, Newton Road, Hesters Way at 7.30 p.m. D. Steveley.

Cheshunt: Mill Lane Chapel, High Street at 7.00 p.m. D. Hinton.

Northampton: The Gospel Hall, Osborne Road at 7.30 p.m. J.R. Baker, also on Lord's Day at 4.00 p.m.

Warrington: Hope Hall, Hawthorne Street, Bewsey at 7.00 p.m. J. Naismith.

Ludlow: Cleeview Gospel Hall at 7.30 p.m. P. Kaye.

Bermondsey: The Gospel Hall, 97 St. James's Road, London SE16 at 7.00 p.m. T. Proffitt.

Ely: Gospel Hall, Ship Lane at 7.30 p.m. J. Scarsbrook.

Torrington: Halsdon: Road Hall at 4.00 p.m. J. Jardine at 6.15 p.m. J. Jardine, E. Lovering.

APRIL 17

Swindon: Park Gospel Hall, Axbridge Close, Park North at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. A. Aiken, W. Gardiner.

Windsor: The Gospel Hall, Garfield Place, at 3.15 p.m. and 5.45 p.m. R. Hill, R. Perrett.

North Shields: Tyneside Easter Weekend in Gospel Hall, Coach Lane on Friday at 2.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. Saturday at 6.30 p.m. Monday at 2.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. W. Craig, E. Hughes (Not Monday), J. Hunter.

APRIL 18

Bristol: Longwell Green Gospel Hall, Watson's Road at 3.15 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. K. Rudge, I. Steeds.

Luton: Onslow Road Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. D. Roberts. Also on Lord's Day at 4.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m.

Eastbourne: Marine Hall, Seaside at 7.00 p.m. C. Stewart.

APRIL 20

Colyton: Gospel Hall, The Butts at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. A. Cundick, J. Mitchell, P. Smith.

Port Talbot: Gospel Hall, Ynys Street at 3.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. J. Harrison, P. Brind.

APRIL 25

Hanworth: Gospel Hall, Hounslow Road at 7.00 p.m. G. B. Fyfe.

Birmingham: The Gospel Hall, New Street Erdington Centenary Conference at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. B. Osborne, D. Powis, A. Shearman.

Coventry: Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street at 7.30 p.m. A. Maunder.

Leicester: York Street Gospel Hall, off Granby Street at 7.30 p.m. J. C. Coltman.

Mitcham Junction: Gospel Hall, Percy Road at 7.00 p.m. J. M. Riddle.

Mansfield: The Gospel Hall, Radford Street at 7.30 p.m. C. Lacey.

London: Hope Hall, Kilburn Lane at 7.00 p.m. A. C. Gooding.

Northleigh, Whitney: Oxon Primary School, Park Road at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. H. A. Barnes, J. Sinclair.

MAY 2

Chickerell, Near Weymouth: Budmouth Secondary School, Chickerell Road at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. P. Davies, F. Holmes.

Ealing: Grove Hall, The Grove at 7.00 p.m. H. A. Barnes.

Westcliff-on-Sea: Gospel Hall, Carlton Avenue at 7.30 p.m. E. Hughes. Mr Hughes continues in ministry on May 4 at 8.00 p.m.

Birmingham: Gospel Hall, Quarry Lane, Northfield at 3.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. N. Mellish, C. D. Stewart, Mr Mellish continues Monday to Thursday at 7.45 p.m.

Trent Vale: Swan Lane Gospel Hall, Claytonwood Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Grice.

Blackpool: Gospel Hall, Saltcross Avenue, Off Rigby Road at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. F. Epps, A. Maunder.

Four Marks, Near Alton: Gospel Hall, Winchester Road at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. J. Harrison, T. Proffitt.

MAY 4

Mansfield: Annual Conference in Baptist Centre, Rosemary Street at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. G. B. Fyfe, N. Gibbons. Mr Fyfe continues in ministry in Radford Street Hall 5th - 7th May at 7.30 p.m.

Eastbourne: Marine Hall, Seaside at 3.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. R. Hill.

Ludlow: Cleview Gospel Hall Annual Conference at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. R. Revie, J. Burnett.

MAY 9

Cheshunt: Mill Lane Chapel, High Street at 7.00 p.m. R. Dawes.

Northampton: Gospel Hall, Osborne Road at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. F. Epps and T. Proffitt.

Ely: Gospel Hall, Ship Lane at 7.30 p.m. R. Fenn.

Warrington: Gospel Hall, Forster Street at 7.00 p.m. G. Waugh.

Redrow, Morpeth: Hebron Hall, Main Road at 2.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. J. Gillespie, A. Meikle. Lord's Day at 3.00 p.m. W. Tinkler.

MAY 16

Cheltenham: Bethany Hall, Newton Road, Hesters Way at 7.30 p.m. A. Shearman.

Mitcham Junction: Gospel Hall, Percy Road

Annual Conference at 3.15 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. A. M. S. Gooding, D. Ussher.

Coventry: Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street at 7.30 p.m. D. Ogden.

Luton: Onslow Road Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. E. Hughes.

MAY 16 - 20

Warrington: Hope Hall, Hawthorne Street, Bewsey. Saturday at 7.00 p.m. Weeknights 7.30 p.m. R. McPheat.

MAY 16 - 21

Redditch: Foxlydiate Crescent Gospel Hall, Bletchley Estate. Saturday at 7.30 p.m. Monday to Thursday at 7.45 p.m. J. B. D. Page.

Scotland FORTHCOMING

APRIL 4

Motherwell: Shields Road Gospel Hall at 3.30 p.m. J. Hunter, J. Gamble, R. McPheat. Mr. Hunter continues in ministry Sun. at 3.15 p.m. Mon.-Thurs. at 7.30 p.m.

Kilmarnock: Elim Hall, Cuthbert Place at 6.45 p.m. J.R. Baker.

Glengarnock: Hebron Hall at 3.00 p.m. G. Waugh, A. Meikle, K. Stapley.

APRIL 11

Barrhead: Annual Conference in Calibar Community Centre at 3.00 p.m. J. Chalmers, A. Gamble, T. Meekin.

Lossiemouth: Annual Conference in Town Hall at 3.00 p.m. J. McDonald, J. Hay, E. Nelson.

Shotts: Dykehead Gospel Hall at 3.30 p.m. W. Banks, R. McPheat, R. Cameron.

Grangemouth: Albert Hall, Myreton Road at 3.00 p.m. J. Cadzow, J. Wallace, P. Brandon. Mr Brandon continues Lord's Day at 2.45 p.m. and Monday to Thursday at 7.45 p.m.

APRIL 18 - 20

Tarbolton: Gospel Hall, Montgomery Street. 18th at 7.00 p.m. J. Hay, S. Downs. 19th at 3.00 p.m. A. Gamble, S. Downs. 20th Conference at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m.

APRIL 18

Dundee: Meadowside Gospel Hall, 2 Euclid Crescent at 7.00 p.m. F. Stallan.

APRIL 25

Kilbarchan: Memorial Hall at 3.30 p.m. J.

Gillespie, I. Grant, J. Grant. Sunday at 3.15 p.m. I. Grant.

Castle Douglas: Gospel Hall, St. Andrew Street at 3.00 p.m. A. Aitken, J. Hay, A. M. S. Gooding.

MAY 2

Dreghorn: Ebenezer Hall at 3.00 p.m. S. Jennings, J. Hay, J. Harrison. Lord's Day at 2.00 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. S. Jennings.

Dunfermline: Abbot Hall Conference in West Baptist Church, Chalmers Street at 3.00 p.m. J. Adrain, W. McKee, W. K. Morrison.

Cullen: Town Hall at 3.00 p.m. R. McPheat, D. Morgan, A. Wilson (Airdrie).

Lanark: Lanark Gospel Hall at 3.30 p.m. J. Aitken, G. Jackson, A. Naismith.

MAY 9

Saltcoats: Bethany Hall, Ailsa Road at 3.15 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. A. Gamble, J. Paterson, J. Rodgers.

MAY 16

Dundee: Meadowside Gospel Hall, 2 Euclid Crescent at 7.00 p.m. J. Grant.

Oakley: Blairhall Assembly Conference in Inzievar Primary School, Station Road, Oakley at 3.00 p.m. R. Revie. T. Aitken, A. Legge.

N.Ireland FORTHCOMING

MAY 9

Mullaferghan Annual Conference. 1.30 p.m.

OCTOBER 11 - 17

Lurgan Gospel Hall. Annual Conference and Bible Readings. Subject—Epistle to the Galatians.

England & Wales REPORTS

E. LANCs., E. CHESHIRE, GREATER MANCHESTER AND YORKSHIRE MANCHESTER AREA

The saints at Werneth, Bury and Mauldeth Road, Withington, were encouraged to hear Missionary Reports by J. Rowberry on the work of the Lord in India.

J. Crawford gave interesting reports of the work that God is doing in Brazil when he visited the assemblies at Flixton, Bury, Mauldeth Road and Swinton. The evidence

of the spread of the gospel and the zeal of the Brazilian saints is in itself a challenge and encouragement.

EAST MIDLANDS

Derby: G. B. Fyfe spent a few days with the believers at Curzon Street, giving help in the ministry of God's Word.

WEST MIDLANDS

Birmingham Aston: The assembly continues with help from the Lord's servants on Saturday evenings on a monthly basis. J. Harrison spent a profitable week at Park Lane which was much appreciated by saints locally and those who journeyed from further afield.

Birmingham Small Heath: The saints who formerly gathered at Miles Street, Bordesley 'Camp Hill' moved into their new hall in January. The opening was marked by a special meeting at which A. T. Shearman ministered to a large company. The new hall is in Herbert Road, Small Heath, a short distance off the A45 Coventry Road only a short bus ride from the City Centre. Further details of meetings can be obtained from A. Cosco on 021-422 9968.

SOUTH-EAST MIDLANDS

Bicester: Four weeks children's meetings by S. Mountstevens are attracting good numbers with good interest among older ones. One parent is attending regularly and others have expressed interest in the parents night/prize giving to be held at the close.

Northampton, Osborne Road: The personal witnessing of a sister only three months in assembly fellowship has resulted in the salvation of three others all within a few days. One is her own mother. After at first refusing to come, she began attending the Gospel Meeting and professed faith in Christ during a visit by H. Tickner, as did a young man. This followed by the conversion at home of a young woman who had previously not shown any interest in attending the meetings. Another brother, C. Jenkins, has been visiting a youth custody centre on a weekly basis over the past five years. Each Wednesday evening during term-time an opportunity is given to talk to a group of lads for over an hour. Our brother will value prayer for this work.

DEVON AND CORNWALL

Cornwall: Prayer would be much valued for the summer tent work of the brethren, J. Hadley and S. Burditt. Each of these brethren has a tent for the preaching of the gospel and with so few assemblies to show them support they need wisdom from the

Lord as to where to pitch them to be most effective.

J. Hadley hopes to commence his work by erecting the tent for the three days of the Royal Cornwall Show in early June.

The assemblies in Truro, Falmouth, St. Austell and Bodmin are seeking to work in fellowship with each other by holding monthly gospel meetings directed at reaching mainly younger people. There is a fervent desire amongst young believers to interest others and to witness to them about the Saviour. Elders would value prayer for the spiritual wisdom needed to guide and lead this outreach in a godly way and to counsel any who profess Christ as a result. The first of these is planned for early March (D.V.).

St. Austell: Following up a report some months ago that the assembly was exercised about the purchase of the property adjacent to the hall, we can now give thanks that the purchase is proceeding. After patiently waiting on the Lord, He graciously opened doors one at a time and it is hoped to start work on the much needed car park by the early summer. It is proposed to re-sell the house once the boundaries have been redrawn and this might be of some interest to any believers thinking of moving into the area.

A very profitable weekend of ministry by G. B. Fyfe culminated in a baptism of four believers during the gospel meeting.

Scotland REPORTS

STRATHCLYDE

Chapelhall: The saints were greatly encouraged by the support given by neighbouring assemblies at their conference (about 380 were present). The choice and challenging ministry at the conference had been preceded by very good ministry for a week by J. Flannigan on portraits of The Lord Jesus from the Song of Songs. During the week following the conference A. Leckie gave most helpful ministry on the Levitical offerings. Altogether ministry that was Christ exalting.

NORTH EAST

Peterhead, Gardenstown and Mintlaw: John Burns ministered to profit during January in these three assemblies.

Peterhead: J. Stubbs ministered during February from the book of Ezekial with the help of a chart and was much appreciated.

GRAMPIAN

Scottish Postal Sunday School and Bible Class: Arthur Pollard reports that in 1986

the number of lessons sent out has more than doubled. There are four lessons issued monthly from primary age through to Bible class (15+). Arthur regularly receives letters of encouragement from both children and adults. During the year he was able to visit and get to know scholars in more distant areas—north Scotland, Orkney and in England. Please pray for this work. Help is also requested for the Summer Camp when many unsaved children attend. Any willing to assist in this important work from 11th to 18th July please contact Mr Pollard.

N. Ireland REPORTS

CO. ANTRIM

Kilwaughter (Near Larne): R. McIlwaine (Nova Scotia) and T. McNeill continue preaching the gospel in a portable hall, with encouraging numbers attending and some blessing.

CO. ARMAGH AND CO. MONAGHAN

Armagh: S. Ferguson and N. Turkington continue in the gospel with blessing.

Eryroe (Co. Monaghan): A gospel effort has commenced in this very needy border area conducted by S. McBride.

Ahorey: S. Jennings had a week of ministry on the Book of Revelation.

Teaguy: R. Pickering commenced gospel meetings in the Gospel Hall on 22nd February.

CO. DOWN

Lisburn (Plantation): J. Thompson and J. Hawthorne have been encouraged with good numbers attending and blessing in salvation. The town has been faithfully visited with gospel tracts and invitations.

Moir: Encouraging numbers are attending gospel meetings where the preaching is shared by E. Fairfield, A. Davidson and Dr Spence. E. Fairfield is thankful that his health is improved, and that he is able to engage again in gospel work. Dr Spence practises medicine in this area and is able to influence some of the locals to attend the meetings. Pray for this needy and hard district.

CO. LONDONDERRY AND CO. DONEGAL

Coleraine: W. J. Nesbitt continues in the gospel hall with encouraging numbers.

Burnfoot: S. Patterson and G. Stewart had five weeks in the gospel but with no visible sign of blessing.

Churchtown (Near Carrigans): G. Stewart and S. Patterson commenced gospel meetings in their portable hall on 1st March.

Letterkenny: The assembly has been greatly encouraged in recent weeks by the baptism and reception into their midst of a young married couple, who had no previous assembly connections. They were saved as a result of attending various meetings conducted by S. Patterson and G. Stewart.

CO. TYRONE

Cookstown: The meetings conducted by A. Aiken have been most encouraging and fruitful. Quite a number of locals have come to hear the gospel. The assembly has been much cheered.

BELFAST AND DISTRICT

Bloomfield: J. Hay has commenced in the gospel. Good numbers coming in and help to preach each evening.

Castlereagh: S. Jennings and J. Flanigan have commenced in the gospel, with particular interest in future events, using a chart on the Book of Revelation.

Cregagh Street: E. Wishart has commenced a series of gospel meetings.

Dunmurry: D. Kane and D. Morgan (Wales) continue in the gospel. The district has been well visited, resulting in a good response in attendance. Some are showing an interest in spiritual matters.

Glenburn: J. Hay has finished four weeks in the gospel. Good numbers attended and the Word was faithfully preached each night. The saints were refreshed.

Addresses **PERSONALIA**

The correspondent for Mullafernaghan Gospel Hall, Mr T. Alderdice, should now be addressed at: 2 Mourne View Park, Dromore, BT25 1QL.

All correspondence for West End Gospel Hall, Whitburn, to be addressed to: Mr J. Chalmers, 3 Netherton Place, Whitburn, West Lothian, EH47 8JG. Telephone 0501-43711.

All correspondence for Castle Douglas Assembly should now be addressed to: Mr Ron MacFarlane, Shalom, 31 Robb Place, Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbrightshire, DG7 1LW.

With **CHRIST**

Miss RUTH KIRKPATRICK, on 20th August, aged 81. Our sister was saved 63 years ago and was received into Burnside Assembly, Co. Antrim. For the past 33 years she was in happy fellowship in Antrim Assembly. She bore a quiet, consistent testimony and was a regular member at all the meetings, until hindered by illness. Prayer is requested for her aged sister, Mrs Linda Maris.

A. McCOLL, suddenly on 2nd October. Saved, baptised and received into fellowship in early life at Greengairs. He moved later to Bonnybridge where he spent many years in happy fellowship. Predeceased by his wife, our brother bore a quiet testimony. Prayer will be valued for his family.

Mrs ISABELLA KELLY, on 29th December. Our sister was saved as a young girl and was for many years in Bethany Hall, Bridgeton. She was baptised in Tylefield Assembly in 1969. Moved to Sandyhills in 1981 and continued in fellowship there until her sudden homecall. A faithful sister who loved her Lord.

Mr JOHN A. JAMIESON, on 9th January, aged 82. Converted as a young man, baptised and received into fellowship at Ebenezer Hall, Lerwick. A beloved brother, loyal friend and respected elder. At his funeral service a hymn was sung composed by his sister, **Miss ANNE C. M. JAMIESON**, who was called home on 17th November, aged 86. She was also in fellowship at Ebenezer Hall, Lerwick, for over 60 years. A bright Christian although an invalid for many years. She had a profound knowledge of missionary work and corresponded with missionaries all over the world.

Mr STANLEY HAND, on 11th January, aged 66. Our brother was saved four years ago under the preaching of brother R. Revie. Soon afterwards he was baptised and gathered with the saints in Stair Park Gospel Hall, Girvan. His wife, Jenny, is in fellowship and prayer would be valued for her and the large family, none of whom is yet saved.

Mrs EVELYN SPRATT, on 19th January. Saved in 1954 at gospel meetings held by the late W. Johnston and Lennon McIlwaine. Baptised and received into fellowship in Belymacashon Assembly, where she continued steadfastly with her husband, Mr Thomas Spratt, until her home-call. A godly, consistent wife, mother and sister who will be greatly missed.

Mrs AGNES GALLAHER, on 26th January. Our sister was saved at gospel meetings conducted by R. Johnston and R. Eadie in Donegall Road Gospel Hall. Later she was received into fellowship in the assembly. Prayer would be valued for her husband who has been ill for quite a while and is much missed in the assembly.

Mr WILLIAM B. C. BEGGS, suddenly on 30th January in his 74th year. He was saved as a boy and received into fellowship in Darvel. After a short spell in Peterhead he returned to Darvel and eventually moved to Newmilns where he served the Lord faithfully until his home-call. Our brother was an elder and for a number of years was also correspondent. As well as being Treasurer and Secretary of the Ayrshire Missionary Committee, a Director of Stewards Company of Glasgow, he was also a member of the Missionary Council. He was also an extensive writer and wrote many articles for the *Believers' Magazine* and other publications. He was a true man of God, well known and well respected by all who knew him and will be sadly missed. Please remember his dear widow in prayer.

Mrs MAISIE GOWANS, on 30th January, aged 70. Our sister bore a consistent testimony, seldom absent from any of the gatherings of the assembly at St. Monans, where with her husband John, she was in happy fellowship for more than forty years. With other of the sisters she laboured effectively in providing clothing and food parcels for various missionary causes. The well-attended burial services paid a worthy tribute to her. Remember in prayer her husband and family.

Mrs ANN MARTIN, on 8th February, aged 70. She was saved while in her teens in Kilmarnock during a campaign conducted by Dr H. Ironside. She enjoyed unbroken fellowship with the Lord's people in Elim Hall, Kilmarnock, and for over 40 years in James Street, Ayr. She laboured for the Lord using her nursing skill and experience amongst her neighbours and saints. Many have cause to thank God for her help. A sister greatly esteemed and loved. She will be greatly missed by her husband and by the James Street Assembly, Ayr. A succourer of many.

Mrs JOHN HUNTER, on 8th February, aged 88. Our sister was saved as a girl of 15 in Galston. In fellowship for many years in Plann Assembly near Kilmarnock, she moved to Barrhead 50 years ago and came into fellowship in Chappell Street, with her late husband, who was a respected elder. She continued faithfully as long as she was able and her steadfast faith was apparent to all in spite of her increasing weakness during the last year of her life.

Mrs ANNIE BORELAND, on 8th February, aged 86. Saved almost 62 years ago and baptised and received into fellowship at Bushmills Assembly. For many years associated with the assembly at Portrush where she was highly esteemed for her faithfulness. She has left behind a fragrant testimony for God which will speak to her many relatives who are not yet saved.

Miss HELEN STRUTHERS, on 10th February, aged 93. Our sister was highly esteemed in the community, being the district nurse, devoted in this work and faithful to her Lord. Saved in her teens and, following a nursing career, she came to Largs and was in fellowship at Brisbane Hall for many years. Remember the family in prayer.

Mrs MARGARET SCOTT, on 11th February, aged 92. Saved over forty years ago under the preaching of T. Wallace and T. McKelvey in tent meetings at Waringstown. Some time later our sister was received into fellowship at the assembly there where she remained until her home-call. She loved the Lord and His people and is survived by two daughters, grandson and some grand children for whom prayer would be requested.

Mr WILLIE JOHNSTON, Newtonstewart, Co. Tyrone, suddenly on 23rd February, aged 66, as a result of a mortar attack on his local police station. Saved in 1970 under the preaching of the late A. Little and J. Hawthorne. Quiet, consistent and contributive to assembly testimony. A very large funeral gave assent to this. His widow was saved at the same time. Pray for seven children, not yet saved.

Mrs LILY MOORHEAD, suddenly on 8th February. She was saved 33 years ago at meetings in Zion Mills Hall, conducted by the late Messrs Campbell and Wallace. Later received into Zion Mills Assembly. Latterly in Strabane Assembly until her home-call. Although living in a Republican Estate she was so highly respected that the Gospel Hall was filled at her funeral service. Many of these people were R.C.'s and they heard the unadulterated Gospel. Prayer requested for her husband and three sons, two of whom are not yet saved.

Mrs MARTHA KENNEDY, on 18th February, aged 95. Saved in 1947 in her own home, later learning the Truth of Assembly gatherings she was received into fellowship at Coleraine, and continued there until her home-call. A good and Godly woman, whose loyalty to the Assembly and love for the Gospel and souls was evident to all. The Gospel Hall was filled for her funeral service and a large number gathered at her grave. She leaves a large family, some are in the assembly, others are not saved. Prayer requested for them.

CRAIGYHILL GOSPEL HALL LARNE N.I.

Annual Conference
and Bible Readings
(DV) 11th - 15th September 1987
Subject for Readings -
Book of Ruth

Details later of responsible brethren. All meetings at same venue as last year.

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MONDAY 20th APRIL

Thanksgiving, Confession and Prayer with
Ministry of the Word—11.00 a.m.—12.45 p.m.

Refreshments—1.00 p.m.

Ministry of the Word—2.00-4.30 p.m.

Refreshments—4.45 p.m.

Ministry of the Word—5.30-7.30 p.m.

TUESDAY 21st APRIL

Reports of the Lord's Work in Home Lands—
11.00 a.m.—1.00 p.m.

Reports of the Lord's Work in Foreign
Lands—2.30-5.00 p.m.

Ministry of the Word—6.30-8.30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY 22nd APRIL

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EDITORIAL Searchlight

The street urchin of the last century has appeared again in another form in modern society. The scraggy, unkempt, and undernourished urchin of the past has been replaced by a reasonably well-dressed one who is not short of a few pounds in his pocket. It is this last point which is symptomatic of a modern malady; a problem unfortunately which has not bypassed the christian household.

A short time ago the writer was involved in a small way with a lad who had absconded from an approved school. While awaiting officers to come for him, the lad told his story. He was well-spoken, an only-boy, but he was, as it turned out, a modern street urchin; what some people call today, 'a latch-key kid'. Both of his parents worked and kept up a lively social life. To allow them freedom, they gave the lad what money he wanted and went their own way. In his own words the boy said, 'My parents did not want me; they wanted to do their own thing without me; so they gave me a key and money and left me to fend for myself.' It was not long before the lad, with too much money and time, got into bad company and serious trouble.

Of course family life makes demands on parents. If some want to

live as if they had no children, the risks are great and they have only themselves to blame if delinquency comes home to roost. Children soon become aware of the lack of companionship, the lack of love; and it is not made up by constant increases in pocket money. Indeed, in some respects, money as a sop is the very thing that accelerates the progress of departure.

Christian parents must face this that they are not entitled to contribute to the problem of a sick society by wilful negligence of their families. If the bulwarks of family life are dropping all around, every endeavour must be made by believers to keep the christian household inviolate.

The words of Abraham in Gen 22 have a lovely ring about them. Taking them out of context and simply for their form, they surely have a message for every christian father, 'abide ye here ... and I and the lad will go yonder.' If more links were forged on the basis of 'I and the lad' things might be better in the long run in many christian families. Perhaps the problem was not very far away from Paul's thoughts when he wrote to the Colossians, 'Fathers, provoke not your children, lest they be discouraged'.

F.E.S.

Joel (3)

by R. Revie, Tarbolton

ch. 3 Recovery leading to blessing

vv. 1-8 *Judgment of the nations* Only when Israel is brought back to their own land will God initiate the judgment of the nations. The nations will be judged in the light of their treatment of Israel as seen in vv. 3-6. This is what the Lord is referring to in Matt 25:31-46.

(1) The **person** who initiates the judgment is God and He brings the nations before Him.

(2) The **place** referred to is the Valley of Jehoshaphat. This is one of the valleys near Jerusalem and means 'Jehovah judges'. It is called in v. 14 'The valley of decision'. This would be better rendered the valley of judgment for it is the place where decisions have already been made by God. It is not the people making up their minds but God who has already come to a decision. This valley is generally placed in the valley of Kedron on the east of Jerusalem. It is amazing that in the vicinity where the Lord was rejected will be the place where He will finally be vindicated.

Some feel that this is the valley that is going to be formed as a result of the Lord's feet standing on the mount of Olives and a very great valley coming into being (Zech 14:4).

What God will accuse the nations of in that day will be their treatment of His people. We have seen a little of that in our day first with Hitler and then with the Arab nations but this will be

intensified in a coming day. The hatred soon to fall upon Israel during the time of 'Jacob's trouble' will surely eclipse all that has gone before.

(3) The **manner** of the gathering is seen in vv. 9-17. God will personally intervene in the affairs of Israel. An exhortation is given in v. 10 which will be reversed in the Millennium (Isa 2:4). In Joel it is a time of preparation prior to war whereas in Isaiah it is a time of warfare followed by peace.

v. 11 reminds us that coming with the Lord to execute judgment are the angels 'thy mighty ones'. This is the event referred to in Rev 19:14-21.

v. 13 is the idea of a harvest or a gathering of grapes. This kind of expression is used in the judgment referred to in Rev 14:14-20 where the idea of reaping and treading the winepress is used.

vv. 15-16 takes us back to ch. 2:30-31 where these events set the stage for this great judgment. It is obviously something that is sudden, unexpected and divine in its nature. When the earth quaked before and the sun was darkened Christ was engaged in a battle which would result in blessing both to Jew and Gentile alike. In these verses the battle will still be of the same nature as the nations will be spurred on and led by the evil trinity of the Dragon, the False Prophet and the Beast.

vv. 17-21. Like most of the other

prophetic books Joel ends his vision with a view of the kingdom established by Christ.

(1) The **true Monarch** shall reign, His kingdom shall be established and all shall know the Lord.

(2) **The centre** of administration will be Jerusalem and from it all the nations will be controlled.

(3) **Blessing** will be brought and a day of untold fruitfulness and His land will be again the 'land flowing with milk and honey'.

(4) **God's judgment** will fall on Egypt.

They seem to be singled out because of their treatment of Israel.

(5) Israel **cleared** of their treatment of Christ. Righteousness will reign on the land and Israel will become the head of the nations.

(6) **The Lord** will dwell in Zion. It is a certain fact that where He is we will be there also. With such a prospect in view may we be kept in the spirit of the last prayer in the Bible, 'Even so come Lord Jesus' (Rev 22:20).

Concluded.

Women in the Church

by H.A. Tickner, Muswell Hill

4. Their Problems

The diverse teachings and interpretations in relationship to women's position and practice in the church, has produced a great deal of question and controversy. The situation has been much aggravated in recent years by the prominent push for Women's Lib in today's society and by the sometimes, very convincing areas of teaching produced from some Bible schools, and, sad to say, from men of noted ability in their assessment of high Bible scholarship.

1. *The Interpretation.* In the approach to all Bible study in general, and to our subject in particular, the working out of the problems of correct interpretation is dependent upon the appreciation and application of simple but important rules: a) The Elucidation of the text and context under review; that is in complete dependence allowing the

Holy Spirit, who ever seeks to guide into all truth, to explain, to illustrate, to throw light upon, the passage under consideration. b) The Analysis of the text, i.e. a logical arrangement of the Bible grammar into its component parts thus avoiding the danger of isolating Scripture in seeking to arrive at a conclusion of exegesis from one word, one phrase or sentence. c) It is, of course, a help to have some knowledge of the historical background and also, though perhaps not for all, some understanding of the Hebrew and Greek text. If these rules are applied, the student can then check his conclusions; if the interpretation agrees with the analysis, it is correct; if there is no such agreement, it is not correct.

2. *The Scholarship.* By no means must we, or indeed can we, deny the gift and

help of the scholastic mind. The church should always acknowledge the valued and vital contributions made by godly men, who through the ages and from the elevation and depth of their studies have given so much to the people of God. The ultimate value of such scholarship, if it is to produce spiritual profit, is gained when it is received and applied in its correct position in relation to Holy Scripture, always subordinate, never superior!

In the early days of the church — and the mark is revealing itself today — there were those who set great store in learning; the gods of wisdom were worshipped in the universities of Corinth 1 Cor 1:22. Paul with all the wealth of learning he had acquired at the feet of Gamaliel would not allow the wisdom of such scholarship to surmount that of the wisdom of the Spirit of God, in his laying of the foundation of faith (1 Cor 2:1-4). What care is required to assess the wisdom of man as against the wisdom of God; how important to guard against the influence and weight of the sometimes convincing arguments of the professor, the doctor, the Bible school, lest we be found relying on the wisdom of man for the test and confirmation of Scripture. It is well to note and to follow the example of those at Berea who “searched the Scriptures” which they had “received” Acts 17:11, and of Paul who, in writing to Macedonia, insisted on basing what he had to share on the foundation of the Word of God: “This we say unto you by the word of the Lord” (1 Thess 4:10). Here is the key to acquire all truth and its interpretation.

3. *The Controversy.* How much has arisen over the years, surrounding the

subject to hand, bringing its resulting confusion and uncertainty to many who are not sure, but who sincerely seek God’s divine pattern and purpose in assembly testimony; to such, problems arise that are real and pressing. The writer has often found from ministry and conversation that question and answer can be a helpful method of clarifying and confirming any subject from God’s good Word. In the light of our previous papers, the following may be of help!

Q: You interpret your way, I interpret my way. Who is right?

A: When the personal pronouns dominate the problem, neither is right! As already stated the lines of correct understanding are arrived at only by dependent adherence to the context of the subject plus the comparison of Scripture with Scripture.

Q: Is it not obvious from the Bible record (Acts 21:8-9) concerning Philip’s four daughters that the participation of women in public speaking is permitted?

A: Here, again, is an outstanding example of the need for contextual observation. We are informed that the daughters were virgins and as such they would be, by firm custom and by love and duty, responsive and obedient to the rule and authority of their father, Philip the evangelist. His godly example and teaching of church pattern and order would be surely respected. Their prophesying (lit. the speaking forth of the counsel of God) would not be in the assembly, but no doubt to their own sex in their father’s house (v. 8). It is of significance that although on the spot, those virgins were not used by the Spirit to impart the important ministry of v.

11 given by Agabus, who had to travel down from Judaea (v. 10).

Q: How can the public thanksgiving of Anna in the temple (Luke 2:26-36) be reconciled with the prohibition of Paul?

A: The church with its pattern of divine order had not yet been instituted, and the service of temple worship was still in force, as under the law. It is of interest to note that even under such permit, the devout woman Hannah prayed in the temple "but her voice was not heard" (1 Sam 1:13).

Q: Is it not clear that the numerous mentions of Priscilla in the New Testament suggest that she used her outstanding gift of teaching in a prominent way?

A: Undoubtedly Priscilla was gifted in a remarkable way, and used the gift to the help and profit of others! Nowhere is it stated that she exercised this gift in the church. It must be inferred from Acts 18:24-26 that Priscilla and her husband Aquila, in expounding (Gk. *exethento*) and explaining to Apollos, did so privately in their home, as "they took him unto them" (v. 26) in contrast to "the church that is in their house" (Rom 16:5). Surely with such elevation of spirituality as was Priscilla's together with her knowledge of the Scripture, she would readily bend to the truth of 1 Tim 2:12 in the light of church order.

Q: In view of Phebe being "a servant (a deaconess) of the church which is at Cenchrea" (Rom 16:1) would she not hold a place of authority in the church?

A: The choice of seven Hellenistic deacons, as recorded in Acts ch. 6 reveals the significance of their

being male! Emphasised by the strength of the masc. gender in the Greek text, *adelphoi* (brother) *andras* (men). Paul, again and again, underlines the male aspect of those given teaching authority viz. "bishops" (overseers, elders) and "deacons" (ministers) e.g. Phil 1:1 by using the masculine nouns. It is well to see that although Paul refers to Phebe, as a "servant of the church" using, as he does, the singular masc. noun *diakenon*, her duties stand in marked contrast to those designated to the brethren of Acts 6:2-3, Phil 1:1. Theirs was the leadership authority supporting the apostles and later the bishops, a character so clearly defined in 1 Tim 3:8-13; hers was, in the context of Rom 10:2, as "a succourer" (*prostatis*, "protecting care") of many, not least of Paul himself, and as the carrier of letters from Greece to Rome — a valued service in days of poor communications. Hence Paul's request that she be "received in the Lord as becometh saints" would carry great commendation for Phebe's faithful service.

Q: Surely, Paul finding upon his visit to Corinth public participation by women as recorded in 1 Cor 11 and not reprimanding them at the time, implies that he sanctioned such a practice. Cannot such flexibility be granted today?

A: This is a classic question rearing its head whenever there is review upon the subject. Again we refer to our former notes a), b) and c) in paragraph 1, and to a previous paper where we saw Paul's skilled and orderly method of dealing with one matter at a time, namely that of subordination in ch. 11 and silence in ch. 14. The stern and firm

prohibition of ch. 14 can give no place for the allowance of speaking in ch. 11.

In moving to the final conclusions of the subject considered in our studies it is seen that Bible teaching sets the divine standard of the place of women in the sphere of the church, to be private and not public! In their spiritual standing, as we have seen in the first study, they are "one in Christ" (Gal 3:28) and co-equal with men.

In their sphere of service in the local assembly, they are supportive and complementary to men, and here in the history of the church is seen—

Mary of Bethany, at the Master's feet, in submission, to "hear His Word" (Luke 10:39) and in silence to worship (John 12:3)

Martha, extending hospitality (John 12:2)

The Woman of Samaria, in personal testimony (John 4:28-29)

The older women teaching the younger (Titus 2:3-4)

Mothers and grandmothers showing a godly example (2 Tim 1:5)

Joanna and Susanna, yielding a practical ministry of their substance (Luke 8:3)

Doreas, abundant in "good-works" and giving of alms (Acts 9:36).

It is of striking interest and instruction to note the close and intimate association of women, and not men, in three major areas of the Lord's life upon earth

1. His birth. Salutation from heaven to Mary, "highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou" (Luke 1:28), the chosen human channel, "that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (v. 35).

2. His crucifixion. It was women, not men, that were so near in His time of greatest need: "his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdelene stood by the cross of Jesus" (John 19:25).

3. His resurrection. It was the women, not men, that were involved in the early events of that day. In love for their Master, they came to the tomb, with "prepared spices" (Luke 24:1). With joy the women carry the news of His resurrection to the men (Matt 28:7-8). It was to Mary Magdelene, of all women, He appears as the risen Christ (John 20:11-18). What place of honour and privilege is given to women!

In their role in the church, what greater commendation can women desire, than that from their Lord and Master, "she hath wrought a good work ... she hath done what she could" (Mark 14:7-8).

BOOKS



Why Me? by L.G. Barton; published Gospel Tract Publications; price 60p.

This brief paperback of 44 brief pages is described as "a meditation in the problems which face Christians who are afflicted". There are several such books on the market — one indication at least that despite advances in medicine many dear saints are passing through the valley of Baca.

The reviewer is conscious that his limited experience disqualifies him from worthwhile comment on this particular addition to the available books. He feels it would be better enlarged — some chapters are less than two pages — but perhaps those in the crucible of suffering prefer a very brief treatment.

T.W.

Christians Gathered in the Name of the Lord Jesus by Edwin N. Cross; published Chapter Two; 10 copies £1.50.

This booklet of 16 pages treats of the position of those who meet "unto the name". Although it originates in "Needed Truth" circles, the presentation of truth will appeal to *all* who have grasped the NT teaching of church order and makes no reference to those points of difference which distinguish the author's ecclesiastical position from the reviewer's.

The booklet is aimed at those in traditional state churches or where there has been blatant deviation from Pauline truth. For that reason it offers further help from various Bible Depots. It is interesting to note that the booklet is available in Dutch, French, German, Otatela, Russian, Slovenian, Spanish and soon in Chinese.

Also available from Chapter Two: *Pure Gold*: 10 copies £1.00.

This little compendium of Gospel texts measures 3 inches by 2½ inches. It is beautifully presented and comes complete with a plastic envelope. It will be a useful addition to the Tract distributor's armoury.

T.W.

From Idolator to Friend of God by J.H. Large; published John Ritchie Ltd; price £4.95.

This is the first of a series of OT character studies to be published by Ritchies. Coming from the pen of J.H. Large, so long associated with our sister publication *Precious Seed*, it is certain to be well received.

The reviewer was delighted at the high standard of the work from so many angles. The content is sound, well-balanced and carefully applied. The freshness of approach to familiar truths can only appeal to all with spiritual tastes. And the book is well written: the style is smooth, the vocabulary rich and yet devoid of pretension. Indeed there are so many possibilities in such a book that the reviewer commends it to all ages. Every Christian will find something in its pages to enlighten, to cheer, to challenge or to guide.

T.W.

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These stones (5)

by E.A.R. Shotter, Northampton

It only remains now to consider the import of the devil's last encounter with the Lord Jesus on this occasion. Satan promises to Him all the kingdoms of the world if He will fall down and worship him. The stones are gone, even the stones which men took up to stone Him with on at least two occasions as recorded by John. No more can His neighbours take Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built to cast Him down headlong. And (wondrous thought!) no more is He to remove Himself a stone's cast from those He loved.

We are now to see that He who came as the Prophet to declare the glad tidings of God; and to be the Kinsman-Redeemer who should offer Himself a sacrifice to God on behalf of men; and to fulfil all the functions of the Priest — the high priest, is the same One who is the divinely appointed and anointed King.

There is possibly a sense in which the forces of Chedorlaomer, already discussed, may represent the military might; the dream of the great image which Nebuchadnezzar saw, the political might; and the golden image set up in the plain of Dura by this king, the religious might of 'the prince of this world'.

Bearing in mind the great power wielded by these two monarchs (also remembering that seldom does a shadow reflect exactly its 'original') we see that

they show more than a slight resemblance to the devil with his world dominion in the affairs of men.

There is a third likeness in Daniel, for the great tree reflects not a little resemblance to 'the prince of this world'. Nebuchadnezzar admittedly was restored to his sanity and rule, and then confessed to 'the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways judgment' as the One of whom it is said, 'those that walk in pride He is able to abase'. Is not pride the very thing in which the devil walks? In fact, had we been reading these temptations from Luke rather than Matthew we should have found that he also said, 'for that the habitable earth is delivered unto me' (compare Dan 2:36-38 and 4:19-22).

So we have a situation which reflects 'all the kingdoms of the habitable earth', described for us chiefly in Daniel, under the dominion of the devil and the whole world system (*kosmos*) lieth in the Wicked one (1 John 5:19).

Not only is the Lord Jesus anointed as the Prophet (Luke 4:18) and appointed and consecrated as the High Priest, (Heb 3:2; 7:29), but He is Prince of the kings of the earth (Rev 1:5).

In this temptation the devil disputes that regal office, claiming it as his own, and offering it to Jesus for the apparently small return of worship-

ping him. Behind this offer of world dominion is another device of the devil, for does not Isa 14:12-20 refer to him as saying, 'I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; ... I will be like the Most High? If the Lord Jesus had succumbed to the devil it would have left him as the object of worship, and therefore God. The day is yet to come when his accomplice will attempt the same thing (2 Thess 2:3-4). In this case it will be again the word of God, and by the Spirit of His mouth, that the man of sin will be destroyed.

Returning again to the temptation and its political content, we are reminded of the great image of Nebuchadnezzar. In it each of the metals is inferior to the preceding one mentioned, and their colours become darker until the darkest (clay or earthenware) is not metal at all. So much for the offer to the Lord Jesus.

But how is all to end? The whole structure is to become like the chaff of the summer threshing floors —before what, or should we say whom? Why! The Stone cut out without hands, but not alluded to by the devil! This Stone is to become a great mountain filling the whole earth! From the lowest place — the stones of the wilderness, to the pinnacle of the temple, and to the high mountain He was conducted by the devil; but now we see Him as the great mountain which shall fill the whole earth! This is given to Him by divine command.

The pathway through which this takes place includes Olivet again —not now in the atmosphere of rejection and the shadow of the cross; nor yet in the joy of resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father; but in

the judicial and regal character in which He gathers (after the rapture of the Church and the great tribulation) 'all nations against Jerusalem to battle' and, having defeated them, Christ will be 'King over all the earth' (Zech 14).

The Temptation in the wilderness therefore brings to our notice the fact that Jesus is the Son of God; that in His manhood, in the will of the Father and in His appointed time, He went to Calvary, dismissed His spirit, and was buried. He was raised and ascended. There He awaits the Father's time for His millennial reign in righteousness as King-Priest. During this time He will have sin under restraint. It is then that Zechariah's prophecy as recorded in ch. 6:12-13 will be fulfilled.

Further, it is evident that, unknown to Satan, his wiles and doom are being spelt out until the Lord dismisses him for a season, according to Luke's gospel, and ultimately he will be cast out for ever.

There are many lessons which we can learn from the Temptation in the wilderness. Lessons such as we have been contemplating concerning the Lord Jesus; lessons revealing the wiles of the devil; and lessons which we should learn in following in the Christian pathway: rightly dividing the word of God and living by it; waiting His time for the fulfilment of His will in our daily life, and leaving the end to His love and care. As we do so we shall have the peace of God garrisoning our hearts and be able to say with the Psalmist: 'O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together'.

Concluded.

YOUNG Believers'

Conducted by Howard A. Barnes,
Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside

Pauline Epistles

Part 9: 2 Corinthians (part 1)

INTRODUCTION

Once Paul had sent his first epistle to Corinth, it seems that it was his original intention to follow it up by a personal visit and then to travel north to Macedonia (2 Cor 1:15), come back to Corinth and then go on to Jerusalem. However, he later thought it best to make the journey the other way around, i.e. to go from Ephesus to Macedonia via Troas, south to Corinth and then on to Jerusalem. To prepare the believers for his visit (probably with special reference to the collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem, so that the assemblies' collections would be ready when he arrived), he sent Timothy (see Acts 19:21,22) who would eventually arrive at Corinth where he would be able to back up Paul's first letter (1 Cor 4:17 and 16:10,11). He sent Titus directly to Corinth to encourage them to have their contribution ready, and also for him to report back to him on the state of the assembly and the response to his letter. From the later part of the story, it seems he instructed Titus to come back via Macedonia and Troas (reference to a map would be very useful to understand the various movements here).

Paul's plans for his own departure

from Ephesus were upset by an uproar in the city (See Acts 19:23-20:1), and he had to leave in a hurry (for Paul to leave without trouble was exceptional; see Acts 18:9-11). The next events are only briefly summarised by Luke (Act 20:2-4), but represent some of the most significant moments of Paul's life. Included in this is a very traumatic event that took place somewhere in Asia even before Paul arrived in Troas. What the exact circumstances of this were we do not know, but it ended with death staring Paul in the face. He felt physically and mentally overwhelmed by it. He says it would have been "so great a death" (2 Cor 1:10). It is interesting here to refer to Rom 16:3,4 where Paul tells us that Priscilla and Aquila "have for my life laid down their own necks". Is this the same event? All of them were delivered anyway even if these were separate incidents. Certainly Priscilla and Aquila were with Paul in Ephesus and had also now left.

TROAS AND MACEDONIA

When Paul arrived at Troas he found plenty of opportunity to preach the gospel, but he couldn't settle to it because he said "I found not Titus my brother" (2 Cor 2:13). Paul was so preoccupied with the state of things at Corinth that he had no freedom in his preaching, and thought it best to move on into Macedonia looking for Titus. (Paul later returned to Troas and stayed for a week; see Acts 20:6-12.)

Just as Paul had no rest in his spirit in Troas, so also he had no rest in his flesh in Macedonia, for "without were fightings, within were fears" (2 Cor 7:5). However, at that point Titus

turned up, having come up from Corinth. Paul is delighted to see him and hear his news, which for the most part is very good for "he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more" (2 Cor 7:7). Paul's delight was matched by Titus', which in itself made Paul even happier: "exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all" (7:13). Timothy also by this time had joined them (1:1), so for them all this must have been one of the happiest moments of their lives!

Paul then sends this present epistle and Titus to Corinth, while he evangelised in Macedonia and Illyricum. The subject matter of the epistle is fourfold: first he wants to tell the Corinthians how he felt when he received Titus' news, and his state of mind at that time resulting from his recent experiences (1:1-7:16). Secondly (actually as a digression within the first section), Paul delights in his ministry as a minister of the new covenant (2:14-6:10). Thirdly, he exhorts them to finish the collection soon so that it will be ready when he goes down himself as he planned to do (chs. 8 and 9). Lastly, he addresses himself to the minority who still withstood his teaching (chs. 10 to 13).

TRIBULATION AND COMFORT

The effect of the traumatic experiences described above (in Asia, Troas and Macedonia) had brought Paul to the very limits of human endurance, but as he constantly proved, because he was the Lord's, there was always something beyond human endurance. This he calls "consolation", and the amount of consolation is in proportion to his sufferings (1:5). All these things had been allowed to happen to remind Paul that "we could not trust in

ourselves, but in God" (v.9), who had constantly delivered him and would go on doing so until his work was done. Sometimes he was delivered from trouble altogether (Acts 18), but other times (as in Asia, v.8) only at the very last minute when all seemed lost.

Some at Corinth still seemed to query Paul's sincerity, and particularly with reference to his earlier intention to come to Corinth first, and then go on to Macedonia. This Paul thought would have been a second benefit (v.15), but thinking later he should spare them until his letter and Titus' and Timothy's visit had done their work, he changed his plans. This was not a sign of weakness of character on his part, but rather a sign of his care for them. He could happily call God to witness in this matter (v.23). When he eventually came, it could be hoped he in joy, not sorrow (2:1-4).

Titus reported that the immoral person referred to in the fifth chapter of his first letter had been dealt with in discipline, and Paul now urges them to restore him to fellowship because he had truly repented. Without this forgiveness that person might be "swallowed up with overmuch sorrow" (2:7-11).

Although the question of immorality had been cleared up, there was still a problem with the believers becoming "unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (6:14). Close associations whether in marriage or in business with unbelievers is wrong on many counts (vv.14-16). This has always been so, even from OT days (vv.16-18 are quotations from the OT).

However, on the matters he had raised, there had been a general repentance in the assembly, so that although it caused him much inward pain to have to write, he is now very happy with the outcome.

He was delivered (1)

by J.W. Ferguson, Belfast

One of the commonest ways in which the New Testament refers to the circumstances in which our Lord came to be crucified is some variation of the expression, 'He was delivered.' This is variously translated 'deliver, betray, give' in the Authorised Version; the last appears as 'give up' in the Revised Version.

Judas betrayed Him. It is, first of all, the standard word for the action of Judas in betraying his Master. Judas is referred to repeatedly as the man 'who *betrayed* him,' this being as characteristic of Judas as it was characteristic of Nicodemus that he was the man 'who came to Jesus by night.' What a summary of a man's achievements on earth — 'who also betrayed him!' Matt 26:15 tells us what he said when he went to the chief priests: 'What are you willing to give me and I will *deliver* him to you?' This suggests greed as a motive, particularly since Matthew adds that from the time when they promised Judas 30 pieces of silver he sought an opportunity to *deliver* him up. It is significant too that this negotiation between Judas and the chief priests follows immediately in Matthew the story of the disciples' indignation about the supposed 'waste' of the perfume with which the Lord was anointed in the house of Simon the leper (Matt 26:6-16). When we compare this story with the anointing of the Lord by Mary in John chap. 12 we find the source of

the indignation; it was Judas the treasurer who could put the price of 300 pence on a jar of costly ointment though he would sell the Lord for the equivalent of 120 pence! Judas clearly was moved by more than mere greed, for if he had been merely greedy he could have held out confidently for a far higher price. His acceptance of such a low price indicates his bitter alienation from Christ.

So was fulfilled the word of Christ to his disciples that he would be *delivered* to the chief priests and scribes (Matt 20:18; Mark 10:33). Presumably this lies behind the Lord's words to Pilate that if his kingdom were of this world his followers would fight that he should not be *delivered* 'to the Jews' (John 18:36). It is appropriate that the translation of the word in relation to Judas' action is usually 'betray', for he was willing for base motives to hand over Jesus, whom he called 'Teacher', to his enemies.

The chief priests handed Him over to Pilate. The word is used secondly for the actions of the chief priests in *delivering* Jesus to Pilate. The nature of this transaction comes out clearly in Mark 15 vv. 1, 9 and 10. The picture which emerges is of a unified Jewish leadership consisting of chief priests, elders, scribes and indeed the whole Sanhedrin, united against Christ. Pilate's understanding

of their motives underlines the irony in his question in verse 9, 'Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?' The Sadducean party, which as a political power block controlled the priesthood at this time, followed a policy of collaboration with the Romans, a policy which was anathema to many in the Sanhedrin, the Pharisees for instance. Yet something had brought the warring factions momentarily together, their *envy* against Christ. It was this unity against Christ which made it possible for them to stand together before Pilate, enduring his irony and taunting, in order to ensure that he would do their will. They were willing to hand over Christ to Pilate in the knowledge that he held the official power to execute a man; thus they *delivered* him to Pilate, fulfilling the word spoken by the Lord, that he should be *delivered* to the Gentiles (Luke 18:32), and probably also his references to his being *delivered* into the hands of sinners (Mark 14:41). This last reference immediately precedes his being handed over to the Jewish leaders, but it may refer to the end of the process when he would be in Gentile hands. One may compare it with the brief version of his warning to the disciples about his crucifixion as reported by the angels in Luke 24:7.

Pilate delivered Him to be crucified.

Pilate had official authority to perform an execution. He had however problems in this case: the witnesses did not agree (Mark 14:56), the

accusers argued that their accusations were adequate ground for condemning the accused (John 18:29, 30), the accusations had been backed up by implicit threats of denunciation against Pilate before Caesar (John 19:12), and Pilate was convinced that the accused was not guilty as charged (Luke 23:22). He so misjudged the mood of the Jerusalem leaders that he thought he could use a neat side-step to evade the dilemma; he would offer a choice of Jesus or Barabbas for release at this traditional *season of goodwill* and they would choose Jesus. But they did not, would not, could not choose him. Then follows the chilling statement: 'And Pilate, wishing to content the multitude, released unto them Barabbas, and *delivered* Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified' (Mark 15:15 RV). He was willing, because of fear, fear of Caesar and the chief priests, to do what he knew to be wrong. He handed over a man whom he knew to be innocent to his troops to crucify. While this handing to over is probably to be taken as a committal of the prisoner to the soldiers it should be noted that Luke puts it (23:25) that Pilate *delivered* Jesus *to their will*; it seems as if Luke is intent upon establishing the guilt of the Jews at this point. This was the third delivery of Jesus, the climax of a depressing record of treachery through greed, conspiracy through envy and capitulation through cowardice.

To be continued.

Does your knowledge of Christ lead you to two things—secret communion of soul with Him, and practical energy of Christian walk?
J. G. Bellett

Light from an Old Lamp

By the late John Ritchie

Man's Future State (13)

Resurrection of the Dead in Christ.

The vast, transcendent subject of the resurrection of the dead has been an offence to the worldly-wise all through the ages. The craft of Satan has been used against it, and the traditions of men have been set in order to obscure it. The testimony of the Word of God is full and clear regarding it, and the faith of each succeeding generation of the saints of God has rested securely upon that enduring Word, while their hope has waited in patience for its full realisation. Its magnitude and eternal issues increase as the years go by. For over six millenniums, generation after generation of Adam's sons and daughters have been laid in the dust of death. Every thirty and odd years, it is estimated that a whole generation of over fifteen hundred millions of human beings die. Their bodies lie in the earth on which we tread, or become changed and mingle with myriads of organisms around us. Can these, the philosopher asks, be ever made to live again? "How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" (1 Cor 15:33) is still his question. The answer is given in the Word of God. It comes to us by Divine revelation alone. Among those who accept it as a Bible truth, and confess with their lips, "I believe in the

resurrection of the dead," how few give time or thought to its immense and eternal issues, alike to the saved and the lost.

Resurrection of the dead. "Resurrection of the dead" (Heb 6:2) is a foundation truth of the faith. Dimly foreseen by patriarchs, they buried their dead in the hope of it (Gen 23:5), and confessed their faith in the certainty of it (Job 19:25). Sufferers and martyrs, in the prospect of it, sealed their testimony with their blood (Heb 11:35), and those bereaved of loved ones had a ray of comfort borne as from the distant future, — the hope of a resurrection and reunion on a far-off "last day" (John 11:24). A fuller revelation waited on the triumph of Christ over death and as the First fruits in resurrection, which now has come, and remains on record in the Scriptures.

"Resurrection of the dead" is the general term which embraces the first resurrection of the righteous only, and the later resurrection of those who stand before the great white throne for judgment (see John 5:28-30; Rev. 20:12-13). All must be raised, but not at the same time or for the same purpose. "The dead in Christ" will be raised at the moment of His coming as Son of God to the air (1 Thess 4:16); "the rest of the dead" will not be raised until after the thousand years of millennial glory (Rev 20:5), when they are brought forth to judgment.

Resurrection from the dead. “Resurrection from” literally “from among — the dead” is the word used to describe the former event. It first came from the lips of the Lord, on the way down from the Transfiguration scene (Matt 17:9; Mark 9:9, 10), and the newness of the word attracted the notice of the disciples, and caused them to “question one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.” They were familiar with “resurrection of the dead,” but a “resurrection from,” or “out from the dead,” was something entirely new to them. The truth here first uttered, and subsequently repeated by the Lord, is always limited in its application to His own (Luke 14:13, 14; 20:27-38), and is more fully unfolded in its details in the Epistles, notably in 1 Cor 15:50-51, where the apostle writes of it as “a mystery” — that is, something hitherto not made fully known; and in 1 Thess 4:13, as a revelation — a distinct “word of the Lord” to meet the need of those who were sorrowing over the death of some of their brethren, whom they evidently feared would miss their share in the triumph at the coming of the Son of God from heaven, for which the living saints waited (ch. 1:9). This “resurrection of life” (John 5:29), elsewhere named “the resurrection of the just” (Luke 14:14) and “the first resurrection” (Rev 20:5), includes Christ Himself the First-fruits, all “who are Christ’s at His coming” (1 Cor 15:23), and the martyred saints who will live and bear faithful testimony unto death during the reign of Antichrist in the period between Christ’s coming for His

saints and His appearing with them. These all share in the “first resurrection,” and reign with Christ, but no others. They only are “children of the resurrection” (Luke 20:36). The “rest of the dead” lie in their unblest graves during the thousand years of millennial glory, to be raised by an act of Divine power for judgment. This elective “out resurrection” of the saints from the dead (Phil 3:11) was the apostle’s hope and prize.

The Resurrection Body. In the “moment” of the Lord’s descent from heaven into “the air” (1 Thess 4:17) with “a shout” — a word of command, such as a general gives to his soldiers — the whole of the ransomed dead shall be raised, and by an act of Almighty power transformed into the image of their Lord. That “shout” with “the voice of the archangel and the trump of God,” will be felt and owned through the whole realm of death in land and sea. The grave will yield its ancient charge. The mighty deep will disgorge its long held treasure. The bodies of the “dead in Christ” long ago redeemed by blood, will be claimed by power, and fashioned like unto the body of His glory (Phil 3:21), each retaining distinct personality, knowing as they are known, all conformed to His image (Rom 8:29), made perfectly “like Him” (1 John 3:2), seeing Him as He is. What a moment of triumph and of power that will be! Death once more will own its Victor’s claim, and be “swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor 15:54).

The Lord’s Supper

In the Lord’s Supper it is not so much what we have gained, but what it cost the Lord to secure the gain for us. Many remember what Christ has done for them who forget what it cost Him.

REGIONS · BEYOND ·

HONDURAS—Another Perspective

by Ken Cunningham, Newton Mearns

When you've married into a missionary family you can be sure you pick up over the years quite a mass of information about the land your parents-in-law spend most of their lives in. However, it's one thing hearing about something and experiencing it first-hand. Two summers ago we had the privilege of seeing and feeling what it is to serve the Lord in a culture and country quite different from our own.

I had been warned about the heat, but it does defy description. The humidity just drains you, and there's no let-up. If you're *wealthy* you might have some form of air-conditioning, if you're just rich you will have electric fans, but if you're like the vast majority of Hondurans you suffer in silence. And this is the climate in which the Lord's work must be carried on. It's relatively easy to serve the Lord in areas that we know well and that our bodies and minds are accustomed to. It is quite a different matter serving in the kind of conditions that we were to see over the five weeks we were in Honduras and it opened my eyes!

Banana Republic Honduras is literally a banana Republic in Central America with a coast on the Caribbean and a smaller one on the Pacific; a boundary with Nicaragua, El Salvador, and with Guatamala, although miraculously the desperate plights of these countries have not fully interfered with Honduras, but obviously the relationships are on a knife-edge. It is a country geographically the size of England but with a population of less than Scotland. It is a country of contrasts—the humid plains of the coast where Mum and Dad spend most of their time, and the less humid but just as hot mountains of the Capital region around Tegucigalpa. The climate lends itself to quite an amazing collection of fruit and fauna, and it is the plant life that brings the country any income: the list is impressive, palm oil, castor oil, bananas, pineapples, oranges, melons, mangos, coffee, cashew, almond, cotton, rubber and tea to name only a few. Fortunately there are few dangerous animals although you could meet the odd snake and find yourself uncomfortable from an encounter with a scorpion. The insects are the worst—I don't think Marion and I had many bits of flesh untasted by the little creatures, and *how* they itch!

Automatically in Jail Among the many other things worth mentioning let me briefly mention three, their relevance to the work of the missionary being obvious. First, there are the roads or lack of

them. You can turn, as we did, a corner and face either the road completely blocked or obliterated by an avalanche, or no road at all but a thirty foot drop into a dried-up river bed, the road never having been replaced after the last flash flood. Driving in the dark—to be avoided at all costs—brings one up against hazards we have never begun to contemplate over here.

Secondly, there is no such thing as car insurance! After an accident you are automatically put in jail until someone bails you out. If you're a blue-eyed gringo you can forget about justice as well apart from the rough justice you are likely to get from enraged relatives!

Thirdly, it's not easy for a Westerner to live in a country where police and military men can stop you at any time, and looking down a sub-machine gun barrel is no fun. In a land where even the three year old carries his machete and knows how to use it, and a good number tout a pistol in their waistband you can well understand the unease that exists. In the capital where the few wealthy live their homes are like fortresses with armed guards a regular sight.

164 Assemblies Apart from Freda Hocking, Mum and Dad (Allister and Jean Shedden) are the only remaining British missionaries. They are well supported in the work by two American families, the Hannahs and the Dominguezs. In addition there are six national full-time workers (Antonio, Evaristo, Claudio, Julian, Jose and Ancieto) to whom increasingly will fall the responsibility to teach the Word and encourage the spiritual upbuilding of the 164 assemblies throughout the country. The health of all the foreign missionaries is also causing real concern and much prayerful support is needed as they take major decisions regarding their continuing involvement in the work.

Help and Support What a thrill it was to visit and minister in seven assemblies while there. What a welcome we had on all occasions and we were urged to convey to the saints at home their greetings and thanks for the help and support they have received over the years either by the Lord's servants, by material aid as in the terrible devastation following the hurricane of the '70s, or by prayer.

What a response we got from Don David, a brother in the Guadalupe assembly in Tegucigalpa. He it was who was gunned down about ten years ago in a bank raid and little hope was given. But there he was paralysed from the waist down but a very bright character and so very grateful for the prayer and financial help received at the time.

These people, very poor by any standard, would have given their last crust in the service of their Lord and their desire to learn was

incredible. I sat beside a brother in a little country assembly and offered to share my hymnbook. There was no need—he was totally illiterate. Yet that same brother gave out a totally suitable hymn and quoted it word for word and then prayed just as ably. And after the breaking of bread they were in no hurry so that I could minister for as long as I wanted.

And how does one communicate the warmth of feeling in that Old Folk's Home? Perhaps by the picture of old, blind Don Jose who would work his way round the walls until he reached the garage and when he found the car away, down he would get on his knees and often remain there until Don Roberto returned in safety. Perhaps too by the hugs and kisses from folk who only knew you by photograph but loved you for whose you were.

Sheer Volume of Work It would be difficult to communicate the sheer volume of work the missionaries are called upon to do. "24 hours on call" takes on a different meaning over there! Anything from marriage counsellor to funeral embalmer and undertaker, from business man to bank manager—and then somewhere in the 24 hours time for study and answering letters and gifts. Then there are the two national camps and all the preparation needed for their frequent use. And with it all the patience of Job! "Manyana" is still the Latin-American watchword, and to those used to keeping time and appointments it very nearly drives one crazy.

Prayers I hope I've conveyed something of the thrill that we had and more importantly something of the knowledge that now colours and prompts our specific prayers, and how Honduras needs all our prayers. We were impressed by the quality of the Gospel preaching and witness, but there is a desperate need for teaching especially as assemblies mature and begin to ask themselves questions about their practice. They need confidence to make decisions and know that what they decide is in the leading of the Spirit. It's hard enough here with all our wealth of heritage and gift to draw on—how much harder it must be over there and in other similar areas

(After the recent article on Honduras by a missionary, it is interesting to have 'another perspective' by a visiting non-missionary brother, and we are grateful for this refreshing insight into the work there by Ken Cunningham.)

Fruit bearing

Are you saying, 'But what a fruitless branch I must be that God must needs purge me?' Not so. Have you not noticed what kind of branches it is that God purges? Hear His word: 'Every branch that *beareth fruit*, he purgeth it' (John 15:2). It is not the fruitless branch which is purged. And why? 'That it may bring forth *more fruit*.'

Question

All questions should be sent to the Editor, Believer's Magazine, Office, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and should have the name and address of sender. Consideration of space may prevent the publication of answers

QUESTION

It has recently been stated that a young child has received the transplant of the heart of a baboon and is still alive after twelve months. If these two 'flesh' have knit how can it be viewed in light of the contradiction between Darwinism and 1 Cor 15:39?

ANSWER

There is no doubt that the inspired record of scripture leaves no support for the theory of evolution. The account of creation specifies that each form of life was made 'after his kind' and that statement is used 10 times in Gen 1. The distinction of the various days in Gen 1 is also of importance, the evening and the morning being the time boundaries of each. Animal life was created in both day 5 and day 6 thus helping us to see the distinction of different forms of creation. The creation of man is unique within the chapter the terms used being different from any other part of creation. No animal was made in the image of God or after the divine likeness. Only to man was given both the ability and responsibility to be in dominion over all other forms of life.

The actual implant of a heart as described in the question does not throw doubt on the differentiation between men and animals. When we eat meat the body processes break the food into its constituent chemical parts and incorporate such into the various tissues of the body. This is mentioned in the Word of God as from after the flood (Gen 9:3). What the long term effects of such transplants will be has yet to be seen. It should also be remembered that artificial substances have been used to replace certain parts of the body, eg heart valve and joint prostheses, clearly this does not prove that we have evolved from inert substances!

The questioner has rightly drawn attention to an important NT passage which underlines

the earlier mentioned facts from Gen 1, it is possible that man in his human wisdom is beginning to tamper with the human body beyond what is intended by a wise creator.

J. R. Baker

QUESTION

Is there scripture for public rebuke in an assembly gathering where some not in assembly fellowship are present?

ANSWER

The present writer is not aware of any scripture which would sanction such a course of action. It would be most unwise to air assembly faults before the world or even before unbelievers who are not in fellowship in the local assembly involved.

Reference to public rebuke is found in 1 Tim 5:20 and, whilst there are divided views as to whether the sin of elders, or of any person in fellowship, is in view, the verse context shows that the 'all' before whom the rebuke is given refers to the saints within the assembly. Such would fear, but the unsaved if present would not necessarily have any such feelings.

'Tell it not in Gath' is a wise principle set in the OT and continued into the NT reminding us that in matters which could be influential to public testimony there should be godly discretion. "A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter" (Prov 11:13). Sin in an assembly should be publicly exposed and condemned and the offender appropriately disciplined. In such cases all not in assembly fellowship, including the children of local believers should be asked to withdraw.

J. R. Baker

Together in Christ (3)

by L. Goddard, Romford

The Faith (*Continued*)

I have often said, and I do not think it is without weight, that the standard and quality of worship in the assembly is largely dependent on the place we give to it in our homes. Of course one could discourse at length on the meaning of worship, but the psalmist gives it to us in a nutshell, "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (Psa 96:10).

Isaiah says, "Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste" (64:11). What a change had come in Israel's worship — and may we not say in ours too? whether in the home or in the house of God. How barren, how spiritless, how empty much of it seems. Think of the record of history, of revivals; think of the biographies of some of our fathers. Their ministry had depth and reality. How closely they seem to have walked with God; how precious and sweet their communion with Him. Does it not touch the depth of spiritual longing in the heart? Yet God is the same; the Lord Jesus has not changed; the Holy Spirit still has the same power of leading, directing, and instructing for every spiritual exercise; the word of God is full of matter which enlightens the soul and can lead to true worship. How much, of one form or another, has come in and burned up spirituality. It is not for me to lay my hand on any one thing; each individual, and every home,

knows where the particular besetting sin lies. In consequence all our precious things are laid waste: reading and meditating on God's word; prayer; singing His praises round an instrument of music — or without one. Such happy times stirred up the affections and warmed them towards God. Thus as men and women gathered to worship there was response, making a joyful noise to the Lord, the Rock of their salvation. Worship breathed in their prayers, instead of worry about themselves; appreciation of the "old corn of the land", of the manna, of the bread from heaven, of the strong meat of the Word were all bound up in one anthem of praise, worshipping the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Indeed, the stimulus of all was carried back again into the home; thus they grew in grace and in the knowledge not about God but of God — a great difference — that is, in personal experience of God. There is so much knowledge about God, but so little proven experience.

What we have studied so far in the home of Justus ("one that worshipped God") relates more or less to what is inside, private devotion and principle of the faith. Now look again; it reads, "whose house joined hard to the synagogue". What do we learn here? Is it not suggestive of the relationship between our home-life, its aims, ideals and issues, and the assembly? There should be nothing that comes between us and the fellowship of the house of

the Lord. This is searching, is it not?
How much comes between, hindering
communion and true worship!

Nothing between Lord, nothing
between!

Let me Thy glory see,
Draw my soul close to Thee;
Then speak in love to me,
Nothing between.

Nothing between Lord, nothing
between!

Thus may I walk with Thee,
Thee only may I see;
Thine only let me be,
Nothing between.

Cannot the lovely words of this
hymn be turned into a prayer of
spiritual depth and sincerity?

Finally, we will look at another
character of Justus' home, that of 1
Tim 3:2, "Given to hospitality". Evi-
dently this home was open to the
Lord's servants and the Lord's people;
such homes are looked upon by the
Lord Jesus as worthy homes. This
truth was clearly taught in Matt 10:11
by the Lord Jesus Himself when He
said, "Whatsoever city or town ye shall
enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and
there abide till ye go hence". Paul had
learned of its open door, and un-
doubtedly other believers had shared
and enjoyed happy, profitable and
edifying fellowship with such a host.

Thus some of the principles in
relation to the faith were clearly seen
and manifested in the life and home of
Justus:

worship: "One that worshipped God";
walk: "whose house joined hard to
the synagogue";

work: Paul "entered into a certain
man's house".

Can we wonder at God giving Justus
a place of honour on the scroll of
Scripture, the Holy Spirit recognising
and testifying to these characteristics in
this saint of God? Does not God say in
1 Sam 2:30 "Them that honour me, I
will honour"? Does our home measure
up to these divine principles? The
apostle Paul says that everyone has
been given a talent, a gift, "as the Lord
gave to every man" (1 Cor 3:5). How
are we using what the Lord has given?
Are we living up to these principles of
the faith in worship, in walk and in
work?

Only one life, 'twill soon be past;
Only what's done for Jesus will last.

I'll work on with pleasure, while
keeping my eyes
On the end of the field, where
standeth the Prize;
I would work for His glory, that
when we shall meet
I may have a large sheaf to lay down at
His feet.
That He, too, with pleasure His fruit
may review.
Is the Man in the glory a stranger to
you?

(The Man in the Glory)

The Morning Cometh!

A Shout!
A Triumphant note!
A Glorious Presence in the azure
sky!
A Gasp!
A thrill of joy,
And we are with Him in the
twinkling of an eye.

A. C. White

Misunderstood Texts (4)

by John J. Stubbs, Mayfield

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard ...”

The text partly quoted above from 1 Cor 2:9 is one which has often been used as the basis of elaborate descriptions of heaven and as a kind of proof statement for the realisation that Christians in the present life cannot possibly know all that is in store for them in the glorious future in heaven, but must be content to wait until those visions of glory burst upon them. Now we must readily admit that God has not fully revealed to us all the things that await us in the bliss of heaven. The greatest of saints down the ages have been ignorant of the many wonders of that which is to come. The language of the child of God when at home in the glory may well be as the queen of Sheba said of all that she saw at Solomon's palace: “The half hath not been told me” (1 Kings 10:7).

Here is a case, however, of not taking into consideration the immediate passage and separating v. 9 from v. 10. Such separating of the verses may well be unintentional but by not going on to the next verse we lose entirely the real purpose for which the apostle Paul freely quotes from Isaiah 64:4. Firstly, the context makes clear that Paul uses Isaiah 64:4 to show that the things of God cannot be entered into with the natural intellect. They are outside the knowledge of man naturally. Thus the eye, the ear and the heart may be taken here as equivalent to the whole sum of

our natural faculties. The natural faculties cannot help us to understand spiritual things. This is the great point Paul is emphasising in the context, for he goes on to make clear to the Corinthians that the Spirit of God has been given “that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God” (v. 12). The Holy Spirit is the great Teacher, Enlightener and Revealer of divine truth, even of the great truths that an OT prophet could not enter into. Secondly, there is a wider thought than this and it is that we have the contrast between an OT prophet and a NT apostle. We can see that what was hidden prior to NT times is now revealed by the Holy Spirit, for while the inspired prophet stopped with the recognition of man's inability to understand the things prepared by God for them that wait for Him, the inspired apostle can say, “But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit.” So the great teaching of this is that the believer, contrary to the feeling that the deep things of God, because they are so deep, should be left alone, will rather appreciate that all that God has communicated can be enjoyed and entered into now by means of the revelations of the Spirit of God in His present operation in the believer. It is true to say that we all must frankly acknowledge limitation in understanding divine things and that some believers too are slow to grasp what God has for them, but we must not forget that the Spirit of God who

indwells us has the perfect ability to reveal such to us in order that we may grow spiritually.

1 Cor 2: then is not telling us that God withholds something from us. It is not telling us that we must continue ignorance of spiritual things, for immediately in the following verse Paul goes on to make clear that the Spirit of God is the one who is the Revealer of these things. It is surely the difference between OT times and NT times and ought to provoke in us a real appreciation of the blessed and privileged position we are in in this present age. How thankful to God we should be for the ministry of the Spirit of God and yet how little we rely on Him to help us to intelligently enter into the present wealth of truth God has given. The prophet speaks of a people that *waited* for what God had prepared, whereas the apostle describes that, what God has prepared in times leading up to the coming into the world of Christ, He now gives to those who *love* Him.

Looking at the passage of 1 Cor 2 we see that what the nobles of the world did not know we know by the Spirit of God, namely is that the One who was on the cross was the Lord of glory (v. 8). What the OT prophet could not possibly enter into then has now been revealed by the Spirit for us to enjoy (v. 9). What the natural man cannot receive we have received, again through the ministry of the Spirit of God (v. 14). All this serves to illustrate how much we owe to the Spirit of God and what a peculiar blessing it is to have Him indwelling us. It is up to us to seek with earnest desire more and more of the revealing ministry of the Spirit.

The purpose then of drawing the readers' attention to this text is to correct a wrong use made of the verse and to cause us to make sure we quote vv. 9, 10 together in order to catch the real meaning, not of unknown blessings we cannot enter into now, but of a divine storehouse of truth which the Spirit of God can reveal to us.

The Bible

What an unspeakable privilege, comfort and stay, when the shadows of old age begin to steal upon our path, when physical powers are waning, to have the inerrant, inspired Word of God in our hands, telling us of a Father's love, assuring our consciences of pardon and forgiveness, of an eternal home where there is no crying, pain, separation or death.

It is diabolical cruelty to rob the dying saint of this blessed book, for unless it is God-breathed in all its parts, we have nothing but the shifting sands of human opinion, and are left to the torture of doubt in things where we need the most assurance.

Thank God, again and again, for His holy inspired Word—our precious Bible.

The LORD'S WORK and WORKERS

All items for "intelligence" columns of this magazine should be addressed direct to Editor, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and posted in time to arrive on or before 4th of month previous to issue.
Intimation of commencement of new assemblies should always carry commendation of nearest local assembly.

England & Wales FORTHCOMING

MAY 2

Chickerell, Near Weymouth: Budmouth Secondary School, Chickerell Road at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. P. Davies, F. Holmes.

Ealing: Grove Hall, The Grove at 7.00 p.m. H. A. Barnes.

Westcliff-on-Sea: Gospel Hall, Carlton Avenue at 7.30 p.m. E. Hughes. Mr Hughes continues in ministry on May 4 at 8.00 p.m.

Birmingham: Gospel Hall, Quarry Lane, Northfield at 3.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. N. Mellish, C. D. Stewart, Mr Mellish continues Monday to Thursday at 7.45 p.m.

Trent Vale: Swan Lane Gospel Hall, Claytonwood Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Grice.

Blackpool: Gospel Hall, Salthouse Avenue, off Rigby Road at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. F. Epps, A. Maunder.

Four Marks, Near Alton: Gospel Hall, Winchester Road at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. J. Harrison, T. Proffitt.

Derby: The Gospel Hall, Brunswick Street at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. C. Philips, G. Waugh.

MAY 4

Mansfield: Annual Conference in Baptist Centre, Rosemary Street at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. G. B. Fyfe, N. Gibbons. Mr Fyfe continues in ministry in Radford Street Hall 5th - 7th May at 7.30 p.m.

Eastbourne: Marine Hall, Seaside at 3.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. R. Hill.

Ludlow: Cleeview Gospel Hall Annual Conference at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. R. Revie, J. Burnett.

Derby: The Meeting Room, Curzon Street at 10.30 a.m. Prayer, 11.00 a.m. Bible Reading, 2.45 p.m. Praise, 3.00 p.m. Bible Reading, 6.00 p.m. till 8.00 p.m. Ministry G. Waugh, H. Barnes

MAY 9

Cheshunt: Mill Lane Chapel, High Street at

7.00 p.m. R. Dawes.

Northampton: Gospel Hall, Osborne Road at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. F. Epps and T. Proffitt.

Ely: Gospel Hall, Ship Lane at 7.30 p.m. R. Fenn.

Warrington: Gospel Hall, Forster Street at 7.00 p.m. G. Waugh.

Redrow, Morpeth: Hebron Hall, Main Road at 2.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. J. Gillespie, A. Meikle. Lord's Day at 3.00 p.m. W. Tinkler.

MAY 16

Cheltenham: Bethany Hall, Newton Road, Hesters Way at 7.30 p.m. A. Shearman.

Mitcham Junction: Gospel Hall, Percy Road Annual Conference at 3.15 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. A. M. S. Gooding, D. Ussher.

Coventry: Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street at 7.30 p.m. D. Ogden.

Luton: Onslow Road Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. E. Hughes.

Bedford: Kempston Christian Assembly, Manor Hall, Manor Drive at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. P. Bees.

MAY 16 - 20

Warrington: Hope Hall, Hawthorne Street, Bewsey. Saturday at 7.00 p.m. Weeknights 7.30 p.m. R. McPheat.

MAY 16 - 21

Redditch: Foxlydiate Crescent Gospel Hall, Bletchley Estate. Saturday at 7.30 p.m. Monday to Thursday at 7.45 p.m. J. B. D. Page.

MAY 23

Northampton: The Gospel Hall, Spencer Bridge Road at 7.30 p.m. and Sunday at 4.15 p.m. S. Burditt.

Cwmbran: Gospel Hall, Oatfield Road at 3.15 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. N. Mellish, C. Hocking.

MAY 25

St. Austell: Seymour Gospel Hall, Slades Road at 3.15 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. J. Hunter, J.

Riddle. Mr Hunter continues in ministry 26th-28th May.

Sheringham: Brook Hall, Cromer Road Annual Conference in St. Andrew's Methodist Church, Cromer Road, at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. R. Fenn, E. Hughes.

MAY 30

Leicester: York Street Gospel Hall, off Granby Street at 7.30 p.m. A. J. Maunder.

London W10: Hope Hall, Kilburn Lane at 7.00 p.m. A. Leckie. Mr Leckie continues in ministry 1st-3rd June at 8.00 p.m.

Shillingstone, Dorset: Portman Hall, Shillingstone at 3.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m., J. Hunter, A. C. Gooding, Monday to Thursday. 7.30 p.m., J. Hunter.

MAY 31 - JUNE 21

North Staffordshire: Evangelistic Work Campaign to Biddulph. Peter Brandon. Using Hebron Hall and Town Hall.

JUNE 6

Ealing: Grove Hall, The Grove at 7.00 p.m. J. Kirkham.

Westcliff-on-Sea: The Gospel Hall, Carlton Avenue at 7.30 p.m. E. Parmenter. Mr Parmenter continues in ministry 8th and 9th June at 8.00 p.m.

Blyth: Gospel Hall, Devonworth Place, at 2.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. J. Hay, P. Coulson.

JUNE 13

Skelmanthorpe: Saville Road Hall at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. E. Hughes, D. West.

Ely, Cambs.: At City of Ely College, Needhams Block, Downham Road at 3.15 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. B. Price, K. Rudge.

JUNE 20

West Mersea: Assembly Hall, East Road at 3.15 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. T. Proffit, F. Epps.

Scotland FORTHCOMING

MAY 2

Dreghorn: Ebenezer Hall at 3.00 p.m. S. Jennings, J. Hay, J. Harrison. Lord's Day at 2.00 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. S. Jennings.

Dunfermline: Abbot Hall conference in West Baptist Church, Chalmers Street at 3.00 p.m. J. Adrain, W. McKee, W. K. Morrison.

Cullen: Town Hall at 3.00 p.m. R. McPheat, D. Morgan, A. Wilson (Airdrie).

Lanark: Gospel Hall at 3.30 p.m. J. Aitken, G. Jackson, A. Naismith.

MAY 2 - 8

Ayr: Ayr Bible Readings in Leisure Centre, 24 Wellington Square. Readings 4.00 p.m. J. Flannigan. Ministry 7.15 p.m. A. J. Gamble, J. Flannigan.

MAY 3

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street, off Maryhill Road at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

MAY 3 - 24

Chapelhall: Gospel Hall, Special Gospel Campaign at 8.00 p.m. Sunday to Thursday. Joe Baxter.

MAY 9

Saltcoats: Bethany Hall, Ailsa Road at 3.15 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. A. Gamble, J. Paterson, J. Rodgers.

Greengairs: Conference in Primary School at 3.00 p.m. J. Baker, J. Sinclair, J. Grant.

Blackburn: Gospel Hall, Bathgate Road at 3.30 p.m. J. Baxter, J. Harrison, I. Steele.

MAY 10

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street, off Maryhill Road at 8.30 p.m. S. Arbuthnot.

MAY 16

Dundee: Meadowside Gospel Hall, 2 Euclid Crescent at 7.00 p.m. J. Grant.

Oakley: Blairhall Assembly Conference in Inzievar Primary School, Station Road, Oakley at 3.00 p.m. R. Revie, T. Aitken, A. Legge.

Newmains: Gospel Hall at 3.30 p.m. A. Naismith, J. Gillespie, J. Riddle.

New Cumnock: Bridgend Gospel Hall at 3.00 p.m. till 6.30 p.m. K. Stapley, J. Paton, W. Barr.

Glasgow: Gospel Hall, 100 Finlay Drive, Dennistoun, (formerly Porch Hall), Annual Conference at 3.15 p.m. J. Anderson, A. W. Foster, A. J. Gamble.

MAY 17

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street, off Maryhill Road at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

MAY 23

Forres: In Applegrove Primary School, Orchard Road at 3.00 p.m. J. Harrison, G. Waugh, R. Walker.

MAY 24

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street, off Maryhill Road at 8.30 p.m. S. Arbuthnot.

MAY 24 - JUNE 4

Kirkconnel: Gospel Hall Lord's Day at 3.00 p.m. Monday to Thursday at 7.30 p.m. A. M. S. Gooding.

MAY 30

Lanarkshire: Gospel Work Rallies at Law Gospel Hall. Prayer 3.30 p.m. till 4.00 p.m., Open Air 4.00 p.m. till 5.30 p.m., Tea 5.30 p.m. till 6.00 p.m., Ministry 6.00 p.m. till 7.30 p.m. J. Aitken, S. McKenzie.

MAY 31

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street, off Maryhill Road at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

JUNE 6

Mayfield: Gospel Hall Annual Conference in Combined School, Stone Avenue at 3.00 p.m. K. Stapley, M. Radcliffe, S. Downs.

Lanarkshire: Gospel Work Rallies at Forge-wood Gospel Hall. Prayer at 3.30 p.m. till 4.00 p.m., Open Air 4.00 p.m. till 5.30 p.m., Tea 5.30 p.m. till 6.00 p.m., Ministry 6.00 p.m. till 7.00 p.m. J. Paton.

N. Ireland FORTHCOMING

MAY 2 - 5

Ballyduff: A. McShane, J. Grant, S. Patterson, F. Stallan, R. Eadie.

MAY 9

Mullafernaghan Annual Conference, 1.30 p.m.

MAY 23

Enniskillen Half-yearly Conference. Ministry of the Word, 3.00 p.m. till 5.00 p.m. Missionary Reports, 6.00 p.m. till 8.00 p.m.

MAY 30

Ballymacashon Annual Conference, 2.00 p.m.

England & Wales REPORTS

E. LANCS., E. CHESHIRE, GREATER MANCHESTER AND YORKSHIRE

Just before the commencement of a gospel meeting one Sunday evening, a man in his seventies called at a gospel hall in Manchester, asking to see 'the minister'. A local brother was due to speak that night and he explained that there was no 'minister'. The man replied, 'I'm dying. I've only got six months to live. I must see an ordained minister.' The brother told him, 'You don't want an ordained minister, friend, you want Christ,' and invited him to stay for the meeting. The visitor would not stay but came back at 7.30 p.m. and explained he had cancer of the throat. He had been to the local Church of England but the clergyman was out and the lady at the door had shut the door in his face.

The way of salvation was explained to him and he received a Bible, promising to be back the next Sunday. The following week he said he had found Christ and started to attend on a Lord's day evening. During the weeks that followed, he began to witness brightly in the neighbourhood and one of his relatives later said: 'The change in him is marvellous. Local believers helped and visited the gentleman at his home. Shortly before he died the man asked for his Bible and actually passed into the Lord's presence with a Bible in his hands. His relatives attended the funeral service at the hall and the gospel meeting the following Sunday.

Leeds: J. Flannigan had a week of Bible reading at the assembly at Harehills.

WEST MIDLANDS

Birmingham, Bartley Green: This small assembly on the west side of the city has not been numerically large for most of its history. The hall has suffered from the problem of age and vandalism, but the saints have worked hard to improve the premises overall. They continue on seeking to maintain the testimony for the Glory of God, valuing the prayers of the Lord's people far and wide.

Ludlow: The saints have seen the visits of A. T. Shearman, J. Hall and C. Raggett for their monthly Saturday gathering. The ministry has been appreciated, with support from believers travelling from Hereford, Shrewsbury and farther afield. The attendance has not been great despite visiting believers, but the saints seek to carry on. A

series of subjects relating to the gospel has been made known in the town in an effort to interest the unsaved in coming each Lord's day evening. Unfortunately the response has been poor, but there are some teenage girls showing interest for which prayer would be especially valued.

Let us pray for the many small assemblies, some somewhat remote from the cities and major towns, and seek to encourage them to go on for God, as often as we can.

GREATER LONDON

Two weeks of gospel meetings with Martin Baker were held recently in Hope Hall, Kilburn Lane, London, W10. Four thousand invitations were given out in the district and door-to-door visitation was undertaken before and during the weeks of meetings. Unsaved were present each night and one lady, for whom the assembly had prayed for ten years, was saved. Prayer would be valued for unsaved who attended the meetings and continue to show interest.

KENT AND EAST SUSSEX

Wainscott: The Medway and District Missionary Conference was this year held at Wainscott Gospel Hall. Very good numbers gathered to hear excellent reports of the Lord's work in Japan and Eastern Europe by R. Lower and M. Baker respectively. Ministry on the Friday evening was given by T. Bathgate.

Scotland

REPORTS

STRATHCLYDE

Glasgow, Harley Street: Our brother, J. Baxter, has been visiting the homes in the district and preaching the gospel each Lord's Day during March. The assembly was greatly encouraged when a middle-aged lady and a young man in his early twenties (both of whom have been attending frequently during the past two years) confessed Christ as Saviour during the visit of our brother.

LOTHIANS AND BORDERS

Uphall: J. Baxter, while engaged in tracting in Broxburn/Uphall district, came in contact with a brother in his seventies who had once been in fellowship. As a result, the brother has been restored to the Lord and to fellowship in the assembly.

Tayport: During a time of gospel effort in Tayport, Newport and Wormit with J. Baxter, the small assembly had the joy of receiving

back into fellowship a young man who had been away for some time. Two other backsliders have been attending the meetings and, during the time brother Joe was there, four unsaved people attended the gospel meetings.

Port Seton: R. McPheat had meetings for ministry and gospel for the last four Lord's Days in March. The gospel meetings, which commenced at 8.00 p.m., were most encouraging, with the hall filled each evening and a good number of unsaved present. Support from neighbouring assemblies was much appreciated by the saints. R. Miller shared in the gospel meetings each night. We feel there will be "signs following the preaching of the Word".

GRAMPIAN

Aberdeen, Fountain Hall: During March, David MacMaster has been conducting children's meetings in one of the local schools. Despite little enthusiasm from the headmaster, around fifty children attended, boys in particular listening well. Some of the parents came to the prize-giving night in the Gospel Hall.

Aberdeen, Holburn Hall: Again during March, the Holburn assembly held a Gospel Campaign with Jim Smythe. The meetings were well attended, with quite a few unsaved coming, including five young ladies for several nights. One woman was saved, a back-slider under great conviction, and the believers have been greatly challenged. The speaker has been deeply moved by the apathy of the people in the City to the gospel.

N. Ireland

REPORTS

CO. ANTRIM

Clough: J. Martin and W. Jennings expect to commence in portable hall, April 26th, about two miles from the village.

Broughshane: Ministry meetings by J. G. Hutchinson for one week were well attended and helpful.

Kells: A. M. S. Gooding commenced April 5 for two weeks' ministry.

Ballywatermoy: Annual Believers' Meeting, Saturday 4th April. G. Harris, S. Jennings, E. Fairfield, W. Ferguson.

CO. ARMAGH & CO. MONAGHAN

Armagh: N. Turkington and S. Ferguson have finished ten weeks in the gospel.

Meetings were good, with large numbers of unsaved attending. Some blessing was seen.

Erryroe (Co. Monaghan): S. McBride continues in the gospel. Do pray for this most needy part.

MONAGHAN CONFERENCE

This was considered a fair conference, held in a school with numbers much increased. Those who took part were A. McShane, W. J. Nesbitt, D. Morgan, J. Hay and N. Turkington.

CO. DOWN

Ballynahinch: J. G. Hutchinson and J. Allen intend, God Willing, to commence tent meetings on 31st May on site at edge of town. Pray for this needy town, that it may be a time of visitation.

Bessbrook: J. Hawthorne and T. McNeill commenced 5th April. This is a difficult area close to the border with the Republic. Prayer requested for blessing.

Gransha: A. McShane to commence gospel meetings at end of April. Prayer valued.

CO. FERMANAGH

Newtonbutler: G. McKinley and B. Glendinning have commenced gospel meetings in a portable hall. Prayer requested for this needy area.

CO. LONDONDERRY AND CO. DONEGAL

Coleraine: W. J. Nesbitt had seven weeks of well-attended meetings. No one has professed to be saved.

Churchtown: G. Stewart and S. Paterson continue in their mobile hall. Among those attending there are about 20 Postal Sunday School pupils.

Magheracorrán: The Annual Conference was well attended and helpful ministry was given by D. Kane, G. Harris, J. Brown, T. McNeill, S. Patterson and J. Hawthorne.

CO. TYRONE

Birney (near Strabane): Cottage meetings—N. Coulter and D. Lowry are being encouraged with good numbers and blessing in salvation.

BELFAST AND DISTRICT

Albertbridge Road: R. Wishart and R. Jordan continue in the gospel. There is a good feeling in the meetings, and encouraging numbers are attending.

Bloomfield: J. Hay is having good attendances at the special gospel meetings, with a number of "outsiders" coming.

Castlereagh: S. Jennings and J. Flannigan

have finished four weeks in the gospel, using a chart. The meetings were exceptionally well attended and one man was saved. Immediately after the meetings finished this gentleman's girlfriend also professed faith in Christ.

Cregagh Street: E. Wishart is working hard in the area in visitation, but the response so far has been disappointing.

Dunmurry: D. Kane and D. Morgan (Wales) have finished nine weeks in the gospel. The attendance and interest was good throughout. A feature of the meetings was the regular attendance of a number from the Shankill Road area of Belfast. One man accepted Christ as Saviour and others were concerned about salvation.

Oldpark Gospel Hall: We regret to announce that because of the deteriorating condition of the hall and depleting numbers, the Christians have now decided to disperse and join with other nearby assemblies. We would like to take this opportunity of thanking the many friends who so willingly gave of their time and talent to encourage, comfort and cheer the saints, especially during the latter more difficult years. "We will praise Him for all that is past, and trust Him for all that's to come."

Addresses PERSONALIA

Change of address for Mr and Mrs J. Rowberry: c/o Mr B. Merriman, 9 Broxash Close, Flaggoner's Green, Bromyard, Herefordshire. Tel: 0885 83704.

All correspondence for Ebenezer Hall Assembly, Dreghorn, should now be addressed to Mr John Watson, 169 Main Street, Dreghorn. Tel: Irvine 211076.

All correspondence for Gospel Hall, St James Road, Forfar, should now be addressed to Mr J. C. Robertson, Taylor Street, Forfar, Angus, DD8 3JQ. Tel. 0307-66871.

Believers on holiday in south west Cornwall and the Lizard area will be warmly received at Trevethan Gospel Chapel, Falmouth. Breaking of Bread 11.00 p.m., Gospel Meeting 6.00 p.m., Prayer and Bible Reading 7.30 p.m. on Thursday.

Ilfracombe, Devon: Please note that the Ilfracombe assembly meet at present in Assembly Gospel Hall, Regent Place, Ilfracombe (down passage opposite Meadows Opticians, High Street).

Bournemouth, Dorset: All Christian visitors warmly welcomed at Victoria Gospel Hall, Victoria Park Road, Winton, Bournemouth. Sundays, Lord's Supper 11.00 a.m., Gospel 6.30 p.m. Car Park. Tel. 529425.

With CHRIST

Mr ANDREW JORDAN, on 16th December, aged 84. Our brother was saved at 14 and was in fellowship in Albertbridge for over 60 years, where he was a help and blessing among the young in earlier years, also village work. Since early 1985 he was in fellowship in Cregagh Street, Belfast, where he was a regular attender until a short time before his home-call. He will be missed.

Mrs MARY LINDSAY, on 25th December in her 101st year. Our sister was commended to Cregagh Street Assembly, Belfast, in 1951 from Kilmore, Co. Tyrone—last foundation member from Kilmore. Saved in her early twenties, convicted of her need through a tract left by the side of a well. During her time in hospital over her last years, was faithful to her Lord in witnessing to the doctors and nurses. Remember her family in prayer.

Mr ALBERT PENNEY, on 16th January. Our brother was in fellowship in Abingdon Hall, Glasgow, since his conversion in May 1943. A studious lad, Arthur showed great promise; however, home duties, after his father died, and indifferent health kept him away from many of the assembly meetings. His health deteriorating rapidly, he was called home. Pray for James, his surviving brother, who as yet shows no inclination towards salvation.

Mrs LUCY WALSH, suddenly on 18th January, aged 74. Saved for over 40 years, received into Cregagh Street Assembly, Belfast, on her own testimony in 1956. Our sister used her hands in sewing for missionary work for the Lord. Her son, who is still unsaved, was moved by his mother's death.

Mrs HELEN MORRICE, on 4th February, aged 86. Saved in June 1922, John 6:37 being the means of her salvation. Some years later our sister was received into fellowship at Fraserburgh where she continued for almost 50 years. During that time, many of the saints benefited from her kindness and hospitality. Although restricted latterly to the Senior Citizens' Home, often she was heard to sing "He has a home prepared for me". She now knows of a Truth, "To die is to gain", Phil. 1:21.

Mrs JESSIE SUTHERLAND, on 7th February, aged 77. Our sister, who quietly and consistently maintained a godly testimony, was saved in 1931. She was baptised and received into fellowship at Fraserburgh in 1950 where she continued until her health declined and she was unable to gather with the Lord's people. She and her husband together showed kindness to friend and stranger alike.

Mr SAM HAY, on 18th February, aged 70. Saved in the year 1933, baptised and received into fellowship at Ebenezer Hall, Dreghorn, where he continued steadfastly with a deep interest in the assembly's well-being. One who truly loved the Lord and loved His Word. He will be greatly missed. Please remember his wife and daughter, Jean, in prayer.

Mr JAMES DUNWOODIE, on 22nd February, aged 81. Saved as a lad of 17 in Loan Hall, Stevenston, baptised shortly afterwards and received into fellowship where he consistently bore a bright testimony until the last few years when he was in hospital preventing him attending the gatherings which he lived for. Ever keen to preach the Gospel, particularly in the open air, which consisted of quotations from scripture extensively quoted from memory.

Mrs JENNY BERNARD, on 22nd February. Our sister was saved in early January, 1925, and in March of that year took her place among the saints at Abingdon Hall, Glasgow. She was a quiet, spiritually contented believer who gave her time and talents to our Lord's service. Visitation of the sick and those who for any reason were confined to home or hospital. Also her help among the women's work in the assembly. Our sister's testimony can be borne out by these words: "Thou shalt be missed for thy seat shall be empty." Prayer requested for all members of her family.

Mrs EMMA WILKINSON, on 25th February, aged 88. Saved as a girl of 12, she was received into the Tassagh Assembly, but spent the greater part of her life in the Fintona district, Co. Tyrone, where she was in happy fellowship. Her long life was one of consistent testimony and, towards the end, with longing to be with her Redeemer whom she loved. Leaves two sons and a daughter for whom prayer is requested.

Mr ALEXANDER PATERSON, on 3rd March, aged 78. Our brother was saved as a lad of 15 during a gospel campaign conducted in Hebron Hall, Glengarnock, by J. L. Barrie. He was in fellowship there for many years before moving to Kilbirnie Gospel Hall in 1958. A quiet but consistent brother, he liked to take part in male voice choirs. He will be greatly missed for his godly example.

Mr WILLIE SUTHERLAND, on 12th March, aged 78. Our brother was saved and baptised in 1930 and often spoke of his experience "amongst the hymnbooks" at the back of the gospel hall in Sandend. He and his family moved to Fraserburgh in 1916 where he continued to maintain a bright gospel witness in the town and among his "fellow fishermen". Whilst noted for his personal witness, he would also preach publicly of his Saviour. For some years he lead the Sunday School and the effort he expended is still having its effect presently. Remember the family in prayer.

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Mr THOMAS HUGH SKELLY, on 19th March, aged 88. Saved as a young man of 26 in 1924 some time after attending tent meetings by the late brethren Dr W. Matthews and Mr John Hogg. He was in fellowship in Shanaghan for upwards of 60 years and recognised as a true guide in the assembly. The funeral was exceptionally large when both Protestant and Catholic neighbours with brethren from many assemblies gathered, hearing the word of God with great respect. Remember the family in prayer.

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Booklet *Why Me?* reviewed last month is available from author, L. G. Barton, 64 White Road, Quinton, Birmingham, B32 2AG, at 80p per copy including postage.

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EDITORIAL **Searchlight**

That there is a distinction between headship and lordship few would deny; defining that distinction is less easy. It will be sufficient for our present purpose to observe that in the ultimate lordship may be imposed (Isa 45:23); the head, while it has authority, never acts in this way. In order for the natural head to function correctly three things are needful: recognition, acknowledgement and response. Recognition relates to the signals the limb receives from the head, acknowledgement to those sent by the limb to the head, and response to the obedience of the limb.

In a healthy body there is constant communication between the head and the member—the head constantly aware of the need of each, co-ordinating the functioning of each, anticipating and supplying every requirement of each. It is to this that Col 2:19 alludes: “. . . the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth”. If due to disease or injury the link between a member and the head is damaged, the member itself suffers: it may become subject to involuntary spasms or simply wither. The body too loses, loses the benefit of what that “joint” previously supplied.

Writing of the believers in Colosse Paul describes some as “not holding the head” (2:19); the preceding verses give a clue as to the cause and, while there may be some doubt

as to the spiritual standing of the persons actually referred to, the principles are relevant to us.

Verse 8 warns against allowing ourselves to be kidnapped or carried away (such is the meaning of “spoil”) and exposes the method of the kidnapper: “through philosophy and vain deceit”. Now philosophy is literally the love of wisdom, the desire to be counted wise or enlightened—and who likes to be considered naive or old-fashioned? This has been a fatal weakness of the human heart ever since Eve saw that the fruit “was to be desired to make one wise”, and was never more apparent than in the present day. It besots a man’s mind, clouding his spiritual perception and leaving him vulnerable to the plausible arguments that the devil plies.

Seeing that God has ordained that headship should be operative in society at large, in home life, in corporate assembly life, and in our personal lives, is it too much to suggest that the breakdown in the practical realisation of this great truth (or the wanton disregard of it) lies at the root of many of our present-day ailments? Can we not echo the words of the apostle in another connection, “I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ” (2 Cor 11:3)?

K.S.

Haggai

by B. Greenhow, Falkirk

As with any exposition of the Scriptures, the view presented depends upon the perception and circumstances of the expositor. This particular exposition does not attempt to provide a detailed, structured analysis of the book (which in the case of this prophecy is quite clear). Rather, it will attempt to set out some principles on the gracious ways of God with His people both then and now. Briefly, Haggai's prophecy is a grouping of six distinct but sequential prophecies which were given to a remnant of the people of Israel, covering a period of less than four months, during the reign of Darius the Persian (1:1). Compare the "first day" of the "sixth month" (1:1), with "twenty fourth day" of the "ninth month" (2:10,19).

The six prophecies are: **1.** ch 1:1-2; **2.** ch 1:3-12; **3.** ch. 1:13-15; **4.** ch. 2:1-9; **5.** ch. 2:10-19; and, **6.** ch. 2:20-23.

One of the major themes of this prophecy focusses upon God's sovereign ways with His people of old, and demonstrates that His heart was always towards them and His hand always supportive. It did not matter how weak they were numerically, spiritually or legally, they were His by redemptive and covenant relationship—"According to the word which I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt" (2:5). More on this later!

Haggai is also an encouragement to God's people in this late age, for the Lord's words to the "eleven" (Matt

28:16), that numerically, spiritually and legally weak remnant was (as He was about to leave them too!), "... lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world" (Matt 28:20). "He is faithful that promised" (Heb 10:23).

Another major theme of the prophecy is the way it demonstrates that the written Word of God is "living" (Heb 4:12). That is, what was written to a people long since dead and gone is relevant to a people over 2,500 years later, of whom they could not even have imagined! "Now all these things happened unto them for examples, and they are written for our admonition (ie to be borne in mind) upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor 10:11). All the Word of God is relevant to all the people of God in all circumstances and in all ages!

It is necessary to set out in some detail the background of this ancient prophecy, in order to derive some of the benefits of Haggai's ministry today.

The People As indicated previously, the prophet spoke to a "remnant" of the nation of Israel (1:12,14; 2:2) who came back in the first return from exile 536BC (Ezra 2:1-2). He was contemporary with Zechariah (Ezra 5:1). It should therefore be noted that the ministry of the two prophets was to the same remnant and the same background should be borne in mind!

The Temple The remnant under the leadership of Zerubbabel the governor

and Joshua the high priest, had begun to rebuild the temple (Ezra 3:8). The gathering centre, the House of God was being raised again. However, such efforts for God always provoke the enemy into action—"Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel... the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah and troubled them in building... to frustrate their purpose..." (Ezra 4:1-5). Eventually, by using subtle methods, they prevailed "... and made them cease by force and power" the result being "Then ceased the work of the house of God" (Ezra 4:23-24).

The Enemy The Enemy is cunning (Gen 3:1), and so "subtle" were his persistent attacks on that little remnant, that over a period of time, the work ceased. Ezra ch. 4 shows us that Satan has many arrows ("fiery darts", Eph 6:16) for his bow and if at first he does not succeed, he will try, try and keep on trying to find a chink in our armour (Eph 6:11). Even in the life of the Lord, after "being forty days tempted of the devil" (Luke 4:2), when he had "ended all the temptation, he departed from Him for a season" (v. 13). Please note, it was only FOR A SEASON.

Satan used different methods against the people, particularly against their leaders, Zerubbabel and Joshua (Ezra 4:2-3). He was therefore attacking those who represented government and communion (the throne and the altar). In weakening the position of these two men, he was attempting to break God's authority OVER His people (Rom 13:1; Hag 2:23) and His people's communion WITH Him (Heb

5:1; Hag 2:14). He was attempting to break a twofold cord—God's authority DOWNWARDS and the people's communion UPWARDS. If either of these are broken, any work for God will cease!

Satan's Methods 1. *Compromises* (Ezra 4:1-3). The people of the land said "Let us build with you, for we seek your God as ye do, and... sacrifice unto Him..." (v. 2). So many people, then and now, say that they seek God to serve Him as we do, but we should always beware of wolves in sheep's clothing (Acts 20:29). Zerubbabel was aware of the principle of the unequal yoke and that these people were "workers of unrighteousness" and that the "temple of God" had nothing to do with "idols" (2 Cor 6:14-18). He refused saying, "Ye have nothing to do with us to build a house unto our God..." (v. 3). We should also be ever wary of those who claim to be "with us" when they are in reality not "of us"—"Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matt 7:16).

2. *Legal Processes*. Having failed in the matter of compromise, Satan changed tack. Firstly, over a period of several years, he used prolonged legal arguments in the courts of those days, to slow down the work (Ezra 4:4-6). Note that a literal translation of "weakened", v. 4, is "were weakened", ie a process over a period of time. Satan can frequently use a long term distance strategy suggested by the "darts" (arrows) of Eph 6:16 which are designed to hit a more distant target. Secondly, having weakened them, he stopped them by legal "force and power" (v. 24). This time he used the "sword of justice" in the hands of "the people of the land" to wield the

“death blow” to the work of the Lord. So he thought!

The Scriptures teach us that we should not be “ignorant of his devices” (ie purposes, 2 Cor 2:11) and broadly speaking, the above attacks on the remnant, represent Satan in his two main guises. Firstly, as an “angel of

light” (2 Cor 11:14), that “father of lies” (John 8:44) in the mouths of the people of the land (the compromises). Note also the liars who said they were apostles (“sent of God”) in Rev 2:2. Secondly, as a “roaring lion seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet 5:8)— the “force and power” of Ezra 4:24.

To be continued.

He was delivered (2)

by J.W. Ferguson, Belfast

The previous section of this paper outlined the three aspects of the handing over of Christ to be crucified, beginning with the betrayal by Judas to the leaders of Israel, followed by their handing Him over to Pilate as the one who had official authority to execute Him, and climaxed by the weak response of Pilate in handing over an innocent man for crucifixion. We saw how the Scripture links these together by the repetition of the word translated in the various contexts as “betray, deliver, give (up)”.

God delivered Him up for us all. We are thankful that the story as we have examined it so far is only one side of what happened. The other side transforms the grim account and fills it with hope and consolation. Paul gives us the other aspect in Romans. First in chap. 4, verse 25:

“who was *delivered* for our offences and was raised again for our justification”; then in chap. 8, verse 32: “He that spared not his own Son, but *delivered* him up for us all...”. This is the supreme example of God working through and yet in spite of sinners’ actions to bring about His sovereign will. In a deeper, fuller, truer sense the events which we have followed from Gethsemane to Calvary were the outworking of God’s will rather than the will of the Jewish leaders. The most concise expression of this is in Acts 2:23 (though the word “delivered” in this verse is a different word): “Him being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay” (RV). Here is the wonder of God’s grace in response to man’s sin; God was as willing in grace to give His own Son to be

crucified as men were in their sinfulness to crucify Him. We should note here that in Isaiah 53:6, after the statement of men's sin and straying, the Septuagint Greek version literally reads "and the Lord *delivered* him up for our sins".

He gave Himself up for us. But that is not all. It is Paul again who gives a further facet of this divine gem. To show that it is God's will that a husband should love his wife with a practical, sacrificial love he cites the example of Christ—"even as Christ also loved the church, and *gave* himself for it" (Eph 5:25). "Gave" in this verse is the word we have been considering, usually translated as "deliver". Then again, that Christians generally should continue habitually to love one another Paul exhorts them to "walk in love, as Christ also has loved us, and *hath given* himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph 5:2). It is easier to take this in on a grand cosmic scale, that in His great plan God loved the world and Christ in love gave Himself for a vast company of His own, but Paul does not stop there. In Galatians he states that in relation to the law and law-keeping he has been crucified, crucified with Christ... "and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and *gave* himself up for me" (Gal 2:20 RV). What an inducement to the maintenance of true Christian love and to the life of true Christian liberty! Christ was as willing to give Himself up as His Father was to give Him, as His enemies were to hand Him over to one another to be crucified. And I know that it was for *me*.

The night He was betrayed. In 1 Cor 11:23-25 Paul refers to the institution of the Lord's Supper. He could have used many different ways of indicating when it was that the Lord Jesus gave the disciples bread and wine and taught them to remember Him; the expression which Paul uses is "in the night in which he was *betrayed*". He uses the word which we have seen in the context of Judas' *betrayal* of his Master to the Jews; of the Jews *handing Him over* to Pilate; of Pilate *handing Him over* to the soldiers and to the will of the Jews; of God *giving Him up* to die; of the Lord Jesus Himself *giving Himself up* for our sins. We may well let our minds dwell in worship on the love of God our Father and of the Lord Jesus when we think of His quiet reference to "my body" and "my blood" even while "he was being betrayed", for the tense used in 1 Cor 11 is continuous. Whatever was in Judas' mind, whatever the Jewish leaders thought was happening that night, whatever Pilate felt the next morning about his failure to wash his hands of "this just person", there can be no doubt in our minds about what God intended or what Christ saw Himself achieving in that night as He went forth to meet Judas and his party. A little of what was in His mind can be touchingly illustrated by His words while He was being arrested: "if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way." In order that we might go free He must be delivered up. Surely all these ideas are present in the expression in 1 Cor 11—"in the night in which he was being handed over".

Concluded.

How It Began (1)

Rockhampton, Gloucestershire

The editors appreciate this contribution from an aged brother, W. H. Tiley; he is partially blind and dictated his recollections in true Pauline fashion to an amanuensis—his 87-year-old wife.

My home was in London. I was brought up in a nominally christian home, my mother, father and all the family attending the Church of England. As I had quite a good voice I was a choir-boy. In the course of time I was confirmed and, with my brothers and sister, was a regular communicant but I had no knowledge of salvation through faith in the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The first world war broke out and when I attained 18 years of age I joined Kitchener's army. At the end of the war I was demobbed and, as my parents had moved from London to Newton, Rockhampton, I joined my mother there, my father having by that time passed away. My brother and I started to attend the local church where I met my future wife. We were all regular church attenders and communicants and also joined the choir, but had no knowledge of Christ Jesus as personal Saviour. In 1928 we were married and settled down in a small business in the little village of Rockhampton. I soon became the people's church warden and my wife was treasurer of the church council; thus we were well established in the Church of England.

In June 1932 the rector announced that he was leaving Rockhampton and

going to another "living" in the Midlands. As I was church warden it was my task to find a minister who would do duty while another rector was found to take charge of the parish. Having no idea who to ask I sought the departing rector's help and he approached the Reverend Frank Marriet of Weston-Super-Mare, who agreed to come for a month. The Reverend Marriet was a master at the Missionary and Churchman's Bible College at Clifton, Bristol. He was with us for five months. The first Sunday he was with us he preached the Lord Jesus as a personal Saviour. During the ensuing week my wife and I both accepted Him as Saviour, though neither of us can recall a particular Scripture or point to a specific time—the Lord knows.

This clergyman filled the church Sunday by Sunday; we had wonderful times while he ministered to us. In the November the new rector arrived and sad to say he was dead as regards salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

In June 1933 I decided to leave the Church of England. After the service one Sunday morning I told the rector in the vestry that I was leaving because I was saved. He replied, "It is presumption to say that your sins are forgiven through faith in Jesus Christ"; he said he believed that by his good works he would go to heaven. The Scripture that finally convinced us that we could no longer stay in the church was 2 Cor 6:14, 17, 18.

During the winter of 1932–33 we had been going to Berkeley Gospel Hall for the Bible study, so, on leaving the church, we joined them. They were interdenominational and preached the gospel faithfully. At the same period we would join in an open-air meeting on Saturday evenings on Bristol Broad Quay; my brother who had been saved by then accompanied us. This brought us into contact with believers from the assemblies. My business brought me into contact also with a Mr Cunningham, a provision merchant, who was a well-known brother.

The children we had taught in the church Sunday school came to our house on Sunday afternoons; we also held a gospel meeting there during the winter. It thus became necessary to provide a building for ourselves as we then numbered six believers. A small hall was constructed from war disposal material on a plot of land given by my wife's mother. The building was completed early in 1934, and as I had to contact Echoes of Service, Bath, for the purpose of putting the hall into a trust for trusteeship, I told Mr W. E.

Vine the whole story. He said, "Have you been baptised?" When I replied, No, he stamped his foot and said, "Be baptised at once!"

The 2nd April was arranged by the Berkeley brethren for the baptisms of my brother, my wife, my wife's mother—she was 76 years old and had been saved as a young woman—and myself. In the event twenty-two friends decided they had not been baptised, so in all twenty-six were baptised. On Saturday 4th April the hall was opened by Mr Vine; other with the ministry; Mr J. Teskey from Tobago also took part. The following Lord's day morning we gathered to break bread. In those early months a brother from Bristol invited some speakers to preach the gospel and well-known brethren from Bristol helped to minister the Word. This was a great help to us, as he brought only the cream of Bristol, so we were fed on good sound NT truths from the very inception of the assembly.

We are now thirty-three in number and celebrated our fiftieth anniversary on May day 1984.

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Balaam's Parables

by P. Harding, Manchester

Balaam's great sin was that of covetousness—he loved the wages of unrighteousness (2 Pet 2:15; Jude 11). We see from the incident in Numbers 22 that his heart was really set upon the rewards of Balak while outwardly he wished to keep right with God. He wanted to please self and yet not displease God. God had plainly stated, when Balak had sent for him to come and curse Israel, "Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed" (Num 22:12). Nothing could be clearer but he really wanted to go and was displeased because God had forbidden him. This is very clear from the second appeal to him from Balak. Balak enquires of God again (Num 22:19), despite the clear statement of God on the first occasion. This indicates a heart bent on covetousness while giving the appearance of obedience to God. How solemn it is to see that one can have an outward appearance which is opposite in character to the desires and motives of the heart. Such hypocrisy should be foreign to the believer. On this second occasion, although God said "if the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them" (Num 22:20), it seems clear that he did not wait for them to come. Balaam was so eager to carry out his own desire that he could not wait and thus God's anger was kindled against him. Now God would use Balaam to pronounce blessing upon Israel, not that Balaam would change his desires or intent, but because God would compel him to prophesy of Israel's

blessing. Thus God overrules the intents and purposes of men in order to display His sovereignty and to declare His own purposes.

The parables of Balaam belong to Israel and they speak primarily of future blessing and glorious triumph for Israel in the end times. There are four parables with the fourth one being divided into four parts. It is important to notice that each of the three points from where blessing is pronounced by God, through Balaam, is nearer and nearer to the camp of Israel giving him a more complete view of that camp. The word "utmost" in Numbers 22:41 has the idea of "extremity". It seems that Balak takes Balaam first of all to the high places of Baal where only the extremity of the camp of Israel could be seen, ie just a part of the whole camp. In the high places of Baal all the power of Satan is concentrated in the worship of Baal and so the people of God, Israel, seem but a few and so easily dealt with. The way of approach to God is by the one altar with its sacrifice which speaks of the perfect and infinite value of the one sacrifice of His Son, but the seven altars with their sacrifices are characteristic of idolatry, and from these altars Balaam went out alone. He did not go out to meet the Lord although he anticipated the possibility of the Lord intercepting him ("peradventure"—Num 23:3). He really went out to seek enchantments as Numbers 24:1 clearly states. From the Hebrew word translated "enchantments"

comes the word for "serpent" thus Balaam's intention was, if possible, to harness the power of Satan against Israel in order to rob them of their inheritance, ie the land that God had promised them. Israel was now at the borders of that promised land. They had traversed the wilderness and their journeyings were now drawing to a close. Could Satan, by any means, prevent them from entering into the land? He had tried, through Pharaoh, to keep them in Egypt but had failed. He would try now through Balak and Balaam to keep them out of Canaan. The question was, could he succeed? Israel had come out of Egypt and had sung the song of triumph. Now they were at the borders of the promised land but how many sins and iniquities marked their past! Could Satan make use of their past failure to keep them out of the land or would God, whose grace had brought them thus far, be faithful to His word and bring them righteously into the land? This was the question. Satan could not challenge the veracity of the Word of God nor could he challenge the potency of the power of God but he would challenge the righteousness of God to dispossess the nations of the land in judgment because of their sin, and then to give that land to Israel whose whole course for 40 years had proved they were a sinful people. Satan would challenge the righteousness of God in this. Was not Israel full of sin? Was not their entire history one of almost unparalleled

provocation to God? Yea—however, the grace of God would triumph over all their failure and sin to bring them into the land. God takes up His people's cause, and re-iterates His promise and His blessing in proportion as Satan would interpose to set it aside. Every plea that Satan could put forward to hinder that blessing only brings out more the love and grace of God, and the determination of God to bless. God looks at Israel not as they are in themselves but through the riches of His own grace. This is but illustrative of the certainty of Israel's future blessing, when ultimately she will be brought into the full enjoyment of her God-promised inheritance in the land (Isa 60:21; Ezek 36:24, 37:21, 39:28). But how can that be in view of Israel's sinful and rebellious history? Well, we notice that, although Balaam went out to seek enchantments, it was God who met him—Eloime, the triune God. Thus Israel is looked at from the viewpoint of God's eternal purpose, according to which He has chosen Jacob and in fulfilment of which He had made him Israel bearing royal dignities in the perfection of the new creation. The righteous basis of this being the one sacrifice of His Son typified by the brazen altar in the tabernacle court in the midst of the camp. That people God has blessed and they cannot be cursed. That people God has regally dignified and they cannot be defied or abhorred.

To be continued.

LOVE is often noticed by its absence and not by its presence.

JOY is deep seated satisfaction with God.

PEACE is based on righteousness, and where there is no righteousness there is no peace.

YOUNG Believers'

Conducted by Howard A. Barnes,
Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside

Pauline Epistles

Part 10: 2 Corinthians (cont)

THE GLORY OF THE GOSPEL

In the middle of recalling the unhappy circumstances he was in before he heard news of the Corinthians, Paul suddenly changes his subject, and with a great cry of praise ("Now thanks be unto God", 2:14), begins to describe his great appreciation of being involved in the ministry of the new covenant (2:14-6:10). It is as if although he wants his readers to know his difficulties, he doesn't want them to feel that these influenced his commitment to and joy in his ministry. He pictures himself as a captured prisoner of war, being constantly led in Christ's triumph ("God leadeth us in triumph", 2 Cor 2:14, Newberry and Schofield margins). A "triumph" was the victory procession given to a Roman general after a successful campaign, and in it his enslaved captives were led behind him and the army. Paul thinks of himself in these terms in that although his circumstances are very difficult, nevertheless he can always look ahead to the victorious Christ. During the victory parade incense and fragrant flowers were scattered into the onlooking crowd. Paul also sees himself and the other christian preachers as such a sweet savour (2:15-17).

His ministry is accredited in those who had been converted. It is a ministry that makes great demands ("who is sufficient for these things?", 2:16), but God himself meets these demands ("Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God", 3:5). The ministry of the gospel stands in contrast to that of the law in a way that is best expressed by remembering that the glory on the face of Moses eventually faded away. This was not immediately apparent to the Israelites because Moses put a veil on his face so "that the children of Israel should not look steadfastly on the end of that which was passing away" (3:13 RV).

That veil is now metaphorically on the face of most of Paul's Jewish listeners; they didn't want to see the end of the law. They were blinded to the light of the gospel (3:15) just as other men are by the Devil (4:4), but when their heart turns to the Lord (3:16) the veil is taken away, and they see "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (4:6). This knowledge Paul calls a treasure but acknowledges that we have it in "earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God, not of us." (4:7). Thus Paul can now make sense of his suffering in his weak body (4:16). It also makes him more appreciative of heaven to come (5:1-9).

One of the first events when we get

to heaven will be for us to give an account of our service for the Lord (5:10). Paul views this with fear (v. 11) in the sense that his greatest ambition is to serve his Lord, but knowing that the Lord has very high standards. His response is to "persuade men", and his motivation is "the love of Christ" (v. 14), the One Who "Died for all" (v. 15). The message was "we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God" (v. 20, RV), being His ambassadors. Not that His ambassadors are received by this world, for all Paul knew was constant persecution and privation (6:4,5), however he always responded to this in a spiritual and positive manner (vv. 6-10).

THE COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS

Paul had instructed the Corinthians to put aside weekly amounts so that when he came their contribution to the collection for the poor saints would be ready (1 Cor 16:1). The churches of Galatia had been given the same instructions, and presumably now the churches of Macedonia, and the latter had responded magnificently. They were being persecuted just as Paul had been when he went there (7:5), and they were very poor (8:2), but nevertheless they had given liberally, even to the extent that Paul was reluctant at first to take so much from them, but they prevailed on him (v. 4). Paul saw the true origin of their generosity—"they gave themselves to the Lord" first, and then "unto us by the will of God" (v. 5).

Paul urges the Corinthians who otherwise "abound in everything", not to come behind in this matter of giving ("this grace", v. 7). Their example was

Christ Himself, who "thought He was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (v. 9). All the spiritual riches enjoyed at Corinth were won for them by the love of a Christ who became poor. Paul was sending Titus and a well known brother, who had been chosen by the assemblies to travel with Paul to deliver the gift to Jerusalem, and Paul had also sent another brother of his choice (see vv. 18,22). Paul writes a brief letter of commendation for them all (vv. 23,24). Paul would come later and would probably bring other brethren from Macedonia and he didn't want the Corinthians to let him down, because he had boasted about them (9:2,3). Paul ends this section with another burst of praise: "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (9:15).

PAUL'S DEFENCE OF HIS APOSTLESHIP

Paul when he had been in Corinth had behaved in meekness and gentleness (10:1) toward the believers, and as a preacher "I was with you in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom" (1 Cor 2:3,4), but at the same time there had been the "demonstration of the spirit and of power". Some however were now thinking "of us as if we walked according to the flesh" (10:2). In his defence Paul is forced to do something he would not normally do, that is to list his spiritual achievements, though he says "It is not expedient for me, doubtless, to glory" (12:1). This takes up the chs. 10 to 12, while in the last chapter, he tells the Corinthians to "examine yourselves, whether you are in the faith" (v. 5).

Humility is to know ourselves as God knows us; it is being perfectly honest.

Comments on the Turin Shroud

by D. O. Murray, Australia

Statements are made in radio and TV broadcasts, and books have been published, implying that this shroud once covered the corpse of the Lord Jesus, the Son of God. Some years ago the National Geographic Magazine, of Washington, DC, published articles of the same import. The evidence from the shroud itself is that it did not cover the corpse of the Lord Jesus.

The nails of the crucifixion seem to have been driven through the wrists of the victim. On this some writers agree. Some have claimed that the weight of a man's body would cause the hand to tear, giving no support for the body. If the victim's arms were raised to an angle of about 30 degrees above the horizontal, then the tension in each arm was about equal to the weight of the man's body. The nail through the hand did not tear the hand, the diameter of the nail being large enough that the hand did not tear. The apostle Thomas spoke of his putting his finger in the nail holes (John 20:25). The Lord Himself confirmed this possibility (John 20:27). We must conclude that arguments to support the nail holes through the wrists are merely to explain why the shroud shows the nail holes in the wrong place. Psalm 22 looks forward to the crucifixion of the Messiah, the Christ of God. The psalm begins with the words of the Lord Jesus, spoken while on the cross (Matt 27:46): "My God, my God, why hast

thou forsaken me?" In Psa 22:16 are the words: "They pierced my hands and my feet". And in v. 18: "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture". The nail holes through the wrists show that the corpse was not that of the Lord Jesus.

We now turn to evidence to prove that the corpse of the shroud could not have been the Christ of God. The corpse had long hair. The apostle Paul, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, writes: "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?" (1 Cor 11:14). Never did the Son of God have on his head that which would have been a shame unto Him. The long hair on the victim of the shroud is therefore evidence that the victim was some one else, not the Christ of God.

Long hair on a woman is her sign of her acceptance of the place in life that God has set for her, a sign of her obedience. The apostle adds his comment: "it is because of the angels" (1 Cor 11:10). Of them it is written: "Bless the Lord, ye angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word" (Psa 103:20). Because these mighty beings are obedient to the commands of God, it is wrong for a woman to be disobedient. Long hair is shown as a sign of the demons' submission and co-operation with Satan (Rev 9:8).

Light in the Darkness (Psa 112:4)

*Night's inky sky enshrouds the Pilgrim's path,
He walks by faith, assured he's saved from wrath,
"Saved" Ah; this truth it garrisons his heart,
The shield of faith blunts every fiery dart.*

*'Neath starless canopy stretched overhead,
With staff in hand he moves with steady tread,
A light un-natural his path illumes,
His closest Friend "unseen" with him communes.*

*This sin-benighted world; this wandering star,
In deeper darkness sinks; straying afar,
But light has risen, brighter than the sun,
To save the lost, to find the straying one.*

*Dark was this blighted world when Jesus came,
Deeply man-kind had sank in sin and shame,
But as the true light through the darkness shone,
Men loved the darkness rather than the Son.*

*Darkness in that sixth hour invaded day,
Darkness through which shone not one glimmering ray,
When He the true light entered that lone vale,
Abandoned in such night, oh; wondrous tale.*

*Light in the darkness, light above the sun,
The darkness past, the battle fought and won,
Now immortality and life are brought to light,
Light which shall ne'er again be dimmed by night.*

*Praise to the Victor Who the darkness met,
Praise, praise to Him Who paid the fearful debt,
Light unapproachable surrounds Him now,
And glory crowns His once thorn-piercéd brow.*

*Light inextinguishable; unsullied light
Shall clothe those sinless scenes, all spotless white,
Th' eternal courts through one eternal day,
Shall be the lot of all who own Christ's sway.*

*What price would be too high this light to gain?
Or who would wish in darkness to remain?
From such a priceless offer who can turn?
Or miss such glory, and forever mourn.*

R. Hull

Light from an Old Lamp

by the late Hawthorne Bailie

ON THE MOUNTAIN

I want the reader to turn to the OT Scriptures and look at three mountain scenes. The first is in Gen 22:2, where we have Abraham offering up Isaac. We shall call this "*the mountain of sacrifice or substitution*". It is true that the word "substitution" occurs nowhere in our Bibles, but every believer is agreed that it is implied again and again. Take, for instance, that passage in Matt 20:28, "Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for (anti) many". Scripture is very explicit that the Son of God "was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed".

As we follow Isaac up the mountain-side, and see him bound, and put in the place of death, with the wood ready for the fire beneath him and the knife raised above him, we have a picture of the sinner exposed to the judgment of God. Hell from beneath moved for his coming; justice above calling down vengeance upon his sins.

But listen to the voice from heaven: "Abraham, Abraham: and he said,

Here am I. and He said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns", and the ram is put in the place of Isaac; dies in his room and stead. Can we watch this scene without thinking about dark Cavalry?

I saw one hanging on a tree
In agonies and blood,
Who fixed His languid eyes on me,
As near His cross I stood.

With chastened spirits and contrite hearts let us hasten to another mountain scene (Exod 3:1). "And he (Moses) led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb". Here we have "*the mountain of God's holiness*". As we listen we can hear the voice of Jehovah saying, "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground".

Moses was about to become God's great public servant, and the lesson here taught was most essential for his future service. We need not only look to Christ as our substitute bearing our sins, but we must remember that God is holy—yea, "our God is a consuming

Believers'

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EDITORIAL **Searchlight**

The issues of pollution whether from acid rain or radioactive dust clouds have suddenly become international. The Scandinavians and the Germans blame the British; the Canadians' anger is directed at the United States, while most of Europe is still assessing how to react against the perpetrators of Chernobyl. Meanwhile the Christian views the destructive forces being unleashed from a Biblical standpoint, knowing that the God who created also legislated for conservation even to detailing the treatment of the dam and her chicks (Deut 22:6,7). But he views chemical destruction with sadness, knowing well that moral pollution is all the more destructive and that in such matters he has unavoidable responsibilities placed upon him by his master. He is salt and light in that world (Matt 5:13,14).

There is always the danger in an overly negative view of our effectiveness to cause us to ignore our obligations. We can rationalise our withdrawal by pointing out that the world will wax worse and worse. And we can point out the blunting of gospel zeal in those who get involved in the many protest groups of our age. But in the final analysis we will have to give account for our salt-like retarding of the growing corruption around and our light identifying man's state and Christ as the Saviour of the world.

But will our contribution to the salt and light exercises be identifiable? The parallel with chemical

pollution may be instructive. From being able to examine tiny traces in a small sample of air and tracking particles with lasers the ability to detect a nation's fingerprints in pollution terms has come to pass. Will God be less able to detect our involvement?

What measure of influence did our objection have to thwarting the office's malpractice? Did our presence make any reconsider the spurious claims the company was making? Did our standard of conversation make it difficult for the distasteful jokes to be appreciated? Could our contribution to neighbourliness have been instrumental in convicting that soul of his need of salvation? God himself will answer these questions unerringly.

Our signature will be looked for too in the more harmful aspects of the moral atmosphere to which we contribute. We may not have been the only one who rebuked that younger brother harshly, but God will be able to discriminate meticulously between our harmful radiation and that of others. Likewise the careless habit may be later seen to have emboldened someone's conscience to their eventual destruction.

To a great extent the world in which we live is a forgiving environment. Many of our ill-advised words and actions don't have the full impact they might have had. Sometimes in retrospect we stand appalled and thank God it is so. Alas, on other occasions we grow bolder and forget the rigours of that day of account.

T.W.

Haggai (2)

by B. Greenhow, Falkirk

In summary: a remnant had returned, the temple was being rebuilt, the enemy resisted and the work had been restrained. It was at this low point that God began to move...“Then the prophets Haggai and Zechariah...prophesied...” (Ezra 5:1). God always has His servants ready! Haggai’s prophecy demonstrates divine principles and methods which He used (and still does) to encourage and strengthen His people in their spiritual battles with the enemy. We also are a remnant who are, in comparison with the Enemy’s forces, numerically few (and becoming fewer?) who appear to be constantly “being weakened” (?) and are also legally weak, as men see us. This prophecy has, therefore, something to say to us today!

Divine Principles in Haggai

1. Restoration of Government. Through Haggai, God spoke first to “Zerubbabel...the governor”(1:1; 2:2,21) and he obeyed (1:12)...“Then rose Zerubbabel...and began to build the house of God...” (Ezra 5:2). Divine authority was restored through the human representative of His throne obeying His word.

Zerubbabel did at least two things as governor: (a) He obeyed God rather than men. It is essential in any corporate work for God, that the ‘rulers’ (leaders) amongst His people give themselves to an understanding of and an obedience to the “word of the Lord” (1:1,12). In Acts 5:29, Peter said

“We ought to obey God rather than men” and in 6:4, “We will give ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word”. This is consistent with “...apt to teach” regarding elders (1 Tim 3:2). In those early days God’s authority and power was established amongst His people through regular exposition of and obedience to the “word of the Lord”. Today we have many and regular ministry meetings but is there the same degree of obedience? When the two were combined in Acts the result was “...the word of God grew and multiplied...” (12:24) and so did the number of the disciples! (6:7).

(b) He led from the front. The second feature of divine order in Haggai is in Zerubbabel leading from the front. He is mentioned first amongst those who “...did work in the house of the Lord of hosts their God” (1:14; Ezra 5:2). In Heb 13:7, the saints were exhorted to remember past leaders, who had ‘gone on before’, “Remember your leaders (guides) who spoke to you the word of God and imitate (follow) their faith” (literal translation). Those leaders were also out in front, guiding the saints through hostile territory using the word of God as their compass! They had an objective before their eyes—“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and for ever” (v.8), the greatest shepherd of all! A similar thought is found in 1 Cor 11:1 “Be ye followers (imitators) of me even as I also am of Christ”. In Heb 13:17 their present ‘guides’ are mentioned, remind-

ing us that God never leaves His people without leadership, even if they are not always 'recognised' as such (1 Cor 11:19). Note the leadership of the elders in Ezra 5:5,9; 6:7,8,14, all linked with building the house, i.e. setting an example by putting their hands to the work first—from the front.

Let those who take the place of leaders amongst God's people today go out in front and be seen to be in front and show the way, remembering that you will have to give an account of your leadership (Heb 13:17). Applying Zerubbabel's example rise up and build "the house of God which is the (local) church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth" (1 Tim 3:15). Obeying God rather than men is the first step in countering the "force and power" of the enemy!

2. *Priesthood Revived (the altar).* God spoke secondly to "Joshua the high priest" (1:1; 2:2,12), and he also obeyed (1:12). The example of Joshua was that even though he was the high priest he did not consider himself to be beyond the word of God. Contrast the rulers in the time of the Lord who "took counsel together against the Lord and His anointed saying, Let us break their bands...cast away their cords..." (Psa 2:2-3). Joshua recognised the voice of God through another and bowed to it. No jealousy or competition here! There is always the risk of not recognising His voice when we hear it because our eyes are on the vessel! ••

The prophet's teaching about the priests suggests several things about priestly men and their activities amongst their brethren: (a) Their life is matched against the word of God. In 2:11-13, the priests were questioned by the prophet regarding certain aspects of

ceremonial cleanness—"holy flesh" and "dead bodies". The question was: could holiness be transferred from a "clean" object to an unclean object? Their answers were rightly negative. His interrogative teaching was that, just because the people were 'offering' clean sacrifices through the priesthood in the correct ceremonial manner, this did not automatically make their offerings acceptable to God (2:14). Whilst giving the appropriate responses, they were unaware that their answers reflected God's attitude towards the people, or the reasons why He had moved against them (2:14-17). Not only so but the priests were 'accessaries after the fact' in offering sacrifices unacceptable to God (2:14). They were therefore, in effect, "Partakers of other men's sins" (1 Tim 5:22). Priestly men should always take heed to themselves in such matters, and remember that they also are "compassed (clothed) with infirmity" and accordingly, be ever ready to "offer for themselves" (Acts 20:28; Heb 5:3-4). They should be always able to "lift up holy hands", i.e. symbolically, the palms of their hands are turned heavenwards for God to see that they are free from defilement (1 Tim 2:8).

(b) They act representatively in the presence of God. It is essential that priestly men amongst the people of God maintain intercession, not only for themselves but also for their brethren. For the Romans (1:9), Paul "without ceasing" made mention of them in his prayers. His requests for them were to the intent that they would be established through the ministry of the word (1:10-11). So also the Colossians that they "might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding..." (Col 1:9-12). Prayers for the people of God

should always be towards their spiritual and physical good. He also was able to constantly thank God for the saints, even when he had not seen them (Rom 1:11; Col 1:12). Priestly men will always pray positively, not negatively! They will constantly pray sympathetically FOR their brethren never AGAINST them (Heb 5:1; Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60). Priestly men will, if necessary, speak against the wrongdoings of their brethren but will not pray against their brethren!

Balaam's Parables (2)

by P. Harding, Manchester

We have seen that Balaam's intention to harness the power of Satan in order to curse Jacob and defy Israel was thwarted when God (Elohim) intercepted him (Num 23:4). The Lord pronounced blessing upon Israel through Balaam, for God is looking upon Israel from the viewpoint of His own eternal purposes. Balaam sees Israel from a place of eminence — the top of the rocks (Num 23:9), not from the valley. He thus sees Israel from the heights, from the viewpoint of God's eternal counsel. From such a place how can he curse? — for in God's eternal counsel that people is the object of the love and blessing of God. That people God has separated and thus "they shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations" (Num 23:9). God has selected Israel from among the nations to be exalted above the nations so that she is no longer reckoned among the nations. God has purposed to give them the first place, making

Like their Lord in the feet-washing of John 13:4-10, they know how to move and what to use to keep the walk of their brethren clean before God. In others, such as Timothy in Phil 2:19-21 through his "care" for them and Epaphroditus in his "longing" and "service" for them (25-30), were men who not only felt for their brethren, but who also acted on their behalf!

To be continued.

them His own uniquely and exclusively. A people separated unto Himself, consecrated for His glory and sanctified for His pleasure. A people chosen and choice in His eyes (Deut 10:15; 32:9-10); a people in whom He will be glorified (Isa 49:3; 61:3); a people holy and priestly in character (Exod 19:6); and a people for His own possession (Deut 14:2; Psalm 135:4). Thus Israel has a bright future awaiting her (Isa 18:2-7) when she shall be the head of the nations and not the tail (Deut 28:13) and when peace shall be her portion (Isa 60:18). In that day she shall enjoy prosperity (Micah 4:4) and be exalted to a position of dignity, honour and authority over the nations (Isa 61:4-9). Israel shall then have a name and a praise among the people (Zeph 3:20). Thus the future blessing and glory of Israel will outstrip and outshine their past blessing and glory. God's eternal purpose for Israel cannot be thwarted, His purpose to bless Israel

cannot be overthrown. As Balaam views them according to God's eternal counsel he asks, "Who can count the dust of Jacob and number the fourth part of Israel?" (Num 23:10). It seems as if he has but seen a fourth part of the camp, i.e. one standard. If a fourth part is so many what must the whole camp be like. Again it is seen from the viewpoint of God's eternal counsel and the fulfilment of God's promise (Gen 13:6; 28:14; 32:12). It indicates increase, strength and power in the end times.

Balaam's parables have many precious principles we can apply to the present and future dealings of God with us, His people today, in the wonders of His grace until at last it shall be said "behold what God hath wrought". Thus the same character of blessing as Israel's is bestowed upon the Church in the eternal purpose of God in Christ but on a much higher plane. Satan would also challenge the righteousness of God in His dealings with us in matchless grace but God has the perfect answer in Christ raised from among the dead, ascended and glorified in His presence. Thus all God's purposes for us will be accomplished and the end consummated in heavenly glory so that we shall not only be to the praise of His glory but also to the glory of His righteousness eternally. We have been called with a heavenly calling and severed from the present course of this world so that we are no longer of the world even as He is not of the world (John 17:16). We are separated unto God, consecrated for His pleasure and sanctified for His praise and glory. That is what we are positionally in Christ, in the eternal purposes of God, but we are now on earth for a little while as strangers and pilgrims. As such we are to manifest our heavenly

calling before men, living for the pleasure and glory of God. We ought to live as those whom grace, consistent with God's righteousness, has destined to be the holy temple in the Lord, the holy of holies, where the glory of God will dwell eternally (Eph 2:21).

No wonder Balaam exclaims "let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his" (Num 23:10). But Balaam was not prepared to live the life of the righteous and thus his end was to perish at the hands of Israel (Num 31:8). How many there are who, like Balaam, would gladly die the death of the righteous but who will not live his life. To die in Christ one must be brought to the Lord by the Spirit of God. Only thus we have eternal life and that life is manifested in day to day living. True, the believer experiences many shortcomings, failures and infirmities but that new life is always evident. The child of God is ever learning more of himself and more of the Lord—more of the vileness and unworthiness of self and more of the preciousness, faithfulness and all-sufficiency of Christ. The more we learn of the one the greater will be our appreciation and dependence upon the Other. Dear fellow believers, let the life of each one of us be the life of the righteous. May we banish all unreality. Let us be real and genuine, bearing testimony as those who have just come out from the sanctuary for the only living reality is that which His presence gives. This, and only this, will be effective testimony for God in a corrupt and evil world. All other testimony may be in letter but it will lack the one thing that is vital—the holy influence of the presence of God.

To be continued.

How It Began (2)

Bermondsey, London S.E.

Nestling on the south bank of the Thames between Tower Bridge and the Rotherhithe tunnel lies the old borough of Bermondsey, now part of the Southwark Corporation. The district formerly provided much employment with its riverside docks and many factories. Local industrial premises are now dormant or have been demolished, and the docklands are being re-developed to provide some privately owned housing which is generally scarce in an area hitherto developed as estates of council flats. The gospel hall is located in St James's Road; within the half square mile in which the hall stands there are five thousand homes, each of which receives a sound gospel tract and an invitation to the hall on a regular distribution schedule.

The testimony was established through the exercise of some eight members of a local nonconformist church who, quite unknown to each other, became concerned about the divine pattern for gathering. Ultimately in the year 1927 this resulted in these believers meeting together in the home of the late Walter Reynolds for the purpose of prayer, the reading of the Scriptures, and seeking the mind of the Lord. During those early days it pleased the Lord to add others to them, and they sought His guidance regarding another meeting place. This was provided in 1929 in the form of half a railway arch, seated to accommodate thirty persons. As this was under the busy commuter lines into London

Bridge station brethren desiring to be heard learned to speak clearly, and believers determined to hear had to listen intently!

Five years were spent there during which time more were added; the writer (now deceased) first heard the good news as a six year old. The tract distribution and open-air witness begun earlier continued, with a thousand tracts per month being delivered to folks living in the older terrace-type houses then standing.

In 1934 penetration of water from the railway and lack of space compelled the saints to move to a second arch nearby, with a seating capacity of fifty. There the children's work prospered and, during a visit of Charles McEwan in March 1939, there were several conversions amongst the young.

With the outbreak of war heavy bombing of this dockland target resulted in many vacant plots of land appearing close by, and the assembly began to pray about acquiring one such for a new hall. A successful offer was made, the owner eventually halving his original price. Thus guided, an estimate of building costs was obtained from an architect in assembly fellowship. The elders did not send out circulars, they simply asked the local saints to indicate anonymously in writing how much they would give when required; this was during the early fifties. Through the faithfulness of God and the willing-

ness of His people near and far, a new, modern building covering 1600 square feet was opened on 22nd March 1958 free of debt.

The assembly has never been large.

The Hand of God

Tom Wilson, New Zealand

When the Bible says that man is created in the image of God, it does not mean that He has a physical form like ours. John 4:24 says, "God is a Spirit". (Better, "God is Spirit" as there is no indefinite article in Greek. To insert "a" here tends to give the mistaken idea that there are other spirits like God. (Cf. Isa. 45:5,6,18 etc.).)

Yet the Scriptures often speak about God as though He had features and members like ours — His face (Psa 34:16), eyes (2 Chron 16:9), mouth (Isa 1:20), ears (James 5:4), feet (1 Cor 15:27), etc. Why does God use parts of the body figuratively of Himself in this way? To show that He is indeed a personal God, communicating with us as effectively as we do between ourselves when we use our physique and facial features to back up our words.

It is interesting and informative to see how God speaks of "His hand" in this way. We may well use our hands more than any other part of our bodies. We do this intuitively and deliberately in many ways: they minister

Although the membership rose to thirty-three in the seventies the average over many years was eighteen; it is currently fourteen and includes the sole surviving founder member.

to our needs, sometimes delicately, sometimes with remarkable strength; they can be tender or callous; but they always have a wonderful dexterity, supplying what is needed to every situation. They supplement our speech, create barriers, operate tools, machines, computers; wield weapons, demonstrate anger, show fear — the list is almost endless.

With this in mind, it is edifying to see how the hand of God occurs and recurs in Scripture, symbolizing His infinite power at work in this world and among His people.

His Hand in Creation Isaiah quotes God as saying, "Hearken unto Me, O Jacob and Israel, My called; I am He; I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and My right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them they stand up together (Isa 48:12,13).

Here we learn much of the greatness of God. He is the covenant-keeping

God of Israel, a people whom He has called into being for His historical purposes; the eternal God for Whom and by Whom all things exist, Who is working all things after the counsel of His will (Eph 1:11). And we read here that all that greatness and that energy is channelled into the world by His hand, with which He laid the earth's foundation; and with His right hand with which He has spread out ("stretched out" Newberry marg.) the heavens in all their vastness.

But men and women in their ignorance and insolence claim the mighty cosmos to be nothing more than a freak of chance and circumstance! It is ironic that this "knowledge" which they present as wisdom has been declared by God to be foolishness (1 Cor 3:18-20).

The fact remains that the hand of God made the heavens, the earth and every living thing. Did He not say, "I, even My hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded" (Isa 45:12)? And the Psalmist, "Of old hast Thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of Thy hands" (Psa 102:25)?

His Hand in Compassion The hands that formed the heavens and the earth are also extended to those whom He has created in His own image and especially His own elect (Luke 18:7; cf. 2 Cor 6:16).

How different were the hands of heathen idols! The Hebrews were often influenced by the gods of the nations which surrounded them. They were lured away from the living God to **worship idols** so that the Psalmist was

provoked to cry out, "But our God is in the heavens...their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands...They have hands but they handle not" (Psa 115:3-7).

Our God, the Psalmist is saying, is not like them. His hands are stretched out in concern for His people. That concern is expressed in many different ways. Sometimes He pleads, as He did with Israel when they forsook Him: "I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people" (Isa 65:2). He still pleads with all men through the Cross; His hands are, as it were, outstretched as His servants preach the Gospel of the grace of God (2 Cor 5:20).

Sometimes He strengthens the weak: "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and He delighteth in His way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with His hand" (Psa 37:23,24).

The Psalmist speaks of the strength of His hand to uphold him, even when he had failed: "So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before Thee. Nevertheless I am continually with Thee: Thou hast holden me by my right hand" (Psa 73:22,23). No matter where he might be God's hand was there to guide and protect him: "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me" (Psa 139:9,10). Ought we not to think gratefully about these things, as the Psalmist did? — "I muse on the work of Thy hands" (Psa 143:5b) (the context of which makes it clear that he is thinking of past blessings).

This thought of God's hand in compassion upon us is very precious. No matter what adversity may come our way, His powerful, preserving, protecting hand is strong on our behalf. We ought never to say, "The way is too hard". Has **He** not said, "Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is any thing too hard for Me?" (Jer 32:27). The Lord Jesus Christ is ever with us, His hand outstretched, sometimes appealing, sometimes protecting, sometimes directing — never neglecting to care for us and supply our needs.

Yet even more than dwelling upon our blessings, ought we not to think of the One who blesses us in this way?:

The Bride eyes not her garment,
But her dear Bridegroom's face;
I will not gaze at glory,
But on my King of grace;
Not at the crown He giveth,
But on His piercèd hand;
The LAMB is all the glory
Of IMMANUEL'S land."

"His pierced hand" is now a hand of power — mighty, omnipotent — and strong on our behalf.

And when the way becomes hard, and people do not respond to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, shall we not remember what He said through the prophet, "Is My hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver?" (Isa 50:2)

His Hand in Correction It must be said

that there are times in all our experiences when we turn away from his outstretched hand. Does He forsake us? No. But He loves us enough to chasten us.

Remember how David cried out on one occasion, "For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me" (Psa 32:4). That hand of correction caused him to turn in contrition: "I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin" (v.5).

It is an evidence of God's undying love that He corrects us in this way: "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth" (Heb 12:6). How important it is for us to respond to that hand of correction by confessing our sins (1 John 1:9)!

Sadly, there are many in the world who do not receive the free gift of eternal life His hand so freely proffers. They will not hear the correcting word of the Gospel, will not believe that in His hand there is the sharp sickle of Divine judgment, so soon to come upon the world (Rev 14:14).

Shall we not praise Him for the grace that has brought us to repentance and faith and join with the hymn writer:

"I'll bless the hand that guided,
I'll bless the heart that planned,
When throned where glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land."

"When I am operating I feel the presence of God so real that I cannot tell where His skill ends and mine begins".

(Attributed to a famous surgeon.)

YOUNG Believers'

Conducted by Howard A. Barnes,
Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside

Pauline Epistles

Part 11: Romans (1)

Introduction

Following his deliberate delay in Macedonia, (see our last study) Paul eventually goes down to Corinth (Acts 20:2,3) and stays in the district for three months. There are a number of reasons that lead us to believe that he wrote his epistle to the Romans toward the end of this period. First the reference (Rom 15:25-27) to his forecoming journey to Jerusalem with the collection for the poor saints. The Corinthian contribution to the collection seems ready at last (see 2 Cor 8,9). Secondly the bearer of the epistle is Pheobe, a sister from Cenchrea, which is the eastern port of Corinth. She was going on a business trip to Rome (Rom 16:1,2).

Paul had planned to go to Rome (Acts 19:21) and use it as his stepping-off point for a proposed missionary trip to Spain. Although he did not intend to stay very long at Rome, he never the less wanted to take the opportunity to impart to them "some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me" (Rom 1:11,12). His prayer was that "if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come

unto you" (v.10). He had often "purposed to come unto you but was prevented thus far" (1:13, Schofield margin). His eventual arrival at Rome some years later was by means that he probably didn't have in mind in writing this epistle (see Acts 21:15-28:16)!

Further explaining his desire to visit Rome, Paul hoped that he "might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles" (v.13). Indeed this largely Gentile assembly although living in the centre of the civilised world, was among the most remote from the usual spheres of apostolic influence, and although Paul knew many of them (see ch.16), others were unknown to him, some perhaps being Jews converted on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10). With all the inevitable problems of an assembly composed of Jews and Gentiles they obviously needed a clear account of the gospel in relation to them both, and also how they should behave towards one another bearing in mind their different backgrounds (see for instance ch.14 and Acts 15:1 - 16:5). The general circumstances of the assembly in Rome was more favourable when they received Paul's letter than when he actually arrived some years later, for these were the first and more tolerant years of Nero's reign (cf. Rom 1:8 with Phil 1:14). The city was at once at the height of civilisation and also at the depth of moral corruption.

THE GOSPEL OF GOD

The first half of the epistle can be summarised as "sinners because (1:16 - 3:20)...sinners but (3:21 - 5:21)... sinners buried (6:1 - 7:25)...sinners blessed (8:1 - 8:39)". It is a complete exposition of the "Gospel of God" (1:1). In fact there are at least thirtysix things in the epistle that are said to be "...of God", such as His Son, power, will, righteousness, wrath, truth, love, grace, goodness, etc. (Try listing them using a concordance, because added together they make up the "gospel of God). The epistle also gives a complete summary of the glory of God in history, from post-Flood days until the present. In ch.1 Paul notes that there was a time when men knew God, but they glorified him not as God...and changed the glory...of God (vv 21-23). Ever since man has consistently "come short of the glory of God" (3:23). This latter expression tells us that man's aim and target in life should be the glory of God. However all his efforts fall short of the standard, just as an arrow falls short of the target because the archer has insufficient strength, however good his aim.

What man in the flesh is not able to do, the man saved by faith can do. Thus Abraham according to 4:20 "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God". God's purposes extended further, and Abraham's descendants were called to the privileged position, of "Israelites...to whom pertained the glory" (9:4). Indeed the first mention of the glory of God is with reference to Israel; see Exod 16:10.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

Another important idea running through the earlier chapters of the epistle centres around the "just" or "right" family of words. The two words have exactly the same meaning and so do many of the words deriving from them, among which are justify, justification, justifier, justly, and righteous, righteously, righteousness. To "justify" means to pronounce righteous (or just); it is carried out by a "justifier" and the whole process is called "justification". Note that any "just-" type word or phrase has its "right-" type equivalent.

The first reference to righteousness appears in ch.1 where it is one of the first things apparent from the gospel for "Therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written: The just shall live by faith" (1:17). Ch.2 takes us further and speaking of the Jews notes that "not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified" (2:13), and of course because no-one keeps the law fully, no Jew can ever be justified that way; not that the self-righteous Jewish sinner is any better than his Gentile neighbour, for "There is none righteous, no, not one" (3:10). The conclusion is "Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight" (3:20), so that "We conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law" (3:28, Newberry margin). Ch.4 gives two OT examples of being justified by faith, namely Abraham and David, and 5:1 draws the grand conclusion that "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God".

"The Bible is the only book by which you may know with certainty the future; it is the only book that satisfactorily answers the questions 'Where did I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going?'"

Light from an Old Lamp

by the late E. W. Rodgers

THE FALL

Man's present state—not always so.

That man, who is both sinful and mortal, was not originally created thus by the holy and eternal Creator is certain, since all that God does partakes of the nature of what He is. It follows, therefore, that the present condition of man is one into which he fell, and it is the purpose of this article to consider the only authorised record of such fall. The validity of that record is due to its divine revelation and inspiration.

To be read literally. It may be emphasised that this record should be read literally, and whatever may be its deeper meaning lying beneath the surface, it should be regarded as simple history. To treat the record as mere allegory will involve one in logical difficulties with other parts of scripture as e.g. Rom 5:12, 1 Tim 2:13,14.

In order to aid in the understanding of this chapter the subject may be considered under four heads, suggested by the words of the Lord Jesus to the Pharisees Who when He rebuked them for overlooking the weightier matters of "Law, Judgment, Mercy, and Faith" (Matt 23:23).

LAW

The prohibition. The created pair, Adam and his helpmeet, placed in the

garden of Eden, had imposed upon them by their creator and benefactor but one restriction, viz: that the "tree of knowledge of good and evil"¹ was forbidden, and its fruit was not to be eaten by them. The reason of this law was not that that tree was of special use to God, nor was it intrinsically pernicious to man, but it served as a means of enforcing the claims of God in His own creation, and reminding the creature that he was not independent, but dependent on God; that he was not the owner of the garden but simply the tenant. It was as the imposition of a peppercorn rent (a nominal rent sometimes imposed today for retaining legal rights) asserting God's rights in the garden and over the creature, and reminding Man of such rights.

The modus operandi. The Devil, who approached the woman (note, not the man) in the Serpent² (John calls him "that old serpent, the Devil, Satan") first cast a *doubt* upon God's word. The woman, who lent her ear to the Serpent (it should have been given to her husband) thereupon *distorted* God's word by both adding to and detracting from it. The Serpent in response *denied* God's word, and the woman thereafter *disobeyed it*.

Such is the downward course of the Fall. (Who can doubt it was a *Fall*? What folly to speak of the Ascent of Man!). From doubt to distortion; from distortion to denial; from denial to

disobedience: and all this the result of negotiations with the Devil, who is a liar and deceiver.

Hath God said? To doubt God's word and to question its plain force and meaning is the thin end of the wedge that ends in disaster.

Perverted orthodoxy. To distort God's word, though it may have the appearance of orthodoxy, is to libel God and to deceive self. These two things the woman did. She added to God's word by inserting the detail "touch", which made God appear harsh and arbitrary. She also detracted from God's word by substituting for the word "shall" the word "lest", deceiving herself into the belief that the penalty might not prove altogether inevitable. No marvel that God speaks so sternly later concerning those who "add to or take from" His own written utterances.

"Ye shall not die". To deny God's word of necessity issues from the former two, for doubt entertained leads to a wresting (distortion) of the Scriptures to serve one's own sinful desires, resulting in a plain contradiction of their obvious meaning (Denial). This was the course followed here. Satan asserted that it was God's jealous regard of His own position that led Him to deprive His creatures of the higher rank of the equality with God which, by taking of the fruit of the tree, they could achieve. In a word, he attributed to God motives other than kindness towards the creatures who were surrounded by every evidence of His kindness. Satan's own earlier aspirations of pride had resulted in his fall (1 Tim 3:6). He, therefore, would now adopt a similar procedure to secure the fall of the woman, and,

through her, of the man also, thus again (see ch. 1:2) spoiling the handiwork God.

It was true, as Satan said, that "their eyes were opened", but it was to their own nakedness, and not to their elevation.

"She took and gave". To disobey God's word is the final downward step which secured, as it always does, the execution of God's forewarned calamity. The woman threw open the avenues called (a) "the lust of the flesh", (b) "the lust of the eye", and (c) "the pride of life", and observing the tree was (a) good for food, (b) pleasant to the eyes, and (c) useful to make one wise, she, being deceived by the Devil, took, although without economic necessity, and gave to her husband who, "hearkening to the voice of his wife"³ and knowing right well what he was doing, did eat also (see 1 Tim 2:13,14). For him to eat was to disobey the voice of God: for him not to eat, was to forfeit the partner given him by God. What was to be done? He loved his wife and for her sake he took from her hand the forbidden fruit, and shared with her the consequences.

JUDGMENT

God's Law cannot be broken with impunity: judgment of necessity must follow disobedience, since the moral government of God in His own creation must be upheld. Accordingly in this record we discover judgment falling on the Devil, the Serpent, the Woman, the earth, and the Man.

The conqueror conquered. God's judgment on the devil is stated in v.15. It is God's counter-move to the Devil's move. The devil used a woman to bring sin into the world; God will use a

woman to bring the Redeemer into the world. The conqueror of the woman is to be conquered by the Seed of the Woman. This was fulfilled when the Redeemer, "born of a woman", came into conflict with the devil at Calvary. There He suffered, but there the devil was conquered. The heel of the conqueror suffered as it was placed in victory upon the head of the Serpent.⁴ Other parts of Scripture show that the devil's eternal doom is to be sealed by the Lord Himself, Who at Calvary potentially defeated him, and is later to consign him to the lake of fire.

Lessons From the Past

by F.E. Stallan, Linwood

Since fairly early in the last century, many writers have set out to record the history of 'The Brethren', commonly so-called. The writer of this paper has found the study a most absorbing one, and over many years has acquired a number of works by various writers; some light and racy, and some quite the opposite. Although some of the writers have been accused of bias, and in some works there are evidences of this, there are still extant some personal memoirs of early brethren of the last century which are well worth considering.

One personal account concerns a man who featured in the early days of the movement in Dublin. He was named Edward Cronin, and for many

¹ So called because of its resultant effect upon the disobedient participants.

² It is the consistent witness of Scripture that the animal or human tools used by Satan are themselves always subjected to consequential judgment, e.g. Judas, The Beast (Rev 19), the Swine, etc.

³ Note how Satan confuses God's order. Man should have hearkened to God and the woman to her husband but, as it was, the man hearkened to his wife and the woman hearkened to the serpent.

⁴ The picture is of a Victor standing erect with his heel on the serpent's head, whilst the tail of the serpent is lashing that heel.

To be continued.

years he was widely known amongst one section of brethren as Dr Cronin. His father was a Romanist and he was therefore brought up in that persuasion. His mother, however, was a Protestant and she apparently exercised a considerable influence over her son, so much so that he gave up Roman Catholicism and became a totally-committed believer in the Lord Jesus. It appears that Edward Cronin came to Dublin in 1826 while still a medical student, and for some time accepted fellowship with various Dissenting Churches, but always as a visitor, never as a permanent resident. When it became known that he was a permanent resident in the city he was told that unless he accepted membership with one or other of the Denominations he would not be allowed to take communion (as it was called).

This young man, after much prayer and exercise of conscience, refused to submit to the ruling of the Independent churches with which he had been having fellowship and remained outside

for several months. To avoid giving the appearance of evil he took himself away on Sunday mornings, sometimes, as he said, sitting under a tree or against a haystack. Although he found the separation from believers a heavy burden to bear, the Lord was speaking to him and his seasons of meditation became most precious to him.

At length, Edward Cronin was publicly excommunicated and he felt it keenly. But a certain Edward Wilson, Secretary to the Bible Society, was moved to protest at the action taken against Edward Cronin and he left the Congregational body. These two men, after studying the Word of God began to see that they should come together on a Lord's Day morning to break bread and they met for that purpose in the house of Edward Wilson. Soon they were joined by two sisters, the Misses Drury, and then by a bookseller by the name of Mr Tims. Because of Mr Wilson's departure to England the four believers were forced to move and so they met in the house of Edward Cronin. At this point, the words of Edward Cronin make telling reading, "It then became noised abroad, and one and another became affected by the same truth... Here Francis Hutchison found us and as we were becoming numerous offered us the use of his large room in Fitzwilliam Square". It was here that four young christian men, afterwards to become renowned amongst brethren, met to break bread, Mr. Darby, Mr Cronin, Mr Bellett, and Mr Hutchison.

Tracing some of the early happenings of the past is one thing, but seeking to recognise the hand of God in them is quite another. Christians today may well wonder what has happened to the

freshness of early exercises and the desires to be free of any Denominational links. There may never be another resurgence of that freshness but there is no reason in the meantime for the ever-quickening rush to adopt the very things that were left behind so many years ago.

Although the story of Edward Cronin may appear to be a simple one, consideration of the pressures of the Establishment on the young man to remain within its fold, takes the testimony into a sphere of deeper spiritual significance. Without a doubt God was in it and used it to influence others to sever their links with the Denominations of the day. The many withdrawals from the various religious bodies caused no mean stir and great concern reigned in ecclesiastical circles because of the departure of many men and women of considerable standing in many of the professions and well-known families in the land. Early prophecies that the brethren movement would fade out were not realised and throughout the land the brethren went from strength to strength.

Since the second world war there has been a steady decline in various branches of the brethren movement; indeed, some who were numerically strong are now virtually non-existent. There may be many reasons for the falling-away, as there were no doubt in post-Apostolic times, but falling back into the Denominations is not the answer. If it is believed that God was behind the coming-out, it is hardly likely that He will support a going-back. Perhaps the prayer of William Lincoln is worthy of consideration, "May I by God's grace be kept from joining anything".

REGIONS · BEYOND ·

God at Work in China Today

by John Short

Knowing that many are truly interested in God's work in China which we seek to do and the situation which currently prevails there, we have prepared this China news-letter.

Reform Still Goes On The current tightening up upon "bourgeois liberalisation" i.e. Western influences that have flooded China, does not mean that China's 'open door' has begun to close, but rather those who have swung to a radical embracing of all things western have been brought into line. This has included even the Communist Party Secretary Hu Yaobang! who has been unceremoniously replaced!

China has slowed down her rush to reform but the reform still goes on. Leaders are advocating not so much a change of direction as a slowing down of the speed to reform, not a return to old-line Maoism but rather a control of the inflation and price rises that have hit all sectors as the nation sprints ahead to 'get rich'. The current campaign against "bourgeois liberalisation" is promoted to halt the moral decay and corruption the conservative wing see as accompanying this liberalisation through decadent Western influences, and to promote a renewal within society.

Desire for Eternal Things Still the Party pushes the ideals of Marx and Mao to the masses, although as a Beijing student recently stated, "No one believes in Marxism anymore!" The onward move of China's millions is truly a sight to behold as she lumbers forward, a sometimes fiery and sometimes extinguished dragon, but always a Leviathan to be reckoned with.

We are glad to see much curtailed anyway, for we despair when we think of what would happen if China were to indiscriminately embrace all that Western technology, art, and culture involves. The world's cults entrenched in the West would flood in and cause chaos in modern China — and she will never be ready for this — and the outcome as we see it would be complete confusion. However, God is very much at work in China today, and the desire for God and eternal things is phenomenal to say the least.

Need for Bibles I have just returned from two more weeks in China with literature for our brethren there, and write now to encourage you to make a place in your hearts and prayers for China. The need for Bibles and suitable literature of every basic sort continues to be much before us. When with one brother in Guangzhou in the south who is a well-known supplier

of Scriptures to house-church groups (who for conscience sake will not join the Patriotic-Government sponsored religious groups) he told us he is continually inundated with requests for Bibles, books, and tracts. While with him five brethren from Anhui province came down to Guangzhou at great expense to obtain what they could to carry back to the poor brethren of their province. Also when with some others in Beijing the same urgent call was upon the brethren there to please supply them with as much literature as possible. Of China's one billion, 80% live in the provinces.

Incredible Number Seeking the Lord The number of souls seeking the Lord and His Word in China is quite incredible. While numbers cannot be accurately verified one thing is factual and been witnessed personally — and that is there are very many in China today who, after the sweeping atheistic purges of the 50's and 60's, are seeking a solution to the awful emptiness that remains after all of socialism's promises fall empty to the ground.

We are seeking to fill some of that vacuum with good assembly literature and the gospel! The assemblies and workers here have put forth much effort to supply this need in China, and although but a trickle it is an increasing one, and we have been encouraged by several faithful men in China who have told us, "Your books are good and what we really need here now". It is among these many thousands of "house churches" we are able to freely distribute the truth of God relative to the local church and simple gospel testimony.

Increasing Outlet Centres One brother in N . . . is willing to use his place as a depot for us, increasing our outlet centres now to six in cities strategically situated right across China. Our brethren in Japan, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Singapore have been most encouraging in fellowship, prayer, and sympathetic interest in this work, and many of you also have encouraged us as we travel into China on this great work.

Four Requests to Fulfil We now have four requests to fulfil this year. One to help in a city on the China-Pakistan border, a predominantly Muslim area where one house-church maintains a witness outside of government control. Also in Anhui province, then in Fujian province, and fourthly in the north-eastern province of Heilongjiang. The Chinese translation of Franklin Ferguson's *The Church of God* has been well received and we rejoice to see it being widely distributed in China today. Our brethren in Singapore have done this great work. Also *The Old Nature and the New Birth and Safety, Certainty, and Enjoyment*" by George Cutting are regarded as extremely valuable for the new believer, and we have printed large quantities for wide distribution.

One dear sister, a retired Chinese doctor in Beijing, told me of the many who come from distant provinces and expect her to have Bibles and books for sale or supply, and when told none is available they say with Chinese

resignation and patience, "Well, we'll come back every day until a supply comes, for we cannot go back empty-handed to our village". Our joy is unbounded when we know we have come at such a time to meet such a need. On two occasions on this last trip we found men just waiting!

Will Israel reject God's goodness? then the Gentiles will find grace outpoured upon them. Will London, Berlin, New York, Sydney, proudly smile in their pride, intellectualism, and temporary riches at that outpoured grace? Well, then in China, India, and Africa shall the Saviour-God find grateful, hungry hearts today!

(Extracted from brother Short's March, 1987, Newsletter.)

The Morning Star

*Soft stillness of the morning hour,
With half-moon riding in the sky.
A light with strong attractive power,
Compellingly engaged my eye.*

*Low down it hung in eastern pose;
I left like one of those wise men,
For whom that special star arose.
In thought I drifted back to then.*

*Glad herald of the heavenly One;
It guided them from lands afar,
To where on earth God's only Son
Appeared as Jacob's long-sought star.*

*To worship Him they bowed the knee;
Presenting gifts, fit for a king.
A royal welcome it must be,
And thus the very best they bring.*

*We too can come with our hands filled;
And speak with hearts that overflow.
With love our offerings can gild,
And on His head our praise bestow.*

*My thoughts returned to present days;
That light, the bright and morning star.
Magnetic-like it held my gaze;
A vision with no clouds to mar.*

*With bated breath, and spirit poised,
Christ's second Advent we await.
The hour draws near, the news is noised,
And christian hearts anticipate.*

*Moment of moments that will be,
When to the air, our Lord descends,
And of His travail He shall see,
That multitude He calls His friends.*

T.B. Houston, New Zealand

Question

All questions should be sent to the Editor, Believer's Magazine, Office, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and should have the name and address of sender. Consideration of space may prevent the publication of answers

QUESTION

What is the meaning of the phrase "will God bring with him" (1 Thess 4:14), does it refer to the day of manifestation when Christ shall come to earth, or is it the coming of Christ to the air which is in view?

ANSWER

Whilst there are divided views on this matter the present writer is convinced that the phrase cited is in relation to the dead saints as to what will happen to them at the coming of Christ to the air.

Earlier parts of the epistle show that the truth of the rapture of the saints was already known to the Thessalonian believers (1:10; 2:19). The problem being dealt with in the passage under question is in respect of those believers who had already fallen asleep (v.13). Here it should be noted that sleep never refers to the soul, but always to the body of the believer who has gone to be with Christ.

Having raised the whole matter in v.13 the apostle then goes on to show that the means by which God will bring the saints into the blessing of the rapture will be by physical resurrection. Our belief in this is strengthened by the example cited in v.14. "If" is used in argument and not in doubt, thus the statement can read "since we believe that Jesus died and rose again". Here then we are reminded that God has already demonstrated the great fact of physical death and resurrection in our Lord Jesus Christ. "Even so" carries the idea of "in the same manner" thus the apostle is teaching that just as Christ came from the tomb by physical resurrection so will the bodies of the saints be raised at the time of the rapture. The term "with him" in no way demands that we interpret it as the coming of Christ in manifestation, this is not in the context here at all. Just as there are hundreds of years between one part of the first resurrection and another, so the resur-

rection of the dead saints is here seen linked to the resurrection of Christ in this term "with him".

Viewed contextually in this way there is no need to read into the passage an artificial parenthesis between vv. 15-18. Those who argue that resurrection is necessary for the future manifestation must concede that it is even more necessary for the rapture of the saints which clearly precedes manifestation.

The following verses in the passage go on to teach the relationship of the living and dead saints at the time of rapture. Such is a cause of great comfort to those who have laid the bodies of their loved ones in the grave.

J. R. Baker

QUESTION

Is it scriptural to encourage unsaved people to bring items such as fruit and flowers on a Lord's day evening to have a "Harvest service"? Some feel that this will encourage people to hear the gospel.

ANSWER

The observation of Harvest thanksgiving in the OT is related solely to the nation of Israel. In that case it was a redeemed people who were bringing in their thanksgiving at the commencement of the harvest. It must be remembered that such belongs to the "days" observed under Judaism. Many NT scriptures teach the error of going back to such ceremonies (Gal 4:9-11; Col 2:16-17).

The unbeliever has nothing to give to God which can bring divine favour, such offerings would indeed be in the character of Cain's offering of the fruit of the ground (Gen 4:3). We do want people to hear the gospel but we should not bring them in under false pretence.

J. R. Baker

Together in Christ (5)

by L. Goddard, Romford

The Family (*Continued*)

N . . Named—appropriately

One of the most important issues in relation to a new born babe is its name. In olden days names were very important indeed, because most names carried with them a characteristic of a person. God Himself first introduced meaningful names, and changed names because characters were being changed. The name given to this child of Manoah was Samson, which means, Shining like the sun, Strong in power. The sun is controlled from above, radiating warmth and bringing light, life and liberty. The testimony concerning Samson's early life is that he "grew, and the Lord blessed him. And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times" (v.24f). He was given of God to begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. He was to be separated to God, a Nazarite from the womb. By his great strength he was to show the light of God's power against the enemies of God, to bring captive Israel into liberty and back to a new life for God. Samson was indeed a mighty man of faith (Heb 11:32), yet one who so miserably failed to accomplish any abiding work for Israel, overcome by that great enemy, "the flesh". Yet at his death he slew more than in his life, in some measure illustrative of a greater Samson who never failed, but has brought light, life and liberty to countless multitudes: none other than our Lord Jesus Christ.

His be the victor's name
Who fought our fight alone;
Triumphant saints no honour claim,
Their conquest was His own.

By weakness and defeat
He won the meed and crown;
Trod all His foes beneath His feet
By being trodden down.

As parents, may we pray the prayer of the psalmist in Psa 144:12,15, "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace: . . . Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord". Pray that our children may have their names written in heaven, and that here on earth they may give evidence of growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, discovering God's true purpose for their individual lives.

T . . Trusted God—relative to his future

This feature, trust in God for the future of one's child, is illustrated often in Scripture. Consider how God so wonderfully prepared the future for His children: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph in the OT; John the Baptist, Paul and Timothy in the NT. Follow the pattern of these and see how the golden thread of providence is woven into their lives, bringing about

God's true purpose for them according to His love and grace. How much minute detail is given relative to the trust Abraham's servant evidenced in his master's God; he could truly say, "I being in the way, the Lord led me" (Gen 24:27). One act of providence after another falls into place, completing one of the most beautiful scenes in Holy Writ. How little did Rebekah realise that day, as she performed the humble yet gracious task of drawing water from the well for this stranger, what a future God had in store for her. She did not then know how deeply she herself was to drink and taste of the love and grace and bounty of this servant's master and his son. What a future began for her at that well. The well speaks to us of the deep things of God; the psalmist says: "Thy thoughts are very deep" (Psa 92:5). There is nothing shallow about God's thoughts for us. The apostle Paul reminds us: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor 2:9,10). So one could go on. "Trust in the Lord . . . and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Prov 3:5).

S . . . Sacrifice

Finally, in our acrostic, is the

thought of sacrifice. What parents have not made sacrifices in varying degrees for their children? But the most important aspect in relation to sacrifice is what we are prepared to sacrifice to God. Think of what God Himself sacrificed on our behalf. Was it not His own well-beloved Son? Think of the words of willingness in the prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ in the garden of Gethsemane: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt 26:39). His sacrifice was accepted by God. Manoh's sacrifice was accepted of God, for it is written: "the angel did wondrously" (v. 19). What wondrous things God's Holy Spirit has done through the acceptance of Christ's sacrifice by God and man; the saints in all ages can say, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad" (Psa 126:3). Listen to the apostle Paul's exhortation in Rom 12:1, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God". What wonders God can still do through the ministry of His Holy Spirit, with a saved, sanctified, sacrificial life, to the blessing of many and to the glory of His name.

"No other book in the world contains any typology; it is God's speciality; it is historical prophecy; a challenge to unbelief; its presence in Holy Writ cannot reasonably be denied; to admit its presence is to acknowledge the hand of God in the inspiration of the Bible; to understand it aright is to have the most delightful unfolding of truth in simple and majestic, pictorial and historical form".

Geo. Goodman.

Misunderstood

Texts (6)

by John J. Stubbs, Mayfield

“Abstain from all appearance of evil”

The above verse is one which from time to time is used usually to enforce to believers the need for taking great care in making sure that one's testimony is entirely above reproach. A believer for example may do something or go somewhere that perhaps may not look just quite right though it involves no sin. In fact his conscience may well be clear and he himself persuaded that he is doing right and yet there might be the danger of causing a false impression to the unbeliever. So the scripture is quoted from 1 Thess 5:22, “Abstain from all appearance of evil”, for the sole purpose of emphasising how that such a one should avoid anything in the life that in the eyes of the world could either be misinterpreted or fastened on to by the enemy to cause suspicion.

Now the questions we must ask here are these: Is it a correct use of Paul's charge to use the verse in the way we have outlined above? Again: Is the common interpretation given to this right, viz. that we must avoid that which seems evil but is not really so? We think not. While it is certainly true that we should be careful to avoid anything in our lives that may be wrongly read by onlookers, we should see however that the meaning in this verse will be the quicker grasped when we substitute the word “form” for “appearance”. The verse then would

better read: “Abstain from every form of evil”. The RV, JND translations and the Newberry Bible margin so render it. Now we are better able to understand what the Spirit intended in this exhortation, for it is well remarked by Alford in his Greek Testament, “not against giving occasion by behaviour which appears like evil, that he is cautioning them, but merely to distinguish and hold fast that which is good and reject that which is evil”. The warning word of Paul doubtless has a link with the immediate preceding verses relative to “proving all things”, which includes of course revelations and communications coming professedly from God. Therefore the “evil” of our verse would necessarily imply in the context evil doctrine, but seeing that the apostle asks them to avoid “every form” or “kind” of evil, the term “evil” would take in every species of evil, whether it be doctrinal, practical, moral or religious. Sometimes evil may assume a subtle guise and this calls for discernment on our part. Other times the evil may be more blatant, but whatever the evil it must be completely avoided, not merely because of what it is in itself, but because of its influence and effect upon us. This is why the word for evil here (*poneros*) is different from v.15 of our passage; *kakos*, is “evil in itself”, whereas *poneros* of v.22 means “not content to be evil in itself but will drag others with it”. Hence the Devil is designated “the wicked or evil one” (1 John 2:13).

There must have existed in Thessalonica many kinds of evil, which the believers were to hold themselves back from. This charge of Paul's therefore would have been a much needed word for this young assembly.

This weighty word then is given a much better and far more serious force when we see that it means not "all appearance of evil" but rather "every form of evil". How timely and applicable this word is for us in these evil days, for it touches us in all areas of our lives. Never was there a day like the present when we need more than ever to give heed to the warning voice of the Spirit here. There is much doctrinal evil abroad today and it can sometimes come dressed up in an attractive garb and thus ensnare the believer. We must ever prove all things, as Paul says in v.21 and we can best do this by submitting all teaching heard to the test of the Word of God. Our christian lives must be built on the superstructure of the solid teaching of the word of God. Evil teaching will have very detrimental effects upon our lives and because of this must be turned away from. The Devil confronts the believer today with aspects of evil that some

years ago would never have had to be faced. The pressure to fall into moral evil is stronger than ever. Whatever the evil is it must be rejected, be it the evil of abortion, homosexuality, euthanasia and permissiveness in general, to name but a few of the modern examples of man's depravity.

The prophet Isaiah had strong words to say about the men of his day who called dirt clean, sin virtue and black grey. He said, "Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil" (Isa 5:20). This day is sadly upon us now and while it would be easy to be conditioned by this twentieth century attitude and to drift with the stream, we must let the full force of I Thess 5:22 have its practical import upon us, "Abstain from every kind of evil". Such we believe to be the sense of the verse; not only to avoid things which may appear to be evil but actually are not, but turn aside from every species of evil. Only thus will we be preserved. We can count upon the God of peace Himself to help us to do this (v.23), because it is not in, or of, ourselves that we can accomplish this, but God who gives the godly power to go on in our strivings against evil.

"The secret of spiritual advance is openness to God, so we must throw heart and mind and spirit wide open to Him that we may make way for divine impressions to reach us... God demands instant acceptance of His Word. If He says 'Go' we should go at once... If you are subjective, i.e. set in your own ideas, it takes a long time before you can adjust to His command... It will be very difficult to get you going at all for you will first have your own ideas to contend with...".
Watchman Nee.

Compare Gen 22:1-13 with Num 22:7-21.

Divine Jealousy

by A. E. Rout, Waltham Abbey

To introduce this subject, I will turn your attention to some Scriptures which show us clearly God's feelings towards Israel and His people. Firstly in Exod 20:1-7, we find God reminding His people that it was He who had brought them out from bondage of Egypt. Therefore He says "Thou shalt have no other gods before me". The latter end of v.7 has these words: "For Jehovah will not hold him guiltless, that idly uttereth His name". We see God is a jealous God, for His love was great towards them. He wanted them for Himself, yes for His own praise and glory. He wanted them, as He wants us, to be a God-fearing people, a people that would magnify Him, and live for Him. Again in the same book, in 34:14-15, we read "For thou shalt worship no other gods. For Jehovah whose name is Jealous, is therefore a jealous God, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee and thou eat of his sacrifice".

When we think of God as the mighty creator, of how He breathed into man the breath of life and man became a living soul, we see He cares for man and sustains him. That very God, the caring God, brought out from among people a nation unto His Name, for His praise and glory and honour. But alas! how that nation failed; yet He says to them in Exod 19:5: "Now if ye will hearken to my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a

peculiar treasure unto me from among all peoples, for all the earth is mine". So with the Lord's people today, if ye will hearken to My voice, says the Lord, then I will give you joy and fatness of soul, and our lives will be so if we go on in our christian pathway with our hearts' affection going out to Him. Israel failed, so much so that Jehovah sent leanness into their souls (Ps 106:14,15). As with them, so with us, if we are not obedient, then chastisement must come. What blessed words are these, that God sent His beloved Son, yet the Lord Jesus came unto His own, and His own received Him not, but as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, to them that believe on His Name (John 1:11). By Luke 19:14 the cry was "we will not have this man to reign over us"; they finally rejected Him.

But how precious are we to Him? This He has shown us, by taking that mighty stoop from the glory of heaven, to come into this world to pay that dreadful price for you and me. How greatly He must have loved us, for He wants us for Himself; therefore He is jealous over us. Paul, that great servant of the Lord, wrote to those he led to trust in the Lord, "I am jealous over you with godly jealousy, for I have espoused you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Cor 11:2). Paul feared that as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtily, their minds might be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus. Paul was jealous over them because of his appreciation of the great love of Christ for them. His desire was that they might be to His praise and glory. Now let us ask ourselves how can we be to His praise and glory? I think the answer is to walk with Him.

In Gen 6:9, we read that Noah was a just man, and perfect amongst his generation, for Noah walked with God. In Heb 11:5, we read "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and he was not for God took him, for before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God". A person who pleases God must be walking with Him.

Ezek 39:25 blends two seemingly opposing traits: "Therefore thus saith the Lord God. Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and I will be jealous for my holy name". The blessed Lord is full of mercy, but at the same time He is jealous for His holy name. We may ask ourselves, Are we jealous for His holy name? What do we think? What do we say, when that blessed name is spoken in vain? What is my reaction? What is your reaction? That name is sweet to us, so "sweet . . . in a believer's ear, it soothes our sorrows, heals our wounds and drives away our fears", but at His name every knee will

bow, of heavenly and earthly and infernal beings and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God (Phil 2:9-11). At this moment, the Lord is dealing in grace, and we who have been brought into divine liberty, must realise, that this does not mean that we have licence to do as we please, for we have been bought with a great price; we are His, and therefore if we love Him, He will call for our obedience. Exod 19:5 insists: "Now therefore if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people. For all the earth is mine". These words were spoken to Israel. But we are a heavenly people not just a treasure, we shall become His bride (Rev 21:9). Are we aware of just how jealous our Lord is over His Church, His soon-to-be-presented bride?

For further references to God's character as a jealous God, see Deut 4:24; 5:9-11; 6:15; Josh 24:19-24; Joel 2:18; and Zech 1:14; 8:24. Please ponder these Scriptures prayerfully.

Lord's Work Trust

42 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, KA3 1RH
Telephone: (0563) 21098

Total Gifts received from 1st May to 31st May, 1987

For the Lord's Work and Workers

From Assemblies	£21,719.00
From Individuals	11,366.42
From Covenants	14,507.01

£47,592.43

Gifts Towards Expenses

From Assemblies	£954.69
From Individuals	505.50
From Covenants	14.00

£1,474.19

Includes: L.O.F. £330.59; Liverpool £10; Anon £70.

The LORD'S WORK and WORKERS

All items for "intelligence" columns of this magazine should be addressed direct to Editor, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and posted in time to arrive on or before 4th of month previous to issue.

Intimation of commencement of new assemblies should always carry commendation of nearest local assembly.

England & Wales FORTHCOMING

JULY 11

London: Convention in Westminster Chapel, Buckingham Gate at 10.30 a.m., 3.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. W. Cochrane, J. Hunter, A. Leckie, K. Rudge.

JULY 18

Blyth: Gospel Hall, Devonworth Place, Cowpen Estate at 7.30 p.m. E. Hughes.

Eastbourne: Marine Hall, Seaside at 7.00 p.m. J. Riddle.

JULY 25

Northampton: The Gospel Hall, Spencer Bridge Road at 7.30 p.m. D. E. West.

Blyth: Gospel Hall, Devonworth Place, Cowpen Estate at 7.30 p.m. J. Grant.

AUGUST 8

Blyth: Gospel Hall, Devonworth Place, Cowpen Estate at 7.30 p.m. T. Wilson.

AUGUST 15

Eastbourne: Marine Hall, Seaside at 7.00 p.m. A. C. Gooding.

N. Ireland FORTHCOMING

JULY 13

Ballybollan: Annual Conference, 12 noon.

JULY 14

Bleary: Annual Conference, 12 noon.

Ballymagarrick: Annual Conference, 1.30 p.m.

JULY 14-24

Bushmills: Annual Bible readings, subject Rom chs. 6, 7 and 8. Please note the Bible

readings will be held in Bushmills Orange Hall, because the Gospel Hall has become overcrowded. Bible readings commence at 8.00 p.m. Open air meetings at 11.00 a.m.

Scotland REPORTS

GRAMPIAN

The Annual Conferences at Lossiemouth, Cullen and Forres were again well attended, and the ministry helpful and challenging. David Morgan preceded the Cullen conference with ministry meetings on "Solomon", while George Waugh followed on at Forres with ministry on the early chapters of Acts.

The Summer Outreach work has commenced again in Banffshire. Prayer would be valued as the gospel is carried to many villages in preaching and tract distribution.

STRATHCLYDE S.W.

Irvine: During the month of April Robert Revie had a series of gospel meetings. There was a good response among the children, but with the adult population it was a bit disappointing as far as attendance was concerned.

Largs: Peter Brandon had a short series of meetings at the beginning of May, with signs to follow the preaching of the gospel.

Dalry: Robert Revie is working at Dalry at time of reporting (end of May). A few unsaved have been attending each evening. Children's meetings are building up well. Some good contacts made in door to door visitation.

STRATHCLYDE

Forth: For three weeks in May our brother Jim Smyth conducted special gospel services. It is reckoned that over the three week period about 80 unsaved people were under the sound of the gospel. An elderly lady was saved and she has already spoken about the matter of baptism. Quite apart from the conversion of the lady, the assembly benefited from the meetings.

Shotts: The small assembly arranged two weeks of gospel meetings in May so the

villagers could have further opportunities to hear the message of good news. The Lord's servant was J. Hay. Meetings with the children and adults were good with a number of unsaved adults present most nights. One man found Christ and the assembly was encouraged. The contacts made will be maintained by the local brethren.

Chapelhall: Brother Joe Baxter had three weeks gospel meetings during May. For the first two weeks the response was not very good, although a senior citizens' meeting on the first Friday was very well attended, with over 60 unsaved present. The testimony given by our brother was appreciated. The third week was better for numbers, with a number of unsaved each night in addition to believers' children. One man is under conviction (his wife professed salvation). The harvest is not the end of the meetings but the end of the age.

England & Wales REPORTS

WEST MIDLANDS

Birmingham Northfield: The assembly at Quarry Lane has had the help of J. Wedderburn and P. Atkinson for Saturday evening ministry meetings. These have been profitable times. Although the Annual Conference was a little down on support this year the ministry given by N. Mellish and C. D. Stewart was most helpful. N. Mellish stayed on for a series on the subject of the High Priest's Garments illustrated by a beautifully drawn colour drawing of life size proportions. Very informative and helpful meetings.

Crowle, near Droitwich Spa: P. Beer and D. Richards have given help at this small rural assembly this year, which was appreciated. The Annual Conference saw the visit of A. Leckie and J. Glenville with the former brother staying for a number of nights of ministry. The conference and other meetings have been a blessing and help. This year's conference was hopefully the last in the village hall. The new hall is built, but interior work and completing the grounds remains to be undertaken.

Ludlow: Very good support from far and wide for the May Bank Holiday Monday Conference. Helpful and encouraging ministry from R. Revie and J. Burnett.

Rugby: C. S. Jarrett had a good meeting when he visited the Rugby Assembly for ministry. The ministry was most helpful and it was encouraging to see a good number of younger believers present

SOUTH EAST MIDLANDS

Bicester, Oxon.: Two students are being baptised who were each contacted originally through the personal witness of two other fellow students who are believers in assembly fellowship. This avenue of testimony has been fruitful over the years and this should be an encouragement to other christian young people in similar situations.

GLOUCESTER, WILTSHIRE, SOMERSET AND AVON

Bristol: From the Bristol area comes news from two small, struggling assemblies.

At LANGFORD ROAD the baptistry was opened for the first time in 15 years for two girls in their upper teens, one saved recently, the other about five years ago. The saints were heartily encouraged by the attendance at this gospel meeting, over 40, being higher than they had seen in many years, especially as this included 10 unsaved adults.

The LONGWELL GREEN assembly had a week's children's meetings with D. Wilcox last year, and this marked the revival of a weekly children's work, after missing a generation or more. Our brother repeated the exercise for two weeks in April this year, when numbers climbed to the thirties, but the saints were disappointed to see them drop as low as four by the time the season ended. Also, for the past 18 months, the assembly has been delivering 100 challenge newspapers monthly to the surrounding homes, talking to some of the residents as they do so.

E. LANCS., E. CHESHIRE, GREATER MANCHESTER AND YORKSHIRE

Manchester: One of the assemblies on the south side of the city had a two week children's campaign with J. Skingley. The meetings were preceded by a series of prayer meetings, during which time one young girl professed salvation.

North Manchester: By the time this report is printed, God willing, the Lancashire Gospel Tract Campaign in Heaton Park will have just finished. Prayer would be valued for those who will have heard the gospel.

EAST MIDLANDS

Derby, Curzon Street: The annual May Day Readings were well attended when Heb 11 was discussed and ministry given. G. Waugh and H. Barnes gave much help throughout the busy day.

Burton-on-Trent, Winhill: The Annual Conference was a great encouragement. Many assemblies were represented and R. McPheat and J. Burnett ministered to the large gatherings.

N. Ireland

REPORTS

CO. ANTRIM

Carnlough: Annual open-air meetings at harbour during July—twelfth fortnight, to be conducted by A. Aiken. Support appreciated. Many locals and holiday visitors hear the gospel. Prayer valued for this effort.

Clough: J. Martin and W. Jennings continue in portable hall about two miles from the village. Quite a number of locals have been to the meetings, which are well attended and some blessing has been seen.

Derrigahy: J. Thompson and E. Fairfield continue in the gospel with good numbers and interest. The Lord's presence manifest in the preaching.

Kilnock: J. Brown and J. Lennox have had two weeks well attended meetings for Bible teaching, following gospel meetings held there in the spring.

CO. ARMAGH

Derryhubberd: W. J. Nesbitt commences tent meetings on 8th June. Prayer valued for this needy country area.

CO. MONAGHAN

Drum: Conference considered to be an excellent meeting with hall packed, speakers being: R. Wishart, W. Craig (Scotland), N. Loudon, J. Wishart, J. Flynn, R. McLuckie and J. Hutchinson.

CO. DOWN

Ballyhay, near Donaghadee: R. Eadie and C. Law continue in the gospel. They have moved from the portable building into the new hall (just completed), and are being encouraged by good numbers and interest.

Ballynahinch: J. G. Hutchinson and J. Allen commenced gospel meetings in the gospel hall on 31st May. It was originally intended to have the meetings in a tent, but due to security problems the venue has been changed.

Bangor: S. Jennings conducted ministry meetings for one week, followed by two weeks special gospel effort by H. Andrews.

Bangor: Open air meetings during the month of July at sea front in connection with Central Hall Assembly, Bangor, will be taken by Mr Wesley Barr with the help of some of the young men from the assembly.

Blackskull, near Dromore: N. Turkington and S. Ferguson are being encouraged by

good numbers and interest at their meetings being held in portable hall.

Bessbrook: J. Hawthorne and T. McNeill have seen a good interest in the gospel in this needy border area. Christians from Newry Assembly have had a children's work in this area for many years.

Comber: W. Lavery (USA) and L. Mullan have had an encouraging start to their gospel effort, a good atmosphere being experienced in the meetings.

Gransha: A. McShane and D. Gilliland have been preaching for some weeks in this country area. Pray that the good seed faithfully sown will yet bear a rich harvest.

Newtownards: R. Pickering conducted three weeks gospel meetings during May. A good interest was seen and blessing in the salvation of souls was experienced.

CONFERENCES

Mullafernaghan: (9th May.) Good company gathered. Very practical and helpful ministry from J. Wishart, J. Anderson, E. Wishart, L. Mullan, N. Turkington and G. Hall.

Drumlough: (20th May.) Hall well filled to hear most practical and heart searching ministry given for some years by J. Wells, D. Kane, W. J. Nesbitt and S. McBride.

Ballymacashon: (30th May.) Good company gathered. Ministry of a helpful nature given by D. Ussher, E. Fairfield, Bert Gamble, J. Burns and W. Lavery.

CO. FERMANAGH

Enniskillen: Half Yearly Conference, Saturday 16th May.

A large gathering enjoyed helpful ministry by brethren E. Fairfield and J. Gamble, and interesting missionary reports by J. Flynn (Ethiopia), N. Stewart (Zambia) and E. Fairfield (Venezuela).

The assembly here has been encouraged recently with some baptisms and additions.

CO. LONDONDERRY

Bready: A. Aiken is finding an increasing interest in the gospel meetings held in portable hall.

Moneydig: E. Wishart and T. Sloan, a local brother, commenced meetings in the gospel hall on 25th May.

CO. TYRONE

Cookstown: Well attended and helpful ministry meetings for one week on Foundational Truths for Believers conducted by J. Allen.

Martray: W. J. Nesbitt had one week of ministry which was practical and helpful to the small assembly.

Addresses

PERSONALIA

Colin J. Raggett, the correspondent for the E. Lancs., E. Cheshire, Greater Manchester and Yorkshire area, has now moved to: 21 Brown Lane, Heald Green, Cheshire, SK8 3RR (Tel: 061-499 0041).

All correspondence for the Gospel Hall, Belfast Road, Comber should now be addressed to Mr F. G. Gamble, "Chestnut Lodge", Londonderry Avenue, Comber, Co. Down, BT23 5ES.

Bridlington: The assembly meeting at the Gospel Hall, 49 North Street, in accordance with the NT principles of gathering extend a warm invitation to visitors. Lord's day 10.45 a.m. breaking of bread, Tuesday 7.30 p.m. Bible reading and prayer meeting (D.V.). All correspondence to Mr W. H. Boyd, 11A Chestnut Close, Bridlington, YO16 5YT.

Bournemouth, Dorset: All christian visitors warmly welcomed at Victoria Gospel Hall, Victoria Park Road, Winton, Bournemouth. Sundays, Lord's Supper 11.00 a.m., Gospel 6.30 p.m. Car park. Tel: 529425.

With

CHRIST

Mrs ELIZABETH BENSON, on 23rd March, aged 78. Saved in early life and for many years in happy fellowship in the Armadale Assembly. Of a quiet and peaceful disposition she bore a consistent testimony to Christ. Despite ill health she gathered with the saints whenever possible and remembered the Lord in the breaking of bread eight days before her passing to be with Him.

Mrs MARGARET MOFFATT, on 3rd April, aged 91. Saved in Armadale and for many years associated with the assembly, she regularly gathered with the saints until failing health prevented her. She loved to be visited in her home and to converse on the scriptures. Her home was always open and she was given to hospitality.

Mrs CHAPMAN. Called home after a long illness both at home and in hospital. She was saved two years after her husband and received into fellowship in the Donegall Road Assembly in 1948. Remember her two daughters in prayer.

Mr GEORGE MUNRO, on the 13th May, aged 44. Saved as a boy of 12 and later

baptised and received into the assembly at Glencraig and afterwards, when the assembly moved to Ballingry, he was there until his home-call. He was an amazing combination of greatness and humility of sickness and strength. For over 20 years he lived with the knowledge that he had an incurable disease. He was a brother, beloved among the assemblies and always with him first things were first. Sickness was never allowed to hinder hospitality in his home or to curtail his work for God and his home-call is a great loss to all. His funeral was a tremendous testimony in the village and many hundreds heard the gospel preached at the service.

Mr TOM ROSS, on 18th March, aged 74. He was in fellowship in Ebenezer Hall, Dreghorn, where his presence is missed. Remember his wife and family in prayer.

Mr THOMAS AYRE, on 27th March, aged 72. Saved as a young man in 1936 while associated with the McCracken Memorial Church and after severing his links met with the saints at Windsor Gospel Hall, where he was a correspondent. He later moved to the Dunmurry Assembly, and for the past 14 years was in fellowship at Craig Hill Assembly, Larne. Our brother was a devoted student of the Word and, an acceptable preacher of the gospel, he was a real help in all the activities of the assembly, especially the Bible reading. His great desire was to see his four sons saved and prayer is requested for them and for his wife in assembly fellowship.

Miss CAROLINE BRIXTON, on 9th April, aged 96. Commended from Portugal Road, Woking, in 1915, she went to serve the Lord in Jehol, North China. Interned by the Japanese from 1942 until 1945, she was in a camp in Nagasaki when the atomic bomb was dropped there. Refused permission to re-enter China in 1951, she went to Japan to serve until 1958. Her later years were spent at Quebec Hall, Dereham.

Miss ELLEN McLAUGHEN, on 10th April, aged 64. Saved in 1934 while attending gospel meetings held by the late Mr R. Love and Mr Andy Ussher near Limavady and for over 40 years in fellowship in Limavady Assembly. A consistent, godly sister and mother who leaves two sons, a son-in-law and four grandchildren unsaved. Prayer valued for them.

Mrs S. MITCHELL, on 11th April. Our sister was commended to Abingdon Hall, Glasgow, in 1976 by the saints at Larkhall. For many years our sister gave much help and service to and with the saints in Union Hall, Glasgow, and Elderslie. She was much used among women and many indeed will give eternal testimony to this fact. Sadly for over nine years she was housebound by illness. Please remember all the family in prayer.

Mrs MARGRETT WISLON, on 16th April, aged 69. She was saved in 1935 at a meeting conducted by the late J. Stewart and the late T. Wallace and received into Ballywatermoy Assembly soon afterwards. Since her marriage in 1942 she has been in happy fellowship at Kells. For the past 25 years she taught in the Sunday school at Tully near her home. A godly sister, with a real interest in the gospel and the things of God. A number of her grandchildren are still unsaved. Please remember them in prayer.

DOROTHY HAMILTON (Aughavey, Co. Tyrone), on 16th April, after a trying illness. She was saved in 1954 under the preaching of the late Mr A. Lyttle and afterwards received into the assembly at Aughavey. She proved to be a very willing worker, especially among the young of the Sunday school and the children's meeting and was held in high esteem by all. Her position locally will be very difficult to fill.

Mr WILLIAM GLACHAN, on 27th April, aged 88. Saved in 1917 and in fellowship in Barrmill until 1940 when he came to Stevenston. Associated with the saints in Bethany Hall. His wife Agnes was called home in 1983. Living alone took a very heavy toll on our brother. His Bible was his only text book and when his eyesight became impaired he used a strong magnifying glass to read God's Word. Remember his son George and the family some not yet saved in prayer.

Miss EVA GEDLING, on 6th May, aged 72. Our sister came into fellowship at Hebron Hall, Carlisle, in June 1937 and for 50 years she bore a faithful testimony to the goodness of the Lord in enabling her to care for others of her family who were unwell for many years. A faithful sister who loved the Lord.

Mrs ELIZABETH CRAIG, on 30th April, aged 83. Saved as a young girl of 16 at Stonehouse, she was baptised and received into fellowship there. Still in her teens she came to work in Houston, taking her place with the saints in Bridge of Weir, where she married, brought up her family and cared for her 'in-laws' at the same time. A quiet and consistent sister, ever willing to help others, both in the assembly and the homes of the saints. For a few years she was in Shuttle Street Assembly, and for the last three years in Newton Stewart, where she was resident in Machermore. Prayer is requested for her family.

Mr GEORGE GEDDES, suddenly, on 14th May, in his 76th year. A native of Buckie, he was saved as a lad of 10 years, baptised at 18. Both he and his wife were staunch members of the Baptist Church when about 30 years ago they saw the truth of the local assembly. Due to his work with the admiralty he moved to a base in Greenock and for over

20 years he was in fellowship with the assembly in Gourrock. Due to failing health he moved with his wife to the Ardgown Assembly and for the last four years was in fellowship at Bridge of Weir. George was a quiet borthr, with a great desire to be at all the meetings. He will be sadly missed. Prayer requested for his wife and family.

Mrs MARGARET BEGGS, on 28th May, aged 88. Saved at meetings conducted by the late Mr John Hutchinson. She was received into the old Wellington Street Assembly, Ballymena, but at the formation of the Harryville Assembly with her late husband they became foundation members. There she remained until her home-call, bearing a fragrant testimony and adorning the doctrine of God her Saviour. Loved, esteemed and respected by all. She was a true Mother in Israel. Her home was open to the Lord's people, where many enjoyed her hospitality. Remember her family in prayer.

Mr JAMES CALDWELL, at home with the Lord, 7th May 1987, after a short illness. He was saved at 14 and baptised at 15 years of age, at which time he came into fellowship at Larkhall. For the remainder of his life he devoted his energies to the Lord and His Work, 61 years in all (57 at Larkhall and the last four years at High Park, Hamilton). He was a diligent student of the Scriptures and a most acceptable minister of the Word. Throughout Scotland he exercised his ministry for many years to the profit of the Lord's people. His preaching of the gospel had a tenderness of appeal which affected many who heard him preach. Remember his wife, daughter and family in prayer.

Mr FREDERICK CUNNINGHAM, on 22nd April, aged 72. Saved when 18 years of age he was baptised and received into fellowship at Armagh Assembly but spent most of his years in the Tassah Assembly, until the time of his home-call. He was of a cheerful disposition, living constantly in the enjoyment of salvation and he will be much missed in the family circle and the assembly where his ministry and care was much appreciated. The large number gathering at Armagh cemetery heard a plain gospel message. Prayer requested for relatives, some not yet saved.

Mrs ISABELLA NESBITT, suddenly, on 26th April, aged 83. She was saved in her late teens and later baptised and received into fellowship at Erryroe, Co. Monaghan, where she remained until her home-call. Predeceased by her saved husband some years, she was a very godly sister given to hospitality in a home that was ever open to the Lord's servants. She will be very much missed in the large family circle. At a very large funeral many neighbours heard the gospel proclaimed. Please pray for her son who has many home and assembly cares.

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Believers'

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EDITORIAL Searchlight

It is good to note that after the Lord Jesus had ascended back to heaven, and John had been banished to the isle of Patmos that John was not a disappointed and disillusioned old man. The pathway was not easy for this aged servant of God, his closest companions had been removed, James to a martyr's death and Peter to prison, but John would no doubt often remember the words of his Master "yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John 16:2).

From John come those stirring words to the saints in testimony in each locality "I John, who am also your brother, and companion in tribulation ... was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev 1:9).

The years of the public ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ must have been very real to John the apostle. He had lived so near to Christ, sometimes leaning in His bosom, and it is from his pen we learn many precious things about the Saviour. In his Gospel he emphasises so much of the deity of our Lord and yet in his first epistle he stresses the importance of the fact that He came in flesh. No doubt in the hours of solitude he would look back to the day when along with his brother he

had first heard the call of Christ and would also recall the words later spoken by Him "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). Many of God's people have similarly found that in the hour of greatest trial it is good to look back to the day when we came to Christ.

But John did not only look back for he had learned from Christ that He would come again (John 14:3) and this prospect would also maintain God's servant in the time of greatest need. How fitting it is that the closing utterance of our Lord to His Church is recorded by John, as the promise of His soon return. Not once but three times the statement is found in Rev 22. The prophetic record has concluded at v. 5 and the remainder of the chapter contains mainly the words of our Lord Himself. The whole book has given detail of great woe and wonderful bliss but neither are to pre-eminently occupy the mind of John or the later readers. It is to our personal relationship to Christ and the pledge of His return that we are directed. Hope and fear may alike forget this central object, the person of Christ. May we whatever the circumstances of life say with John "Even so, come, Lord Jesus".

J.R.B.

Haggai (3)

by B. Greenhow, Falkirk

A Common purpose rediscovered (the people) God spoke thirdly to the people with the happy result that they “obeyed ... and ... did fear before Him” (1:3-12). Reverential fear of and before the Lord is a prerequisite for blessing — “He will bless them that fear the Lord, both small and great” (Psa 115:14). We should ever remember that our very life depends upon our reverence of God. For example, in Deut 6:24, Israel were commanded, “... fear the Lord our God FOR OUR GOOD ALWAYS, that He might PRESERVE US ALIVE”. This was still true in Samuel’s days, “If ye will fear the Lord and serve Him and obey His voice ... ye shall ... continue ... But if ye will not obey ... the hand of the Lord be against you ...” (1 Sam 12:14-15). The linking of the fear of the Lord and our good still stands, (Deut 10:12-13).

In Haggai 1:14, the corporate fear of the Lord stirred up the spirit of the people (and their leaders) and UNITEDLY they began again to rebuild the temple, (Ezra 5:2). “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to DWELL TOGETHER IN UNITY ... for THERE GOD COMMANDETH THE BLESSING ...” (Psa 133).

Divine Methods Reproving their priorities (1:2-4) He compared their houses with His and the difference was obvious (1:4). The material was being placed before the spiritual! The correct priority is to first seek Him and His things “and all these (needful material) things shall be added unto you” (Matt 6:33).

Reviewing their ways (twice, 1:5, 7) He revealed to them the cause of their present experience of hunger, thirst, lack of warmth and poverty — His sovereignty, (1, 6, 9). He had closed the windows of heaven and the womb of the earth, (1:10). Little wonder they feared the Lord! Do we? In Acts 5:5 God moved against Ananias in judgment “and great fear came on all them which heard these things”. The Almighty is still sovereign!

Calling to the work (1:8) His hand, temporarily against them, was like that of a father patiently but firmly guiding them into the right paths. His goodness and kindness was leading them to repentance, (1:12; Rom 2:14). The result was, “... and they came and did work in the house of the Lord ...” (1:14).

Please note that the scriptures teach that rebuilding God’s local gathering centre (for Israel=the temple: for us=local assembly, 1 Tim 3:15), requires PERSONAL involvement of ALL the people all the time and not just some of the people some of the time, “... all the remnant of the people ...” (1:14). Working for God is not transferable — “Whatsoever THY hand findeth to do, do it with all THY might” (Ecc 9:10). David is an example of this, “Now I have prepared for the house of God with all my might” (1 Chron 29:2).

Offering incentives (Promises) There are seven promises which He sets before them by way of encouragement: i. His pleasure, “... I will take pleasure... ” (1:8).

- ii. His glory, "... I will be glorified ..." (1:8); "... I will fill this house with glory ..." (2:7-9). That glory was to be greater than that of Solomon's temple (2:9).
- iii. His Presence "... I am with you saith the Lord" (1:13; 2:4).
- iv. His Peace "... in this place will I give peace ..." (2:9).
- v. His mercy "According to the word which I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt ... fear ye not" (2:5).
- vi. His Power "... I will shake ... I will overthrow ... I will destroy ..." (2:21-23). That power which had been against them was now to be for them. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom 8:31).
- vii. His reward "... I will make thee (Zerubbabel) as a signet ..." (2:23) is a seal, the symbol of authority.

God never commands without linking promises with them. For example: Cain (Gen 4:7); Abraham (Gen 12:1-3); Israel (Ex 20:12; Deut 11:26-28) and ourselves (John 14:1-3). Never let us forget that our willingness to obey is measured against our love for Him. "If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments" (John 14:15, 21). So is our love for our brethren (1 John 5:2-3). Responding to His call and to the needs of His people leads to blessings NOW and to rewards in the FUTURE (2:18-19, 21-23; Eph 3-12). These blessings are immutably linked to His covenants with His people (2:5; Heb 6:17-18).

Haggai's prophecy therefore teaches us today to review our personal and local assembly circumstances before the open book (2:11). No matter the pressures without or within, if godly leaders are strong and priestly men are strong and all the people are strong (2:4), He has promised to be with us as

with them (2:4; Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:20). It is possible therefore, even in this late day, to experience His sovereignty in our own locality and that "... that the glory of this latter house" can become "greater than the former" and in such a place will He "give peace" (2:9; Acts 9:31).

Concluded

BOOKS

Win The Battle For Your Mind by **Richard L. Strauss**; published **Loizeaux Brothers**;

The cultural setting of this book is unmistakably North American: its money values are in dollars; its quotations are mostly from the *New American Standard Bible*; it refers to "automobile accidents" and of course recognises the dangers television presents in a nation where the average adult "is hit with up to 500 advertising messages a day."

Despite the language barrier that American dialect poses for some, the book deals well with the far-ranging topic of the Christian mind. The Mind of Christ, A Mind to Suffer, A Mind to Grow, A Sound Mind, A Heavenly Mind are some of the chapter headings. The world, the flesh and the devil are seen to have their influence and the safeguards the careful christian finds in prayer. Scripture and meditation are dealt with well.

The author does not write for the scholar or the preacher but for the young, the harassed, the busy and the worried. His style is conversational, rather than theological or sermonic. It abounds in references to Scripture and so comes from one who has pondered the Word in his own mind.

T.W.

Lessons from the Past

by F.E. Stallan, Linwood

It is not very often that we hear these days of clergymen, trained for service with the Denominations, leaving the Establishment and seeking fellowship with Brethren assemblies. In more recent years it would seem to be rather the reverse, with brethren leaving the fellowship to become clergymen.

In some ways the position is understandable. Although it would be a considerable sacrifice for a clergyman to give up his livelihood; the fact that it was because of a deep conviction would be an evidence of the extent that the Scriptures had gripped him. Conversely, the corollary would seem to be that the Scriptures had formed no part of the decision-making process which led someone in assembly fellowship to become a clergyman.

The last century was a period when many, at considerable personal cost, left the Denominations and sought out the company of those who gathered in accordance with the word of God. One notable example, about the year 1875, concerned a prominent Baptist minister at Greenwich by the name of Edward Dennett. In two publications, "The step I have taken", being letters to a friend, and 'Recovered Truths', Mr Dennett sets out the reasons why he gave up the ministry and associated himself with 'Brethren.' He was about forty-five years of age when he finally decided to give up his charge, but for nearly forty years after that he exercised a ministry of a different sort, writing

over twenty books; amongst them being such helpful works as, Typical teaching of Exodus, Daniel the prophet, The blessed hope, The glories of Christ as the Son of man.

In his second letter to his friend, dated January 1875, Edward Dennett expresses his sorrow about a tract he had written against 'the Brethren'. In it he states, 'At the very outset, my tractate against 'the Brethren' engaged my anxious consideration. Very soon after it was issued, I regretted its publication. The reason of my regret then was, that while I at the time believed all that I had written, I could not but entertain the most sincere esteem for such of the 'Brethren' as I knew. I could not fail to admire their separateness of walk, their simplicity of life, and their love for the word of God and the person of our blessed Lord: and oftentimes I felt most acute sorrow that I had wounded such, and that by my book I had shut myself out from all fellowship with them. Besides this, I sometimes suspected whether I had dealt quite fairly with them in criticising detached quotations; whether in fact, I had conscientiously sought to ascertain their real meaning, and to test it by the Scriptures. The consequence was, that I had long since ceased to have it advertised and had more recently determined that it should be discontinued. I was compelled not only to resolve that the book should be withdrawn, but also to confess that I could no longer adhere to all the statements therein contained. And I further resolved, that on the first opportunity I would state this publicly, and express my sorrow for its publication.' In his fourth letter, Mr Dennett carries his resolve to its conclusion, 'Having expressed in public my regret for the publication of my book, I felt I

was bound to say as much to those against whom it was written. Accordingly I wrote a brief letter to Mr Kelly — as one well known amongst 'Brethren' — stating what I had done, and expressing my sorrow that I had written and published the pamphlet.'

The next action Mr Dennett took was to examine his practice in the light of his teaching and his doctrine in the light of the Scriptures. In connection with his practice he states, 'Had I in this respect been consistent? Very sorrowfully I was soon compelled to admit some important discrepancies. Thus I had held for many years that believers should be gathered as such on the Lord's day to 'break bread,' and had often stated this from the pulpit; so also I thoroughly held the evil of pew-rents, etc., for, apart from their unscriptural character, I had often noticed that poor believers were compelled to sit anywhere and everywhere, however uncomfortable it might be, because that unbelievers who could pay had the option of choosing pews. I had frequently stated my conviction on these points, *and had satisfied myself with my testimony*. Here was the failure. I was responsible for the truth which the Lord revealed to me, and hence I was bound in faithfulness to Him to seek to carry it out in action. This I had neglected.

In connection with some of the doctrines which Mr Dennett advocated, he wrote to his friend as follows: 'After this I tested the doctrines I had preached by the light of the Scriptures, and here also I discovered grounds for regret. I had, as already stated, in the pamphlet to which I have referred, as well as from the pulpit, advocated *the*

mortality of the Lord's human body — in the sense of being under the *necessity* of death — though I can truthfully say, that I was not aware at that time of the nature of the errors with which this doctrine had been associated, or I should have shrunk from them with horror. Further study of the word of God now showed me that I had been hasty in my conclusions; that indeed the Lord's human body was mortal, but only in the sense of being capable of dying, *and not in anywise as being under the necessity of death*; for to maintain the latter would be, as I was now convinced, to assail the very foundations of the atoning sacrifice.'

Throughout nine letters, occupying nearly sixty pages of print, Mr Dennett sets out his exercises and explains the reasons for the step which he took in leaving the Denominations. That the Spirit of God was working with him for some time would be clear from some of the actions which he records in his writings. For example, in his fifth letter he states, 'I remember some years ago dining with some Congregational ministers, when one of them took the opportunity to condemn the practices of 'Brethren.' Interposing, I said, 'Are you sure of your own position? Show me from Scripture the justification of the one-man ministry.' He replied, 'That can easily be done.' But on being pressed, the only passage he could adduce was, 'The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches!' The others were equally helpless; and it will suffice to show, not only how indefensible the practice is, but also how easily we are led to assume solemn and responsible positions, without asking ourselves whether we have the guidance and justification of the word of God.'

The challenging aspect of the situation described, lies not much with clergymen coming under the influence of the word of God concerning their position (this may be happening all the time), but with the example of believers in assembly fellowship to live out the principles which they avowedly hold. Unfortunately the lines of demarcation are becoming so fudged in many parts.

Balaam's Parables (3)

by P. Harding, Manchester

In the first attempt to curse Israel, Balak had allowed Balaam to see but a portion of the camp in order to diminish Israel in his eyes, for enchantments depended much upon what was before the eyes. It had the opposite effect (Num 23:10). Balak now takes Balaam to a new vantage point to see the camp. Once again Balaam goes out to seek enchantments but now the Lord-Jehovah meets him (Num 23:16). The change of title is significant for now Israel is seen from the viewpoint of the covenant of God. In the first parable Israel is seen as God's exclusive property by divine choice and are thus a separated people. Now in this parable they are justified on the basis of covenant grace. They are seen relative to the covenant of God, the fulfilment of which depends entirely upon the faithfulness of God.

We must see that the words "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel" (Num 23:21) were spoken by Balaam at the close of the wilderness journey.

it would be exceedingly difficult for any one under exercise in the Denominations to say like Mr Dennett, 'I could not fail to admire their separateness of walk, their simplicity of life and their love for the word of God and the person of our blessed Lord.'

Concluded.

They speak of complete justification of Israel before God because His eye was upon the altar. It is suggested that here we have that which is both inward and outward — iniquity referring to what is inward and perverseness to the outward life. Thus, whether God looked into them He beheld no iniquity, or whether He looked at them He saw no perverseness. Inwardly and outwardly they were perfect before God. Was Israel perfect then? No. Were they not a stiff necked and rebellious people marked by ingratitude? Yes. How then could God say that He saw no iniquity or perverseness in them? It does not say that Israel had no iniquity or perverseness but that God beheld none. God is looking at them from the standpoint of His covenant, the basis of which is the work of Christ, and the fulfilment of which is absolutely certain. There was abundance of iniquity in Israel and their whole history was full of perverseness but God sees Israel as they will be and thus Israel's perverseness cannot be used by Satan to cut them off from the blessing of God forever. Is God

then unrighteous? By no means — He only magnifies the riches of His grace by putting their iniquity and perverseness out of His sight on the basis of the one perfect sacrifice of His own Son at Calvary. Thus He sees Israel upon redemption ground perfectly justified before Him. Is not this true of the people of God today? Does God not see us in Christ, in the flawless beauty of the new creation, completely reconciled to Himself? We stand on redemption ground, “justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom 3:24).

Let us notice the foundation and results of Israel’s complete justification. We note five things in this parable: —

1. Num 23:10 The Unchanging Promises of God to Israel. “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent”. The promises of blessing to Israel and all that is linked with those promises depend upon the unchanging character of God — “He hath said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?” Israel’s justification and blessing are secured by the faithfulness of God — “My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips” (Psa 89:34; see Lev 26:44). Not one of the promises of God to Israel can fail for they rest upon the word of the One who cannot lie — they rest upon the unconditional covenant of God (Gen 17:7; Psa 105:10). Thus all that follows in this parable rests upon the immutability of God.

Are not all the blessings and future glory of the people of God today also resting upon the unchangeable character of God, Who cannot lie? Thus “we have a strong consolation, who have

fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us” (see Heb 6:17-20).

2. Num 23:20 The Unalterable Blessing of God upon Israel. “He hath blessed and I cannot reverse it”. Here we have God’s determination to bless Israel. God takes up His people’s cause and re-iterates that blessing as Satan would interpose to set it aside. Ere Balaam made the journey to Balak God had said of Israel “they are blessed” (Num 22:12). Now the word through Balaam is that they are blessed and it cannot be reversed, altered or changed. The time of fulfilment is yet future as is borne out in many OT passages:— Isa 14:1 shows us the mercy of the Lord upon Israel and His blessing in establishing them in the land. Isa 51:1-11 is assurance given by God to comfort Israel for she shall become as Eden and from her blessing will go forth to all the world. In that day joy and gladness will be her portion. Ezek 36:25-27 shows that in that day there will be for Israel (a) a new condition — “ye shall be clean” (v. 25) — God will remove their filthiness, (b) a new nature — “a new heart also will I give you” (v.26) — the rebellious heart of the nation will be changed to a heart of affection for the things of God, (c) a new spirit — “a new spirit will I put within you” (v.26) — a willing spirit to be governed by the will of God, (d) a new power — “I will put My Spirit within you” (v.27) — the power of the Spirit of God will be evident in their walk, i.e. their manner of life.

The blessings of the saints today are unalterable and all that lies before us is assured to us in the purposes of God (Rom 8:28-30).

To be continued

How It Began (3)

Dalmellington, Ayrshire

A record of the beginning of the assembly in Dalmellington, as it appeared in "Green Pastures" (1908) under the title "The Kindness of God" (Titus 3:4, 5) recorded by J.A.

In Dalmellington, an Ayrshire mining village with a population of about 900, away from the din and bustle of city life, I spent the early years of my life, from childhood to manhood. Although the population was small, there were two churches and a Roman Catholic chapel in the village. About half of the villagers attended none of these places.

At the time of which I write, I attended Sunday School regularly and also went to church with my parents, but cannot remember ever hearing of my condition by nature as a sinner, nor of God's provision for sinners in the death of Christ. I learned later that the minister of the church to which my parents went was himself not saved; he frankly admitted this in our home in the presence of some of the family. In taking up the pen at this time it is my desire to give a brief account of the Lord's doings in the eighteen seventies.

David S ..., who was the railway porter at the station, and his wife were the only ones in the village who were saved; if there were others they had not the courage to say so. Many strange things were said about this worthy couple, for they embraced every opportunity to warn others about coming judgment, and to make known that a way of escape had been made through

the death of Christ. At this time I was attending the village school. One afternoon when the scholars were leaving, two men were standing at the entrance. They gave each pupil a little book and spoke kindly to some of the bigger boys and girls. Waiting till the master came out, they talked some time with him. The following afternoon they were waiting again for the children coming out, giving each of them another book, and asking them to come back to the school at six o'clock to hear some stories from the Bible. The master kindly granted the use of the school for the meetings.

At the appointed time the door was opened and all were soon seated. They began by telling that God had sent them there, that the master had given the school and that they were going to tell from God's Book about God's love, and about the death of Christ that sinners might be saved. We were asked to close our eyes while they spoke to God; this took some time and someone ventured to keep watch! After the prayer was over they read a verse from a hymn, asking us to repeat it after them. This we did, and in a short time could repeat it all correctly. One verse was sung, and we followed until we could sing it ourselves.

We then heard, for the first time in our lives, that we were sinners (Rom 3:23), that Christ died for sinners (5:8) and that if we would take our place as sinners and accept Christ as our Saviour, we would be saved. This was exactly the opposite of what we heard in the Sunday School. We were told there that only those who were good would get to heaven. Before separating we were asked to learn John 3:16 to repeat the following day, with a promise of a book to all who could

repeat it correctly. When we got outside, a number of the bigger boys formed into rank, and we began to sing the hymn we had learned. We marched up the street singing:

“Christ was born in Bethlehem
And in a manger laid,
The Jews they crucified Him,
And nailed Him to a tree.
Joseph begged His body,
And laid it in a tomb.
Down came an angel
And rolled the stone away;
Up rose the Saviour,
And conquered death and hell.”

The tune was lively, and we did not spare ourselves. Many of the villagers came out and asked what was wrong with us. We told them about the meeting; thus, quite unknown to ourselves, we advertised the meetings — much to the joy of the Lord’s servants. The following night the numbers increased, many coming from a school about a mile from the village. Night after night we heard from God’s word our condition as sinners, how we became sinners, and the provision of God to meet our need. One night we were questioned, no doubt to see what grasp we had of the truth to which we had listened:

“Would you like to go to heaven?”
“Yes, sir,” came the answer. “Can you tell me who will go to heaven?” “Those who are good,” volunteered a number of voices, “Will every good boy and girl here tonight stand up.” No response! “Are there any sinners here tonight?” “No, sir,” we chorused. “What! Do you mean that there are no sinners here tonight?” “Yes, sir, I am one,” came a voice from the side of the room where the girls were seated. In an instant some of us were on our feet to see who

had said, Yes. After order had been restored came another question: “How do you know that you are a sinner?” “Because God says, All have sinned.” The truth of all being sinners was again impressed on us, and the fact that only those who realised they were sinners would be saved: Christ did not die for good people, for there are none — He died for sinners.

The following night, after the meeting was opened, the question was asked: “Can you tell me tonight who will go to heaven?” “I will, sir.” It was the girl who the previous night had said she was a sinner. “But you told us last night that you were a sinner!” “I know, sir, but Christ died for sinners.” “And did He die for you?” “Yes, sir!” Thus we listened to one of ourselves bearing testimony to her faith in Christ, of having passed from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God (Acts 26:18). Many years have come and gone since then, and Maggie is still in the body (in 1908 when this was written), living to Him who died for her and rose again, awaiting the moment when she shall see Him who loved her even unto death. Should anyone read these lines who does not yet know the blessedness of being saved from eternal misery, I beseech you to delay no longer. Time is quickly passing, and then — eternity. To know Him is eternal life; not to know Him will be an eternity of misery in the lake of fire.

Before many nights had passed, five girls and one boy had professed to be saved. When this news was made known in the village, it caused quite a stir. Many scoffed, some ridiculed the idea of being saved, saying that no one could be sure till the last day. However, God had begun a work and who could

stay His hand? Meetings were started for the big folk, and these were well-attended; no doubt many came to hear for themselves what their children had been recounting at home. Some fifteen adults heard and believed the gospel, among them some men of note as sinners. The villagers were astir by this time; the general conversation was about the meetings and the impertinence of some whom they knew saying that they were saved.

After this series of meetings was over, David S, his wife and another brother met under a thatched roof to keep the weekly feast of remembrance (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 11:23-26). This caused no small stir among those who were religious. The idea of leaving the kirk and setting up another place of worship was more than they could understand. However, these three had learned the truth, and were determined to obey the truth as they had learned it.

One of the three, who was a butler to the lady of the manor on whose estate the village stood, had been a member of the established church. Learning that he could not do the will of God and sit side by side with the unconverted at communion, he called on the minister, asked that his name be taken off the communion roll, and read to him the Scriptures that caused him to make the request. After listening to the Scriptures, the minister said, "Well, James, I must admit that these Scriptures often gave me serious consideration, but of course you are more at liberty to

act than I am." Alas, how many, like the minister, do not obey the truth (see Heb 13:13). James had to escort his mistress, very aged and frail in body, to the parish church on the Lord's day. Immediately he saw her seated, he made haste to David's house where they met to keep the feast, afterwards hurrying back to escort the lady home. This was far wrong in the eyes of many, and some hard things were said of James; yet he did not swerve from doing what he believed to be the will of God. An old proverb says: "Where there's the will, there's the way," and this is verily true in the things of God; He opens the way whereby it may be done. How many saints excuse themselves from doing God's will because of their surroundings, or because of what others might think or say about them! God's will cannot be carried out and the saints win the approbation of the world at the same time. This brief moment is the only opportunity we will have of pleasing God, and He has no greater joy than seeing His children walk in truth.

Quite a number were added to the assembly until the number of names was eighteen. Another meeting place had to be acquired, where gospel meetings were held every Lord's day evening, conducted by the brethren in the assembly. These meetings were well attended, many going to hear the local brethren telling how God had dealt with them and delivered them from eternal misery. A number of us who were in our teens attended the meetings too — more to annoy than to hear.

Every hour is an hour of difficulty with us while we are here, and if we do not keep our eye on Him in the little difficulties we shall not be able to find Him in the great ones.

Together in Christ (6)

by L. Goddard, Romford

Food, or Pasture

The fifth pillar is in relation to food, or pasture. Great wisdom is given by the prophet Hosea in 13:6, which reads: "According to their pasture, so were they filled". Again, he says in 14:8, "From me is thy fruit found". Food is very important; the substance of it should build life and limb. In Deut 8:9 we have the thought of liberality: "bread without scarceness". God is not only a loving God, He is also a liberal God, and has provided abundantly for all the needs of His people, both spiritual and physical.

Boaz, the gracious host, when speaking to Ruth said, "At mealtime come thou hither and eat" (2:14). She did eat and was sufficed. "When thou art athirst, go unto that vessels, and drink" (v. 9); she did drink and was refreshed. Thus Ruth found favour in the eyes of Boaz. What a blessed thing it is to hunger and thirst after spiritual food and refreshment. As we partake of all our gracious God has provided in His Son and in His word, by His Spirit, we must grow; as Peter says, we shall "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet 3:18).

What a variety of food and drink is provided for the family of God's children. Listen to the array: water in fountains; depths that spring out of the valleys and hills; wheat, barley, vines, figs, pomegranates, olive, oil, bread without scarceness ... an inexhaustible

supply. Everything balanced: no need for spiritual indigestion: everything for proper growth, from the milk of the Word for babes to meat for the strong. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts" (Jer 15:16). Only those called by His name, i.e. only His true children, can enjoy and rejoice in the Word. "When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God" (Deut 8:10). How could a soul so filled do other than bless and praise the Lord, and, like Ruth, give to others what he has reserved? May we all feed on the right food and grow in grace to His glory.

The Flag or Standard

What we have considered in most of the other pillars is mainly personal and inward. We come now to the pillar of testimony.

Every tribe exhibited its own standard. By it they declared whose they were and whom they served. Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal 2:20). There is no need to apply the truth that is so very plain here. Surely it is identification of Christ's life in me. How true are we to our flag? How loyal are we to God, to His word, to His Son? Does the wind, the Holy Spirit blowing where He listeth in us, fill out our flag, so that the true royal colours of our King are seen, and its inscription clearly read?

The Future

If we have been exercised relative to the preceding six pillars, we shall be

building on the proper site, firm on the rock foundation, strong on the fundamentals of the faith, exercised as parents about our families, feeding on a diet of balanced food, unashamed to hoist our flag. These cover in some measure what is past and present. What pillar is there for the future? Surely the promises of God.

David could testify to the goodness of God in his past and present experiences; moreover, he had a promise for the future in relation to his house, for the Lord said through His servant, "Thine house and thy Kingdom shall be established for ever" (2-Sam 7:16). "Then went king David in, and sat before the Lord, and he said, Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come" (vv. 18, 19). Thus the future of David's house and home rested on the promise of God. David speaks of small things and great things that God had done for him. God is the same today; all the promises of God are Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus our Lord. Not only will God help us to found our homes, He will remain faithful to us in them, as the One who is the same yesterday, today and forever.

Yes, David sat in his house before the Lord a picture of rest, meditating on the goodness, grace, and word of God, listening to His voice. How do we spend our time in the house? How often do we sit before the Lord learning of Him?

The Lord Jesus Christ in John 14:2, 3 speaks of a future home, "I go to prepare a place for you ... I will come

again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also". In 2 Sam 7:10 we read, "Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move them no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as before time".

These are some of the promises of God to all His dear children.

May we by His grace line up our house, and hew out those seven pillars; thus our house will become home in the fullest sense of blessing.

Are you feeling down? (1 Pet 5:7)

John Griffen

*It is so easy to get down,
When things around us press,
Or even feelings of dismay,
When there's no known distress.
So is there any cure at hand,
To help when trouble's there,
The only answer one can give
Is "Look up, He doth care".
When passing through sore trying days
When skies are dark above,
How good to look beyond the clouds
To One whose name is Love.
When sore bereavement comes its way,
When death knocks at the door,
What comfort comes to those who trust,
Like thousands gone before.
Sometimes when health is not too good,
There's tendency to frown,
How many suffer at this time,
And feel a little down.
But ah, our great high Priest above,
Still loves us, and He cares,
And in the trials of our way,
He knows them all, and shares.*

Light from an Old Lamp

By the late E.W. Rogers

The Fall (2)

The Animal Serpent. The Animal *serpent* too was permanently judged for whatever Millennial blessings will be shared by the brute creation the judgment which here originally placed it on its belly with dust as its food will not even in Millennial days be removed (Isa 65:25).

The Woman's penalty. The Judgment upon the *Woman* is plain and self-evident in connection with which should be read 1 Tim 2:15. In sin the woman took the lead, but God originally intended that man whom He formed first should in all earthly matters have priority. How eloquently does Paul's inspired utterance tell that in the midst of judgment God remembers mercy.

Creation fallen. The *Creation* was subjected to vanity and made the subject of the curse for the sake of man, since God would not have fallen man in unfallen creation. When man is restored Creation will be restored (Rom 8:21). In the meantime the thorn, sweat and sorrow persist, in the midst of which man has to work in order to provide the physical means of subsistence.

The Man's penalty. On *Man* death has ensued: from dust he came, to dust he goes.

How touching that our sinless Lord in His sufferings partook of all these.

A sinless substitute. "They put on Him a Crown of *thorns*."

"He *sweat* as it were Great drops of blood."

"My soul is exceeding *sorrowful*."

"Thou has brought me into the *dust* of death."

He thus bore the judgment of man's sin, and died for the sinner.

So God's Word came true: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shall surely die." Separation from God was spiritual death, immediate and felt; "to dust thou shalt return," involved physical death, ultimate but real.

MERCY

In the midst of judgment God remembers mercy and throughout this Record it shines.

The Cry. "Adam where art thou?" is the Cry of God for His hiding, naked, fearful creature — not of a vindictive proprietor about to arrest the thief, nor of a judge revelling in the opportunity to strike, but of one who, delighting in Communion with man, sorely felt the loss of it when man fled and hid. The Call "Where art thou?" was a call of Mercy.

The Conquest. Even though Man blame God — "the woman Thou gavest me" — His mercy is not stayed. How full of mercy in v. 15. By Him Who is come through the "Woman Thou gavest me," the destroyer is to be destroyed: the deceiver is to be taken by his own craftiness. Sin and the Devil are not always to prevail. A Deliverer and Deliverance are announced. What mercy!

The Coats. Although man tried to cover himself by his own efforts God substituted coats of skin, coats instead of breeches, skin instead of withering leaves — nay more, a slain substitute suffering death to cover the death-deservers. What Mercy! foreshadowing God's mercy in the slain Lamb of Calvary by Whose death all naked sinners may be clothed.

The Barrier. How merciful too of God to bar the way of the Tree of Life! That the sinful first man and woman, and all their sinful posterity should live concurrently for ever on earth would make society intolerable. Even the death of some is a mercy to the living that are left, and perhaps to the dead themselves.

Ere that Tree of Life could be eaten by man that revolving sword must first be met and stayed, and He Who met it was our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ against whom the sword was drawn at Calvary. Now redeemed sinners have right without fear or risk to that Tree of Life (See Rev 22:14, RV).

FAITH

Life instead of death. God speaks in verse 19 of dust and death, and man immediately in the next verse calls his wife's name Eve, i.e. living. God pronounces death, but man speaks of life, this strange response being not so much a reply to v. 19 but faith's grasp of the truth of v. 15. God says Redemption is to come through the Woman. "Here," says Adam, "is the Woman, and I believe God that through her Seed Sin's judgment will be removed, I therefore call her Eve — living": such was the confession of faith.

Wherever faith is found God always answers, and accordingly God's immediate response is to cover the guilty pair. So it always runs — "Death" — Sin's Penalty (v. 19): "Eve" — faith's utterance (v. 20): "Coats" — God's response. And gladly did man part with his leafy effort for God's adornment.

Concluded

Lord's Work Trust

42 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, KA3 1RH
Telephone: (0563) 21098

Total Gifts received from 1st June to 30th June, 1987

For the Lord's Work and Workers

From Assemblies	£21,456.93
From Individuals	8,056.44
From Covenants	43,819.00
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	£73,332.37
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Gifts Towards Expenses

From Assemblies	£1,003.90
From Individuals	239.00
From Covenants	35.50
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	£1,278.40
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Includes: L.O.F. £254; Lerwick £55; Anon. £10

Question BOX

All questions should be sent to the Editor, Believer's Magazine, Office, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and should have the name and address of sender. Consideration of space may prevent the publication of answers

QUESTION

In a recent BM review, a book was commended for its 'orthodox' approach to a number of subjects including the premillennial rapture of the believers of the church age and the literal 1000 years reign of Christ. In view of the variety of opinion on these matters can any one outlook be called orthodox?

ANSWER

It is perhaps a sad reflection of our day that such a question need be asked. There is no doubt that many opinions are expressed on vital matters within the Word of God and whilst God has set some things to be pondered over, yet there is a foundation of truth which cannot be altered by the mere opinions of men.

Luke refers to "things most surely believed among us" (Luke 1:1), and no doubt it is in this sense that the reviewer used the term 'orthodox'. The two examples given by the questioner are not idle areas of doctrine in which each is entitled to pick or choose. The reviewer was writing in a magazine which since its commencement in 1891 has clearly taught both the premillennial rapture of believers of the church age and the literal reign of Christ for 1000 years.

It should also be remembered that these truths were believed and held right from the apostolic era. Even Allis, an amillennarian states 'Premillennialism was extensively held in the early church, how extensively is not definitely known', and Whitby, generally known as the founder of Postmillennialism wrote 'the doctrine of the Millennium, or the reign of saints on earth for a thousand years, is now rejected by all Roman Catholics, and by the greater part of Protestants; and yet it passed among the best Christians, for two hundred and fifty years, for a tradition apostolical; and as such, is delivered by many Fathers of the second and third century, who

speak of it as the tradition of our Lord and His apostles'. These quotations are given to show that these truths were held not only in the days of J Ritchie or even Darby and Kelly, but were from the beginning of the divine testimony.

The presentation of truth must always be positive, not setting out a variety of views but presenting what is believed to be the revealed will of God.

J.R. Baker

QUESTION

Is it essential to be employed, before commendation to full time gospel work can be given?

ANSWER

There are no precise rules within the NT to guide in detail such as this although there is sufficient principle to enable a right decision to be made in each case.

If a man is unemployed because of lack of effort or laziness this would be contrary to the Scripture (1 Tim 5:8; 2 Thess 3:10-12) and this would be known to the saints, who certainly would have no confidence in such a person for commendation.

If a man has become unemployed then this in itself would not be sufficient reason to give commendation although no doubt such a person would seek to serve the Lord according to his ability whilst free from work. There have been cases where the withdrawal of employment has been under the sovereign hand of God, and has been the last link in a chain of events in which God has been indicating His will.

In Acts 13:2 the Spirit called Saul and Barnabas and made the same call known to the Antioch assembly. For such a serious matter there is a need for unmistakable evidence from God.

J.R. Baker

REGIONS · BEYOND ·

Prisoner of Islam Released

by Michael Browne

Just one year ago we reported in this magazine the imprisonment of a fine man of God by Islamic authorities in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates. His name, Barakat Messih Gill; his offence, testifying that Jesus Christ was Lord and Saviour.

By the grace and mercy of our God brother Barakat was released from his imprisonment on June 18th and immediately deported home to his native Pakistan. He has since been reunited with his wife and six children in Lahore and is now rejoicing in his freedom and resting after his tremendous ordeal.

Betrayed—This beloved brother was betrayed by a fellow workman while privately witnessing to another colleague, and was overheard to say that Jesus Christ was the only Saviour and supreme Lord. This was reported to the Islamic police who immediately arrested him and imprisoned him without trial. Later he was tried by a religious court, the Islamic "shariat" and charged with one of the most serious crimes known to Islam—that of demeaning the prophet Mahomet because he had lifted up his Redeemer, Christ, as the only way of salvation for sinful man.

On the testimony of only one man he was sentenced to seven years severe imprisonment later reduced to three years on appeal but carrying also a heavy fine. Still later and after several more appeals the fine was also waived—clear evidence not of any Islamic compassion but of the innocence of this dear man of God and that the court had realised its injustice in ever bringing such a good man to trial and sentence.

Fine Waived—This is another chapter in the religious fanaticism and intolerance of Islam when it is the ruling power in any land. Even so, the prison authorities still initially insisted upon payment of the fine before they would release Barakat when local believers checked the exact date of his release. They ruled he would have to remain in prison until August unless payment was made! Only renewed appeals through the courts and notification from them that the fine had been waived finally removed the prison edict.

Whilst in prison our brother faithfully witnessed for his Lord and bore throughout a consistent and cheerful testimony. When visited by

fellow saints from time to time he never complained, never spoke of himself, but always of the little assembly of Urdu-speaking saints in Al Ain. "Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer" (Rom 12:12).

It is a gracious footnote to this story that his fare back to Karachi which he was responsible for, was paid by the very small Arab church gathering in Al Ain. Rather like Paul and Silas lashed by Roman whips until they bled, being then washed and comforted by redeemed Roman hands. The ways of our God are so perfect and fitting. Blessed be His Name.

Looking for a Job—There were enough funds in hand for brother Barakat to take back with him to Pakistan cash to maintain him and his family for many months. He is presently looking for a job in Lahore. Please remember this fresh need in your intercessions before the Throne of Grace.

May we thank once again all of our readers who were moved to share in a practical way some of the burdens of our brother's incarceration. It has been deeply appreciated by him and his family and the little assembly out in Al Ain, and our gracious Lord has already laid it to your accounts.

In the letter we received from Al Ain informing us of Barakat's release the believers said, "He has been encouraged by the support and prayers of so many of God's people. It has not been an easy experience for him but he experienced the Lord's grace and has come through it all victoriously. Praise God!"

✠

How little we realise the magnitude of the fact that God is our Father. If a man had an emperor for his father he would not go to a peasant to ask for help. We cannot naturally bear the delay and suspense to which we are subjected in turning to God. But delay is simply to test our faith. He that believeth shall not make haste.

Never allow a single thought that would cast a slur upon the perfect goodness of God who gave His Son to die for us.

YOUNG Believers'

Conducted by Howard A. Barnes,
Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside

Pauline Epistles

Part 12: Romans (2)

THE DEATH OF CHRIST AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

"Being justified... we have peace... also... access... and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God" Rom (5:1-2)—thus the Apostle Paul summarises the believer's past, present and future position. The death of Christ, which is the greatest demonstration of the love of God (v.8), has brought this about, and has met all our need. As far as the unsatisfactory state of our personality was concerned, "Christ died for the ungodly" (5:6), while with reference to our practical state "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (v.8), and thus our resultant position was rectified—"when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (v.10). All this by the "one accomplished righteousness" (v.18, Newberry margin).

The next two chapters can be summarised as "We should walk in newness of life" (6:4) and "we should serve in newness of spirit" (7:6). Our response to the great work of God for us should be a willingness to devote our way of life in general (our walk) and our actions (our service) in particular to God. Having realised that our sin brought forth the grace of God opposers of the gospel might apply

faulty logic and say that continuing in sin might be a good thing, as it results in more grace. This however goes against even the most elementary understanding of God's holy nature. Accepting that Christ died for us leads to a dying to sin (6:2). This death is symbolised for the believer by baptism, which is a picture of burial. In the christian mind however burial is followed by resurrection, as in the case of the Lord Jesus. This took him to a new sphere, so too for us. We should live in a new state where sin is not master of our bodies, the members of which should be yielded to God (see vv.11-12). Throughout this passage the word servant is better understood as slave, thus bringing home to us the depth of devotion asked of us.

The ideas of chapter 6, which could be easily understood by Gentiles are in essence repeated in chapter 7, but now "to them that know the law" i.e. the christian Jews in Rome. There Paul illustrates the position from his own experience, which was that "sin worketh death in me by that which is good (i.e. the law)" (v.13). The law did not make Jews different in nature from the Gentiles, but God's dealings with them were always with reference to it, so Paul had to explain the pre- and post-conversion position of Jewish christians in its light.

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND HIS WORK

Chapter 8, which to begin with is a continuation of Paul's special explanation to the Jews, brings before us the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We have learned that the Holy Spirit has been "given unto us" (5:5), and now we are to learn why. We learn of a "law of the Spirit", which made Paul and all Jewish christians "free from the law of sin and death" (8:2). God's purpose in sending His Son and afterwards His Spirit into this world was first to "condemn sin in the

flesh", but then that the righteous standard set by the law, but which was unattainable in the flesh, was in principle possible now by those who "walk after the Spirit" (v.4). Every action starts as a thought in the mind (vv.5-8), and is performed to produce pleasure in one way or another, but the flesh cannot please God.

The christian, Jew or Gentile, when living for God is said to be "led by the Spirit" (v.14), and is thereby showing the signs of christian maturity, i.e. they are sons. Sonship is received by adoption, and gives many privileges, as the rest of the chapter shows, but it should be lived out before men. However, irrespective of the extent to which we show who we really are now, all the sons of God will one day be shown publicly and this will herald the new age for which the world is groaning (see vv.19-22). This will be when the Lord Jesus Christ comes to earth to reign. At that time we shall have had our new bodies for which we "groan within ourselves" now (v.23). This is our great hope (vv. 24 and 25).

The Holy Spirit is active in our prayer lives "for we know not what we should pray for as we ought", so the Holy Spirit makes a personal intercession with the Father on our behalf (vv. 26 and 27). Further "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God" (v.28). That is, our present circumstances do

not arise in a random fashion, but are either planned or else positively allowed by God, for His glory and our good. We have always and will always be in God's mind for good (v.30) and no person however powerful or circumstance however extreme can change this (vv.31-39).

ISRAEL AND SALVATION

The joy that Paul might have in contemplating these great truths is however soon replaced by "great heaviness and continual sorrow" when he turns his mind to the vast majority of the Jews who remain unconverted. In the next three chapters (9, 10 and 11) Paul explains that just as God has and always will have the believer in His mind, so also the Jewish nation. It was to them that God assigned the "adoption, the glory, and the covenants, and the service of God and the promises" (9:4), and the Lord Jesus was a Jew (v.5). We can sum up Paul's thoughts, first with regard to the present as "My heart's desire for Israel is, that they might be saved" (10:1), but knowing that one day "All Israel shall be saved" (11:26) when the Lord Jesus comes again to earth as Messiah.

When we consider God's purposes, we like Paul can only say "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" (11:33)

A living faith is a growing faith. Growth is a necessity of life, and when the life is eternal life, there is no limit of it reached as in natural growth. We grow on until we reach eternity. Important it is to realise this—salvation is so often simply looked on as an end in itself which is to be reached, instead of the beginning, that which starts us upon the road. It is Christ in glory who is the end before us, and if we are really travellers, the light of that glory will be shining upon us more and more fully all the way.

The Language of the New Testament

by J. Mitchell, Cardiff

It has been said that the Greek language is the most subtle tongue that has ever flowed from the lips of men. In the providence of God, this was the language used in the writing of the New Testament. It is a precise language of great beauty with an immensely long history. Its written history can be traced back to 1300 BC, through the period of the great classical writers, like Homer (about 8th century BC) Plato (4th century BC) and many others; through the Hellenistic Age, when the Old Testament was translated into Greek (the Septuagint version — about the 2nd and 3rd Centuries BC) and the New Testament was written; through the Byzantine period (beginning about 6th Century AD) and right into modern times. Despite many changes Greek can be recognised as one language over a period of more than 3000 years. In the classical period the various dialects of the language, such as Attic, Ionic and Doric were in use side by side. Attic, the dialect of Athens became the foremost literary dialect and was made the official language of the Macedonian Empire after the conquests of Alexander the Great. In due course through Alexander's influence Greek became the LINGUA FRANCA of the civilised world. This 'common' language (the KOINE or Hellenistic — Greek) developed simpler forms than the classical Attic Greek and incorporated some aspects of the other dialects. This was the medium throughout the Roman world and also used by

the writers of the New Testament. The Greek of the New Testament is essentially a domestic dialect and was in common use throughout the Mediterranean world in the time of our Lord. Attic Greek terms predominate in the accidence (inflexions etc) of the language but there is a greater laxity of expression in the syntax (the arrangement of the words in sentences). It is the language of the common life of the people rather than that of the philosopher's library. The influence of the Septuagint version is evident, and arises both from the nature of the subjects treated, and the familiarity of the writers with that version. The principal points of difference between New Testament Greek and Attic Greek are —

- (a) The complete disappearance of the Dual Number.
- (b) The very rare use of the Optative Mood (The mood of 'more doubtful assertion' i.e. expressing a wish).
- (c) The more frequent use and extension of the use of certain words.
- (d) Sentence construction generally is much less complex.

However the writers of the New Testament have made much use of the preciseness of which Greek is capable. The following are just a few examples of this —

- (a) The use of the definite article — Phil 2:9; 1 Jn 5:12.
- (b) The use of the various prepositions — Mt 20:28; 1 Cor 15:3, etc.
- (c) The use of the various tenses of the verbs — Jn 1:1; 1 Jn 1:5, etc. (This is a very rich area).
- (d) The order of the words for emphasis — Philemon 10.
- (e) The vivid imagery conveyed by certain words — Eph 3:10; Phil 3:20.

- (f) The fine distinction in seemingly similar words — Jn 21:17; Gal 1:6, 7
- (g) The derivation of certain words — i.e. Medical connotations — Gal 6:1; Tit 2:1.

In each of the above instances the reader who is not fully conversant with Greek is recommended to use a work such as the Interlinear Greek-English New Testament by Marshall along with a good Lexicon or Mr. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament words, in order to appreciate something of the fulness of the language of our New Testament.

His Workmanship

The Greek word POIEMA occurs twice in the New Testament. In Rom 1:20, "the things that are made" relate to the works of God in creation. The other reference in Eph 2:10 refers to His (God's) workmanship in the new spiritual creation. The word POIEMA denotes that which is made (from POIEO, to do or make) and it gives us the English word poem. The word is used in the Septuagint of the divine creation — Ps 143:5.

The apostle Paul in stressing mankind's responsibility in view of the revelation of God in creation states "His invisible nature is perceived with

the mind's eye by the things He has created", Rom 1:20. That men choose to disregard God's voice in the creation seen around us does not in the least invalidate that God has nevertheless revealed Himself to men in this way, Ps 19:1-4. Creation is God's poem but many have no taste for divine poetry!

In Eph 2:10, Paul says "we are His workmanship" and is referring to the new creation God has wrought in Christ (see 2 Cor 5:17 and Gal 6:15). This spiritual product is the creation of God unto good works. "His" being emphatic in Greek. The inference is that good works cannot be performed until we are created unto them through Christ. We are not saved by works v. 8-9, but created unto good works according to God's purpose. Believers are His creation. By His handiwork He has made us what we are that we might carry out His will. Consider God's handiwork in quickening those who were dead, v. 1, delivering those who were dominated by the world, the flesh and the devil, v. 2. His love, mercy and grace, v. 4-5, indicate His attitude towards sinners in taking the initiative in their salvation and in creating a people to carry out His purposes.

We, too, are His poem — do we make good reading? Do we reflect the handiwork of God in our lives?

We do not maintain the truth merely by clinging tenaciously to the terms of the truth, but being ourselves exponents of it.

Nothing in the universe has called forth the compassion of God as the welfare of the souls of men.

Misunderstood Texts (7)

by John J. Stubbs, Mayfield

“He will judge the world in righteousness”

When Paul was at Athens he preached that “God will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained ...” (Acts 17:31). These words are usually quoted as a word of warning to the unsaved by the gospel preacher and to strengthen the case reference is made to the great white throne judgment of Rev 20:11-15. There is nothing wrong with this application but the interpretation of the passage is rather to the millennial reign of Christ.

Because however, of the constant application of the verse to the solemn event of the last great assize, there is a very real possibility thereby of causing christians to accept that this is what Paul has before his mind and perhaps to the gospel preacher in particular any other view of the text must come as quite a surprise. We have found though that no harm will be done and no time will be lost if we re-examine such familiar usages of a text and bring to bear upon it the light of the context and the meaning of the words themselves as well as asking the question why the words are used by the speaker or the writer.

Here is a verse we are now considering which cannot stand the test of close scrutiny if it is insisted that it refers to the awful scene of Rev 20.

Let us then look at this text of Acts 17:31 and notice some things which will greatly assist us to see what Paul was actually referring to. It is submitted that the reasons for believing that these words of Paul at Athens refer to the millennium and not to Rev 20 are as follows:

Firstly, the word for “world” here is “habitable world” and would surely refer to the earth at the time of the millennium. We know from Rev 20:11-15 that the great white throne is set up in space, between heaven and earth and not on the earth. This word for “world” is used of the millennial earth in Heb 1:5 where it points to Christ’s coming to the earth a second time and Heb 2:5 where it refers to the earth of the future messianic age put not in subjection to angels, but to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly, the background of Acts 17:31 is clearly Ps 9:8, “He shall judge the world in righteousness”. While it is true Paul is not making a direct citation to this Psalm among the Athenians, yet such a psalm explains Paul’s reference to the world being judged in righteousness and throws much light upon it. The context of Ps 9 is the messianic reign. We see the Messiah assuming His throne and kingdom. The early part of the psalm indicates that Christ will destroy the enemy. The enemies there are a confederation headed by the “wicked one”, the anti-Christ. In another group of Messianic psalms the same thought of judgment in righteousness is found (Ps 96:13; 98:9). Therefore with this OT idea Paul is in full agreement when he preached that God will judge the world in righteousness.

Thirdly, we note the words "He will judge" are in the infinitive present mood (see Newberry Bible). This conveys the thought of a continuous process. The judgment will commence with the public manifestation of Christ and will continue throughout the course of the millennial period. The same sense is used in 2 Tim 4:1, where it is applied to a process of judgment in connection with the living nations and throughout the millennium. The final form of that process will be at the great white throne, for "the dead" also are mentioned in that verse. From these considerations it should be seen that Acts 17:31 is not a reference to the dead being judged in Rev 20 but to the living inhabitants of the world. F.W. Grant we note, rightly says: "It is of the judgment of the living and not of the dead, that the apostle speaks here and with evident intention of announcing the coming of the Lord and the introduction of the kingdom ... his hearers are philosophers, and not the conscience struck and weary. But of the world's need and its remedy they might still be ready to hear, who were ignorant of their own and their hearts

be stirred by the prospect of a reign of righteousness, in contrast with the hard Caesarism under which they were pressed down".

Some readers may feel that Paul would hardly use the millennium as a solemn warning to produce repentance in his hearers, but Paul could also be including the awful judgment that will precede the millennial age. If so we can quite understand the emphasis on repentance. On the other hand it is also true that the unrepentant throughout the Church age will not participate in the millennial reign of righteousness. Hence we read in Ps 1:5: "Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous" that is, they will not share in the kingdom. Only the repentant will be in it.

While Acts 17:31 may be commonly understood to refer to the great white throne the above points would really be against it. It would be far better to use Scripture passages more to the point in order to remind sinners of penal judgment to come, such as Heb 9:27.

It is not wickedness to be harassed by bad thoughts if you resist them. It is Satan's efforts to get you to adopt them, and thus you are sifted. You will find, if you keep near the Lord, that you are more established after an assault of that kind than you were before; and the only way to combat Satan's attacks is by the Word . . . If Satan can lead you to become indifferent to these assaults, then they will lead you to great damage; but if, on the contrary, they urge you to become more dependent on the Lord Himself and on His Word, they will eventually cease, and you will be 'settled'. As Peter records, 'After you have suffered a while . . . make you perfect, stabilise, strengthen, settle you'.

The Preacher

by C.D. Pollard, Montrose

Concern is expressed from time to time by those who are anxious as regards present day trends in assembly worship, work and witness. The feature engaging one's thoughts in this article is the lack in gospel endeavour leading to a barrenness on the part of the saints and in results. Many and varied are the suggestions offered.

One aspect of difficulty which is seldom mentioned, due no doubt on the part of the person or persons presenting what is considered to be the fundamental weakness, is that misunderstanding will be encountered; accusations of having an axe to grind, a chip on the shoulder, and so on. Notwithstanding the foregoing, one is bound to state that the issue is vital, and urgent action is called for having regard to the fact that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh (time is limited). Wickedness is on the increase. Indeed anarchy is with us. Morals are at a very low ebb in every strata of society. In short, in large measure we live in a godless society. At the same time the devil's emissaries, J.W's and Mormons, are devoted in their work to an extreme degree. We would do well to emulate their zeal and sacrifice. Dare we add Islam? The root of the problem is gospel presentation. One of course is not forgetting by any means the sovereignty of God and work of the Holy Spirit. "The work is thine, thine only it can be. Fruit of the wisdom, joy divine, peculiar unto Thee." Yet is has pleased God to use the human vessel. "But we have this treasure in earthen

vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us" (2 Cor 4:7).

The gospel is "the preaching of the cross". We preach Christ crucified — His death, His burial, His resurrection. This brings us to the crux of the matter. In how many gospel meetings are the foregoing features presented? A worthwhile exercise would be to check on one's own assembly and the result, if unbiassed, may well be that the majority of preaching is not the gospel. Missing the cross you miss everything. Woe is me if I preach not the gospel. The Banner of Truth publishes a book entitled *The Present Day Gospel — Authentic or Synthetic*. The position is alarming without doubt, and the cure?

Well, may I submit that we rightly say one-man ministry is unscriptural, but it is equally true to add any-man ministry is unscriptural. In a word no one should seek to engage in this vital essential work without having definite ability. Just here one is not setting aside the valuable contributions of simple sincere testimony made from time to time by those young in the faith. The point is that in many cases our gospel meetings are conducted by those not gifted to proclaim the glad tidings. "Not many teachers — not many preachers". In virtue of the conditions which have obtained the saints have unconsciously fallen into a state of indifference. The messages are insipid, weak, lacking in appeal and in earnestness, and fail to make any impact. Passionate preaching is a thing of the past and not appreciated. The usual routine! Indeed, increasingly, preaching time gets less and less. As long as nobody is perturbed, upset, caused to think seriously — as long as a challenge is not given, as long as sin is

not mentioned, nor death and hell, it is all right! Another gospel meeting has come and gone, routine preserved, automatic machinery has come on and gone off at the right time — all is well. But lo and behold nothing for God or man. Souls (if any lost ones are present) are not arrested and eternity draws near. May God arrest us as believers, and cause us to think seriously as to our gospel preaching; cause all with diaries to ask themselves in God's presence have I been called of God? cause correspondents to pause, to pray for guidance as to who to invite — Who can worthily and well preach the old-fashioned gospel which thank God has still power unto salvation?

It is of interest to note that it is said of the saintly R.C. Chapman that if he considered there was no one fitted in the assembly at any particular time to engage in service as described he would take the meetings even for lengthy periods himself. Today our platforms must have variety, distance seems to be no object. One might well enquire what is the object?

Furthermore, apart from the matters already referred to there is the question of phraseology used at the rostrum. Let us shun slang or cheap expressions. There is a dignity, a reverence that is essential. At the same time our words are not uncommon for "the common people heard him gladly". Incidentally the writer is not recommending use of any version other than the AV for public reading and declaration. The popular renderings, paraphrasings of the Scriptures are not convenient on a variety of counts. Then again, what about the prayer meeting associated with the preaching of the gospel? One is saddened to see this exercise no

longer carried out in some assemblies. In others, with only five minutes before the time you might observe but one or two brethren present. One is bold to ask, Are we in earnest? Do we really believe in what we believe? "The night is far spent the day is at hand" (Rom 13:11).

I will Build my Church

by W. R. H. Hooker, London

*I will build my Church, said Jesus,
And found it on this Rock;
The gates of Hell shall not prevail,
Nor His own purpose block.*

*That Rock is Christ, the Bible shows,
He is foundation sure;
It is on Him the building rests,
He also is its door.*

*Thou art the Christ, the Son of God,
Confession bold and true;
This truth the Father hath revealed,
Has it been shown to you?*

*If you will that confession make
With a submissive heart,
You will become a living stone,
And of that building part.*

*Salvation is in Christ alone,
He is the Son of God;
He died that you might be forgiven,
For you He shed His blood.*

*He rose again in triumph great,
Death is a conquered foe;
Repent, believe in Him today
And full salvation know.*

The LORD'S WORK and WORKERS

All items for "intelligence" columns of this magazine should be addressed direct to Editor, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and posted in time to arrive on or before 4th of month previous to issue.

Intimation of commencement of new assemblies should always carry commendation of nearest local assembly.

England & Wales FORTHCOMING

AUGUST 8

Blyth: Gospel Hall, Devonworth Place, Cowpen Estate at 7.30 p.m. T. Wilson.

AUGUST 15

Eastbourne: Marine Hall, Seaside at 7.00 p.m. A.C. Gooding.

AUGUST 22

Blyth: Gospel Hall, Devonworth Place, Cowpen Estate at 7.30 p.m. J. Paton.

Northampton: Gospel Hall, Spencer Bridge Road at 7.30 p.m. D. Newell.

AUGUST 28-30

Ealing: Sunbury Court. Young christians Bible study weekend. D. Newel. Enquiries: G. B. Fyfe, 39 Byson Road, Ealing, London. Tel: 01-992 1597.

SEPTEMBER 1

Treorchy (Mid. Glam.): Annual Conference in Junior School, Glyncoli Road at 2.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. Platform open to ministering brethren.

SEPTEMBER 5

Redditch: Annual Conference at Foxlydiate Crescent Gospel Hall, Batchley Estate, at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. A. Leckie, D. West.

N. Ireland FORTHCOMING

AUGUST 19

Fintona: Annual Conference, 12 noon.

AUGUST 23-29

Bangor: Central Hotel. Ministry Meetings. Mr Jack Hunter, Scotland.

SEPTEMBER 5

Mullafernaghan: Annual Missionary Conference, 6.30 p.m. Speakers expected: D. Ussher, B. Gray, H. Wilson and E. Fairfield.

Scotland FORTHCOMING

AUGUST 15

Dundee: Meadowside Gospel Hall, 2 Euclid Crescent at 7.00 p.m. I. Spiers.

Inverurie: Assembly Hall Annual Conference in Tow Hall at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. A.M.S. Gooding, W. Steveley, G.P. Waugh.

Lanarkshire Gospel Work, Kirkmuirhill: Prayer 3.30 p.m. till 4.00 p.m. Open Air 4.00 p.m. till 5.30 p.m. tea 5.30 p.m. till 6.00 p.m. Ministry 6.00 p.m. till 7.00 p.m. Speaker W. Banks.

Girvan: Stair Park Gospel Hall at 3.00 p.m. J. Hunter, S. Jennings, M. Radcliffe. Mr. Jennings continues in Ministry Mon.-Thurs. at 7.45 p.m. 17th-20th and 24th-27th with Chart "Egypt to Canaan".

AUGUST 22

Lanarkshire Gospel Work, Chapelton: Prayer at 3.30 p.m. till 4.00 p.m. Open-Air 4.00 p.m. till 5.30 p.m. Tea 5.30 p.m. till 6.00 p.m. Ministry 6.00 p.m. till 7.00 p.m. Speaker S. King.

Bishopton: Annual Conference in Bishopton Community Centre at 3.00 p.m. A. Cundick, B. Gamble, I. Speirs.

Irvine: Annual Conference at 3.15 p.m. A. W. Foster, F.E. Stallan, W. Steveley.

AUGUST 29

Forth: Annual Conference in Miners Welfare Hall, Manse Road at 3.30 p.m. A. Leckie, K. Stapley, G. Jackson. Mr. Leckie continues in Ministry.

Ayrshire Missionary Conference in Central Hall, John Finnie Street, Kilmarnock at 3.00 p.m. till 7.00 p.m. S. McKenzie, R. Rew, A. Shedden, Dr. A. Stewart.

Motherwell: Shields Road Gospel Hall at 3.30 p.m. Open Air and Bible Reading. J. Paton.

AUGUST 30 - SEPTEMBER 3

Kilbarchan: Meeting on Prophetic Subjects with G. Waugh in Gospel Memorial Hall on 30th at 3.15 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. 31st-3rd at 7.30 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 5

Annbank: Annual Conference in Community Centre, Annbank Road, Mossblow at 3.15 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. J. Campbell, S. Foster, G. Jackson.

SEPTEMBER 12

Stenhousemuir: Annual Conference in Larbert East Church Hall, at 3.00 p.m. S. Arbuthnot, W. Barr, G. Bull.

Due to unforeseen circumstances it has been necessary to change the dates of the 1988 Ayr Bible Readings, which will now be (DV) from Saturday 7th May to Friday 13th May inclusive. The speakers will be Mr. J. Riddle, Mr. J. Allen.

NOTE: Will correspondents please note that all information about local activities should be sent to the brethren who co-ordinate area reports and not to the Publishers. The names and addresses of the co-ordinating brethren are listed in the January 1987 issue of the Believers' Magazine.

England & Wales REPORTS

WEST MIDLANDS

Birmingham, Aston: This year's conference at Park Lane was not so well attended as in previous years, but the ministry was helpful and encouraging from S. Emery and D. Clapham. S. Emery stayed on for a series of ministry meetings which were appreciated.

Birmingham, Small Heath: J. Scarsbrook and J. Grice ministered the word at the first Annual Conference of the 'Camp Hill' saints at their new hall. The practical ministry and fellowship was a help to the saints. A. E. Turner followed with a week of meetings on the subject of prayer.

Broadwas on Teme: At the gospel hall on the hillside above the fields through which the Teme meanders, the assembly has continued its programme of Saturday evening ministry meetings. The guest speakers have been J. Whitmarsh and C. S. Jarrett. The ministry of these brethren has been much appreciated, together with the support of believers from a considerable distance.

EAST MIDLANDS

Nottingham: A. M. S. Gooding had a series of ministry meetings on the Feasts of Jehovah at Netherfield, where the small assembly was encouraged by believers joining them from surrounding assemblies.

Derby, Curzon Street: A. Leckie gave helpful ministry when he visited the assembly recently, taking as his subject the Levitical Offerings.

SOUTH EAST MIDLANDS

Baldock: S. Mountstevens had an encouraging two weeks tent meetings. A lad of 11 was spotted writing on the tent pole "I would like to be a christian". Very concerned and earnest when counselled (he realised the attitude his friends would adopt), he did not openly confess, but one believes a work of God was started. On returning to the tent during a violent thunderstorm, six 17-20 year olds ran out. On being chased after and rebuked, they were also invited to return and hear the gospel which they did. Our brother writes, "One can only praise God for that thunderstorm and thank Him for sending it". He continues, "A man stood in the tent door one dinner-time. He wanted to unburden his heart. Realising his need one sought to help him. This poor soul hung his head in mid-sentence and disappeared. We believe something struck into his soul". Pray for the small assembly as they commence a work for youngsters following this effort.

Milton Keynes: S. Mountstevens writes, "A moslem gentleman engaged in conversation at much length as he spotted the banner and text. His English left a lot to be desired, and my knowledge of the Indian language being non-existent meant a frustrating time. Praise the Lord he did accept a gospel leaflet. May the Lord use it to open his eyes to the glorious truths of the 'Son of God'".

GREATER LONDON

Broadwater Farm Estate (Tottenham), London: Over the past months, the Lord has been pleased to continue to bless the work on this needy estate. Almost 3,000 invitations and pieces of gospel literature have been distributed to the homes on the estate. The monthly "Family Hours" have been attended by both adults and children, many of them unsaved. The "Family Hours" held at Easter and for the "Prizegiving" for the children's work were especially well attended. A nucleus of parents attend most of the meetings and show much interest.

The children's work on a Friday evening is also encouraging, with new children joining from time to time. Their behaviour is excellent and there is much interest amongst the children in the things of the Lord.

Four of the children will be joining us at "camp" this year. This will be our eleventh year of camp work for children from the North London area. We expect about 45 to be at camp at Chigwell in Essex. Please pray for this camp from August 1st-7th and especially for the four children from the estate.

Parents and children from the estate are being invited to the Chapel (Brook Street) in July for a "Strawberry Tea". This will be in place of an "outing" and we are praying that this will be another means of contacting these folk with the gospel.

Whilst to us the situation on the estate seems "quiet", we know that the evil one is ever at work. On the Monday following a recent "Family Hour" a young man was murdered on the estate.

Brook Street Chapel (Tottenham), London: The monthly missionary prayer meeting held at the chapel since January, following the closure of the monthly missionary prayer meeting in Central London, has been deeply encouraging. With almost 50 attending, there has been a wonderful spirit of prayer and intercession. Various missionary brethren have shared matters for prayer which has greatly added to the duplicated list of prayer requests circulated at these meetings each month. From the commencement of the work in Tottenham 148 years ago there has always been a keen interest in the Lord's work and servants overseas.

The closing weekend in May marked the 148th anniversary of the work at Brook Street Chapel. Although the chapel was opened in 1839, the work commenced during the previous year, 1838, as believers met together in a house to celebrate the Lord's Supper. A good company of believers from many local assemblies met together to give thanks to God for His goodness and faithfulness over these past 148 years.

At present we are greatly blessed by the helpful ministry of Mr K. Jones (Brazil) and Mr J. Riddle (Cheshunt).

EAST ANGLIA:

Mid-Suffolk Village Evangelism: A regular work of open air meetings and tract distribution on summer Saturday afternoons in the villages of mid-Suffolk has continued for many years. Those involved in this work from a number of assemblies have been increasingly concerned that few people were listening to the open air messages and this summer the emphasis of the work has changed to concentrate on door to door visitation. A tract has been produced specially for this work.

A very unfortunate incident occurred recently when a sister delivering tracts was attacked by an alsatian dog. She was badly hurt, suffering a broken arm and a number of

serious bite wounds. Her condition was very painful for some weeks but is now improving. Humanly speaking, it is difficult for us to understand why such a thing should happen to someone engaged in His service but the Lord can bring blessing out of even this incident. We pray for the owners of the dog that they might consider the message our sister was bringing them.

Stowmarket: The assembly at Stowmarket have been holding a series of Bible prophecy classes in a Portakabin on a new estate on the outskirts of the town. These classes led by Mr A. C. Gooding have been presenting the gospel based on a number of charts depicting God's purposes in mercy and judgment. It has been disappointing that so far few have ventured even the few yards to the hall virtually on their doorsteps but there has been very definite blessing and encouragement in that one lady from a Roman Catholic background came to hear what the Bible had to say about the return of Christ and has been soundly saved

DEVON AND CORNWALL

St. Austell: The assembly has been greatly encouraged over the last few months by seeing God save souls and by the obedience of five believers being baptised. One middle aged man made known the fact that he had been saved by telling his wife that he wished to be baptised. His wife had that very day come into fellowship, having trusted the Lord about a year previously. Prayer is requested that God might save their two sons who are now coming to the meetings regularly.

At a Saturday night gospel meeting entitled "Lifelines" over 100 adults and young people listened to over an hour of powerful testimony to the change that only Christ can make in human hearts. The saints are convinced that God is at work in the area and that many of those hearing the gospel at the present time God will save soon. Further outreaches in the gospel using "Lifelines" are planned (D.V.) for June and September in the outlying villages of Polgooth and Penwithick.

Youth gospel rallies have now been held in Truro, St. Austell and Falmouth assembly halls and on each occasion there were over 120 youngsters present to listen to a clearly and powerfully presented gospel message. Prayer is urgently requested for a continued and sustained work of the Spirit of God and that those in the forefront of this work may have a clear understanding of the Lord's will for the future of it.

Truro: M. Baker and M. Brown gave ministry and reports at the annual conference on Easter Friday. M. Brown continued with a further week of ministry which was greatly appreciated by many.

Plymouth: Westhill and Wolsley gospel halls both enjoyed a very challenging visit from P. Brandon in which the saints felt the Spirit of God calling for a deeper and fuller response to God's Word was required of them. The visit has left a very much increased desire for earnest prayer and an exercise to see a real movement of the Lord amongst His people once again.

J. Hadley and S. Burditt would value much and consistent prayer for their labours in their gospel tents during the summer months in the villages and towns of Cornwall.

N. Ireland **REPORTS**

CO. ANTRIM

Ballyrobert, near Ballyclare: R. Pickering conducted tent meetings, with encouraging numbers attending.

Monkstown: R. Jordan and W. Armstrong had meetings in portable hall during June. The meetings were poorly attended but encouraging, as a young man in his thirties and a young girl of 12 professed faith in Christ. Meetings for children were also held in the same hall each evening during the month with an average attendance of 70. The word was faithfully sown and, no doubt, will bring forth a harvest for the glory of the Lord.

CO. ARMAGH

Derryhubbert: Gospel tent meetings by W. J. Nesbitt and son. The tent is filled each evening and numbers of local people attending. Pray for blessing in this needy area.

CO. DOWN

Ballyhay: R. Eadie and C. Law concluded meetings in new hall. Good numbers and good interest. One young woman professed.

Ballynahinch: J. G. Hutchinson and J. Allen concluded five weeks of meetings in the gospel hall. Good numbers attended each evening and blessing was experienced.

Blackskull: S. Ferguson and N. Turkington concluded meetings in portable hall. Good numbers of unsaved attended, mostly connected to the christians. The word was faithfully preached.

Comber: W. Lavery (USA) and L. McMullan concluded five weeks in the gospel. A good interest was shown, and some were concerned about salvation.

Moneyreagh: R. Jordan and W. Armstrong commenced meetings in portable hall in this needy and hard area on 26th July. Pray for blessing.

Waringstown: R. Pickering and H. Andrews started tent meetings on 26th July. Prayer valued for blessing on this effort.

CONFERENCE

Ballykeel: Large company gathered. A. McShane, J. McCann, W. J. Nesbitt, D. Williamson and J. Allen shared in the ministry which was of a helpful nature. A children's meeting following the conference was considered good. The speakers were E. Fairfield and J. Thompson.

CO LONDONDERRY

Moneydig: E. Wishart and T. Sloan had five weeks of gospel meetings. The assembly is small numerically and, while the response from the district was disappointing, one girl showed interest in being saved.

Portarlington (Eire): S. Patterson and G. Stewart had two weeks of meetings in the gospel hall. Numbers attending were small but one family showed definite interest in spiritual matters. Our brother Bert Gray plans to follow them up.

Kildare: The RC family who showed interest in the meetings in Portarlington requested that G. Stewart and S. Patterson have some meetings in their home. These are presently continuing.

CO. TYRONE

Bready: A. Aiken concluded meetings in portable hall in this country area. A measure of interest was seen. The word was faithfully proclaimed and the district well visited.

CONFERENCES

Sion Mills: D. Ussher, N. Turkington, S. Ferguson, J. Martin and A. Aiken gave helpful ministry.

Strabane: D. Kane, J. Martin, J. Brown, J. G. Hutchinson, A. Aiken, D. Ussher and Mr Kimber shared in the ministry.

Lungs: First conference in new hall. A. McShane, S. Ferguson, J. Allen, D. Ussher, W. Lavery and R. Wishart gave ministry of a helpful nature.

Martray: E. Fairfield, W. J. Nesbitt, T. Flannigan, D. Kane, J. Wells and J. McCann shared in the ministry.

BELFAST AND DISTRICT

Maranatha: H. Andrews concluded two weeks in the gospel and found a growing interest, extra seating necessary during second week

Scotland REPORTS

SOUTH WEST STRATHCLYDE

Dalmellington: The little assembly at Dalmellington was helped by the Ayrshire outreach there at the beginning of June. David McMaster made many interesting contacts and conducted adult's and children's meetings in the little hall with the support of Ayrshire assemblies.

Stevenston (Bethany): A little later in June the centre of witness in connection with the Ayrshire Outreach was Stevenston. Most of the meetings were at Bethany and there was good support from the other Stevenston meetings. Robert McLuckie conducted the adult meetings and Alaister Young conducted the children's meetings. There was a very good interest. A local lady professed salvation on the last night of the meetings.

Maybole: Robert Revie and Jack Hay have been working at Maybole during the month of June. There has been quite a bit of interest in this town where there was once an assembly. One little girl has been saved so far.

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

Portpatrick: J. Baxter had four weeks gospel meetings in the small assembly when around 12-20 unsaved were present every night. Many of these were brought by believers from the nearby town of Stranraer. During the effort a woman and a young man from Stranraer professed salvation.

LOTHIANS AND BORDERS

Uphall: Subsequent to visitation made by J. Baxter as reported in a previous issue, a married couple have been restored to fellowship in the assembly.

Bo'ness: G. Meikle and R. Marshall have finished gospel meetings in the town. During the effort children's meetings were well attended and a good number of adults attended. Many good contacts were made during a door to door visitation. Our brethren have commenced visitation in the village of Cennet in Fife.

Addresses PERSONALIA

Correspondence for Ebenezer Assembly, Bangor, Northern Ireland should now be addressed to Mr. Ronnie Johnston, 2 Cranley Park, Bangor, Co. Down.

Mr. Joe Merson should now be addressed at 26 Rosewell Place, Aberdeen, AB2 6HN.

Unemployed? Send for a free parcel of Gospel Tracts. Employed? £10 per 1,000 postage free. Alex Ross, 33 Wellbrae Terrace, Aberdeen, AB1 7YA.

Bridlington: The assembly meeting at the Gospel Hall, 49 North Street, in accordance with the NT principles of gathering extend a warm invitation to visitors. Lord's day 10.45 a.m. breaking of bread, Tuesday 7.30 p.m. Bible reading and prayer meeting (D.V.). All correspondence to Mr W. H. Boyd, 11A Chestnut Close, Bridlington, YO16 5YT.

Bournemouth, Dorset: All Christian visitors warmly welcomed at Victoria Gospel Hall, Victoria Park Road, Winton, Bournemouth. Sundays, Lord's Supper 11.00 a.m. Gospel 6.30 p.m. Car park. Tel. 529425.

With CHRIST

Due to lack of space it is not always possible to print notices for this section in full. It will be appreciated if correspondents will endeavour to keep notice to a maximum of 80 words.

Mr ALEX CLARK, suddenly on 4th April, aged 69. Saved as a boy of nine in Ebenezer Hall, Wishaw, baptised at Newmains and later received into the assembly at West End Gospel Hall, Whitburn, where he was in happy fellowship for 42 years. Marked with consistency, he was actively involved in Sunday school work, hospital visitation and tract distribution and was a very faithful and gracious overseer for 25 years. He was a very well known and respected christian in the locality. He will be sadly missed.

Mrs ELIZABETH McKELVEY, Dromore, passed away in hospital in her 81st year. She was saved in a gospel meeting conducted by the late Robert Curran, near Shanaghan in October, 1925. Later she was baptised and received into the assembly at Shanaghan.

Sometime afterwards the family moved to Dromore, where she was in fellowship until her home-call. She was a quiet, godly woman who believed in prayer and saw her family saved.

Mr SAMMY COPELAND, on the 7th June, aged 73. Saved 33 years ago in meetings at Ashfield, truly a trophy of grace. Some time later he was baptised and received into the Ballykeel Assembly, Dromore, where he remained in fellowship until his home-call. The large funeral was a testimony to how much he was held in respect by the saints and many others who knew him. Our brother was a faithful attender at the assembly meetings. Prayer is requested for his widow and family circle.

Mr JAMES CAIRNS, on 13th June, aged 77. He was in happy fellowship in Greenock assembly for 57 years. He led an active life in serving the Lord, bearing witness in word and song. For a number of years a valued elder, offering counsel and care when required. Poor health overtook him during the last year, but because of his friendly nature and quiet consistency he will be missed. Remember his widow and family in prayer.

Mr JOHN McCracken (Evangelist) Nova

Scotia, Canada, in his 77th year. Saved at the age of 17 at meetings of his late father and Thomas Lyttle. Commended and went to Canada in 1937. He did much pioneer work with his late brother Bob both in planting and maintaining small assemblies. At the funeral services, which were very large, his characteristics of humility, integrity and faithfulness were expressed. He went home peacefully after several months of illness. Remember his wife and family in prayer.

Mr SYDNEY HINDLE, on 23rd June, aged 83. Saved when he was 16 and along with his wife was in fellowship in Accrington and then moved to Huddersfield Assembly where he was the correspondent for 40 years. They were untiring in their efforts to build up the assembly and their home was always open to the Lord's people. Remember the family in prayer.

Mr WILLIAM IRWIN, on June 2nd aged 83. Our brother was saved in 1922 and was in assembly fellowship for 65 years. During the past 24 years he met with the saints in Hospital Hill, Dunfermline. He was a priestly man, faithful in the ministry of the word and had a great zeal for the gospel. He will be greatly missed both in the home and the assembly. Please remember his widow and family in prayer.

Carnlough: Christian Guest House over looking Carnlough Bay. Open all year round. Central heating etc. Home baking. Christian fellowship. James and Mary Aiken, Bethany Guest House, 5 Bay Road, Carnlough, Ballymena, N.I. Tel: Carnlough 85667.

Scarborough Christian Hotel, moving to spacious detached property, has several rooms available for permanent residents. For further details, tel: 0723-360360 or write to Mr Smith, 6 Albion Road, Scarborough, YO11 2BT.

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Netherhall, Largs

AUTUMN CONFERENCE WEEKEND

2nd-4th October 1987

SUBJECT:
"BRIDGING THE GENERATION GAP"

SPEAKERS:
JOHN ALLEN, EXETER
ALEX ALLEN, LONGRIGGEND

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LARNE, N.I.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND BIBLE READINGS

D.V. 11th-15th Sept. 1987

Subject for Readings
BOOK OF RUTH

Responsible brethren expected

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W. J. Nesbit, N. Ireland
J. McColl, Australia
J. Burnett, Scotland
B. Currie, N. Ireland

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LURGAN

(NORTHERN IRELAND)

GOSPEL HALL
MALCOLM ROAD

ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND BIBLE READINGS

10th-16th Oct. 1987 (D.V.)

SUBJECT:

EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

D. HINTON J. GAMBLE
A. McSHANE S. McBRIDE

CORRESPONDENT:

Mr W. McConville, 2 Mournview
Avenue, Lurgan, Co. Antrim,
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Believers'

MAGAZINE

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Regions Beyond, M. Browne

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- Young Believers
Question Box

EDITORIAL PANEL

- J.R. Baker
K. Stapley
F. Stallan
T. Wilson



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EDITORIAL **Searchlight**

Although propaganda is a legitimate tool in today's world for the spread of information, dogma, etc., it is in fact an old word, used to describe a Roman Catholic Congregation, set up in 1622, charged with the spreading of Catholicism. In more recent times the word has taken on an even more sinister meaning, especially by reason of its use in the last world war, when the information spread was very often far removed from the truth.

Although Christians would shrink from using the word 'propaganda' to describe the spread of gospel tidings, there are other means which fall into a similar category. Recently a report came into the hands of the writer and in it was a statement, 'and the bait used to get them in was ...' That statement had something about it which seemed to border on deceit. To go further, there seems to be something grossly wrong about using some pretence to get people under the sound of the gospel, and when they come in, they find an entirely different situation from what was conveyed or described to them in the 'bait.'

Is not this sort of approach a misrepresentation of the character of God? If God is who He is, does He need to sanction the use of bait to carry on his work? Does it not state in Rom 2:5, 'the goodness of God leadeth to repentance?' This too in a setting which has such statements as, 'Thou art inexcusable, O man.' Perhaps a clearer understanding of

the character of God would help to lift the methods of communication on to a higher plane. God is not a demanding God: He is not an austere Being who wishes to make bigots out of men and women; He is a giving God; He delights to give, and he gives freely and liberally to the undeserving. It is not necessary, therefore to hide this fact behind 'bait' which after it is swallowed is followed up by something else which might not have been acceptable in the first place. Far better to state the facts openly and leave the Spirit of God to do his own work and take up the testimony in his own way.

Some may say that the idea of bait is used in the NT. That is not denied; it is used once in James 1 and twice in 2 Peter 2, but all three occurrences have to do with evil situations. Some again argue about Paul's remark, 'that by all means I might save some.' The passage from which this is taken, 1 Cor 9:22, demands an interpretation of 'every legitimate way.' In any case, people who argue for wide (and doubtful) scope are not so quick in adopting Paul's condition 'made all things to all men.'

The heralding of the glad tidings of the gospel and the communication of the truth are vital for healthy assembly life. To sit back and wait for something to happen only invites the application of the trite saying, 'evangelise or fossilise.' Having stated that, however, there are guide lines in the Scripture for 'holding forth the word of life' which will surely be sought out and observed by those who wish to reach out with God's approval.

F.E.S.

The Palm Tree

by L.G. Barton, Birmingham

“The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree” (Psa 92:12).

The palm tree has always been associated with the lands of both Old and New Testament narrative. It is found in the desert providing shade from the hot sun and indicating by its presence some hidden source of moisture. The palm tree flourishes best in well watered soils and the date palm produces fruit which, according to the Arabs, together with the tree has as many uses as there are days of the year. The palm tree was incorporated in the architectural ornaments of Solomon’s temple being in the form of carvings on walls and doors (1 Kings 6:29-36; 2 Chron 3:5). Also in Ezekiel 40 and 41 the palm tree is again mentioned in the vision of Ezekiel’s temple, probably sculptured similarly to the lion and cherubim.

We are concerned however with the palm tree to which the Psalmist likens the righteous man. These trees are mentioned in connection with the children of Israel in their journeyings from Egypt to Sinai. In Exod 15:24-27, after the people murmured over the bitterness of the water of Marah and their ultimate sweetness, we read that the people journeyed to Elim where twelve wells of water and threescore and ten palm trees provided a place for them to pitch their camp. These same wells are called fountains in the summary of their movements after leaving Egypt given in Num 33:9.

Much has been written about the

palm tree in Scripture but as the purpose of our meditation is to gather spiritual teaching from it we will note its characteristics and examine its comparison with the believer’s life. Firstly although it requires moisture it does flourish in a barren soil. Our thoughts go beyond the believer to the prophecy of the christian’s Lord, the servant of Jehovah when in Isa 53:2 we read that “he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground”. The hymn writer summarised His life such “Thy death of shame and sorrow was like unto Thy birth, which would no glory borrow no majesty from earth”.

The palm tree does however flourish best near water and maybe the psalmist in the first psalm had the palm tree in mind. He writes “Blessed is the man ... and he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither ...”. This is not the only reference likening the righteous man to a tree, for in Jer 17:7, 8 we have almost a repetition of Psa 1 with the added promise that he “shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit”. Let us now notice that both the fruit and tree has so many uses. The christian path covers a 365 day year. There is to be no let up in our testimony. Day in and day out preaching the word, “be instant in season, out of season” (2 Tim 4:2).

Let us note the physical characteristics of the palm tree. Firstly it is an upright tree, a lofty tree with the branches or leaves forming a graceful umbrella shaped tuft at the top of the tall stem. Unlike many trees the girth of the trunk does not increase with its height

but each year a new coronet of leaves grows out of the top to bear the fruit whilst the lower tufts gradually wither away over the years. The palm's physical appearance reminds us of the uprightness of the believer as exhorted in Phil 2:15, "that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world". Paul in his letter to Titus, when giving exhortation to the aged men and women, and the young men and women, instructed them to be temperate, faithful and sober, sound in speech etc. He then directed the servants to be obedient, not robbing their masters; all for the purpose of silencing the critics and supporting the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ. See also Psa 84:11.

The trunk of the palm tree is a solid mass of fibre rather than real timber. This fibre together with its deep roots makes the tree somewhat elastic. The writer has never seen a picture of a palm tree blown out of the ground after a gale. It bends with the storm and then straightens up when the storm ceases. We should be just as pliable. Why are we so touchy and pushed down by circumstances? With our spiritual food and strength "being rooted and grounded in love" we should not let anything keep us down. The palm tree sends its roots down for water; we should dip deep into the Scriptures so that Paul's exhortation will be fulfilled as given in Col 4, "Let the peace of God be the umpire in your hearts... let the word of Christ dwell in you abundantly, in all wisdom". We are exhorted also to put off and put on respectively the bad and good things and in v. 13 we have the answer to our sensitiveness "forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man

have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you so also do ye".

It is a strange thing to say, but it can be said of the palm tree that it is always growing while it lives. Some trees and shrubs do not grow although alive. The christian life is a progressive life for we grow in grace (2 Pet 3:18). It is also a continuous battle against evil and the old nature. The palm tree foliage is always green and it always bears fruit as far as possible from earth and nearest to heaven. The believer's life should be a fruitful one. In John 15 we have the soil or husbandry and this is abiding in Christ; in 2 Pet 1 we have the weaving or cultivation of the fruit; in Gal 5 we have the nine descriptions of the fruits. Spiritually we are concerned with the fruit of the Spirit. In the abiding we find the condition of the fruitfulness is union with Christ and His word abiding in us. Faithfulness is progressive; in John 15:2 there is fruit and more fruit, and in v. 5 there is much fruit. In 2 Pet 1 we take each fruit of the Spirit and form them into a uniform pattern giving no preference, but finding room for each in our life. The nine fruits of Gal 5 are in three groups. The first three are in relation to God and the Lord Jesus Christ, "love, joy and peace". The second three are in relation to our fellow believers, "long-suffering, gentleness and goodness". The third three are in relation to ourselves, "faith, meekness and temperance".

Paul writing to the Philippian saints thanked them for their gifts and desired that their kindness should be "fruit that may abound to their account". All our fruit should be that which is acceptable to the Lord, and count for "gold, silver and precious stones" at the judgment seat of Christ.

Balaam's Parables (4)

by P. Harding, Manchester

We have suggested five things in this second parable:—

1. **Num 23:19 The Unchanging Promises of God**

2. **Num 23:20 The Unalterable Blessing of God**

3. **Num 23:21 The Unmistakeable Presence of God** — “the Lord his God is with him”. Not only is Israel justified, not only blessed with blessings that cannot be reversed, but the Lord is with him. God dwelling in the tabernacle is typical of the end times when God will set His sanctuary in the midst of Israel for evermore (Ezek 37:26-28). The dwelling of God in the tabernacle in the wilderness followed the deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. This is but figurative of Israel's deliverance in a coming day and the presence of God in their midst. In that day the glory of the Lord will return to Israel and fill the House of God, and the earth will shine with the glory of the Lord (Ezek 43:1-5). The Lord's presence in the midst of Israel shall be for their exaltation as well as the casting out of their enemies. The Lord their God in the midst of them shall be mighty and will rejoice over Israel with joy (Zeph 3:15-17). Israel will also sing and rejoice, and there shall be universal homage to the Lord in the midst of Israel (Zech 2:10-12).

Are we not able to apply this to the saints of this dispensation? Surely we see God dwelling in the midst of a heavenly people (Eph 2:21; Rev 21:3). Is not Christ in the midst of saints who

are gathered to the Lord's Name in any locality (Matt 18:20)? What a dignity! What a privilege! What a responsibility.

4. **Num 23:21 The Unconquerable Prince among them** — “the shout of a king is among them”. It is a shout of joy for their Messiah King is among them in glorious triumph. In the end times the One Israel despised and cast out will come in all His glory to destroy their enemies and bring deliverance to them. In that day they shall first mourn as they look upon the One they pierced then rejoice because the true King of then rejoice because the true King of Zeph 3:15). Then “a King shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgment” and “a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth” — then Israel shall dwell safely in the land (Isa 32:1; Jer 23:5-8). Jer 23 looks on to the millennium when the Lord as the ‘Righteous Branch’ of the seed of David, will be revealed in all His regal glory as the King of kings and Lord of lords. Thus the royal office and glorious character of Israel's Redeemer is described in all His majesty and power (Zech 14:9).

Again, all this can be applied to the saints today, for the One in our midst is omnipotent. We can, therefore do all things through Christ Who continually strengthens us (Phil 4:13). However, to enjoy His presence and to experience His power we must submit to His authority.

5. Num 23:22 The Unlimited Power available to Israel — “God brought them out of Egypt; He hath, as it were, the strength of an unicorn”. The power displayed in the past deliverance from Egypt is the same power that will be manifested on the behalf of Israel in a coming day. This is clearly seen in Isa 11:15-16 and Zech 10:10-12, for in that day a way shall be opened up for the remnant of Israel to return to the land. The Lord will intervene, when the nations rise against Israel and threaten to engulf them, in order to deliver. In His fury, the Lord will deal with Assyria, Egypt and all who are against Israel (Isa 14:25; Zech 10:11). Every power against Israel shall be impotent —“surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel”(Num 23:23). No longer will foes oppress Israel for terror will not come near them. Their enemies may gather together, but all who dare shall fall. In that day Jerusalem will be invincible and no weapon formed against them shall prosper (Isa 54:15-17). In Zech 9:14-15 we have a vivid description of the irresistible armies of Israel when the Lord shall lead them and be over them. The Lord shall fight for them and be their protecting shield, and their victory

will be so great that they shall subdue and devour all that oppose them — “Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat up the prey, and drink the blood of the slain” (Num 23:24). Happy shall Israel be when they celebrate the triumph of divine grace, saved and protected by the Lord, and before whom all their enemies will be helpless and defeated. In that day none shall make them afraid (Zeph 3:13). As we contemplate the glorious future for Israel, unfolded in this parable, we are not surprised at the exclamation “What hath God wrought!”

When we think of the riches of God’s grace to us, surely we are amazed at what God has wrought. We too, are assured of omnipotent power on our behalf knowing that “if God be for us, who can be against us”, and that “we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us” (Rom 8:31, 37). Well might we ask “who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” We know full well the answer for nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom 8:35-39).

To be continued.

I'm just a cog in life's vast wheel,
That makes the same old trip.
But what a joy it is to feel
That but for me the wheel might slip!
'Tis something, after all, to jog
Along and be a first-class cog.

How It Began (3)

Dalmellington, Ayrshire

A sequel

So started the assembly in Dalmellington. Perhaps I might be allowed a word of personal testimony.

Another series of meetings was started, two other servants of the Lord coming to conduct them. Again the Lord worked through them and quite a number were brought from darkness to light, among them two of my sisters. Shortly after they were saved, they expressed their desire to be baptised according to the Lord's command. Opposition to this was offered in our home by some of the family; my mother strenuously opposed it because we had all been baptised in infancy and we "needed no more than what was done". However, this argument did not suffice; they saw clearly that it was the Lord's will that they should be baptised, and not only so, they expressed their desire to meet with the assembly on the first day of the week to remember the Lord. This desire only caused more opposition. However, help came from a most unexpected source. One night as they were using much entreaty to let them obey the will of God, my mother began to point out the disgrace which would be brought on her by their leaving the kirk. I then asked why they should continue to go to a kirk from which the minister and two Sunday School teachers had excluded me but a few months previously. Consent was subsequently given; both were baptised and added to the assembly. They embraced every opportunity of speaking

to the rest of us about our need of salvation.

A few months after the meetings concluded, another servant of the Lord came to follow up the work. At these meetings a few more were saved, among whom were two more of my sisters. Coming home from work one night, my mother said, "L... is converted now." "We'll soon see about that," I boasted. She was a very quick-tempered girl, and, watching for a suitable opportunity, I lifted a tub of water and threw the contents over her. To my great surprise she did not utter a word — that was something new; it should have been the signal for a pitched battle. Turning to my mother I said, "She's saved all right; there's not a doubt about it." Somehow we had an idea what a Christian should be. Today when one professes to be saved the ungodly look for a life that matches that profession.

With four sisters now saved things were becoming hot for me; every opportunity was taken to speak to me of my need of salvation. I vowed to leave the house and find a place where I could be at peace. Although attending most of the gospel meetings I had not as yet learned my condition before God. Therefore I was content with my lot. Having attended a singing class some knowledge of music had been acquired, and I used to sit down with my sisters in the evenings and sing

hymns from Sankey's hymnbook which had just been published. All went well while I taught them the tune, but as soon as they spoke to me about my need I rose and left. The brethren used to visit our home about this time, which annoyed me very much as some one of them would speak to me about eternity and meeting God in my sins. One night in particular will not be easily erased from my memory. Coming home from work I found a few brethren gathered round a well-filled table enjoying themselves. This was more than I could bear, so I began by warning them, "Never be in this house again; at least while I am at home." This ended their visitation — at least while I was in the house.

Just about this time, the assembly removed to a new hall. It was erected by an elder in the Free Kirk. His wife and daughter were in the assembly and, though a leading man in the kirk, he always had a leaning to the little assembly. He was seldom absent from the gospel meetings. A short time after the hall was opened the assembly resolved to convene special meetings for prayer; these continued for three weeks. The saints poured out their prayers to God that the new hall might be the birth place of many souls. Quite a number of us were specifically named to God, that we might be interested and saved from eternal misery. They cried especially for God to send one of His servants, that through the preaching many might be saved. In answer to these intercessions God did send a servant, and six weeks of meetings began.

During the first two weeks of these meetings I was working away from home and sowed my wild oats, seeking to enjoy myself to the full. I thought

what a change it was from home — no one to restrain me, no one constantly reminding me of eternity and of meeting God in my sins. So much did I enjoy this liberty that I made up my mind to go home, gather my belongings together and leave the parental roof for good. Arriving home I tried to open up a way to make known my intentions. I was leaning against the table wondering how to broach the subject, when my nine-year old brother came over to me. Looking up into my face he said, "I want to tell you that I'm saved." I blurted out, "You are well off!" and fled from the house, my brother's words ringing through my mind. God was now dealing with me. I was in great distress, knowing well that I was not saved. My past life came before me and, returning home, I made straight for the attic for the night. Sleep deserted me. God's sharp arrow had accomplished its end.

The following night my companions were all at the bridge-end listening to the gospel being proclaimed, when I joined them. We were invited inside to hear the gospel. We went, and, reaching the top of the stairs, we were separated to ensure good behaviour. The text that night was Amos 4:12: "Prepare to meet thy God." These words are about all I can recollect of the address. I trembled at the thought of meeting God in my sins, for I now realised that I was guilty and that God's righteous judgment hung over me. The closing hymn was intimated and read, after which the preacher said, "If anyone cannot sing these words truthfully, it would be better not to sing at all." The words were:

" 'Tis the promise of God full salvation
to give

Unto him who on Jesus His Son will believe.
Hallelujah, 'tis done! I believe on the Son;
I am saved by the blood of the crucified One."

Some made no attempt to sing, knowing full well they were not saved. An after meeting was announced, and I determined to stay. To my surprise three of my companions also remained. The word of God was read to us, and brethren kindly sought to help us, but we all left the hall that night not saved. We talked a short time together and, each expressing his desire to be saved, we separated to go home. My mind was filled with the words of the hymn we had been unable to sing. Stopping abruptly on the street, I repeated the words aloud; the truth suddenly dawning I said, "I believe, and I am saved." That moment I had peace with God; no fear now of meeting Him. I wept for joy; my load was gone.

I was very quiet when I arrived home. Although I knew what a joy it would be to them to know I was saved, I did not tell them that night. Going up to the attic I kneeled down and thanked God for saving me.

The following morning at work, as our custom was, a few of us retired to a quiet corner where we spent a good deal of time when we should have been working. Immediately I sat down my conscience smote me and, rising, I left the company, satisfied that in doing so I was pleasing God. Throughout the remainder of the day I frequently sang the opening verse and the chorus of the hymn referred to above, many fellow workmen remarking that I had

turned holy in a hurry. Having myself harassed the believers by what I had done and said, I could not expect to be exempt.

Almost at stopping time instructions were received that we were required to work all night. This was a great disappointment for me as I was longing for meeting time to arrive. The following day, being Saturday, was a half-holiday. What a surprise was awaiting me at home to hear that James S..., Andrew P... and George W... had all been saved, and at the open-air meeting at the bridge-end. I could not understand it, knowing that the last time we were together we were not saved.

I was to learn later that James, who went in an opposite direction from me, stood still in the street and passed from death to life through believing. Andrew and George went a part of the way together. Andrew stopped and said, "George, I can't go home tonight until I am saved." "Well," said George, "I can't help you much, but I will read a verse that was read to me tonight." Opening his Bible, he read John 3:16. As he finished reading, Andrew said, "I am saved now; I have everlasting life. Man, George, do you not see that if you believe on Him you have everlasting life?" George, too, believed that night and rejoiced in the knowledge that he was saved.

The meetings increased in size and many were brought from darkness to light. It was a time of awakening in the village; the full results will be known only in a coming day. About twenty of the souls who believed the Word were baptised and added to the assembly at that time. It was the year 1877.

Together in Christ (7)

by L. Goddard, Romford

The Garden

A friend thought it well to add a thought or two about the garden, without which home for many would not be complete.

How much enjoyment is to be found in a well-kept garden! Scripture describes the first garden made on earth and tells us that God planted it "with every tree that was pleasant to the eye and good for food" (Gen 2:9); it was a perfect pattern of beauty and fruitfulness. Alas, Adam, who was put there to tend it, fell into sin and had to be expelled, bringing death and misery upon the human race.

Nevertheless, God promised the remedy in the Person of His dear Son, who was appointed to be our Sin-bearer. Hence, in the fulness of time, the Lord Jesus suffered and died in our place. Significantly, as we read in John 19:41, "in the place where he was crucified there was a garden and in the garden a new sepulchre". There they laid His body to rest. But there He rose from the dead, so that as the first Adam failed in a garden, so the second man, the last Adam, Jesus Christ, in His work of redemption was associated with a garden, where the purpose of God was gloriously fulfilled.

Figuratively speaking, every child of God is expected to cultivate a spiritual garden, a life that displays a beauty and

a fruitfulness that shall glorify God. This is what the bride pictures in her invitation to the bridegroom: "Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits" (Song 4:16). There we see, too, that as a variation of weather benefits a literal garden, so the chilly north wind of adversity and the warmer breezes of blessing from the south work together for good to produce the fruit and fragrance of our devotion to delight the Lord.

I come to the garden alone,
While the dew is still on the roses;
And the voice I hear
Falling on my ear
The Son of God discloses.

And He walks with me, and He
talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own;
And the joy we share
As we tarry there
None other has ever known.

He speaks, and the sound of His
voice
Is so sweet that the birds hush their
singing;
And the melody
That He gave to me
Within my heart is ringing.

I'd stay in the garden with Him
Though the night around me is falling
But He bids me go:
Through the voice of woe,
His voice to me is calling.

YOUNG Believers'

Conducted by Howard A. Barnes,
Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside

Pauline Epistles

PART 13: ROMANS (3)

THE BELIEVER'S RESPONSE TO GOD'S MERCY

The tender mercies of God (Rom 12:1 Newberry margin) as described in the first eleven chapters deserve a response on the part of the undeserving but believing Jew or Gentile. A complete surrender of oneself to God is the only reasonable response, and that is figured by Paul as a priest presenting a sacrifice as a religious service to God. The believer is the priest and the sacrifice his own living body. God finds such a sacrifice acceptable for it is holy (set apart) to Him. The picture follows that of ch 6, where the command "yield" in v. 13 is the same as the word "present" here.

The way to prove the will of God in our lives is not to be conformed to today's society outwardly, and to be inwardly transformed by a thoroughgoing renewal of our minds (v. 2). The effect of knowing the divine will is to have a proper appreciation of one's function in "the one body in Christ" (v. 5). The function and its extent (measure) varies from person to person, but here and in the other passages (1 Cor 12; Eph 4) that deal with spiritual gifts, it is clearly stated that each believer has a gift. Paul's command is: find your gift, know its extent and use it to its full capacity (vv. 6-8)!

As to general behaviour, the believer should show love and consideration to friend and foe, and as far as it lies within his or her control to "live peaceably with all men" (vv. 9-21), neither showing hate to his enemies nor feigned love to his friends.

THE BELIEVER AND THE STATE

Because the "powers that be (i.e. all levels of government) are ordained of God" (13:1) and law and taxation officers of the government are "ministers of God" (vv. 4, 6), we must give them the respect and obey them as long as their demands are reasonable (cf. Acts 5:29). We are not asked to be involved with the politics of this world (Phil 3:20), but nevertheless we must be model citizens (vv. 1-7) and although not conformed to this world, be model neighbours in it (vv. 8-10).

As well as responsibilities to state and society, we have certain responsibilities relative to ourselves. The final phase of our salvation (in which we will have new bodies) is very near, and we must be wide awake to the fact and live accordingly (vv. 11-14).

THE BELIEVER AND HIS WEAK BROTHER

The backgrounds of the believers in Rome were very diverse. Some had come from a very sheltered Jewish religious environment while others had been saved from immoral Gentile idolatry. To be able to live with each other in unity was no easy matter. The

remnants of years of religious scruples regarding diet and days were hard to shake off for Jews and much love and patience were needed by stronger Christians in respect to these weaker brethren. The motives of such weak believers were not to be questioned, even though their personal religious practices are unnecessary (ch. 14). If they did not intrude into the lives of others and were not taught publically as necessary for all, such things are to be regarded as personal matters (note the continual occurrence of "he," "him" and "himself") and are not suitable subjects for public debate.

UNITY AMONG BELIEVERS

The main point to be borne in mind is the unity of the believers, who in their collective activities are to be united, so that "ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (15:6). Such is the aim of the reception of fellow-believers (v. 7).

This united worship of Jews and Gentiles is possible because "Jesus Christ hath become a minister of the circumcision (i.e. Jews)" not only "to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" but also "that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy" (15:8,9 Newberry margin) this latter fact was prophesied in a number of places in the OT (vv. 9-12). Paul, Jewish zealot as he had been, viewed the purpose of his own work relative to preaching the gospel among the Gentiles "that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptabler, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost" (v. 16). He could have gloried (boasted) at length on the subject of his work among the Gentiles (vv. 17, 18), but confined his comments on it to the phrase "from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum (north west of Macedonia and opposite Italy), I have

fully preached the gospel of Christ" (v. 19), deliberately choosing places where no other preacher was evangelising (vv. 20, 21).

He now planned to travel to Jerusalem to deliver the proceeds of the collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem. This collection had been made among the largely Gentile assemblies he had been used to establish. He believed these Gentiles had an obligation to the Jewish believers to share their material things with them materially just as the Gentiles had gained a share in the spiritual things that the Jewish believers had first.

Paul knew that this journey would have its dangers especially from "them that do not believe in Judaea" and he asked for the believers at Rome to "strive together with me in your prayers to God for me" (v. 30). He was also concerned that the saints at Jerusalem would accept the Gentile gift. He then looked forward to travelling to Spain via Rome.

PAUL'S FRIENDS AT ROME

In the last chapter we learn who delivered the letter and find that there were at least twenty-six believers in Rome whom Paul knew personally. Phebe who lived near Corinth was going to Rome on business and had taken the letter with her. She had been a faithful helper of the apostle and others and Paul asks that she now be helped relative to the business she was to carry out in Rome (16:1, 2).

Priscilla and Aquila had now been able to return to Rome, their original home until they were expelled and hence came into contact with Paul at Corinth (Acts 18). We learn for the first time that at some point they had risked their lives for him, and for doing so

deserved not only Paul's thanks, but also that of all the churches of the Gentiles. They were now the hosts of a church possibly in or near Rome. It is difficult however to be sure of their exact location because the letter is not addressed to a particular church (or churches) but to "all that be in Rome" (1:7).

The epistle concludes with a plea for them to be on their guard against "them which cause division" (v. 17); some personal greetings from people probably known to them (v. 21); details about the person who actually wrote the letter at Paul's dictation (Tertius); the identity of Paul's host at Corinth (Gaius) and a beautiful doxology (vv. 25-27).

The Gospel of God

by E. Robinson, Exmouth

The gospel is concerned with the question of how man, sinful by nature, can stand before God who is holy and righteous. In this survey we keep always in mind that it is incumbent upon every preacher of the gospel to make the message clear and simple that no hearer may fail to realise the solemn warning of the message involves eternal issues. There are, however, a variety of aspects to the gospel, the enquiry into which has many rewarding features. The initial one, perhaps more readily understood, is the forgiveness of sins.

Would that our first joy in this may not be diminished but rather heightened. We may observe that sin is never forgiven, only judged, as at the Cross of Calvary (2 Cor 5:21). The subject is extensively in Paul's foundational epistle to the Romans, widely recognised as vital and authoritative.

In the opening chapter of the epistle, Paul describes himself as an apostle by divine calling, *separated* unto the gospel of God, investing both the subject and the servant of God with much dignity. In v. 9, he serves God with his spirit in "the gospel of *His Son*". How precious to the heart of the Father is this second appellation of the gospel. He goes on to a third (v. 16): "I am not ashamed of the gospel of *Christ*, for it is the power of God unto *salvation* to every one that believeth". This is the gospel of the anointed Man and there is the introduction of a further and far-reaching thought, salvation. It is positive, on-going, daily with us in its preserving character, ensuring that the God who forgave our sins will also keep us from falling. It has in view also the thought of the presentation to Himself at the end of the journey of that which is in accord with Himself. Peter, in his first epistle, beautifully looks ahead also: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively (living) hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1:3-5). He further adds in vv. 8-12, "receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls".

Before leaving the thought of salvation, it might be fitting to refer to Titus 2:10-14 in which he speaks of the saints (v. 10), "that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things", adding "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (vv. 13, 14). Redemption has here the thought of buying back, that those who once were marked by iniquity, once unprofitable, might now be for the pleasure of their Redeemer. We move on to *justification*, in which we stand in all the righteousness of Christ. Again we have a word from Titus, "that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:7). Righteousness is a prominent feature with the justified, connected with the risen Man, Jesus our Lord, "who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom 4:25).

Perhaps the topmost note in all the blessings portrayed in the setting out of this glorious gospel of God is in the thought of *reconciliation*. The whole consideration serves only to magnify the sacrificial service of our Lord Jesus and the outstanding momentous place of the cross of Christ in all the deliberations of our blessed God. The thought exceeds that of the forgiveness of sins in that those so favoured are made of His order through the work of His beloved Son and God regards them with complacency. Paul strikes the same note, writing to the Romans (5:11): "We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement (Gk. reconciliation)". Again, Paul writes: "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself" (2 Cor 5:16-19).

Concluded

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From Assemblies	£22,928.49
From Individuals	8,836.10
From Covenants	16,536.52
From Refund of Tax	14,947.05
	<hr/>
	£63,248.16
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Gifts Towards Expenses

From Assemblies	£822.05
From Individuals	245.45
From Covenants	306.32
From Refund of Tax	227.34
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	£1,601.16
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Includes: L.O.F. £140: Anon. £2: Weymouth £4: O.A.P. £60: Lerwick £80

I Like the Assemblies

by Wm. MacDonald, California

"Instead of calling out the wrecking crew, we need to roll up our sleeves and tackle the problems."

Pardon me, but I just happen to like the assemblies. It seems almost counter-cultural to say something like that. The "in thing" is to badmouth them, to highlight all their faults and failures. There are plenty of critics who pontificate on what is wrong with the assemblies. Maybe it's time for someone to step forward and say what is good about them. I'd like to be that person. Let me tell you why I like them.

I like the weekly remembrance of the Lord in the Breaking of Bread. For 50 years I have sought to remember the Lord every Sunday at the communion table, and it has never lost its charm for me. There is something special about a meeting where our beloved Lord is the sole attraction and the central object of worship. No wonder that when people leave an assembly for a different type of fellowship, they invariably say, "I do miss the worship meeting." It makes me sad that they ever left it.

The assembly has endeared itself to me because I have seen Ephesians 4:12 practised as nowhere else. Gifts were given for building up the saints for the work of the ministry. I have seen unlettered men matured to the point where they preached the Gospel with convicting power. I have seen homespun

men ministering to the hearts of God's people and not just to their heads. I have seen devoted women finding fulfilment, not only in raising sons and daughters for God, but also in teaching other women and children, co-labouring with their husbands in support of their ministry, supporting the work of missionaries at home and abroad, visiting the sick and afflicted, and showing hospitality to saints and strangers alike. I have seen young men encouraged to exercise their gifts in a way that would never happen in the average church. Many prominent evangelical leaders give lip-service to Ephesians 4:12, and some even commend the assemblies for the way they practise it.

One of the glories of the assemblies is their steadfast refusal to divide an equal brotherhood into clergy and laity. To gather to the Person of Christ rather than to a charismatic preacher is divine both in principle and practice. The New Testament teaches a plurality of elders and never a one-man ministry. But assemblies who preach and practise this will always be speckled birds in the Christian community. There is a certain measure of reproach to being in an assembly of this type, and those who cast in their lot with the assemblies better be prepared to hear it.

I like the fact that each assembly is autonomous, responsible to the Lord alone. There is no headquarters on earth, no humanly ordained hierarchy, no organization coming between the Head and the body. This impedes the takeover of assemblies by liberalism, alien doctrines, or dictatorships.

The financial policies of the assemblies are commendable. It is extraordinary that in most fellowships, there is only one collection or offering a week. And yet that one offering, taken without fanfare or begging appeals, is sufficient to meet the local expenses and to help support Christian ministries at home and abroad. Traditionally, full-time workers have looked to the Lord alone for the supply of their needs without publicising those needs. The world cannot say of the assemblies what it says of Christendom in general, "All the church wants is your money."

I appreciate the fact that the assemblies are willing to exercise godly discipline when it is called for, even if in doing so they may be limiting their chances of ever becoming megachurches. They are content to judge their fellowships, not by their size, but by the holiness of their members.

The literature ministry of the assemblies has been outstanding. Perhaps this has been their main contribution to the evangelical scene. The writings of Darby, Kelly, Mackintosh, Vine, and a host of others have exerted a profound and beneficial influence throughout the world. Some years ago the librarian of a Christian college attempted to compile a bibliography of "Brethren" writers. He later despaired of ever finishing the project.

And mention must be made of the missionary movement associated with the assemblies, a movement that is all out of proportion to the number of local fellowships supporting it.

Other people have other reasons for liking the assemblies, some quite unexpected. For instance, a sister who recently came into fellowship after years of church-hopping said she was delighted to be in one with male leadership. That was a strange note to sound in a day of women's lib.

Probably few groups engage in as much self-criticism as the assemblies. Frankly I feel it is grossly overdue, causing impressionable people to be unnecessarily disenchanted and turned away. Criticism comes best on the back of praise. It's time we balanced the two.

The foregoing does not mean that I am satisfied with the status quo. I recognise that there are areas in which we need to improve, such as evangelistic outreach and development of leadership in the assembly. While unalterably committed to Biblical principles, I recognise the need for changing methods from time to time. I agree that some of our people, including the young people, have legitimate concerns, and need to be heard.

But instead of calling out the wrecking crew, we need to roll up our sleeves and tackle the problems. Give us men who will show us how to do a constructive job rather than armchair generals who blackball the assemblies or bail out altogether. And those who draw their support from the assemblies should demonstrate a measure of loyalty and avoid any appearance of "biting the hand that feeds them."

Reprint from Counsel

REGIONS · BEYOND ·

Ecumenical Bible Translations and Missionary Endeavour

The foundation of all evangelical missionary endeavour has been the teaching and declaration of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ contained in the pure Word of God; and the consolidation of such missionary outreach has been the translation and distribution of that same pure Word of God in the vernacular tongues. This has been accomplished over the years by evangelical missionary scholars in collaboration with the various Bible Societies around the world, and God has signally blessed this work. However, of recent times there has been a distinct shift in this pattern of missionary translation work as far as the United Bible Societies (UBS) — which includes the British and Foreign Bible Society, the American Bible Society and the other national Bible societies around the world — are concerned. Whereas formerly they had no contact or cooperation with Roman Catholic scholars in any Bible translation projects because of the erroneous system and unbiblical doctrines of Catholicism, today the UBS is foremost in encouraging “ecumenical” and “interconfessional” Bible translations and revisions, which means cooperation with the R.C. system at every stage of translation work and at the highest levels of office.

We wish to draw our readers’ attention to this development as it very materially affects the work in which assembly-commended missionaries are engaged. In this connection we have obtained permission to take extracts from a *Trinitarian Bible Society* report contained in their Quarterly Record, April-June 1987, entitled “Ecumenical Bible Translations” which is mainly quotes from both United Bible Societies’ and Roman Catholic publications.

“In the October 1985 issue of the Quarterly Record, information was given concerning the numerous joint Protestant-Catholic projects sponsored by the United Bible Societies, involving Roman Catholic Bible translators and distributors. It has been a matter of surprise and grief to many people to find that organisations with an “evangelical” reputation have been responsible for promoting a compromised programme through ecumenical Bible translations. In this article we give further details of the rapid growth of these ecumenical projects around the world.

(AFRICA) **Algeria** The Executive Secretary of the "Bible Society in North Africa" reported as follows: "1985 got under way with the inauguration of our new offices ... This event, preceded by a reception for various heads and staff of diplomatic missions, and marked by an outstanding sermon delivered by the Cardinal Archbishop of Algeria, Monsignor Leon-Etienne Duval, will be remembered as a high point in the rich inter-confessional life of this country" (UBS Report 1985.131). The involvement of this prominent RC dignitary is fairly typical of the United Bible Societies' approach. In the various Arabic-speaking countries of North Africa and the Middle East, the UBS join forces with the RC church in distributing the new ecumenical Arabic version of the New Testament.

Botswana The current edition of the Bible in the national Tswana language is an interconfessional project, sponsored by the Bible Society of South Africa, with both Protestant and RC involvement. A "Catholic" edition was published containing the Apocryphal books. (See WCFBA III, a report of the Third Plenary Assembly of the World Catholic Federation for the Biblical Apostolate, held in 1984).

Cameroun The General Secretary of the Bible Society of Cameroun writes, "The visit of the Pope to Cameroun was an opportunity for distribution of Scriptures among RCs. We supplied a summary of our activities to the Holy See and the Pope mentioned it with satisfaction during his visit to our country ... Many of our translation projects most of which are interconfessional, are progressing extremely well" (UBS Report 1985). This account should be set side by side with a report in the Trinitarian Bible Society Quarterly Record (Oct 1985), that the ecumenical movement had led to divisions and persecution of Protestant churches in Cameroun. A leader of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Cameroun described how the persecution began in 1967, "In one year, at least fifty people in our congregation were imprisoned, my mother being a victim. My father, who was a pastor, died in prison. During a three year period we were all pushed out. The ecumenical group took over all our territory, they took our churches, they took all our resources." In the light of these sad events it is indeed significant that the Pope is heard expressing satisfaction with the ecumenical activities of the Bible Society of Cameroun. To the shame of evangelical supporters of the United Bible Societies, their gifts have been used to further the interests of a movement which was responsible for the oppression of true Bible-believing Christians in that country.

Nigeria The RC church is a "full member" of the Bible Society of Nigeria "at both national and zonal levels". That Society's national translation committee includes the Catholic Bishop of Jos, the Rt Rev Dr G.G. Ganaka, with Catholic involvement in translation projects in the following languages: Bokiya, Edo, Efik, Ekpari, Esan, Ezaa, Hausa, Ikwo, Yala and Yoruba (WCFBA III).

Uganda The Bible Society of Uganda reported as follows, "As 1985 ends, we give thanks and praise to God for His mercy and protection in the midst of the difficulties that faced our country. We began with encouragement from a successful Bible Week with the presence of the leader of the RC Church, Emmanuel Cardinal Nsubuga, and several leaders of other churches, who gave daily afternoon addresses throughout Bible Week" (UBS Report).

The worldwide phenomenon of "Bible Week" and "Bible Sunday" is characteristically an ecumenical event, and in many countries it is now quite usual to hear that RC dignitaries have taken a leading role in these national celebrations. Rather than fostering a genuine devotion to the Word of God, these impressive ceremonies are deliberately aimed at promoting ecumenical relationships between the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches.

Zimbabwe Several interconfessional projects have been undertaken in the languages of Ndebele and Shona. To prepare a revision of the Shona Bible, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Zimbabwe and the Bible Society of Zimbabwe entered into a special written contract with one another beginning with the following statement, "The project will be a genuinely joint project designed to foster real collaboration between the Churches concerned, and to produce a true 'Common Bible' which is readily acceptable to the faithful of all denominations". This agreement went on to stipulate that Roman Catholics should be included on the Editorial Team, the Review Committee and the Supervisory Committee, and it was envisaged that copyright in the eventual publication would be shared by the RC church and the United Bible Societies. This information was given by one of the translators, the Rev Ignatius Chidavaenzim who is a RC priest. (Word-Event Nos 64-5/1986)

(ASIA, AUSTRALIA AND THE PACIFIC) In a new publication entitled "A Guide to Catholic Bible Translations, Vol. 1, The Pacific" (1986), edited by P. Rijks, interconfessional Protestant-Catholic translations are listed in more than thirty languages, most of which were carried out in conjunction with the United Bible Societies, but also four in collaboration with Wycliffe Bible Translators.

Australia Ecumenical Scripture translation projects sponsored by the Australian Bible Society have included Old Testament portions in the Kitja language, and Bible stories in Murrink-Patha. The latter were published in 1982 the work of an interconfessional team including RC translators. Scripture selections in Tiwi were published in 1985 by Wycliffe Bible Translators in collaboration with Roman Catholics. These languages are spoken by Australian Aborigines.

China Ecumenism of a more conventional kind is found in a separate project, whereby the UBS recently supplied the paper for printing 300,000 copies of a new Chinese translation of the Gospels, translated by a RC bishop, the rector of the Catholic Seminary in Shanghai (UBS World Report 199, January 1987)."

These are just a few of the selections from this deeply instructive and illuminating article, which also includes sections on North and South America and Europe. We would recommend for those interested in the full report of this article on ecumenical Bible translations throughout the missionary lands of the world, that they send for the booklet "Ecumenism and the United Bible Societies" available from the Trinitarian Bible Society, 217 Kingston Road, London SW19 3NN, at 10p plus postage.

M.B.

Light from an --- **Old Lamp**

By the late William Williams,
Venezuela

There was a note of sadness and disappointment in His question. The testing time had come and many were going back to walk no more with the Lord. Would He not repeat the question were He with us today? Every great movement in the religious world, carries with it, for good or evil, a certain enthusiasm. When the smoke clears away, and the excitement dies down, things get back to normal, and then true discipleship is put to the test. This is why Sardis is such a disappointment, looked at from God's viewpoint. Much was made of justification by

faith; but little was made of God's only Centre of gathering — the Lord Jesus Christ. National churches were organised, but little or no heed was paid to God's word, as to how a church should be planted and sustained. The great masses of professing Christians went back to a modified form of Romanism. The same sad tale is true of all the great revivals, from the 16th century to the present time. There has been a tragic four cycle of events, in all God's dealings with His people — Defection — Discipline — Deliverance — Degeneration. Well may the Lord say:

“Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?” (Isa 2:22).

Some time ago a lengthy circular letter was sent to us seeking to prove that the church order in Acts 2 was primitive and imperfect; and that 1 Corinthians was the order for today, as unity was the first thing and order a secondary matter. Then another article comes to us to show that the church spoken of in Matt 18 was the Jewish gathering in the synagogue; and that there can be no local church today. Then a third article comes to tell us that Matt 18:20 is for a prayer-meeting, and that later research in the Greek proves Darby, Newberry, etc., incorrect in their interpretation of this text — and that we must not use it to say that we are Christians gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus or else we make ourselves a terrible sect.

In the articles referred to, there is usually an appeal to the Greek, and an air of superior knowledge is manifested — similar to the *higher critic* over the fundamentalist. Many of God’s beloved people who only know a little English and less grammar are perplexed and unsettled. Now it means all to us, the right or wrong interpretation of God’s holy Word. Twenty-eight years ago God’s order in the Acts was brought home to us, as we knelt before an open Bible. We were baptized, and left human names behind, and we were received into an assembly, gathered to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Three years later, that same assembly commended us to the Lord’s work in Venezuela. For 25 years, with the help of others, whom God has raised up, we have preached the gospel to the benighted Roman Catholics — not

where others have laboured; and as we could see no place where the great pattern gospel preacher — the Apostle Paul — used a musical instrument, or spoke about one in the churches that he planted; we followed the same course here and we have found that God can use the gospel to draw, save and keep. Hundreds of Roman Catholics have been saved, baptized and gathered in church-fellowship in accordance with the Acts and Epistles. Now we hear, that because we only knew the English version, that we were all wrong in not having an organ; and a grievous sect because we have taught the Lord’s people to gather in the name of the Lord Jesus.

We marvel how some of those writers talk so glibly about the Greek. We have been studying Spanish — one of the easiest languages — for 25 years, and yet how deficient we find ourselves, even at translating English to Spanish. But withal, some of these writers, fear not to speak lightly of men of God, who have made Greek a life study.

The way some of those writers speak of Matt 18:20 would lead us to think, that this is the only passage in God’s Word where it speaks about being gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus.

But let us turn to 1 Corinthians and we will find that the word “church” is used some 18 times where it could not possibly refer to the Church in its universal aspect; but only to a local company of Christians as in Corinth. Then at least some 8 times the Apostle refers to being gathered together, in the name of the Lord Jesus. If he does not always use the full expression, it is implied. “In the name of the Lord

Jesus Christ when ye are *gathered together*" (1 Cor 5:4). Here no fanciful interpretation can make this to mean a prayer-meeting. It was an assembly meeting for discipline; and the fornicator was to be put away from "among yourselves" not the Lord's table merely — as a "wicked person." "Now in this I declare unto you that ye *come together* not for the better but for the worse" (1 Cor 11:17). This coming together refers to the Lord's Supper and not to a prayer-meeting. In 1 Cor 11:18 the *coming together* refers to any church meeting. 1 Cor 11:33-34 clearly refers, as we know, to the Lord's Supper. 1 Cor 14:23 would speak of a ministry meeting. 1 Cor 14:26 instructions as to how to conduct a profitable ministry meeting.

"The Lord preserveth the simple" (Psa 116:6). We firmly believe, that it is still possible to carry out the New Testament principles of preaching the gospel without organs, of baptizing believers, of forming a local church, and of receiving into and putting away from that church. Yea we go further, and state that we have seen it in practice in Venezuela for 25 years, and quite a number of local churches have been planted — not "mission stations" — where there has been room for all God's word to be ministered — the Lordship of Christ has been owned, and room for the Holy Spirit to use whomsoever He will. We certainly do not believe that in seeking thus to honour the Lord and His Word we form a sect.

There is a great fear among preachers today of speaking out the simple, wholesome Word of the Lord. But let us be loyal to the truth in love. Let us encourage every believer to be baptized, and then let us encourage them to be separated from all that is contrary to God's word and then to gather in the blessed holy Name of our adorable Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, let us meet in His name to pray, we need more of it — let us gather in His name to study His Word, there is nothing like it; and then best and highest of all, let us gather together to remember Him, whom God delights to honour; and gathering thus we will not forget the preaching of the gospel, both in the hall and in the open-air, nor shall we forget the gospel for those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death in what is called the "foreign field."

Beloved children of God, do not let the sophistry of men, who run from assembly to assembly, take from us the old "land marks." We have proved that God's word works. It goes and grows. Are we to give up that for an amalgamation of Christians with no fixed principles, no decided convictions — a wishy-washy, sentimental sort of a thing, where God's Word is at a discount and men's arrangements at par? Will ye also go away? The Lord help us one and all, who love His name, and His beloved people to say with outspoken Peter: "Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6:68).

Still as of old, men by themselves are priced.
For thirty pieces Judas sold himself — not Christ!

(Beware of the small beginnings of great tragedies.)

Misunderstood Texts (8)

by John J. Stubbs, Mayfield

"The coming of the Lord with all His saints"

1 Thess 3:13 is a verse often used to prove the difference between the two stages of the Lord's coming. It is usually said that the Lord at the rapture will come for His saints (thank God the writer believes in this as a blessed truth!), whereas at the Lord's manifestation to the earth He will come with His saints. This too the writer firmly believes in, but in support of the latter event, 1 Thess 3:13 is often referred to. It certainly on the surface seems to show a nice distinction with the doctrine of the rapture in 1 Thess 4:13-18. When one compares Scripture with Scripture in the prophetic word, the unbiased mind can only come to one conclusion, that the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is in reality not two comings, i.e. first to the air and then to the earth, but rather one coming in two important stages, the first stage being the rapture of the Church (this we have in 1 Thess 4:13-18) and the second stage the Lord's advent to the earth (this we have in Matt 24:27-31). It is quite correct to state that at the rapture the Lord will come for His saints and at the manifestation He will come with His saints, but it is not correct to refer to this expression "The coming of the Lord with all His saints" in 1 Thess 3:13 as if the preposition "with" refers to the time of the second advent. It may look a very suitable and suggestive propo-

sition and fit well the distinction we desire to show between these two stages of the coming, but a look at the text in the context and an understanding of the word "coming" that Paul uses will soon put us on the right road of interpretation.

Let us notice first that in Paul's prayerful desire for the Thessalonians he writes: "to the end it may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even the Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ". The holiness of the believer will reach a fulness and a perfection not down here, but says Paul "*at the coming*". Now holiness in the believer will not arrive at a finality when we come out with the Lord in association with Him at His appearing, for this will be gained when we possess our glorified bodies at the rapture and since the judgment seat of Christ will take place in between the rapture and the appearing we cannot conceive of any lack in the saints of holiness as God intends it to be in us. Moreover in Rev 19:7 we have a view of the Church the Lamb's wife just prior to the section dealing with the Lord coming out of heaven for His advent to the earth and there we have these significant words, "*and His wife hath made herself ready*". Thus by the time the saints who form the Church are seen with the Lord in v. 14, they are "ready" — not only for the event itself, but morally and spiritually as v. 8

indicates clearly. Therefore in the light of other Scriptures 1 Thess 3:13 cannot refer to the Lord's coming to the earth, because if so it would teach that final holiness will be reached only at that time, whereas from the preceding remarks we have seen this is not so, for by the time we are with the Lord enjoying His presence, holiness will have been realised.

We come now to this word "coming" which is in the original *parousia*. It means literally "presence" and is used fifteen times in a prophetic sense of the Lord's coming, whether of the rapture or the appearing. (Paul uses it seven times in his epistles.) Now it is important to see that this "presence" of the Lord Jesus will have a beginning at the Lord's descent to the air (1 Thess 4:15). It will have a course during which the saints will be in heaven while solemn events are taking place on earth. This is the aspect of the *parousia* that Paul refers to in 1 Thess 3:13. See also 2:19. In Matt 24:37, 39 the Lord gives the characteristics on earth during the course of His *parousia*, i.e. His presence in heaven with His saints. Finally it will have a consummation in His manifestation to the world. Whereas no one on earth will see the *parousia* when the Lord comes for the Church, nor indeed while His *parousia* continues in heaven with His saints, yet by contrast men will see the *parousia* when He comes to the earth. Therefore

when Paul speaks in our text of the coming of the Lord with all His saints it is to the course of the *parousia* that he refers and not its conclusion. Once we see this it will help us to avoid using it as a proof text in support of the second stage of the Lord's coming and will cause us to look again to our NT for a reference that leaves no doubt. This we find in Col 3:4, where again we have the preposition "with" but there rightly seen in connection with the Lord's manifestation to the earth — the second stage of His coming. "When Christ who is our life shall appear then shall ye also appear *with* Him in glory."

Our text 1 Thess 3:13 requires careful handling if we are not to fall into the trap of using it wrongly. We trust we have demonstrated again the need to make sure that we cite the clearest and best possible passages in setting forth and upholding Biblical truth, for while the NT clearly indicates the two stages of the second coming, yet if we brought 1 Thess 3:13 into service to prove a contrast with 1 Thess 4:13-18 and were challenged as to the true bearing of the verses we would certainly be in difficulty. 1 Thess 3:13 is only a contrast with the 1 Thess 4 passage in that it takes the *parousia* or presence of the Lord a step further, from the air to His presence with His saints in heaven during at least the seven year period of Daniel's seventieth week.

For ships sail East, and ships sail West
On the self-same winds that blow.
It is not the gale, but the set of the sail
That determines the way they go!

Question

All questions should be sent to the Editor, Believer's Magazine, Office, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and should have the name and address of sender. Consideration of space may prevent the publication of answers

QUESTION

Could some help be given regarding attending the local assembly. Is there scriptural reference to this?

ANSWER

The first NT assembly was at Jerusalem and of the believers there it is stated that they not only 'received the Word' but were baptised and then continued steadfastly. Some have attempted to make the Jerusalem assembly only Jewish, but there is sufficient evidence in the ongoing record of the book of Acts to disprove this.

Their continuance was in the four exercises which are described; the apostles' doctrine (teaching), fellowship, breaking of bread and prayers. These are fundamental activities which should mark every local assembly, and which should be 'continued in' by each person in fellowship. The assembly does not depend only upon the elders or ministering brethren. Each member has the privilege and responsibility of being at every meeting. Sadly today, many assemblies are suffering from lack of support.

When Paul (known as Paul then) was received into the assembly at Jerusalem (Acts 9:26-28) he was with them 'coming in and going out'. This indicates that he threw his lot into all the gatherings. In 'Light from an Old Lamp' in this issue it will be seen that over 52 years ago the same truth was being taught in this magazine. There the late writer was emphasising the expression 'gathered together' in 1 Corinthians, such very words imply the activity of each saint gathering.

In both first and second Thessalonians the assembly is spoken of as being the 'church of the Thessalonians' implying that they gathered where they lived. It must of course be remembered that then there were only NT local assemblies. We in our day have the great problem of many religious forms of

Christendom. The believer should not associate with such but should give his all to the local assembly where he is gathered.

J.R. Baker

QUESTION

Is there scripture warrant for the phrase 'let Jesus come into your heart'?

ANSWER

Many expressions are used in public preaching which when tested in the light of Scripture are found wanting. The present writer is not aware of any NT passage which would support the use of such a saying.

Eph 3:17 speaks of Christ dwelling in the heart by faith but these words are written to believers and have nothing to do with the initial act of salvation. In Romans 10 various allusions are made to the heart in respect of salvation but they all relate to the belief which is from within, and which is exercised for salvation.

There is ever the danger of a weak and shallow gospel being preached in language which cannot be described as "words ... which the Holy Ghost teacheth". It is best to keep to the language of Scripture when dealing with such a holy and important matter as the soul's salvation.

J.R. Baker

QUESTION

Will children under the age of understanding who are alive at the coming of Christ to the air for His Church, go to be with the Lord at this time?

ANSWER

It is not wise to speculate on matters which have not been revealed to us. The passages which describe the event alluded to make clear that every saint will be caught up, beyond that we cannot know. God in His own wisdom will do that which is right.

In general terms it does not seem feasible that such children of saved parents will be left behind, nor that all children will be taken. We can only rest upon the wisdom of an all wise God.

J.R. Baker

Brazil

The missionary work in the State of Rio Grande do Sul suffered a severe loss in July when two of the Lord's servants were suddenly called home. Wilfred Glenn was engaged in a gospel effort with Tommy Wright when he took ill and shortly afterwards passed into the presence of the Lord. Samuel Curran was with a Brazilian evangelist, José Mattos, preaching the gospel in Capivari when news of Wilfred's homecall came. He spoke at Wilfred's funeral service in Brazil on Tuesday 19th July, and on Saturday 25th July he suffered a heart attack and was called home. Prayer is requested for the mission field in Brazil where these two brethren laboured so faithfully. The brethren and sisters labouring there at present have suffered a severe set-back and are now looking to the Lord for the continuance of the work.

WILFRED GLENN, on 19th July. Saved at 12 years of age after a gospel meeting at Ballymagarrick. He was in fellowship in that meeting until his marriage to Kathleen Crawford in 1967 when he took up residence in Glengormley. In 1970 the Glengormley Assembly heartily commended him to full-time service in Brazil where he and his wife became diligent workers for the Lord. Wilfred's preaching was blessed by the Lord and many souls were saved. His teaching ministry was also used by the Lord in the encouragement and building up of the saints. After a funeral service in Brazil, shared by his fellow-labourers, Wilfred's body was brought back to Ireland for burial. The funeral service was held at Glengormley Gospel Hall where a large number heard tributes, and later at the cemetery where the gospel was faithfully preached. Remember Mrs Glenn in prayer and the two small children who have returned with her to Brazil.

SAMUEL CURRAN, on 25th July, aged 65. The eldest son of Robert Curran, Evangelist, he was saved in 1938 in Banbridge under the preaching of brethren Stewart and Bingham. After his marriage to Miss Eleanor Alexander, he was in Ballywillwill Assembly and then in Ahorey. After a time he expressed an exercise for the mission field and these three assemblies commended him and his wife to the work in Brazil in 1958. It was a big step for him to learn a new language at his age but he quickly gained a fluency which enabled him to preach and teach to great profit. Under his ministry many were saved and assemblies were formed. His life was not without its sorrows. Within a space of ten months he lost two of his sons, one through illness and the other in a car accident. In accordance with his expressed wish, he was buried in Brazil, where brethren T. Matthews, G. Orr, and R. Watterson shared in the funeral service. Prayer is requested for Mrs Curran, her son and daughter.

The LORD'S WORK and WORKERS

All items for "Intelligence" columns of this magazine should be addressed direct to Editor, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and posted in time to arrive on or before 4th of month previous to issue.

Intimation of commencement of new assemblies should always carry commendation of nearest local assembly.

N. Ireland FORTHCOMING

SEPTEMBER 5

Mullafernahgan Annual Missionary Conference at 6.30 p.m. D. Ussher, B. Gray, H. Wilson, E. Fairfield.

SEPTEMBER 26

Ardmore Gospel Hall Annual Conference at 2.00 p.m. Following week Ministry J. Hunter.

OCTOBER 1

Shanaghan Annual Conference 12 noon.

OCTOBER 3

Lurgan Annual Conference and Bible Readings.

Gospel tent meetings commencing between Armagh and Keady in conjunction with Tassagh assembly. Speakers J. Thompson and J. McCann.

England & Wales FORTHCOMING

SEPTEMBER 5

Newcastle-on-Tyne: Bethany Hall, Wingrove Road at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. J. Glenville, J. Riddle.

Redditch: Foxlydiat Crescent Gospel Hall, Batchley Estate at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. A. Leckie, D. West.

Cleeview: Gospel Hall, Ludlow at 7.30 p.m., E. Parmenter.

SEPTEMBER 7-10

Redditch: Foxlydiat Crescent Gospel Hall, Batchley Estate at 7.45 p.m. A. Leckie.

SEPTEMBER 12

Derby: Curzon Street, at 7.15 p.m. D. Newall.
Hornsey: Alexandra Hall, annual at 6.30 p.m., K. Baker, W. Grunbaum.

SEPTEMBER 18-21

North East England Missionary Weekend. Meetings held simultaneously on Teeside, Tyneside and Wearside. P. Grosvenor, K. Jones, C. Judkins, E. Morris, W.J. Rew, A. Stewart. Full details from W. Archbold, 12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, Tel. 091 2570607

SEPTEMBER 19

Redditch: Foxlydiat Crescent Gospel Hall, Batchley Estate at 7.00 p.m. C. Jarrett.

Southborough: Holden Park Gospel Hall at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. H. Tickner, M. Thomas, Combined ministry and missionary Conference.

Luton: Onslow Road Gospel Hall Annual conference at 3.15 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. A.C. Gooding, E. Bermejo. Mr. Bermejo continues in ministry from 20-24 Sept.

SEPTEMBER 19-21-24

Eastbourne: Marine Hall, Seaside Annual Conference at 3.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. W. Craig. also 21 and 24th at 7.30 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 19-20

Warrington, Hope Hall, Hawthorne Street, at 7 p.m., J. Warne.

SEPTEMBER 19-21

Leicester: York Street Gospel Hall. Missionary Conference. Sat at 3.15 and 6.15. Sun at 8.00. Mon at 7.30. D. Gillies, N. Stewart, D. Ussher.

SEPTEMBER 26

Birmingham: Northfield, Gospel Hall Quarry Lane at 7.00 p.m. F. Lonney.

Northampton: Gospel Hall, Spencer Bridge Road at 7.30 p.m. D. Gillies.

OCTOBER 3

Coventry: Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. A. Leckie, E. Hughes. Mr Leckie continues 5-7th at 7.30 p.m.

Kingsteignton: Gospel Hall, Exeter Road at 7.00 p.m. H. Bell.

West Mersea: Assembly Hall, East Road, at 4 p.m. and 6 p.m., Mr A. Wiseman.

Oldham: Wernethh Gospel Hall, Manchester Street, at 3.15 p.m., J. Mitchell, D. Roberts.

Cleeview: Gospel Hall, Ludlow at 7.30 p.m. H. Cooper.

OCTOBER 10

London: Gospel Hall, 97 St. James's Road Bermondsey at 7.00 p.m. C. Roberts.

Coltishall: Norfolk Bethesda Gospel Hall, Annual Conference at 3.00 p.m. and 6 p.m. J. Harrison, H. Stewart.

Derby: Curzon Street, at 7.15 p.m. J. Burns.

Northampton, Gospel Hall, Osborne Road, Kingsthorpe, from 10th to 15th at 7.30 p.m. A. Leckie.

OCTOBER 17

Redditch: Foxlydiat Crescent Gospel Hall, Batchley Estate at 7.00 p.m. K. Jennings.

Luton: Onslow Road Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. R. Dawes

Mitcham Junction: Gospel Hall, Percy Road at 7.00 p.m. E.G. Parmenter.

Scotland FORTHCOMING

SEPTEMBER 5

New Stevenston: Assembly Hall at 6.30 p.m. W. Stevely, Jas. Campbell.

Lanarkshire Gospel Work: Rally at Douglas Prayer 3.30 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. Open-Air 4.00 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. Tea 5.30 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. Ministry 6.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. I. England, S. Hunter.

Clydebank: Annual Conference in Gospel hall, Miller Street at 3.00 p.m. J. McDonald, J. Baxter, J. Thomson.

Baillieston: Evangelical Church Annual Conference to be held in Hope Hall, Church St. at 3.30 p.m. A. MacIntosh, W. Hastings. Mr Hastings will give a report on his work during the evening session.

SEPTEMBER 12

Peterhead: Annual conference in York Street Hall at 3.00 p.m. W. Mowatt, J. Buchanan, W. Stevely. Lord's Day at 2.30 p.m.

Bishopton: Gospel Hall, at 7 p.m., J. Gillespie, W. Banks.

SEPTEMBER 19

Blantyre: Annual Conference at 3.30 p.m. till 7.00 p.m. R. McPheat, J. Paton, M. Radcliffe. Mr. McPheat continues in ministry Lord's Day 3.15 p.m. Gospel 6.30 p.m. Monday Ministry 7.45 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 19

Bonnybridge: Ebenezer Hall, annual conference at 3 p.m., A. Foster, I. Grant, T. Wilson.

Coatbridge: Hebron Hall, 20 Church Street at 3.30 p.m. W. Banks, I. Ross, J. Smyth.

SEPTEMBER 26

Dumfries: Bethany Hall, Buccleuch Street at 3.00 p.m. A. Foster, A.M.S. Gooding, W. Hastings.

St. Monans: Gospel Hall, Hope Place Prayer 11.30-1.00 p.m. Ministry in Town Hall at 3.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. Lord's Day Ministry 2.30 to 4.00 p.m. Gospel 6.00 p.m. Open Air following at Harbour. J. Gillespie, M. Radcliffe, R. Walker.

Port Seton: Annual Conference at 3.30 p.m. Viewforth Gospel Hall, Cope Lane, J. Cadzow, J. Harrison, R. Marshall.

OCTOBER 3

Cumbernauld: Mossknowe Gospel Hall, Kildrum Ring Road Annual Conference at 3.30 p.m. J. Burnett, R. Hill, G. Jackson.

Lesmahagow: Hope Hall at 3.30 p.m. A. Naismith, J. Buchanan.

Gourock: Bethany Hall, Drunshantie Road Annual Conference at 3.30 p.m. D. Clarkson, A. Legge, S. MacKenzie. Mr. MacKenzie continues for three weeks in the Gospel, Sunday to Thursday at 8.00 p.m.

Shettleston: Sandyhills Gospel Hall Annual Conference at 3.30 p.m. F. Beavers, F. Stallan, J. Rodgers.

OCTOBER 9-11

Plains: Elim Gospel Hall at 7.30 p.m. Bible Reading D. West.

Plains: Annual Conference in Public Hall at 3.00 p.m. D. West, A. Foster, I. Spiers, J. McColl.

Plains: Elim Gospel Hall at 3.00 p.m. D. West, J. McColl. Tea afterwards in Hall. Gospel at 8.00 p.m. D. West, J. McColl.

OCTOBER 11

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road) at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

OCTOBER 17

Dundee: Meadowside Gospel Hall, 2 Euclide Crescent at 7.00 p.m. J. Sinclair.

Motherwell: Shields Road Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. T. Glidden, J. Harrison.

Port Glasgow: Annual Conference in Hebron Hall, 41 Princes Street at 3.30 p.m. A. Foster, J. Buchanan, F. Beavers.

N. Ireland REPORTS

CO. ANTRIM

Ballyrobert: R. Pickering was encouraged with blessing in salvation in tent meetings.

Broughshane: A. Aiken, in conjunction with the assembly here, conducted two weeks of open-air meetings during the second and third weeks of August, visiting the various housing estates around the village.

Carnlough: A. Aiken conducted the annual open-air meetings at the harbour during the main July holiday fortnight. Good numbers listened to the gospel each evening.

Bushmills: Bible readings well attended good and profitable.

Rathcool: A. McShane and A. Hull commenced gospel meetings in tent.

Ballynure: D. Kane and A. Graham commenced gospel meetings in tent.

CO. ARMAGH

Derryhubbert: W.J. Nesbitt and son Andrew continue in the gospel tent with interest and blessing.

Bleary Conference 14th July. Extremely large, with profitable ministry by W.J. Nesbitt, N. Turkington, J. McCann, G. Munro and T. Bentley.

CO. DOWN

Ballywalter: N. Mellish commenced in the gospel on 26th July.

Bangor: Central Hall Annual open-air meetings at sea front during the month of July were conducted by W. Barr helped by local brethren. The word was faithfully preached.

Moneyreagh: R. Jordan and W. Armstrong are having gospel effort in portable hall.

Waringstown: R. Pickering and H. Andrews are having gospel meetings in tent.

Ballymagarrick Conference — 14th July. Tent nicely filled. Practical and helpful ministry given by A. Leckie, N. Mellish, J. Flanigan, J.G. Hutchinson and A. McShane.

CO. TYRONE

Bready: (Strabane area) A. Aiken was encouraged on the last evening of meetings in portable hall when a woman professed faith in Christ. This is a difficult area, and yet

over the period of the meetings quite a number of locals came to hear the gospel, some showing a measure of interest. Pray for the seed sown that much fruit will yet be reaped.

Dunmullan Conference — 13th July. Tent filled. Helpful ministry was given by W.J. Nesbitt, S. McBride, J.G. Hutchinson, R. Jordan and E. Fairfield.

Kingsmills Conference — 13th July. Large meeting. Profitable ministry by A. McShane, D. Ussher, J. Wishart, Mr. Hodgskins (USA) and D. Mawhinney.

BELFAST & DISTRICT

Whitehouse: A. McShane and A. Hull were expected for tent meetings first Sunday in August.

Scotland REPORTS

Galston: During the month of June, two local brethren conducted a series of tent meetings in the town. Unsaved were present on most evenings with the main feature of the meetings being a good attendance of a large number of believers' children. Prayer would be valued for the work done and the seed sown.

Perth: Have just concluded their fifth annual Bible Study Week when the assembly meet each morning and evening for ministry of the Word and during the afternoons they visited places of local interest. Mr R. Gamble took up "Parables in Genesis" in the evenings and "Things Concerning Himself" from Exodus in the mornings. A very profitable and pleasant time was enjoyed by all.

STRATHCLYDE

Glasgow: Harley Street Gospel Hall. The assembly at Harley Street had a splendid opportunity for tract distribution when the Annual Orange Parade came to the local Park and over 12,000 tracts were given out and there were a good number of spiritual conversations with the people. The tract which had been specially written for such an occasion was very well received. May the Lord of the Harvest bless the good seed that was sown.

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

Sandhead: J. Baxter continued with the Wigtownshire county work for two weeks in this small assembly. A few believers who used to meet with the saints locally attended, but the response from unbelievers in the village was disappointing. In this effort and the final time at Drummore a married couple from the assembly at Stranraer brought many young people to the meetings almost every evening.

Drummore: J. Baxter concluded the county gospel work in this village which is the most southerly in Scotland. While the assembly is now closed the hall has been retained, and a monthly gospel meeting is carried on. During the two weeks with brother Joe two or three local unbelievers attended each night which was encouraging.

GRAMPIAN REGION

Shetland: Frank Reid has been labouring in Tingwall and Walls areas. There was a good attendance at the children's meetings held each morning and some parents came along to the prizegiving meetings. Some good contacts were made by Frank during the afternoon tractwork. Please pray particularly for the Chief Inspector of Police and his wife (Mr and Mrs Drummond) who have shown a great interest in the gospel message.

Summer Camps: Over 100 children and teenagers attended the Tayside Camp in Aberdeen. Despite poor weather, all went well with the wide variety of activities. The Word of God was the priority and much effort was put into making it interesting, living and relevant to the children who were mostly unsaved. William Harrison spoke to the juniors on the 'Life of Christ' while Junior Rodgers spoke on aspects of 'Discipleship' to the seniors. Many were challenged regarding salvation, baptism and assembly fellowship.

St. Andrews: The assembly were overjoyed when Mr. J. Hay conducted a series of open-air meetings in the mornings, followed by ministry on the seven churches. Each evening the hall was full as the gospel was faithfully preached.

England & Wales REPORTS

WEST MIDLANDS

Broadwas on Teme: The Annual Conference was very well attended, and the saints profited from good ministry given by P. Harding and E. Parmenter. P. Harding stayed on for ministry meetings over the following

week. Taking up 'first principles' these meetings proved to be most helpful.

Bromsgrove: To the east of the town where the houses give way to the countryside is an area called Finstall. Here there is a small assembly which has been established for many years. Some years ago improvements were made by local brethren to the hall including the installation of a baptistry. May those of us who meet in large gatherings ever remember those small assemblies up and down the land in our prayers, and wherever possible give support to them.

SOUTH-EAST MIDLANDS

Hanslope: S. Mountstevens obtained a very favourable tent site and good numbers of children and adults came in. Many had been contacted previously and interest was excellent. Nineteen from the village came in on the Lord's Day to hear a testimony from a local brother. A parent with a drink problem came in late one night for a talk on spiritual matters. She testified to having been helped but had to contend with Roman Catholic influence and literature. The sufficiency of Jesus Himself was impressed upon her.

E. LANCS, E. CHESHIRE, GREATER MANCHESTER & YORKSHIRE

Manchester: An encouraging number of local people attended the Lancashire Gospel Tent meetings in Heaton Park. The gospel was preached for 4 weeks by D. Richards and N. Mellish. The location of the tent no doubt helped to eliminate the usual problems of vandalism etc. associated with tent work these days although this meant that only a handful of local children attended the children's meetings and as time went on, the only children attending were those brought by local saints from elsewhere.

I Live for Him

I live for Him who loves me,
For Him who holds me true,
For the Heaven that bends above me,
For the good that I can do;
For the wrong that needs resistance,
For the cause that lacks assistance,
For the future in the distance,
And the good that I can do!

Addresses PERSONALIA

Postage to Southern Ireland: We are reminded that the second class service is not available on letters from the U.K. to Southern Ireland. The 18p EEC concessionary rate is applicable for letters of not over 20 gm. For higher weights the scale increases to over £2 for 500 gm. Please note 2nd class postage carries a penalty of over 200%.

Mr. Willie Mahood correspondent for the Bethany Hall, Stevenston and treasurer for the Bible Exhibition (Ayrshire) has now moved to 4 Mayfield Grove, Stevenston KA20 4AH (Tel. No. 0294-66311).

All correspondence for York Street Hall, Peterhead should now be addressed to Mr. A.B. McLean, 63 West Road, Peterhead.

Good Christian Books always wanted — especially early "Brethren" writings, bound magazines etc. G. Peek, Rowan Cottages, Main Road, Billockby, Nr. Gt. Yarmouth, Norfolk, NR29 3BG Tel. 049 377 752.

The Management Committee of the Bethany, Evantide Home, Ealing, London, have advised that the Home has now been closed and the property sold. Guidance from the Lord is being sought regarding the disbursement of the purchase money and funds.

Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street, Maryhill, Glasgow. A warm welcome is extended to Christian students starting university in October. Letters of commendation would be appreciated. Further information can be obtained from David Newell (041-946-7458).

Wanted: Illustrations on High Priest and the Tabernacle in the Wilderness which would be suitable for ministry meetings. Please contact John Ritchie Ltd., 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock.

Mitcham Junction: Surrey (about 10 miles south of Central London). Visitors are welcomed at the Gospel Hall, Percy Road. Details of location etc. will be gladly sent on request. Please bring a letter of commendation.

Change of address: all correspondence for Tarbolton Assembly should be addressed to Mr. A. Hill, 1 Hodge Court, Tarbolton.

Mr. Jim Dickson of Troon should now be addressed at 'Dunvegan Court' 73 Kirk Street, Prestwick, KA9 1AU. (Tel. Prestwick (0292) 74847).

With CHRIST

Mrs E. CURRAN, on 13th June in Newbury, Berks aged 87. Widow of the late R. Curran, Evangelist. She was saved when she was 12 and all her long life in fellowship in the assembly in Banbridge. She was a true helpmeet to her husband in his work for the Lord. Our sister had the joy of seeing her four sons saved and in assembly fellowship. The very large funeral was from the gospel hall in Banbridge, many including a number of R.C.'s heard the gospel.

Mr GWILYM WILLIAMS on 20th June, aged 82. Our brother was saved at the age of 17 in the Thornhill Gospel Hall, Caerphilly Mountain, which he had attended from the age of 5. He faithfully continued to serve the Lord in that area until his home-call. His wife who survives him received many letters from people in the neighbourhood who stated that they had lost a true man of God. The large number which attended his funeral bore testimony to the high esteem in which he was held. Prayer would be valued for his wife and family.

Mr THOMAS ATKINSON, on 23rd June, aged 52. Saved as a lad of 17 after attending a Gospel Meeting in the city and soon afterwards received into Bloomfield Assembly, where he remained until the Lord called him home. He faithfully attended all the Assembly meetings, a Sunday School Teacher for thirty years, in which work he had a special interest, he gave much help in children's meetings, both as a speaker and a worker. A brother beloved, his homecall was described as a "Body Blow" to the Assembly. With calm assurance and spiritual trust in the Lord he bore his illness in his own patient way which was characteristic of the man. Prayer would be valued for his widow and two teenage boys, one of whom is not saved.

Mr DAVID CUNNINGHAM Suddenly on 21st July aged 50. Saved in 1950 as a lad of 13, baptised and received into fellowship in the Old Loan Hall Stevenston in 1953 and continued faithfully with that assembly until his sudden homecall. His voice was not heard in public but his kindness and attentiveness to others along with his sense of humour endeared him to all the saints. A brother beloved and much missed. Remember his wife and family in prayer.

Mrs ELIZABETH RITCHIE, on 25th April, aged 80. Saved in her teens, baptised and received into fellowship at Peterhead in October 1965. Our sister had a simple, quiet and consistent testimony among the Christians at Peterhead.

ARTHUR STRETCH, on 4th July aged 77 years. In his early days he associated with the saints of the Swinton assembly, Manchester and was much used in the ministry of the word and preaching of the gospel. In 1949 he moved to Devon and Cornwall where he gave valued help specially to the St. Austell assembly. After 23 years he moved to Adelaide, Australia for 4 years returning to Scotland to spend his last 4 years in Prestwick. He is survived by his wife and daughter, both are in happy fellowship, and claim a place in our prayers.

Mr PETER MACPHERSON, aged 58, saved as a boy of 14 and has been in fellowship with the saints at Fountain Hall till his sudden homecall. Will be remembered for his gift as a Bible Teacher and Bible Class Leader, also for the invaluable work in his latter years as Superintendent of the Summerhill Eventide Home. At home with the Lord whom he loved.

Miss GRETA SELLAR, aged 84, saved in middle life through the influence of the late Harry Burness and his wife, she was baptised and continued in fellowship at Victoria Hall and latterly Holburn Hall Aberdeen, until increasing frailty confined her to hospital. Of a studious and enquiring nature, she was greatly interested in Prophetic subjects and has now gone to be with the Lord whose return she awaited expectantly.

Mr JAMES LEGGE, on 7th July aged 82. Our Brother was saved as a young man of 16 years. In assembly fellowship in Bowhill, Dufftown, Lochgelly and for the last 50 years in fellowship again at Bowhill. A brother of exceptional spiritual standing who was loved and respected by both saved and unsaved alike. Many of the Lord's people have benefitted over the years from his hospitality, advice and prayers. He will be greatly missed by the assembly at Bowhill, by the saints over a wide area, but most of all by his wife and family who will value your prayers.

Miss DORIS JOHNSTON, on 17th July after a short illness. Miss Johnston was a lifelong member of the fellowship at Hebron Hall, Carlisle, after being saved in her teens over fifty years ago. Remembered for her faithfulness in attending assembly gatherings and for her willingness to help in all the assembly activities.

Mrs LINDA MAIRS, on 20th June aged 85. Our sister, saved as a girl in her early teens was for over 30 years in happy fellowship in the Antrim Assembly. Her husband also in fellowship went to be with the Lord 24 years ago. She was marked by her love to the Lord and his people, also by her presence at all the meetings. The funeral service from the Gospel Hall to Antrim cemetery was conducted by Mr. N. Lowden and Mr. D. McNeill.

Mr ROBERT McKEE, on 3rd June aged 87. A Christian gentleman who had a lifelong association with Adam Street Assembly, Belfast. Saved at 20 and received into fellowship, he was soon active in Sunday School teaching and gospel preaching in surrounding villages. He also had a deep prayerful interest in missionary work. The large attendance at his funeral was a fitting tribute to this highly-esteemed elder and Sunday School Superintendent.

Mrs REBECCA HENDERSON, called home on 11th June. Our sister was in happy fellowship in Lanark assembly for 39 years. Our beloved sister will be sadly missed.

Mrs CATHERINE ELIZABETH (LILY) BOYD aged 80, passed peacefully to be with Christ. She was the widow of Dr. John Boyd of Belfast, whose helpful written ministry was well known and widely appreciated amongst Christians for many years. Saved in her mid-teens, after her marriage supported her husband whole-heartedly in his extensive Christian work first in Apsley Street Assembly, Belfast and later in Holywood. Our sister devoted herself to the ministry of hospitality and the work of missionary sewing classes for many years.

Mr ANDREW M CORDINER, on 25th May aged 85, saved on 15th December, 1919, baptised and received into fellowship at Peterhead in March 1921 where he continued apart from a short time in Preston Pans. The family are all saved and baptised as are some of the grand children. The regard with which he was held was evident at the funeral service where so many came to show their respect. Our brother also laboured faithfully in the assembly at Peterhead for 66 years as a Sunday School teacher, a Gospel preacher and a respected elder who would always encourage and show a care for both old and young.

NORAH LAIDLAW CALDWELL, at New Plymouth Hospital, New Zealand, on 25th June. Born in Aberdeen, Scotland on 14th July, 1907. She was converted as a child of nine and immediately wanted to become a missionary. Norah first went to the field in 1931 with her older sister Agnes (Mrs. George Suckling), already a missionary at Chitokoloki. The following year, she married Jim Caldwell. In 1945 they went to Mwambashi where in addition to all the usual responsibilities Norah made their home a haven for convalescent missionaries. The last 16 years of her time on the field were spent back in Chitokoloki. She retired to Scotland in 1971 and went to New Zealand two years later to live near her daughter Jean and her husband, Dr Brian Fisher with their three children. Prayer is requested for her husband James and family.

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14th April 1988

(14 days)

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Netherhall, Largs

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2nd-4th October 1987

SUBJECT:
"BRIDGING THE GENERATION GAP"

SPEAKERS:
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ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND BIBLE READINGS

D.V. 11th-15th Sept. 1987

Subject for Readings
BOOK OF RUTH

Responsible brethren expected

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W. J. Nesbit, N. Ireland
J. McColl, Australia
J. Burnett, Scotland
B. Currie, N. Ireland

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LURGAN

(NORTHERN IRELAND)

GOSPEL HALL
MALCOLM ROAD

ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND BIBLE READINGS

10th-16th Oct. 1987 (D.V.)

SUBJECT:
EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

D. HINTON J. GAMBLE
A. McSHANE S. McBRIDE

CORRESPONDENT:
Mr W. McConville, 2 Mournview
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EDITORIAL
Searchlight

"The head of Christ is God"

This statement, as staggering as it is brief, as sublime as it is unexpected, is one of the fingerprints of inspiration. Nestling against a foil of creaturely responsibilities, this jewel fitly set displays at once its own brilliant lustre and ennobles with its light the submissiveness that headship implies.

Some are disposed to confine its significance to the earthly life of our Lord, and certainly it is easier for us, with finite minds, to grasp what relates to time. How precious it is to contemplate the life of Him who is "in the bosom of the Father". Here is the communion unbroken, unhindered, that headship anticipates. On the one hand "He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned (as the disciple)", on the other "I knew that thou hearest me always". What a delightful expression the Spirit of inspiration has chosen to convey to our hearts the alert, eager attentiveness of the ear of Christ!

We may observe, too, the tender ministrations of the divine Head, again uniquely noticed by John and Isaiah. John with deepest pathos recalls the comfort of the Father's conscious presence: "I am not alone, because the Father is with me" (16:32). Isaiah forsees the secret of his fortitude: "I was

not rebellious... I gave my back... I hid not my face... the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face... I know I shall not be ashamed" (50:5-7). What language!

Precious as these reflections are, there is enough in Scripture to warrant our inferring that headship is eternal in its scope. 1 Cor 15:28 is quite specific as to the future: "When all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all". This obviously looks beyond the millennial reign, beyond man's final rebellion, beyond the judgment at the great white throne, beyond the final destruction of death and hell to the day of God and the eternal state.

As to pre-incarnate times the evidence is largely inferential, many passages in both old and new testaments presenting the Father as the One who purposes, chooses, appoints and blesses, and the Son as the One through whom all things are brought about. Perhaps the pre-eminent testimony is that of our Lord Himself. His repeated reference to the Father as "Him that sent me" expresses just the relationship that 1 Corinthians anticipates.

"The head of Christ is God" is indeed the rainbow red, originating in eternity past (if we may so speak), sweeping down to realms of time and then disappearing from view in the glorious infinitude of eternity.

K.S.

Zechariah

by R. Deans, Blantyre

Zechariah's prophecy takes us from the rebuilding of the temple under Zerubbabel and Jeshua through to the millennial period. The three men together are representative of prophet (Zechariah); priest (Jeshua) and king (Zerubbabel).

Haggai was contemporary with Zechariah and their prophecies took place during the rebuilding of the temple in the days of Zerubbabel and Jeshua. These two prophets not only had a practical ministry for the people of their day but a ministry which concerned rebuilding the house of God by a remnant which was returning from Babylon and, of course which also looked forward to grander days when "there shall be no more a Canaanite in the house of the Lord of Hosts" (Zech 14:21). We would not deny that many of the Lord's people were still in Babylon, but such could not be rebuilding a house for the Lord of hosts and the hope of a future kingdom may well have been lost to them. The lessons for us are obvious:—

1. We need practical ministry which will affect us and produce a moral fitness to build for God.
2. We need ministry relating to the truth of the house of God (1 Tim 3:15), this is truth regarding the 'local' aspect of the church. Only those who are free from Babylon (a man made system) will appreciate the need for this and be involved in building the church of God which is **always** 'local'.

3. We need ministry which points us beyond present days to the coming of the Lord; His second advent; His reign and to the eternal day.

Not only did Haggai and Zechariah prophesy but they became personally involved in the work and the outcome like all true ministry was that it:—

1. Stirred up — (Ezra 5:1), the work had ceased (Ezra 4:24).
2. Built up — (Ezra 5:2) the prophets were helping.
3. Cheered up — (Ezra 6:14-16).

Under the ministry of Haggai and Zechariah we see the work of recovery and rebuilding proceeding until there is:—

1. The house finished (Ezra 6:15).
2. The people restored (Ezra 6:17).
3. Priests and Levites in their place and purified (Ezra 6:18, 20).
4. The divine centre at Jerusalem again recognised (Ezra 6:18).
5. Divine authority acknowledged "as it is written" (Ezra 6:18).
6. Deliverance from Egypt remembered — they kept the Passover (Ezra 6:19). Days of recovery often lead the people back to the remembrance of this great event (see e.g. Hezekiah and Josiah).
7. Babylon forsaken and they had separated themselves to seek the Lord (Ezra 6:21).
8. Moral suitability of the people — they kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days (Ezra 6:22).
9. The joy of the Lord (Ezra 6:22).

If we in our day follow such a path as outlined above, it will in turn lead to true joyfulness which is to be found, not in man-made mirth, but by following

Divine order in accordance with "what is written" and by acknowledgement of God given ministry through His servants.

Having established such a desirable condition it is good to remember that, approximately 50 years later, other godly men arose who enter into the good of the labour and ministry which Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Haggai and Zechariah had left. Ezra is raised up, not to change or knock down what had been done, but rather to beautify it (Ezra 7:27) and to recover for it precious things (Ezra 8:24-30). Nehemiah, a few years later, is responsible in the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem, for the defence and preservation of that which was built for God. This should give encouragement to those who build for God in this day that men whom God will raise up in His will in a future generation may well enter into the good and defence of their godly exercise.

The pattern followed in the days which we have been considering is no less necessary and applicable for the present time and we can compare the Old and New Testaments to bear this out:—

1. Ezra 2 — sought their register (See I Cor 1:2).
2. Ezra 3 — the altar upon its base (see I Cor 1:18 to 2:16).
3. Ezra 5 & 6 — building the house (see I Cor 3:10-13).
4. Ezra 6:19, 22 — the feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread (see I Cor 5:7-8).
5. Ezra 7:27 and 8:24-30 — beautifying the house (see I Cor 3:12) Gold, silver and precious stones.
6. Nehemiah — rebuilding the wall to defend and preserve that which is within. As in I Cor for most of the epistle Paul is building walls to defend

and preserve the sanctity of that which is within.

The ministry of Haggai covers but a few months (See ch. 1:1, 15; ch. 2:1, 10, 20) and his message is mainly concerning the house, to stir up the people in his day, though he cannot close his ministry without pointing to a grander day — (see Hag 2:21-23).

Zechariah's ministry, however, covers a period of about three years and spans the centuries from the rebuilding of the house under Zerubbabel and Jeshua through the times of the Gentiles to their fulness, on to the glorious return of the Lord to the Mount of Olives and to the setting up of His kingdom (Zech 14).

The book contains the repetition of such expressions as:—

1. The word of the Lord.
2. Thus saith the Lord.
3. The Lord of Hosts.
4. In that day.
5. Lifted up mine eyes.

It is still most important for us today to be reminded of the importance of the above:—

1. To receive the Word of the Lord.
2. Be able to say with conviction "thus saith the Lord."
3. Despite the opposition and apparent weakness to remember "the Lord of Hosts" is with us. The Lord of Sabaoth — Rom 9:29 (cf. Isa 1:9). David in I Sam 17:45 said "I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Hosts."
4. Do all in the light of "that" day.
5. Lift up our eyes (instead of looking around so much) in order to receive and know the divine will. Abraham was also characterised by "lifting up his eyes" (Gen 13:14; 18:2; 22:4, 13).

To be continued.

BALAAM'S PARABLES (5)

by P. Harding, Manchester

On the first occasion Elohim met Balaam (Num 23:4), and thus in the first parable, Israel is viewed from the standpoint of God's eternal counsel where they are seen as a separated people, exclusively for God. On the second occasion Jehovah met Balaam (Num 23:16), and thus in the second parable Israel is viewed in relation to the unconditional covenant of God where they are seen as a justified people without any trace of sin. On this third occasion the Spirit of God comes upon Balaam and his eyes are opened, thus Israel is seen transformed by the work of the Spirit of God. What God's eternal counsel has determined and what His unconditional covenant has guaranteed is now brought to fruition by the work of the gracious Spirit. Balaam had said "surely there is no enchantment against Jacob" (Num 23:23), and so he seeks none against them, not because he would not but because he could not. He has realised at last, much against his will, that Satan's power cannot prevail against Israel. Balaam had not changed in his desire to curse them, but "he saw it pleased the Lord to bless Israel" Num 24:1, and could not do otherwise. The last view point is from the top of Peor and from there Balaam sets his face toward the wilderness but see how that wilderness is transformed under the Spirit's control. The waste becomes a land of beauty, filled with valleys and gardens fragrant with blossoms and fruit. It is the touch of the Master Landscape Gardener, the product of

the Holy Spirit where there is freshness, fragrance and fruitfulness for the pleasure and glory of God. From the heights of Peor Balaam views the whole encampment of Israel and everything about Israel is perfection. Under the control of the Spirit of God, with his eyes opened, Balaam is forced to proclaim as the divine oracle, and behind that proclamation lies the power of God to fulfil His word. Thus, although viewed in the wilderness, Balaam sees a picture of Israel in her divine order and beauty of a coming day. In the first parable Israel is a separated people, in the second parable they are a justified people but in this third parable they are a transformed people.

"How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob" (Num 24:5) is an indication of the grace of God that has transformed the nation, and "thy tabernacles, O Israel" indicates that the nation bears the stamp of a prince of God.

The camp is seen as valleys spread forth (Num 24:6), beautiful valleys watered by the river and therefore the pasture is lush and delightful to the eye. Thus, Israel is viewed as made beautiful by the refreshing streams of the living water which flow from the throne of God, a people delightful to, and pleasurable for, God.

But the description becomes richer "as gardens by the river's side". They are like gardens where there is fruitful-

ness. They are now planted by God in the land (Jer 32:41) — “I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon” (Hos 14:5-6). There will be growth like the lily: steadfastness like the roots of Lebanon: godly influence like the spreading branches: beauty as the olive blossom: and fragrance like the smell of Lebanon. The description goes on “as trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted”. The aloe tree was highly odoriferous and was thus noted for its aroma. It was highly valued for its fragrance and was thus used on special occasions (Psa 45:8: Prov 7:17: John 19:39). So Israel will be fragrant, a sweet odour to God—“the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon” (Hos 14:7). Such fragrance is the result of God’s planting in the land and of the work of the Spirit of God in their lives.

There is another step in this verse—“as cedar trees beside the waters”. The stature of Israel is now viewed as the stately and lofty cedar. Here we have the thought of grandeur and fulness. First we have the **freshness** of Israel—“as valleys spread forth”, secondly we have the **fruitfulness** of Israel—“as trees of lign aloes” and finally the **fulness** of Israel—“as cedar trees”.

From the heights of Peor Balaam sees a picture of perfect unity. What is the reason for such unity? It is because in their midst there is a sanctuary where God dwells and He has ordered the camp—every tribe having its place in relation to the sanctuary. It is, therefore, a unity of the tribes camping in divine order around the sanctuary—a beautiful picture of unity because all

are subject to the rule of God to Whom they express adoring worship, enthroning Him in the midst of the praises of Israel.

One principle of rule was to be recognised and acknowledged by all, and this remains the secret of true harmony amongst the people of God today. If the assembly is to be an effective testimony for God in the locality there must be oneness among the saints. An assembly cannot be torn by strife and defiled by carnality without a corresponding loss in testimony. Harmony in the assembly is vital and is stressed over and over again by the apostle Paul: “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing...that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Cor 1:10) — “stand fast in one spirit, with one mind”, “be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind”, “let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing” (Phil 1:27: 2:2: 3:16).

To be continued.

Fancy Meeting You

*I dreamt Death came the other night
And Heaven's Gate swung wide,
An Angel, with a halo bright,
Ushered me inside.*

*And there to my astonishment
Were folks I'd judged and labelled,
As "Quite unfit", "Of little worth",
And "Spiritually disabled".*

*Indignant words rose to my lips
But never were set free
For every face showed stunned surprise,
No one expected me.*

HOW IT BEGAN

Clonkeen, near Randalstown
Northern Ireland

Rodger Luke was born in the townland of Craigmore, near Randalstown. He was reared tenderly by an aunt, but grew up to be idle, wild and intemperate — a real terror to the neighbours. Often he could be heard “roaring like a bull” when in a drunken frenzy. He was often handcuffed to a ring (specially made for him and known as Rodger’s Ring) in the Randalstown police barracks. During the 1859 revival he went to Kells to hear what it was all about. Coming home he thought of his little children, and began to pray that God would have mercy on them. Then he discovered that he too could be saved, though he was so wicked. His prayer was, “Lord, if you save me you will never hear the end of it”. After days of anxiety he was saved. He proved, as he later told, that the work of Christ on Calvary was perfect: his heavy burden of sin was gone, the Lord Jesus having taken it all away. Having found peace, he gathered his children around him and read the Scriptures with them, then they all bowed their knees together while he prayed. He confessed Christ first to his family then far and wide: Rodger Luke had “got the change”, he was now a true monument of grace. His favourite hymn became, “O Blessed God, how kind are all Thy ways to me”, No. 181 in the Believers Hymn Book. He went to the police and told them they might remove the ring as he had met with the “Subduer”, meaning the Lord Jesus Christ, and would never trouble them again.

There was a Baptist Church near to his home at the Grange, where he was baptised and which he attended for some time: but as he read the Scriptures he became dissatisfied with where he was, and walked the nine miles to Kells school house, where a meeting of believers gathered in accordance with New Testament principles. He sat at the back and witnessed the Breaking of Bread meeting, and was convinced that this was the right place to be. He was received into fellowship with another brother called Andrew Kennedy.

About the year 1861 these two brethren were exercised to start a Breaking of Bread meeting at Groggan, and so in a hand-loom shop, they pushed the looms to one side and spread the table. Joseph French attended this meeting and on the Monday morning he came to Robert Wilkinson, his neighbour, and told him what he had seen and heard. They agreed that this corresponded with the reading of the Scriptures in the Acts of the Apostles, and they both went the next Lord’s day in spite of much opposition. They were satisfied this gathering was according to New Testament teaching, and were baptised and received into fellowship. Later Boyd McDowell, Robert Vance and other believers gathered with them.

In the year 1870 a farmhouse was rented in Groggan where larger accommodation was available, making a little hall. There the assembly prospered,

and as there were no evangelists or full-time workers at that time, the brethren took responsibility for preaching the gospel themselves.

Later in 1879 a young man called John Halyburton, for health reasons, came to Ireland from Scotland, and at Rodger Luke's request he began to preach. At first the preaching met with no response, but gradually the indifference melted away, the meetings increased in size and souls were saved, until a remarkable movement spread all round the country. Mr William McLean and Mr David Rea were called in to give help as often three meetings were being conducted at the same time, one in the barn loft seating 300, another in the barn seating 100 and one in the farmhouse seating 50. The people would not leave after the first speaker, but sat on while a second preached, and continued to sit until a third had spoken, so that each meeting was addressed by three preachers in succession. So manifest was the visitation of the power from on high that the

workers could only exclaim, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes" (Psa 118:23). Many were saved and added to the assembly including the late John McDowell.

Some time later a corrugated iron hall was erected at Clonkeen for gospel work. In 1897 the assembly at Groggan moved to Clonkeen as the hall was larger and more central. In 1940 Mr Lamb and Mr Meharg came for gospel meetings: God opened His hand in rich blessing and many were saved, including the children of believers and also notable characters, who were real trophies of God's grace. The power of God was so manifest at that time that manual work was brought almost to a standstill: the people came to the hall at mid-day to pray, some having walked four miles, not returning home until after the gospel meeting at night.

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ANTICHRISTS, ANTIGODS, ANTISPIRITS

by John Heading, Aberystwyth

In those early days, local assemblies could be harbouring men of darkness who propagated false doctrines and false practices. Christendom had not yet commenced, so until various groupings had been formed, there was nowhere for such men to go to when they were either put out or when they left of their own accord. Thus Paul wrote of "false brethren" who came in to spy out the liberty that believers had in Christ Jesus (Gal 2:4). The Lord spoke of Jezebel, a prophetess in Thyatira, who evidently could not have been saved, having no right to be in the assembly (Rev 2:20). Today, elders must be careful lest they be caught unawares by men of such status, but now there are many sectarian groupings where any and every false doctrine would be welcome, and such men would gravitate to those of their own persuasion.

In his old age, the apostle John was surrounded by doctrines that were heretical concerning the Person of the Lord Jesus. In particular, there were men who denied that the Lord Jesus had actually come in the flesh. To counteract this false doctrine, he wrote his Gospel to put on record what he *knew through past experience* of the Person, character, work and teaching of the One of whom he wrote, "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). In this Gospel, the apostle drew no practical lessons from the Lord's teaching for His readers. Hence in his first Epistle he

drew heavily on the Gospel, and introduced practical lessons at every stage. Thus he dealt with men who would come in their own name (John 5:43). These are the antichrists, the antigods and the antispirits, found respectively in chapters 2, 3 and 4 of his first Epistle.

Antichrists (1 John 2:18-23). The apostle makes it quite clear that he is not writing about the antichrist that is yet to come in the prophetic future: *that* antichrist is unique. Rather, he is writing about "many antichrists" that existed in his day that he called "the last time". Some may be bold enough to claim that they were Christ, thus deceiving many (Matt 24:5), but here John was referring to religious men, even leaders, and existing today, who deny the Person of Christ, His miraculous birth of a virgin, His Deity, His perfection untainted by sin, the sacrificial nature of His death, and the truth of His bodily resurrection.

The remarkable thing is that these men "went out from us". They went out to establish the beginnings of the heretical sects that welcome false doctrine of every sort. The fact that they were "not of us" contrasts with "one of you" (Col 4:9,12); true membership of a local assembly is something that should be valued and jealously guarded. A brother who is "of us" would continue faithfully; a man who is "not of us" is proved to be such by his own defection. Perhaps such men held

their doctrine secretly until it came out into the open. This reminds us of the men in John 6:66 who left the Lord Jesus because they did not hold to His doctrine, and preferred the flesh that profits nothing (v.63). We may wonder whether those who held the doctrine and deeds of the Nicolaitans left the assemblies when it was announced that the Lord knew what was going on (Rev 2:6,15).

But how different were the people of God. They had the anointing from the Holy One, and held faithfully both to the Father and the Son. The *recognition* that such doctrine is *the truth* cannot come from teachers, however faithful such teaching may be. Rather the anointing ensures that believers recognise the truth when they listen to teachers. Otherwise men are recognised as liars; denying that "Jesus is the Christ".

Antigods (1 John 3:9-15). In the context, John is dealing about the regular practice of righteous deeds or sinful deeds, which is characteristic of the birth of the individual concerned. The former has been born of God and is a child of God; the latter is a child of the devil. The difference between such men can be seen by whether they manifest the love of God in their lives or the hatred of the devil in their lives. These men who are children of the devil are the antigods, for they are "not of God" (v.10). The Pharisees claimed to have "one Father, even God" (John 8:41), but the Lord knew differently, and branded them as "of your father the devil" (v.44). The profession of divine Names meant nothing when men were seeking to kill the Lord Jesus, following the one who was a murderer from the beginning.

To illustrate the nature of antigod, John refers to the activity of Cain (1 John 3:12), the only direct reference to the OT in this Epistle. He was "of that wicked one"; thinking that Abel was the seed through whom the Lord Jesus would enter into the world, he induced Cain to slay his brother, reckoning without another seed, Seth, through whom the Lord would participate in the genealogy of mankind. Cain was used to thwart the purpose of God, but did not, and could not, succeed; neither could Herod after the Lord had been born (Matt 2:16). The works of the antigod were "evil", while the works of his brother were "righteous". In Hebrews 11:4, Abel himself is declared to have been righteous; on account of his faith his work in offering the more excellent sacrifice was owned by God. John uses this to show the difference between a believer's love and an unbeliever's hatred.

Antispirits (1 John 4:1-6). John now deals with two kinds of spirits. The "spirits" in v.1 refer to the inner beings of men, from which issue their deeds and doctrines. They must be tested by what they do and say. On the one hand there are the antispirits, the inner beings of the false prophets who have "gone into the world", and the world willingly listens to them. But there are those who are taught by "the Spirit of God": we must test them also, ascertaining that they believe that the Lord Jesus came in the flesh. Such men are "of God". In v.6, John used the apostolic "we": the two kinds of spirits either hear the apostle or they do not. It is the same today: we must distinguish between "the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error".

Concluded

YOUNG Believers'

Conducted by Howard A. Barnes,
Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside

Pauline Epistles

PART 14: 1 TIMOTHY

BACKGROUND

Paul had been released from his first period of imprisonment in Rome (Acts 28) and some time later he and Timothy were at or near Ephesus. He himself had to go on to Macedonia (possibly to Philippi, Phil 2:24) but hearing of problems at Ephesus had urged Timothy to stay and try to sort them out. Paul hoped to return shortly to Ephesus but in the event of him being delayed he wrote this epistle to tell Timothy "how it is necessary to behave in the house of God" (1 Tim 3:15, Vine). The content of the epistle was not so much new revelation or things that Timothy didn't know already but was meant to give Timothy written authority so as to strengthen his position with regard to those who had to be taught or disciplined. Timothy's position was therefore no different than any spiritual teacher today who appeals to Holy Scripture as his sole authority in matters of faith and doctrine. Paul had already seen the kind of problem that Timothy was to face at Ephesus, for at Rome there had been those who sought to upset him (Phil 1:16). They had only joined in the renewed evangelical spirit Paul's witness had kindled among the believers at Rome so they could increase the number in their own

party. Also we see that the problems Paul had foreseen and predicted previously (Acts 20:29,30) were beginning to manifest themselves at Ephesus.

This work at Ephesus was the latest of a number of tasks Timothy had been given by Paul, in order to help, encourage and correct assemblies (see 1 Thess 3:2; 1 Cor 4:17; Acts 19:22 and Phil 2:19). He was now able to meet the most difficult situations despite any physical and emotional shortcomings (1 Tim 1:23 with 1 Cor 16:10,11). His strength like Paul's was in the Lord (Eph 6:10 and 1 Tim 2:1).

PAULS CALLING AND TIMOTHY'S TASK

Paul's upbringing as a strict Jew, together with his enlightenment following conversion had given him a clear understanding of what the Jewish law was and who it was for (vv. 9-1¹ and Rom 7:12,13). It was to prove that man is a sinner in the sight of a holy God. The sad thing was that now at Ephesus there were those who wanted to encourage believers to return to it (v.7) and were backing up their claims with arguments that had no end (v.4). The claims that arise from the gospel however have a clear end—love (v.5). Paul is overwhelmed by the grace of God that made him, the number one sinner (v.15) into the number one example (v.16) of what grace can do.

Paul had no desire that Timothy should get mixed up in this false teaching (v.4) but rather urged him to fulfil the potential that all had seen in his life (vv.18-20).

In order that Timothy and also the faithful believers at Ephesus should be able to please God, prayer must have first priority (2:1). In the assembly

meetings it is the men only who are to pray (v.8 should read "the men"). This is to be the universal custom among believers (everywhere, v.8) and is to be accompanied by becoming behaviour by those who pray. Likewise the women present at such times should be dressed in a becoming way so as not to draw attention to themselves by anything else other than their good works, which were particularly with respect to family and home life (2:9-15).

TRUE LEADERS IN DIFFICULT DAYS

There were those brethren at Ephesus who desired to be "teachers of the law" (1:7) and these were to be discouraged. On the other hand there were those who had a desire to be active as elders in the overseership of the assembly, and these men, if properly gifted and experienced were to be encouraged to this "good work" (3:1-7). These were the true teachers (v.2) who in prayer had been truly able to lift up "holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (2:8). Their home-life too was important, because being able to "rule his own house" demonstrated a man's ability to "care for the church of God" (vv.4,5). Acts 20:17-35 should be read to give the background to the subject of elders at Ephesus.

Those who serve the assembly publicly in whatever capacity are deacons. Their lives, wives and family must, like those of elders, come up to the necessary standard for the sake of the testimony which the assembly maintained to the great truths of the gospel (2:14-16).

The difficulties that Timothy was experiencing were not going to go away, but rather were going to increase (4:1-5). Departure from the truth was to be in many directions.

Timothy's job was to warn the faithful and so be "a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in words of faith and of good doctrine", even if he himself was unable to eradicate the errors. Some, for their own advantage, might question his youth, but his blameless life and ministry was his best defence (v.12). Until Paul's return Timothy was to engage in the best kind of activities. We too waiting for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, do well to follow these instructions (vv.12-15).

PRACTICAL MATTERS

The treatment of the aged in the assembly was of concern to the apostle. The older men (5:1 "elders" in the general sense) were to be treated with great respect, as too were the older widows. The latter's practical needs were to be met by the assembly if there was no supporting family and if they themselves met the necessary qualifications (vv.3-16). The practical needs of others in the assembly are also to be considered (vv.17,18) for example those whose devotion to the Lord's work meant that their normal income is insufficient for their needs. There is no indication here or anywhere else in the New Testament that assemblies should have a paid pastor as is sometimes the case today.

Timothy appears to have been teetotal, and Paul in suggesting the medicinal "use" of "a little wine" is in no way trying to change his general attitude to the consumption of alcohol (5:23).

Timothy had attained to a spiritual position where he could be called "man of God" (6:11), but to maintain that position demanded constant vigilance and he is reminded of the need to "flee", "follow", and "fight" and also to be a good trustee of those things committed to him (6:13-21).

The Suffering Servant of Jehovah

by T.C. Taws, Leicester

Of all the wonderful prophecies in the Scriptures, perhaps Isa 53 is the best known and best loved, foretelling the sufferings of the Son of God described as 'My Servant', who willingly came into this world to be the Saviour of men and the Messiah of Israel, although as a nation the Jews accept neither the prophecy of what is to them 'the forbidden chapter', or the person of whom it speaks, even our Lord Jesus Christ, their Messiah.

The chapter opens with reference to the *mental sufferings* of our Lord while He sojourned amongst men, when the Eternal Word became flesh and dwelt or tabernacled among us. He was despised, rejected, a Man of Sorrows, disdained by His Jewish brethren: 'He came unto His own (possessions), and His own (people) received Him not' John 1:12. Of His loneliness and rejection it can be said of our Saviour as declared by the Psalmist 'I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop' Psa 102:6, 7.

Despite the crowds that gathered around him to see his miracles, hear his words and accept the blessings he so freely gave, he was still 'The Stranger of Galilee' and in the garden of Gethsemane the companionship of the disciples was withdrawn, when alone he prayed 'nevertheless not my will, but thine be done'; surely the words of the Perfect Servant.

The mental agony of utter isolation was fully revealed 'at the place called Calvary' when all the disciples forsook him and fled; then in the solitude of the darkness that overshadowed the cross we hear His words 'My God. My God why hast Thou forsaken Me'. Forsaken of God and men our Saviour died alone.

We read in verses 5 to 9 of some of the *physical sufferings* endured by our Lord when he died on Calvary's tree and suffered vicariously at the hand of God, as it is written 'because Christ also suffered for us' (1 Pet 2:21).

How graphically the words 'wounded', 'bruised', 'stripes' describe the intensity of the punishment heaped upon the body of our precious Saviour when he 'became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross' Phil 2:8. There his visage was so marred (Isa 52:14) even to the point of being unrecognisable. The waves and billows of God's wrath were heaped upon him and according to the prophecy of Psalm 22, cruel men pierced His hands and His feet; a very graphic description of the physical sufferings experienced by the Son of God at the 'place called Golgotha' when he displayed how great was his love for the Church when 'He gave Himself for it' Eph 5:25.

The final section of this chapter introduces to us the *spiritual sufferings* of God's only Son, his well-beloved; sufferings which exceed both the mental and physical, because he not only 'endured the cross' but he 'despised the shame'; it was then he dealt with the problem of sin and bore the curse for us, as it is written 'cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree' (Gal 3:13).

We note in verses 10 to 12 there are

three references to 'His Soul', the seat of his affections, the inner recesses of his being. We may try to understand the mental sufferings and in some small measure appreciate the physical sufferings but his spiritual experience on the cross we shall never fully grasp when the holy, sinless Lamb of God was 'made sin for us'.

In verse 10 we read 'thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin'. Remembering that in Leviticus there are five principal offerings (Burnt, Meal, Peace, Sin and Trespass), the reference here is to the *trespass offering* (see Newberry, margin) reminding us that because our sins have separated us from a Holy God, our Saviour offered himself unto God without blemish. 'Who his own self bare our sins (trespasses) in his own body on the tree' (1 Pet 2:24) and now by his once and for all sacrifice, God in His love and mercy is able to say 'thy sins and thy iniquities will I remember no more'. John reminds us that we know Christ was manifested to take away our sins and now redemption and reconciliation are provided for sinful man, both Jew and Gentile through the Gospel. Rom 1:16

'The travail of His soul' was to 'bear their iniquities', suggesting that as the perfect *sin offering* our Saviour in his love satisfied the righteous claims of a Holy God when he took the burden of sin in the sinners stead and so give us peace with God.

As the Lamb of God, John the Baptist declared Jesus to be the sin bearer for the world but we in a personal way know that 'Christ our passover is sacrificed for us' 1 Cor 5:7.

By faith we lay our hand on the head of the sacrifice (i.e. Christ), slain at the gate of the court of the Tabernacle, and

so identify ourselves with the death of the offering, and say 'The Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me', a truth confirmed in the Hebrew Epistle 'Wherefore Jesus also that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate' Heb 13:12.

Finally, Isaiah tells us 'He hath poured out his soul unto death' v. 12. Here is suggested the thought of the *drink offering* (Num 15), an offering never offered alone but was included with or added to the sweet savour offering by the offerer when it was poured out over the sacrifice (it was never drunk) and thus was identified with the offering.

As a 'drink offering' our Saviour 'poured out his soul unto death' suggesting his willingness to surrender his will unto the will of his Father when he said 'not My will but thy will be done', and although it meant the suffering and shame of the cross yet in obedience to his Father, the Lord of Glory humbled himself, even to the extent of dying on a cross.

However, as the Drink Offering was of wine, a symbol of joy in the Scriptures, it may suggest the divine satisfaction the death of Christ brought to God, his Father and also to himself because it was for the joy that was set before him our Saviour endured the cross and all its shame. So in spite of the sorrow and the pain, the ultimate joy of the Church to be his bride was always before Him, because he 'loved the Church and gave himself for it' Eph 5:25.

Only when the Church is complete and we are forever with the Lord, then our wonderful Saviour and glorious Bridegroom 'shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied'.

LIGHT FROM AN OLD LAMP

By John Law, Norwich

A Meditation

My heart has been inditing a good matter, so I am desirous just to pass on a few thoughts which I trust will be very sweet to each reader. How precious are such words as these. "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor 4:18). When we were unsaved, we were occupied altogether with things under the sun, but all these things never gave us any satisfaction, for all these things are to pass away, the world and all its gilded glory, but blessed be God, He has given us to know Jesus, the Son of God, the brightness of the Father's glory, yea, He has given us Him as the object of our souls, the One Who fills the heart of God, who fills the heavens, and who is the Object of worship of all these, and Whose glory is shortly to fill the whole earth, and we are thus to be occupied with Him where He now is, the Enthroned, the Exalted, and the Glorified One, and all the glory that is connected with Him, and what a privilege is this, to be walking by faith, and not by sight (2 Cor 5:7), gazing with open or unveiled face, beholding as in a glass, or mirror, the glory of the Lord (2 Cor 3:18). What attraction there is in Him, Whose visage was so marred more than any man (Isa 52:14), and yet the glory of God now shines in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor 4:6). Oh to thus ask ourselves, are we thus occupied with Him, upon who God's

eye rests with infinite satisfaction and delight, and are we thus taken up with the things that are eternal. If we are, our souls will be under the power of such an object and of such glory, and the result will be a moulding after the divine pattern: which will be seen in our being changed into the same image and from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor 3:18), and by our affections going out after the Man Christ Jesus: and our walk will be characterised by walking in the truth, in fellowship with the Father and the Son, and we shall be answering to the mind of God as expressed in Phil 2:15-16: while we shall be thus unto God a sweet savour of Christ (2 Cor 2:15).

Oh, to be thus kept exercised and occupied before the Lord by His Spirit, so as to yield ourselves to the leading of the Holy Spirit, that we may ever be saying, Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth, that I desire beside Thee (Psa 73:25), but the device of the Devil is to get us taken up with things down here, so as to fail to lay hold of the things which are eternal. We see even this was his way with the Lord Jesus in His temptation in the wilderness. He shewed Him the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them in a moment of time (Matt 4:8-9; Luke 4:5-6) (here were things temporal), but our Lord refused them. They had no attraction for Him, but we find that our Lord was occupied with the things that are eternal, for it is

written of Him, ... who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God (Heb 12:2). May we thus copy Him, the glories of earth had no attraction for Him: for they were being presented by the god of this world, because of the greater glories that were filling His soul, even the sight of bringing many sons unto glory (Heb 2:10), but what was presented by the Devil and refused, He will in the coming day receive from the hand of Jehovah (Psa 2:8-9). Even now the Devil is seeking to draw aside the child of God, from the pathway of faith, by presenting well-watered plains, vineyards, glorious processions, world heroes, and gorgeous exhibitions, which are all to end up in the admiration of the beast, of whom it is written, ... and all the world wondered after the beast (Rev 13:3). May it be ours like Daniel, to be so separated from the earth, standing in the mind of heaven, that while the course of the world passes before Nebuchadnezzar in glorious attraction as seen in Dan 2:31-35, the same course of this world passes before Daniel, but oh how different the sight, to the man who had the mind of heaven, whose eyes were anointed with eyesalve, for what was so attractive to the king, to Daniel was as four terrible beasts (read Dan 7:2-9), and if we read the course of this world and all its tinsel glory in the light of the Cross (Gal 6:14), we shall rejoice to be crucified unto the world and the world unto us.

And while we are thus separated from the world, walking and keeping our garments unspotted from it, we learn a marvellous lesson from the disciples and our Lord as recorded in Matt 24:1-2. The disciples were admiring the buildings of the temple and drew

His attention to them, but oh how different it was in the eyes of the Lord, for at once He began to say, there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down (Matt 24:1-2), so that which was so beautiful and attractive in the eyes of the disciples, was in the eyes of the Lord under judgment, which was soon to be carried out, and such is the world and all its glory, and its fashion, it is not of the Father, but is under judgment, and as such shall pass away (1 John 2:17: 2 Pet 3:7,10,12).

May we then like our father Abraham, so lay hold of, and walk by faith, that we shall be in deed and in truth, strangers and pilgrims on the earth, as those upon whom the things of earth have no power, because of the God of glory filling the soul. Christ engaging the vision, His beauty ravishing the heart, leading the whole being to long intensely to be with Him, where there will be nothing to hinder, nothing to draw aside, but where Christ will be known and enjoyed to the fulness of our own spiritual capacity, even now it is ours to endure Moses-like as seeing Him who is invisible (Heb 11:27) and Abraham-like to be looking for a city which hath foundations: whose builder and maker is God (Heb 11:10): while like the Thessalonian saints, serving, and waiting for His Son from Heaven (1 Thess 1:10): while Paul-like forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before (Phil 3:13) in marked contrast to Lot who was occupied with well-watered plains, and Demas who loved this present world (2 Tim 4:10). May God our Father thus give reader and writer to know the increasing blessedness of being occupied with the Man upon the Throne awaiting His return!

REGIONS · BEYOND ·

Hong Kong Evangelists Report Persecution In China

For some months my desire was to visit believers in Shantou, and finally on 25th May together with brother J.F. we were able by the Lord's help to carry in much needed literature and Bibles to the believers there.

Upon meeting the brethren they told us the situation obtaining in Shantou as it affected the Christians. They were under severe persecution and open church gatherings had been stopped by the police who only permitted them to attend the official government controlled Three-Self Patriotic Church. The believers feel this is a system which Christ is not in, so while the police used threats to pressurise the believers to join the Three-Self Church many firmly refused to do so.

Group Gatherings in Houses Now they have been scattered into small groups of from two to seven believers, and meet in various houses where they remember the Lord in His death once a week as well as meeting for prayer and Bible study. Gospel work has been reduced to personal witness mainly. During this time of persecution three faithful servants of Christ have been jailed for 5 and 12 years because they were caught distributing Bibles in the central provinces of China. These areas are economically very poor and the lack of Bibles, literature, and sound teaching is very great. Do remember to PRAY for our brethren beloved and for their families during this time of persecution and imprisonment for the sake of Christ.

We were able to pass on gifts from the Lord's people to those who labour for the Lord as well as to the families of those who are in prison. "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity as being yourselves also in the body" (Heb 13:3). They were so glad to receive our Bibles, books, and Gospel tracts. This literature is able to build up the local assembly by its edifying content, and to supply food to feed the flock of God.

I have just received two letters from the brethren of the central China province requesting more Bibles and literature to help them in their Gospel work. They said the field is great and white unto harvest.

Our desire is to help them and others like them, and we pray our God will guide us as to the right time to go again, this time taking with us some of the freshly printed books we have just received from the printers to encourage them.

Here in Hong Kong we have a young married couple and their son recently arrived from Peking and who came to our Gospel Hall. They told us the wife's father had a tract given him in Peking which had our Kowloon Gospel Hall address on it, and so they came to the meeting to hear the Gospel! The woman has a godly father and is enjoying the love and fellowship of the saints here and has expressed thanks to God for His grace in leading them to the assembly. We do pray they may be saved and gather to the Lord's Name here with us.

(S.S. Hong Kong, July 1987)

Angola Still Needs Prayer

The biggest problem continues to be the lack of recognition of assemblies by the Marxist authorities. A political spokesman told the leaders of the recognised churches that it was required that each "church" should have an adequate level of organisation with a definite hierarchy and with whom, if necessary, the government could discuss matters of common interest. Our fear is that the setting up of such an organisation could be used by a minority seeking position and power not only to represent assemblies to the government, but also to control assemblies with a central organisation through central funds. Some still do not have much spiritual understanding of the church as an organism—His Body. Please therefore pray at this crucial time that whatever happens, the believers will follow New Testament church principles, and that assemblies will be recognised. Brethren from all over Angola met on 26th July in Luanda to discuss this development, and as a result have formed an elected organisational core around an executive committee. It has been reported that a small vocal minority were both carnal and worldly, although a good many of them were simple spiritual men who have been unfortunately caught up in this organisational movement.

War Situation Sad to say the war situation is **not** improving. After the previous widespread destruction, Luma has again been attacked just as the people were returning from the bush: so they have fled again and lost **everything** twice. The government post near Biula was attacked by UNITA and missiles were fired into Luena.

Literature and Translation We were very encouraged by the literature and translation work. The second "reader" which my wife Karen prepared, and the commentary on Romans which I translated have been enthusiastically received on the field, and other titles are in

the checking and printing pipeline. Karen is now deciding her next project and I am half-way through the commentary on 1 Corinthians. The government are making minor orthographic changes but these should not affect us for a long time. All these books and those produced by our fellow-workers in Canada will be a real help to the Chokwe-speaking believers all over Angola, Zaire, and Zambia.

Pray Pray especially for the believers in Angola many of whom are refugees, homeless, sick and wounded in this war-torn land. **Above all pray for peace and liberty.**

(Roy Wood, Plymouth, July 1987)

The Juniper Tree

by L.G. Barton, Birmingham

In the record of creation we read that God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind whose seed is in itself upon the earth" (Gen 1:11). The next verse reveals the fulfilment of God's command and so we are introduced to one general botanical realm divided into grass, herbs and trees. Of the first two their creative purposes are confirmed in Psa 104:14 "He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle and herb for the service of man that he may bring forth food out of the earth". This leaves us with the trees which, when considered in the context of the above verses, can be included under "the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind". The forest trees, fruit trees and shrubs spoken of in the Bible provide much thought for examples in spiritual experience, and of the main trees we note that in addition to their fruitfulness, some, growing in the desert places, provide shade from the brightness and heat of the eastern sun.

Of the various trees and shrubs recorded in the Scriptures the writer would like to draw attention to the juniper, palm and cedar trees and see what practical lessons each of these can teach us.

The juniper or broom or rothem bush provided grateful shade to Elijah when he fled into the wilderness (1 Kings 19:4, 5). The life of Elijah can be considered in three phases, his emergence and triumph at Carmel, his despondence a day's journey from Beersheba, and lastly his work with Elisha and final transportation to heaven. Elijah is introduced to us in Scripture in an unusual manner. We are told nothing of his parentage or his early life. He was of the inhabitants of Gilead and although an uncultured man of the desert, his courage and ministry of prayer did much to turn God's disobedient people from idolatry. (See Prov 28:1; Psa 27:3.)

Our lesson from the juniper tree falls in the second phase of his life when he fled from the wrath of Jezebel.

All he had achieved in the first phase was against the background of a world no better than our present day of profanity, corruption and ungodliness. The deplorable state of God's people Israel had resulted from seven kings since the division of the kingdom after Solomon, who between them practised idolatry, murder, drunkenness and treason. This cycle of evil ended with an unholy marriage between Ahab and Jezebel, a worshipper of Baal.

Elijah had fulfilled all that God had directed him in. He had triumphed by the efficacy of prayer. The glorious transaction upon Mount Carmel and the marvels accomplished in response to his supplications were hardly completed when Elijah, renowned for his courage, fled from the threat of an avenging woman. In his despondency he expressed the desire to die. Unfortunately his eyes were no longer fixed upon the God who had miraculously fed him at the brook Cherith, and sustained him at the widow's house at Zarephath and brought him through the triumph at Carmel.

Elijah was not the only man of God who failed after success, neither was he the only courageous man to ask for death. See Moses (Num 11:14, 15) and Jonah (Jon 4:3). Probably there are few of God's servants who at some time or other have not experienced Elijah's feelings under the juniper tree, but perhaps very few would utter his request. Circumstances can get us down. Maybe it is a health problem. Maybe we are distressed about the departure from the ancient landmarks of scriptural practices and principles, or the widespread treading under foot of the Lord's commandments, dear to us and our brethren of a hundred years

ago. Our juniper tree experience may lead us to murmur and complain at the hardness of our lot and to wonder why it had to happen to us and to ask what we have done to deserve such treatment.

Let us return to Elijah who together with his servant travelled to Beersheba which, judging from 1 Kings 19:3, was outside the territory governed by Ahab. However Judah was ruled by Jehoshaphat whose son had married the daughter of Ahab (2 Kings 8:18). Jehoshaphat was operating in conjunction with Ahab and therefore would soon hand Elijah back to Jezebel.

Elijah and his servant had travelled about ninety miles when they reached Beersheba; then Elijah, hour after hour, plodded on beneath the burning sun, alone in the dreary desert. At last tired and weary he sat down under one of the many juniper trees found in the desert and requested that he might die. Elijah then lay down and went to sleep. This can be echoed in the words of Psalms 127:2, "He giveth his beloved sleep". Sleep is essential to all people, it is the recharging time for rebuilding our spent physical and mental energy. In times of illness it has a healing value which was recognised by the disciples when the Lord said of Lazarus "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth"; the disciples replied, "if he sleep he shall do well" — a logical conclusion without the greater knowledge. It was not the purpose of God that His servant should die of exhaustion in the wilderness after his flight from Jezebel, so in mercy and loving care He refreshed his body with sleep. "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him" (Psalms 37:7). It is with receptive hearts that we note carefully how God dealt with His servant. There was no immediate rebuke for loss of

faith. Elijah became oblivious to the cause of his despondency in sleep. God is never in a hurry, for as He said, "As the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa 55:9). There would be time enough to deal in mercy and grace with His beloved servant when Elijah was refreshed. He firstly sent an angel with a baked cake and cruse of water, who gently and softly wakened Elijah and exhorted him to rise and eat. This he did and then resumed his sleep. A second time he was awakened and urged to feed upon the heavenly food for there was a further journey to make before God was ready to reveal Himself and to give further instructions.

Those of the Lord's people who have experienced disappointment, frustration and the slough of despondency have discovered the folly of human reasoning. Therefore there is some lesson to learn from Elijah's experience. If we read on in 1 Kings 19 we note that Elijah enlarged on his request uttered under the juniper tree. He now made a statement which put his position frankly and candidly and explained his conduct. What he said was true for he had not shrunk from the dangerous mission for the Lord. He had the Lord's honour and glory at heart and he despised the people's idolatry. However he was wrong in one fact, he was not the only

one left. Was all his strength spent for nought and his labour in vain? (cf. Psa 145:18). Is this not the experience of some of the faithful servants of the Lord who today preach to a lawless and sinful nation? They labour much, but sometimes see little fruit. Plenty of opposition. Perhaps we sometimes have to wait for answers to our prayers and exercise patience (Heb 12:1). Maybe there will be times when the Master will lay aside His servants to refresh them and feed them on His good Word prior to sending them again into the fray.

God's final dealings with Elijah should cause us much heart-searching. Firstly He displayed to Elijah His greatness and majesty and renewed his confidence. Secondly He corrected Elijah's wrong assumption that he was the only non-idolater, for there were seven thousands in the ten tribe kingdom of Israel who had not kissed or bowed down to Baal. Lastly He introduced Elijah's successor, Elisha.

It is therefore a danger in our christian experience to take our eyes off the Lord and to be influenced by the circumstances of our life. The Lord will never let us go and He will take steps to restore us either through others or directly by Himself. (See Gal 6.) If we do fail Him He is not short of servants and although we are secure in salvation we could suffer loss.

HAVE FAITH IN GOD

Go, tell Him all. The sigh thy bosom heaves
Is heard in heaven. Strength and grace He gives,
Who gave Himself for thee. Our Jesus lives.

HAVE FAITH IN GOD!

BOOKS



Martyn Lloyd-Jones Preacher by John Peters; published Paternoster Press; price £2.95.

John Peters indicates in his book that he was reared in assembly circles. His comments on those he calls "The Brethren" show some appreciation of the autonomy of local companies gathering in the New Testament way. However, as he writes of Martyn Lloyd-Jones as one who "had a decisive influence on many individuals and on evangelism as a whole", it is evident that that influence extended to the author.

It is interesting for one like the present reviewer whose convictions restrict his movements to God's assemblies to note from this book a Lloyd-Jones constantly stressing the authority of Scripture and the untenable position of evangelicals in systems like the Church of England or in movements like the Billy Graham Crusades. In a day when the time devoted to preaching and teaching can be as little as fifteen minutes of an hour-long service in some assemblies, it is worth pondering how many came to hear sermons over an hour long from Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones—sermons, the author notes, with "no frills ... no entertainment, no gimmicks, no topical illustrations", sermons which avoided placing his hearers under undue (and artificial) psychological or emotional pressure.

The author writes approvingly of Lloyd-Jones' doctrinal position both with respect to his Calvinistic stance and his view of church unity. The main impression is however of a man who saw "the work of preaching is the highest and the greatest and the most glorious calling to which anyone can ever be called". We might differ with the author's subject on various points but constantly can commend an emphasis upon Scripture.

Perhaps those familiar with Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones' writings will buy this book. Those not conversant with them may not. He stands out as a leader within a Christian community far removed ecclesiastically from our circles but

yet with many features from which we can learn. Perhaps for that reason it may be that this little book will interest some readers within the assemblies.

TW

Maranatha by Daniel C. Bultema; published Kregel Publications.

This "study of unfulfilled prophecy" is a translation from Dutch first published in 1917. The author was a pastor to Dutch immigrants in the Midwest states in USA. His prophetic studies emphasised the distinction of the Church from Israel and so of our Lord's glories as Head of the Body from those as King of Israel. Opposition to those views led to him leaving the Christian Reformed Churches.

Despite being a translation, the book reads of prophecy well and deals thoroughly with the importance and its influence on daily living. He outlines his Scripture-based method of study and the major events to which the reader must relate interpretation, events such as the first coming of Christ, the Rapture, the Appearing, the Millennium, the Great White Throne and the Eternal State.

Conscious of opposition from those who teach a general resurrection of saved and unsaved together, Bultema deals thoroughly with those Scriptures which teach the out-resurrection of the saints, the first resurrection, even to commenting on each of the main proof texts in turn.

Kregel Publications have to be commended on re-publishing this very helpful book in paperback at this time. It will be of use to many and may lead those flirting with amillennialism to recognise the untenable stance of such erroneous teaching.

TW

Misunderstood Texts (9)

by John J. Stubbs, Mayfield

“Settle it ... not to meditate”

It may be felt by some readers that the words of the Lord Jesus in Luke 21:14-15 are so obvious in their meaning and connection that to consider them in these studies as coming under the heading of “misunderstood texts” seems perhaps surprising. Yet still today these words are sometimes quoted but wrongly applied.

The words then of the Lord to His disciples are: “Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to gainsay nor resist”. Now does this precept of the Lord to His own forbid all need for preparation on the part of those who serve in preaching or teaching the Word? Strangely enough His words have been quoted with this in view as if the servant must neglect any anxious thought in preparation for a message and leave all to the Lord who will give the needed inspiration and help when the time for the delivery of the message comes. Thus are cited this and sometimes the parallel passage in Matt 10:19: “Take no thought what ye shall speak for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak”. Are these words of the Lord then to be applied in such a way? Indeed more importantly, can we apply them to Christians today anyway? These are not needless questions for we must ever be alert to the context and meaning of a verse and to whom spoken and in what setting. This is our plea in these papers.

Let us then proceed to answer the above questions. It is clear from Luke 21:14, 15 that the Lord Jesus is predicting for His disciples a time when they will be exposed to new dangers, when they will be in a situation of persecution and opposition. They will be called upon to suffer and as the march of Christian testimony advances with its unique message, they will even be brought before the great men of their times. The Lord therefore gives a wonderful promise of divine assistance to His disciples. It is a promise which when recalled in adversity for Christ's sake would give them great comfort. Strictly speaking these words in the context of Luke 21:12-19 apply only to the disciples in the early period of the Church age. We have only to look into the record of the book of Acts to see how literally these words of the Lord were fulfilled. Take, for example, the address of Stephen in Acts 7 and also the address of Paul before Felix in Acts 24 and before Agrippa in Acts 26. These show how both men were wonderfully taken up by the Lord as a testimony. They were given Spirit-enabling power and liberty to speak. Their mouths were filled with soul-convicting words. Apart from the Holy Spirit this would not have been possible, for Mark in his Gospel tells us: “For it is not ye that speak but the Holy Ghost” (13:11). Only in Luke do we have the words: “For I will give you a mouth and wisdom ...” This helps us to understand some of the great speeches in Acts uttered in an atmosphere of opposition, trial and difficulty. The

speeches of Peter in Acts 2, Stephen in Acts 7 and Paul in Acts 24 seem so spontaneous and yet so skilful that even if they had been permitted to engage in many weeks of preparation they would surely not have done better without such divine assistance. The Lord gave them through the Holy Spirit the wisdom they needed. Though the Lord Jesus would be in heaven when His disciples would be in such circumstances. Yet what a reminder to them such supernatural aid would be, not only of His past words but of His present deity in giving His Spirit to work so remarkably through them. Thus, far from the Lord's words in Luke 21:14, 15 encouraging negligence of preparation in His servants, they point to a different meaning altogether.

It is granted that in some measure down the centuries even Christian martyrs have been marvellously helped in their witness, but a careful look at the Lord's words in the context of Luke 21 would forbid us making them to be of force beyond the early days of persecution as the christian message spread, for it is immediately after these words of prophecy and promise that

we have the Lord speaking about the destruction in Jerusalem and the terrible sufferings in connection therewith, which took place in AD 70 (vv. 20-24).

Those who seek to serve the Lord today certainly need to depend upon the power of the Spirit to enable them to speak forth His word for blessing and profit, but this in no way precludes the time that needs to be spent in studying the Word in spiritual preparation for the message to be delivered. If more time was spent in this we would then begin to see a big difference in the character of preaching and teaching given. The idea of expecting God to do great things for us without playing our part is quite wrong. It should never be a case of "open thy mouth and I will fill it", to use yet another so wrongly applied verse from Ps 81:10. No, when the Lord said "I will give you a mouth and wisdom", He never intended His words to be used as justification for impromptu platform speech, but as a gracious assurance of timely assistance to His disciples in the hour of their need.

CONFIDENCE

What if I cannot tell
The cares the day may bring?
I know that I shall dwell
Beneath Thy sheltering wing.
And there the load is light,
And there the dark is bright,
And weakness turns to might,
And so I trust and sing.

The LORD'S WORK and WORKERS

All items for "intelligence" columns of this magazine should be addressed direct to Editor, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and posted in time to arrive on or before 4th of month previous to issue.
Intimation of commencement of new assemblies should always carry commendation of nearest local assembly.

N. Ireland FORTHCOMING

OCTOBER 3

Armagh: 8.00 p.m. A Hull (Nova Scotia)
Enniskillen: 8.00 p.m. Ministry.

OCTOBER 7

Ballinamallard: 2.00 p.m. Annual Conference

*OCTOBER 10-16

***Lurgan:** Annual Conference and Bible Readings.

OCTOBER 17

Armagh: 8.00 p.m. J.E. Fairfield and J Hawthorne.

OCTOBER 24

Armagh: 8.00 p.m. N. Turkington and S. Ferguson.

Enniskillen: Half yearly Conference in Gospel Hall. Ministry of the Word 3.00 p.m. - 5 p.m. Missionary Reports 6.00 p.m. - 8.00 p.m.

OCTOBER 31

Armagh: 8.00 p.m. N. Stewart (Zambia) and D. Gilliland.

NOVEMBER 7

Armagh: 8.00 p.m. H. Wilson and E. Stewart.

** (Inserted incorrectly in 'Forthcoming' in the September issue.)

ORMEAU ROAD GOSPEL HALL

Due to the deteriorating conditions around the Ormeau Road Gospel Hall in recent years, when the building has been bombed, petrol bombed and vandalised, resulting in a falling off in attendance due to fear, the saints have been deeply concerned and exercised before the Lord as to His will for the future of the Assembly. We believe that God has opened up the way for us to re-locate in

the Stranmillis area of Belfast, in providing us with a suitable hall where we can have a more effective Gospel witness both to young and old. The saints are united in this move, and in the Will of the Lord we will commence our meetings on Lord's Day 13th September, 1987 in our new building. From that date the Assembly will be known as LAGANVALE GOSPEL HALL ASSEMBLY, 21 Lockview Road, Stranmillis, Belfast, BT9 5FH. We covet the prayers of the Lord's dear people that we may be much used of God as we seek to serve Him in this new area.

England & Wales FORTHCOMING

OCTOBER 3

West Mersea: Assembly Hall, East Road at 4.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. A. Wiseman.

Oldham: Annual Conference in Werneth Gospel Hall, Manchester Street at 3.15 p.m. J. Mitchell, D. Roberts.

Ludlow: Cleevview Gospel Hall at 7.30 p.m. H. Cooper.

Coventry: Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street at 3.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. A. Leckie, E. Hughes. Mr Leckie continues 5th-7th at 7.30 p.m.

Kingsteignton: Gospel Hall, Exeter Road at 7.00 p.m. H. Bell.

Preston: Brookhouse Evangelical Chapel, 179 Eldon Street, Aston at 7.00 p.m. R. Hazell.

Nottingham: Gospel Hall, Victoria Road, Netherfield at 7.15 p.m. A. C. Gooding.

OCTOBER 10

Wembley: Uxendon Hall, Elmstead Avenue at 7.00 p.m. J. Riddle.

Coltishall, Norfolk: Bethesda Gospel Hall, Annual Conference at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. J. Harrison, H. Stewart.

Derby: Curzon Street at 7.15 p.m. J. Burns.

Bermondsey: The Gospel Hall, 97 St. James's Road London at 7.00 p.m. C. Roberts.

Northampton: The Gospel hall, Osborne Road, Kingsthorpe at 7.30 p.m. October 10th-15th. A. Leckie.

Ely: Gospel Hall, Ship Lane at 7.30 p.m. A. Cundick.

Brierfield: Annual Conference to be held in St. Luke's Church Hall, Burnley Road at 2.45 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. J. Hunter, J. Warne.

OCTOBER 17

Cheltenham: Bethany Hall, Newton Road, Hesters Way, Annual Conference at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. J. Flannigan, J. Riddle.

Redditch: Foxlydiate Crescent Gospel Hall, Batchley Estate at 7.00 p.m. K. Jennings.

Eastbourne: Marine Hall, Seaside at 7.00 p.m. M. Hall.

Leicester: York Street Gospel Hall, off Granby Street at 7.30 p.m. J. Morley.

Luton: Onslow Road Gospel Hall, at 6.30 p.m. R. Dawes.

Mitcham Junction: Gospel Hall, Percy Road at 7.00 p.m. E. Parmenter.

OCTOBER 16-18

Warrington: Hope Hall, Hawthorne Street off Longshaw Street, Friday at 7.30 p.m. Bible Reading Saturday and Sunday at 7.00 p.m. J. Patterson.

OCTOBER 24

Northampton: The Gospel Hall, Spencer Bridge Road, Ministry Conference at 3.15 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Coventry: Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street, at 7.30 p.m. D. West.

Brierfield: Hebron Hall, Walter Street at 7.00 p.m. R. Maffey.

Weymouth: Bethany Hall at 7.30 p.m. R. Wood.

OCTOBER 31

Coventry: Gospel Hall, Upper Hill Street, at 7.30 p.m. W. Stubbins.

Bexleyheath, Kent: Bethany Hall, North Street at 7.00 p.m. D. C. Hinton.

Leicester: York Street Gospel Hall, off Granby Street at 7.30 p.m. T. Ledger. Mr Ledger continues Monday and Tuesday at 7.30 p.m.

Derby: The Meeting Room, Curzon Street at 7.15 p.m. C. Stewart.

Sawbridgeworth: Hillside Chapel at 3.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. J. B. D. Page.

OCTOBER 31-NOVEMBER 2

Northampton: Osborne Road Gospel Hall, Missionary Weekend, Saturday 7 p.m. R. Wood, Angola; M. Baker, Eastern Europe.

NOVEMBER 7

Ludlow: Cleeview Gospel Hall at 7.30 p.m. P. Harding.

Nottingham: Gospel Hall, Victoria Road, Netherfield at 7.15 p.m. P. Kaye.

Kingsteignton: Gospel Hall, Exeter Road at 7.00 p.m. H. Bell.

Brierfield: Hebron Hall, Watler Street at 7.00 p.m. H. Barnes.

Westcliff-on-Sea: Gospel Hall, Carlton Avenue at 7.30 p.m. A. Leckie.

Ealing: Annual Conference, Grove Hall, The Grove, at 3.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. M. Browne, A. H. Linton.

Preston: Brookhouse Evangelical Chapel, 179 Eldon Street, Ashton at 7.00 p.m. R. Parnaby.

NOVEMBER 14-15

Northampton: The Gospel Hall, Osborne Road, Kingsthorpe at 7.30 p.m. R. Maffey.

Warrington: Hope Hall, Hawthorne Street off Longshaw Street at 7.00 p.m. I. Grant.

NOVEMBER 14

Bermondsey: The Gospel Hall, 97 St James's Road, London, at 7.00 p.m. K. Gibson

Darlaston: Annual Conference in Rough Way Gospel Hall, Hall Street East at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. D. West, C. Lacey. Mr Lacey continues Monday to Wednesday at 7.45 p.m.

Ely: Gospel Hall, Ship Lane at 7.30 p.m. E. Parmenter.

Wembley: Uxendon Hall, Elmstead Avenue at 7.00 p.m. T. Proffitt.

Cheshunt: Mill Lane Chapel, High Street at 7.00 p.m. J. Scarsbrook.

Scotland FORTHCOMING

OCTOBER 3

Kilmarnock: Elim Hall, Cuthbert Place at 3.00 p.m. J. Hunter, J. Gamble, S. Jennings. Mr. Jennings continues in ministry Mon-Thur. at 7.45 p.m.

Livingston: Deans Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. R. Marshall, I. Steele.

Inverness: Culloden Assembly Conference in Millburn Academy, Diriebught Road at 3.00 p.m. T. Wilson, J. Flanigan, P. Prior.

Beith: Bethany Hall, Kirk Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Grant.

Lesmahagow: Hope Hall, 97 Abbeygreen at 3.30 p.m. A. Naismith, J. Buchanan.

Gourock: Bethany Hall, Drumshantie Road at 3.30 p.m. Annual Conference, D. Clarkson, A. Legge, S. MacKenzie. Mr. McKenzie continues for three weeks Gospel Sunday to Thursday at 8.00 p.m.

Sandyhills: Gospel Hall at 3.30 p.m. F. Beavers, F.E. Stallan, J. Rodgers.

Cumbernauld: Mossknowe Gospel Hall, Kildrum Ring Road at 3.30 p.m. J. Burnett, R. Hill, G. Jackson.

Edinburgh: Gorgie Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. Bible Reading, Gal. ch.1.

Dunfermline: Gospel Hall, Hospital Hill at 7.00 p.m. R. Gamble, J. Hay. Mr Hay continues in the Gospel from 4th-29th Oct.

Hamilton: Low Waters Gospel Hall, Hall Street at 6.30 p.m. J. Cameron.

OCTOBER 9

Plains: Elim Gospel Hall at 7.30 p.m. Bible Reading D. West.

OCTOBER 10

Plains: Annual Conference in Public Hall at 3.00 p.m. D. West, A. Foster, I. Spiers, J. McColl.

East Kilbride: Threshold Assembly Hall at 7.00 p.m. A. Wilson, A. Legge.

Wishaw: Ebenezer Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Anderson, J. Dickson.

Larkhall: Albion Hall, Montgomery Street at 6.30 p.m. W. Banks, W. Park.

Armada: Gospel Hall, South Street at 6.30 p.m. R. McPheat, W. Barr.

Bannockburn: Annual Conference at 3.00 p.m. in Community Centre near The Cross. Ministering brethren expected.

Newmilns: Gospel Hall, Drygate Street at 7.00 p.m. W. McKellar, N. Hamilton.

Saltcoats: Ailsa Road at 7.00 p.m. T. Wilson, J. Harrison.

Ashgill: Bethany Hall at 6.30 p.m. R. Miller, J. Gillespie.

Bishopton: Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. Bible Reading J. McDonald.

Bannockburn: Annual Conference at 3.00 p.m. in Community Centre near the Cross. Ministering brethren expected.

OCTOBER 11

Plains: Elim Gospel Hall at 3 p.m. D. West, J. McColl. Tea afterwards in Hall. Gospel at 8.00 p.m. J. McColl.

OCTOBER 17

Dundee: Meadowside Gospel Hall, 2 Euclid Crescent at 7.00 p.m. J. Sinclair.

Port Glasgow: Annual Conference in Hebron Hall, 42 Princes Street at 3.30 p.m. A.W. Foster, J. Buchanan, F. Beevers.

Dalry: Townend Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. W. Cochrane, N. Macdonald.

Motherwell: Shields Road Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. T. Glidden, J. Harrison.

Whitburn: West End Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Burnett, J. Paton.

Larkhall: Harleeshill Gospel Hall, Howard Street at 6.30 p.m. C. Ferguson, J. Gamble

Kilmarnock: Elim Hall, Cuttibert Place at 6.45 p.m. W. Banks.

Innerleven: Missionary Conference, Gospel Hall at 3.00 p.m. A. Shedden, W. Rew, D. Walker.

Mayfield: Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. McColl.

OCTOBER 16-17-18

Dunfermline: Gospel Hall, Hospital Hill, Bible Study weekend for young Christians at Carberry Towers, Musselburgh. Subject for study Colossians. Speaker J.R. Baker. For further information and reservations contact C. Hutchison, Tel: 0383 738593 or J. Gamble Tel: 0698 424614.

OCTOBER 18

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road) at 8.30 p.m. S. Arbuthnot.

OCTOBER 24

Chapelhall: Homeworkers Conference at 6.00 p.m. D. McMaster, S. Matthews, I. Ross.

Hamilton: High Parks Gospel Hall, Silvertonhill Avenue at 6.45 p.m. A. Scott, J. Anderson.

Saltcoats: Ailsa Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Campbell (Larkhall) J. Patterson.

Kirkconnel: Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. J.R. Baker, H. Cooper.

OCTOBER 25

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road) at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

OCTOBER 31

Wishaw: Ebenezer Gospel Hall, Annual Conference at 3.30 p.m. S. Foster, A.M.S. Gooding, M. Radcliffe. Mr. Gooding continues in ministry until the 5th Nov. at 7.30 p.m.

Glasgow: Harley Street at 7.00 p.m. P. Coulson, J. Sinclair.

NOVEMBER 1

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road) at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

NOVEMBER 7

Edinburgh: Gorgie Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. Bible Reading Gal. ch.2.

Beith: Bethany Hall, Kirk Road at 7.00 p.m. T. Wilson.

Hamilton: Low Waters Gospel Hall, Hall Street, Annual Conference at 3.30 p.m. R. Hill, I. Steele, J. Paton.

Dunfermline: Annual Conference, Hospital Hill Gospel Hall, in High School, St. Leonard's Place at 3.00 p.m. J. Gamble, A.M.S. Gooding, M. Ratcliffe. Mr. Gooding continues in ministry Mon-Tues. at 7.30 p.m.

Bridge of Weir: Annual Conference, Hope Hall at 3.30 p.m. W. Barr, I. Grant, J. Rodgers. Mr Rodgers continues in ministry until Wed. 11th Nov. at 8. p.m.

Kilmarnock: Elim Hall, Cuthbert Place at 6.45 p.m. J. Buchanan, R. McPheat.

Coatbridge: Hebron Hall, Church Street at 6.30 p.m. A. McGregor, J. Aitken.

Livingston: Gospel Hall, Deans at 6.30 p.m. J.R. Baker, B. Stapley.

NOVEMBER 8

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road) at 8.30 p.m. S. Arbuthnot.

NOVEMBER 14

Cumbernauld: Mossknowe Gospel Hall, Kildrum Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Grant, C. Hutchison.

Wishaw: Ebenezer Gospel Hall, at 6.30 p.m. W. Craig, J. Burnett.

Larkhall: Albion Hall, Montgomery Street at 6.30 p.m. N. Hamilton, J. Sinclair.

Baillieston: Gospel Hall, 18 Glasgow Road, Annual Conference at 3.30 p.m. W.K. Morrison, M. Ratcliffe, N. Hood.

Armadale: Gospel Hall, South Street at 6.30 p.m. W. Todd, G. Dunbar.

Newmilns: Gospel Hall, Drygate Street at 7.00 p.m. J. Harrison A. Prentice.

Ashgill: Bethany Hall at 6.30 p.m. A. Wilson, F. Reid.

Bishopton: Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. J. Rodgers, K. Stapley.

Prestwick: Glenburn, Bethany Hall, Annual Conference in Prestwick Academy, Newdykes Road, at 3.00 p.m. W. Hastings, J. Flanigan, A. McMaster, G. Forbes.

NOVEMBER 15

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road) at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

N. Ireland REPORTS

CO. ANTRIM

Ballycastle: Lammas Fair — Annual Open air meetings for two days—two meetings per day. Lovely weather and many visitors. The gospel was faithfully preached and thousands of tracts were distributed.

Ballynure: D. Kane and A. Graham continue in tent meetings. Good numbers attending and blessing in salvation.

Broughshane: A. Aiken and A. McClean have had an encouraging start in the gospel.

Ahoghill: The assembly have commenced their winter season children's work with a special week by A. Carew.

CO. ARMAGH

Derryhubbert: W.J. Nesbitt and son Andrew continue into the twelfth week of gospel meetings. A number have professed faith in Christ.

Nr Keady: J. Thompson and J. McCann (Kilmore) continue in the gospel tent in this needy part. A number of strangers have attended.

CO. MONAGHAN

Clones: Annual Conference — Was large and ministry was given by W.J. Nesbitt, T. McNeill, S. Ferguson, T. Flannigan.

CO. DOWN

Ballywalter: N. Mellish has seen a good interest with blessing in salvation.

Bryansford: S. Ferguson and N. Turkington continue in tent. The meetings have been small but some locals attending.

Kilkeel: S. McBride and R. Shannon finding it hard to get local people interested in gospel meetings in tent.

Killyleagh: E. Wishart and A. Rodgers commenced in the Gospel Hall on 6th September. Prayer valued.

Moneyreagh: R. Jordan and W. Armstrong concluded five weeks in portable hall. A difficult area, but a number of locals attended and heard the plain message of the gospel.

Shanaghan: J.G. Hutchinson and R. Eadie expected, God willing, for gospel meetings early November. Prayer valued.

Waringstown: R. Pickering and H. Andrews concluded the tent meetings. Good numbers attended and some professed faith in Christ.

CO. TYRONE

Drumquin: J. Hawthorne and T. McNeill are conducting gospel meetings in a store, and being encouraged with good local interest.

CO. FERMANAGH

Churchill: R. Jordan and W. Armstrong expected for meetings in portable hall at end of September in this sparsely populated area. Prayer requested.

CO. LONDONDERRY AND CO. DONEGAL

Aughrim: David Hull intends commencing gospel meetings on 4th October.

Ballyronan: On 30th August J. Martin and W. Jennings commenced meetings in a farm building.

Limavady: J. Brown and J. Lennox commenced meetings in the Gospel Hall on 30th Aug.

Muff: G. Stewart and S. Patterson commenced in their mobile hall on 24th August. While their prime aim in going to the district is to preach the gospel, they are also seeking to help the believers whom they saw saved a few years ago.

BELFAST AND DISTRICT

Parkgate: R. Eadie and J. Kells commenced gospel meetings mid September. Prayer valued for this area.

Whitehouse/Rathcoole: Meetings continue, tent well filled every night and blessing has been seen in salvation. The preachers are A. McShane and A. Hull.

Prayer requested for gospel effort in large tent conducted by J.G. Hutchinson and J. Allen in ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA from Mid September.

England & Wales REPORTS

NORTH WEST ENGLAND AND NORTH WALES

The Oaklands sheltered accommodation and home for elderly believers in Bromborough on the Wirral recently held their first "open day" when over 250 visited the complex. The home serves the saints of south Merseyside and district, and is a joy

to visit with the residents being full of praise for the care and fellowship. A number are able to attend assembly meetings more often now, knowing that their loved one is being looked after. The home is now full but the take-up of sheltered flats is slow with only a third sold or rented so far.

There have been quite a number of baptisms in assemblies in the district. Young people at Ramillees Road (Liverpool), Bromborough, Great Sankey (Warrington) and Wrexham (North Wales) obeyed the Lord, and a number were witnessed by large numbers of outsiders. On the Ford Estate in Birkenhead the baptism of a young sister and a brother in his late forties saw a large gathering including friends and relatives of the older brother who had never been to the assembly before, two being "Jehovah's Witnesses". All listened well to the gospel and an explanation of baptism.

A brother on the Wirral recently moved house and with a concern for his new neighbours organised tent meetings which took place in his back garden. D. Thompson of Bromborough took the meetings and a number of neighbours came in and new contacts were made. One neighbour who did not attend the tent meetings nevertheless enquired about the meaning of the word redemption which appeared on the tent literature.

In a series of children's meetings recently held in Irby, Wirral, a mother came along with her child one day and asked about a story the children had been told about Moses. The mother couldn't understand the story as related by the child at home and asked if Moses was a garden! Clearly we can no longer assume even the simplest kind of Bible knowledge.

SOUTH-EAST MIDLANDS

Bicester: The assembly has been encouraged by two separate weeks of challenging and helpful ministry by J. Hunter and R. Gamble. In addition professions have been made by Sunday School girls, one following Gospel Meetings at Aston Clinton held by R. Eadie and R. Smith.

WEST MIDLANDS

Birmingham Northfield: There was a good response by local children when the assembly at Quarry Lane sent out invitations for a series of children's meetings during the school holidays. A week of meetings saw numbers grow night by night and there was a good number of parents present too.

Broadwas on Teme: This small country village assembly has also been having special children's meetings four mornings a week over a period of a fortnight. Response has been limited, but children have come from neighbouring villages including Whitbourne and Bredenbury. The saints would like to see children from the village of Broadwas itself coming to the hall, but there are very few homes which have children living there. The work has however been worthwhile, and those who have contributed have been encouraged by the interest shown by the children.

KENT AND EAST SUSSEX

Sid Mountstevens writes:

Wainscott, Kent: The tent was erected here on a recreation ground and a good interest was maintained throughout. The Lord sent in good numbers and some have continued at the Sunday School at Wainscott Gospel Hall.

It is always a joy to link up contacts with an assembly of His people who adhere to the Word in the matter of gathering. A young man briefly came to speak to me on the field. He had got himself in a real mess and acknowledged that he definitely needed a Saviour and that he could in no way lift himself up from the pit he had dugged for himself. He took literature with much joy and one prays he will be saved. He came to the field and talked for almost two hours at Higham after I had written to him. Here is a young man in need of your prayers.

19 adults heard the Word on the Lord's Day evening.

Higham, Kent: We probably had more numbers than in the four previous years, this despite heavy storms when parents brought their children a good distance to the tent. Over the years good relationships have been built up but we long for souls to be converted to the Lord. Good contact was made here also among adults.

We commit the tent season and its work into the hands of the One who is over all. May He richly bless His own Word.

Rejoice with us in His marvellous protection. One evening three car loads of drunken men used the recreation ground as a racing track — AND TOOK NO NOTICE OF THE TENT AND CARAVAN. One MUST be aware of two things in such a situation: (a) the interest of Satan and his hosts in the activities; (b) the over-riding protecting hand of an Almighty God who looks over His own in love.

"Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world."

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Bethany, Cheltenham: Literature distribution continues on the local housing estate. Invitations are backed up with offers of transport, so people come to hear the gospel. A Catholic lady requested a Bible, which has been given to her.

Emmaus, Cheltenham: Opportunities have been taken to reach drug addicts and alcoholics, some having professed salvation. Prison visits are made regularly, and a Strong's concordance there has created an interest in the Scriptures.

Ebenezer, Gloucester: The hall is in the City centre, but Sunday school children are transporting in several miles from the outskirts. An outreach to the suburb of Churchdown has resulted in a teenage girl trusting the Saviour.

Nelson St., Gloucester: This is a very small assembly with a large heart for needy people. Every month they visit three eventide homes, where staff as well as residents listen to the message, and there is evidence of God's blessing. They pioneered the sponsorship of a Bible poster on the railway station, and have now been joined in this by three larger assemblies in the city.

Abbeydale, Gloucester: The assembly on this large housing estate would value prayer as they do not have their own premises yet. They meet in a school on Lord's days, and in homes during the week. Many young people are being reached.

Hillview, Gloucester: To accommodate everybody attending meetings on Lord's day, the assembly have bought the property next to the hall. Two of their increase in attendance came from a Bible exhibition by Counties Evangelistic Work. During its display in Cheltenham and Gloucester, for a week in each place, 2,500 people saw the exhibits.

AVON

Rockhampton: During the past year tracts have been distributed to all 4,000 homes in the town of Thornbury, and the task is beginning again. As with previous different outreaches in the past, apathy seems to be the only response, but the Lord calls His servants to be faithful, and leave the results to Him. The Postal Sunday School sent its largest number of youngsters yet, 8, to the camp near Chepstow, which it joins with Peterborough P.S.S. Three of these made professions of salvation, and prayer is essential for their continuance.

Addresses PERSONALIA

Will correspondents please note that all information for the "Reports" section should be sent to the brethren who co-ordinate area reports, and not to the publishers. The names and addresses of the co-ordinating brethren are listed in the January 1987 issue of the *Believers' Magazine*.

All correspondence for Bethany Hall, Kirk Road, Beith, should now be addressed to Mr T. Summerhill, 74 Balmoral Road, Elderslie, Strathclyde, PA5 9RA.

Mr Davidson, Rankinston, now at 19 Little Mill Place, Rankinston, KA6 7HB.

All correspondence for the Cumnock Assembly should be addressed to Mr T. Stannage, 4 The Square, Cumnock, Ayrshire. Correspondent J. Burns (Tel: Cumnock 23065).

All correspondence to Shieldhill Assembly should be addressed to Mr T. Stannage, 24 Elim Drive, Shieldhill, Falkirk, FK1 2EX. Tel: 0324-26044.

Mr C. D. Pollard of Forfar should now be addressed at 12 Townhead Drive, Inverurie, AB5 9RH.

With CHRIST

Mrs JANET DALZIEL, on 22nd April aged 81 years. Saved as a girl in Bo'ness she was baptised after she was married in Muirkirk and received into fellowship in Glenbuck. Later moving to Muirkirk for a number of years, the last 17 years in Deans, Livingston. Many of the Lord's people received hospitality from her. She will be remembered for her faithfulness at all the assembly gatherings. Prayer would be valued for her husband and daughter and family.

Mrs MARION LITTLE, on 27th July aged 88. Our sister was in fellowship in Shields Road Assembly Motherwell for 26 years although was unable to attend the gatherings of the saints for the past 12 years due to ill health. She was a loveable and sincere sister and will be missed by the Assembly.

Mr GWILYM WILLIAMS, for over 60 years a faithful brother in fellowship at Thornhill Gospel Hall, Caerphilly Mountin, South Wales. A man who walked with God, then God took him home. Greatly missed by all who knew and loved him.

Mr ROBERT MCKEE, a happy Christian gentleman aged 81, called home on 3rd June, had a life-long dedicated association with Adam Street Assembly, Belfast. Saved at 20 and received into fellowship he was soon active in Sunday School teaching, Gospel preaching in surrounding villages and taking a deep prayerful interest in missionary work. A large attendance at the funeral was a fitting tribute to this highly esteemed elder, Sunday School superintendent, "faithful beloved brother" and true friend.

Mrs CISSIE HETHERTON, on 2nd July, aged 85. Saved 73 years ago and received into fellowship in Bridge Street Gospel Hall, Dumbarton, shortly afterwards. Moved to Paisley in 1933 and was in fellowship in Shuttle Street Hall. Their home was always open to the Lord's people. Unable to attend the assembly for several years owing to severe illness. Interested in the Lord's people and His work to the end. Remember her dear husband and family in prayer.

Miss DORIS JOHNSTON, on 17th July after a short illness. Our sister was a lifelong member of the fellowship at Hebron Hall, Carlisle, after being saved over 50 years ago while in her teens. Remembered for her faithfulness in attending the assembly gatherings, and willingness to help in all the activities of the fellowship. A faithful sister who loved the Lord.

Mrs I. McCULLOCH, on 18th July. Saved in early life and associated with the saints in the Clydebank area; for the past 49 years in fellowship in Bute Hall, Prestwick. Our sister took a keen interest in the assembly activities in general and in the work among the women in particular. She was faithful in her attendance at the gatherings of the Lord's people and given to hospitality. Much missed by the saints in Bute Hall.

Mrs J. KIRKWOOD, on 30th June. Saved in early life in the Kilwinning area and was in fellowship in Renfrew with her husband until his retirement in 1965 when they came to reside in Prestwick. Since then, with the exception of a short interval when she returned to Renfrew, she has been in happy fellowship in Bute Hall. Our sister was most regular in her attendance at the assembly gatherings and is much missed.

Mr GEORGE HUNTER, suddenly on 5th August, aged 57. saved in 1955 when S. Thompson had fruitful meetings in Banbridge. Latterly in the assembly at Castlereagh, Belfast, he was highly esteemed amongst his brethren and had a good testimony in the world. His funeral was very large when many R.C.'s and others heard a plain gospel message. His wife and family are all saved and would value prayer.

Mrs SARAH DYATT, on 27th July. Saved in 1952 and after baptism received into Balintoy Assembly where she was until her home-call. She constantly attended her husband, Charles, who went blind after an illness, reading the Scriptures to him and driving him to meetings by car. Her husband will value the prayers of the Lord's people as he seeks to re-adjust his life. He is in fellowship in Ballintoy Assembly.

Mr THOMAS HENRY, on 6th August aged 69. Saved in 1926 under the preaching of W. McCracken and T. McKelvey. He was a foundation member of the Ballyshiel Assembly and for 50 years engaged in Sunday school work and assembly activities. A true shepherd, the large funeral evidenced the high esteem in which he was held. Predeceased a few years by his wife, he leaves two sons and a daughter, all in fellowship in Ballyshiel Assembly. S. McBride and J. Thompson shared the funeral service. W. Nesbitt and J. Lennox preached the Word at the grave.

Mr HERBERT BEU MITCHELL, suddenly on 14th May aged 68. A giant in faith. Saved 1934 at Killycurragh, Northern Ireland. Came to England 1937. In fellowship at Bracknell then in N.C.C. during the war. After marriage lived in Leominster and in business moved to

Wiltshire. At Amesbury Assembly 16 years until its closure. After retirement to Swindon in 1983 the home-call of his second youngest son was a great grief to the family. Sadly missed by his wife and six children of whom four are in assembly fellowship.

Mrs AGNES FENTON, on 8th August in her 91st year. She was saved through the truth of John 3:16 after a long time of conviction when she was in her early twenties. For a number of years she and her husband were in the Clough Assembly and for the past 30 years in happy fellowship in the Harryville Assembly in Ballymena. A quiet godly woman who had a heart for the assembly, the gospel and the family, one of whom is not yet saved. Prayer valued.

Mrs ELIZABETH PERRIE, suddenly on 3rd April. Saved in her early teens our sister came into fellowship in 1931 and continued steadfastly until her home-call. The best part of her years were spent with the saints in Hebron Hall, Larkhall, and latterly at Harelees-hill Assembly where she was an inspiration to many by her faithfulness at the gatherings of the Lord's people. Despite indifferent health our sister delighted to be found at the gatherings. A faithful sister whose passing was a great loss to the assembly.

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EDITORIAL **Searchlight**

Sadly it isn't possible to claim that in every assembly the whole counsel of God is taught. Here and there an Amaziah says to Amos "Go, flee away into the land of Judah ... and prophesy there, ... But prophesy not again any more at Bethel, for it is the king's chapel and it is the king's court" (Amos 7:12,13). But until comparatively recently, one could have asserted that a true gospel was preached wherever there were saints gathered to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thankfully on the whole a Christ-centred gospel is presented week by week, but there are influences abroad that would pervert the gospel we preach.

The gospel must still address the basic problem of the human race, the problem of sin. Anything less than a bold assertion that "the scripture hath concluded all under sin" (Gal 3:22) is not enough. After all, until a sinner accepts that conclusion salvation is impossible. Our God is the God who justifies the ungodly, says Paul in Rom 4:5. No right relationship with God can be established until the meaning of this shines as light into the soul. Dare the preacher address sinners as if they were already on christian ground?

The gospel must present Christ, but not just the Christ of Bethlehem and Bethsaida and Bethany. The preacher must have experienced the blessing of Calvary and the joy that Christ is risen and glorified. He

must recognise that the shadow of the cross should be cast across every path and, as the preacher, he must confront his listeners as the apostles did theirs and as countless later heralds have done through the centuries with the import of Calvary.

Of course the preacher will want to show the relevance of Christ to the circumstances of his audience. He may identify the perplexing problems of the age and indicate that Christ relieved many of their burdens in the days of His public ministry. But the preacher mustn't stop there! He must go deeper to show the root from which alcohol-dependence, broken marriages and all other social evils spring and leave the listener in no doubt but that Christ must first deal with the sin-question *before* the multifarious effects of sin can be alleviated. With compassion and patience, he must seek God's face that darkened minds may grasp his lesson.

The Pauline denouncement of "another gospel" so recently embraced by the Galatians was much more than a caution. A gospel that left the impression that something more than, or apart from, Christ and His redemption was needed by the seeking soul was not the same, nor from the same source, as the gospel of God. As a result Paul's rebuke is stern. Our rebuking of any who preach another gospel must be equally severe.

T.W.

Zechariah (2)

R. Deans, Blantyre

Zech 1:1 commences with the eighth month in the second year of Darius and v.7 brings us to the twenty fourth day of the eleventh month. We have, therefore, about three months between vv.1 and 7 and one wonders whether the prophet spent this time alone with the Lord in preparation for the communications he is about to receive. Compare the prophet Elijah (Jas 5:17) who prayed earnestly that it might not rain on the earth (possibly for approximately 6 months) before appearing before Ahab in 1 Kings 17.

The word of the Lord of hosts through Zechariah to the people was "turn unto me" (1:3), but to their fathers by the former prophets the message was "turn now from your evil ways and from your evil doings" (1:4). The corrective period of the Babylonish captivity had intervened and many of the captivity were now obviously ready to "turn to the Lord of hosts" who was yearning after them and ready to "turn unto them".

What occupies the prophet for almost the first six chapters of the prophecy is a series of eight visions which will be considered under their headings:

First vision 1:7-17 The rider on the red horse. If we turn to Exod 15:1 we read of the horse and his rider, as also in Hag 2:22, but in Zech 1:8 we behold a man (*ish*) riding upon a red horse. The prominent one in this vision is the "man", and he stood among the

myrtle trees. For other mentions of the myrtle, see Isa 55:7 and Neh 8:15 where it is connected with the anticipation of the millennial period. Esther is referred to in Esther 2:7 as Hadassah which means myrtle. It would seem from Isa 55 and Neh 8 that a day will arrive when the myrtle will have its true place but that day is not present either in Esther 2 or Zech 1. Rather the myrtle trees of Zech 1 are seen in the bottom (i.e. shadowy place or valley) which sets before us God's people in their experience and position in Zechariah's day, but who could anticipate the more glorious days which Isaiah and Nehemiah would set before us. May we pause here and consider that our present position may at times be "down in the valley", but we can rejoice to know that we too can anticipate a far more glorious day.

Behind the man on the red horse, standing among the myrtle trees, are other horses. These other horses may well be riderless but this does not mean they are not controlled. In fact we know from 1:10 that "the Lord sent them to walk to and fro through the earth", and v.11 states that they were accountable to "the angel of the Lord". These horses probably represent the Gentile world powers.

From v.12 we note that "the angel of the Lord" intercedes for Jerusalem and there is a direct reference to the seventy years of captivity. The Lord is going to intervene (vv.16-17) and it is evident from these verses that the

prophecy had a partial fulfilment in Zechariah's day as well as pointing forward to the day of Kingdom glory.

The present writer feels that the man among the myrtle trees, or the Angel of the Lord, is the same One who appeared to Abram in Gen 18 and to Gideon in Jud 6 or Manoah and his wife in Jud 13, and is the same One who is in the midst of His people today. It is, therefore, comforting to know that He:

1. Is in control of the circumstances.
2. Is cognisant of the circumstances.
3. Is concerned about His people.
4. Has comforting words for His people.

From these verses we have a very positive response to Paul's question of Rom 11:1 — "Hath God cast away his people?"

Second vision 1:18-21 The four horns and four carpenters. The second vision seems to be related to the first in which we have seen horses whose course took them to walk to and fro in the earth—a similar way to Satan himself (Job 1:7)—and whose report was "all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest". The Lord indicates His displeasure in the way the nations were at ease having helped forward the affliction of His people (1:15), and promises not merely a restoration in the time then present, but especially a day of enlargement and kingdom glory. Up to this point no mention is made of how the evil forces will be dealt with nor how the Lord will accomplish that of which He speaks in 1:16-17. In the second vision we begin to see something of the movement of the Lord in relation to those who scattered Judah and Jerusalem.

In 1:18 the prophet sees four horns. and in v.19 he is informed what these horns represent. There is no reason to suppose that the interpretation should be any different from the horns of Dan 7 or Rev 17:12, and that there are four horns here "which have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem" (v.19) suggests the four great Gentile powers in their political and military might—Babylonian: Medo-Persian: Grecian and Roman.

Next we are introduced to four carpenters or artisans who are come to fray (terrify or trouble) the four horns. The wildness and power of the horns against the skill of craftsmen, in human terms would be a totally unequal match. Let us never forget, however, that whether dealing with the welfare of His people or the truth of God in Christ, we can be sure that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men" (1 Cor 1:25).

The thought of craftsmen suggests divine skill and their work as defined in v.21 leaves no doubt that they are divine agents in opposition to the horns. It may be these four carpenters answer to the four living creatures of Rev 6. Their work is certainly preparatory to the glory of "that day" mentioned for the first time, in this prophecy, in 2:11.

In concluding these few remarks relative to the second vision of Zechariah, we should note the words in v.21—"so that no man lifted up his head" and think of the words of Psa 110:7 "Therefore shall he lift up the head".

To be continued.

Balaam's Parables (6)

by P. Harding, Manchester

We have noted in this parable (Num 24:3-9) that Israel is viewed as a transformed people through the work of the gracious Spirit of God. In a coming day Israel shall be fragrant and fruitful, bearing testimony for God and being a source of blessing to the nations.

Today, each local assembly is viewed as a garden in the wilderness (1 Cor 3:9—"husbandry"). A garden exclusively for God where there will be fragrance and fruitfulness, the fragrance of Christlikeness and the fruit of the Spirit, for the deep satisfaction of the heart of God. For the assembly to be fragrant and fruitful the living waters of the Spirit's ministry are essential. Only the ministry of the gracious Spirit of God can make God's garden, the assembly, a place of beauty for the pleasure and glory of God. The ministry of the Word of God is not merely to impart knowledge or truth—it should do that—but is intended to produce something for God in the lives of the saints, i.e. Christlikeness. Only when the ministry is unrestrained and of the Spirit, and the assembly is marked by separation, can the assembly, as God's garden, blossom and fulfil the purpose for which it has been planted.

In verse 7 we have Israel's testimony and influence throughout the world. "He shall pour the water out of his buckets" — we understand that this expression likens Israel to a man carrying two buckets overflowing with

water thus indicating the effective witness of Israel and the rich blessing of God that will flow through them to the gentiles (Isa 4:8; 61:6). The buckets, filled to the brim, overflow on every step the man makes so that water flows everywhere. The Hebrew word for "pour" has for its primary meaning "to flow as a stream". This is clearly a figure of divine blessing (Isa 44:3; Ezek 47; Zech 14:8), which flows abundantly through the nation of Israel. The buckets are but vessels, nothing in themselves, yet when filled with water they dispense blessing to others. In a coming day Israel, having appreciated they are nothing apart from the Lord, will be a source of rich blessing to others and wherever they go they will carry the fame and glory of a greater than Solomon Who is in their midst. As Israel has been a curse among the nations, through their idolatry, so shall Israel be a blessing to the nations (Zech 8:13). The influence of Israel shall be worldwide—"His seed shall be in many waters"—"as dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass" (Mic 5:7).

The figure now changes—"His King shall be higher than Agag"—it is not Israel who is exalted but Israel's King. The supremacy of Christ is now emphasised. Agag does not refer to a particular king but is rather a title of all the Amalakite kings in general just as all the Egyptian kings were called Pharaoh. The mention of Agag is not because the Amalekite kings were the greatest of all time (although Amalek

might have been chiefest among the nations at that time), but being the first nation to attack Israel they are representative of all the enemies of Israel, of all the gentile powers. 'Agag' means "I shall over top" or "very high" but Israel's King shall be higher than the highest. Thus is emphasised the greatness, supremacy and majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ, and "His kingdom shall be exalted". In that day the promises to David (Psa 132:11: Acts 2:30) and to Mary (Luke 1:31-33) will be brought to fruition. Christ, the King of Israel, is to be higher than all the kings of this world and His kingdom shall be exalted above all other kingdoms. In the wilderness Amalek was not yet exterminated, but in the final parable that is dealt with.

"God brought him forth out of Egypt" (v.8) — we see that deliverance from Egypt in the past is linked with the future glory of Israel. The same power of God will be displayed in the end times, both in deliverance and judgment, as was manifested when Israel was brought out of Egypt—"He hath the strength of an unicorn"—"the Lord is my strength and my song, and He is become my salvation" (Exod 15:2)—"the Lord will be...the strength

of the children of Israel" (Joel 3:16). This power then, will be displayed in the destruction of all who oppose Israel—"He shall eat up the nations His enemies, and shall break their bones, and pierce them through with His arrows"(see Deut 32:42: Dan 2:34-35).

This parable closes with two statements linked with older prophecies thus re-affirming the Word of God. The first is found in Jacob's prophecy of Judah (Gen 49:9)—"He crouched, He lay down as a lion" (v.9). The attitude here is that of expectation, awaiting the moment when the lion will spring upon its prey. The time is not yet when the Lord will rise in judgment upon the nations. It is now the day of grace but the day will come when He shall "break them with a rod of iron" and "dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel"(Psa 2:9). The second is found in God's promise to Abram (Gen 12:3) and in Isaac's blessing of Jacob (Gen 27:29). Both these declare, from an enemy's mouth, how sure and unchangeable are God's promises. They will most certainly find their fulfilment in a future day.

To be continued.

The Word Of God

There are three actions of the Word.

1. When my soul is going astray it is the Word that *recovers me*.
2. When my soul is going right, the Word discovers to me what may lead me astray and so *preserves me*.
3. The Word leads my soul into communion with the Lord: it presents Him as the one all-satisfying object of the heart: it *advances me*.

Misunderstood

Texts (10)

by John J. Stubbs, Mayfield

"The Day of Small Things"

This present age of grace in which we live has often been described as "the day of small things". It is not unusual to hear something like the following: Well, it is a dark and difficult day and we cannot expect to see great things, but we will have to be content and try to be faithful because it is a day of small things. Now the days are admittedly dark and difficulties certainly abound, but what do believers really mean when they use such an expression as "the day of small things"? Perhaps they feel that trying to be faithful because in their view it is a day of small things, is the best that they can hope to achieve.

The expression "day of small things" is taken from Zech 4:10 where God asks the question, "For who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven: they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth". The first part of our text especially is often misunderstood. It is so on at least two counts. Firstly, in the context it is only a day of small things in the estimate of men and not of God, for note we read in the verse of the eyes of the Lord, which would suggest His providence and intelligence. The eyes of the Lord are upon the plummet in

the hand of Zerubbabel. Therefore the work that Zerubbabel had commenced on the house of the Lord (the temple), God will make sure is brought to completion (v.9). Then secondly the day of small things is really but the start of great and important things on earth in so far as God is concerned, for these eyes rested upon the little lump of stone or lead in the hand of Zerubbabel to which is attached the string for checking the building, and this was truly setting in motion what to God was something that would work out grander and bigger. To the dispirited and despondent remnant in Zerubbabel's day what was a seeming day of small things was really a time of great importance. As one has written, "These beginnings may seem small, but this restoration to the land will eventually result in the birth of the Messiah, with all the blessings attendant to that event."

If we are viewing conditions with our own eyes then all may appear a day of small things, but if we see things "as the eyes of Jehovah", we will appreciate that God has the desire to bring before our hearts the great things of His purposes. The remnant that returned with Zerubbabel were in danger of forgetting this. They were obviously cast down with the bigness of the task of rebuilding and with the overwhelming odds which were against them. It was to such that the question of Jehovah was directed: "For who hath despised the day of small things?" Already God had revealed for their comfort that He would deal with the mountain of difficulties and make them a plain (v.7).

It is all too possible in the midst of the weakness of assembly testimony and the great indifference to the preaching of the gospel, that we try to reassure our hearts by persuading ourselves it is a day of small things and we cannot expect things to be much better, whereas the real need is to see that however small our work may appear to be it is God's work and could lead on to greater things if He so wills it. We must not be given to talk about a day of small things unless we first understand exactly what is meant by the expression in the context of Zech 4. The practical teaching of the chapter is clear enough, and this is that the remnant under Zerubbabel were viewing things through their own eyes and not from the divine standpoint. Consequently, to them all seemed to be a day of small things, but looking at what was happening then from Zechariah's ministry, it was God who attached great importance to the event. All this should make us careful how we apply "the day of small things" to certain conditions today.

There is a sense in which the present church age, whatever difficult periods it may have, could not properly speaking be described as a day of small things. God is doing things on a large scale today. The Holy Spirit is still working in the world. God is still taking out of the nations a people for His Name (Acts 15) and the blessings too are far greater than any previous age. On the other hand we have to remember that

God often occupies Himself with what may be little in the eyes of men. How often God's purposes have commenced in a small, insignificant way. We may think, for example, of the tiny handful of disciples on the day of Pentecost. Who would ever have thought that they eventually would conquer the mighty Roman empire with the gospel? It has been estimated that there were about four million Jews in Palestine at that time. How small the 120 must have felt in comparison with them. Again we may think of Paul and Silas in Acts 16 taking the gospel for the first time to Europe. Their work in Philippi commenced so quietly and insignificantly—indeed it began with only a small company of pious Jewish women. The vast stream of Christianity in Europe which has flowed on for centuries can be traced back to the little gathering by the river side. Would anyone have imagined then that it would have increased so mightily in volume and depth like Ezekiel's river (Ezek 47). No, we must not be like the remnant of Zech 4 and despise the day of small things. We must look at the potential of any work for God. We must realise that even our little efforts with all their difficulties are connected with God's great and large purposes. If we are tempted to feel that it is a day of small things, let us remember how and in what way it was so in Zerubbabel's day and to see in the question of Zech 4:10 a tender rebuke from God to His people.

When faith is tested we learn our own weakness and God's faithfulness.

Faith tested is faith strengthened.

The Cedar Tree

by L.G. Barton, Birmingham

"The righteous...he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon" (Psa 92:12) Whilst the palm tree symbolises the thought of the righteous *flourishing*, we note that the cedar tree is related to *growth*. And what growth! It is described as a tree of grandeur, might and of lofty stature. It is also a tree which exists for many years. H.B. Tristram in his book *Natural History of the Bible* published in 1867 refers to a cedar tree in Gloucestershire not yet two hundred years old measuring twenty one feet in girth! The quality of wood grown in England is lighter and more open grain than that of the wood grown in the mountains of Lebanon, and the age of the cedars of Lebanon exceeds two thousand years. The branches of the cedar tree are large and always green. The wood is incorruptible, beautiful in appearance, solid, and the tree is fruitful bearing a small apple like that of the pine tree.

The cedar tree is much referred to in the Scriptures, there being at least fifty four references in the OT relating to the tree, its wood and its location: we can therefore select only some relevant to our thoughts and meditations of the christian's walk. Because of its durability and beauty, we find it used in the construction of Solomon's and Ezra's temples (2 Chron 2:3,16; Ezra 3:7). It was also used by Herod for the construction of the roof of his temple and can be seen in the construction of the dome of the Church of the Sepulchre at Jerusalem. It is interesting to note that in the

construction of the walls of Solomon's temple there were three rows of stone to one row of cedar wood (1 Kings 6:36; 7:12).

In the wilderness experience of the children of Israel it is a fact that the cedar of Lebanon would have been unknown and it is significant that the cedar wood was not used in the construction of the tabernacle. Bible students will know the meaning of the shittim wood used in the building of the tabernacle which speaks primarily of the blessed Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. The tabernacle construction was for a wilderness experience, and was dismantled and reconstructed as Israel journeyed or rested as the cloud tarried or was taken up (Num 9).

The temple was constructed as a permanent building with the ark of the Lord resting in the most holy place under the wings of the cherubim, the staves used for carrying in the wilderness withdrawn. Whilst it is not the intention of the writer to pursue a spiritualising of the temple, it is interesting to note that a wood was used which symbolised continual growth when as a tree, but is now symbolising a state of incorruptible rest.

Not only so, but the cut cedar gave off a sweet smell referred to in relation to God's healing of Israel from their backsliding (Hosea 14:6) and the smell of the garments of a

beloved in Song of Solomon 4:11.

Collecting together all the virtues of the cedar tree especially those which are grown in Lebanon, we see firstly its perpetual growth and this is a characteristic of the mature believer. Time and time again the apostles in their epistles urge their readers to go forward. In Heb 6:1 (Newberry margin) we are exhorted to "go on unto full growth", in Heb 13:13 to "go forth therefore unto him without the camp". In writing to the Colossians Paul prays that they "might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding...increasing in the knowledge of God (Col 1:9,10). Again Paul writing to the Philippians tells them that he is pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (3:14). Finally Peter's exhortation to believers "But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2

Pet 3:18).

We could ask ourselves, Are we growing into more mature Christians? Are we those to whom weaker saints can come and rest in our sympathetic and understanding presence, just as the birds find refuge in the large branches of the cedar tree? Can it be said of us that the beauty of Jesus is seen in us? And do we emit a fragrance of Christ toward our brethren and sisters?

God speaking through Ezekiel in ch.31 describes the Assyrian like a tree, similar to a cedar in Lebanon but this tree was exalted above all the trees of the field and all the trees which God created envied him. This Assyrian was a bit like Diotrephes of 3 John, he liked the preeminence among the brethren. Pride is one characteristic that God hates and it brings a negative reward.

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BOOKS



The Fifth Horseman of the Apocalypse by Jesse M. Hendley. Published by Kregel Publications at £9.95, 238 pages, paperback.

According to the introduction, these studies in the Book of the Revelation were first given as ministry. The book is not one that a student of the Scriptures would consider as a work of reference; it reads more like a novel. For example, a comment against the church at Ephesus reads, "In many of our churches, preachers preach, singers sing, and the deacons 'deac' (whatever that is)". Many will not agree with the author's view that the angels of the seven churches are pastors. For example, the Lord is given to say, 'Brother Pastor and church people, I have something against you.' Strangely, against the reference to the Nicolaitans at 2:6, the author states that he does not know who they were, which is a fair comment, except that having made the angels pastors, he could hardly risk suggesting that clerisy was what was hated.

Regarding the title of the book, Mr Hendley states that coming on to the stage of the world one after another will be the four horsemen of the Apocalypse, but the fifth horseman dominates the whole book (of the Revelation). The reviewer would have thought that the view of the Lord as the rider upon the white horse was restricted to the events immediately preceding and during Armageddon (Rev 19).

The book is easily read. It has many quotes and pithy comments, some of which are very good. For example, there is a quote from Dr G. Campbell Morgan, 'The older I get, when I take a text of Scripture, I have to have the whole Bible to back it up'. The use of the A.V. as the text in the book is very commendable.

God the Evangelist by David F. Wells. Published by W.B. Eerdmans and the Paternoster Press. 128 pages, paperback.

This book is a digest of the substance of the Oslo Consultation held in 1985, on the work of the Holy Spirit and evangelisation. The editor and author is David F. Wells, professor of historical and systematic theology at a theological seminary in Massachusetts, U.S.A. The digest covers papers submitted and matters discussed by the forty-six participants who represented all continents, many denominations and charismatic and non-charismatic churches. Commenting on the conference, one contributor states, 'Pentecostal and charismatic evangelicals were effectively welded into fellowship with those of an older cultural type'. Since both of these classes would seem to be poles apart, one wonders who gave up what so that they could be effectively welded together in fellowship. And from this contributor there is more to follow, he states, 'The Holy Spirit himself did much for us corporately and individually, during a half-morning of prayer together'. What the Holy Spirit is alleged to have done is not stated.

While the book may not appeal to everyday Christians (and the reviewer is one), it is in many parts a scholarly consideration of the work of the Holy Spirit. The treatment of idolatry is excellent and the conclusion reached is flawless, 'The purpose of idolatry is always the same, it is to displace God; to replace him with gods of our own liking'. The defence of preaching is stoutly stated, 'Serious preaching that has as its goal the relaying of the truth of God's Word ... is a commodity that is all too rare today'. And again, 'If in certain churches the Word of God is inadequately preached, it is no coincidence that those same churches are plagued with moral decay.'

Although much of what is submitted in the book would be at odds with the views of many believers in Assembly fellowship, the submissions are thought-provoking; in itself a good exercise to sharpen one's reasons for holding the truth in all its facets.

The Divine Choice of Servants

by John Heading, Aberystwyth

True servants are God's possession: thus He said, "My servant Moses" (Num 12:7), "my servant Isaiah" (Isa 20:3), and several times the Lord Jesus was prophetically referred to as "my servant" (Isa 40:1). Several times the title "my servants the prophets" is used, while the Lord Jesus said of His followers, "where I am, there shall also my servant be" (John 12:26). The implications of this are far reaching, but today the word "my" (as God's possession) is often neglected, when service degenerates from the the holy standards found in Scripture. The choice and equipment of the servant, the actual work of service, and the spiritual results in those who are served, are all consequences of the divine will. Thus in Acts 14:27, Paul "rehearsed all that *God had done with them*" on the first missionary journey. To realise this would keep us from the leavening influences of the flesh, from using entertainment to attract people, from engaging in service in our own strength, and from going outside the fellowship of the assembly in service as if scriptural principles do not matter.

We consider one aspect of this subject: the Lord's choice and will for His servants, using thoughts found in 2 Timothy 1.

1. The purpose of God (2 Tim 1:9). Our salvation and calling are not of works, but according to the divine purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Self has

nothing to do with this call of God. The "holy calling" separates us unto Himself; it links us to eternity and not to this present age: we are saved so that the purpose of God can be accomplished in us. The deep exercise of soul that led to conversion should be continued afterwards in the matter of service. But if conversion has no depth, being based on unspiritual methods, then it may easily be followed by a lack of incentive and interest in assembly fellowship, so necessary for the proper call to service at the appropriate time. Thus "no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" (Heb 5:4): Aaron's garments were placed upon Eleazar at the commandment of God (Num 20:26): at the end of Moses' life, God gave the charge to Joshua (Deut 31:14): "He chose David also his servant" (Psa 78:70): of Paul the Lord said, "he is a chosen vessel unto me" (Acts 9:15). It is the same today: whatever God's work for us, it is by His purpose that we are called to divine service.

2. The appointment of God (2 Tim 1:11). Paul claimed, "whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles". This appointment would appear to refer to the particular gifts that Paul had for his service. Here was nothing arbitrary or unplanned on God's part: our personal desires should dovetail with the divine appointment, not being slack, fatalistic, and without exercise. Thus all can covet earnestly the best gifts for

edification (1 Cor 12:31): those appropriately qualified can desire eldership when this is God's appointment (1 Tim 3:1).

There is no unseemly rush into service after conversion. In Paul's case, after the first zeal of testimony in Acts 9:20, he was in Arabia, and then engaged in general service for about ten years before his appointment to missionary service. Development comes by waiting upon God, being at assembly gatherings, and doing what we can. The Levites had many preparatory years before engaging in service at the age of thirty. In Paul's case, God's appointment enabled him to labour more abundantly than others, yet this was by the grace of God (1 Cor 15:10). No academic training is involved, but service is by the divine appointment that miraculously leads to service. And God has dealt to every man (Rom 12:3).

3. The gift of God (2 Tim 1:6). This appears to refer, not to a specific gift for service, but to general ability and character. When there were New Testament apostles and prophets, the order appears to have been as follows: (i) There were prophecies that indicated the mind of God regarding the ability and character that Timothy would have (1 Tim 1:18; 4:14). (ii) These were imparted by apostolic authority (2 Tim 1:6) perhaps at the beginning of the second journey (Acts 16:1-3), though we cannot be sure of this suggestion. (iii) There was the laying on of the hands of the elders (1 Tim 4:14), not to impart a gift, but to have fellowship with Timothy in the exercise of his service (no doubt the elders mentioned in Acts 14:23). Here was a recognition of the gift of God by prophet, by the

apostle, by Timothy and by the elders. There would be no service by one not equipped in that particular direction, not just anyone on the platform whether he is able to preach or not. Thus the Spirit takes a soul up in salvation — this is the new birth: the Spirit takes up in service — as growth and maturity develop. This is not a second blessing, but rather a question of what the convert allows the Spirit to do with him. The fruit of this gift is "power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim 1:7).

4. The will of God (2 Tim 1:1). Paul recognised that he was an apostle "by the will of God". This is an oft-repeated thought at the beginning of many an epistle. Certainly it is no mere formula, but a truth felt and acted upon throughout life, even in Paul's *last* epistle. And of course it applies to all, not just to the apostle! Today, perhaps in some, the sense of this divine will does not always grip the heart: but such truth avoids mechanical service, a floating service, a fleshly service, a self-pleasing service, a service grudging in the time necessary for its preparation and accomplishment. Thus Paul could write of being "an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God" (1 Cor 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1; Eph 1:1; Col 1:1; 1 Tim 1:1). Galatians 1 is full of this thought: his apostleship was by Jesus Christ (v.1): the gospel that he preached was by the revelation of Jesus Christ (v.12): he was called by divine grace to preach (vv.15-16): the saints glorified God (not Paul) for his preaching (v.24). He stressed that he was made a servant, that is, by God (Col 1:23,25). For ourselves, we, like Archippus, should take heed to the ministry which we have received from the Lord (Col 4:17).

Zaphnath-Paaneah

(Genesis 41; John 4)

Thou art a Jew! O feeble comprehension
Only a member of the chosen race:
He was a man, no different from the others,
She saw no special beauty in His face.
 The Heavenly Joseph
And yet no coat of colours caught her gaze.

Thou art a prophet! Deeper apprehension,
As He to her the guilty past revealed:
She learned the lesson we should well remember
That nought is from His piercing eyes concealed.
 Zaphnath-Paaneah,
Past, present, future, all their secrets yield.

Thou art the Christ! Amazing revelation,
The true Messiah to His people came:
The nation's King, and yet by them rejected,
For Him the crown of thorns, the cross, the shame.
 Zaphnath-Paaneah,
O Saviour of the world, blest be Thy name.

Sandy King

Our Spiritual Stature

Our spiritual stature is not measured by our mental acquaintance with the truth, but by the practical effect of it in our daily lives. We may be able to explain with perfect lucidity the early chapters of Romans, but if the righteousness of the law is not fulfilled in us by our walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit (Chap. 8), of what value is it? If the truth of justification by faith and all the mercies of which we clearly see have delivered us from condemnation by placing us in Christ, do not lead us to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, there is something wrong.

We may well be acquainted with the doctrines of the early chapters of Ephesians, and be able to expound the glories of them to others: it will be all worthless if the effect of the knowledge does not lead us to use diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.

We must not study the doctrinal parts of the Epistles less, but we must pay more attention to their exhortations, for our spiritual stature is measured by our ability to carry them out rightly according to God as the truths that precede them are in souls in power, but we test ourselves as to how far these truths possess us by the way they affect our conduct.

Light From An Old Lamp

By the late A.R. Prentice, Paisley

Heaven and the Heavens

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen 1:1).

This sublime and majestic statement with which the Bible begins informs us that the world and all that we see above, around and beneath us are the product of a creative act of God. Though both words appear in the singular in our version it should be remembered that "heaven" is actually plural and is very often translated so, the earth on the other hand is always in the singular. The question may then be asked, how many heavens are there? Some have suggested that there are seven, the Scriptures teach that there are at least three (2 Cor 12:2), where the apostle speaks of having been caught up into the third heaven. The Word of God abounds with references to all three, we propose to look at a few only of these.

First of all there is the aerial or atmospheric heaven (Gen 1:20) which is the sphere and natural element of bird life. This heaven is spoken of in the following and many other scriptures. "The Lord shut up the heaven that there be no rain" (Deut 11:17). "The beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven" (Dan 2:38). "Behold the fowls of the heaven" (Matt 6:26 R.V.). "Henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven (Matt 26:64). It may be that in this heaven we shall first see the Lord when He comes in accordance with 1 Thess

4:17, and we are caught up to meet Him in the air and so to be forever with Him.

Secondly, there is the starry heaven (Gen 1:17) in which God has placed the luminaries which give light on the earth by day and night. Toward these heavens Abraham was directed by God to look, when He made promise to him of a seed that should outnumber the stars in multitude (Gen 15:5), and to them nearly every Old Testament writer makes some reference. The Psalmist David continually refers to them. "When I consider the heavens the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained" (Psa 8:3). "The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psa 19:1). "The heavens declare his righteousness" (Psa 50:6). These heavens are an unceasing witness to God's existence, power and divinity (Rom 1:20) a witness irresistible and incontrovertible in spite of man's sceptical denials.

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens a shining
frame
Their great Original proclaim.

The unwearied sun, from day to
day,
Doth his Creator's power
display:
And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty hand.

What though in solemn silence all
Move round this dark terrestrial
ball?
What though no real voice nor
sound,
Amidst their radiant orbs be
found?

In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a mighty voice;
For ever singing as they shine,
The hand that made us is divine.

Thirdly, there is, what might best be described in the words of Solomon, "the heaven of heavens" (1 Kings 8:27): "God's dwelling place" (1 Kings 8:39,43). To this the eye and the heart of the OT saints were ever directed and from it their hopes were drawn. David has it in mind when he says, "Whom have I in heaven but thee" (Psa 73:25) and to it Daniel refers when he says "There is a God in heaven who revealeth secrets" (Dan 2:28). That the men of God in the OT looked and longed for this place is borne out in Hebrews. "But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country" (Heb 11:13,16). From this heaven the Son of God came down (John 6:51: 12:3), and thither when His work on earth was finished He returned again (Mark 16:19) from thence He, in fulfilment of His promise, will come again (John 14:3). Presently, as the minister of the Sanctuary, He is appearing there for His people as their great High Priest (Heb 9:24). To this heaven the redeemed of past and present ages will ultimately be gathered, this we see symbolically set forth in Rev chapters 4 and 5.

Of the first two heavens man has acquired a wonderful knowledge. Science, with its research, has enabled him to master the aerial heavens, and to probe many of the secrets of the starry heavens, but for what we may presently know of heaven we are still cast on

what God has been pleased to reveal in His word: even with this to guide us, we believe our highest imaginations must fall far short of the reality. Some things, however, we may rejoice in knowing, these can be briefly stated as follows: Negatively, there will be no sin, no sorrow, no sighing, no pain, no parting, no tears, no trouble, no darkness, no death. Nothing that defileth (Rev 21:27). Positively, we know (1) that all who have fallen asleep in Jesus are already present with the Lord (2 Cor 5:1-6). (2) When the Lord comes we shall join them, and in bodies like unto His glorious body shall go in to occupy the place He has there prepared for us (1 Thess 4:13-18). (3) It will be a place of light, life, liberty and love, all in perfection. (4) Everything there will be infinite in measure, changeless in character, glorious in manifestation and everlasting in duration, peace and plenty will be the portion, and joy and gladness ever fill the hearts of all who dwell therein.

Hunger and thirst are felt no more,
Nor suns with scorching ray,
God is their sun, whose cheering
beams
Diffuse eternal day.

The Lamb which dwells amidst the
throne
Shall o'er them still preside:
Fced them with nourishment divine,
And all their footsteps guide.

'Mong pastures green He'll lead His
flock,
Where living streams appear,
And God the Lord from ev'ry eye
Shall wipe off ev'ry tear.

MY FATHER'S HOUSE All that makes heaven a home to Christ will make it a home to me. Come, Saviour, Come!

REGIONS · BEYOND ·

Assembly Trends in Modern Spain

by Ken Stunt, Madrid

Spain is considerably more than twice the size of the United Kingdom, distances therefore are great and one would need to have a fairly incessant itinerating ministry to be able to give a balanced assessment of assembly witness in the different regions of Spain today. Furthermore, assemblies are living through a gigantic identity crisis, a veritable state of flux, and from the writer's point of view this makes the use of generalisations an even more risky business. On the other hand Spain needs prayer, and it is hoped this article will provide some information to help towards more definite intercession on her behalf.

Transition Once aloof in national isolation during General Franco's regime, Spain has since his death in 1975 entered the Common Market, Nato, the Council of Europe, and has earned very considerable respect from the free nations of the world for the remarkable and quite unexpectedly peaceful transition from a 40-year dictatorship to a modern democracy. The 1978 constitution is certainly a most remarkable document, fruit of an all-party consensus and based absolutely upon 'the sovereign will of the people'. The democratic freedom now experienced by the people has not only affected every institution of state and society leading to free elections for government, trade unions etc, but has also brought pressure upon the churches, including the assemblies some of whom are also experimenting with the democratic process! We know of one case where the congregation decided to vote for new elders, but was so dismayed to find that seventeen candidates were put forward and adopted, that it was decided to nullify the results of the election!

Please pray that elders and their fellow-Christians may be able to discern between what is a reasonable and legitimate way to run a kingdom of this world, and what is the *only* legitimate way to live out one's membership of the local assembly: humble, sincere recognition of the full Lordship of Christ.

Interdenominational Movements To live and work within the body of Christ as expressed in the local assembly is what the NT always envisages. In Spain during the past twelve years especially, there has been an enormous increase of interdenominational movements, many

with specialised aims in view and some prepared to organise just about anything that may occur. One is sadly impressed by two phenomena which this situation has brought to light. Firstly, that if worshipping and serving together in the local assembly require love, patience, and a mutually submissive spirit—fruit of heart submission to one Lord—these requirements, so totally abhorrent to the flesh, can be much more easily side-stepped by reducing time with the assembly and diverting time and energies to one of the organisations. (Not, of course, that this is the motivating force of every brother or sister engaged with an organisation!) It has been tragic to know of many cases where members of assemblies have apparently been unable to accept the Lordship of Christ in the local context, working and worshipping together with their brethren. For such, the offer of movements and organisations is especially tempting. The second phenomenon is a deficient understanding of Scripture about the nature of the local church in all its precious simplicity as the sphere for worship and service, and the almost limitless possibilities for spiritual growth, maturity, and fellowship with others. The Lord may sovereignly use flashy and spectacular evangelical events as He deems fit, but the tenor of Scripture and half a life of missionary experience both point to local assembly life and order as the God-appointed place for the conversion and discipleship of others—always assuming of course that the Word of God and the Spirit of God have free course among us.

Unfortunately this is not always the case, so charismatic teaching and influences have found it easy to tempt some away and there have been divisions in not a few assemblies. The charismatic tide is flowing high, and the ensuing flotsam and jetsam abound. Please pray that in the midst of all this we may have sensitive and obedient hearts and cool heads, courage and compassion.

Church of Rome Dis-established The 1978 Constitution dis-established the church of Rome, but in practice it is ludicrous to believe it! For the first few months after the socialists gained their ten million vote victory, religious gowns on the streets became quite a rare sight. Overt Catholic participation on television was drastically reduced. Rome was informed that the astronomic sums paid yearly by the Spanish state to cover priests' salaries would be diminished and disappear. But it could not be. The same sums or greater still are paid now for the upkeep of church fabrics, which come under the heading of "culture" and "state heritage". The black, purple, and white gowns are coming out on the streets again, like snails after rain. State television—as yet there is no other—manages to find fifteen minutes each month during the worst viewing time for an evangelical programme, while Rome seems to be regaining an ever larger slice of TV time.

Catholic Pressures against Evangelicals There are also indications that Catholic pressures against evangelicals are again on the rise. Among others, we quote the following reasons: evangelistic activities by all evangelical groups are on the increase. Then the "market" of religiously-minded people has been greatly reduced by the spread of atheism and sheer indifference, something made possible by the regained freedom of the press and ample use of television. Rome needs to keep whatever religious nucleus remains, but competition from the gospel has far more access now than under Franco. Also within her own ranks there are increasing numbers who actively read the Scriptures and discuss them. Whatever the true appraisal may be of the situation, the fact is that our assembly work in the open-air this year has found a more hardened response than last year, and there is evidence on many sides of fierce underground struggles between church and state for power.

Regional Consciousness Since the gigantic identity crisis among assemblies in Spain, mentioned in the first paragraph, is still going on, the writer will not touch on the vexed question of what does or does not constitute an "assembly". But the grace of God through the gospel has given rise in the last fifteen years to some twelve churches in the terrorist-plagued Basque country, where formerly there were none with assembly connotations. Coinciding with regional political autonomy, although possibly not really related to it, there has been a sharp increase in regional consciousness among the assemblies in Galicia (NW Spain), and in Andalucia (the south). In Cataluna (NE) this does not constitute such a novelty.

Evangelical Federation Please pray for wisdom regarding laws affecting legal status for religious communities. The constitution guarantees religious liberty as a basic right for all, both on an individual and corporate level. But for a local church as such to be able to own its own building it must form itself into a legally registered and recognised entity with named legal representatives. Most of the assemblies have felt free to take this step. However, recently an evangelical federation has been formed in the Protestant community and recognised by government to be the legitimate "spokesman" towards the government, and it is working to obtain agreements with the state. Obviously, many assemblies have very serious reservations about this, while others, including some well-known and loved leaders, seem to see in this development as a big move forward. So discernment, love, and right decisions are needed.

Praise God for the men and women of all age-groups whose delight is in the Word of God and obedience to it. Pray that many more may be converted, taught and trained to be men and women of God and convinced of the sanctity in Christ of the local churches, content to follow the simplicity of the NT pattern, with hearts and lives full of the Spirit of God and the love of God. We are grateful for your prayers.

YOUNG Believers'

Conducted by Howard A Barnes,
Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside

Pauline Epistles

PART 15: TITUS

INTRODUCTION

In the few years between his two imprisonments in Rome (see Acts 28 and 2 Tim), Paul spent some time preaching and teaching on the island of Crete. Associated with him in that work was Titus, a Gentile, who like Timothy was converted as a young man through Paul's preaching and became a fellow-worker with the apostle. He went to Jerusalem with Paul and Barnabas (Gal 2:1). Following Paul's discussions there with the apostles and elders a better understanding was reached between those who worked amongst the Jews and those who worked amongst the Gentiles. The first result of this was that Titus was not required to be circumcised (Gal 2:3); other results soon followed (compare Acts 15 with Acts 16:4,5). Titus was also involved with the collection for the saints at Jerusalem (read 2 Cor 7,8). Although Titus was thus fully involved in the Lord's work and closely associated with the apostle Paul, it is surprising that he is not mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. Could it be as some have postulated that he was a close relative of Luke the author of Acts?

We hear no more of Titus until this epistle. He and Paul had been labouring together in Crete but the apostle Paul had felt it necessary to go somewhere else. Where this was we cannot say for sure, however he must have been at, or else within easy reach of Nicopolis in western Greece because it was there he had decided to spend the winter (Titus 3:12). Travel in those days would be difficult during the winter, so staying in one place was sensible. Paul left Crete at a time when there was still more work to be done (1:5), but which he had happily delegated to Titus. Among the things left to be done included teaching the believers and the appointment of elders for every city in Crete where there was an assembly.

THE MAIN THEMES OF THE EPISTLE

Four words in the first two verses of the epistle give us an outline of the rest, namely "faith ... truth ... godliness ... hope" (try tracing these and similar words through the epistle). The apostle describes himself not only as "an apostle of Jesus Christ" but also "a servant (i.e. slave of God)". The result of this was "the faith of God's elect". That is to say, Paul's submission and sending resulted in people being saved. Although those converted could look back to the day when this happened, Paul points them even further back to before time began when God chose them. Paul did not of course believe his work was finished when people got saved, he was just as keen to see them come to an "acknowledging of the truth", and that not merely an academic understanding, but rather one that was "after (i.e.

consistent with) godliness", i.e. it had a practical effect in their lives. All these things were based on "hope of eternal life" which God promised long ago. God "that cannot lie" made the promise so it will be kept. All these thoughts recur throughout the epistle.

"APPOINT ELDERS"

Elders, although not necessary for the being of an assembly, are necessary for its well-being (E.W. Rogers). Paul had already left and would soon be followed by Titus (3:12) and although other helpers might come (Artemas or Tychicus), ultimately the care of the local assembly fell to local elders chosen by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20.28). When Titus was given the task by Paul, he was no doubt aware that he was just a channel through which the Holy Spirit was working.

Like Timothy, Titus already knew most of the truths that Paul was giving in the epistle. However having this written form of revealed truth allowed Titus to appeal to it in any difficulties he had with those who refused his authority.

His appointment of elders would be consistent with divine revelation. Their character in public and private had to be beyond reproach. They would have to be "able by sound doctrine both to exhort, and to convince the gainsayers". This would be a difficult task given the basic nature of the Cretians. One of their poets had written over 600 years before that they were "always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies (i.e. lazy gluttons)" (1:12). Paul agrees with this very unflattering description! (v.13). This was very unpromising "raw material", even including the Jewish Cretians (1:10) but such is the power of God that even these could do good (note the word "good" appears 11 times in this epistle). In such a situation the choice of leaders is crucial.

Even though the Cretian character

was so bad, it still had a basic interest in extreme and strange religion, and because of this could, even after conversion be led astray, so Titus (and later the elders) had to speak out strongly against this tendency (1:10-16).

TEACHING FOR ALL

Paul gives Titus an outline of the kind of things he should teach to each group in the assembly, whether the group be defined by age, sex or occupation. To each there is an appropriate message (2:1-10). Paul (slave of God) gives special prominence to the christian slaves on the island. Slaves were generally known for their indifference if not complete hostility to their masters' interests. The christian's attitude to his master is, on the other hand to be very positive (vv. 9 and 10). These verses give us a good guide to our own attitude today relative to our employers. Such good behaviour (like that of young women, vv. 4 and 5) results in a good public testimony for the "doctrine of God" i.e. the gospel. In fact the gospel tells us that not only did the "grace of God that bringeth salvation" appear when the Lord Jesus Christ came to die, it also teaches us the kind of lives we should live now (2:12-14). To have a people of His own "zealous of good works" was in fact one reason why He redeemed us (v.14 and 3:8,14).

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

Anyone who completely rejected Titus's teaching and deliberately followed his own opinions is after fair warning to be himself rejected (3:10,11).

When he had finished his work, Titus was to be relieved by either Artemas or Tychicus so he could rejoin Paul who would by then be at Nicopolis. He was to bring Zenas and Apollos with him. Years later during Paul's second imprisonment in Rome, Titus leaves Paul to return to this area i.e. the Dalmatia of 2 Tim 4:10.

Question

All questions should be sent to the Editor, Believer's Magazine, Office, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and should have the name and address of sender. Consideration of space may prevent the publication of answers

QUESTION

Please explain 2 Tim 2:20.

ANSWER

No doubt the questioner has in mind the difficulty of deciding what the 'great house' of v.20 represents. Many believe that it is a description of religious christendom, i.e. the sphere of christian profession, but it should be noted that it is *a* great house not *the* great house. In Ephesus there would be many such houses containing various types of vessels for many uses and it is thus much more likely that the apostle is simply using an illustration. The central teaching of these verses lies much more in the vessel than in the house itself. Those who believe that christendom is in view state that the vessels of gold and silver illustrate the real, and the wood and earth the unreal. They further relate the vessels 'unto honour' with the former, and 'to dishonour' with the latter.

It appears to the present writer, wiser to view the house merely as illustrative with varying types of vessels within it. It is however important to note the closing clause of the verse. A vessel 'unto honour' must refer to its state of cleanliness when viewed in light of v.21. A vessel 'unto dishonour' would therefore describe an unclean vessel. However great and important the house and however valuable the material of a given vessel, it must be clean to be of use. This appears to be the main lesson being taught in v.20 which is in preparation for the truth of v.21. The word 'purge' is 'to cleanse out thoroughly'; 'from' is 'away from' (*apo*). The same verb is used in respect of the need for moral purity of the assembly at Corinth (1 Cor 5:7). The idea being presented is to avoid defilement and so keep oneself pure. The object of such 'outpurging' is to be a vessel unto honour, i.e. clean and therefore suitable for honourable use. The main problem in v.21

is in interpreting the meaning of 'these'. Various scholars have pointed out that this word is in grammar, a genitive plural. This means that it could refer to persons or things. An overall view of the preceding context would support the fact that Paul is calling for separation not only from evil but also from evil teachers. In the earlier verses of the chapter the unholy babblings of v.16 are seen in the individuals of v.17. The withdrawal from iniquity of v.19 must include not only the evil taught but also the bearers of that evil teaching. 'These' is therefore a comprehensive plural word including both evil and the evil teachers.

A vessel unto honour is 'one sanctified', i.e. hallowed, set apart. This is not the positional aspect of sanctification, it is the practical outworking of such a truth.

J.R. Baker

QUESTION

What is the meaning of 1 Cor 3:12?

ANSWER

In this chapter the apostle uses three metaphors of a local assembly. The first is a tilled field or husbandry (vv. 1-9), the second a building (vv.10-15) and the last a temple (vv.16-23). The verse under question is in the central section where the apostle has shown that he, as a wise master builder, had laid the foundation of the assembly at Corinth (v.10). The verse under question deals with the responsibility of each to build upon the foundation. The *value* of what is built is under consideration and should be noted in view of the following verses which show that such value will be tested at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

J.R. Baker

How It Began

Port Seton
by J.S. Blackie

In the month of September 1982 we celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of the opening of the Viewforth Gospel Hall. Previous to 1922 the brethren met in a small hall situated at Gardner's Close, off the High Street, Cockenzie, the actual commencement of the assembly going back over one hundred years to the 1870's. In those early days Cockenzie and Port Seton was entirely a fishing community. All the male population followed the fishing industry and this necessitated them leaving home at different seasons of the year to engage in the herring fishing. It was during such a time, when the fleet was in Shetland in 1877, that a number of the fishermen were converted and also baptised.

When they returned home to Cockenzie they were exercised about commencing an assembly and began to remember the Lord according to the New Testament pattern in a house at the West Harbour, Cockenzie. After some time the small hall at Gardner's Close came on the market. The brethren acquired the property, paying for the building outright with their first offering. The numbers in the assembly began to increase as brethren from Lanarkshire and also from Fife came and settled in the town. They were mostly of the mining community being employed in the nearby Prestonlinks Colliery.

Mr James Lees then commenced his work for the Lord in this area. He

told me he cycled all the way from Blantyre to Cockenzie when only a lad of twenty. With my grandfather, Mr. William Gray, they laboured together with a gospel tent in East Lothian and as a result of these labours in Cockenzie and district many were saved, baptised and added to the assembly.

He went to Sweden in the year 1910 as a missionary and was much used of the Lord in that country and in the Balkan States.

As the numbers grew and new members were added to the company the brethren became exercised about building a completely new hall. A site became available at Viewforth, Port Seton, facing the harbour and they began to build in the year 1921. During that year there was a long miners' strike lasting for many months. The hall was built mostly by volunteer labour, the architect being Mr James Milne of Glasgow. The hall was completed and duly opened by a conference in September 1922 to the glory of God. Since then a yearly conference has been held in September for the past sixty years.

Looking back over these years the brethren can testify to the goodness and faithfulness of God, the testimony being maintained during these many years for His glory.

During the second world war of 1939-1945, despite the fact that Port Seton was a restricted area for security reasons, the weekly services in the assembly and the annual conference in September were carried

on unhindered and unmolested. We can say, "The work begun is carried on by power from Heaven above". May the memory of the past and our reflections of the work stimulate our interest in the things of God in the coming days.

"Hold fast till I come" (Rev 2:25).
"Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev 3:11).

We praise Him for all that is past, and trust Him for all that's to come.

The **LORD'S** **WORK** and **WORKERS**

All items for "intelligence" columns of this magazine should be addressed direct to Editor, 40 Beansburn Kilmarlock, and posted in time to arrive on or before 4th of month previous to issue. Intimation of commencement of new assemblies should always carry commendation of nearest local assembly.

N. Ireland **FORTHCOMING**

NOVEMBER 7

Ballymacashon Annual Conference: 2 p.m.
Armagh: 8.00 p.m. H. Wilson and E. Stewart

NOVEMBER 14

Armagh: 8.00 p.m. J. Lennox and J. Brown.

NOVEMBER 21

Armagh: 8.00 p.m. J. Walmsley.

NOVEMBER 28

Armagh: 8.00 p.m. R. Eadie and L. Ballintine.

DECEMBER 5

Armagh: 8.00 p.m. S. McBride.

DECEMBER 12

Armagh: 8.00 p.m. J. Hay.

England & Wales **FORTHCOMING**

NOVEMBER 7

Cwmbran: The Gospel Hall, Oakfield Road at 7.30 p.m. D. West.

Kingsteignton: Gospel Hall, Exeter Road at 7.00 p.m. H. Bell.

North Staffordshire Area, Biddulph: Hebron Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. I. Crawford.

Ludlow: Cleeview Gospel Hall at 7.30 p.m. P. Harding.

Ealing: Grove Hall, The Grove Annual Conference at 3.30 and 6.30 p.m. M. Browne, A. H. Linton.

Preston: Brookhouse Evangelical Chapel, 179 Eldon Street, Ashton at 7.00 p.m. R. Parnaby.

Nottingham: Gospel Hall, Victoria Road at 7.15 p.m. P. Kaye.

West Mersea: Assembly Hall, East Road at 4.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. E. Parmenter.

Westcliff-on-Sea: Gospel Hall, Carlton Avenue at 7.30 p.m. A. Leckie.

Brierfield: Hebron Hall, Walter Street at 7.00 p.m. H. Barnes.

NOVEMBER 14

North Staffordshire Area, Trent Vale: Swan Lane Gospel Hall Camp Report at 7.00 p.m. J. Skingley.

Cheshunt: Mill Lane Chapel, High Street at 7.00 p.m. J. Scarsbrook.

Bermondsey: The Gospel Hall, 97 St. James's Road, London S.E.16 at 7.00 p.m. K. Gibson.

Warrington: Hope Hall, Hawthorne Street off Longshaw Street at 7.00 p.m. I. Grant. (Also 15th at 7 p.m.)

Cobham: Gospel Hall, Anyards Road at 3.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. F. Lonney, H. Ruston.

Kingsthorpe: The Gospel Hall, Osborne Road at 7.30 p.m. R. Maffey.

Ely: Gospel Hall, Ship Lane at 7.30 p.m. E. Parmenter.

Darlaston: Rough Hay Gospel Hall, Hall Street East Annual Conference at 3.00 p.m. D. West, C. Lacey. Mr Lacey continues Monday to Wednesday at 7.45 p.m.

Wembley: Uxendon Hall, Elmstead Avenue at 7.00 p.m. T. Proffitt.

NOVEMBER 21

Brierfield: Hebron Hall, Walter Street at 7.00 p.m. T. Renshaw.

Northfield: Gospel Hall, Quarry Lane at 7.00 p.m. J. Hunter. Mr Hunter continues Monday to Thursday at 7.45 p.m.

Mitcham Junction: Gospel Hall, Percy Road at 7.00 p.m. G. B. Fyfe.

Luton: Onslow Road Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. M. Horlock. (Also on Sunday at 4.00 p.m.)

Redditch: Foxlydiate Crescent Gospel Hall, Batchley Estate at 7.00 p.m. E. Hughes.

Skelmanthorpe: Saville Road Hall at 7.00 p.m. N. Gibbon. (Also Sunday at 3.00 p.m.)

Waltham Abbey: Eastbrook Hall, Conference at 4.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. A. Leckie. Mr. Leckie continues in ministry Monday to Wednesday at 8.00 p.m.

Cheltenham: Bethany Hall, Newton Road, Hesters Way at 7.30 p.m. B. Osborne.

Eastbourne: Marine Hall, Seaside at 7.00 p.m. B. Price.

Bishop's Stortford: Gospel Hall, Dunmow Road at 7.00 p.m. A. Shearman.

Bracknell: Annual Conference, Emmanuel Chapel, Crowthorne Road at 3.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. J. Harrison, T. Ledger. Mr Harrison continues to 26th November.

Derby: The Meeting Room, Curzon Street at 7.15 p.m. T. Proffitt.

NOVEMBER 28

Hanworth: Gospel Hall, Hounslow Road at 7.00 p.m. Mr J. Hadley. (Also on Sunday at 8.00 p.m.)

Leicester: York Street Gospel Hall, off Granby Street at 7.30 p.m. R. Hill.

Bexleyheath: Bethany Hall, North Street at 7.00 p.m. R. Dawes.

Weymouth: Bethany Hall at 7.30 p.m. F. Holmes.

Northampton: The Gospel Hall, Spencer Bridge Road at 7.30 p.m. G. Waugh. Mr Waugh continues Monday to Thursday at 7.30 p.m.

Chesterfield: Dunston Lane, Newbolt at 7.30 p.m. P. Coats

Blackpool: Salthouse Avenue, off Rigby Road at 7.30 p.m. E. Hughes.

DECEMBER 4

Warrington: Hope Hall, Hawthorne Street off Longshaw Street at 7.30 p.m. Bible Reading. (Also 5th and 6th at 7.00 p.m.) D. West.

DECEMBER 5

Boscombe: Drummond Hall, Drummond Road at 7.00 p.m. D. C. Hinton.

North Staffordshire Area, Stoke: Fletcher Road Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. G. Payne.

Westcliff-on-Sea: Gospel Hall, Carlton Avenue at 7.30 p.m. A. M. S. Gooding.

West Mersea: Assembly Hall, East Road at 4.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. C. Roberts.

Netherfield: Gospel Hall, Victoria Road at 7.15 p.m. J. Griffiths.

Preston: Brookhouse Evangelical Chapel, 179 Eldon Street, Ashton at 7.00 p.m. T. Renshaw.

Ludlow: Cleeview Gospel Hall, Cleeview at 7.30 p.m. R. Cummings.

Kingsteignton: Gospel Hall, Exeter Road at 7.00 p.m. H. Bell.

Brierfield: Hebron Hall, Walter Street at 7.00 p.m. D. McMaster.

Cwmbran: Gospel Hall, Oakfield at 7.30 p.m. D. Williams.

DECEMBER 10

Wembley: Uxendon Hall, Elmstead Avenue at 7.00 p.m. T. Baker.

DECEMBER 12

Leicester: York Street Gospel Hall, off Granby Street at 7.30 p.m. R. Maffie.

Ely: Gospel Hall, Ship Lane at 7.30 p.m. A. C. Gooding.

Kingsthorpe: Gospel Hall, Osborne Road at 7.30 p.m. P. Bristow. (Also on Sunday.)

Bermondsey: Gospel Hall, 97 St. James's Road, London S.E.16 at 7.00 p.m. T. Ledger.

Cheshunt: Mill Lane Chapel, High Street at 7.00 p.m. R. Catchpole.

Blackpool: Salthouse Avenue, off Rigby Road at 7.30 p.m. H. Barnes.

Scotland FORTHCOMING

NOVEMBER 1

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road) at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

NOVEMBER 7

Coatbridge: Hebron Hall, 20 Church Street at 6.30 p.m. A. McGregor, J. Aitken.

New Stevenston: Assembly Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Harrison, F. Stallan.

Livingston: Gospel Hall, Deans at 6.30 p.m. J. R. Baker, B. Stapley.

Hamilton: Low Waters Gospel Hall, Hall Street at 3.30 p.m. Annual Conference. R. Hill, I. Steele, J. Paton.

Bridge of Weir: Hope Hall Conference at 3.30 p.m. W. Barr, I. Grant, J. Rodgers. Mr Rodgers continues in ministry Wednesday at 8.00 p.m.

Edinburgh: Gorgie Gospel Hall, 4 Smithfield Street at 7.00 p.m. Bible Reading.

Beith: Bethany Hall, Kirk Road at 7.00 p.m. T. Wilson.

Kilmarnock: Elim Hall, Cuthbert Place at 6.45 p.m. J. Buchanan, R. McPheat.

NOVEMBER 8

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road) at 8.30 p.m. S. Arbuthnot.

NOVEMBER 14

Prestwick: Glenburn Bethany Hall Annual Conference in Prestwick Academy, Newdykes Road at 3.00 p.m. W. Hastings, J. Flanigan, A. McMaster, G. Forbes.

Saltcoats: Bethany Hall, Ailsa Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Anderson, F. Stallan.

Armadale: Gospel Hall, South Street at 6.30 p.m. W. Todd, G. Dunbar.

Newmilns: Gospel Hall, Drygate Street at 7.00 p.m. J. Harrison, A. Prentice.

Larkhall: Albion Hall, Montgomery Street at 6.30 p.m. N. Hamilton, J. Sinclair.

Baillieston: Gospel Hall, 18 Glasgow Road at 3.30 p.m. W. K. Morrison, M. Radcliffe, N. Hood.

Wishaw: Ebenezer Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. W. Craig, J. Burnett.

Cumbernauld: Mossknowe Gospel Hall, Kildrum Ring Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Grant, C. Hutchinson.

Bishopton: Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. J. Rodgers, K. Stapley.

Tarbolton: Gospel Hall, Montgomerie Street at 7.00 p.m. J. Paterson.

Ashgill: Bethany Hall at 6.30 p.m. A. Wilson, F. Reid.

East Kilbride: Threshold Assembly Hall at 7.00 p.m. S. Arbuthnot, W. Stevely.

Gourock: Bethany Hall, Drumshantie Road at 7.00 p.m. T. Wilson.

NOVEMBER 15

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road) at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

NOVEMBER 21

Linthouse: Bethesda Hall, 16 Holmfauldhead Place, Annual Conference at 3.00 p.m. J. Flanigan, M. Radcliffe, A. Pollard.

Whitburn: West End Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Gamble, A. Legge.

Ayr: Gospel Hall, James Street at 7.00 p.m. R. Gamble.

Motherwell: Shields Road at 6.00 p.m. Home Workers Conference. F. Reid, J. Baxter, W. Hastings.

Dalry: Townend Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. F. Beevers, G. Waugh.

Dundee: Meadowside Gospel Hall, 2 Euclid Crescent at 7.00 p.m. J. R. Baker.

Larkhall: Gospel Hall, Howards Street at 6.30 p.m. A. Gamble, F. Stallan.

Mayfield: Gospel Hall, Stone Avenue at 6.30 p.m. W. Scott, J. McCormack.

NOVEMBER 22

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road) at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

NOVEMBER 28

Airdrie: Hebron Hall Annual Conference in Chapelside School, Chapel Street at 3.30 p.m. R. Cameron, J. Sinclair, A. Gooding.

Prestwick: Bute Hall at 7.00 p.m. J. Paterson, A. D. Scott.

Glasgow: Harley Street at 7.00 p.m. M. Smith, J. McLatchie.

Hamilton: High Parks Gospel Hall, Silvertonhill Avenue at 6.45 p.m. A. Foster, T. Watt.

Kirkcconnel: Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. J. Dow, J. Burns.

Galston: Annual Conference in Evangelistic Hall at 3.15 p.m. M. Radcliffe, R. McPheat, R. Miller.

Saltcoats: Bethany Hall, Ailsa Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Paton, D. Locke.

NOVEMBER 29

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road) at 6.30 p.m. D. Newell.

DECEMBER 5

Beith: Bethany Hall, Kirk Road at 7.00 p.m. R. Gamble.

Edinburgh: Gorgie Gospel Hall, 4 Smithfield Street at 7.00 p.m. Bible Reading.

Bridge of Weir: Hope Hall at 7.00 p.m. W. Hannay, A. Pollard.

Hamilton: Low Waters Gospel Hall, Hall Street at 6.30 p.m. J. Hunter.

Livingston: Gospel Hall, Deans at 6.30 p.m. A. Legge, W. McKellar.

New Stevenson: Assembly Hall at 6.30 p.m. D. Fyall, D. Cameron.

Coatbridge: Hebron Hall, 20 Church Street at 6.30 p.m. J. Paterson, T. Wilson.

DECEMBER 6

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street (off Maryhill Road) at 8.30 p.m. S. Arbuthnot.

DECEMBER 12

Ashgill: Bethany Hall at 6.30 p.m. M. Radcliffe, J. Cameron.

Tarbolton: Montgomerie Street at 7.00 p.m. B. Gamble.

Newmilns: Gospel Hall, Drygate Street at 7.00 p.m. R. Revie.

Cumbernauld: Mossknowe Gospel Hall, Kildrum Ring Road at 7.00 p.m. W. K. Morrison, A. Naismith.

Wishaw: Ebenezer Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. G. Jackson, G. Waugh.

Larkhall: Albion Hall, Montgomery Street at 6.30 p.m. A. Deans, J. Gamble.

Armadale: Gospel Hall, South Street at 6.30 p.m. J. Aitken, A. Meikle.

Gourock: Bethany Hall, Drumshantie Road at 7.00 p.m. F. Beevers.

Saltcoats: Bethany Hall, Ailsa Road at 7.00 p.m. A. Gamble, N. Hamilton.

N.Ireland REPORTS

From the 20th July, brethren D. Caughey, H. McClements, B. and D. Glendinning, S. Deakin, K. Glasgow, W. Taylor and J. Thompson spent nearly a week in Isle of Man. They had two open-air meetings each day on the foreshore in Douglas and, one day, two open-air meetings in Peel. The two mile

promenade in Douglas was tracted each day, also the ship was tracted going and coming. About 20,000 tracts were distributed.

J. Thompson and J. McCann (Junior) are preaching in a tent at Dunlarge, near Keady, in South Armagh. The tent was filled nightly, some fruit seen and others interested.

S. Ferguson and N. Turkington have just ended tent meetings near Bryansford and near Castlewellan. Attendance and interest encouraging.

D. Kane and A. Graham have just ended tent meetings at Ballynure, Co. Antrim, where a number professed to be saved.

A. McShane and A. Hull have just ended tent meetings at Rathcoole, Co. Antrim. Good attendance and some fruit gathered.

J. Hawthorne and T. McNeill continue gospel meetings in a barn at Drumquin, with encouraging interest and attendance.

B. Glendinning and B. Smith continue in a portable hall at Upperlands, Co. Derry, with encouraging interest and attendance.

CO. FERMANAGH

Currien: Annual Conference (16th Sept.). Ministry shared by J. Hawthorne, W. J. Nesbitt, E. Fairfield, J. Wishart, S. Jennings and N. Turkington.

CO. LONDONDERRY AND CO. DONEGAL

Ballyronan: W. Jennings and J. Martin continue with encouraging numbers attending.

Coleraine: N. Coulter, with the help of brethren from the Brook Street assembly, is preaching in a disused house in one of the housing estates.

Limavady: J. Lennox and J. Brown continue with fair numbers attending.

Upperlands: B. Smyth and B. Glendinning are continuing in a portable hall.

Muff: S. Patterson and G. Stewart continue with small numbers attending. In visiting among those saved at previous meetings they have been encouraged by their continuing interest in the word of God.

CO. TYRONE

Killycurragh: Annual Conference (23rd Sept.). Considered a very good conference. Ministry shared by A. Leckie, S. McBride, A. McShane, D. Kane, J. Hawthorne and A. Hull.

BELFAST AND DISTRICT

Clarawood Estate: R. Pickering has been encouraged by very well attended meetings, and one lady has professed faith in Christ. This outreach is run by brethren from the Ballyhackamore assembly.

Parkgate Avenue: The saints are greatly encouraged by the attendance nightly of strangers at the gospel meetings being conducted by R. Eadie and J. Kells.

CO. ANTRIM

Antrim Town: A. Aiken expected for gospel meetings early November. Prayer valued.

Broughshane: A. Aiken and A. McClean continue in the gospel with good interest. The assembly has been greatly encouraged, and a number have professed faith in Christ.

CO. ARMAGH

Blackers Mill (near Lurgan): Gospel meetings commencing in portable hall at the end of October. Speakers A. Mitchell and A. Redpath.

Keady: Gospel tent meetings concluded after ten weeks. Good interest shown and district well visited. Conducted by J. Thompson and J. McCann (Kilmore). One young boy professed faith in Christ.

Birches: W. J. Nesbitt had four nights of profitable ministry in the Gospel Hall.

Ardmore: Conference (26th Sept.). Nice number present. Speakers J. Hunter, R. Pickering, J. Wishart, R. Jordan, H. Wilson, S. Jennings, E. McGrath.

CO. DOWN

Banbridge: G. Hall conducted a week of special meetings for children at the beginning of the winter season.

Carryduff: A week of special meetings for children was held in portable hall in this fast growing district. An attendance of 70-80 children each evening was most encouraging, with good attention to the gospel messages given by Alan Wilson. The work will continue throughout the winter season each Thursday. Prayer valued.

Killyleagh: E. Wishart and A. Rodgers are finding it very difficult to interest the locals to come to hear the gospel. The assembly is small and needs encouragement. Pray that the homes visited with tracts and the word sown might still be blessed.

Shanaghan: J. G. Hutchinson and R. Eadie expected to commence in the gospel on 1st November. Pray for blessing in this country area.

Mullafernaghan: Annual Missionary Conference (5th Sept.). A most encouraging time when interesting and challenging reports were given by E. Fairfield (Venezuela), H. Wilson (Brazil), B. Gray (Eire) and D. Ussher (Trinidad).

Shanaghan: Annual Conference (1st Oct.). The hall was well filled, and the assembly was much encouraged. The ministry was of a very practical nature and was shared by W. J. Nesbitt, J. Hawthorne, J. Walmsley, J. McColl (Australia) and D. Kane.

Scotland REPORTS

GRAMPIAN

During June and July, Dan Gillies took his gospel tent to Newtonhill, a few miles south of Aberdeen. The site given was on the edge of the village, but the Lord's hand was in this for it was right outside the home of a couple whose family are saved and had been praying for their parents. Please pray for Mr and Mrs Clark who regularly attended the meetings and continue to show an interest in the gospel. There was also good attendance and interest among the children.

Aberdeen Assemblies Children's Camp:

Around 140 children from all over Aberdeenshire plus another 60 leaders and helpers went to Forres Academy during July. The week went smoothly and the weather was mostly good. Visits were made to Aviemore, Inverness and Portsoy. George Forbes spoke at the junior meetings and Brian Crockett spoke to the seniors. Many of the older children have been convicted about baptism and two have been baptised since camp. The camp committee and leaders were very conscious of God's presence and appreciate the prayer support of many believers.

Dan Gillies moved the tent up the coast to Portlethen for the month of August, where he was helped by Jack Hay. As a result of the meetings it is hoped to commence a children's meeting in the local school. A few women who attended the Gospel meetings have requested a Bible study.

A woman from Marykirk was baptised in Luthermuir recently. The hall was full for the occasion and quite a number came along to witness this step of obedience.

As a result of being challenged at a summer camp, a young brother from Montrose has been baptised. A good number of people from the Tayside region attended the meeting, many of whom were his friends from camp.

The assembly in Inverbervie has been greatly encouraged to see the hall filled to capacity since the recommencement of their children's meetings. Please pray in particular for two or three local mothers who also attend the children's meeting.

LOTHIANS AND BORDERS

Musselburgh: The assembly had the joy recently of baptising and receiving into fellowship a young man and woman who are both brother and sister in the flesh and in the Lord. Both are married and have unbelieving partners. R. McPheat conducted the meeting on the Lord's day evening at the baptisms and a goodly number attended and heard the gospel faithfully preached. Prayer would be valued for a special effort with brother Robert on Lord's day from 15th November-6th December 1987 that not only the unbelieving husband and wife will be reached and saved, but many others also.

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

Kirkconnel: S. Ferguson commenced gospel meetings in September in the gospel hall. Unsaved have been present each evening, and much prayer has been made that many of them will trust the Saviour.

STRATHCLYDE

At the time of reporting the "Let Helensburgh Know" campaign with John Spiers is nearing the end. The first week of meetings was geared toward a specific age group and it was encouraging to see a wide cross-section of local people fill the hall each night. The assembly was boosted by the help of about 50 young believers from Ayrshire who arrived on the middle weekend.

The weather was excellent for open-air meetings and door to door visitation. Even with overflow accommodation it was difficult to get all in who came. On Saturday and Sunday evenings the ministry was profitable from the book of Jeremiah. The Helensburgh assembly have been exemplary in inviting their unsaved relatives and friends to attend.

The hand of the Lord was at work, and some have professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, with others under conviction.

The believers have been challenged and encouraged and look to the Lord for future blessing.

Harley Street, Glasgow: The assembly had the joy of baptising two young men on the first Lord's day in October, one of whom was a complete outsider. He was brought to the meetings by the diligent efforts of one of the local brethren and was saved at the time brother Joe Baxter was having a few nights with the assembly in the gospel during the month of March this year. Personal Witness is still effective.

SOUTH-WEST STRATHCLYDE

Port Glasgow: Alistair Young had a campaign at Port Glasgow, mainly aimed at the young people of the town, toward the end of September as part of Renfrewshire assembly outreach. Good numbers of children were present at the meetings.

Greenock: Alistair moved on to Greenock, Ardgowan Square assembly, again as part of the Renfrewshire assemblies gospel effort. A good start has been made in these meetings at time of reporting.

HIGHLAND AND NORTH EAST COAST

The summer outreach in Banffshire has come to a close again. Many villages were visited with the gospel in preaching and tract distribution and the support for the work was excellent, especially by young brethren and sisters.

Cullen: As an outreach from the assembly, gospel work has been carried out weekly in the town of Keith and the brethren felt they ought to have some gospel meetings there. A public hall was hired for two weeks and the meetings have been most encouraging. The saints gave good support, which they usually do, and nearly every evening between 12 and 20 young teenagers from the town attended, some of whom listened very well. At the time of writing there are two meetings still to go, and we pray that in due time the good seed sown will yield fruit.

Peterhead: The annual conference was very well attended and the ministry was helpful. There are many young people there, and the assembly continues to be encouraged by the occasional baptism.

England & Wales REPORTS

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE

Evangelistic outreach from assemblies in North Staffordshire involved a campaign in the town of Biddulph from May 30 to June 11, previously visited with the N. Staffs Tent in 1962, 1963, 1971, 1981 and 1984, this was a return visit with Peter Brandon. The meetings were conducted this year in the Hebron Gospel Hall and the Town Hall was taken for the four Sunday evening gospel rallies. House to house visitation was undertaken by local believers prior to the campaign and a determined effort was made on the doors by Mr Brandon—helped by Malcolm Radcliffe. This resulted in good

conversations and some attending the meetings from the estate.

The meetings were well attended and there were several professions. Believers were challenged as to their consecration. Prayer requested that a number of families be touched and brought to the Lord and added to the assembly.

E. LANCS., W. CHESHIRE, GREATER MANCHESTER AND YORKSHIRE

J. Hunter had a week's meetings in Mauldeth Road, Manchester, and A. M. S. Gooding had two weeks at Skelmanthorp, Yorkshire, where the local saints greatly appreciate the support given by believers in nearby assemblies. D. Ussher (Trinidad) visited Manchester assemblies at Wythenshawe (giving a report of the Lord's work) and Cheetham (giving Bible teaching), concluding with reports at the the Missionary Conference.

EAST MIDLANDS

The believers at Netherfield Gospel Hall, Nottingham, were exercised regarding a work among children. A short effort was engaged in for just five days and the Lord blessed. About 30 or more children attended each night with much interest shown; morning visits to a local park caused the effort to be made known around the area and proved profitable. Much encouragement has been given as a weekly meeting has been instigated following the effort with a regular attendance of 20 plus. May souls be saved and added to the gathered assembly.

WEST MIDLANDS

Burghill: This small assembly is situated in the country outside Hereford. J. Rowberry did some door to door visitation in the area during August, and the saints enjoyed a visit from G. Forbes who was in the Welsh Marche for a children's effort at Ludlow in September. There are now only a few assemblies left in Herefordshire, but the saints at Burghill seek to maintain a faithful testimony. They also travel widely to give support when special meetings are being held at Abergavenny, Broadwas-on-Teme and Ludlow etc. Assemblies such as this value the prayers of the Lord's people and their support when visiting the district.

Redditch, Batchley Estate: The Annual Conference on the first Saturday in September is often a spiritual uplift which heralds the commencement of special ministry meetings at various assemblies around the West Midlands during the winter months. This year there was profitable ministry from A. Leckie and D. West, with a week of good meetings conducted by A. Leckie following on.

SOUTH-EAST MIDLANDS

Kempston: The assembly had the privilege of a gospel stand at the annual 'Fun Day' arranged by the town council. Thousands of people were in the local park on a sunny Saturday, 29th August. Bibles, Scripture texts, books and tapes were available. Many tracts and gospel portions were distributed and poster-size gospel texts were prominently displayed. There were several extended conversations with men who acknowledged they had no peace with God. This was the third consecutive year that the assembly has had an opportunity to witness in this way to the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Northampton, Spencer Bridge Road: D. Gillies had two weeks gospel meetings in September. From the commencement unbelievers attended each night with at least one case of deep interest.

EAST ANGLIA

Norfolk Junior Bible Camp: 50 youngsters aged 10 to 13 years gathered for the camp. The days were well filled with many activities. The Bible sessions were lead by J. Gooding. The camp was characterised by a good team spirit and was well enjoyed by all.

Kings Lynn: The assembly have recently held a two week gospel tent campaign with David Dixon and Tony Renshaw. Children's meetings were held for four nights each week with 20-50 attending and the assembly have been encouraged in seeing an increase in numbers in the Sunday school. Adult meetings were also encouraging with people from the estate attending most evenings. The tent was pitched on a notorious housing estate. There were two instances of vandalism but the meetings were not affected. The local press gave good coverage and there were also opportunities to visit a number of schools.

Norfolk Show: The 'Good News Tent' with the theme 'Time to Take Stock' gave opportunities to distribute 6,000 tracts and also enrolment forms for the Postal Sunday School. Particularly encouraging was a contact with a girl at the show. Subsequently she wrote to say she had been saved.

GLOUCESTER, WILTSHIRE, SOMERSET AND AVON

S. Mountstevens conducted two weeks of children's meetings at Friarn Hall, Bridgewater, and whilst numbers were small much encouragement was given as far as behaviour and attention was concerned. A pleasing feature of these meetings was the good memorisation of the Bible verses given each night. At the end of the effort many children had memorised every verse, including one four-year-old and several under-eight-year-olds. "The entrance of thy Word giveth light". A good number of children chose Bibles as their prize.

Addresses PERSONALIA

All correspondence for the Gospel Hall, Ynys Street, Port Talbot, should now be addressed to Mr. R. Francis, 34 Villiers Street, Velindre, Port Talbot, South Wales, SA13 1YU.

Southport: Bethesda Chapel. Breaking of bread meeting now commences 10 a.m. The outreach work from Bethesda Hall in Kew Estate will be in a new hall from October 17th 1987. This will be known as Folkestone Road Chapel, Kew. It is hoped that an assembly will be established in Kew in the near future in the will of the Lord.

All correspondence for Victoria Hall, Torry, Aberdeen, should now be addressed to Mr Gordon M. Lindsay, 37 Gordon Place, Bridge of Don, Aberdeen, AB2 8RB.

Any believers visiting Israel who desire to break bread in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv, should contact Miss Kilbridge, Jerusalem (tel. 02 714692), or Mr Ostrovsky, Tel Aviv (tel. 03 302320), for time of meetings.

A.M.S. Gooding has suffered a heart attack whilst in Skelmanthorpe for ministry meetings and has cancelled meetings until the end of the year. Prayer will be appreciated for a full recovery.

With CHRIST

Mr JAMES R. CORDINER, on 4th July, aged 81. Prominent in business and christian circles in Aberdeen, he was for many years in fellowship in Victoria Hall, where he regularly engaged in worship, preached the gospel acceptably, and took a leading part in men's meetings and children's work. The large and representative company at the funeral indicated the high esteem in which our brother was held. Prayer is requested for his son and daughter and their families.

Mr WILLIAM HERD, on 20th July aged 68. Saved at the age of 16, baptised and received into fellowship in Shuttle Street, Paisley, Abingdon Hall, Glasgow, and latterly for 15 years in Mossknowe assembly, Cumbernauld. Our brother served the Lord faithfully in many ways, especially in song and testimony both here and overseas. Will be remembered for his kindly and encouraging disposition. Was dearly loved and respected by all. Remember his wife and family in prayer.

Mrs JEAN HAMILTON, on 27th August, aged 68. Our sister was saved as a girl in Blantyre where she was brought up, but was in Ebenezer Hall, Burnbank, for the past 35 years. Jean left the saints an example to follow. Her consistent godly life, and bright witness and the help she gave to so many throughout her lifetime will be long remembered. Remember her husband John in your prayers.

Mrs KATE JONES, on 5th September, aged 75. Our sister was saved as a girl in the mining village of Quarter but spent most of her adult life in Bolton (Lancs) where she attended Hebron assembly. After the death of her husband she came to Ebenezer Hall, Burnbank, where she spent the last 13 years of her life. Our sister had a life long interest in missionary work and was an active member in the Torch movement for the blind. Kate was a quiet and godly sister who will be sadly missed.

Miss JEAN GRACEY, on 4th September, after a long illness. Saved when a teenager and ever since in the assembly at Banbridge. She was a devoted member, teaching in the Sunday school; she also acted for many years as the caretaker. Only God knows how much the assembly owes to her. Her life could be summed up like Phebe "a servant of the church". The funeral service was from the Banbridge Gospel Hall.

Mrs MARJORIE PARKINSON, of Wallace Avenue assembly, Lisburn, on 6th September. Saved in her teens through the preaching of Mr. W.P. Nicholson. She had a great interest in the work of the Lord and was always keen to know how it was progressing. She is survived by four sons.

Mr WILLIAM BRANNAN, on 7th September, aged 74. Saved as a lad of 11 in old Loan Hall Stevenston, and baptised and received into fellowship at 18 and continuing steadfastly until his recent illness and homecall. He had a friendly disposition and witnessed faithfully to all he came into contact with. His way with children particularly suited him to be Sunday school superintendent for over 30 years, and his powerful voice was often heard in the open-air, particularly before the era of loudspeakers. Our brother's advice and conciliatory voice will be missed in oversight work. Remember his family in prayer.

Mrs ELIZABETH GORDON, on 22nd August, aged 62. Saved in early life in Musselburgh and for the past 29 years in happy fellowship with the believers in Holburn Gospel Hall, Aberdeen. Our sister bore a quiet, consistent testimony in the assembly and amongst those she worked with. The large gathering for the funeral showed the love and respect with which she was held. Remember her husband and the family in prayer.

IDA SIMPSON TURNER, aged 78 years, of the assembly at Trent Vale, called home 30th June 1987. Saved in early years, she was consistent in her interest in spiritual things and sought to be a true 'mother in Israel'. With her late husband, she was linked with the establishment of the Swan Lane Gospel Hall some 50 years ago; with whom too, outreaches to several homes for the elderly were initiated—and maintained to the present. She had a genuine care for the young people of the assembly as well as the witness to the women folk of the estate surrounding the hall.

ETHEL NIXON, called home 8th May 1987, aged 73 years, after a period of increasing weakness sustained with a sweet serenity of spirit and bright testimony to all with whom she had contact. Originally of the assembly at Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, for the last 25 years enjoyed and contributed to very happy fellowship at Trent Vale.

JAMES JOHNSTONE, on 28th July, aged 75. Saved in early teens, in fellowship over 50 years. Associated with Bethany Hall, Felton, Bristol, for a number of years. Latterly at Buckie. A quiet and consistent brother who attended all the assembly gatherings. Missed by all.

Mr GEORGE S. YOUNG, on 21st August 1987, aged 84. Saved in 1921, baptised and received into Bethany Hall assembly, Blantyre, in the same month. Except for six years in Canada, he was in Bethany Hall until 1982, when he was commended to Douglas assembly. He was an able teacher and preacher. He was Sunday school superintendent for 30 years and for many years Bible class leader. He and his wife were much given to hospitality.

Mrs GRACE SMILLIE, aged 80, on 11th September as the result of an accident. For 20 years associated with assembly now at Ardgowan Square, Greenock. She was a devoted follower of the Lord and daily active in His service. Seldom absent from the gatherings and regarded it as her duty and privilege to devote her life to the Lord. She will be remembered and missed especially for her love in ministering to the saints, her words of encouragement and her regular visits to those in need of any kind, bringing material and spiritual help to so many. We thank God for her life and example.

Mr ROBERT JONES, Belfast, on 13th July, age 87. Our brother was saved as a young man of 22 and when he went to the USA sought fellowship in one of the assemblies there. On returning home over fifty years ago he came into the fellowship of saints who meet in Ebenezer Gospel Hall where he remained until his homecall.

Mr VICTOR KELLY, Ballynahinch, on 17th August after a long illness, patiently borne. Aged 60. Saved in 1967, soon baptised and received into Ballynahinch assembly. A godly brother who helped much in the seeking of lost souls. Leaves a widow and daughter saved and two sons unsaved. Prayer for these valued.

LILY SLATER, on 7th September, aged 83. Saved in early life and in happy fellowship in Buckie assembly for over 50 years. Regular attendee at meetings until failing health and sight prevented this; witnessing to many by hand and lip. A beloved mother and grandmother.

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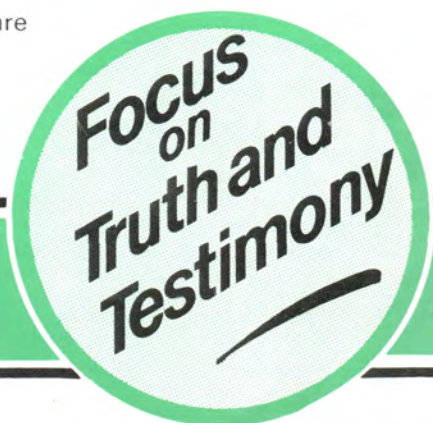
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EDITORIAL
Searchlight

As another year draws to a close we find ourselves evaluating the past and identifying the changes which have taken place. For some the circumstances of life have become so different. The familiar face with its loved features has gone and loneliness has become a constant companion. For others the personal state of health has changed and limitations are now a hindrance to the activities of the past. These and other similar factors remind us that the poet gave a true account of the ongoing course of life in saying 'change and decay in all around I see'.

At such times it is good to remember that in the sovereign purpose of God there are certain unchanging truths which are a bedrock upon which every child of God can rest.

1. God remains the same. The book of Lamentations was written by a servant of God who knew and felt the deep sorrow brought by change. He viewed the city of Jerusalem, once busy and thronged with people, now solitary in the distress caused by captivity (1:1). He felt the shame of the desecration of the sanctuary and the priesthood (4:1,2) and from the human standpoint all was so different, yet at the end of such a sad description there glows the bright gleam of the prophets statement as he lifts his eyes away from earth to the place of God's throne "Thou, O Lord remainest for ever; thy throne from generation to generation" (Lam 5:19). The

clear implication is that God has not abdicated His place of sovereignty and control, and even the captivity would not have taken place if God had wanted to prevent it. A true appreciation of the real purpose and plan of God in our lives will encourage us in our day of deprivation and sorrow. It is good to look above knowing that our God remaineth!

2. Christ remains the same. In the final chapter of the Hebrew epistle the saints are exhorted to recall the leaders who had spoken the Word of God to them. They were also to emulate the faith of these leaders. Likely some of them had by then gone on to their reward. What a cheer it is to learn in the same context that the whole issue of the lives of these men had been Jesus Christ and though the leaders themselves had gone, Christ is the same forever. Most are agreed that our Lord Jesus Christ is in view in ch. 1:11,12, thus this wilderness epistle is strongly teaching the permanence of Christ with and to His people until the end of the journey. Many of God's people in times of deep distress have rested upon the truth of ch. 13:5 "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee".

3. The Word of God remains the same. Every true believer has been born again of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God. Both Isaiah and Peter emphasise that whilst all may change yet the Word of the Lord endureth for ever (Isa 40:6,8; 1 Pet 1:24-26). The word of men is constantly subject to change but we rest upon truth that is unchanging which will guide us until the end of the journey.

J.R.B.

Zechariah (3)

by R. Deans, Blantyre

Third vision ch.2 The man with a measuring line. The third vision develops the thought of deliverance and glory. A reading of this second chapter will surely convince us that much of the prophecy concerns a yet future day. Such verses as 4 and 5 and 10 to 13 certainly take us to days of Kingdom Glory.

It would seem that the man with the measuring line suggests someone like a surveyor who is preparing for the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its precincts (See Ezek 40 vv.3,5 where there is a measuring, particularly associated with the building of the millennial temple). Measurements have their importance in conveying the Divine Mind as is evident from the instructions given regarding the building of both tabernacle and temple, but here (v.4) the Lord wishes to take the returning remnant's thoughts to something vaster and greater. In a day of small things the Lord would lift our hearts beyond that which can be measured to remind us that He is still "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph 3:20) and just as the prophet in v.5 points to a day of glory, so in Eph 3:21 the apostle reminds us of His Glory. In Rev 21 we have the holy Jerusalem measured which has height in addition to length and breadth. During the return of the captivity from Babylon under Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah, there was but a remnant whereas Zech 2:4 anticipates a day when Jerusalem shall be inhabited like towns without walls. Further, Nehemiah

found it necessary to rebuild walls, but in Zech 2:4-5 not only is the city without walls but the Lord will be unto it a wall of fire round about and will be the glory in the midst of it. There never has been a day like this in the history of Jerusalem which takes us on to the time spoken of by the Lord Himself (see Matt 25:31).

Now there is given to us (Zech 2:6-7) the true return of the Lord's people (see Jer 23:5-8; Jer 51:6; Rev 18:4). There have been times of partial recovery, even as in the days of Zechariah, but the Lord would ever have His people in anticipation of the fuller day of glory. So with His people of the present day: we likewise are granted days of recovery and encouragement and what could encourage us more than to be reminded of the coming day of glory.

Babylon (origin Babel in Gen 11) has ever been a man made mixture of political and religious power which has its final overthrow in Rev 18. The call in Zech 2:7 was first heard by Abram (Gen 12:1) and finally by the Lord's people of Rev 18:4. To us in this present day the call is no less clear when Babylon's daughter of ecumenicism is making inroads into The Lord's Assembly—"Come out of her My people".

Having regathered and delivered His people and with "The Glory" now in Jerusalem the nations will be dealt with (see Zech 2:8-9; Matt 25:31-46). The closing verses of this chapter undoubtedly describe the kingdom glory of "that day".

Fourth vision ch.3 Jeshua the high priest. We have, in this vision, Jeshua the high priest, clothed in filthy garments as a picture of the nation in its sinfulness and state away from God. They had been called to be a kingdom of priests, dependent upon their obedience to the voice of the Lord and in their keeping of His Covenant (Exod 19:5,6) but this they had failed to do. Satan (the Adversary) is ever present in these conditions and we have previously thought in the first vision of the Myrtle trees with a link to Esther 2:7 where Haman (the Adversary—Esther 7:6) is present. Despite satanic opposition divine choice cannot be altered and we have this choice mentioned in v.2 of our chapter. The brand plucked out of the fire can possibly be better understood by reading Amos ch.4 and particularly verse 11 where it is seen that events took place with a view to having the people return unto the Lord. So in Zech 3:2 the brand plucked out of the fire is the returning remnant, with a partial fulfilment then and its true fulfilment yet to be. A reading of Rom ch.9:10 and 11 teaches clearly concerning the divine choice and of the brand plucked out of the fire.

Jeshua is to receive a change of raiment, his iniquity has passed from him and the promise of v.7 is similarly conditional to that of Exod 19:5-6. We have then a picture of the remnant cleansed, with iniquity pardoned and restoration to the position of a kingdom of priests (see Isa 40:2 for the pardoning of her iniquity and of the glorious days that follow). The One promised in Isa 40 is now promised as the branch in Zech 3:8, the truth of which is more fully developed in Zech ch.6, and brings before us the kingdom of priests in relationship with the king priest

Himself (see Rev 5:9-10 RV which reads "...didst purchase unto God with Thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest *them* to be unto our God a kingdom and priests and *they* reign upon the earth").

The Stone of v.9 is the same One as The Branch and upon Him we see seven eyes (see Zech 4:10; Rev 5:6). There are several references to Christ as a stone and if we take the first and last references in our bible we will have something to build upon in separate study (see Gen 49:24; 1 Pet 2:4,8). Joel 2:28,29 teaches of the pouring out of the Spirit and v.22 refers to the vine and fig tree reminding us of the seven eyes of Zech 3:9 and the conditions of v.10. The fourth vision closes with a further anticipation of "that day" with every man under the vine (Israel in her fruitfulness at last and the joy associated with it) and under the fig tree (Israel nationally)—See John 1:48; also Mic 4:4 in particular, and the other verses of Mic 4 which clearly anticipate the time when the Lord shall reign.

To be continued.

The Jew

Amazing race! deprived of land and laws,
 A general language and a public cause:
 With a religion none can obey,
 With a reproach that none can take away:
 A people still whose common ties are gone,
 Who, mixed in every race, are lost in none.

George Crabbe

(Num 23:9; Deut 4:25-27)

Balaam's Parables (7)

by P. Harding, Manchester

The last of the four parables of Balaam (Num 24:15-24) brings before us the world's total and final collapse under the judgments of God. It is occupied exclusively with the future, and is divided into four prophecies, each part commencing with the words "he took up this parable and said" (vv.15,20,21,24). The first of these prophecies refers to the two nations that were related to Israel—Edom and Moab (vv.17-19): the second refers to Amalek, Israel's first enemy (v.20): the third deals with the Kenites who were allied to Israel (vv.21-22): and the fourth has reference to the great world powers of that day (vv.23-24).

At the commencement of the third parable Balaam describes himself as "the man whose eyes are open", "which heard the words of God", "which saw the vision of the Almighty" and "falling into a trance, but having his eyes open" (Num 24:3-4). In the fourth parable he adds to this description "and knew the knowledge of the Most High" (v.16). The Most High is God's well known Millennium title. How solemn to note the manner in which Balaam introduces himself and yet, with all his privileges and knowledge, he was found opposed to the people of God and died in rebellion against God (Num 31:8,16). How dreadful! It is so possible to have a great knowledge of the things of God and yet be an enemy of God.

The prophecy commences with the coming of the Messiah. "I shall see Him, but not now", i.e. He has not already appeared. "I shall behold Him, but not nigh", i.e. He is not to appear immediately, but in some future day—the latter days (v.14). "There shall come a Star out of Jacob"—a star is the symbol of imperial greatness and splendour and here it represents the future Ruler of Israel. "And a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel"—in Gen 49:10 the reference is to the line of Judah, whereas here it is to the nation. The Sceptre is an emblem of regal authority and here it refers to the One in Whom that authority resides. Thus, the Star speaks of the Messiah in His imperial greatness and splendour, and the Sceptre of the Messiah in His absolute authority and sovereignty. He it is who will destroy His enemies and raise up Israel to prominence.

The first enemies of Israel mentioned are Moab and Edom (vv.17-18). Moab stands first for two reasons:—(1) Balak, who was being addressed, was king of the Moabites and therefore the future of his people is mentioned first, (2) the hostility of Moab is emphasised in Balak's desire to curse Israel. Thus Moab shall be smitten—"For in this mountain shall the hand of the Lord rest, and Moab shall be trodden down under Him, even as straw is trodden down for the dung hill" (Isa 25:10)

“Sheth” means tumult and thus the reference is to the subjugation of all the sons of confusion.

“Edom shall be a possession, Seir also”—Edom is the name of the people, Seir the name of the country. Edom, that refused Israel even a passage through their land, shall become the possession of their enemies (Amos 9:12). They opposed Israel and became their enemy but Israel shall “acquire strength” or “do valiantly” and Edom shall fall (Isa 11:14). Again, the emphasis is upon the Ruler out of Jacob, the Messiah—the Lord Jesus Christ. Keil says, “City is employed in a collective and general sense, as in Psa 72:16. Out of every city in which there is a remnant of Edom, it shall be destroyed” (Isa 63:1-3; Jer 49:17-22; Joel 3:19). Although Edom was near to Israel in blood relationship yet their enmity against Israel was persistent. In some way they took vengeance against the house of Judah and took advantage of Israel’s calamities showing their hatred and enmity. In a coming day, Israel, so shamefully treated, will be used to inflict judgment upon Edom (Ezek 25:12-14).

The second prophecy in this parable deals with Amalek. The expression “the first of the nations” (v.20) does not indicate they were the first nation in

time or the most distinguished nation, but that they were the first to attack Israel after their deliverance out of Egypt (Exod 17:8-16). The result of such hostility was that God declared “I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven” (Exod 17:14). Thus, Israel was commanded to blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven, when they were established in the land (Deut 25:17-19). In the reign of Saul there was only a partial fulfilment of this and Saul lost the kingdom because of his disobedience to the Lord’s command (1 Sam 15). This is a solemn lesson to all who are marked by disobedience. The Amalekites who were spared were subdued by David (2 Sam 8:12) but not destroyed (see 1 Chron 4:42-43 and Esther 3:5-6—Haman descended from Agag — 1 Sam 15:20). The end of Amalek will be utter destruction.

Surely in these judgments we see clearly the righteous dealings of God with men—“whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Gal 6:7). Here that principle is seen relative to the judgment of nations. This, however, is a reminder that we cannot act as we like without suffering the consequences. We do well to govern our lives by the Word of God.

To be continued.

Harold St. John once wrote, “In a noble palace in the city of Venice, I once saw a magnificent ceiling beautifully painted, but the chamber was so lofty that the visitor could only see a confused vision of gorgeous colours. In the centre of the room stood a table inlaid with a horizontal mirror so skilfully placed that as one gazed into it, the picture above was reflected in its full beauty of form and hue.” It is as we gaze into the mirror of Scripture that the greatness and glory of our Lord comes into full view.

(John 5:39; 2 Cor 3:18)

Indian Christian

Misunderstood

Texts (11)

by John J. Stubbs, Mayfield

“Oh...That they would consider their latter end.”

Deut. 32:29 is a text usually quoted to enforce the urgent need to prepare for death and eternity and often is referred to in the preaching of the gospel. While by application a verse may be put to good use even in illustration of gospel truths, yet we must avoid the mistake of assuming this is the intended meaning of the text.

When Moses in his song says of the nation, “Oh...that they would consider their latter end”, he is not reminding them of the awful end of mortal man. This was not in his mind at all, for a close consideration of the passage will show that this oft quoted saying clearly points to the latter day glory of Israel. This we see down at v.43. Moses prophesied firstly of the judgment of God that would come upon the nation for their apostasy (vv.15-28) and next of the vengeance that is to be upon their adversaries, issuing in God being merciful to His land and to His people (vv.29-43).

The latter end in the passage then is Israel's and not the unsaved sinner. It is not the sinner through death going into eternal perdition, but the nation of Israel coming into her glorious future inheritance in the land of Palestine. That this is so is also seen in that Moses regretted greatly that they could be so unmindful of these wonderful things in

store for them in their latter times. If only they had considered these, Moses argues, they would have been supplied with powerful incentives to advance in triumph over the foe: “How should one chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight” (v.30). Thus it is by going on to the next verse that we see the connection, namely the great possibilities for the nation if only they had been more occupied with their latter day glories and God's purposed blessings for them. Here we see then what a help occupation with these things would have been to the nation. They were intended to be an incentive. The knowledge of such millennial glories would do far more for them than the awful knowledge of impending doom.

If the latter end of v.29 was indeed the latter end of the sinner it should fill such a person with alarm, fear and a getting ready to meet God and certainly not as here, joy, courage and power to overcome impossible odds.

Here is another case of a general usage of a verse becoming fixed in the mind as to the meaning and of course when this happens it is hard to dislodge such an idea. By all means continue if you will in making application of “the latter end” as a warning to the sinner, but please do not let us miss its proper contextual meaning or otherwise we shall rob it of a beautiful and practical force.

We would do no injustice to the text if we said that these earthly glories were really to them what the hope of the resurrection, the coming of the Lord and the joys of heaven should be to the believer today, i.e. a great incentive. What a difference there would be in the life of the believer if there were more contemplation of all that is in store for us. It is as the hymn writer says:

“The eternal glories gleam afar,
To nerve our faint endeavour,
So now to watch, to work, to war,
And then to rest forever.”

The reader, it is hoped, will readily agree that by asking: What is the latter end of Deut. 32:29?, will find an answer in the context that not only perhaps will surprise but give a precious aspect of truth that cannot but have its

practical lessons for us today. So the Word of God when closely examined always reveals its treasures.

Our verse then is not a gospel verse though it may be applied in that direction. It refers not to a sinner's woeful doom, but a nation's wonderful deliverance and destiny. May the Lord help us to consider our latter end. It is said of Israel, “There is hope in thine end” (Jer 31:17). For us as believers we, along with the apostle Paul, rejoice in hope of the glory of God (Rom 5:2). If we do what Israel should have done we will then be greatly encouraged by the coming glories and be able to accomplish what otherwise we could not in our own strength. The glorious future is designed to have a present enabling effect upon us. Well may we say of believers too today, “Oh that they would consider their latter end”.

Letter to a Friend

Dear . . .

I have just returned from the Gospel Meeting, conscious of being deeply thankful that there were, to my knowledge, no unbelievers there. Before you accuse me of gross heresy, let me try to explain this admittedly startling response to what should be a glorious proclamation of divine grace.

Simply and sadly, the gospel of God's Son was **not** preached at our

Hall tonight. And, tragically, this is fast becoming a regular problem. What **was** preached was a muddle that would fail either to enlighten an unbeliever or edify a saint. It was a cold, stale recitation of texts with no attempt to make the message clear and plain, to warm the heart or stir the conscience. I fear we have to face the fact that many Gospel Meetings are, generally speaking, time-wasters, characterised by perfunctory preaching, a total unbelief that God will

save anyone, and little or no effort to invite the needy in. Is it any wonder we see no blessing? Is it any surprise that those who, by the grace of God, **are** saved soon become disenchanted with the assembly and seek fellowship elsewhere?

So often have I come away from such a meeting desperately grieved that I feel driven to do a little thinking about the whole matter. As I know you have a concern for evangelism, I am taking the liberty of sharing these scattered thoughts with you.

At the root of the disease, it seems to me, is a failure to recognise our solemn responsibility before God to proclaim faithfully, clearly, fervently, His message to men. We are commissioned to be the Saviour's witnesses (Acts 1:8), left in a Christless world to represent His interests (Mark 5:18-20). That demands obedience. I am struck by the fact that Abraham, seeking a suitable bride for Isaac, sent his best man (Gen 24:2). Why are we so content to put men on the gospel platform who should never be there? Have we forgotten the clear NT teaching about spiritual gifts? It is a fundamental principle in God's Word that not all believers have identical abilities—indeed, the whole point of the body metaphor in 1 Corinthians 12 is to show that each saint has a different function. After all, we know that an ear isn't an eye, and a foot isn't a hand. Of course, each one is needed in its place, but just imagine the confusion that would result if feet tried to be hands and ears eyes! Alas, just such confusion commonly reigns in many assemblies, and brethren responsible for inviting speakers seem to work (dare I say it?) on

the principle of what we might call the Old-Pals Club ("Dear me. We need a speaker for next Sunday...I'll just give old Jimmy a ring. He'll do the job").

Would men run their businesses like that? Is not the assembly of God and the truth of God worthy of our very best endeavours, rather than what appears to be almost a contemptuous indifference? Paul reminds us that gospel preaching is a priestly activity, a spiritual sacrifice to God (Rom 15:16). Can we therefore offer so thoughtlessly, so cheaply, so easily, that which costs us nothing (2 Sam 24:24)? We must pray earnestly that elders will be granted a sense of their heavy responsibility to provide for solid gospel preaching. They will, I am convinced, be held accountable at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Choosing speakers is a prayerful, spiritual exercise, and if not undertaken in that light is worse than useless.

Another related error is the common assumption that every Bible Teacher is also automatically an Evangelist. I find nothing in Scripture to support this strange notion. Certainly some men have more than one gift, Paul being the great example, but that hardly justifies us expecting a visiting Teacher always to be a powerful presenter of the gospel.

Even more disturbing, to my mind, is the fact that most of the poor gospel preaching I hear comes from older men, men who once, perhaps, were able, fresh, zealous, alive for God, but who now seem tired, mechanical, careless, lacking both a coherent message and a compelling manner. A 1936 book by George

Goodman opens with these words:

This booklet has been written at the request of several persons experienced in Christian service. The reason in each instance being stated thus, "Our young men are not preaching the Gospel".

I am afraid that an equivalent publication today would need to point the finger of anxiety in the opposite direction. Experienced men who should know better are at the vanguard of departure.

A while ago, a well-known brother was asked to take a baptismal service at our Gospel Hall. To a hall packed with unsaved folk, many probably there for the first time, he waffled (there's no other word for it) about himself, about his ministry, about anything except the plain truth of the gospel. It has to be said, gently but firmly: if I have been invited to preach the gospel and fail to do so, I have not discharged my responsibility. There is, therefore, blood on my hands (Ezek 3:18).

What is wrong with us? Are we so unaccustomed to outsiders coming in that we have effectively changed our so-called Gospel Meetings to Ministry? Have we grown so cold that we have lost all concern for the unsaved? Have we settled down into such a weary but comfortable routine that fiery, dynamic preaching would actually embarrass us? Have we completely excised from our Bible verses like Phil 1:27; 1 Cor 8:22-23 or 1 Cor 9:16? God forbid!

The answer, of course, is not to plunge desperately into new methods

and techniques for their own sake, but to return to what we so glibly claim is our guide—the Word of God. Were we to re-read Acts and Romans, we should discover that Paul and his companions communicated the gospel (a **full** gospel) with stark clarity, using words that people could understand, with an infectious enthusiasm, an amazing stickability that refused to be daunted by opposition, and a tender love that lasted beyond our statutory one-hour Evangelistic Meeting. If those of us who preach would aim at simplicity (think how lucid the Lord Jesus was), authority (for the news is God's, not man's), and urgency (the time is short), instead of trying to impress the believers in the gathering with our ability to "get the gospel" out of the most unlikely places, we should be taking a step in the right direction. If elders thought more carefully about the speakers they invite, and were prepared **not** to have back men who fail in their duty, and, at the same time took the trouble to look about for servants of God who obviously **do** have a real gospel ministry, that would be another. And if all the believers in an assembly came to the Prayer Meeting with a burden for the lost, a willingness to pray, a determination to invite their friends and neighbours in, that would be a third. As always, the change must start with me!

Forgive such thinking out loud. Please tell me if you disagree. But let us at least pray for the testimony of our respective assemblies, that many might be saved and that God might be glorified.

Sincerely yours in Christ Jesus

Question

All questions should be sent to the Editor, Believer's Magazine, Office, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and should have the name and address of sender. Consideration of space may prevent the publication of answers

QUESTION

Could you please comment on the three questions put to Peter by the Lord Jesus in John 21. Do the words for love differ and how do the same words fit into John 3:35 and 5:20?

ANSWER

In the first two questions in vv. 15, 16 our Lord Jesus Christ used the word 'agapao' which usually refers to divine love. Peter in his answer used the weaker word 'phileo' which is often found in scripture describing human affection. In the third question (v. 17) our Lord uses Peter's own word 'phileo' and Peter responds with the same word again. An extra note is given in v. 17 indicating the grief which Peter felt because he was asked a third time.

We thus see that after the Lord had asked regarding the high divine love to which Peter could not rise, then the Lord in grace takes him up on his own confession using the word which Peter had used consistently. It is then that Peter confesses that the Lord knew all things and knew the measure of his affection. All this showed Peter and now teaches us, that our Lord Jesus Christ knows every part of our hearts and knows how much we really love Him. We can deceive others and sometimes even deceive our own hearts but we can never deceive Him.

John 3:35 speaks of the love of the Father towards the Son, the strong word for divine love being used. The same word is also found in John 10:17; 15:9; and 17:24. All of these passages refer to the love of the Father for the Son of God. How fitting it is in this gospel to hear the constant refrain that the Father's affections are, and ever have been, towards the Son.

The only exception, as far as this word being used is concerned, is in John 5:20 where the word 'phileo' is used. It should be noticed that whilst 'phileo' is more often used to denote human affection it is not always so. In John 5 the context is describing the equality and harmony which exists between the Father and the Son. It is perhaps for this reason that tender affection is being stressed. Our Lord Jesus lived in the good of the affections of the Father's heart.

J.R. Baker

QUESTION

Please explain 1 Pet 1:7.

ANSWER

In this section the matter of trial is being dealt with. Here we should distinguish between temptation, which never comes from God (see Jam 1:13) and testing which does come from God. Peter is showing that the suffering through which the dispersed saints (v. 1) were passing was being used of God to provide experience in the testing of their faith. Faith must be tested otherwise it could not be testified to. Thus when our faith is exposed to trial it does not signify God's displeasure but rather indicates His interest in us. Just as gold is tried in the fire to remove the dross so our faith which is much more precious than gold will be tested and the result will be with a view to praise and honour and glory in the future. The appearing alluded to would point us on beyond the Judgment seat of Christ, where rewards will be given, to the day when the open display of those rewards will be enjoyed. Many passages of NT scripture do this, taking us on to view the kingdom aspect of the enjoyment of responsibility and reward.

J.R. Baker

Light From An Old Lamp

By the late Harold F. Wildish,
Jamaica

The Christian's Part in Politics.

In these startling days when world happenings move swiftly, and everything around makes the watchful Christian cry "Maran-atha", it is well to remember the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Tim 2:1-4... "I exhort therefore, that, FIRST OF ALL, supplications, prayers, intercession, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in authority: that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour: Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth".

During recent years, crowned heads have grown fewer, old forms of government have changed: and the Daily Press is now full of Soviet, Fascist, Nazi and Republican news. Many watchers can discern the shaping of the ten-kingdomed League of Nations, so soon to form the revived Roman Empire, where iron and clay are mixed but not united— (Dan 2).

We know that "Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour", but is there not a danger of our failing to play our part in the political life of our land here on earth? The measure of peace, order and safety we enjoy, comes to us by way of the men to whom God has entrusted authority: and though it is often impossible to agree altogether with their judgments, and deplorable to see

how rarely God is acknowledged in their schemes, yet, like Daniel, we know that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will" (Dan 4:25).

As "strangers and pilgrims" (1 Pet 2:11), away from, but journeying to our heavenly home, we have to tarry for a time in this world, and it is the mind of our Lord that "every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for...the powers that be are ordained of God... Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake" (Rom 13:15). The "quiet and peaceable life toward God and men" seems dependant on the part we play in politics, for right through Divine Record we find men of prayer, unseen by the world's leaders, accomplishing by supplication, prayer, intercession and giving of thanks far more than this world dreams of.

Supplication "I exhort first of all, *supplication*". From the first mention of the word in Scripture, we may well get the key to its general use. The thought is that of *requesting God for the averting of evil*. In 1 Sam 13:12, Saul, with a trembling following of about 600 men: faced by an angry Philistine host, foolishly offers the sacrifice in the absence of Samuel fearing to face the battle unless *supplication* has been made unto the Lord. The evil was averted, though his impatience seems to have lost him the kingdom.

In days of trial, depression, sickness and evil, what comfort the child of God finds in the exhortation and promise "In nothing be anxious but in everything by prayer and *supplication* with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God which passes all understanding, shall guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus". But let us not forget the need of kings, statesmen, and leaders of men, on whom the responsibility rests of guiding the nations in these evil days, when crisis after crisis arises: rumours of war abound: and so often men seem powerless to stem the rising tide of lawlessness.

Prayer "I exhort...first of all, supplications, *prayers*". From the first use of the word in Gen 20:7 and 17, where we read that Abraham *prayed* for Abimelech's healing, the thought is that of *requesting God for good*, though in its wider use the term embraces the other three.

How clearly the Apostle James tells us, "if any man lack...let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally...for every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights". Daily we delight to make known our personal and family needs, but let us heed the exhortation, "for kings, and for all that are in authority", for how much they need Divine wisdom and help in these perilous days! Besides which, the burden of our prayers should always be, that they might be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

Intercession An intercessor, is one who stands between to plead, and the word, only used eleven times in Holy Scripture, conveys the thought of

requesting God for the need of others, first used prophetically of Christ in Isa 53:12. "He made *intercession* for the transgressors", and later in the NT, of our Great High Priest's work for us in the Glory.

What do we know of intercession? The dangers and needs of our own loved ones and acquaintances may send us to our knees to plead: but how often do the failings of those in authority burden our hearts so that we are driven to our knees on their behalf?

If criticism and prayerful intercession are thrown into the scales which will show greater weight, how those words shame us in Isa 59:16, "The Lord saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no *intercessor*".

Giving of thanks Day by day, it is the habit of most christians to give thanks for the spiritual blessings and daily mercies they enjoy. Never could they forget to thank God for His unspeakable gift, nor for His goodness and mercy which follow them. In 2 Sam 22:50, David could *give thanks* as he thought of the Lord's kindness through all the days of his life—days full of testing, but he had proved God to be his Rock, his Fortress, his Shield and his Deliverer from all his enemies!

God's daily mercies are for all. His sun shines upon the field of both just and unjust. How often do we remember to lift up our hearts to God for His mercy to those who rise to face the day, who eat their food, who reap their crops, who enjoy good health, without any thanks to the Giver of all good gifts? How often do we remember to thank God for righteous decisions and wise policies enacted by the powers that be?

Those uplifted hands of Moses seen by God on the hill-top, won the victory (Exod 17:12). Weary work it will always be, but may our hands be kept steady until the setting of the sun. The World's Day is closing, and there can be no lasting peace until "Thy kingdom

come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven", but let us heed the words of the great christian statesman, "to pray and praise for all men and for king, and for all that are in authority: that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty".

Going Through the Alphabet with the Lord Jesus

by Nelson McDonald, Halfway

Paper 1: The Letters A to D

Psa 104:34, "*My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord*". Meditation is to the soul what digestion is to the body. It is not the quantity taken that really counts, but the amount assimilated. The first mention of meditate is in Gen 24:63 and the last in 1 Tim 4:15. Here is a little meditation on the Lord Jesus that has been sweet to one's own soul and brings the gladness of the Lord with it: Going Through the Alphabet with the Lord Jesus.

1. *The Alpha of All Acceptance.* He commends the outshining of His grace as that wherein He has accepted us in the Beloved (Eph 1:6). He has "perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Heb 10:14). In what sense has He perfected forever them He sanctifies? It is not as to growth, nor maturity, nor morally, nor spiritually, nor as in any other thing. It is in this: the moment I received the Lord Jesus as my own, personal Saviour I received a personal acceptance on the ground of a perfect offering, or sacrifice, or atonement

made. What a Saviour, and what an acceptance we have received in Him. All glory to His name.

2. *The Benefactor of All Blessing.* He has "blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph 1:3). "The blessing of the Lord" (Prov 10:22) always enriches the soul, and "He addeth no sorrow with it"; or, as the RV and JND render it: "toil addeth nothing thereto". That suggests that no matter how much I work, or what position I attain to in this life, or how ambitious I am in this life, or how much wealth I have, it adds nothing to the blessing of the Lord which is there already. It enriches us, whether we are laid aside in hospitals, or homes, or institutions, or in loneliness. The blessing of the Lord is always there to enrich us, whether we are enjoying it or not: it is God's desire and prerogative, or peculiar privilege, to bless His people, whether they deserve it or not (Num 6:24-27), "The Lord bless thee"—that is the *Satisfaction of His Portion* (Psa 107:9): "and keep thee"—

that is the *Security of His Promises* (2 Tim 1:12): “The Lord make his face shine upon thee”—that is the *Sunshine of His Presence* (Matt 17:2: Rev 22:4): “and be gracious unto thee”—that’s the *Sufficiency of His Provision* (Rev 22:21): “The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee”—that’s the *Strength of His Protection* (Song 5:15: Isa 12:2: 26:4): “and give thee peace”—that’s the *Serenity of His Peace* (John 20:19): “And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel”—that’s the *Sealing of His People*. And it’s still the same today, as Eph 1:13,14 reminds us: He has sealed us, and given us the earnest (or a little foretaste) of future glory. What a people we ought to be for our God, in a world like this, in the light of such blessings.

3. *The Christ of All Compassion*. Five times in Matthew and Mark it says “he was moved with compassion” (Matt 9:36: 14:14: 18:27: Mark 1:41: 6:34), and five times in the Gospels that “he had compassion” (Matt 15:32: 20:34: Mark 5:19: 8:2: Luke 7:13). Compassion just means that He had pity and

sympathy and tender mercy: His very inward feelings yearned for them. Never was compassion like His seen in anyone, but only in the Lord Jesus: and we should enjoy it and thank God for showering it upon people like us.

4. *The Dispeller of All Darkness*. See John 1:4,5,9. As the poet puts it:

Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts,
Thou fount of life, Thou light of men,
From the best bliss that earth imparts
We turn unfilled to Thee again.

“He was the true light” (John 1:9) just like the sun in the heavens, shining for the common benefit of all, whether they appreciate it or enjoy it or not (John 8:12). And the benefit of walking in the light is, as 1 John 1:5-7 puts it, “we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin”. So may we seek while here to walk in the light and enjoy the benefits of such a fellowship.

SONSHIP ETERNAL

Dawned there a day when He, ever began to be
What He now is, and will be forever?
Deep in the Virgin’s womb: wrapped round with natal gloom.
Did He begin to be?—Say of Him never!

Whence sonship’s origin: linked with the sphere of sin?
Questioned by sinners: can Saints discover?
Barefoot and bowed head: dare we the quest begin,
Raptly to pry within, this Ark uncover?

If He began to be, Son in Humanity,
Christ needed Mary e’er Son He could be!
Profound profanity, implied impiety,
Infernal infamy: from which we flee!

Constant and endless be, ever His Deity.
E’er time began, never from Sonship free.
Son from Eternity, Son in Humanity,
Son to Eternity, He’ll ever be!

John Campbell, Larkhall

BOOKS



Words of Faith, Hope and Love and More Words of Faith, Hope and Love. Both by John Dickie. Published by Gospel Tract Publications at £3.45 each, plus postage. 350 pages, hardback.

These two books are a series of letters and extracts from letters written by the late John Dickie of Irvine, during the last eight years of his life when he was housebound because of illness and bodily weakness.

The first volume is a collection of 81 letters and poems written to the late John Todd of Dublin at the close of the last century. C.H. Spurgeon, Henry Dyer and J.R. Caldwell all bore testimony to the high standard of spiritual worth in the letters. Indeed, J.R. Caldwell commented, "Their effect on me every time I take them up is to humble me in the dust, and yet to draw me towards the One who is their theme throughout".

The second volume is in a different format. Although the substance is from letters, the details are classified in a wide range of subjects. There are, amongst many, fourteen letters under the heading of Christian Service and twenty-six letters under the title of Sanctified Affliction.

Both of these books are ideal for lifting in spare moments, read, and laid aside until some other short opportunity arises. The present reviewer is of the opinion that both books should be on the shelves of every believer's library. They are a real uplift, especially to those who, in frailty of body may be looking for an additional source of encouragement.

Gospel and Wisdom by Graeme Goldsworthy. Published by Paternoster Press; price £4.95

This book examines the OT wisdom literature, especially Job, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes and shows their relationship to the themes of God as Creator and Saviour and their goal reached in Christ. Wisdom literature is the author's special field of interest.

The author, an Anglican clergyman, is orthodox in his approach to Scripture. He accepts the divine inspiration of Scripture and consequentially the canon of Scripture as we acknowledge it—an important acknowledgement in treating this theme. However, he would be prepared to consider the possibility of a book like Job being the work of more than one author, each being borne along by the Spirit to convey God's word to men. The present reviewer recognises the dangers to which that approach might lead. Nevertheless, only to a very limited extent would the content of this logically-developed, clearly-presented book cause such concerns. Here and there is a questionable comment such as Christ's life "was lived for us in order to provide a perfect righteousness for us that counts for our acceptance with God" or "According to the NT the day of the Lord has come in Jesus Christ". But such controversial statements are few. In the main the fundamentals of sin and salvation are clear.

The author is writing for the thoughtful, if not scholarly, among God's people. He addresses a theme which in the majority of assemblies is given scant attention. The 202 pages offer much to stimulate the mind but care should be taken not to put it into the hands of those immature in the faith.

REGIONS · BEYOND ·

Worlds Apart—Zaire

by Alan Park, Pweto

This article presents our impressions of assembly testimony and activity in the Pweto region in SE Zaire, where we have now been for five months. Our experience to date is limited, and perhaps after several years we might write differently. However, we do have the benefit at present of minds unaccustomed to life here and so perhaps feel more acutely those deviations from accepted principles and practices we have been used to in our home assemblies.

Extent of Assembly Presence. In Lubumbashi, which is the main town some 300 miles from Pweto, there are 14 assemblies, and within a 30 mile radius of the town there are a further 60 assemblies. These vary in size from 20 to 150 in fellowship. In the country areas there is also a good coverage, including a healthy number of new assemblies. In Pweto, which consists of 4 villages covering some 6 square miles, there are 3 assemblies.

Assembly Extension. In our area many churches have been planted as a result of people hearing the Gospel through preaching and visitation when attending hospital. Upon returning to their villages they start to spread the message, and the growing number of believers seek help from a local assembly. This help tends to come from the Chamfubu assembly where there is one evangelist who travels around on his bicycle.

Strength of Assembly Testimony. The message of Christ has come to a people among whom lying, stealing, and adultery are ways of life. They do not have the benefit of a long-standing culture based, however tenuously, upon the Christian ethic, therefore when people turn to Christ they are not giving up the occasional theft or lie, but are being asked to completely and radically change their culture. I believe this is why there is such widespread evidence in the assemblies here of those very practices which should have been abandoned at conversion. Specifically, these problems include adultery, theft, and witchcraft.

The extent of the adultery problem is exemplified in a nearby assembly where two men, known and admired for their integrity and strength of character, by myself included, have both been out of fellowship for several years. The first is a village chief who was an elder and a very fine teacher of the Word until he took a second wife. Similarly the other is a very fine man who committed adultery. When even the prominent men in the assemblies are commonly succumbing to temptation it sets a very worrying precedent for the saints, and undoubtedly compromises the strength of assembly testimony before the unsaved.

Convictions of Assembly Testimony. The widespread prevalence of poverty gives many people a sense of hopelessness and resignation regarding their situation, and frequently they say that this is God's lot for the black races. The ability to accept and tolerate spiritually contrary practices is also evident in assembly life. Situations are allowed to exist which to us would be totally unacceptable, but are soon accepted by the locals as normal! This rather resigned attitude does not make for good plodders, people who accept the trials of everyday life as challenges to be overcome through the power of Christ. Consequently the meetings which we have at Chamfubu have very fluctuating numbers, due to the lack of conviction.

The influence of Missionaries. The presence of missionaries in this area over a long period of time has provided a solid foundation of teaching and established Scriptural principles which, by their very nature, are foreign to this country. On the other hand there is a sense in which missionary influence is detrimental to healthy assembly growth, *and that is because of the difference in living standards! We have a vehicle, three meals a day, and two pairs of shoes, and many people spend their time wishing that they too had what we have, or actively trying to obtain it. I believe the problem of wanting to live like missionaries live will always exist.*

The presence of missionaries in addition to providing a goal for some, other than Christ-likeness, can also lead to dependence upon what the missionary can do for them. Typically this would include transportation to a common destination, collecting of goods in town, and even financial aid in providing work. All these things are of course nice to do for your new neighbours, many of whom are in your local fellowship; but what you do for some most definitely makes others jealous, and very soon one can be left propping up the whole village!

If it is the goal of every missionary to establish an independent christian gathering, it must take a lot of wisdom to establish precisely what action is helpful to the people. *Pray that the Lord may grant us this wisdom.*

Medical Work. The tremendous volume of work which has been done in the field of healthcare has helped to reach and led to the salvation of thousands of souls in this area. The evangelical work at Chamfubu Hospital has been demonstrated to be far and away the most effective method *at present* of reaching people from remote villages. There is no evidence to suggest that those who confess faith at the hospital, are any less earnest than those who have been reached in other ways.

There is however at present tremendous government pressure for the missionaries to abandon the spiritual aspect of their hospital work on the basis that it is only a part anyway of their total mission outreach. The government is seeking to spread its influence over this work executively by instructing what and how things should be done, while at the same time still relying completely on the christians at home to provide the finance for the operation of the hospitals! The increased work-load caused by the new bureaucracy, and the lack of trained staff, has the effect of reducing the amount of time available for other mission activities.

We have all to remember that medical work is in addition to, and therefore not a substitute for, the precedents set by the Apostles for missionary activity!

Zaire has an open door for the preaching of the Gospel, and there is a desperate need for suitable people to come out and preach and teach the most basic and fundamental of doctrines.

The Future. Is the outlook bleak? Can we ever expect the assemblies in this area to be independent of foreign missionaries? At present, in addition to the very necessary tasks of bridge-building (to the people), and fire-fighting (in the church), I believe our activities must be orientated to providing members of the indigenous population with solid consecutive teaching, and leaving them to practice Scriptural principles in their own society, and then to move on and teach others. We must avoid the inherent problem of dependence upon the missionary, because the life and authority of the local church can only come from the one Lord Himself.

The Preaching of the Gospel

An old gospeller once advised his younger brethren to preach:

- “A full gospel – Christ and nothing else.
- A plain gospel-- Christ and nothing more.
- A pure gospel -- Christ and nothing else.”

A preacher once said, “I preached philosophy and men applauded: I preached Christ and men repented.

A.P. Gibbs

YOUNG Believers'

Conducted by Howard A Barnes,
Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside

Pauline Epistles

PART 16: 2 TIMOTHY

INTRODUCTION

As with the two previous epistles, the actual circumstances of writer and recipient can only be known in part. What is clear is that Paul had been rearrested, taken back to Rome, and subjected to an initial examination before Nero and now awaited a second appearance (4:16). He held out no hope of acquittal and had prepared himself for his departure from this life. It is fitting that this, his last recorded writing, should be to Timothy who was so close to him (Phil 2:20). Their last parting had been very distressing for Timothy, and Paul looked forward to an early reunion (2 Tim 1:4) before a final farewell.

Timothy appears to have been somewhere in Asia, at or near Ephesus perhaps. His forthcoming journey to Rome at Paul's request would allow him to give Paul's greetings to Priscilla and Aquila (4:19), and the family of Onesiphorus at Ephesus, and collect Paul's cloak that he had left at Troas with Carpus, together with his books and parchments (4:12). Perhaps Paul also meant him to call in to see Trophimus at Miletus and Erastus at Corinth (4:20).

Paul urged Timothy to travel as fast as he could in order to arrive before winter (4:21). It seems that the journey Timothy was to undertake was identical to Paul's last journey. We can imagine him leaving Timothy to carry on the work when he himself was arrested.

I PUT THEE IN REMEMBRANCE

It is not surprising in the circumstances, to find that much of this epistle is taken up with Paul reminding Timothy of their past. Paul thinks of his own family history of service for God (1:3), and also the true faith in Timothy's family, at least in his grandmother and mother (1:5). Paul then recalls Timothy's commendation to the work of God (1:6), and urges Timothy to keep the flame of service bright in his life. Timothy seems to have been rather timid, and needed to be reminded that God has given all His people a spirit of power and not of timidity (1:7).

Service for God necessarily means suffering and Paul expects Timothy to bear this as he had done himself (cf 1:8 and 1:12). All this was possible for Paul because he said "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep (i.e. guard) that which I have committed to him against that day" (1:12). Paul had handed over his life now and hereafter to the Lord Jesus Christ Who alone could guard it safely. Just as Paul had committed his all to the

Lord Jesus Christ, so Timothy had been entrusted with sound words which he had to guard (1:13,14). Others had not stood with Paul, especially those from Asia (1:15). However there was an exception, for Onesiphorus had, when visiting Rome, searched for Paul and eventually found him. Obviously the many questions he needed to ask in order to find Paul could raise suspicion and Onesiphorus' life could have been in danger in these days of the insane fury of Nero against christians.

COMMIT TO FAITHFUL MEN

Just as Timothy had heard "sound words" from Paul (1:13; 2:2), he now had to commit them to faithful men, who in their turn could teach others also. This is true apostolic succession, and is the reason why Paul wrote these epistles to Timothy and Titus. The authority for Timothy's teaching would be these very words he was now reading. Paul now makes it clear that in order to do this work Timothy had to labour under very difficult circumstances.

The hardship involved in Timothy's service was no less than that of a soldier on active service, his motive was a high one—"that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2:4). Paul goes on to illustrate the necessary commitment needed as that shown by an athlete (v.5) (See our previous study on Pauline Pictures).

Although Paul was now in chains, the word of God was at liberty due to Paul having committed it to younger men like Timothy (v.9). They now had their personal responsibility to the Lord. As well as teaching the truth, Timothy had to ensure that christians did not waste their time speculating about things that were actually beyond their knowledge.

Timothy's use of the "word of truth" was to be accurate. Paul compares this to a workman cutting a straight line

("rightly dividing", 2:15) in wood, leather etc. and not being ashamed of his work. As well as arguing about things outside their knowledge, some were actually denying basic truths such as the resurrection (v.18). Timothy had to dissociate himself from such people who still sought a hearing from the believers but taught error. If he didn't, his own service would be dishonoured (2:20,21). His behaviour as a teacher among God's people had to be exemplary. He had to "flee...youthful lusts...follow after righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (v.22). He had to choose his close companions carefully.

IN THE LAST DAYS

It was not easy for Timothy to serve God even in his own day when things were beginning to get difficult. However Paul now tells him, that things were going to get worse. The context shows that these "last days" were to begin later in Timothy's own lifetime ("from such turn away" 3:5), and had to do with the spiritual conditions among professing believers (vv.4,5). We only have to look at church history to see how quickly in post-apostolic days these things came true, and by and large how they still prevail today and will do until the Lord comes.

What is one to do in such circumstances? The answer is given to Timothy in 3:14—"continue thou in the things which thou hast learned...and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures". Scripture will always remain, being not only "given by inspiration of God" (3:16) but also miraculously preserved to us. When all else is unprofitable, "all scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness". The result of its use makes the man of God mature in his faith and completely equipped for life, just like a ship completely provisioned for a voyage (3:17).

Timothy was not to give up in despair, but go on teaching and preaching. He might become unpopular and be displaced by others who were more acceptable to unspiritual believers (4:3-5), but he must keep on in his ministry (v.5). The reason is "For (i.e. because) I am now ready to be offered" (I am already

being poured out like a drink offering), and "the time of my departure is at hand" (The time of my release is come—Englishman's Greek New Testament—4:6). Paul could look back on a full life and look forward to a full reward! (4:6-8) but wanted to be sure the work was continued.

Hope (Proverbs 13:12)

*No more deferred Hope's brightest star,
Our saddened hearts rejoice
As in Thy presence we discern
Love's sweet remembrance voice.*

*That voice that stills th'Assembly's heart,
That lures and charms in grace,
Has struck the chord of Love's response
In those who've seen Thy face.*

*That face, Lord Jesus, once so marred,
No lordliness was seen—
But thou despised and left alone
Thy beauty we esteem.*

*So Thus as under Thy blest hand,
We'd taste the sweet delight
Of union, Lord, with Thee above
In realms of endless light.*

Neil Short

Lord's Work Trust

42 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, KA3 1RH
Telephone: (0563) 21098

Total Gifts received from 1st September to 30th September, 1987

For the Lord's Work and Workers	Gifts Towards Expenses
From Assemblies £21,692.85	From Assemblies £905.43
From Individuals 8,519.50	From Individuals 451.00
From Covenants 12,968.00	From Covenants 433.17
From Tax Refund 11,475.50	From Tax Refund 280.07
£54,655.85	£2,069.67

Includes: L.O.F. £160: Anon £2: Aberdeen £40

How It Began

Bethany Gospel Hall
Weston-Super-Mare

"Another Chapel For Sale"

In the providence of God a brother and his wife, deeply exercised about the evident departure from God's ways, the lack of power in the meetings and the spirit of worldliness which television had brought in its train, began to be exercised before the Lord about the mission hall which belonged to a wealthy family.

The hall was erected over 85 years ago by a Mr Jackson-Barstow, one time deputy Lord Lieutenant of Somerset and thereupon commenced an outstanding gospel witness in that part of the town which made considerable spiritual impact on the locality with gospel meetings, children's meetings and women's meetings. After the death of Mr and Mrs Jackson-Barstow, their two daughters who were christians carried on the work.

At the time of the couple's exercise about the low spiritual state of the assemblies they did not realise that the work at the mission hall had come to a close and that the Estate, of which the mission hall was a part, was going to be sold.

Lacking faith in God at this point they refrained from doing anything about it.

Another brother from Worcester who was living at Weston-Super-Mare was exercised about the mission hall, but on approaching the local brethren was told, "It has all been tried before".

Eventually the sale of the mission hall appeared in the local paper and the couple once more turned to the Lord in prayer and, waiting upon God, received a word from the Lord about purchasing the hall (1 Cor 1:26-29).

The surrounding area was empty land but the Council had earmarked the ground for a housing scheme which would provide a population to be reached with the gospel and in particular children which, as later years proved, filled the gospel tent that for 3 years was pitched in Ashcombe Park, opposite the hall.

An approach was made to an eminent brother in the locality but he replied "It's all been tried before". "But not in the Lord's way", the brother answered, "the New Testament way where the Lord could meet with his people and be in the midst, the subject of praise and worship".

After much prayer the brother and his wife met Miss Barstow and put in an offer for the hall: she desired to know for what purpose they wanted it—were they Jehovah Witnesses? They assured her they were not: that they wanted to preach the gospel and bring God's word to men and women, young people and children. Reassured of their intentions she brought the key and they had their first look at what was, in the overruling of God, to be their spiritual home. The text above the platform read, "In this place will I give peace saith the Lord" (Hag 2:9). They bowed their hearts and worshipped the Lord for His goodness.

Investing their savings, set aside for approaching retirement within about a year, they bought the hall in September

1970: a venture of faith—all the time the Lord making good to them the words of Scripture: "...he hath chosen the weak things..." Truly they were weak, but they were clinging in faith to One who is mighty.

The work of cleaning, refurbishing, painting, putting in gas-fired central heating and electric lighting began. The furniture, curtains, books etc. were all answers to prayer and exercise, the Lord directing the work overall.

When one raised the question, "Who are you going to get to fill it?" They answered, "We can't, but God can".

The hall was opened on Saturday 7th November 1970 when about 100 were present and brother Cecil Lough gave a word of ministry. Lord's day 8th November saw eleven believers gathered to break bread. Brother David Willcox was invited for a week's meetings soon after, when the hall was comfortably filled each night and on the final night the hall was filled to capacity: over 150 were present.

From these humble beginnings the Lord has blessed us and we are now 39 in fellowship. Praise His name.

Addresses

PERSONALIA

New Gospel tracts "The Greatest Text in the World" and "All of Grace". £10 for 1000 post free. Mr. Alex Ross, 33 Welbrae Terrace, Aberdeen, AB1 7YA.

Mr Charles McEwen, now at 140A Hamlin Gardens, Exeter, EX1 3AA Telephone (0392) 31425.

Christmas

God manifest in flesh,
Oh wonder to behold
Creative power within the breast
That felt the blast of cold.

God in our likeness made,
Oh may we understand
The One Who made the wondering
worlds
Appears as lowly Man.

He stood within the realm
He'd fashioned with a thought
His creatures gazed upon Him,
But alas they knew Him not.

They cried out for His blood,
His claims cast out as dross
They spat upon His princely face,
Then nailed Him to the cross.

But He made the tree for that cross of
wood
He made the hill on which it stood.
And in some hidden vein of land
He made the steel that pierced each
hand.

He made the sun that hid its face
He made the fathers of that race
Who in their hatred knew Him not
He made the fiends with whom He
fought.

And there in death He made a way
Back to Himself eternally.

W. Mullan, Ireland.

The LORD'S WORK and WORKERS

All items for "intelligence" columns of this magazine should be addressed direct to Editor, 40 Beansburn, Kilmarnock, and posted in time to arrive on or before 4th of month previous to issue.

Intimation of commencement of new assemblies should always carry commendation of nearest local assembly.

Will correspondents please note that intimations, notices of meetings, etc., should be in the hands of the Publishers by the 4th of the month preceding publication to guarantee acceptance for the next issue of the magazine; later submissions cannot be guaranteed. Reports of assembly activities, gospel campaigns, etc., should not be sent to the Publishers, but to the brethren who collate the reports for the different areas.

N.Ireland FORTHCOMING

DECEMBER 5

Armagh: 8 p.m. S. McBride.

Cloughfern: 7.30 p.m. S. Jennings.

DECEMBER 12

Armagh: 8 p.m. J. Hay.

Cloughfern: 7.30 p.m. J. Flanigan.

DECEMBER 19

Cloughfern: 7.30 p.m. J. Strachan.

DECEMBER 25

Gransha: Annual Conference 1.30 p.m.

Cregagh: Annual Conference 7 p.m.

DEC. 26—DEC. 28

Belfast: Christmas Conference (See separate notice).

DECEMBER 31

Fortwilliam Gospel Hall 10.30 p.m. Testimony Meeting.

Laganvale 7.30 p.m. Ministry G. Hall.

Albertbridge Road 7.30 p.m. Ministry.

Maranatha 10.30 p.m. Gospel H. Andrews.

Castlereagh 10.30 p.m. Gospel S. Jennings.

Matchett Street 10.30 p.m. Testimony Meeting.

BELFAST CHRISTMAS CONFERENCE 1987

Annual meeting of believers to be held (God willing) in the Members' Room, beside the King's Hall, Balmoral.

SATURDAY 26th DECEMBER

BIBLE READING (2 Tim ch. 1), 2.30 p.m.—5 p.m., conducted by A. McShane. Refreshments, 5 p.m. Ministry 6 p.m.—8.30 p.m.

MONDAY 28th DECEMBER

BIBLE READING (2 Tim ch. 2), 2.30 p.m.—5 p.m., conducted by A. Leckie. Refreshments, 5 p.m. Ministry 6 p.m.—8.30 p.m.

Further information from:

Mr G. BEASANT, 63 Kings Avenue,

**Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim
BT37 0DE Tel: (0232) 867479**

JANUARY 1

Albertbridge Road: Bible Readings Psalm 22, 23 and 24. Conducted by J. Walmsley and W.J. Nesbitt. 11.00 a.m.—1.00 p.m. Bible Reading. 2.00 p.m.—4.00 p.m. Bible Reading. 5.00 p.m.—7.00 p.m. Ministry of word. Refreshments between meetings.

JANUARY 3—16

Bangor: Central Hall, Central Avenue. Ministry meetings with Mr. Samuel Jennings—subject "The Tabernacle".

Scotland FORTHCOMING

HARLEY STREET GOSPEL HALL GLASGOW

ANNUAL CONFERENCE MEETINGS

Dec. 31st, 7 p.m.-9 p.m. Bible Reading (Hebrews 13), D. West.

Jan. 1st, Conference in Harper Memorial (Craigyhall Street), 11 a.m.-4.30 p.m. B. Currie, J. Hunter, J. Smyth, D. West.

Jan. 2nd, Ministry Meeting, 7 p.m.-9 p.m. J. Hunter, D. West.

Jan. 3rd, Ministry Meeting, 2.30 p.m.-4 p.m. B. Currie, J. Hunter.

Jan. 4th, Report Meeting, 7 p.m.-9 p.m. D. Gillies, L. Swaan, J. Smyth.

DECEMBER 5

Coatbridge: Hebron Hall, Church Street at 6.30 p.m. J. Paterson, T. Wilson.

New Stevenston: Assembly Hall at 6.30 p.m. D. Fyall, D. Cameron.

Livingston: Deans Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. A. Legge, W. McKellar.

Hamilton: Low Waters Gospel Hall, Hall Street at 6.30 p.m. J. Hunter.

Bridge of Weir: Hope Hall at 7.00 p.m. W. Hannay, A. Pollard.

Beith: Bethany Hall, Kirk Road at 7.00 p.m. R. Gamble.

Edinburgh: Gorgie Gospel Hall, 4 Smithfield Street Bible Reading at 7.00 p.m.

DECEMBER 6

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark street, (off Maryhill Road) at 8.30 p.m. S. Arbutnot.

DECEMBER 12

Gourock: Bethany Hall, Drumshantie Road at 7.00 p.m. F. Beevers.

Armadale: Gospel Hall, South Street at 6.30 p.m. J. Aitken, A. Meikle.

Wishaw: Ebenezer Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. G. Jackson, G. Waugh.

Cumbernauld: Mossknowe Gospel Hall, Kildrum Ring Road at 7.00 p.m. W.K. Morrison, A. Naismith.

Newmilns: Gospel Hall, Drygate Street at 7.00 p.m. R. Revie.

Tarbolton: Montgomerie Street, Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. B. Gamble.

Ashgill: Bethany Hall, at 6.30 p.m. M. Radcliffe, J. Cameron.

Larkhall: Albion Hall, Montgomery Street at 6.30 p.m. A. Deans, J. Gamble.

Saltcoats: Bethany Hall, Ailsa Road at 7.00 p.m. A. Gamble, N. Hamilton.

Dunfermline: Gospel Hall, Hospital Hill at 7.00 p.m. A. Aitken, J. Chalmers.

East Kilbride: Threshold Assembly Hall at 7.00 p.m. J. Harrison, W. Hannay.

Bishopston: Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. Bible Reading, John 1:10-18, ministry by W. Stevely.

DECEMBER 13

Glasgow: Eastpark Gospel Hall, Avenuepark Street, (off Maryhill Road) at 8.30 p.m. D. Newell.

DECEMBER 19

Larkhall: Hareleeshill Gospel Hall, Howard Street at 6.30 p.m. D. Meikle, A. Pillans.

Mayfield: Gospel Hall, Stone Avenue, at 6.30 p.m. J. Paton, I. Robertson.

Motherwell: Shields Road Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. John Gamble, S. Foster.

Ayr: Gospel Hall, James Street at 7.00 p.m. J. Gillespie.

Whitburn: West End Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Harrison, M. Ferrier.

Linthouse: Bethesda Hall, 16 Holmfauldhead Place at 7.00 p.m. W. Craig, W. Banks.

DECEMBER 26

Hamilton: High Parks Gospel Hall, Silvertonhill Avenue at 6.45 p.m. G. Waugh, J. Campbell.

Airdrie: Hebron Hall, North Bridge Street at 6.30 p.m. J. Rodgers, T. Wilson.

Portpatrick: Gospel Hall Christmas Conference at 2.30 p.m. J. Gamble, J. Baxter, R. Miller.

DECEMBER 29th—JANUARY 2nd

Buckie: Gospel Hall, 29th & 30th December at 7.30 p.m. D. Gilliland. 31st December at 7.30 p.m. Ministry. 1st January at 3.00 p.m. Annual Conference R. Cameron, D. Gilliland, L. Swaan. 2nd January at 7.00 p.m. Report Meeting, L. Swaan.

DECEMBER 31

Hamilton: High Parks Gospel Hall, Silvertonhill at 6.45 p.m. J. Riddle, F. Reid.

JANUARY 1

Hamilton: High Parks Gospel Hall Conference in Baptist Church at 11.00 a.m. till 4.00 p.m. J.R. Baker, W. Craig, J. Riddle, F. Reid.

New Stevenston: Assembly Hall Conference in Holytown Community Centre at 11.30 a.m. till 4.30 p.m. J. Paton, A. McLean, J. Harrison.

Motherwell: Roman Road Gospel Hall Conference in G.L.O. Centre from 12 Noon till 4.00 p.m. P. Brandon, A. Carew, P. Maiden.

Kilmarnock: Central Hall Conference, John Finnie Street at 12 noon S. Arbuthnot, D. Fergusson, W. Stevely.

Dumfries: Bethany Hall, Buccleuch Street at 12 noon. W.K. Morrison, W.E.F. Naismith. A. Naismith.

Kirkcaldy: Hebron Evangelical Church, Hayfield Road, Annual Christian Conference at 2.30 p.m. A. Allan, R. Rabey, H. Stalker.

JANUARY 1—2

Aberdeen New Year Conference in Gilcomston South Church. J. Flanigan, J. Anderson, T. Wilson, F. Haggerty, F. Kelling.

JANUARY 2

Denny: Conference in Masonic Hall, Kirkslap, off Broad Street. 12 noon ministering brethren expected.

Whitburn: Conference in Brucefield Church, East Main Street at 11.30 a.m. M. Radcliffe, W. Mowat, D. West.

Innerleven: Methil Conference at 3.00 p.m. J.R. Baker, R. McPheat, R. Gamble.

Glasgow: Abingdon Hall, 12 Stewartville Street at 3.15 p.m. A. Gamble, W. Hannay, G. Jackson.

Stranraer: Conference, Lewis Street Gospel Hall at 2.30 p.m. G. Dunbar, S. McKenzie.

Auchinleck: Conference in Gospel Hall Park Road at 12.15 p.m. P. Brandon, J. Hunter, F.E. Stallan. Mr. Brandon will minister the Word and preach the gospel on Sunday at 3.00 p.m. & 8.00 p.m.

Larkhall: Hareleeshill Gospel Hall in St Machans Parish Church, Church Street, Larkhall at 11.30 a.m. Jeff. Harrison, J. Riddle, G. Waugh.

JANUARY 4

Prestwick: Conference in Prestwick Academy, Newdykes Road at 1.30 p.m. P. Brandon, J. Naismith, J. Riddle.

JANUARY 9

Saltcoats: Bethany Hall, Ailsa Road, at 7.00 p.m. W. Craig, A. Young.

Tarbolton: Gospel Hall, Montgomerie Street at 7.00 p.m. A.M.S. Gooding.

Larkhall: Albion Hall, Montgomery Street at 6.30 p.m. I. Galbraith, G. Gilmour.

Ashgill: Bethany Hall at 6.30 p.m. D. Meikle, D. Gillies.

Newmilns: Gospel Hall, Drygate Street at 7.00 p.m. R. Gamble.

Cumbernauld: Mossknowe Gospel Hall, Kildrum Ring Road at 7.00 p.m. W. Cochrane, J. Rodgers.

Whishaw: Ebenezer Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Harrison, A. Naismith.

Armadale: Gospel Hall, South Street Annual Conference in Academy, West Main Street at 3.00 p.m. J. Harrison, K. Stapley, F. Stallan. Mr Harrison will continue in ministry from Mon. to Thurs. at 7.30 p.m.

Gourock: Bethany Hall, Drumshantie Road at 7.00 p.m. W. Deans.

Hamilton: Low Waters Gospel Hall, Hall Street at 6.30 p.m. R. Cameron, A. Wilson.

Renfrew: Albert Hall Annual Conference, Albert Road at 3.30 p.m. S. Arbuthnot, J. Naismith.

JANUARY 16

Linthouse: Bethesda Hall, 16 Holmfauldhead Place at 7.00 p.m. F. Beavers, J. Hunter.

Ayr: Gospel Hall, James Street at 7.00 p.m. J.R. Baker.

Motherwell: Shields Road Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Rodgers, R. Miller.

Mayfield: Gospel Hall, Stone Avenue at 6.30 p.m. A. Wilson, A. McLean.

Larkhall: Hareleeshill Gospel Hall, Howard Street at 6.30 p.m. S. Foster, J. Burnett.

Whitburn: West End Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Stubbs, R. Cameron.

Dalry: Townend Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. Report Meeting J. Baxter, J. Hay.

R.G.C. Conference in Ardgowan Square, Greenock at 3.00 p.m. J. Hay, T. Wilson.

England & Wales

FORTHCOMING

DECEMBER 4

Warrington: Hope Hall off Longshaw Street, Bible Reading, 7.30 p.m. D. West.

DECEMBER 5

Warrington: Hope Hall off Longshaw Street, Bible Reading, 7.00 p.m. D. West.

Cwmbran: Gospel Hall, Oakfield Road at 7.30 p.m. D. Williams.

Brierfield: Hebron Hall, Walter Street at 7.00 p.m. D. McMaster

Kingsteignton: Gospel Hall, Exeter Road at 7.00 p.m. H. Bell.

Cleeview: Gospel Hall, Cleeview, Ludlow at 7.30 p.m. R. Cummings.

Preston: Brookhouse Evangelical Chapel, 179 Eldon Street, Ashton at 7.00 p.m. T. Renshaw.

Netherfield: Gospel Hall, Victoria Road at 7.15 p.m. J. Griffiths.

West Mersea: Assembly Hall, East Road at 4.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. C. Roberts.

Boscombe: Drummond Hall, Drummond Road at 7.00 p.m. D. C. Hinton.

Westcliff-on-Sea: Gospel Hall, Carlton Avenue, Studies in Hebrews at 7.30 p.m.

Stoke: Fletcher Road Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. G. Payne.

Liverpool: Larkhill at 7.30 p.m. N. Mellish.

Ealing: Grove Hall, The Grove, at 7.00 p.m. A. Cundick.

Solihull: Gospel Hall, 62 Lode Lane at 7.30 p.m. C. Lacey.

Bristol: United Ministry in Totterdown, 15 Bellvue Road at 7.00 p.m. I. Sampson.

DECEMBER 6

Warrington: Hope Hall of Longshaw Street, Bible Reading, 7.00 p.m. D. West.

DECEMBER 10

Wembley: Uxendon Hall, Elmstead Avenue at 7.00 p.m. T. Baker.

DECEMBER 12

Leicester: York Street Gospel Hall off Granby Street at 7.30 p.m. R. Maffie.

Ely: Gospel Hall, Ship Lane at 7.30 p.m. A. C. Gooding.

Kingsthorpe: Gospel Hall, Osborne Road at 7.30 p.m. P. Bristow.

Cheshunt: Mill Lane Chapel, High Street at 7.00 p.m. R. Catchpole.

London: Gospel Hall, 97 St. James Road, Bermondsey, London at 7.00 p.m. T. Ledger.

Blackpool: Gospel Hall, Salthouse Avenue, at 7.30 p.m. H. Barnes.

Bristol: United Ministry in Langford Road, 39 Langford Road at 7.00 p.m. J. Griffiths.

DECEMBER 19

Cheltenham: Bethany Hall, Newton Road, Hesters Way at 7.30 p.m. A. C. Gooding.

Derby: The Meeting Room, Curzon Street at 7.15 p.m. R. Maffey.

Bristol: United Ministry in Unity, 90 Shaldon Road at 7.00 p.m. E. Parmenter.

Mitcham Junction: Gospel Hall, Percy Road, Conversational Bible Readings at 7.00 p.m. D. E. West.

JANUARY 2

Westcliff-on-Sea: The Gospel Hall, Carlton Avenue at 7.30 p.m. D. Towse.

Kingsteignton: Gospel Hall, Exeter Road at 7.00 p.m. H. Bell.

Preston: Brookhouse Evangelical Chapel, 179 Eldon Street, Ashton at 7.00 p.m. C. Stewart.

Netherfield: Gospel Hall, Victoria Road at 7.15 p.m. T. Ledger.

Solihull: Gospel Hall, 62 Lode Lane at 7.30 p.m. D. Clapham.

Bristol: United Ministry in Langford Road at 7.00 p.m. B. Knowles.

Ealing: Grove Hall, The Grove, W.5 at 7.00 p.m. D. W. Coulson.

JANUARY 9

Trent Vale: Swan Lane Gospel Hall at 7.00 p.m. B. Sutton.

Liverpool: Bethany Hall, Dinas Lane, Huyton, Annual Conference. J. M. Sinclair, H. Barnes.

Wembley: Uxendon Hall, Elmstead Avenue, at 7.00 p.m. D.C. Hinton.

Ely: Gospel Hall, Ship Lane at 7.30 p.m. J. Gooding.

Bristol: United Ministry in Bethany, 838 Filton Avenue at 7.00 p.m. I. Strobe.

Kingsthorpe: Gospel Hall, Osborne Road at 7.30 p.m. J. Dickson.

Cheshunt: Mill Lane Chapel, High Street at 7.00 p.m. T. Proffit.

Cleeview: Gospel Hall, Ludlow at 7.30 p.m. R. Hill.

JANUARY 10

Skelmanthorpe: Saville Road Hall Prize Distribution at 2.30 p.m. P. Malcolm.

Kingsthorpe: Gospel Hall, Osborne Road. J. Dickson.

JANUARY 16

Leicester: York Street Gospel Hall off Granby Street at 7.30 p.m. E. Hughes.

Blackpool: Gospel Hall, Salthouse Avenue at 7.30 p.m. J. Harrison.

Cheltenham: Newton Road, Hesters Way, Missionary Conference at 4.00 p.m. and 6.30 p.m.

Warrington: Hope Hall, Hawthorne Street off Longshaw Street at 7.00 p.m. J. Jackson.

Skelmanthorpe: Saville Road Hall at 7.00 p.m. K. Jennings.

Brierfield: Hebron Hall, Walter Street at 7.00 p.m. B. Deen.

Bishop's Stortford: Gospel Hall, Dunmow Road at 7.00 p.m. R. Catchpole.

Luton: Onslow Road Gospel Hall at 6.30 p.m. J. Riddle also on Sunday at 4.00 p.m.

St. Austell: Seymour Gospel Hall, Slades Road at 7.00 p.m. P. Davis.

Bristol United Ministry in Chelsea, 79 Devon Road at 7.00 p.m. F. Lonney.

Mitcham Junction: Gospel Hall, Percy Road Conversational Bible Readings at 7.00 p.m. T.W. Proffitt.

JANUARY 17

Warrington: Hope Hall, Hawthorne Street off Longshaw Street at 7.00 p.m. J. Jackson.

Scotland REPORTS

SOUTH-WEST STRATHCLYDE

Dreghorn: Joe Baxter had 3 weeks in the village during October, the first week mainly in door to door visitation. The gospel was faithfully preached and good support was given by surrounding assemblies.

Greenock: Allistair Young had good meetings at Greenock. Sunday schools at Greenock and Port Glasgow helped.

Bridge of Weir: Allistair Young having two weeks children's meetings at Bridge of Weir. A good interest building up.

Ardrossan: Robert Revie has pitched his portable hall in a scheme in the town near the end of October. Good interest on the part of the children by the end of the first week. A few unsaved attending at this early stage of the meetings.

Gourock: Stewart McKenzie having good interest in meetings at Gourock. Good interest on the part of some unsaved attending. Meetings going into an extra fourth week at time of reporting at end of October.

N.Ireland REPORTS

CO. ANTRIM

Antrim Town: A. Aiken commenced gospel meetings mid November.

Ballinalood: T. McNeill and A. McLean commenced in the gospel 1st November.

Ballymena: A. McShane and J.S. Wallace preaching the gospel in Cambridge Avenue. A number of unsaved attending nightly.

Broughshane: A. Aiken and A. McClean have had a very fruitful spell in the gospel. Souls were saved and the Christians greatly encouraged. Further blessing seen after the conclusion of the meetings.

Burnside: W.J. Nesbitt commenced gospel meetings 1st November.

CO. ARMAGH

Lurgan conference was very large, and those responsible for Bible Readings were D. Hinton, A. McShane, J. Gamble and S. McBride.

CO. DOWN

Growell: H. Andrews is being encouraged in seeing good numbers, including local people, coming to hear the gospel.

Lisburn, Plantation: J. Walmsley and H. Wilson have commenced in the gospel.

Lisburn, Wallace Avenue: E. Wishart and J. Wishart have commenced in the gospel.

Portavogie: S. Ferguson and N. Turkington commenced gospel meetings on 25th October. Prayer requested.

Shanaghan: J.G. Hutchinson and R. Eadie commenced in the gospel.

CO. FERMANAGH

Churchill: R. Jordan and W. Armstrong have found difficulty in getting the local people to come to hear the gospel. The district has been visited with tracts and a few locals have come in. Pray for the seed sown.

Ballinamallard conference—7th Oct. Annual conference in gospel hall. Ministry of the word by brethren D. Kane, J. Hawthorne, W.J. Nesbitt, J. Kells, T. Gracey and J. Wishart.

Enniskillen conference—7th Oct. Half-yearly conference in gospel hall. Ministry of the word by J. Lennox and N. Mellish. Missionary reports by H. Wilson (Brazil) and W. Hastings (S. Africa).

CO. LONDONDERRY AND CO. DONEGAL

Aughrim: D. Hull had two weeks meetings for children in an outreach hall in Castle-dawson and is now preaching in Aughrim gospel hall. The saints are encouraged and good numbers are attending.

Ballyronan: W. Jennings and J. Martin continue to have good numbers attending, including quite a number from the locality—many for the first time. So far a boy of eleven has professed to be saved.

Coleraine: N. Coulter and brethren from the Coleraine assembly had five weeks of meetings in an unoccupied house. While the district was faithfully visited very few from the locality attended.

Letterkenny: G. Stewart and S. Patterson intend commencing meetings on 8th November in the gospel hall. Prayer would be greatly valued.

Limavady: J. Brown and J. Lennox continue in the gospel with an increase in numbers attending. One woman has been blessed with God's salvation.

Upperlands: B. Glendinning and B. Smyth are in their eighth week in a portable hall.

BELFAST AND DISTRICT

Parkgate: R. Eadie and J. Kells have finished their present spell in the gospel. The meetings were well attended, with drug addicts and alcoholics present at times. God blessed the preaching in the salvation of souls.

Newtonbreda: Gospel meetings conducted by J.E. Fairfield and J. Hawthorne continue with reasonable interest—a few 'outsiders' have been present.

CO. TYRONE

Drumquin: J. Hawthorne and T. McNeill have concluded an encouraging spell of meetings in this country area with good local interest. A man and his wife professed to be saved.

Strabane: D. Kane was conducting Bible Readings with the small assembly in this border town. The gospel hall here suffered flood damage destroying hymn books and damaging carpets during the recent flooding of the town.

Omagh: P. Harding was conducting ministry meetings in the gospel hall. The meetings had to be discontinued due to severe floodings.

England & Wales REPORTS

WEST MIDLANDS

Birmingham: The Birmingham assemblies annual conference was held at Hope Chapel Moseley. There was good support and the ministry given by J. Phillips and K. Rudge was both practical and helpful.

Birmingham Northfield: F. Lonney spoke to a good number of parents and children at the Sunday school prize giving. This was followed by a week of children's meetings conducted by local brethren, with F. Lonney helping on the first night. It was encouraging to see so many children each night, together with some parents, at Quarry Lane.

Bromsgrove: The assembly at Finstall had the joy in October of baptising two young believers which was encouraging for the small number in fellowship. Those baptised are now in fellowship in one of the Birmingham assemblies which is much nearer their home.

Coventry, Upper Hill Street: The annual conference proved a real blessing with ministry by A. Leckie and E. Hughes. A. Leckie followed with a week of meetings on the subject of the 'Dangers of the Charismatic Movement'. Very timely ministry in a day when the saints need to be soundly warned about these things.

Crowle (nr. Droitwich): Progress on the new hall steadily continues as work was started on the interior fittings

Darlaston: The faithful prayers and labours of the saints at Rough Hay has continued for a long time, and the Lord has recently blessed the assembly who have seen some Sunday school scholars and one of their mothers saved.

EAST ANGLIA

Cambridge: A children's Holiday Club was held at Panton Hall during the summer. An average of 40 children attended each morning and enjoyed the time of Bible teaching, crafts and games. The assembly is also particularly exercised about students coming up to the university. This is a critical time in the lives of young people, away from their family and home assemblies often for the first time. Sadly many students fall away and forgo assembly fellowship. It is important for their own sakes and for the sake of the assemblies that these students should be encouraged to play an active part in the life of the assembly and grow spiritually in their time at university

Stowmarket: The Bible Exhibition prepared by brethren from Cardiff was held for two weeks in an empty supermarket in the main street of the town. Although not as many people came into the exhibition as had been hoped, the response was still encouraging and a number of contacts made. A number of schools visited the exhibition and the children showed a good interest, filling in worksheets and entering a competition. A number of visitors took Emmaus courses and some children enrolled for the Postal Sunday School. Mr Brian Jenkins came from Wales to assist at the exhibition. He worked long hours and his help and fellowship was much appreciated. We pray that God's word displayed in this way will have its effect on those who attended the exhibition.

Westcliff-on-Sea: A week with children at Westcliff-on-Sea brought both joy and a little discouragement. The discouragement was the reluctance of children to come in and the hardness in this area. The encouragement was the response of parents on the last day.

Westcliff is very hard. Few in numbers (about 18 children) and yet eight parents and relatives came in to the prizegiving and heard the Word of God. Interest was good and 3 or 4 new children are expected to continue. Pray for the ongoing work here.

An item for prayer resulting from meetings. A little girl came in to the gospel hall and looked eagerly at the prizes and other items. She said her mother did not want her involved with religion. She went out with a pencil. Her mother was infuriated and burst into the hall during a meeting and was very

antagonistic to the things of God and accused us of enticing her daughter. She did not want her daughter to know of the One who said "suffer little children to come unto me—and forbid them not" She hated that Scripture: *poor woman poor child*. Our sorrow was multiplied when, on prizegiving day this dear little child stood on the doorstep waving pitifully and longing to come in—but she could not. Pray for this mother under such condemnation. Pray for the little child—with God all things are possible.

S. Mountstevens

KENT AND EAST SUSSEX

Hildenborough: Two weeks of children's meetings were conducted by S. Mountstevens in the gospel hall. Memorising of the Word of God was a particularly pleasing feature of these meetings. Interest was very good despite rather small numbers, especially from the locality. Most of the children were picked up from nearby Tonbridge. This is a very difficult area to get people in and prayer would be valued that a breakthrough be accomplished here and that God may be glorified and the believers encouraged. The assembly enjoyed a week's ministry from W. Craig on lessons on Leviticus.

GLOUCESTER, WILTSHIRE, SOMERSET AND AVON

Filton, Bethany: A sequel to 18 months' literature distribution, including a week's visit by F. Lonney reported previously, is a great improvement in the work among young people. The start of the new season of children's meetings has been attended by over 50, and parents who fetch them speak enthusiastically of when they attended as children. As the children's work was revived last season after many years, so this season has seen the revival of a meeting for teenagers, with an attendance of about seven so far. The saints, mostly elderly, are heartily encouraged to see this revival of interest, and are watering it earnestly with fervent prayer. Please join them.

Berkeley: An elderly couple were saved through the testimony of a son and daughter who were saved while in London independently of each other, and then witnessed consistently to their parents. The children are now in full time service for the Lord, and in November the father who was a Catholic lay reader, will be baptised. This is not possible for the mother who is confined to a wheelchair. Another crippled lady attends the gospel meetings regularly, after a period under the influence of "Jehovah's Witnesses", and the saints are praying for her salvation.

With CHRIST

Mr ALEXANDER BURNS, on 17th September, aged 75. Saved as a lad, baptised and in fellowship in Bridgend Gospel Hall, Kilwinning. Keenly interested in the spread of the gospel at Home and Abroad. A careful student of the Word and had a great care for the Saints always. His last two and a half years were spent in happy fellowship in Bethany Hall, Stevenston, where he was much loved by all. Prayer valued for his wife.

Mrs MATILDA REID on 24th September, aged 87. Saved in early life and in fellowship with the saints at Bridgend Gospel Hall, Kilwinning for many years, although unable to gather with the believers for the past few years due to frailty of body. Our sister displayed "A meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price".

Miss MAY McCRACKEN Belfast on 14th October. Saved in September 1929 at Ballyhackamore at meetings held by the late David Walker, Aberdeen. Our sister was a faithful Sunday school teacher and a true servant of the assembly (Rom 16:1). In fellowship at Bloomfield for the last 43 years where she will be greatly missed as in the family circle. Survived by one sister in U.S.A. and one in Belfast (Mrs. J. Hawthorne).

Mrs EVA GLASGOW on 14th October aged 90. Awakened to her need and saved under the preaching of the late Mr. R. Curran 68 years ago. Shortly afterwards received into fellowship at Drumacranver, and was there until a few years ago, when she moved to the Portadown district, where she remained in very happy fellowship. A faithful attender at all the meetings, and had a great interest in the gospel. Prayer greatly valued for grand children not yet saved.

Mr RODERICK REID, on 26th August, aged 84. Saved in his teens he continued steadfastly for over 67 years with the saints at Shieldhill. Remembered for his faithfulness in attending all the assembly gatherings and willing to help in all its activities.

Mr HUGH DAVIDSON on 10th October. Saved in Bellshill Gospel Hall and gave up a promising and lucrative career on the concert platform to use his voice in the spread of the gospel. He assisted in both large and small campaigns both north and south of the border. His services were in demand over the years both in singing and preaching the gospel. After his marriage our brother moved to Carfin Assembly and on moving to Motherwell was in fellowship in Forgewood Gospel Hall for approximately 24 years. His

last few months were spent in Bellshill. He was diligent and unsparing to the end, even when in indifferent health. Please remember his wife and family in prayer.

Mrs JEAN COLGAN, suddenly on 8th October, aged 72. Our sister was saved over 25 years ago while attending gospel meetings conducted by the late John Grant. She was received into Ballymoney Assembly in May 1962 and maintained a godly consistent testimony until her sudden home call. Mr Albert Aiken conducted the funeral service.

Mrs KATHLEEN MAILEY, on 12th October, aged 69. Saved in her own home while reading her Bible. Afterwards received into an assembly in Edinburgh. For the last three years in happy fellowship in Ballymoney Assembly. Mr Albert Aiken conducted the funeral service.

Mrs JOHN BARR, called home 13th September, aged 79. Saved in early years soon baptised and received into fellowship with the saints at Ebenezer Hall, Dregghorn, where she continued for many years, a quiet sister who is sadly missed.

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