

## THE FAITH TO CONTEND FOR (1)

—R. K. Campbell

We begin a series of studies on the subject of "*The Faith for which we are to Earnestly Contend.*"

In the Epistle of Jude, we read: "Beloved, using all diligence to write to you of our common salvation, I have been obliged to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. For certain men have got in unnoticed, they who of old were marked out beforehand to this sentence, ungodly persons, turning the grace of our God into dissoluteness (a license to immorality), and denying our only Master, and Lord Jesus Christ" (verses 3-4).

Here we have the mention of the faith which was once delivered unto the saints and the exhortation to earnestly contend for it. As Jude took up his pen to write to the "called ones beloved in God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ," about the common salvation, he felt compelled to write that they should earnestly contend for this divinely given faith delivered to them. The urgency with which Jude exhorted the saints to contend earnestly for the most holy faith was caused by certain men who were apostates from the faith and who had secretly slipped in among them. These men are first of all spoken of as ungodly men, secondly, as those who pervert the grace of God into licentiousness, morally unrestrained; and thirdly, as they who deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ. These apostates had already crept in among Christians in Jude's day. He describes their characteristics throughout his Epistle. The Lord warned that Satan would sow tares, a poisonous imitation wheat, among the wheat (Mark, 13:38-39). The apostles Paul and Peter also warned about such apostates in their epistles (Gal 2:4-5; Acts 20:29-30; 2 Cor. 11:13; 2 Peter 2:1-3). This apostacy, or falling away from the faith, has continued in the Christian profession and increased tremendously in our present time. Therefore it is most important that we know what the true Christian faith is and realize the necessity of earnestly contending for it.

Our purpose in this present series of studies is to consider some of the vital, essential truths that comprise the Christian faith that has been delivered to us once for all in the days of the apostles of Christ. To quote the words of another: "The faith is that extensive body of Bible doctrine which makes up the perfect whole of the truth revealed by God concerning our common salvation... The faith is the complete new-testament teaching concerning the true Church of Jesus Christ" (S. M. Coder).

### 1. *The Complete, Verbal, Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures.*

The most basic, primary and vital tenet of the Christian faith is that we have in the Bible, or the Holy Scriptures, a complete and perfect, inerrant revelation from God as to His will and mind for mankind, as well as His purposes of grace. The Bible claims for itself that it is inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is the perfect Word of God as given in the original manuscripts. We read in 2 Timothy 3:16, "Every scripture (is) divinely inspired" (*God-breathed* — Greek). 2 Peter 1:21 tells us that, "Holy men of God spake under the power of the Holy Spirit." In Deuteronomy 8:3 we read, "By every thing that goeth out of the mouth of Jehovah doth man live." David wrote, "The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and His word was on my tongue (2 Sam. 23:2). In Acts 1:16 it is stated, "The Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David, concerning Judas" (probably referring to Psalm 41:9). Then in Hebrew 3:7 we read, "The Holy Spirit saith, Today if ye will hear His voice." This is a reference to Psalm 95:7, written by a psalmist, but here ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Throughout the Pentateuch written by Moses, we repeatedly read, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying" etc. In the Prophets we often read, "The word of the Lord which came to" etc.

The foregoing scriptures give ample proof of the Bible's claim that it is inspired of God and that it is His revealed Word. Some 35 or more persons of various walks of life, who lived during a period of some 1600 years, were used as the human instruments to write the Bible's 66 books under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In the Holy Scriptures, a divine unity amidst diversity is manifest. A harmony and design is evident which is only possible through the activity and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the divine Author of the entire book.

Furthermore, the very words used in the original Scriptures were inspired of God and not just the thoughts expressed. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 2:13 about "the things which have been freely given to us of God: which also we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, communicating spiritual (things) by spiritual (means). This means that the very words the inspired writers used were Spirit-taught, Spirit-chosen and, consequently, very

important. This is also emphasized by passages in the Old Testament, such as "I have put my words in thy mouth," (Isa. 51:16) and, "The Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put My words in thy mouth" (Jer. 1:9) or, "Moses wrote all the words of the Lord" (Ex. 24:4). So the Bible not only contains the Word of God, but *it is* the Word of God.

Therefore, we must reject as unscriptural and erroneous the deceptive, modern teaching that the Bible is inspired of God in its thoughts and ideas, but that it is not verbally inspired word for word in the original writings and that it is therefore not free from human error. The infallibility of the Holy Scriptures is thus denied. We must contend for the complete, verbal, infallible, divine inspiration and authorship of the Bible. To deny anything of the full, infallible, divine inspiration of the Scriptures, opens the door for further unbelief and human reasoning that exalts itself above the Word of God and becomes its judge. Thus a human, non-inspired source takes precedence over faith in the inspired Bible; the grounds for apostasy are laid and cardinal doctrinal truths of Scripture are soon given up. Apostasy from the faith always begins with the rejection of the claims and teaching of the Word of God, something else is placed above God's infallible Word, be it tradition, so-called science, infidel reasoning etc.

In closing our remarks on this vital subject, we would give a word of caution and warning as to the use of loose and liberal translations of the Bible that do not faithfully adhere to the original Scriptures or fail to give us an accurate and faithful rendering of their meaning in our languages. We are thankful to have careful and faithful, scholarly translations worthy of trust for accuracy and loyal rendering of the original Scriptures. Especially would we caution against the use of paraphrases as a Bible. They are not translations of the Scriptures at all, but an attempt to communicate ideas and explain in one's own words what God actually said. Thus the truth of the full, verbal, word for word, inspiration of the Scriptures is lost sight of in the use of paraphrases.

*To be cont'd*

## **THE OFFERINGS (13)**

—H. L. Heijkoop

### *Leviticus 2:4-10*

In the first three verses of Leviticus 2 we saw the general principles of the meal-offering. It had to be prepared from fine flour with oil poured over it, with frankincense thereon. The fine flour typified the holy Manhood of the Lord Jesus; the oil, His birth of the Holy Spirit; and the frankincense, His personal glory. All of this had to be brought to the altar to be tested by fire.

From the fourth verse onward we find the various kinds of meal-offerings. As early as Genesis 8 we are shown that the glories of the Person and the work of the Lord cannot be presented by one type. Noah brought a sacrifice "of every clean animal, and of *all* clean fowl" (v. 20): only a variety of many animals and birds could typify the Lord Jesus. It is clear however that each one could only present one side of His glory. For the same reason we have four Gospels: the glory of the Lord could not be presented simply in one Gospel.

Therefore we have also various sacrifices, each showing a particular side of the Lord Jesus. In chapter one we saw how God even made use of the poverty of believers to give expression of this. The highest sacrifice was a young bullock; a bullock generally speaks of the service and of the power in the service. If someone was poor he was allowed to sacrifice a lamb which spoke of the Lord's meekness and of His suffering in silence. One could even bring a goat; the goat was generally used for the sin-offering. Finally the poorest were allowed to bring turtledoves, a picture of the heavenly glory of the Man Christ Jesus.

We find the same thing with the meal-offering: after the general characteristics shown us in the first three verses, we find three kinds of meal-offerings. What one could bring depended on the wealth of the one who sacrificed. Here I do not speak as much about the Israelite as about the spiritual significance of the matter to us. As far as the Israelite was concerned, the sacrifice he brought depended upon the effort he made in preparing it; in our case it depends on the degree to which we have been occupied with the Lord Jesus, the degree in which we have entered into what God has revealed to us in His Word about the Lord.

The Lord's life glorified God: this shows why He had to suffer during His life on earth, for one's moral glory only becomes evident when circumstances are against him. When people are always kind to me, it cannot be seen whether or not I can bear an unpleasant individual; when all my desires are satisfied, no one will be able to see whether or not I am discontent

at heart. Trying circumstances reveal what is really in my heart. So it was with the Lord: the outward circumstances revealed what stirred His heart.

There are sufferings that can be seen by everyone. When someone is sick, and in pain, everyone notices it. When someone is maltreated, it can be seen. But there is suffering that cannot be seen by others: it is only known and felt by the Lord and the person himself. We find here three types of suffering presented. In verse 4 we find the meal-offering *baken in the oven*. When something is baked in the oven, the dough is directly subjected to the heat of the fire. Besides this, no one can see the baking taking place; the early ovens were entirely closed. This speaks of the sufferings of the Lord which were not visible to the human eye and in which nothing protected Him from the heat of the fire. Fire stands for the holiness of God which searches and tests. So the entire life of the Lord was secretly tested by the fire. It is precisely the perfection of the Lord Jesus that prevented the feelings of His heart from being displayed.

In the Gospels we see the types of circumstances He had to endure and how He bore up under them, but we are not generally told anything of His inward feelings. We only occasionally get glimpses of those feelings such as in Matthew 27:46 and in Mark 15:34, when He cried out, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" There was, however, One who saw very well what the Lord felt: that was God, and God has told us about many of the Lord's feelings particularly in the Psalms. How little would we know of what went on in the heart of the Lord Jesus if we did not have Psalms 22, 40, 69, 102 and 109!

Psalm 22 records the words we referred to a little earlier: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" But the Gospels do not tell what the Lord said afterwards, "Thou art holy, Thou that dwellest amid the praises of Israel" (v. 3). There we see how perfect the feelings of the Lord were, even during this terrible hour. He spoke of men encompassing Him, men without feelings; He called them "dogs," and "strong bulls of Bashan." Oh, the Lord deeply felt all that man did to Him. But His confidence in God was unshakable, "Thou art He that took Me out of the womb; Thou didst make Me trust, upon My mother's breasts. I was cast upon Thee from the womb; Thou art My God from My mother's belly" (vv. 9-10). He committed Himself entirely to God. So, we see something of what was in the Lord's heart while hanging on the cross.

During the Lord's life it was exactly the same. In Psalm 16 we see how the Lord relied completely upon God when He was upon earth, and what we, the believers, mean to Him. "To the saints that are on the earth, and to the excellent Thou hast said, In them is all My delight" (v. 3). In John 17:6 we find the reason for this; the Lord said to the Father, "They were Thine, and Thou gavest them Me." But here we find what they were for His heart. In Psalm 16 He cried to God in connection with His death; by saying to God, "Thou wilt not leave, My soul to Sheol, neither wilt Thou allow Thy Holy One to see corruption" (v. 10). By these words He expressed His full trust upon God.

Let us also consider Psalm 109 in which the Lord spoke of the people who surrounded Him. From the Gospels we know the circumstances, but in this Psalm we see what moved the Lord's heart. In Psalm 102 He said, "I am become like the pelican of the wilderness" (v. 6). The pelican is one of the waterfowl; the Lord compared Himself to a waterfowl *in the desert*. It has reference to a totally foreign surrounding. Wasn't the earth just that to the Lord? He had always been in the Father's house where the entire atmosphere breathed the Father's love to Him, where everything was in complete harmony with His heart's feelings.

After He had created the worlds, millions of angels were at His service, waiting for His smallest command. He was always in the bosom of the Father and came upon earth where there was no house for Him but a sheepfold, in which there was only a manger to put Him in. After His birth, Joseph and Mary had to flee to Egypt and at their return they went to live at Nazareth, the despised city, and there the Lord lived for about thirty years. Let us think about it: what must that have been for Him. In the Gospels we hardly find anything about this, only the second and third chapters of the Gospel of Luke give a few details, but for the rest we have nothing.

In Leviticus 2 reference is made to fine flour with no leaven in it and oil poured over it. The Lord Jesus was without sin and all He did bore the character of the anointing with the Holy Spirit. For thirty years He lived in this sinful city, and in Luke 4 we read how the people of the city behaved towards Him. During those thirty years, had they not been able to see how perfect He was, that He was a Man who had never lied, had never done evil, had never stolen anything, who had always been ready to help? He had revealed God in grace. All that time they had known Him in that way. Then, the first time He spoke publicly in their synagogue, they wanted to cast Him off the mountain on which their city was situated. That clearly revealed what was in their hearts towards Him; it was just as He spoke in Psalm 109:4, "For My love they are Mine adversaries." What must it have been for the Lord to experience all of this. He, the Holy and Righteous One, had to live in an atmosphere of hatred. Those 30 years of His life must have been a martyr's life for the Lord.

Later on it was the same thing. Let us consider Judas. The Lord had chosen him as a disciple, although He knew what Judas was. For three years He had him in His presence, had showered him with His goodness, and Judas, in his hypocritical way, had acted as if he loved the Lord. Yet, the Lord *knew* that it was hypocrisy! What must it have meant for Him when He had to say, "One of you shall betray Me." And when Judas came with the band of soldiers to take Him, he betrayed Him with a kiss "and covered Him with kisses" (Mat. 26:49). What a terrible thing! What must this have been for the Lord! God allowed this to occur because God wanted to show to all how glorious the Son was.

Think of John 8:41. Did they not say, "We are not born of fornication." What a terrible reference to the miraculous birth of the Lord! When someone says, "I am honest," it infers that the other one is not honest. In this way the Jews said, "We are not born of fornication." That infers, "But Thou art." Many modern theologians dare to say that the Lord was born out of adultery and this is what the Jews meant to say. To whom did they say it? To the Lord who was the eternal God, who as Man was "that Holy Thing that would be born." We can understand what suffering this must have caused the Lord.

All these things are the hidden sufferings, presented by the oven; they are the *deepest* testings that the Lord had to endure before the cross. We do not generally read of them in the Gospels; we only find them when our eyes have been opened to see the heart of the Lord in the Psalms. Then we learn to know a little of what the Lord suffered inwardly. Everyone who considers the Lord's heart — not with his own imagination, but by reverently searching the Word — and learns from the Father what took place in the Lord's heart, can bring a meal-offering baken in the oven.

These meal-offerings baken in the oven could be of two kinds. First of all they could consist of "unleavened cakes of fine flour mingled with oil." A footnote in the "New Translation" by J. N. Darby explains that the cakes were "thin cakes with holes in them," so that there was no hidden thing in them and no part of them could escape the glow of the fire. Of course they had to be made of *fine flour* and to be *unleavened*. Someone who thinks that the Lord sinned (or even could have sinned — Ed.) has not truly come to know Him. All that the Lord did and all He said was perfect and was, above all, characterized by the Holy Spirit. The cakes had to be *mingled* or kneaded *with oil*. Another footnote in the "New Translation" explains that the oil was not just poured over the cakes, but the entire dough was thoroughly mixed with the oil, receiving thereby its strength. In this way we may see more of the heart of the Lord Jesus. He was perfect Man, He had perfectly human feelings, but these were entirely characterized by the anointing with the Holy Spirit.

In the second place this meal-offering could also consist of "unleavened wafers anointed with oil." The word wafers indicates that they were very thin, but they were "*anointed* (painted) with oil." This reaches further than the kneading with oil. The latter thing speaks of the conception of the Lord by the Holy Spirit, while "anointed" with the Holy Spirit has reference to the event at the baptism of the Lord Jesus by John the Baptist. At that occasion the Holy Spirit descended upon the Lord as a dove, and when John spoke about it, he said, "God gives not the Spirit by measure" (John 3:34). We can see this in the Gospels: the Lord did all things in the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit; He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted; by the Spirit He announced the gospel and healed the sick; and by the eternal Spirit He offered Himself up to God.

In verse 5 we have a second kind of meal-offering: a meal-offering of the pan. In this case the dough was not directly exposed to the heat of the fire. The pan was between the dough and the fire: the testing was not as thorough and it could be seen by the human eye. Every person who bakes inspects the condition of her baking. Here, therefore, we see more those sufferings of the Lord that were visible to the human eye, those things that we can understand when we read the Gospels. Further, that which lies in the pan is not presented as being as thin as the cakes or wafers of verse 4: all parts of the dough were not necessarily equally exposed to the heat of the fire. But this sacrifice had also to be of unleavened fine flour and to be kneaded with oil: although we do not find here the details of verse 4; yet, it had to be perfect. And in verse 6 we read, "Part it in pieces, and pour oil thereon: it is an oblation (meal-offering)." God wanted the inward part to be seen so that it would be clear that everything was perfect, bearing the character of the Holy Spirit.

In verse 7 we find the third kind of meal-offering: a meal-offering of the cauldron (of the frying pan, KJV). Nothing is said about its being baked. It simply says, "It shall be made of fine flour with oil." The dough was not directly exposed to the fire. The sacrifice also did not have a specific form: it was something undetermined. This speaks of the most visible suffering of the Lord Jesus, which can be seen by even the youngest believer, even by the unbeliever who pays little attention to the Lord. When reading that the Samaritans did not want to receive the Lord (Luke 9:52-53), does not everyone understand how painful that must have been for Him? When we read that the Jews picked up stones to stone Him (John 8:59, 10:31), can it not be understood by everyone what a suffering that was for Him? So it was during His entire life, and particularly so in the last three and one half years of His service.

It is clear that He was always rejected. We see that already in the events recorded in the first three chapters of John's Gospel, which took place before all those we find in Matthew, Mark and Luke. So, even from the very beginning the Lord was rejected. He spoke in John of His death, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will build it up." In John 3:2

Nicodemus only dared to come to Him by night, and in the beginning of chapter four the Lord went to Samaria because He had heard that the Pharisees had become jealous. What sufferings the Lord must have endured during those three and one half years of service.

We have already seen what was done to Him in Nazareth. Afterwards the Lord went to dwell in Capernaum. In the Word we read how He was treated there. The Lord said, "Thou Capernaum, who hast been raised up to heaven" (because the Lord of heaven dwelt there), "shalt be brought down even to hades. For if the works of power which have taken place in thee, had taken place in Sodom, it had remained until this day" (Matt. 11:23). We see the same thing during the entire life of the Lord. It was only suffering. He had very few friends and even they did not understand Him.

Finally, in Luke 22:21, the Lord announced that Judas would betray Him. He then instituted the last supper, "This is My body, which is given for you" (v. 19); "This is My blood, that of the new covenant, that (is) shed for many for remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28). Then He told the disciples that He would be taken prisoner and be put to death, that it was His last night, but at the same time the disciples argued "which of them should be held to be the greatest" (Luke 22:24). They were so occupied with their own circumstances that they could not enter into the thoughts and words of the Lord. When the Lord finally went to Gethsemane He endured the most painful hours before the cross. Satan placed all the sufferings that awaited Him before His soul to keep Him, if possible, from completing the work. During this severest test in the Lord's life, He, as true Man, asked His disciples, His friends, to watch one hour with Him, but He found them sleeping. Three times He repeated His request and three times they were asleep. How great must *that* suffering have been for the Lord! Everyone can understand this.

Herein we see the character of this last kind of meal-offering. But all these sufferings which can be seen by everyone, although only fathomed by God, have shown how perfect the Lord was; truly Man, yet entirely characterized by the Holy Spirit. There was no leaven in Him. He was perfect according to God's thoughts, much much more than what God required of a man. He was "a sweet odour" to God (v. 9).

*To be cont'd*

## **GOD'S PURPOSE (6)**

—J. van Dijk

Besides the marriage relationship we have mentioned, God has also given us other areas where we may give expression to that same relationship: Christ, the Head of the Church. We already referred to the silence of the women in the Assembly (1 Cor. 14:34). Perhaps it is good to observe here that this silence does not at all flow from a supposed inferiority, but from the deep desire to give expression to that beautiful relationship: Christ and the Assembly. Who is the teacher, the Assembly or Christ through His Word? To bring the question of inferiority into this, is nothing but a ruse of Satan! May I use an example from the things of this world? Does the answer to the question, 'Who is inferior?,' decide that a man is going to play the role of Romeo and a woman the one of Juliet? Forgive me the use of this example to show how void of reason the arguments of Satan are. Yet how many of the Lord's people are caught in such traps!

Then we have the message of 1 Corinthians 11. Verse 3 clearly shows that this chapter touches most intimately on the subject we have before us. God shows us in the following verses that there are two more ways in which we can give expression to that beautiful Headship relationship He had in mind from before the foundation of the world. Yes, sisters who cover their heads for prayer, give expression to the subjection of the Assembly to the Headship of Christ. Here is one more opportunity to show that, what is precious to God, is also precious to the heart that has been set at liberty through the work of Christ. We are privileged to show forth a relationship that was prominent in God's purpose in eternity past.

May I take liberty to make a remark on the thought, expressed by some, that these verses were only meant for those hours we meet in Assembly? How would we react if a brother prayed at a wedding with his head covered? I am not aware of any other verses dealing with the head covering of brothers, so if we are consistent we should acknowledge that it is not suited for sisters to pray with uncovered heads at such occasions. That is to say, if we are thankful that we may give expression to things so dear to God. We can also notice this from verse 5, for we know that a sister is not allowed to prophesy in the Assembly, so this verse certainly deals with settings outside the Assembly meetings. But let us return to positive teaching.

We now come to the last point I like to mention whereby we may show that we love to give expression to the things that are dear to God. We find this in the same chapter, and it concerns our hair. Long hair speaks of subjection, a man who has long hair dishonours his head. A brother should realize that he represents Christ and that, therefore, his position is not

one of subjection. Angels, looking down, understand the meaning of these symbols. For their sakes, it says, we do these things (1 Cor. 10:10, see also Eph. 3:10). Satan and his fallen angels once held a position of authority under God, however, they were not obedient and fell. Now they look on and they may see men and women (lower creatures than themselves) willingly and gladly demonstrating their respective positions.

Just so we will not be confused by some who say that the hair is the head covering of the woman, I like to point out that the word for covering (K.J.V.) in verse 15 means *veil* and is not the same word as the one in verse 5. That the hair cannot be the cover spoken of in verse 5 is evident from verse 6, which would be completely senseless if the hair itself would be the head covering or if the veil in verse 15 would be identical to the covering in verse 5. When we see what these things mean to God, are we then amazed that the customs which prevail to so great an extent among today's Christians, found their origin in Satan's domain, the world? He opposes most violently all that speaks of the beautiful relationship of Christ and the Assembly. Satan will use the most subtle means to beguile, if possible, even those who have been bought for that tremendous price, the blood of Christ. Satan cannot take away Christ's future portion, but he can certainly spoil all that speaks of that relationship in the present day: the Assembly, marriage, head covering and hair; which did he not touch? Do we cherish the things of Christ? Do we rejoice in every opportunity to give expression to His Headship? As we said before, we certainly confess His Headship with our lips. But may we learn the meaning of the words, "Not every one who says Lord, Lord,..." which certainly give us a parallel to this relationship. God Himself used the very first opportunity to bring this relationship into focus. How do we respond?

How precious are these things for each heart that goes out to the things of Christ. How sad that so many become contentious when we speak of these practical opportunities to give expression of Christ's Headship. Is it perhaps because many do not realize what these practical things symbolize? Is it a lack of understanding that causes them to be contentious? The Assembly, so Paul writes, has not such a custom, nor should anyone who loves the Saviour. Now that we have glanced at the things that are connected with God's purpose, may the Spirit work in our hearts that we cherish what God cherishes and that, even in a time of many cold hearts, we gladly, from the heart, use every opportunity to show forth that Christ is our Head and we His body, in accordance with God's purpose.

*The End*