

115

Living Water

'Living Water' is published by the Stone Publishing Trust (Registered Charity 1034689)

'The Eagles', Headcorn Road, Staplehurst, Kent, TN12 0BU

If you know of any one who might be interested in receiving this magazine, please pass their name and address to the Stone Publishing Trust. Copies of the next few issues will be sent to them free of charge.

Correspondents in the UK are welcome to use the Freepost address:–

Stone Publishing Trust,
FREEPOST TN3448,
Staplehurst,
TONBRIDGE, Kent, TN12 0BR

Quotations from the Bible in 'Living Water' are normally from the Darby translation or from the Authorised (King James) Version.

The permission of the Editor should be obtained before reproducing material contained in this magazine. It is the policy of the Trustees to encourage the use of articles for the work of the Lord wherever this is possible so long as it does not infringe the rights of others.

Articles are sometimes shortened or otherwise amended and for this the Editor takes full responsibility.

Editor: Mark Lemon

Picture: Scotney Castle, Kent; David Mutton

Printed by Lakeside Printing,
Unit 4A, Munday Industrial Estate, Morley Rd, Tonbridge, TN9 1RA, UK

LIVING WATER 115

(January – February 2013)

Recent Ministry

Page

ADORNING THE TEACHING OF GOD OUR SAVIOUR Alex Mowat **1**

Part 3 – Adornment seen in the widow who cast two mites into the treasury

Based on a Bible reading at Chester 24th March 2012

FEATURES THAT MARKED THE CHURCH AT THE BEGINNING. Phil Coldrick **4**

PART 2 – Breaking of bread and prayers

An Address at Basildon, 1st October, 2011

A NEW YEAR Robin Garvie **10**

THE GOOD SAMARITAN Chris Bond **10**

A preaching of the gospel, Basildon, May 2011.

Poetry Selection

LOOKING FORWARD Anon. **17**

THE SUPPER OF THANKSGIVING Horatius Bonar **17**

From "Living Water" No 15

CHRIST, A HIDING PLACE Jehoida Brewer **18**

Continuing the series of reprints from the early issues of the magazine

Testimony Section

BROUGHT TO GOD THROUGH THE WITNESS OF CREATION Henry Musgrave Reade **20**

The testimony of the man who founded the Salford Secular Society!

A voice from the past

THE PRESENT TESTIMONY G.V. Wigram **23**

A word for today

THE TWO COVENANTS
—THE OLD AND THE NEW J. N. Darby **23**

Recent Ministry

ADORNING THE TEACHING OF GOD OUR SAVIOUR – PART 3

Introduction

Paul, writing to Titus, exhorts believers to “adorn the teaching... of our Saviour God in all things” (Titus 2:10). God is looking for the expression of divine teaching in the lives and conduct of men and women just like ourselves. Paul, writing to the Corinthian believers, says, “Ye are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read of all men” (2 Corinthians 3:2). That is, there was something about the work of God in those saints that was an adornment.

ADORNMENT SEEN IN THE WIDOW WHO CAST TWO MITES INTO THE TREASURY

“And he looked up and saw the rich casting their gifts into the treasury; but he saw also a certain poor widow casting therein two mites. And he said, verily I say unto you, that this poor widow has cast in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have cast into the gifts of God; but she out of her need has cast in all the living which she had.

“And as some spoke of the temple, that it was adorned with goodly stones and consecrated offerings, he said, As to these things which ye are beholding, days are coming in which there shall not be left a stone upon a stone which shall not be thrown down.” (Luke 21:1-6).

Verse 5 of the passage read in Luke 21 speaks of the ornamentation of the stones in the temple, the adornment of them. But what met the Lord’s eye was the beauty of what was seen in this widow woman, the beauty of her committal despite her widowhood; having proved her dependence on God she comes to this point in Luke 21 where she gives all of her living. I think that as the Lord saw this woman He might have

been thinking of what He was about to give; He was about to give His all. There was far more adornment in the action of this woman than in the stones of the temple.

At the end of chapter 20 of Luke we are reminded of the actions of the scribes: those *“who love salutations in the market place, and first seats in the synagogues, and first places at suppers; who devour the houses of widows, and as a pretext make long prayers”* (Luke 20:46:47). Then we are told the Lord looks up and He sees this widow. Luke, as we know, gives us quite a number of widows, drawing attention to their dependence upon God. And He sees this poor widow casting therein two mites, *“she out of her need has cast in all the living which she had”*. We might have thought that it was foolish or irresponsible but the Lord has an estimation of it. He valued her dependant committal. What an adornment it was in His sight.

In a certain way it was the requirement of the law which was to love God and your neighbour as yourself. There were two parts to an offering, one was for the priests and the other was for the poor: there would have been one mite for each, in her mind — what was for God and what was for man. And that was more valuable than all the consecrated stones and offerings of the temple.

Think of this woman in all her poverty and her deep need and she gives everything that was within her grasp. It really challenges us as to our committal to Christ. When one sees others who are doing far more for Him than I am doing it reminds us of this widow, *“out of her need has cast in all the living which she had”*. There is a lovely reference in second Corinthians 8 where Paul speaks of the Lord Jesus as becoming poor, *“he, being rich, became poor”* (2 Corinthians 8:9), but at the start of that chapter he speaks of, *“the grace of God bestowed in the assemblies of Macedonia; that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty*

has abounded to the riches of their free-hearted liberality” (2 Corinthians 8:2).

The Scripture speaks about the widow who has put her hope in God (see 1 Timothy 5:5). This woman was putting her hope in God; she was not reserving anything and God was not going to be her debtor. She would find great recompense from the One who gave His Son. There is an adornment, an ornamentation in the lives of believers that makes the teaching attractive and it was seen in this widow.

In Romans we find the exhortation, as affected by the compassions of God, to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. Later in the chapter we read *“let us occupy ourselves in service; or he that teaches, in teaching; or he that exhorts, in exhortation; he that gives, in simplicity; he that leads, with diligence; he that shows mercy, with cheerfulness”* (Romans 12:7-8) and so on. So the Lord says, ‘This building you are looking at, it is all going to come down, it is all going to be razed to the ground but what this woman has done is stored up in the divine record’. I think we need to think about what is kept in the divine record.

You attend a burial service of a believer and you get at that time various assessments of that person’s life but then you begin to think of what is stored up in heaven’s record about that person. That is what counts. You go to a chapter like Hebrews 11 and you get opened up to you the divine record about certain persons.

Alex Mowat

Based on a Bible reading at Chester, 24th March 2012.

In the next issue (God willing), “Adorning the teaching of God our Saviour – Part 4 – Adornment seen in the Christian company at Antioch.”

FEATURES THAT MARKED THE CHURCH AT THE BEGINNING

PART 2 – “THE BREAKING OF BREAD AND PRAYERS”

And they persevered in the teaching and fellowship of the apostles, in breaking of bread and prayers. Acts 2:42

Introduction

In Acts 2:42 the Holy Spirit records that the early believers persevered in four things: the teaching and fellowship of the apostles, and the breaking of bread, and prayers. A previous article dealt with teaching and fellowship (see “Living Water” No. 114). I now want to speak about the breaking of bread and prayers. As in the earlier article, for both of these matters I want to show:

- The **focus**
- The **result**, and to
- Give a **warning**

It is important to remember that these four features are to be taken together. The Christians we read of in the early Acts persevered in the teaching and fellowship of the apostles, in breaking of bread and prayers. It is a complete picture or pattern that has been set out for the Christian pathway, for the church today, the true church. In speaking of these features I want to encourage all of us to be more committed to the Lord Jesus.

The Breaking of Bread (also known as The Lord’s Supper)

- The focus of the breaking of bread is **the Lord Jesus Himself**
- The result is **worship**
- The warning relates to **taking the Lord’s supper unworthily**

Let us follow up these features related to the breaking of bread

There is a particular link between ‘fellowship’ and the breaking of bread since the celebration of the Lord’s Supper is a collective expression of fellowship. In this way, the warnings we read of in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, showing that there is no fellowship

between light and darkness, apply to the Lord's Supper. The Corinthians had been knowingly going on in ways which confused righteousness and lawlessness and Paul had to write to adjust them about it.

The events described in Acts 2:42-47 occurred only a very short time after the Lord had Himself instituted the Supper. On the very night that He was delivered up, He *"took bread, and having given thanks broke it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me"* (1 Corinthians 11:23, 24). That was the pattern that the disciples received in relation to remembering the Lord in breaking bread together.

They persevered in that and when you read the end of Acts chapter 2 it is almost as if they did it on a daily basis. Whenever they were together, whenever they ate together, there was that element of fellowship that they enjoyed together. A little later on in the Acts we find that, under the Holy Spirit's direction, the remembrance of the Lord became particularly associated with the first day of the week. That is the pattern that still holds true for us today.

On the first day of the week the disciples assembled to break bread (see Acts 20:7). That is something that we ought to persevere in. I do not speak against any believers who may not be able to do so, but it is a question we should ask ourselves: 'Is this something we persevere in? Is it what we desire to do each week as honouring the Lord Jesus?' I think there is great blessing in persevering in the breaking of bread in the pattern that was set on for us at the very beginning.

Now, the focus of the breaking of bread is the Lord Jesus Himself. In particular the breaking of bread speaks to us of His death and in that way it reminds us of the supreme character of His love for us. Through His death the Lord Jesus has demonstrated the true depth of His love for us. That is the compelling love that invites us to remember Him. Every Christian committed to following the Lord would be moved by that invitation. It is founded on the compelling power of His love towards us. If you love the Lord Jesus He is looking for you to remember Him. The breaking of

bread is the simple way that He has provided for us to do so.

Now, the celebration of the Lord's Supper is not something that we can do on our own; we need to find others. It is in a setting of fellowship and communion with one another and the Lord. The focus is the Lord Jesus and there is something very special about the way that the Lord Himself would enter into that occasion. We remember Him as One who died but He is living today and He delights to come amongst those that are gathered to remember Him.

The result of that focus upon Him is worship – worship of the Lord Jesus and of God Himself. Worship is a very vital thing for a Christian to be engaged in. It is one of the great characteristics of Christianity, a people called out to serve God.

There is a warning, too, in relation to the breaking of bread. It is found in 1 Corinthians chapter 11, *“So that whosoever shall eat the bread, or drink the cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty in respect of the body and of the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and thus eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. For the eater and drinker eats and drinks judgment to himself, not distinguishing the body. On this account many among you are weak and infirm, and a good many are fallen asleep” (1 Corinthians 11:27-30).*

It was a sad reflection on the company at Corinth that Paul had to give this warning. He could praise them for some things but not for the way they acted in respect of the Lord's Supper. Some at Corinth were eating and drinking to excess (see 1 Corinthians 11:21) and Paul says that for this reason *“many among you are weak and infirm, and a good many are fallen asleep”*. That means some had died as a result of the discipline of God in relation to the way they had been behaving.

The passage from Corinthians is also a further reminder of the collective setting of the breaking of bread. It is not an individual matter (although individually we are to examine ourselves to see that we are not bringing to the breaking of bread conditions that might offend the Lord in any way) but the setting is collective. We have the opportunity beforehand to examine ourselves and if

Prayer indicates our dependence

there is anything in our lives that the Lord would not be pleased about we can repent before Him ahead of the time. The Lord does not want us to stay away. That is not the point at all but the Lord wants us to be right with Him and with one another before we meet Him in this wonderful setting of the Lord's Supper.

So there needs to be an understanding of what we are doing when we remember the Lord in the breaking of bread. We need to be there in the Spirit and in the understanding of the fellowship, sharing with one another but in particular remembering that our focus is the Lord. The result is that we enjoy His presence and have the opportunity to be engaged in the worship of the Lord, the Father and the Holy Spirit.

What a wonderful privilege the believer has and how thankful we are that we are freely able to remember the Lord today. The breaking of bread is meant to be a demonstration to the world that we belong to the Lord Jesus and that He has died for us. *"...ye announce the death of the Lord, until he come" (1 Corinthians 11:26)*. There are some places in the world where believers cannot break bread openly, for fear of their lives, and they have to do so in secret. We feel for believers in those circumstances. Yet the wonderful thing is they persevere in it and they get blessing and the Lord provides for them.

Prayers

- The focus of our prayers is **the will of God**
- The result is **answers to our prayers**
- The warning is the need to **persevere in prayer and not give up**

We might think that the focus of our prayers would be our needs but I would suggest that the focus is truly on the will of God.

All believers would agree that without prayer we can do nothing. Prayer indicates our dependence. The Pharisees tended to pray in a different spirit but the prayers that were answered, the prayers that God takes most account of, are those that come from a humble spirit, the spirit of dependence, when there is a recognition

of the need of divine help. I think that spirit of prayer is what marked the believers at the beginning. It is a pattern for us.

The prayer meeting has been described as the 'powerhouse of the Christian company'. It is the time when believers can collectively find a resource in God that can be a real practical help. It is good to be focused on something in our prayers. I feel for myself sometimes that I am very general in prayer but God loves to hear something specific.

Mr Macintosh (1820-1896) wrote a lovely piece about prayer and the prayer meeting. One of the things he said about it is that long prayers are not good: short and to the point is better. It shows that we have something very definite in mind and that we feel God's will is involved with the matter we are praying about.

The disciples and the apostles were very powerful in their prayers in the early days. Acts chapter 4 records that, "*when they had prayed, the place in which they were assembled shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and spoke the word of God with boldness*" (Acts 4:31). We can see there a picture of how that prayer meeting was a powerhouse for that assembled company to go out and spread the gospel and be able to do wonderful things in the power of the Holy Spirit. It seems that they were praying in a very focussed and earnest way and God was pleased to come in and answer them. That was the result of persevering in prayer.

There are many things that can be prayed for. God delights to hear those prayers that touch upon the spiritual aspects of our lives. The very things we have been speaking about today can be the subject of a simple prayer in the prayer meeting. That we might follow Jesus, that we might know the reality of growth, that we might know something of teaching, learning and growing - all these should be the subject of prayers. Then it is not only to be confined to our needs, in fact if our prayers are confined to needs we will be missing something. Our prayers should seek God's glory and seek His will in all things.

Well, as to the warning, it is simply that we do not give up. Paul, in writing to the Thessalonians, says, "*pray unceasingly*" (1

Thessalonians 5:15-18). That was Paul's warning to the believers at Thessalonica. He says, *"See that no one render to any evil for evil, but pursue always what is good towards one another and towards all"*. If our prayer meetings are on that line, pursuing what is good towards one another and towards all, we can be pretty certain that that is in the will of God.

"Rejoice always; pray unceasingly; in everything give thanks". That is simply what I want to leave you with in relation to praying and persevering in prayer. *"Pray unceasingly"*.

The Lord Jesus Himself told His disciples a parable *"to the purport that they should always pray and not faint (Luke 18:1)* He tells of a woman that persistently asked an unjust judge to help her with a certain matter. Eventually, because of her persistence, the judge gave her what she requested. So we are to persevere in prayer. Do not give up, do not faint. God delights in our persevering in prayer, particularly when it is about something that is precious to His own heart.

The setting of the parable in Luke 18 is, I think, particularly in relation to the Jewish remnant, in a time still to come, when they will be in very difficult circumstances. Today there are many believers who are in difficult circumstances and facing many limitations. But as we persevere in prayer about those circumstances, God will be pleased to bring in His own encouragement, help and blessing.

Well, that is my message. There are these four things that we are exhorted to persevere in. That is the pattern that should mark a company of Christians. May we each know what it is to find our place amongst those who are persevering in the teaching and fellowship of the apostles, in breaking of bread and prayers. May it be so for His glory.

Phil Coldrick

An address at Basildon, 1 October 2011

The first part of this address is given in "Living Water" No 114

A NEW YEAR

May the coming year be one of increased riches and grace:

- hearing Christ's voice more clearly,
- knowing His heart more deeply,
- resting in His love more fully,
- trusting His care more completely,
- walking His pathway more peacefully,
- knowing His presence more intimately, and
- blessed by His goodness more abundantly.

In all things may we know the peace of God, encouraging us to move forward, emboldening us at each new corner, calming us as we walk through dark valleys, softening each footstep as we climb rugged mountains and increasing our courage as we follow our Shepherd wherever He leads. *"Thou crownest the year with thy goodness" (Psalm 65:11).*

Robin Garvie
Contributed

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

"And Jesus replying said, A certain man descended from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of robbers, who also, having stripped him and inflicted wounds went away leaving him in a half-dead state. And a certain priest happened to go down that way, and seeing him, passed on on the opposite side; and in like manner also a Levite, being at the spot, came and looked at him and passed on on the opposite side. But a certain Samaritan journeying came to him and seeing him was moved with compassion, and came up to him and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine; and having put him on his own beast, took him to the inn and took care of him."

Luke 10:30-34.

Most of us like a story. The Bible is full of stories. In fact, the best stories are found in the Bible and this is one of them. Many of you have probably heard of the story of the good Samaritan.

Well, this is where it comes from — the gospel of Luke. It is a story the Lord Jesus Himself told. In one way it is a sad story but it has a happy ending!

Think of this man setting out on this journey from Jerusalem to Jericho perhaps on a day like today. On the road he was mugged. A band of robbers took everything he had, even his clothes. They gave him a good beating as well and left him lying on the road half dead. What a terrible state he was in.

A little while later, a man comes down that same road; he is a priest. Looking on from the outside of the story you might think, 'Well, that is good, he will be able to help the man'; but no, he sees him and just walks by. How callous. A little while later another man, a Levite, comes down that same road. Perhaps he will help. Yes, he stops and looks at him and then just walks off. Neither of them had the heart or resource to help.

The next person to come along this road is on a journey. Does he hurry on thinking, 'I have somewhere to get to tonight?' No! He sees the man lying there, he is moved with compassion, and his heart goes out to him. The Samaritan has the resources to meet the need as well. He draws near to the man, pours oil and wine into his wounds and binds them up. He makes him comfortable. Then he lifts him up and puts him on his own beast, a donkey, or whatever it was, and takes him to the inn and takes care of him. Is it not lovely? That good Samaritan, what a fine man he was.

Well, this story is intended as an illustration of the gospel of the grace of God, which it is my privilege to tell you about tonight. Let me introduce some of these characters that are illustrated here:

- Firstly, the good Samaritan, the one who is the centre of this story. Who is that a picture of? Why, it is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, God's well beloved Son. The One who has compassion on you, who cares about you more than anybody else ever has. He has the means to bless you today.

The battleground tonight is your soul

- What about the man who went from Jerusalem to Jericho, the victim, we might say? Who is he a picture of? Do you know who it is? It is you! It is a picture of you, of me in our sins. It is a picture of all mankind in one sense. *"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"* (Romans 3:23). Man is a wreck. The human race is ruined. Sin came into the world through the disobedience of Adam in the garden of Eden and ever since then the human race has been ruined. That is the explanation of all the sorrow and unhappiness in the world, all the wars, the violence, all the misery. It is all the result of sin. God never made the world like that, it is man that has ruined it.
- Then there are the robbers: they are a picture of the devil, the enemy of God. There is a great battle going on in the world tonight: the battle of good against evil. There is God who is good and the enemy of God is the devil and he is a robber. He wants to rob you, tonight, of any hope of heaven. He wants to take away every opportunity you have of finding peace, joy and happiness. That is what the devil is after tonight. He wants to rob you and he wants to rob God. He wants to make sure that you do not enter into God's kingdom. The battleground tonight is your soul. God wants to save you and to bring you into the most wonderful blessings possible. The devil is doing his best to stop you. Oh, that that battle might be won for God and Christ in your soul tonight!
- Finally, you have these two religious men, the priest and the Levite. I just draw attention to them for a moment because I do not want you to be under any illusions tonight. We are really pleased to see you here tonight, but, just coming to a gospel preaching, attending a church or even living a good life, will not make you fit for heaven. Religion cannot save you. These men could do nothing for that poor victim. Why? They had nothing to offer him. Religion will tell you, You behave like this, you do certain things and you will be fit for the

presence of God. But there is only one way of salvation and that is to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ who has done all that God requires for you to be saved.

You can do nothing to save yourself. We are all hopeless, helpless, just like that man as he lay on the road. He could not help himself, he was half dead. What he required was rescuing.

We are all on a journey tonight – the journey of life. I wonder what stage you are at on that journey. Where have you reached? Perhaps life has been pretty tough with you. Perhaps you have had a hard time and lots of things have gone against you. Maybe you are miserable, dissatisfied and unhappy. In one sense, if that is where you are at tonight, I am pleased because it may bring home to you just how terrible your state is as a sinner in need of salvation.

There are many people who do not realise their need. I would long tonight that you might be brought to realise that you are a lost sinner and that you need to be saved. This man had come under the influence of these robbers and there he was in a half dead state. We have all come under the influence of the devil. We have committed sins and as sinners we are shut out of the presence of God for ever. How solemn. That is our position tonight lost, helpless, unable to help ourselves. What a condition to be in. Do you realise how you are tonight? My desire is that you might realise that you are a lost sinner because once you get to that point you can see that God has provided a Saviour for lost sinners. Oh, may you find the Saviour today.

I expect you remember a little while ago the news was full of some miners in Chile. They were something like 2 miles underground and there was an explosion. Tons and tons of rock and earth fell and they were trapped. They could they do nothing to help themselves. They must have been absolutely terrified. They were 2 miles underground with no hope of digging themselves out. What a condition they were in. That is just like you and me as sinners. There we are, helpless, lost, and unable to do anything to help ourselves. The only hope of escape for

those miners was for there to be a rescue mission organised from the surface.. That is just like the gospel; God has provided a way of salvation – He sent His Son.

What happened to those miners? Well those on the surface started to drill down and managed to locate them. Think of those men down in that cavern; they did not have a clue what was going on and then suddenly the drill came through the roof. What a wonderful ray of hope it must have been for them. So with the gospel, the message of God's glad tidings comes to us –helpless sinners just where we are. God has intervened. He has sent down the message of love from heaven, a message of salvation to needy sinners. He has put into place His wonderful, wonderful rescue mission whereby sinners such as you and I can be saved and brought into life and joy and peace

That brings me back to the story of the good Samaritan. What did God's rescue mission consist of? Think of God looking down, just like those Chilean rescuers, thinking of those persons in that tunnel underground. God has looked down from heaven and He has seen His creatures, you and me, helplessly, hopelessly lost. What was to be done? God is holy. He could not just bypass the fact that we are sinners. If God was to allow sin into His home in heaven what a miserable place it would be. Sin has made the world a place of misery and despair. God could not allow that to happen in heaven. God could not just bypass the fact that we are sinners and let us in. It would not do.

If your sins, my friend, were to be forgiven someone else had to pay the penalty for them. Who could that be? It had to be Someone who had no sins of His own. My friend, think of God looking down on a world full of sin. Every man, woman and child has sinned. No one was qualified to take on this wonderful rescue mission. What did God do? He sent His Son. There was only one Person who was qualified to take on the matter of your sins and mine before God – His only beloved Son.

Think of what it meant for God. How much He must love you and me that He was prepared to send His only Son into this

world to bear on the cross at Calvary the judgment that we deserved. What a God we have to do with! Jesus came down from heaven. He grew up here, a child, a young man, an adult. Every step of His life proved that He was uniquely qualified to be the One who could pay the penalty for your sins and mine. He went about doing good, *“healing all that were oppressed of the devil” (Acts 10:38)*. There had never been anything like it before. What a wonderful Person Jesus is. Think of His life here. The blind had their sight restored, the deaf had their hearing restored, cripples were healed, and those that were oppressed by the devil, those that were demon possessed, were set free.

But His perfect life could not save us. The penalty for our sins needed to be met: He had to give His life as a sacrifice. You and I were subject to the judgment of God because of our sins. Jesus went to the cross of Calvary and there He laid down His life and bore the judgment in our place. He was taken by those

Roman soldiers and nailed to a cross. Then, in three terrible hours Jesus took the judgment for the sins of all those who believe on Him. At the end of those hours

There had never been anything like it before

Jesus said, *“it is finished” (John 19:30)*. If you will believe tonight your sins will be removed forever in God’s sight.

Jesus came from heaven, came down into this world. What a journey He has taken for you and for me. He went all the way to Calvary’s cross. Think of what it meant for Him to leave heaven. What a home it was. But He left it for you and me. He came down to this poor world to meet our need, to rescue us. He died that our sins might be forgiven.

He was taken from that cross, laid in the tomb and rose the third day. God delighted to call Jesus out of the grave, evidence that He is wholly satisfied with the work that Jesus had done. Wonderful Saviour! Tonight God is able to forgive our sins because Jesus has borne the judgment for them.

What do you have to do to have your sins taken away tonight?

Simply to believe and repent. That means that you come to a realisation that you are a sinner and that you need a Saviour and you put your trust in Jesus. It means that you believe that what He did on the cross was for you and you ask Him to save you.

Think of this Samaritan journeying. What did he do? He came right alongside the half dead man in the road. That is what Jesus will do for you today. He will come to right where you are in all your need. He knows about your need, He knows everything that is going on in your life. He knows all about you; He knows all the sins you have committed. The wonderful thing is that even if you were the vilest sinner in the world He would still be available to you as a Saviour.

The Samaritan was moved with compassion. Jesus is moved with compassion for you. He knows your need and He has the ability to save you tonight. Christ has the resources (just as the Samaritan had what was necessary to meet the need of the man who had been attacked by robbers). Jesus is able and willing to heal your sin-sick soul today.

The Lord Jesus would come near to you. He knows all about you. He knows your sin and He is available for you tonight. Ask Him to be your Saviour. Realise you are a sinner and put your trust in Him.

Then just as the Samaritan in the story took the man to an inn and took care of him, so the Lord Jesus will be with you for the rest of your life and for all eternity. He will help you through the problems and difficulties of life, support you and be your friend. He can be trusted absolutely.

What a glorious Saviour He is. May you come to this Saviour today; put your trust in Him. He loves you, He is moved with compassion for you and He is available to you now. May you trust Him as your own personal Saviour for His name's sake.

Chris Bond

A preaching of the gospel at Basildon, May 2011

Poetry Selection

LOOKING FORWARD

*O fathomless mercy! O infinite grace!
With humble thanksgiving the road I retrace.
Thou never hast failed me – my strength and my stay!
To whom should I turn for the rest of the way?*

*Through dangers, through darkness, by day and by night,
Thou ever hast guided and guided aright.
In Thee I have trusted, and peacefully lay
My hand in Thy hand for the rest of the way.*

*Thy cross all my refuge, Thy blood all my plea,
None other I need blessed Jesus, but Thee!
I fear not the shadows at close of life's day,
For Thou wilt go with me the rest of the way!*

Anon.

THE SUPPER OF THANKSGIVING

*For the bread and for the wine,
For the pledge that seals Him mine,
For the words of love divine,
We give Thee thanks, O Lord.*

*For the feast of love and peace,
Bidding all our sorrows cease,
Earnest of the kingdom's bliss,
We give Thee thanks, O Lord.*

*Only bread and only wine,
Yet to faith the solemn sign
Of the heavenly and divine!*

We give Thee thanks, O Lord.

*For the words that turn our eye
To the cross of Calvary,
Bidding us in faith draw nigh,*

We give Thee thanks, O Lord.

*For the words that tell of home,
Pointing us beyond the tomb,
'Do ye this until I come'*

We give Thee thanks, O Lord.

Horatius Bonar (1808 – 1889)

From Living Water No 15

CHRIST, A HIDING PLACE

*Hail, sovereign love that first began
The scheme to rescue fallen man!
Hail, matchless, free eternal grace
That gave my soul a hiding place!*

*Against the God who rules the sky
I fought with hand uplifted high,
Despised the mention of His grace,
Too proud to seek a hiding place.*

*But thus the eternal counsel ran,
Almighty love, arrest that man!
I felt the arrows of distress,
And found I had no hiding place.*

Indignant justice stood in view;
To Sinai's fiery mount I flew,
But justice cried with frowning face,
'This mountain is no hiding place'.

Ere long a heavenly voice I heard
And mercy's angel-form appeared.
She led me on with placid pace
To Jesus as my hiding place.

Should storms of sevenfold thunder roll
And shake the globe from pole to pole,
No flaming bolt could daunt my face,
For Jesus is my hiding place.

On Him almighty vengeance fell,
That must have sunk a world to hell.
He bore it for the chosen race,
And thus became their hiding place.

A few more rolling suns, at most,
Will land me on fair Canaan's coast,
Where I shall sing the song of grace
And see my glorious hiding place

Jehoiada Brewer (1752 – 1817)

This poem is reprinted from Living Water No 15. God willing, in issue No 116 there will be a reprint from Living Water No 16 selected by Timothy Painter.

If there is an article, or part of an article, from a back number of Living Water that you would like to see reprinted, I would be very glad to hear from you. Ed.

Testimony Section

BROUGHT TO GOD BY THE WITNESS OF CREATION

While I was at the height of my rebellion against God, consorting with anarchists and glorying in the most blasphemous extravagancies against Christ and the Christian faith, refusing to allow my children to be baptised or have any religious education or come under any Christian influence, I was asked by my employer to take a journey to the USA. This involved visiting New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Detroit, Salt Lake City, Los Angeles, San Francisco and many other places.

I was in a railway car slowly climbing the wonderful Rocky Mountains. We had reached an altitude of 15,000 feet and here a magnificent prospect of indescribable grandeur burst upon our view; the sun, which shone brilliantly in that clear atmosphere, lighted up the snow to a whiteness that was dazzling. To a city man brought up amidst the grimy bricks and mortar of Manchester the panorama was overwhelming. I sat in reverie gazing at the spectacle while I began instinctively feeling in my mind for an explanation of these wonders. The first defined thought was, 'surely all this is not the result of blind chance, matter and force?' Could 'evolution' explain it at all? Evolution can give a plausible case to us whilst we are studying nature in our chamber amongst our books, but immediate contact with nature herself, in all her rugged beauty, speaks to us of a Power higher than ourselves. An irresistible feeling of wonder, awe and reverence crept into my thoughts.

**I asked for light, and
it came like a flood!**

I had ever been an honest seeker after truth and the thought suddenly flashed into my mind, 'Might I, after all, have been mistaken?' I fell upon my knees and cried, 'Oh God, if You exist, reveal Yourself'. I asked for light, and it came like a flood! The veil was torn from off my mind by the Spirit of God. I who had resisted so long His gracious pleadings, who had rebelled against His authority for so many years was at last brought into

submission. I arose from my knees filled with joy, saying, 'God is!'

There had been no association of ideas, as some would say, to account for this, for as I fell on my knees I had in my hand one of the atheist books of Ingersoll which I had been reading. The sudden change simply meant that the Spirit of God had come into my life in spite of my resistance, without my seeking and without the help of man or books, and I knew that I beheld the glory of God in His wondrous works. What joy and peace to know the unfathomable love of God. It was my first realisation of the personal presence of God.

When I was back in England I told my infidel friends that I believed in God. Some tried to laugh me out of it, others said that I was ill or that my nerves had been shattered by the long journey; but they soon found that it was deeper than that, that there was more in it than they had reckoned on, and one by one they left me severely alone.

Some months passed, when I began to get uneasy about my past life. I felt that I had some sins to account for. I felt that I had led an awful, blasphemous life. I had sleepless nights: my thoughts haunted me during the day so that I could think of nothing during the day but the twenty years in the service of sin. I dared not mention the matter to anyone and I thought that I should die of fear.

At last the thought occurred to me to buy a Bible and see what the word of God had to say about my condition. I purchased a Bible and every evening after my wife had gone to bed, I read it to see if there was any hope for such a great sinner as I felt I was. I started at Genesis and continued through the whole of the Old Testament without being helped. Indeed, I was made more desperate as I came upon the punishments to be awarded to those who blasphemed the name of the Lord. I persevered as a desperate man until I came to that wonderful text in the New Testament: *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16).

Here was something that met my case! *"Whosoever"* included me; there were no conditions but belief, and I truly and sincerely believed that Jesus Christ died for sinners, and I, being one of the chief of them, knew that He died for me. In a few days after this the full import of the finished work of Christ came into my heart and mind and I spontaneously testified to my friends the joyful news that I was a pardoned sinner and that God had undertaken to remember my sins no more.

The new life brought with it, not only great joy and peace, but an earnest desire to spread the good news to others. Having tasted that the Lord was good, I yearned to let other blind souls know this great joy; but I soon found out to my surprise that they did not want to know about this 'good thing of God'. They did not wish to be disturbed, and they were quite comfortable in their sins and blindness. I marvelled greatly that the blessed news of Christ's love to sinful men should meet with such a cold response; but I remembered my own sad case, how blind and perverse I had been for twenty years and I wondered why He had chosen me. I liked to ponder the joyful fact that He had called me with His own gentle voice, and I had heard Him, and came to Him, and He said, *"Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine" (Isaiah 43:1)*, and *"I will never leave thee or forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5)*.

Such thoughts did truly awaken in me the most loyal and loving impulses. I was deeply concerned about the loss of those twenty years in the service of Satan, and earnestly desired to redeem the time that was left to me. I sought the Lord much in prayer, and asked what He would have me do. I consecrated all my moments to Him who had done so much for me and sought the guidance of His Holy Spirit.

Henry Musgrave Reade

I would like to thank Mr Willie Slater of Aberdeen for first drawing my attention to the conversion of Musgrave Reade from an article in the "Joyful Message"

A Voice from the Past

THE PRESENT TESTIMONY

God has His own work in these last days. The Son of His love is ever before Him, and (as I suppose) He will have a report to go out far and wide of that Son's glory and beauty, and of the finished salvation in Him – the report of Him in His three displays:

- in humiliation unto death – the death of the cross
- in patience – as now sitting at God's right hand
- in the approaching display of His coming glory

G. V. Wigram (1805 – 1879)

A word for Today

THE TWO COVENANTS – THE OLD AND THE NEW **Exodus 24**

We find here a principle which there had never been an example of before, namely a covenant founded on the blood. The covenant of the law is distinguished from the new covenant. The first was founded on the commitment which Israel had undertaken to do all that God had said; that is to say, to observe the law (see vv 3 & 7)...

The people commit themselves to observe the law and the covenant is introduced by the blood with which they were sprinkled, in this condition. Such is the old covenant. It is evident that this covenant, and the blessing which flowed from it, depended on two things – on the faithfulness of God and on the faithfulness of the people. The blessing is here the result of their obedience; for us, it is the result of the obedience of Christ. There is no blessing at all without obedience.

As the blessing depended on the faithfulness of the people, and as the people were wicked, there could be no blessing. God has to demand obedience under the covenant of the law. Now, He

had to bless us, us who are under grace. When the blessing depends on the obedience of man, there is no blessing at all for him. If the people fail to keep their word, God must remain faithful to His and, as a consequence, He must refuse blessing.

**God has received
Christ; He receives
me**

The word "covenant" in the Word does not necessarily require two contracting parties. A covenant is a disposition of God. The old covenant was made with Israel, the new covenant also. It is not made with us, but we enjoy all the benefits of it, because the promises which it contains and which we must enjoy as Christians, have been made unto Christ alone as seed of the woman and as seed of Abraham. If we are of Christ, we are therefore heirs of the promise. God cannot fail in His faithfulness. The new covenant rests on a promise made to Christ. The question is therefore: 'Is God faithful to His Son?'

Being faithful to Christ, nothing can fail. God has received Christ; He receives me. The new covenant does not therefore depend in the least on the conduct of two parties, but on the promise of God to Christ and on the faithfulness of God to His promise...

Such is the comforting principle of grace. Christ is the object of a love which gives and promises; He has part in it as perfect and accomplished. We share in it by the blood of Christ who has entered in to the holiest as Head of His people. The blood of the covenant (Hebrews 13:20) is the proof that the disobedience has been expiated and that obedience has been accomplished. Christ obeyed unto death. There is the obedience on which the new covenant is founded, and the blood which has been shed by the obedience of Christ is the expiation of our disobedience. Every disobedience is effaced; all obedience is accomplished. It is not in a future obedience on our part that we find peace, but in the obedience of Christ already accomplished. God has made promises so that we can enjoy them with Christ, but for this we must be perfectly cleansed; and for this the pouring out of His blood is necessary. The new covenant which will be made with

Israel rests on a promise of God to Christ, the seed, and we have the benefit of it because we are united to Christ. The Jew, under the law, began with the necessity of obedience; the Christian begins by the certainty that God is for him, by the certainty of his salvation, of the faithfulness of God, and of that which Christ has accomplished completely.

A thought which often pre-occupies souls is the necessity of being sprinkled again in the blood of Christ; and thus the joy of a complete peace with God is often hindered. Under the law, there were only three occasions where there was the sprinkling of blood:

- On the people to establish the covenant
- On the leper for his purification
- On the priests for their consecration

The blood has been put once for all on the people, on me as a sinner, on us as priests. It has never been shed again and never will be any more. If the sprinkling of the blood of Christ is on me, can this blood lose its value? Impossible! My conscience is purified for ever. It is the true position of the believer, to know that the blood of Christ is for him before God with its imperishable value. I therefore have no longer conscience of sin. The more that I feel that sin is not imputed to me, the more I judge it. It is in the presence of his father who forgives him that a child feels his fault the most. This grace makes the conscience sensitive. The one whose clothes are clean takes care not to soil them.

The principle of the old covenant was the obligation of the people to obedience; it depended as much of the faithfulness of the people as on that of God; the new covenant depends on the faithfulness of God alone...

J. N. Darby

Translated from "Le Messager Evangelique"

These translations are from the French and are not in the "Collected Writings"