

# Scripture Standard

Volume 78-1  
March 2011

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## IN SIX DAYS

The Bible begins "*At the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*" then it explains how God made everything in six days and stopped on the seventh day. In Exodus the Israelites were told to rest every seventh day because He rested on the seventh day.

*'on the [seventh day] you shall not do any work ... because the LORD made the heavens and earth, the sea, and all that is in them in six days and rested the seventh day...'* 20:10-11 (31:15-17)

Here 'seventh day' means one day in the same way that 'six days' means six days.

Many scientists reject the creation account claiming it contradicts "the laws of science."

They don't understand that before creation there were no "laws of science." God brought into being "the laws of science" by the very acts of creation. So God was not hidebound by such "laws." God is the creator. He is not restricted by scientific laws. We do not have to prove how God created everything in six days.

*'The heavens were made by the word of the LORD...Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the world's inhabitants stand in awe of him. because he spoke, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood firm.'* Psalm 33:6-9

The December editorial explained how the Lord's resurrection is enough reason to trust God in the things we cannot understand. (1 Corinthians 15:1-8)

.... TAKE HEED .... Part 3 ....  
**THAT YOU DO NOT DO YOUR GOOD WORKS BEFORE MEN**

James Neil, Skelmersdale

(Matthew 6: 1-7)

I think it would be true to say that all of us like to feel appreciated, in fact it is in accordance with scripture for us to encourage each other. In 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 3:1 we read of Timothy being sent to encourage the church there and the apostle Paul gives an example of commending the good works of our brethren and of appreciation for their services carried out for the Lord and for the good of his church in 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 1:5 when he told Timothy that he remembered not just the faith of Timothy but also that of the mother and grandmother of Timothy, Lois and Eunice.

It is however, a far cry from being uplifted by brothers and sisters showing their appreciation to one another, to a brother or sister who covertly craves self gratifying accolades or who carries out his or her duties and works for any other reason than a love for and a sincere desire to please the Lord

**Matthew 6:1 “Take heed”**

Jesus warns, against doing good works solely to attract attention to yourself.

We read very often of Jesus being critical of the Jewish leaders for doing their seemingly good works publicly and Jesus goes on to say that the reward we will reap for those kind of “*Good works*” will be far removed from that which we seek or bargained for. As Christians, we should always be prepared to be honest with ourselves and with others.

**Matthew 6:1-7** deals primarily with motivation, what motivates us to serve the Lord? Why did we choose to follow Jesus? Are we really following Jesus?

All of these very personal questions, and more, are posed for us in this exhortation by Jesus himself to *“Take heed that you do not do your good works before men to attract their gaze”*

Everything we do should be done in a manner and with the motive of pleasing God, the apostle Paul writing to the Galatians voices a question which puts forward this same idea, when he had declared the true gospel to be the only gospel and when he declared his intent to preach only that true gospel he asks a question which in itself makes a statement ...He says: *“For do I now persuade men or God? or do I seek to please men? For if I pleased men I should not be the bond-servant of Christ.”* (Galatians 1:10)

In the 3 John chapter 1 we have an example of a brother, Diotrephes, who was so intent to impress, what he saw as his own authority, on the church, that he seems to have been oblivious to his real position. He seems to have had these ideas of grandeur which had put him in the position of being a threat to the spiritual welfare of other Christians within his circle of influence, it would be interesting to have the account of how he managed to impose himself to such a degree that he could even dictate to these Christians to whom they could give hospitality.

Diotrephes was certainly not *“taking heed that he did not do his good works to attract the gaze of men”* if indeed we could describe his actions as *“good works”* but this account also comes as a warning to us all of the dangers of allowing ourselves to be influenced by outward show and of becoming followers of men and their reputation whilst believing that we are following Jesus.

May we all have the courage to question our own motives in what we do to serve the Lord remembering that we can not serve two masters, in this case The Lord and our own ego.

## LEGACY – IMAGE OR IMPACT ?

Jonathan Ashurst - Byron GA

### Leaving a Legacy

How will you be remembered by future generations?

We all want other people to think well of us. Younger people call it our “image” – how people perceive us. We worry if our friends think we’re “cool,” smart, athletic, attractive, sociable, etc. We want to feel popular and accepted.

As we enter the workforce, we think of our “reputation,” how our co-workers perceive us. Do they think I am hard-working and intelligent? Do they see me as helpful and dependable? We want others to respect us and recognize our accomplishments.

And as we grow older, we wonder about our “legacy” – how others will remember us after we are gone. We reflect on the choices we’ve made in life, and think about the memories and memorials we will leave behind. We want to leave good memories and lasting contributions.

### Absalom’s monument

Absalom, King David’s son, was a proud man who wanted to be remembered. Absalom rebelled against his father and tried to take over the kingdom. He was eventually defeated, but had left behind a memorial to himself. Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up for himself the pillar that is in the King's Valley, for he said, *“I have no son to keep my name in remembrance.’ He called the pillar after his own name, and it is called Absalom's monument to this day.”* (2 Samuel 18:18 ESV) Absalom wanted posterity to remember his power and influence. But instead we remember his selfishness and wasted life.

### Legacy of Faith

What kind of legacy should we seek to leave behind?

- A stone memorial?
- Power and fame?
- Money and influence?

There is no greater treasure that we could give future generations than a legacy of faith. Hebrews 11 gives us several examples of people who left a legacy of faith:

**Abel**

*“through his faith, though he died, he still speaks”*

**Enoch**

*“he was commended as having pleased God.”*

**Noah**

*“became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith”*

**Abraham**

*“was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.”*

**Sarah**

*“considered Him faithful who had promised”*

**Isaac**

*“By faith, Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau.”*

**Jacob**

*“By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph...”*

**Joseph**

*“By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.”*

**Moses**

*“By faith Moses... considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.”*

The legacy of faith that these men and women left encourages

us as we seek to follow Christ and make our lives meaningful.

## **Jesus' Example**

What kind of legacy did Jesus leave for us? In his short life, He left an example that he wants us to follow. As Peter said,

*“Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.”* (1 Peter 2:21 ESV)

Jesus did not seek to glorify himself, but to glorify God. He spent his life serving others. (Philippians 2:5-11) Our lives should also bring glory to God. As Jesus said,

*“...let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”* (Matthew 5:16 ESV)

In our short lives here, let's encourage others and glorify God. Life is short, but death is not the end – we're looking forward to a better homeland! (John 8:48-51)

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## **FACE TO FACE**

Ian S Davidson, Motherwell

For years, I have searched for a portrait of James Macknight, the famous Scottish Biblical commentator, who lived in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. I even put an advert one time in “Life and Work,” the official magazine of the Church of Scotland, to see if anyone, anywhere, possessed such a portrait. But my endeavours were all to no avail. I have also gone to the lengths of trawling through countless old volumes in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow, in the hope of finding even a small drawing of the great man. But, again, the exercise turned out to be a fruitless one. I am at the stage of realising that I shall probably never know what Dr Macknight looked like. However, there is the consolation of possessing details of his life.

I find it incredible that we have images of some Biblical characters – Augustus Caesar and Tiberius Caesar (named), Ptolemy Sixth Philometor, Seleucus Nicator and Nero (referred to, but not named). But I often wonder what Jesus, John the Baptist, Mary, Joseph, Peter, James, John and Paul (to name but a few) looked like. Who was tall and who was small? Who looked young and who looked old? Who was thin and who was stocky? Who looked strong and who looked weak? We'll never know. And, really, it does not matter. What matters to us is what John, Jesus, Paul, etc. said and did in the service of God. Looks are not everything! The body is but a tent, which the real person inhabits. The real person is not flesh and bones. After all, the body one day will return to dust from whence it came, but the soul, as the song says, will go "*marching on.*" It is the soul that matters. Jesus once said: "*For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*" (Matthew 16:26; Mark 8:36, 37). So, dear reader, remember that the real you is never seen. Indeed, the inner person is unseen to the naked eye, but not to the eyes of God. I Samuel 16: 7b reads: "*...for the Lord sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.*"

## **SEEING GOD**

God said to Moses one time: "*You cannot see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live*" (Exodus 33:20). What Moses did see on that occasion was God's receding glory. (33:22,23). The words of Jesus immediately spring to mind: "*No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.*" (John 1:18). William Barclay has written: "*In Jesus Christ the distant, unknowable, invisible, unreachable God has come to men: and God can never be a stranger to us again.*" I believe with all

my heart that Jesus of Nazareth was “*Immanuel*” or “*God with us*.” When people heard Jesus speak they heard God speak; when they saw Jesus in action, they saw God in action. What a privilege it was to meet Jesus in the flesh; but what a far greater privilege it will be one day to see Him in all His glory and be welcomed by Him into the eternal kingdom (Matthew 25:34). Those who do so will be truly “*blessed*.” We read:

*“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.”* (1 John 3:2) *“And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads.”* (Revelation 22:4).

#### **HYMN ENTITLED: “FACE TO FACE”**

There is a famous hymn on this theme. The second and fourth verses read:

*Only faintly now I see Him  
With the darkling veil between;  
But a blessed day is coming,  
When His glory shall be seen.  
Face to face! O blissful moment!  
Face to face – to see and know;  
Face to face with my Redeemer,  
Jesus Christ, who loves me so.*

The chorus is:

*Face to face shall I behold Him,  
Far beyond the starry sky;  
Face to face, in all His glory,  
shall see Him by and by.*

And what will I say to Him when we meet? Perhaps a good place to start will be: “*Thank you for everything you have done for me.*”

## Fruits of the Spirit - 1- LOVE

Gretchen Ashurst, Stretford

MOSES WROTE:

*“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind.”* This is the first commandment, and the second is like it. *“Love your neighbour as yourself.”*

(Deuteronomy 6:5)

THEN JESUS CAME, SAYING:

*“A new commandment I give to you – that you love one another just as I have loved you, you are to love one another - By this, all people will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.”* (John 13-34 NIV)

We belong to a world - wide family. Brothers and Sisters in Christ. What a blessing - loving and being loved - *“We love because he first loved us.”* (1.John 4:19 NIV).

Love for those lost in this dark world. The sad, unloved, drug addicts, thieves and robbers, the homeless, alcoholics, neglected children, beaten wives, abusers and the abused, cruel criminals, prisoners, the dirty, smelly, hungry, greedy, old and young beggars, drop outs – To us they may seem beyond hope; but not to our loving Heavenly Father - He doesn't want one of them to be lost.

(Matthew 18:14)

With deep compassion he cares about them. He gave His precious son for them - who lived this life in humility, hardship and suffering.

As the crucifixion drew near - Jesus said to His disciples: *“Go into all the world and tell the Good News to every creature”*

(Mark 16:15 NIV)

*“How will they hear if no one tells them.”* (Romans 10:14

NIV) We, too, are disciples and we can go and show by our kindness, concern, care and love that we want everyone to have a future filled with hope. Our homes can

be a safe haven for all who need us. In Matthew 25:31-46 (NIV) he taught those listening this lesson:

*“When the son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on His throne in Heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him and He will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on the right and the goats on the left – then the King will say to those on his right Come you who are blessed by the Father, take your inheritance – the Kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world – for I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you invited me in. I needed clothes and you clothed me. I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. Then the righteous will answer him – when did we see you hungry, thirsty, or a stranger or needing clothes – sick or in prison. Then he will say to them – you cared for me - Depart from me you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels – For you didn’t care when I was hungry, thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes, sick or in prison – they will ask him Lord when did we see these things. He will reply – I tell you the truth – Whatever you did not do for one of the least of these – you did not do it for me – Then they will go away to eternal punishment but the righteous to eternal life.”*

Praise be to the God and Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our trouble so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we have received from God. (2 Corinthians 3:4 NIV)

*“These three remain, faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love.”* (1 Corinthians 13:13 NIV)

## A READER'S QUESTION

**What stance would the church be likely to take in the light of the Bible, where a believer married an unbeliever? Or a Church of Christ member marries a non-member?**

### AN ANSWER

Frank Worgan

I have quoted the question precisely as I received it, because it raises a number of issues, not all of which can be discussed in the space available to us.

#### **'What stance.....'?**

The first part of the question arouses my curiosity because it raises its own question. **"What stance would the church be likely to take..?"**

Are we looking at an event which has not yet occurred, but which is being considered? I wonder!

Furthermore, the question does not ask **"What action, should the church take?"**, or, **"What response would the church make?"**, but **'what stance'**.

The Oxford dictionary states that the original definition of the word *'stance* is, *'The position taken for a stroke'*, and, of course, any golfer could tell you that!

However, by common usage it has become a synonym for **'attitude'**, or perhaps even **'reaction'**.

#### **'Church'**

Before we proceed any further, let us also think about the word **'church'**. I am always uncomfortable with questions which ask, **'What does the church believe?'**, or **'What should the church do?'**, because no-one today is qualified or authorized say what *'the church'* believes, or to speak on behalf of *'the church'*, using 'church' in its proper, wider sense. And I wish that brethren could understand this fact.

The most anyone can do is to show what the Word of God teaches on a particular subject, or, where there is no explicit

scriptural teaching, express a considered *personal* opinion – always bearing in mind that it is *only* an opinion.

In the context of the question before us, therefore, the word ‘church’ probably means the local congregation in which the questioner has membership.

### ‘Attitude’

If we are to discuss the ‘*attitude*’ which should be displayed by the local congregation when a marital situation occurs such as that which has been described, we have no problem. The church’s *attitude* should always be one of concern and care, and not merely one of carping, censorious criticism and condemnation.

It is all too easy, at such a time, for brethren to speak reproachfully and un-helpfully. But perhaps it should also be seen as a time for reflection and self-examination, when those who occupy positions of leadership in the congregation ask themselves to what extent they may have been guilty of failing to give sound guidance to their unmarried brothers and sisters. If there is one skill in which we have become experts, it is at closing the stable door after the horse has bolted.

### ‘In the light of the Bible’

However, I appreciate the fact that our questioner asks for guidance ‘*in the light of the Bible*’, for this is the phrase which indicates the direction we need to take.

As I see it, the question presents us with two quite different scenarios. We are to consider the cases of:-

1. ‘*A believer marrying an unbeliever*’ and
2. ‘*A church of Christ member marrying a non-member*’.

I wonder if the questioner recognizes that the two are not the same. I rather think that he/she does!

If, then, we are to consider the problem from a scriptural standpoint, we must first appreciate the fact that, whilst we have

clear teaching concerning a believer's relationship with an unbeliever, no such clear teaching can be quoted with respect to a 'Church of Christ member' marrying a 'non-member'. Perhaps this needs further clarification. Let me, therefore, explain what I mean.

**Situation number 1** appears to involve someone who holds '**the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ**', as **James 2:1** describes it, and someone who is **without faith**. In other words, one who does *not* believe; that is, an '*un-religious*' person.

**Situation number 2**, unless I am mistaken, relates to church membership. It concerns the marriage of one who is a member of the Lord's Church, to one who is a member of a religious body which is not named in the scriptures, but which is popularly regarded as 'Christian'; in other words, a member of a religious denomination.

With the first situation, involving the believer and the non-believer, we can deal confidently, because we have scripture to guide us. With the second situation this is not so. There exists no biblical reference to marriage between a member of the New Testament Church and a member of a denominational body, for the simple reason that the situation itself did not arise in New Testament times. 'Christian denominations', so-called, such as we know today, did not then exist, and in a sense, the issue was much simpler and clearer.

Reading the New Testament scriptures we find ourselves in a Roman world in which there were Christians – (that is, members of the Lord's Church) - Jews, and Pagans. Today we must add to these, in our 'multi-cultural society' as it is called, not only an estimated 500 'Christian' denominations, sects and parties, but a variety of faiths which include the Muslim, Hindu and Sikh religions... And whilst these latter religions can be dismissed immediately from our consideration as 'non-Christian', and perhaps even 'anti-Christian', we may not be so readily

dismissive of others, who claim to believe in the Bible, the God of the Bible and the Lord Jesus. Certainly, they may be *'non-members'*, but who is prepared to say they are *'non-believers'*?

Yes! I am well aware of the fact that what they believe about God and Christ is not sufficient to make them 'Christians' in the New Testament sense, **and that what they believe about the Gospel falls short of obedience to the Gospel**. Nevertheless, they are not *'unbelievers'* in the sense in which that word is used in the New Testament. Of this there can be no question.

So how are we to deal with the two situations?

### 1. 'Believer and Unbeliever'

Where one who *'holds the faith'* contemplates marriage to one who is *'without faith'*, **2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 6:14** supplies the answer.

In the A.V., writing to the church at Corinth, Paul states, **"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers"**. Later versions will say, **"Do not be mis-mated with unbelievers"**.

I still feel that the older version presents the picture more vividly, since it depicts pairs of oxen working side by side, under the same yoke. For them to work effectively they must be of similar or equal strength. There must be no imbalance to cause strain. This is why, in New Testament times no farmer would dream of attempting to plough his field with unmatched animals. Of course, it has often been pointed out, quite correctly, that this verse applies to other relationships, such as business associations, besides to the relationship of marriage. **But it undeniably applies to marriage.**

The kind of problems which inevitably arise when a believer marries an unbeliever are too numerous to deal with in this article, but it must be obvious that the believer cannot make a real commitment to the Lord when the marriage partner is not fully supportive. In such a relationship the believer is faced with the need to make unhappy compromises, out of consideration for the unbelieving partner.

## **2. A member of the Lord's Church to a Denominational member**

When a member of the Lord's Church marries a member of a denomination, the problems may not be quite so acute, but there will still be difficulties to be faced and compromises to be considered. Although a such a partnership may be compatible in other respects; socially, intellectually, emotionally and physically, it lacks the most important element which is the source of strength and stability; the element of *spiritual* harmony is absent.

The reason why, in these days, so many marriages fail, is that this dimension is missing. In marriage at its highest and best, husband and wife should be able to present themselves *together* before the Lord in worship, and it is sad when one of partner goes to worship with brothers and sisters in Christ, whilst the other either goes elsewhere, or even remains at home.

### **Understanding Needed!**

To return to a point I made earlier in this article; leaders in local congregations will, I feel sure, recognize the difficulties which face young, unmarried members of the Church today as they seek life-partners.

In these days, there do not appear to be very many Christian prospects around – as any eligible young Christian will readily tell you!. And, therefore, church-leaders will, I hope, show sympathy and understanding.

Writing as one who was been happily married for 66 years, and who has seen the difficulties which have beset the lives of many Christians who have become '*unequally yoked.*'

I am very well aware of the seriousness of the problem. But the situation is not helped by excommunicating those brothers and sisters who are involved in it. I have yet to see anything positive result from that course of action. Such brethren need help so that they may remain faithful. Better to keep them in the fold than to cast them out. They should not be abandoned and

forgotten. Our younger brothers and sisters want to do what is right and what pleases the Lord. Of this we may be sure. But they need to be *told* what is right; and if church-leaders fail in their duty in this respect, it is quite reprehensible to criticize when things go wrong.

**A final thought:** When Paul, in **1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 7:39**, writes about Christian widows on the subject of re-marriage, he says that they are free to marry. ***‘but only in the Lord’***. Let us think seriously about these words. If they mean anything at all, they surely mean that ‘Christians should marry Christians.’ Notice that Paul states clearly that he is expressing the mind of the Lord on this matter.

Remember also, that 1<sup>st</sup> Cor.7 is the chapter which deals comprehensively with this subject. In it Paul reveals both what the Lord Himself taught during His earthly ministry and what he, Paul, was authorized to state in his capacity as an inspired apostle of Christ.

When you read the chapter, also bear in mind the fact that Paul had been required to pronounce on relationships which did not exist during the Lord’s ministry, but which developed after the Church was established.

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## **The Covenants and Promises of God - 3**

Derek L. Daniell - Tunbridge Wells

At the invitation of Joseph, Abraham’s descendants went to live in the land of Goshen. Under a new Pharaoh they became a nation under bondage as prophesied, Genesis 15:12-14. God then raised up Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt with His mighty arm, and on to Sinai where He made a covenant with Israel. Moses was to be their mediator and told the people the word of God, *“If you will indeed obey my voice and keep my **covenant**, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine, and*

*you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation*”, (Exodus 19:1-9). It is important for us to understand that this **covenant was made exclusively with Israel**, see Deut 5:1-5; 7:6-11. Jeremiah prophesied that the days were coming when God would make a **new covenant** that would include Jews and Gentiles (Jeremiah 31:31-34; cp Hebrews 8:6-13).

The Ten Commandments are the foundation of the **covenant**, but they are not the entirety of it. After receiving the Law, *“Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the rules. And all the people answered with one voice and said, All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do”*. Moses then wrote down the words of the Lord in the Book of the Covenant, Exodus 24:3-8. A covenant places obligation on both parties, thus Israel was required to keep the covenant and the “blessings” and the “curses” are laid out very clearly in Deuteronomy 28, (see verses 1-2, 9, 15, 26-27; 29:1).

Under the leadership of Joshua, Israel settled in the promised land of Canaan. In his final speech to the nation, Joshua warned the people of the consequences of forsaking the Lord and the covenant, Joshua 24:14-28. However, it was not long after his death that they forsook the Lord and worshipped idols, **“everyone did that which was right in their own eyes”**, Joshua 2:11-15; cp 17:6, 18:1, 19:1. This brought upon them the “curses” of the covenant so that they cried to the Lord to help them. Each time the Lord raised up judges to save them from their enemies yet time after time they returned to their idols. The last of these judges was Samuel. In his old age the people asked him to appoint them a king like the nations around them. They were now not rejecting Samuel, but the Lord, as their king 1 Samuel 8:1-9. Centuries later Israel rejected Jesus as their King, John 19:13-16.

Their first earthly king was Saul whose disobedience to God resulted in his being rejected by God, 1 Samuel 15:17-23. When God had removed Saul, “he raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, ‘I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will’”, Acts 13:22. Another **covenant** was made between God and David in which David’s descendants were made heirs to the throne of Israel, 2 Samuel 7:12-14. This **covenant** agreement was fulfilled when Jesus, a descendant of David was born in Bethlehem, Matthew 1:1; cp Luke 1:26-33. Jesus also fulfilled the **promise** made in the garden of Eden, that the seed of the woman would conquer sin and death, Romans 1:4. This was the good news that Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, that David foresaw, and spoke about the resurrection of Christ and His being exalted to the right hand of God, to be their Lord and Christ, Acts 2:29-36.

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## HELLO FELLOW HUSBANDS

Allan Ashurst - Stretford

There is no word for husband or wife in Koine Greek. It is 'my man' or 'my woman' etc.. For example: “but because of fornication each man **\*must keep to** his own woman.<sup>1</sup>

Man is the head but this is not a licence for tyranny. It is a responsibility. We are answerable to our head - the Christ,<sup>2</sup> as to how we carry out, or fail to carry out, this responsibility.<sup>3</sup> God made Eve to be an appropriate help for Adam.<sup>4</sup> Wives are not always what they should be [neither are most of us] but we **\*must never** be bitter against them. We **\*must** always love them.<sup>5</sup> How much? Just as Christ loves us so we must love our wives. We must be prepared to even 'take the bullet' for them. **He 'took the bullet' for us and for the dear wives to whom God has joined us.**<sup>6</sup> [\* the Greek is emphatic]

## OBITUARY

Harry McGinn, New Cumnock, Ayrshire.

We chronicle the death of brother Harry McGinn on the 15th of November, 2010. Harry was born in 1932 and was re-born in 1949. He was a member of the church at Pennyvenie and then Dalmellington. Harry later helped establish a congregation in New Cumnock ( the place of his birth ) and, latterly, the church met in his home there. Harry was a miner, a beloved husband of sister Rita, and a father of four boys - Tom, Jim, Drew and David. He was also a grandfather to nine.

He was a faithful member all his days and was an example of one ' strong in the Lord '. His labours in the Master's service included a spell of duty as District Secretary of the Slamannan District churches of Christ. Harry will be long remembered for many reasons, but especially as a solo singer at various social gatherings of the Church.

The funeral took place in Brigend Gospel Hall, New Cumnock ( kindly granted ) and at the local Afton Road Cemetery. The writer officiated at the hall and brother John Kneller of Tranent officiated at the cemetery.

Rita has now settled in Mauchline, Ayrshire and we wish her well in the coming days, D.V. She deeply appreciates the support from family and friends over, especially, the past difficult months.

Brother Harry will never be forgotten by all those who knew him and loved him. Our loss is heaven's gain.

Ian S. Davidson

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### REFERENCES

- 1) 1 Corinthians 7:2. 2) 1 Corinthians 11:3. 3) Acts 17:31.  
4) Genesis 2:18. 5) Colossians 3:19 6) Ephesians 5:23-29. Mark 10:9.

## NEWS and INFORMATION

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**7.00 pm** The Green Hut

538 Kings Road, M32 8JT

March 19 Pilomon Raja

September 17

October 22 Ian Davidson

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**7.00 pm** Message

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August 13

November 12

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The *Scripture Standard* is printed for the publishers by [www.a2g-group.co.uk](http://www.a2g-group.co.uk)

# Scripture Standard

Volume 78-2  
June 2011

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## SO GOD CREATED THE UNIVERSE - WHY? -

God does not do anything without reason. The creation has a specific purpose. Understanding this purpose puts the existence of the entire universe and everything in it, into perspective.

The Lord Jesus was the reason why God created the universe. It was **all** created **for him** and absolutely everything in it was created by him and he holds it all together.<sup>1</sup>

*Colossians 1:16 ... all things, that are in the heavens, that are on the earth, visible and invisible ... were created by him. All things were created by him and for him.<sup>17</sup> And he is before all things, and all things subsist in him.*

*John 1:3 Everything came into existence through him, also, of everything which has come into existence not one thing came into existence without him.*

So to fulfil God's purpose the universe had a beginning. but when it has fulfilled God's purpose it will have an end. 2 Peter 3:10 says:

*... the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night; in which the heavens will pass away with a tremendous noise, and the elements will be dissolve with fervent heat, also the earth and the works in it will consumed.*

## The Covenants and Promises of God - 4

Derek L. Daniell - Tunbridge Wells

As we review the Covenants and Promises of God we see how vital the coming of Jesus is to God's eternal purpose for us, Ephesians 1:3-12. **God's first promise** was made in the Garden of Eden to Satan that he would receive a crushing blow through the death, and resurrection of **His Son Jesus**, Genesis 3:15 ***"For by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive,"*** 1 Corinthians 15:21-22.

In the **Covenant Promise** that God made with **Noah** we learn how by his **faith** and God's **grace**, he and seven others were saved by being brought safely through the flood, see Gen 6:6; 1 Peter 3:20-21; 2 Peter 2:5. Today we too can be saved by grace through faith, ***"and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God"***. Ephesians 2:8. Like Noah this requires our obedience to His commands in the gospel, 1 Peter 4:16-18.

**Abraham** is the next man of faith with whom God made a **Covenant with Promises**, Genesis 17:1-8ff. His descendants would become a great nation and possess the land of Canaan on which he, Isaac and Jacob lived as sojourners, cp Genesis 12:1-4. The third promise was that one of Abraham descendants (**Jesus**) would be a blessing to all the families of the earth. But by faith he looked forward to the city that had foundations, whose designer and builder is God, Hebrews 11:8-10. Like others who were faithful to God down through the

centuries they, "***did not receive what was promised, because God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect***", Hebrews 11:13-16, 39-40.

**Moses** having led the people of Israel out of Egypt became the mediator of the **Covenant** that God made solely with the nation of Israel at Sinai. Exodus 19:1-6 Moses prophesied that God would raise up another prophet, like him to whom they were to listen, Deut 18:15-19; Acts 3:19-26. **Jesus** was revealed as that prophet on the Mount of Transfiguration, (Matt 17:18), who would make a **New Covenant** as prophesied by Jeremiah, (31:31-34), cp Hebrews 8:6-13.

When Jesus came preaching the gospel of God he was saying, "***The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the gospel***", Mark.1:14-15. When asked if he was a king Jesus replied, "***I am a king***", but "***My kingdom is not of this world***", see John 18:33-37. **Jesus** was the son of David in fulfilment of God's **promise to David** that one of his descendants would sit on the throne of the everlasting kingdom, 2 Sam 7:12-13; Acts 2:29-36.

**Jesus** is the Mediator of the New Covenant by a new and living way through His death on the cross. He "***has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises***" ... ***When He said, a new covenant He has made the first obsolete ... and growing old is ready to disappear***" Hebrews 8:6-13.

Today, both Jews and Gentiles live under the New Covenant, see Ephesians 2:11-22. The gospel is to be preached to all people and nations. Those who obey the gospel are saved and added by the Lord to His Church, Acts 2:37-41, 47. They are also ***"transferred to the kingdom of His dear Son" Colossians 1:13, and their "citizenship is in heaven from which also we eagerly wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ ..."***

Philippians 3:20-21. We have received the same kind of faith that they had *"seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them [we] may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust ..."* 2 Peter 1:1-11.

---

## **"Thanks be to God"**

Jonathan Ashurst - Byron, GA

When was the last time you thanked God for something?

Sometimes it is easy to take things for granted, or expect that we will always have them. In Luke 17:12-19, we see the importance of expressing thankfulness to God.

### **Luke 17:12-19**

*<sup>12</sup>And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:*

*13And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. 14And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. 15And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, 16And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. 17And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? 18There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. 19And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.*

This passage tells about a time when Jesus met ten men with leprosy. Leprosy is a dreaded disease that affects the skin.

Here is some information about leprosy from the website of the U.S. National Library of Medicine:

“Leprosy is an infectious disease that has been known since biblical times. It is characterized by disfiguring skin sores, nerve damage, and progressive debilitation.

“All forms of the disease eventually cause nerve damage in the arms and legs, which causes sensory loss in the skin and muscle weakness. People with long-term leprosy may lose the use of their hands or feet due to repeated injury resulting from lack of sensation.”

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0002323>

There are still some places around the world where

people suffer from leprosy. Today we have medicine that allows people with leprosy to avoid isolation. But back in Jesus' day, they had no medical cure.

In addition to its debilitating effects, leprosy led to isolation. People who caught leprosy would have to leave their family, friends, and job. Because the lepers were not allowed to come close to Jesus, they called out to Him from far off.

When they begged for mercy, Jesus told the men to go show themselves to the priests. As Leviticus 14:2 explains, if someone thought they were no longer leprous, they were supposed to go the priest. The priest would check whether the person was healed, and decided whether or not it was safe for them to come back into the camp. The ten men followed Jesus' directions. On their way to the priest, they were cured.

One of the lepers, when he realized that the leprosy was gone, ran back to Jesus! He exclaimed praises to God "with a loud voice" and fell down to worship at Jesus' feet. The other lepers were probably just as overjoyed at their healing, but apparently they forgot to give thanks to the One who had healed them.

Jesus was shocked that only one person returned to thank him. After such wondrous healing, how could they neglect to show gratitude?

But often we do the same thing. Jesus has saved us from a fate much worse than leprosy. He has rescued us from sin and death, and in addition, has reconciled us to God!

(2 Corinthians 5:18)

Let us not be like the nine who forgot to give thanks, but instead like the thankful Samaritan, whom Jesus encouraged and commended.

## **2 Corinthians 9:15**

***Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!***

---

### **Diotrophes – an Example to Avoid**

Rose M. Payne

***"I wrote to the church: but Diotrophes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church." 3 John 9/10.***

Who was Diotrophes? A little nobody with a very good opinion of himself? He is not described as an elder, deacon or evangelist nor is he mentioned anywhere else in the scriptures, but he wanted to be the boss of a congregation and set himself up in competition with no less a person than the apostle John!

John had been chosen to be a disciple by Jesus himself and was a witness of everything concerning his life, death, and resurrection. He could even tell of other things which are not included in the scriptures for lack of space

(John 21:25). He also writes like a very kindly man. Who could want a better teacher? Yet Diotrophes seems to have become jealous. He presumably kept John's letter away from the church, otherwise we might have had a fourth epistle of John in our New Testaments, and he would not receive visiting brethren.

John's next letter was therefore sent to Gaius, who appears to have been a faithful member of the church in that district, one who was willing to exercise hospitality to travelling Christians, but who was not quite up to date with the current news.

Diotrophes was casting people out of the church. Paul shows how certain people should be disfellowshipped, when he requests the Christians at Corinth to exclude one of their number in 1 Cor. 5, and also possibly in 1 Tim. 1:20 where two men were handed over to Satan because they were blasphemers. This makes it very clear that they were among the lost unless they repented. Diotrophes, however, had turned this principle on its head. His way of disfellowshipping would result in sincere Christians being shut out of the assembly, and he would be left with those who did not know or care so much about the truth but wanted to keep in favour with Diotrophes.

We are so used to living with religious divisions that we do not easily appreciate the seriousness of the situation in those days. There was only one Christian church then and anyone excluded from that assembly would be understood to have lost his or her chance of salvation. Diotrophes intended to keep out of heaven those

members who rebelled against his assumed authority. This would surely be a very serious matter for which Diotrophes would have to answer in the final judgement.

We do not know the ending of this story. Maybe John did come to set things right and appoint a proper eldership. Diotrophes would have had to repent and be received back in a humbler position, or else he would have met the same fate as he dealt out to others and been excommunicated himself.

Of course, in the last resort, only the Lord knows who is or is not a faithful Christian and can rightly divide the sheep from the goats. Unfortunately all down the centuries there have been individuals acting the part of Diotrophes. Too often they have been lacking in the Christian charity so prominent in John's writings, but come down very hard on differences of opinion about the meaning of the scriptures and so caused many divisions.

---

### **TAKE HEED... (Part 4) ... “ WATCH AND PRAY”**

James Neil, Skelmersdale

(Mark 13 : 33)

Watch or to watch can have a variety of applications and as Christians we should aim to apply them all to our life.

For example, we are told in **Hebrews 13 : 17** to appreciate and to cooperate with those who *watch out for our souls* as this is for our own good. We are told that those in this position will be accountable but that we also

have a responsibility to watch over or to put it another way, to examine in the light of scripture our own behaviour, so that their task is a source of joy to them and not an experience which is dogged by us taking the wrong attitude and being contentious .

**Matthew 24 : 42** ... tells us to “**Watch** because we do not know when the Lord will return”

and of course this is not so we do not miss his coming, no-one will miss that event, but rather that we will be ready for it, prepared for it, some will spend time trying to predict when it will happen but apart from the scriptural fact that this is not for us to know, what does it matter when the lord comes as long as we are ready?

In preparation for the Lord coming, there are some things which sheer common sense, as well as scripture tells us to watch ...To put it in a modern vernacular “Watch your mouth” is one of these things.

**Matthew 12 : 36-37** ... “*But I say to you, that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgement, For by your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned.*”

What a huge area this covers, Gossip.. Foul language, ... False doctrine .. Divisive talk ... and so we could go on... well might **James in his letter chapter 3**... warn against an uncontrolled tongue.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 4:5** ... Paul tells Timothy to “*Watch in all things*” and what better advice could we have than is

contained in those simple and yet powerful words?

Can we say that we do watch in all things? ... our actions? ... the company we keep and how we behave in that company? ... don't get caught out, don't put your salvation on the line is the warning for us to consider.

We are each responsible for watching out for ourself but also we are responsible for watching out for each other as well. (**Galatians 6:1**)

Jesus said. "*Watch ... **and pray***" .... This would seem to tell us that one without the other is ineffectual .... Rather like "*Faith without works*"

Prayer is our communication with God, it is a source of encouragement to know that he listens to us. But even so effectual prayer is built upon faith. Built upon the conviction that when we pray we are indeed speaking to God ...That God is there. ... If we are not convinced of this then are we praying "Just in case"

Prayer must also be done in sincerity if it is to be effective, for example ... it is no use praying for forgiveness if we don't believe He will forgive us. Just as it is no use praying for forgiveness if we carry on committing the same sin intentionally.

**"Take heed that you watch and Pray" But let us not pray for help in watching, if we constantly refuse to accept what God shows us through his word**

---

## **THE WORLD TODAY**

Ian S. Davidson, Motherwell

We live in a rapidly changing world. It is difficult to keep pace with all the developments most of the time. I try to keep abreast with what is going on politically, economically, scientifically and religiously, but it is not easy. Here are a few interesting statistics that I have gathered recently:

In 1970, in Africa, about 17 million described themselves as born-again Christians. Today, the figure has soared to 400 million. Many are Pentecostals.

In the past six decades, the rainforest has been reduced by over 60%. Two thirds of what remains is fragmented.

The Colorado, the Murray-Darling and the Indus rivers no longer reach the sea.

In 1955 there were 300,000 lions in the wild. Today there are 20,000.

The number of prisoners in England and Wales almost doubled since 1993.

The net gain of the Indian population in the past decade amounts to 180 million. In other words, there are thirty-four extra heads each passing minute.

Poland, among the Catholic nations of Europe, stands as the only place where seminaries are full and priests abound. 54% of the priests said they should like to have a wife.

France, in the 1950's, boasted 40,000 active priests. In a

few years, the number under sixty-five years of age will be a tenth of that. Some priests in France today have to cope with thirty churches.

In Syria, converting Muslims to Christianity is illegal.

Today there are 1.6 billion Muslims in the world. By 2030, it is estimated that there will be 2.2 billion.

Cities already count for half the world's population. The figure will be 70% by 2050.

South Sudan is the world's newest country: number 193, if you count by U.N. membership.

Forests of the world house more than half the world's species of animals, birds and creatures of all kinds.

Between now and 2050, the world's population will rise from 7 billion to 9 billion.

That's enough to be going on with! We know, of course, that God Himself knows exactly what is going on in the world. Nothing is hidden from Him. *"But all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do"* (Hebrews 4:13b). We often wonder what He thinks about the present state of the globe he created. Some things must cheer Him. Many other things must disturb and anger Him like sin, exploitation, false religions, atheism, apathy, indifference, etc. Interestingly, there are seven things that God especially hates detailed for us in the book of Proverbs: *"Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a*

*false witness who pours out lies, and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers“ (Proverbs 6:17-19, N.I.V.).*

## THE INDIVIDUAL

God sees the billions, but he also sees me. He knows what is happening in the world and he knows what is happening in my life. He is some God! I learned a long time ago that my faith in Jesus is very much a personal faith and that, one day, I shall be judged as an individual. God is not going to get me mixed up with anyone else. He knows exactly who I am. In fact, He knows me better than myself. This world is on its way out and, so, one day God will destroy it and create a new earth with a new heaven (2 Peter 3:7-11; Revelation 21:1). I am on my way out too and, so, God needs to create a new me to dwell in the new world. The renewal process begins here (2 Corinthians 5:17), but will come to total fruition in heaven. Paul wrote: *“Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible ( speaking of the body ) must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory“ (1 Corinthians 15: 51-54).*

The importance of the individual can, for example, be seen in the seven letters to the seven churches in Asia Minor. To each congregation are the words: *“He who has*

*an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches*" (Revelation 2:7,17, 29; 3:6,13,22). We most certainly are not going to be judged as congregations, but as individuals. Before the judgement seat of Christ it will be a one-on-one situation.

## SUMMING UP

The history of the world has had its good times and bad times. The Bible deals with history truly, faithfully and accurately. Of course, the highlight of all highlights was the coming of Jesus to the planet to save all those on it. What a change there would be if everyone believed in Him and obeyed Him.

**I do not know how long this world will last. I do not know how long I shall last in it. What is important is that, at the last, I am found faithful in Christ so that I can last forever in heaven and enjoy lasting pleasure.**

---

## **Fruits of the Spirit - 2- JOY**

Gretchen Ashurst, Stretford

- *Shout with joy and sing to God all the earth*
- *May the nations be glad and sing for joy*
- *Sing joyfully to the Lord, your righteousness*
- *My lips will shout for joy*
- *Everlasting joy will crown their hearts*
- *I will be joyful in God my Saviour*
- *Gladness and joy will overtake them*
- *Let them sing for joy*

All these statements are taken from the Old Testament where joy is mentioned more than 100 times. From the beginning God wanted us to be filled with joy, and has given all his people the gift of song, this makes it possible for people of all nationalities with their own languages, personalities, men and women, rich and poor, old and young to be united in joyful praise to Him.

In the New Testament we read of the birth of Jesus – told to shepherds by an angel who said *'I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.'* Luke 2:10

In 1 Thessalonians 5:16 we are given instructions for the way we should live. *'Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.'*

On days when the going is tough, it seems impossible to be joyful, but we are never left alone to overcome our problems. The God has promised that He will never leave us nor forsake us. (Hebrews 13:5)

In James 1:2 it says *'Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance'* and in 1 Peter 4:12 & 13 he says *'Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the suffering of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.'*

We thank God for helping us in every situation however hard to bear, and for giving us the gift of joy, through the

Holy Spirit. Jesus, too, was full of joy given by the Holy Spirit. Jesus said *'As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you...I have told you this is so that my joy may be in you and that your joy might be complete.'* John 15:9 & 11.

*'Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.'* 1 Peter 1:8-9

Philippians 4:1 *'Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends.'*

Romans 12:11-12 *'Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.'*

We see from all we read in our Bibles that we are truly blessed and joy is so much a part of our lives that we should spread it around to everyone we meet.

As Paul wrote of his joy at being with the brethren as he travelled around we too feel joy as we meet together – and often we sing hymns that lift our hearts and voices in gratitude to a loving Father. As we make melody in our hearts, we are thankful for the hundreds of hymns that have been carefully written and put together in books – it is interesting to see how many speak of joy. As we have a children's choice of song after the adult meeting is over, we all sing with great enthusiasm, and we hope and pray that the words they learn will be in their hearts for ever.

One of the favourites is - '**Joy, Joy, My Heart is Full of Joy**' – after singing this we all go out to face the world with smiles and hugs, knowing that our Saviour dear is ever near, and that's the reason why our hearts are full of joy.

---

## **OBITUARY**

### **Alma Currie, Newtongrange. Midlothian, Scotland.**

Our dear sister in Christ, Alma passed away on 14th. of March 2011. She had a few years of failing health and had spells spent in hospital over the last few months.

Alma was born on 19th of December 1920 and spent her childhood and school years in Newtongrange. She met her husband to be, Joe, where they worked at the Co-op. When war came along, Joe was posted overseas and they corresponded during these years. During that time Alma attended Bible Studies and Gospel meetings of the Church of Christ here in Newtongrange. When Joe returned after the war they were both baptised on Saturday 11th of August 1945 and were married on 15th of August 1945, V.J Day- 'Victory over Japan Day,' but Joe always jokingly referred to it as Victory over Joe day.

Brother Andrew Sharp led a service of remembrance for Alma at the church meeting place which was followed by a short service at Newbattle Cemetery, conducted by Brother David Fergusson.

Our thoughts and prayers are with brother Joe and the family at this sad time.

M. Hunter (Secretary)

## **Mary Gorton, Stretford, Manchester.**

Our dear sister Mary Gorton went to be with the Lord on the 18th. of February 2011.

Her funeral was attended by many who loved her, and have happy memories of her cheerful smile and her warm hospitality.

We miss her. She was a gently loving friend, a caring mother and grandma and our prayers are with her family.

Graham and Mary were a great team and we miss Graham too. Their fellowship with all the brethren at Stretford Church of Christ for many years was a blessing to us all.

We thank our Heavenly Father for letting us have them for such a long time, they lives were wonderful examples of joyful Christianity.

Gretchen Ashurst

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***I hear a voice from heaven saying to me,***

***"Write!"***

***"From now on, the dead, dying in the Lord, are blest."***

***"Absolutely" says the Spirit,***

***"So they can rest from their troubles  
and their accomplishments do follow them."***

[Revelation 14:13. DIRECT TRANSLATION]

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The *Scripture Standard* is printed for the publishers by [www.a2g-group.co.uk](http://www.a2g-group.co.uk)

# Scripture Standard

Volume 78-3  
September 2011

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## CLARIFYING HEBREW DATING - 1

I asked a rabbi a question about the Hebrew calendar. He advised me: "nothing is simple with the Jews." True - the Hebrew calendar is complex.

For example the chart below illustrates how Hebrew months and Sabbatical years are counted from the 1st. day of the month Abib,<sup>1</sup> (also called Nisan).

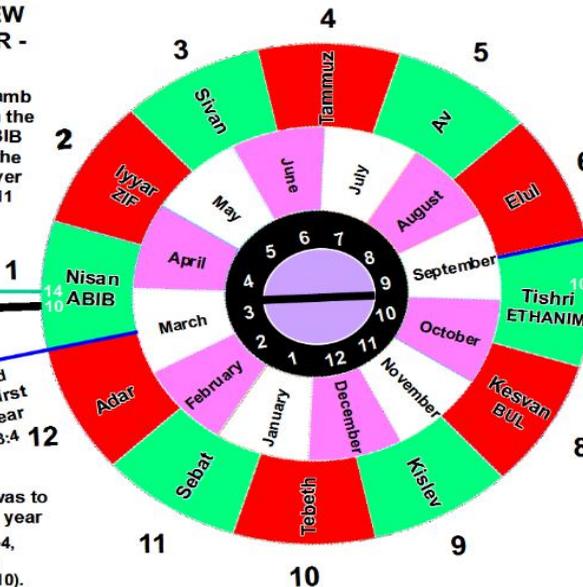
But Jubilee years were from the start of the 10th. day (not the 1st. day) of the 7th. month to the start of the 10th. day, of the 7th. month of the following year.<sup>2</sup> Bear in mind that Hebrew days are from evening to evening,<sup>3</sup> not midnight to midnight. But how could the Jubilee year be the 50th. year<sup>2</sup> when there were only 49 years from Jubilee to Jubilee?

<sup>1</sup>Exodus 12:2 <sup>2</sup>Leviticus 25:9-10 <sup>3</sup>Genesis 1:5,8,13,19,22,31.

NOTE: We have sent a tube of charts on Hebrew dating

## THE HEBREW - CALENDAR -

The Passover lamb was selected on the 10th. day of ABIB. The 14th was the LORD's Passover Exodus 12:3,6,11



ABIB, also called Nisan, was the first month of the year Exodus 12:2, 13:4

Every 7th year was to be a Sabbatical year

Leviticus 25:2-4,  
Joshua 4:19  
(in Abib, see 5:10).

 The 1st. day of Tishri was the Feast of Trumpets Leviticus 23:24

The 10th. day of Tishri was The Day of Atonement Leviticus 23:27

Jubilees began on the 10th. day of Tishri each 49th Sabbatical year and were to be regarded as a 50th year Leviticus 25:8-11

## God's Other Book.

Derek L. Daniell - Tunbridge Wells

The people of Israel had sinned against God while Moses had been with Him for forty days on Mount Sinai. Aaron had listened to the people and made a golden calf that they were now worshipping with sacrifices. They were saying, "*These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.*" The Lord was so angry that he told Moses "*I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you*" (Exodus 32:1-10). Moses implored the Lord to relent and remember His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to give them the land He had promised (vs.11-14). Returning to the people Moses burnt the calf with fire and ground it into powder and scattered it on the water and made the people of Israel drink it (vs.15-20). Moses sent the Levites among the people and about 3000 were slain with the sword (v.29).

The next day Moses returned to the Lord to make atonement for the people. "*But now, if you will forgive their sin, but if not, please blot me out of **your book that you have written.** But the Lord said to Moses, 'Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot out of **my book.**'*"

God reassured Moses that he would lead the people to the promised land, but that he would visit the sins of the people with a plague (vs.30-35).

This is the first mention of **God's other book** However, in Psalm 69:28 David makes mention of those who had sinned against God, "*May they be blotted out of **the book of life,** and not be listed with the righteous*". *The Old Testament ends with a reference to a **book of remembrance** written of those who feared the Lord and honoured His name*" (Malachi 3:16-18).

Coming to the New Testament we read of the disciples of Jesus who were rejoicing at their successful mission for Him, but were told, *“do not rejoice in this ... but rejoice that your names are **written in heaven**”* (Luke 10:20). In Philippians 4:3 Paul makes mention of *“Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in **the book of life**.”* At the close of the New Testament there are further references to **God’s other book** in Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12,15; 21:27. Those who conquer in their faith will have their name in the book of life. Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will enter into the heavenly home. In 2 Timothy 4:7-8 Paul wrote, *“**I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who love His appearing.**”* Jesus said, *“**be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life**”* (Revelation 2:10).

When **God’s other book, the book of life** is opened will your name be there?

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### **“Thaddeus”**

Jonathan Ashurst, Byron, GA.

By the time this is published, in my family, there will be rejoicing over the birth of a new child. My sister Monique will have had a baby boy, whom she and her husband John have decided to name Thaddeus.

In the New Testament, there was a follower of Jesus

named Thaddeus. Not much is said about him, but we do know that he followed Jesus faithfully as one of the twelve apostles. This apostle is referred to by several names, including Thaddeus, Lebbaeus, Jude, and Judas (not Iscariot). He is usually mentioned as a part of a list along with the other apostles:

Matthew 10:3 “...*Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus*”

Mark 3:18 “...*Thaddaeus*”

Luke 6:16 “...*Judas the son of James*”

John 14:22 “...*Judas (not Iscariot)*”

Acts 1:13 “...*Judas the son of James*”

The gospel of John does not list the apostles, but it does mention something Thaddaeus said. Jesus was speaking to the apostles in the upper room, a few hours before He was to be crucified. In the gospel of John chapter 14, verses 19-21, Jesus said:

*“A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has my commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”*

At this point, Thaddeus, to whom John refers as “Judas (not Iscariot),” asks Jesus an important question:

*“Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, 'Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’”*

I'm sure many of us have wondered the same question. After his resurrection from the dead, why didn't Jesus go

show himself to the world? Why did he only reveal himself to the apostles and disciples? He could have appeared to the unbelieving Roman authorities, or to the jealous Pharisees, or to the secular Sadducees. Why did he show himself only to those who believed in him?

Jesus answers the question in verses 23-24:

*“Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.'”*

God comes to those who love him. He does not force himself on anyone. He wants us to choose to love him. But if we refuse, then his word will judge us at the last day (John 12:48).

Jesus continues in John 14 verses 25-26:

*“These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”*

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would come to the apostles, instruct them, and remind them of what Jesus had taught them. After his resurrection, Jesus sent out his apostles, including Thaddeus, with the following commission (Matthew 28:18-20):

*“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the*

*nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

As he explained to Thaddaeus, Jesus chooses to reveal himself to those who love him and keep his word (John 14:23). He sends the Holy Spirit to those who commit their lives to him (Acts 2:38). In this way, he manifests himself to his followers, but not to the world.

Are you a faithful follower of Christ, as Thaddeus was?

**Note:**

Scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version

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**If Jesus Was Black.**

V.Sujatha, Stretford

Once somebody asked me *“How would you feel if you came to know Jesus was black?”* I said, It wouldn’t matter to me if he was black or white. I would still love him the way I do now. Does it really matter what colour he is? It did not matter to him. He died for you and me without thinking whether we are black or white. He died for all sinners (Romans 5:6-8) and all have sinned (Romans 3:23).

Whatever God gives is good. If He gives you white skin - it is good and if He gives you black skin - it is good. It is we, who have created difference amongst ourselves. Racism all over the world, treating our fellow brother wrongly just because his colour doesn’t match ours. We should be kind to one another as Christ is to us (Ephesians 4:32).

What if it was the other way round? Black people dominating the white, treating them as if they are nothing. How would we feel? Christ said *“Just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise”* (Luke 6:31).

What if Christ was black? Would it change the fact that he died for everyone? Would it change that he died for you? Would you not love him just as much as you love him now? We see what we want to see. If we see a black man as servant, we will treat him as a servant. If we see Christ in him, we will treat him as we would Christ (Matthew 25:40,45). We don't have to treat a black man as God but see him as a fellow human being, so that we can treat him like one. It is written *“you should love your neighbour as yourself”* (Luke 10:27), whether your neighbour is black or white.

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## **A SUMMARY OF THE "TAKE HEED" SERIES**

James Neil, Skelmersdale

There are still more examples where the scriptures record the advice, command, and exhortation for us to *“Take Heed”* which we have not dealt with individually. However I believe that we have seen the gist of these within the passages that we have looked at.

Of course we should never take any part of scripture out of the context in which it was given to try and prove a point or a personal opinion and if any kind of “over-all” lesson is to be learned when we look at the instances where we are told to “Take Heed” I believe it is that we should put the word of God before the word of man, that is any man, even ourselves - not just as well but most of all. Why?

Because what we believe is the word of God we will teach and preach to others. Why? Because it is not just the passages which begin with the words *“Take Heed”* that show to us the importance of listening to God, and listening in the sense that we take in his word, build on it, and realise that it is on his word, on his promises, that our salvation and the salvation of those who we undertake to teach depends but the whole of scripture

It is only when we approach God's word with a willingness to *“Take Heed”* that we really receive its blessings fully, it is only when we realise that it is the only way we can please God that we will understand the paths in which God requires us to walk.

*“Take Heed”* means far more than simply listen. 1<sup>st</sup> Peter chapter 4 verse 11 says:-

*“If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God”*

Contained also within the passages we have looked at over the past months is the advice to watch where we are putting our own feet before we try and tell anyone else where they should put theirs.

We have a saying that *“Actions speak louder than words”* and I always try to remember the words I first heard from a great-uncle who wrote in an autograph book I had as a child:

*“IF EVERY CHURCH MEMBER WERE JUST LIKE ME.....  
WHAT KIND OF A CHURCH WOULD OUR CHURCH BE?”*

Perhaps these words sum up better than any words of my own, why I believe it to be so important that we *“Take heed unto ourselves”* the *“Wonderful words of life”* given to us by God.

# **Three Keys to Making our Lives a Living Sacrifice on a Daily Basis**

Henry Kong, Pasir Panjang

We Live in a Complex World. If we are not focussed, it is so easy to be distracted, occupied and stressed by many unimportant things.

Are you distracted? The Bible tells us in 1 Kings 20:39-40 how a soldier was busy here and there. As a result, the prisoner, that he was entrusted to watch over, escaped. Now, he has to pay the full penalty of his carelessness.

Are you too busy? There are many things that demand our time and attention. In Luke 10:40-42, Jesus compares the busyness of Martha with the focussed priority of her sister, Mary.

Are you burdened? It is so easy in modern day Singapore to be stressed out by our studies, careers and commitments in the home. Hebrews 12:1 urges us to lay aside every weight and sin that so easily ensnares us.

It is high time to adjust our priorities! Top on this list is to live our lives as a living sacrifice to God on a daily basis. Here are 3 keys that will give us a head start:

- **1. To Live is Christ**

Paul's testimony in Philippians 1:21 is that the reason for his existence is Christ. Like Paul, Jesus Christ must be key in our lives. In everything we do, we must ask what would Jesus do if He was in our place? Each morning we need to ask what would Jesus have us do? Let Jesus be the deciding factor in all we do – not politics, our opinions or preferences. We must be willing to deny ourselves so

that His will will be accomplished in our lives each day.

- **2. People Matter.**

In Matthew 25:40, the Bible reveals "*... the King will answer them, 'I assure you: Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did for Me.'*"

Everyone counts because each one is created in the image of God. The good that we do for one another, is regarded by Jesus as favour done to Him personally.

Jesus said in John 13:34, "*As I have loved you, so you must love one another*". In everything we do, we are called to value people, not count numbers and measure the success of our projects. We are to treat one another with respect - as friends, the way we want to be treated. People are not a bother, but priority for the Christian.

- **3. Heaven is our Goal**

Hebrews 11:16 tells us that the men of God in the past "*... now desire a better place - a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.*" I find this very encouraging and reassuring because I want heaven to be my home too.

Above all, souls are what we treasure and are worth giving our lives for. Mark 8:36, 37 tells us, "*... what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*" The answer clearly is that we have no profit when we lose our soul.

God desires faithfulness and fruitfulness from each one of us. He does not demand success. Everyone should do what he can. God will be pleased when we put Him first.

- **Conclusion**

To present our lives as a living sacrifice to God each day, we must put Christ first and walk each day ever closer with Him. People are our priority; they matter – Meetings, events, Bible studies are created for people; not people for them. Then look forward to heaven! Live with Eternity in Mind – while our physical body perishes the inward man is renewed.

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### **Lost Forever.**

Ian S Davidson, Motherwell

I live near Glasgow, Scotland's largest city, which dates to 543 A.D. It used to be classified as the second city of the British Empire. Glasgow has had a long and fascinating history and, like Edinburgh, is well worth a visit. I love reading books on Glasgow, but one of the saddest is that entitled: "Lost Glasgow." The book features drawings and photographs of buildings demolished, which played a central part in the city's story at one time or another.

One of the worst "acts of vandalism" was to demolish, in the late nineteenth century, the Old College on the High Street, Glasgow's oldest street. The Old College preceded the new University building now sited on Gilmorehill. Glasgow University dates to 1451. Every time I walk up the High Street I always look over to where the Old College was and think how great it would be if all the buildings were still standing. The Clock Tower was very impressive, as was Blackfriars Church. As I think about the famous College, I also always think about Thomas and Alexander Campbell. Both studied here for a time – Thomas in the eighteenth century and Alexander from 1808 to 1809.

We cannot bring the famous demolished buildings back. Sadly, they are lost forever. All we have left are the drawings, the photographs and the odd bits and pieces that were saved and are now scattered abroad.

## THE JEWISH TEMPLE

The Jews thought the world of their temples. They regarded each one as the “*House of God*.” Jesus looked upon the last one, Herod’s temple, as such too (Luke 19:46; John 2:16). The temple represented the heart of Jewish religious life. The building was magnificent and a joy to behold. It was THE building in Jerusalem. By the time of Jesus’ ministry, the temple had taken forty-six years to construct (John 2:20). I believe they were still adding the finishing touches to it by the beginning of the 60’s A.D.

In A.D. 70, the temple was destroyed by the Romans. Jesus had prophesied of this event (Matthew 24:1-2; Mark 13:1-2; Luke 21:5-6). What did the surviving Jews think of Jesus and His words after the siege instigated by the Roman army? Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian, was present at the destruction of Jerusalem and his account of it is heart-rending. He tells us that 97,000 were taken prisoner and 1,100,000 perished. The destroyed temple was never rebuilt. All we are left with are descriptions of it, models, some stones, including the famous Western Wall, which was not part of the main building itself. Since the destruction of the temple, Judaism has never been the same. The great edifice is gone and lost forever. On the Temple Mount now stands the Dome of the Rock (Qubbat as-Sakhrah) and, nearby, the al-Aqsa Mosque. I hate to think what would happen if the Israeli authorities decided one day to demolish these famous Moslem edifices.

## THE SPIRITUAL TEMPLE

God no longer has a material temple, but a spiritual one. The people of God now constitute His temple on earth. So God's temple today does not consist of dead stones, but living stones. Peter has written: *"You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ"* (1 Peter 2: 5, N.I.V.). In Hebrews we read: *"Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise – the fruit of lips that confess His name. And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased"* (13:15-16, N.I.V.).

Many have attempted to destroy God's spiritual temple. For example, before Constantine, there were ten major persecutions against the people of God by the Roman authorities. But we are still here! The torch has been passed from faithful generation to faithful generation. A remnant of true believers has never gone away or been overcome. Jesus said: *"And I say also unto you, that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it"* (Matthew 16:18).

God has always known those who are His and has never lost them in the crowd. The *"lost"* are actually those outside of Christ who are in danger of being lost forever in hell. To lose a famous building forever is sad; but (through their own making) to lose souls forever is tragic. Lives following Satan are doomed; but lives following Jesus faithfully are heaven-bound. There, they will rejoice forever and forever.

Amen.

## **Cainan the son of Sala.**

### **The 'Cainan' in Luke 3:36 is not listed in Genesis.**

This apparent Bible anomaly has been raised in response to the December editorial "Is Faith Reasonable?"

There are two Cainan's listed in Luke's genealogy (Luke 3:36 & 37). It is suggested that the one in verse 36 might be a serious mistake because it is not listed in Genesis 10:24 or 11;12,13. Even so it is in the Koine text preserved by the Greek church and all known ancient N.T. manuscripts.

So is there an explanation why it is not in the Genesis listings? There are three factors to be born in mind:

- 1) Terms like "begot" etc. do not always refer to the immediate offspring or parent. (e.g. Matthew 1:1,8 and in Hebrews 7:9-10 where Abraham is called Levi's father).
- 2) Lists serve a purpose and so irrelevant names might be omitted (c.p. Ezra 7:1-5, 1.Chronicles 6:3-15).
- 3) Rights of succession might skip generations.  
For example, Jacob's son Joseph was not made the head of a tribe. His sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, were adopted by their grandfather and became the patriarchal heads of two of Israel's tribes. (Genesis 48:5,6)

In Genesis chapter 11 the subject is chronology.

Each patriarch's age is stated at the birth of the next in succession. This makes it possible to add together the years between births and establish an accurate time-line.

On the other hand Doctor Luke is concerned with Jesus' physical, blood lineage. So he lists Jesus' male progenitors. That is why he begins by making it clear that Jesus was not Joseph's physical son, and that Jesus' nearest male blood ancestor was Mary's father, Heli.

*"Also Jesus himself was just turning thirty years of age, being (\*even though he was supposed to be the son of Joseph) \*\* of **the Heli**" (Luke 3:23 direct translation).*

\*[Greek  $\omega\varsigma$  - adverb of comparison - comparing what he was thought to be with what he really was. The comparison is: Jesus having no physical father Mary's father Heli was Jesus' nearest male ancestor.]

\*\*[Here there is no word for "son" in the Greek text]

So from Luke we learn that Sala was the blood offspring of Cainan and Cainan was Arphaxad's blood offspring.

In Genesis 11:12 we learn that Arphaxad was 35 years old when Salah was born. Though unusual, being a grandfather at 35 is not impossible. This might have something to do with why Cainan's name is omitted. However, its omission does not detract from the listings purpose and its usefulness for establishing a chronological time-line.

Cainan's omission from Genesis 10:24 could be because successor-ship in Peleg's lineage skipped him.

**CONCLUSION:** As there are feasible explanations then there is no reason for claiming that there is a discrepancy.

[Anyone interested in investigating this further can find more suggested explanations on page 34 of Dr. Floyd Nolen Jones book: "The Chronology of the Old Testament" ISBN 10: 0-89051-416X.]

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## QUESTION BOX

A question has been submitted asking if we should eat black puddings. Brother Frank Worgan addresses the matter in detail in the accompanying special issue. Do read it. There is more to this question than 'Black Puddings.'

## NEWS and INFORMATION

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October 22 Ian Davidson

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### HELP

Someone has submitted an excellent article headed:

**“LIVING FAITH”**

but has not appended a name or address to it.

If it is you please let the editor have your details.

### HEBREW DATING CHARTS

It is our intention to provide details of how sets of the 3 Hebrew dating charts can be obtained from the printer in the December issue of the Scripture Standard.

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The *Scripture Standard* is printed for the publishers by [www.a2g-group.co.uk](http://www.a2g-group.co.uk)

# Scripture Standard

Volume 78-3 SUPPLEMENT

## THE QUESTION BOX

conducted by  
Frank Worgan. Corby.

A question with which I have been asked to consider is "May Christians eat Black Puddings?" and I am fairly sure that some people will find the subject almost amusing and, perhaps, hardly worthy of consideration.

That, I believe, would be a big mistake, because in the scriptures, where blood is mentioned over 300 times, it is never treated lightly or frivolously, as I think this will become evident as we look at some of passages of scripture in which blood is mentioned.

But let us first make clear what it is that we are about to consider, because whilst most of us have heard about Black Puddings, very few of us will have given them a great deal of thought, and this, I suggest, its even true among the people who eat them!

Of course, blood itself is something we all take very seriously. After all, it has been described as 'The Red River of Life', and this is certainly an apt description, because we cannot live without it.

Our lungs supply oxygen to the blood, and our heart pumps the oxygenated blood throughout our body by means of the arteries, so that among its many functions, blood supplies vital oxygen and nutrients, it keeps us either hot or cool as may be necessary, it fights infections

and it eliminates waste products.

Indeed, the importance of the role played by out blood may be judged from the number of times we are required by our doctors to undergo blood tests.

And the reason why it is so important is revealed in Leviticus 17:14 “...*for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof.*”

No! We take ‘blood’ seriously. It is the addition of the word, ‘pudding’ changes our perception and introduces a note of levity into the discussion. One can scarcely say, ‘Pudding’ without raising a smile, but in answering the question posed at the beginning of this article, I think that we shall find that this black object, created by some resourceful butcher as he sought to make use of every part of the carcass on which he had been working, and then presented as an article of food, should not be treated lightly.

Let us begin by asking:

### **‘Of what does Black Pudding consist?’**

Well, in these days, in the different parts of our own country, and in other countries where it is produced, the manufacturers change the constituents of the ‘pudding’? in order to create their own special, or unique, recipe, but a Black Pudding originally and essentially consists of pig’s blood, which is heated and allowed to cool until it congeals, and then is stuffed into a piece of pig’s intestine.

Traditionally, it is formed into fairly round balls, but in these days it is also sold in slices, as the makers attempt to attract a modern clientele.

As to its food value, think about these facts; 3½ ounces of Black Pudding contains about 90 calories and provides;-

1 gram of carbohydrates,

1 gram of sugar,  
15 grams of protein,  
680 milligrams of salt,  
6.4 milligrams of iron, and  
35 grams of fat.

This means that 1lb. of Black Pudding contains about 220 grams of fat. This hardly qualifies to be labelled a healthy foodstuff!

But, even if Black Pudding is a perfect food, providing everything that our body needs, the question would still remain; Is it something that a Christian should eat?

### **What The Scriptures Reveal.**

There is no obvious mention of blood in the first three chapters of Genesis, although it is apparent that, in providing a covering for Adam and Eve, the blood of animals was shed – sacrificed! - And it was God Himself who provided the sacrifice.

There is no mention of animals being slaughtered for food, because our first parents ate fruit and vegetables (Genesis 2: 29). They were not meat-eaters until after the Flood, as we shall see in our study.

The first use of the word, 'blood', a word which occurs more than 300 times in the Bible, is found in Genesis 4:10, when God said to Cain, "*The voice of your brother's blood cries to me from the ground*".

God knew when blood had been shed and the consequence of that first murder was that the ground would '*henceforth not yield unto thee her strength*'. In other words, the earth would no longer be as productive or as fruitful as before.

This is the first indication of the importance that God attached to blood.

### **The Covenant with Noah.** (Genesis 9).

It was after the flood had subsided and Noah and his family had emerged from the Ark that God spoke about the Covenant which was to be made, not merely with Noah but with '*every living creature of all flesh*'.

#### **Genesis 9:15.**

Notice the terms that God used in speaking about the covenant, because they are both important and significant.

- a) *I establish My covenant with you and with your seed after you.* v.9.
- b) *My covenant.* v.11.
- c) *The covenant .....perpetual generations.* v.12.
- d) *A covenant between Me and the earth.* v.13.
- e) *I will remember My covenant.* v.15.
- f) *The everlasting covenant between God and every living creature...? v16.*
- g) *The covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is upon the earth.* v.17.

### **A Covenant Invariably Consists of Conditions and Blessings**

In the opening verses of this chapter, Genesis 9, we read that God blessed Noah and his sons and commissioned them to re-populate the earth. The Hebrew word used is '*MALE*' – 'to fill' or 'fill up'.

He then bestowed on Noah supremacy over every living

creature – virtually restoring to him the authority that had originally been given to Adam, Genesis 1; 28.

It was at this point that God made an addition to Man's diet. *"Every moving thing that lives shall be meat for you; just as the green herb have I given you all things."*

Genesis 9:3

Man became a 'carnivore' – a meat-eater.

### **But there then follows a condition - a prohibition.**

V.4 *"But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, ye shall not eat".*

It is impossible not to see that this verse alone is sufficient to prohibit the eating of blood in any form whatsoever.

From the earliest of times, the Bible reveals, God has emphasized the sacredness of blood – whether animal or human, - and has hedged it around with very strict prohibitions.

(Notice, also, that embedded in this covenant is God's law relating to wilful murder.

V.6. *"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed for in the image of God made He him.")*

### **Blood under the Mosaic Covenant.**

The sacredness of blood was later revealed in the sacrificial system concerning which God gave instructions to Moses.

I think that we who were never under the Mosaic Law and who, consequently, were not required to implement its commands relating to animal sacrifice, are inclined to treat what we read about it in a casual sort of way.

For example; this is how we often see it:-

A Hebrew sins and brings an animal sacrifice as a sin-offering, intended to appease an aggrieved God. Having offered his sacrifice everything is put right again!

Or so we think! But it was not so simple or straightforward!

### **The Severity of Sacrifice Ritual**

The ritual of animal sacrifice was never just a convenient and simple ceremony, because, in the first place, the animal which the sinner brought for sacrifice must be an animal which he himself had nurtured and for which he had cared.

In order to comply with the Mosaic Law, he must present the animal at the Temple, where the priest would examine it to ensure that there was no flaw or deformity in it, since anything of that nature would render it unfit for sacrifice.

However, in later times it was not uncommon for the priest to reject the animal on the pretext of having found some 'imperfection' in it, which meant that unfortunate worshipper was compelled to buy an approved animal from the priest.

There was, of course no provision made in the Mosaic Law for the purchase of animals for sacrifice. This form of 'made easy and convenient' was the invention of the priests, who, as we see when Jesus encountered them in the Temple court, had created a profitable business out of the sale of animals for sacrifice, and, for their part, the people themselves had come to accept this convenient arrangement which said, in effect, "no need to take the trouble of bringing animals for sacrifice up to the Temple. It can all be arranged at price!"

It is not surprising; therefore, that Jesus was made angry

by this commercialization of religion, and the blatant degrading of the God-given system of sacrifice.

Again; we often suppose that, on his arrival at the Temple, the worshipper simply handed over his animal to the priest, who took it away, slaughtered it, and then applied the blood 'according to the Law'.

But this also is a mistake, because, 'according to the Law' the guilty sinner must himself apply the knife to the throat of the sacrificial victim – his own lamb!– which he had brought up!– ! – reared! And which the family may even have adored as pet! (For an example; read 2nd. Samuel 12:3).

In imposing these procedures, was God being severe? Hard? Insensitive? Perhaps this is how it appears to us today, but it was in this way that God compelled the sinner to recognize the grave and painful, cost of sin!

### **Modern Judaism and Its Attitude to Blood.**

In modern times, Judaism continues to strictly observe God's prohibition placed on the eating of any form of blood. Animals intended for food are slaughtered in a manner which allows the blood to drain away, as God commanded.

Originally, this ritual slaughter would have been supervised by the Priests, but, because the Jews have now no priesthood the function has been taken over by the Rabbi, who monitors the procedure to ensure that it is 'kosher' - a word which means, 'correct, genuine or legitimate' and, therefore, producing flesh fit for food, because it has been prepared according to the laws found in Leviticus 11, the which identify the clean and the unclean animals; that is, those fit for food and those that are unfit. Along with this chapter, we should read

Leviticus 17, and Deuteronomy 12, also passages where God specifically prohibits the use of blood as food.

Leviticus 17:10 states that God would ‘*set his Face*’ against’ anyone, either Israelite or foreigner living with the Israelites, who ate any kind of blood, and would ‘cut him off from among his people’

V.11 explains that ‘*the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul*’

V.12. “*No soul of you shall eat blood.....*”

V.13 declares that any hunter, who caught any animal or bird, must ‘*pour out the blood thereof and cover it with dust.*’

And v.14 reiterates what has already been stated:- “*For the life of he flesh is in the blood. Therefore.....you shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh, for the life of all flesh is in the blood thereof; whoever eats it shall be cut off*” ...

The Hebrews generally obeyed these laws, and exceptions were rare.

The prime example of a case of disobedience is found in 1st Samuel 14, where, having defeated the Philistines in battle, King Saul’s soldiers killed the animals they had captured from the enemy and, after slaughtering them, ate the flesh without allowing the blood to drain from the carcass.

When Saul heard this he told his men, “You have sinned in eating with the blood” vv. 12-14.

## **Blood in the New Testament. (Acts 15).**

After the first Gentiles obeyed the Gospel and had been admitted to the fellowship of the Church, an important meeting was held in Jerusalem, when the apostles and Elders met together to discuss the extent to which the Gentiles might be required to comply with the Mosaic Law. The issue was raised by Jewish Christians who, still 'zealous' for the law, mistakenly believed that Gentile must first submit to the Law of Moses before they could become Christians, and the rite of circumcision was expressly mentioned.

The conclusion reached by this meeting was that the Gentiles should not be troubled by such pressure, but, out of regard for the sensitivities of their Jewish brethren, they should be advised to;-

*“Abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood” Acts 15:20.*

And this was the instruction which went out to all the congregations where non-Jews had fellowship.

Galatians 4:4,5 Until: “when The Fullness Of Time, Came God Sent Forth His Son ... To Redeem ...” Redemption, Forgiveness Of Sins, Was Not Possible.

The Hebrews' writer tells us this when he wrote,

*“It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin”?* Hebrews 10:4

In the O.T. the Hebrew word for Atonement is 'KIPPURIM' simply means “a covering up”.

In other words, sins were not blotted out, cancelled, or washed away, because the blood of an animal could not suffice to deal with the sins of a Man. The lesser could not die in the place of the greater.

Even that solemn ceremony on the DAY of ATONEMENT, the most solemn and important Day in their year, did not offer the Jews forgiveness.

God accepted the sacrifice as a confession or acknowledgement of the nation's sins, and COVERED THEM for another year, always looking forward to the time when the sacrifice would be made which would effectively atone for sin.....

This is why the scriptures tell us that

*“In those sacrifices there was a remembrance again made of sin every year.”*

The burden of the nation's guilt was rolled forward – carried over for another year.

But think of the RIVERS of BLOOD, which flowed during O.T. times!

Sacrifices were offered every day in the Temple; morning and evening.

Personal sacrifices - National sacrifices - Sin offerings - Thank offerings.

Yet none of these provided the assurance of forgiveness.

They all pointed forward to the time when God Himself would provide the sacrifice that saves from sin.

Only in the New Testament do we read of Redemption, Remission, Forgiveness, because the shedding of the blood of Christ did something that animal sacrifices could never do.

*“Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.”* John 1:29

“HE appeared once, at the end of the ages, to PUT AWAY sin by the sacrifice of Himself.” Hebrews 9:26

## **CONCLUSION**

Does this prohibition on the eating of blood apply today?

“We must recognize that some of God’s Laws were Dispensational, and therefore temporary in their application.

“There were the Ceremonial Laws, relation to worship at specific periods in O.T. History.

The particular sacrifices about which we have spoken are examples of a ritual which belonged to the Old Mosaic Law, which Paul says; Jesus took out of the way, nailing it to His cross. That is, He treated it in the manner in which a cancelled debt was treated in ancient times. The cancelled bill was nailed to a place where all could see that the debt had been paid/

Others were Moral Laws, which are permanent and which, never change, but remain valid for all ages.

Murder, for instance, has always been condemned by God.

From the beginning, God decreed “that a man should leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife”, Jesus tells us.

His law relating the sanctity of all kinds of blood belongs to this category of Law/

### **A Brief Summing Up.**

1. It is important to recognize that the law prohibiting the use of blood for food does not come from the Mosaic Law. It preceded the law and existed in the Patriarchal Age, as Genesis 9 clearly proves.

2. This law was not given to Hebrews, Israelites, or Jews alone, because the passage makes clear that the Covenant that God made, was made with the all mankind, as a 'perpetual covenant' the sign of which remains with us even today – the Rainbow!

3. All that we read in the scriptures relating to blood must be considered in relation to God's plan for the redemption of mankind by means of the shedding of the blood of His own Lamb.

For this reason, God declared ALL blood to be sacred!

Even animal blood must not be shed wantonly, and the wanton shedding of human blood should be dealt with severely even animal, human or divine. (We describe the blood of Christ as 'divine' because Paul urged the Elders of the Ephesian Church to:-

'Take heed .....to all the flock of God...?....to feed THE CHURCH OF GOD which HE PURCHASED WITH BLOOD THAT WAS HIS OWN' (Acts 20:28)

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FOUR ISSUES PER YEAR (SUBJECT TO REVISION)

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The *Scripture Standard* is printed for the publishers by [www.a2g-group.co.uk](http://www.a2g-group.co.uk)

# Scripture Standard

Volume 78-4  
December 2011

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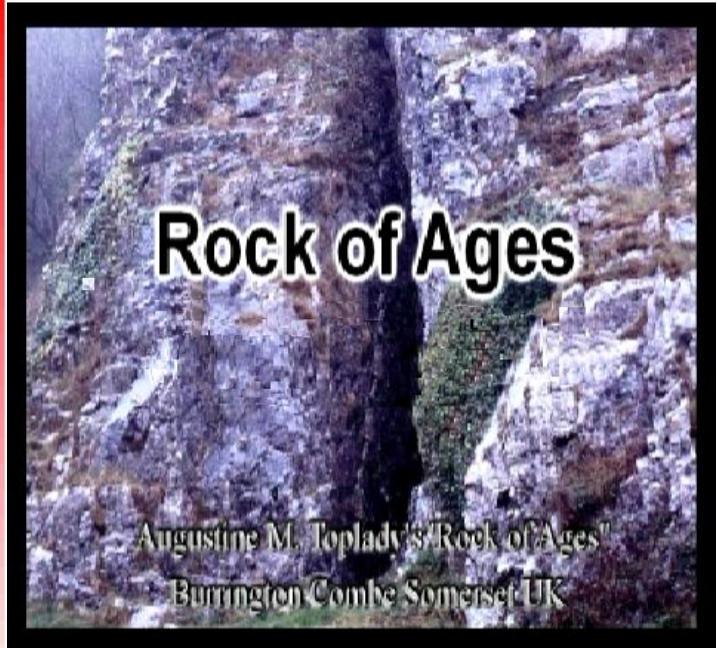
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## **The ROCK of ages**

Derek Daniell, Tunbridge Wells

Rock of ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee;  
Let the water and the blood,  
From Thy riven side which flowed,  
Be of sin the double cure:  
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

This great hymn was written by Augustus Toplady, a country parson who, when returning home one Sunday evening, sheltered from a storm in the cleft of a rock in Burrington Coombe, Somerset.

Growing up in nearby Bristol this was a place we visited often and though I moved to make my home in Kent I took every opportunity to visit the “Rock of Ages” in the foothills of the Mendip Hills. There are three great truths in this hymn, that God is our Rock, Refuge and Redeemer.

David in writing his psalms expresses his thankfulness that God was his **rock** and **refuge** especially when being hunted by King Saul. David also acknowledged that the Lord was his **redeemer**. Psalm 31:1-3 ***"In you, O Lord, I take refuge; let me never be put to shame, in your righteousness deliver me: Incline your ear to me, rescue me speedily, be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me. For you are my rock and my fortress and for your name's sake you lead me and guided me"*** ESV. See Psalm 18:2, 6; 61:1-3.

### **Our ROCK**

**Our Rock** is Jesus Christ, on whom we are to build our lives, for all other ground is sinking sand, Matthew 7:24-25. He is our shelter in a time of storm. Jesus the Christ is also **The Rock** on which the Church is built, the foundational fact of faith, Matthew 16:18 and there is no other foundation, 1 Corinthians 3:11. **The Rock** was with the nation of Israel in the wilderness to protect and provide for them, even though God was not well pleased with them, see 1 Corinthians 10:1-5.

### **Our REFUGE**

**Our Refuge** is in Jesus Christ for ***"our life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life is revealed, then {we} also will be revealed with Him in glory"***, Colossians 3:3-4. For ***"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble ..."***, Psalm 46:1-7. We are reminded that God put Moses into the cleft of a rock and covered him there with His hand as a **refuge** to see His glory as He passed by, Exodus 33:17-23.

## Our REDEEMER

Our Redeemer is Jesus Christ because He paid the price for our redemption, Romans 3:24, “In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins”, Colossians 1:14. Job knew that his redeemer lived and would one day stand on the earth, Job 19:25. David in Psalm 19:14 assured us that “the Lord was his rock and Redeemer.” It was through His death on the cross that Jesus purchased our redemption, Hebrews 9:12, Galatians 3:13; Titus 2:14.

The last verse reminds us that the Rock of Ages is for life, but read verses 2 and 3.

While I draw this fleeting breath,  
When mine eyes are closed in death,  
When I soar through tracts unknown,  
See Thee on Thy judgement throne;  
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.

Paul sums up our victory in Jesus Christ our Rock in Romans 8:31-39. ***“What shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ... But in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life ... nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”***

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## Daniel and Civil Disobedience

Jonathan Ashurst, Byron, GA.

What should you do if the government tells you to do something wrong?

Daniel and his three friends were good examples of how to both obey God and show honour to the authority he has placed over us.

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were four young Hebrews, taken away during the Babylonian captivity (about 580 years before Christ was born). King Nebuchadnezzar wanted these intelligent young men to be trained as his advisers. Far away from their families and communities, they were now expected to live like the Babylonians. According to the Law that God had given, the Hebrews were not supposed to worship idols or eat certain types of food. But in this foreign land, who would ever know?

Despite the temptations all around him, Daniel resolved to stay faithful to God.

”But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.” (Daniel 1:8)

Daniel and his friends decided early in life that they would follow God. However, they were not haughty; they humbly asked the man in charge for vegetables to eat instead. They were allowed to try this diet for ten days. After ten days, since they looked healthier than the other young men, Daniel and his friends were allowed to follow the law of God by keeping the Jewish diet.

God has set up government for our good (Romans 13:1-7). We should obey the authorities in our life, as long as they do not tell us to do something morally wrong (Luke 20:25, Acts 5:28-31, Titus 3:1). If the government tells us to do something against God's will, we should react as Daniel did:

- 1) He decided in his heart to obey God. (Daniel 1:8a)
- 2) He humbly asked for an appropriate alternative

(eating vegetables instead of meat), but was determined to do what was right, whether or not the alternative was granted. (Daniel 1:8b,12)

3) He did what was right and accepted the consequences. (Daniel 1:13)

4) He gave God the glory. (Daniel 1:17)

From this point on in the book of Daniel, we see that God blessed Daniel and his friends for their faithfulness. Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (also known as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) later refused when King Nebuchadnezzar commanded them to bow down to his golden statue. When the king ordered that they be thrown into the fiery furnace, God miraculously kept them from harm (Daniel 3). Many years later, Daniel disobeyed King Darius' edict by praying to the true God. Though Daniel was thrown into the lions' den, God shut the lions' mouths (Daniel 6:22-23). The four friends were respected leaders under two different empires and four different kings, including Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus. Daniel and his friends obeyed their leaders unless doing so would bring dishonour to God. Through their faithfulness, God was glorified (Daniel 3:28, Daniel 6:26-27).

Read the book of Daniel this week to see how he and his friends stayed faithful to God while living under a secular government. Let's follow Daniel's good example by submitting to the authority that God has placed over us, by obeying them in every situation unless they tell us to disobey God, and by honouring God as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

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## Walk and Talk God's Way

V. Sujatha, Stretford

God has created us in the likeness of his own image and breathed into us the Breath of Life (Genesis 2:7). He could have just made us the way he wanted us to be like. He could have programmed us to work and act in a particular way only. But he gave us the ability to think and choose and now man has the scriptures to know and differentiate between right and wrong. But still there is no man who has not sinned (Romans 3:23) and none worthy to stand in front of God.

Very often we imitate other people, without thinking whether it is right or wrong, or its consequences. When there are two choices, a broad and a narrow, many people follow the broad, easier way and they talk about the great things they can get there. But we see only a very few chosen people following the narrow and difficult path, who believe it will lead to the most precious treasure. It is in our nature to follow the broad way because we see many people believing in it. Man's desire to follow man (Galatians 1:6-10). Christ said:

*Enter by the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction and there are many who go in by it, Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life and there are few who find it. (Matthew 7:13,14)*

To those who are in the faith, I encourage you: Be brave! Roar like a lion! Abandon all cowardice and hesitation which doesn't achieve anything in this hasty world of madness. You must have the courage to bear anything at any time and to be firm in our faith no matter what turns up. If you believe in the Lord, you should preach his word

to the whole world, wholeheartedly and with everlasting zeal. Even if the whole world opposes you. You should not turn from the path of righteousness, not even if Satan offers the whole universe to you with all its beauty and glory. You should stand firm in your faith and obey the Lord, just like Christ did (Matthew 4:8-10).

You should be ready to proclaim the Lord's message with a smile to achieve the mighty goal (2 Timothy 4:7). Your life should not only be an open book but it should itself be a message - the Message of Christ.

---

### **BETTER ?**

James Neil, Skelmersdale

We all have our own opinions on which "*things*" are "*The best*" ranging from washing powder to cars and we can all be absolutely convinced that we know the best brands to use in any of perhaps hundreds of commodities. Yet isn't it true to say that very often, when it comes to reality, our opinion is just our own personal opinion, our preference? ... and is it not true to say, that we can even be guilty of assessing people by the criteria of whether their opinions are the same or different to our own?

I feel sure that most, if not all of us, are familiar with the expression "*Birds of a feather flock together*" and it is perhaps natural that like minded people do seek each others company. For example, people interested in photography will form clubs, as will those interested in fishing or a multitude of other activities. In itself this would seem to be harmless and even beneficial, as in many instances these clubs and organisations do offer people with disabilities the opportunity to become involved in their local community.

However, there is a distinct danger in being drawn to a person, or perhaps a group of people, just because of mutual agreement or interests, be it in the form of a hobby or indeed any kind of activity. In any such circumstances we need to be on our guard against being diverted from the really important things in our life.

Each of us make the choice as to what we consider to be "*The important things and people, in our life*" and sometimes, perhaps, we do not find it as easy a choice as we first believe it to be. If we are not careful we begin to neglect those things which we would, if asked, claim to be top of the list in order of importance. We can soon get to the situation where we convince ourselves that what we are doing is "*for the best.*"

The scriptures are full of examples of this ...

Joshua 18:3 ..... Joshua said "*How long will you neglect to go and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers has given you?*"

Hebrews 2:3 "*How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?*"

No matter how well we can quote these scriptures and convince ourself that we are in control of our priorities, if we are not willing to take an honest look at ourselves then (as the writer to the Hebrews puts it) we cannot escape. As Christians, we should be the ones who have an influence on others, not the other way round.

That which is best for us is not always the easiest for us to do, like the old saying "*The best tasting medicine does not always do us the most good;*" however, as Christians we should be striving to show to the world a better way and this is best done by example.

Again to quote the writer to the Hebrews and this time chapter 6:9

*"But, Beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation."*

What better can we do than to fulfil the essence of these words from the writer to the Hebrews and to seek out and follow the better things and so make sure that we get our priorities right.

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## **The Adversary**

Rose M. Payne, Kentish Town

When did we last hear a reference in a sermon to the devil and all his works? Preachers prefer to dwell on the love of God. Reference books about the Bible barely give Satan a mention, and an opinion poll once showed that even those people who believed in God often disbelieved in the existence of the devil.

The writer once overheard a lad saying, "I wouldn't mind going to hell, because you would be allowed to sin as much as you liked there." In fact it would seem to be impossible to murder, steal or commit adultery in hell, and we know there is nothing there to drink (Luke 16:24) so there is no drunkenness either. The only remaining sins would be those of the mind, such as hatred, and existing with those would be a fearful prospect. One result of such widespread ignorance is a lack of urgency about making a decision for Christ. Many people seem to arrive at the end of their lives unsure whether there is any judgement to come, but supposing that they will get by because they are no worse than their neighbours.

Presumably, it suits Satan that people should disbelieve in him. Unlike God's holy angels, he scarcely makes any personal appearance in the scriptures. At the beginning he was obliged to do so, because he could not then influence humans directly. As long as there was only one man created, the devil could take his time, but when Adam was given a wife, Satan must have been in a hurry. If any children had been born to Adam and Eve while they were still sinless, the devil would have had to tempt each one separately. Satan could not masquerade as another human being, since there were no others about, but he had to appear and speak to Eve, so took the form of a serpent. When Adam and Eve had both fallen to his temptation, he was able to infect the whole human race, very much like a computer virus (Romans 7:23).

Satan's other recorded personal presence in this world was when he tried to tempt Jesus in the wilderness and failed. But in the book of Job, we see how he operates in the background, while his works are blamed on the wrong people. Job was blamed for his own misfortunes, while Job himself was tempted to question God. The same thing goes on today. Is there a rise in crime? Then blame the police for not stopping it. Is there trouble within families? Then blame the social workers. And so many people ask "*How could a loving God allow this or that to happen?*" and their faith in God is weakened. This comes about because of a lack of understanding of the real cause of evil.

The apostles were quite sure that their life was a daily struggle against the devil. In Ephesians 6:12, Paul makes it clear that their fight was not against the Jewish authorities or the Roman government, but against the evil power which influenced them in the background. To

overcome the enemy it helps to understand his methods (2 Corinthians 2:11). The devil wishes to undermine the very best endeavours. At one time he was targeting the Apostle Peter (Luke 22:31), and he succeeded in directing Judas (John 13:27). He also influenced the well-meaning, but mistaken, Saul of Tarsus to persecute the church, before the Lord intervened (Acts 22:3-5).

So, in our teaching, let us not neglect warning our hearers about the evil one and his eternal abode, for doing this gives meaning and urgency to the offer of salvation.

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## **THE NEXT WORLD**

Ian S. Davidson, Motherwell

A lot of the people I have known and loved are now in the next world. I cannot help but think to myself from time to time what they are all doing. They might be dead to me, but they, of course, are alive to God. The Sadducees in Jesus' day were rather like the humanists today. They did not believe in a life beyond the grave. We recall the tale of the woman who married seven times. Surely the man from Nazareth would have trouble answering this question: *"Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her"* (Matthew 22:28; Mark 12:23; Luke 20:33). I quote from Matthew's gospel: *"Jesus answered and said unto them, You do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the*

*dead, but of the living. And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at His doctrine" (Matthew 22:29-33). F.F.Bruce has written: "It is inaccurate to say, as has sometimes been said, that the Sadducees' canon was restricted to the Pentateuch (this was true rather of the Samaritans); but they would certainly venerate it as supremely authoritative, and Jesus appealed to it..."*

## **PARADISE**

Jesus said to the thief on the cross: "*Today you shall be with me in paradise*" (Luke 23:43). Jesus, of course, returned to earth from paradise, but isn't the thief, who was on the cross, still there, awaiting the final judgement? I am aware that *hades* ( Hebrew: *Sheol* ) is a divided place or state. The account of the rich man and Lazarus proves that to me (Luke 16:19-31). The righteous are in "*Abraham's bosom*" (16:22) and the wicked are in a state of torment (16:23). The beautiful word *paradise* is found in only two other places in the New Testament. 2 Corinthians 12:4: "*...how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which is not lawful for a man to utter.*" (Many commentators are of the view that Paul was speaking of himself here.) Revelation 2:7: "*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches; to him who overcomes will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*" A.M.Hunter has written: "*About two centuries before Christ was born the Hebrews rose to the great belief in immortality – to the faith that the friends of God do not perish but are in His holy keeping forever. But where? Not, as they had once believed, in a dim and dreary underworld, called Sheol, beyond the jurisdiction of the Almighty, but in a hidden paradise prepared by God for*

*the righteous. So 'paradise' became another name for the abode of the blessed after death."*

## **CONVERSION**

There is an advert going around right now, which reads: "*Turn your Business Dream into a Dream Business .*" An equally good advert would be: "*Turn your Paradise Dream into a Dream Paradise.*" But how does anyone make it to paradise? How can anyone be sure that their dream of paradise will come true eventually? It will not come true as the result of the throw of dice or being rather nice or anything like that. It will come true as the result of turning - turning to Christ through obedience to His gospel. This is conversion. Conversion is at the heart of the Christian system. Conversion has to do with a change of life. As a change of life it is called "*repentance unto life*" or "*turning to the Lord.*" Remember, the entire change of man by the Christian system consists of four things: a change of views; a change of affections; a change of state; and a change of life. Alexander Campbell has written:

*"A Christian is, indeed, one whose views are enlightened, whose heart is renewed, whose relations to God and the moral universe are changed, and whose manner of life is according to righteousness and true holiness."* But what of those who turn away from God and disobey Him? Paul wrote: "*And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them who know not God and who 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 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

## CONCLUSION

Dear reader, where will you spend eternity? In the next world, will you gain paradise or lose paradise? At the judgement, which words will you hear? *"Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world..."* (Matthew 25:34) or: *"Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels..."* (Matthew 25:41). Heaven is an everlasting reality and hell will be an everlasting reality too. Once in either, one is there to stay forever. The next world will be wonderful for the few, but disastrous for the majority. As a believer, I do not only look ahead to heaven, but I've also booked my seat ahead for heaven. Jesus made the booking possible. Jesus said to the church at Laodicea: *"To him who overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne"* (Revelation 3:21).

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### A New Beginning

Andrew P. Sharp. (Easthouses) Newtongrange.

Beloved - To some a new beginning is just another day. To others it might mean something special.

In Christ Jesus, God offers a new beginning to all who respond to His call. Having faith in the One who died for your sin and was resurrected from the dead can, and will, make a new beginning for you.

God offers you the opportunity of a lifetime: your sins washed away and a new life in Jesus the Christ. In this you have a real purpose and meaning in your life. Your life now counts for something: something of permanent value.

We need to realise that the new beginning God gives His

people through justification, presents you with a new obligation, as a follower of Christ.

God called the Israelites out of the bondage in Egypt to a new beginning. Likewise today he calls you out of bondage of a sort to safety and security. Why should this be? "*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*" (Romans 3:23) You see, we all need a new beginning to the saving of the soul. The realisation of this should lead to joy.

Those of us who are in Christ have both a duty and an obligation to fulfil. We need, as never before, to disseminate the truth of the gospel to all who would listen. Sow the seed. God will deliver.

Every day should be a new beginning in spreading the good tidings of Christ's saving power. Beloved, it is expected of us as Christians.

A new day, a new year, a new beginning! It is in your power to help someone to achieve this: do so and so be it. We are encouraged in scripture to ask of Him, and God will give any, and all, the chance of a new beginning.

He will justify you and empower you by the Holy Spirit through faith in His son, Jesus Christ.

Beloved, it is time for new beginnings, whether it is yourself, or a friend or someone else. Take time to be holy and let God lead the way.

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## **HEBREW DATING CHARTS**

The printer is offering these at less than cost.  
See the insert for details and how to order them.

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## NEWS and INFORMATION

### BAPTISM

Please rejoice with us at Beulah Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield at the baptism of Rebecca Faulks on Wednesday the 17th. of August. Her request to be added to the Lord's church is something the brethren and sisters have been praying for and we give thanks and praise to the Lord for showing her the true path to righteousness

Dennis Faulks

### BIBLE QUESTION BOX

Please send your questions to:  
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#### Saturdays

6.00 pm Refreshments

7.00 pm Message

February 11

May 12

August 11

November 10

#### Contact:

Adrian Limb 01773-761 670  
cofceastwood@aol.com

### STRETFORD, MANCHESTER. 2012

#### Saturday Gospel Meetings

7.00 pm The Green Hut

538 Kings Road, M32 8JT

March 17

September 15

October 20

#### Contacts:

Allan Ashurst 0161-865 4242

John Purcell 0161-439 1758

#### Map:

[www.eusebos.eu/d4web4s/longford.htm](http://www.eusebos.eu/d4web4s/longford.htm)

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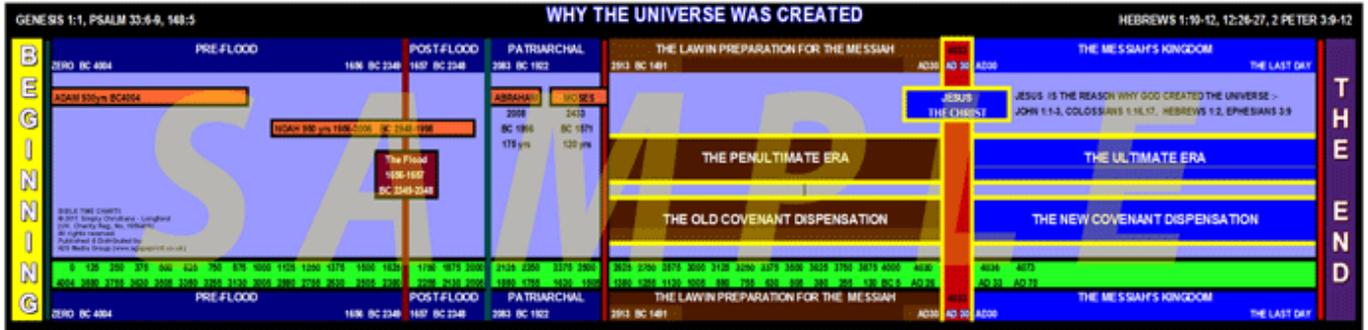
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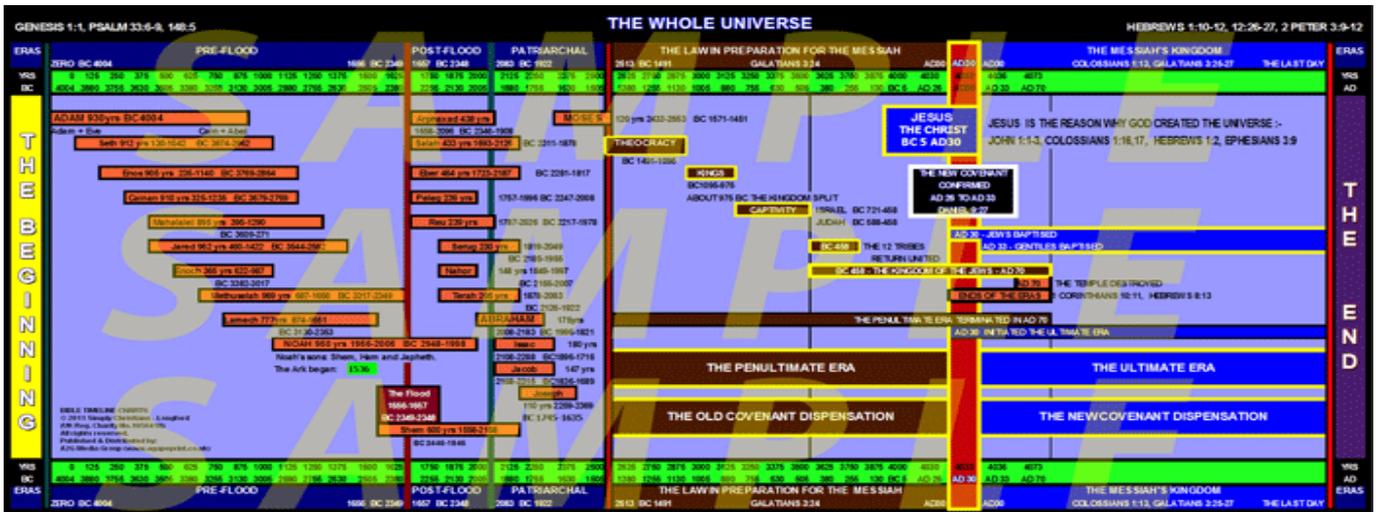
This chart illustrates major historical eras from the universe's creation to its destruction.



[approximately 23.5" (59.75 cm) long by 6" (15 cm) high.]

It is useful for explaining that the crucifixion is the pivotal point in the history of the universe and that the Lord Jesus is the reason why the universe was created.

This chart illustrates in greater detail major eras between the creation of the universe to the future appearance of the Lord Jesus.



[approximately 23.5" (59.75 cm) long by 10.75" (27.5 cm) high.]

It is useful when explaining:

- significant eras and events leading up to the crucifixion.
- that the Mosaic era is superseded by the Messiah's era.
- that the Messiah's era terminates with "the last day."

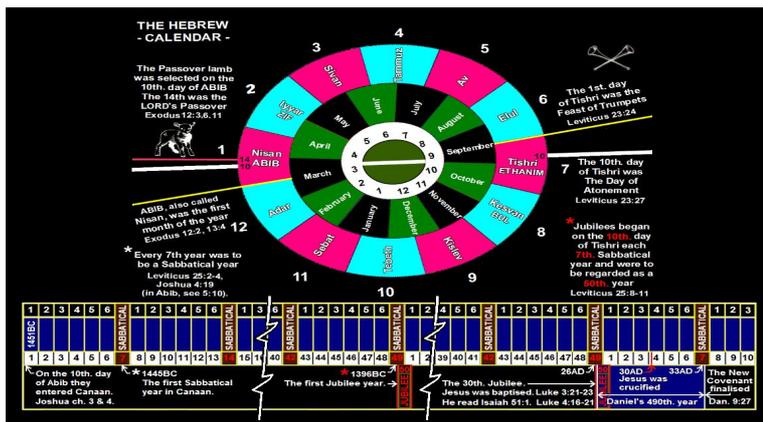
Points of significant interest:

- The overlapping life-spans of early patriarchs. For example, how Abraham's father could have known Noah.
- The first Christians experienced 'the ends' of the two final eras: the termination of the Mosaic era and the inception of the Christian era.

"now these incidents all happened to them, but are recorded for our instruction- to whom the ends of the ages are arrived." (1 Corinthians 10:11 direct translation)

## A pie-chart calendar of the Hebrew year and time-line of the Sabbaticals.

[A4 size: 11.7" (29.7 cm) long by 8.3" (2.10 cm) high.]



These are useful when explaining the timing of religious events in the Hebrew year.

### Points of significant interest:

- The Hebrew year always began with Abib.
- The months were always counted from Abib.
- Sabbatical years always began in Abib.

- The day for selecting the Passover lamb and the Day of Atonement are directly opposite each other in the Hebrew year.
- Every 7th Sabbatical year they were to observe a Jubilee year.
- The Jubilee year started on The Day of Atonement, halfway through the 7th. Sabbatical year.
- So this 50th year started on the 6th. month of the regular 7th Sabbatical year and extended 6 months into the following regular year, as shown in the lower time-line chart.
- It was to be regarded as a 50th year even though it occurred every 49th year.
- Jews celebrate The Feast of Trumpets as a New Years day. Also some theologians say there were two distinct years: a religious year beginning with Abib and a legal year beginning with Tishri.

In the Law of Moses:

- a) The Feast of Trumpets is never referred to as the New Years Day.
- b) There was no annual "Legal Year."
- c) The Jubilee year was the only time that there was a year beginning in the 7th. Month.

The lower time-line chart also illustrates that:

- the Sabbaticals were at 7 year intervals counting from the day the children of Israel entered Canaan.
- the Jubilees were at 49 year intervals counting from the year that the children of Israel entered Canaan.
- every Jubilee year (year 50) straddled every 7th. Sabbatical year (year 49) and extended to the middle of the year following the 7th. Sabbatical year (year 1).
- the Lord Jesus was immersed in Jordan at the beginning of the 30<sup>th</sup> Jubilee year. This coincided with the beginning of the final seven of the seventy times seven years predicted in Daniel 9:24-27.

On this website - <http://www.eusebos.info/d4web4sm/charts/70x7s-lq.htm> - there is another chart which numbers all the 70 x 7 years starting from the year of the decree to "restore" the city (Daniel 9:25). All Sabbaticals and Jubilees are highlighted.

Several decrees authorised building work, but only one decreed that the administration of God's law was to be restored (Ezra 7:25-26).

- the Lord Jesus was crucified halfway through that final seven years.
- the new covenant was necessarily confirmed "with many" (Jews and Gentiles) within that final seven years.