

# ***The Midrash<sup>1</sup> Bible Creed<sup>2</sup>***

## ***Key to Symbols***

**All:** All participants

**P1:** Presiding participant<sup>3</sup>

**P2:** Other participants in worship<sup>4</sup>

**P1-2:** Presiding participant to alternate with other participants

Where appropriate the writer's own words have been inserted in order to provide a sense of flow or a brief explanation of key points. If time is limited, congregations need only go through one or two sections at a time.

### ***(A) God Almighty***

**1) P1:** We [firmly and heartily] believe, [without any secret reservation] that <sup>5</sup>

**2) All:** *"The Lord our God is one Lord,"* (Deuteronomy 6:4)

#### **Brief Pause**

He *"created the heavens and the earth"* (Genesis 1:1)

**3) P1:** And that the most important aim in life is...

**4) All:** *"To love the Lord [our] God with all [our] heart, with all [our] soul and with all [our] strength"* (Deuteronomy 6:5)

**5) P1:** The next most important aim is...

**6) All:** *"To love [our] neighbour as"* [we would love ourselves] (Leviticus 19:18)

**7) P1:** At the same time we are...

**8) All:** *To love one another as [Christ] has loved"* [us] (John 15:12b, 17b; 1 John 3:11b, 23b; 4:7b, 11b & 2 John 5c)

**9) P1:** Whilst remembering that love itself is...

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<sup>1</sup> 'Midrash' is the name given to the First Century Jewish methods of Bible interpretation, readily used by both Jesus and His Apostles. It's derived from the Hebrew word 'Daresh' meaning "to make a thorough investigation of." (The exact word used in 2 Chronicles 13:22 & 24:27). Therefore, Midrash consists of those interpretative techniques, which attempt to make a thorough investigation of God's Word.

<sup>2</sup> The Midrash Bible Creed uses the classic (Midrashic) technique of stringing together a whole range of bible passages. This shows clearly that creeds are grounded firmly in scripture and not in human fabrication or wishful thinking. Paul used the Midrashic technique of stringing together different Bible passages in Romans 3:9-20 to demonstrate the guilt of humanity before a holy God. For further details please see the writer's website article, 'What Is Midrash?'

<sup>3</sup> On Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2008, the term 'leader' (which had been denoted by the letter 'L') was replaced by the term used here. The descriptive title 'Presiding Participant' had the advantage of getting away from any idea of a 'clergy/laity' divide. This had been (and still is) a problem with many church liturgies.

<sup>4</sup> On Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2008, the term 'congregation' (which had been denoted by the letter 'C') was replaced by the term used here. The intention was to prevent any notion that they were passive attendees who allowed the Presiding Participant to do everything.

<sup>5</sup> From this point onwards, scripture is left very much to speak for itself. However, to preserve word flow some paraphrasing and amplification (shown by the square brackets) is used. The original meaning of the passages is left intact.

**10) All:**

1. *"Long suffering, and*
  2. *Kind*
  3. *Love is not envious*
  4. *Love does not boast,*
  5. *Is not puffed up with pride or arrogance*
  6. *Does not behave in an unseemly manner*
  7. *Seeks not her own way,*
  8. *Is not easily provoked,*
  9. *Thinks no evil*
  10. *Rejoices not in iniquity,*
  11. *But rejoices in the truth*
  12. *Bears all things,*
  13. *Believes all things,*
  14. *Hopes all things,*
  15. *Endures all things.*
  16. *Love never fails"*
- (1 Corinthians 13:14-18a)

**(B) God the Father**

**11) P1:** We [firmly and heartily] believe that *"our Father who is in Heaven"* (Matthew 6:9)

**12) All:**

*"Is the God and Father  
Of our Lord Jesus Christ  
He has blessed us in Christ  
With all spiritual blessings  
In the heavenly places  
He has chosen us in Him  
That we should be holy  
And without blame before him in love  
Having predestined us  
To be His adopted children  
Through Jesus Christ  
According to the good pleasure of His will*

**Pause**

*[We] praise and [glorify the Father for] His grace,  
Wherein he accepted [us]  
In the beloved [Son]  
In whom we have redemption  
Through His blood,  
The forgiveness of sins,  
[Arising from] the riches of His grace*

**Pause**

*For He has made known to us  
All wisdom and prudence  
[By revealing] to us  
The mystery of His will,  
So that, in the fullness of time  
He might gather together  
All things in Christ,  
Which are in Heaven and on Earth"  
(Ephesians 1:3-10, slightly paraphrased)*

**13) P1:** Moreover...

**14) All:** *"As a father pities His children, so the Lord pities those who fear Him,"* (Psalm 103:13)

**(C) God the Son**

**15) P1:** We [firmly and heartily] believe, [without any sinful secret reservations] that...

**16) All:**

*"Jesus is Lord (1 Corinthians 12:3)  
Who, being in the form of God,  
Thought it not robbery  
To be equal with God  
But made Himself  
Of no reputation,  
And took upon Himself  
The form of a servant,  
And was made  
In the likeness of men  
And being found  
In fashion as a man,  
He humbled Himself,  
And became obedient to death,  
Even death on the cross  
Wherefore God also has highly exalted Him,  
And given Him a Name  
Which is above every name.  
That at the name of Jesus  
Every knee should bow,  
Of things in Heaven,  
And things on earth,  
And things under the earth:  
And that every tongue should confess that  
Jesus Christ is Lord,  
To the glory of God the Father"  
(Philippians 2:6-11)*

**17) P1:** *"He is the head of [His] body the Church"* (Colossians 1:18)

**18) P2:** *"In Him dwells the fullness of God"* (Colossians 1:19)

**19) P1:** *"Son of God"* (Daniel 3:25)

**20) P2:** *"Son of Man"* (Daniel 7:13)

**21) P1:** *"Who gave himself for our sins"*

**22) P2:** *"That He might deliver us from this present evil World"* (Galatians 1:4)

**23) P1:** We [firmly and heartily] believe that: -

**24) All:**

*"Under Pontius Pilate (1 Timothy 6:13)  
[Jesus] died for us (1 Thessalonians 5:10)  
Having once suffered for sins,  
The just for the unjust, (1 Peter 3:18)  
Giving Himself as a ransom for all (1 Timothy 2:6)  
That He might bring us to God (1 Peter 3:18b)*

**25) P1:** *He is the propitiation for our sins and...* (1 John 2:2a)

**26) P2:** *not only for ours alone, but also for the sins of the whole World"* (1 John 2:2b)

**27) All:**

*"Being put to death in the flesh*

*But made alive in the Spirit*

*In which He went*

*And preached to the spirits in prison*

*Who were disobedient*

*In the days of Noah"* (1 Peter 3:19-20)

[Christ was] *"Raised on the third day"* (Matthew 17:23)

*"In accordance with the scriptures*

*He was seen of Peter,*

*Then of the Twelve,*

[And] *after that by above five hundred brothers at once*

[Then also by] *James and all of the Apostles,*

*And last of all by [Paul]"* (1 Corinthians 15:4-8)

[He ascended] *"into Heaven*

[To sit] *at the right hand of God;*

[With] *angels and authorities and powers*

*Being made subject to Him"* (Hebrews 8:1 & 1 Peter 3:22)

**28) P1:** He [Jesus] is...

**29) All:**

*"The one mediator between God and Man,"* (1 Timothy 2:5)

*"Who also makes intercession for us* (Romans 8:34c)

*A Great High priest* (Hebrews 4:14a)

*Of the order of Melchizedek"* (Hebrews 5:10b)

[The mysterious priest-king of Salem

Who gave a blessing to Abraham] (Genesis 14:17-20)

**30) P1:** *"In all points tempted like as we are...* (Hebrews 4:15b)

**31) P2:** *Yet without sin"* (Hebrews 4:15c)

**32) P1:** He will come again *"in the clouds of Heaven, with power and great glory,"* (Matthew 24:30)

**33) P2:** *"To judge the [whole] World in righteousness [both] the living and the dead"* (Acts 17:31 & 1 Timothy 4:1)

**34) P1:** [He will bind] *"Satan for one thousand years and cast him into a bottomless pit and shut him up and set a seal upon him that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years be fulfilled and after that he must be released for a limited season,"* (Revelation 20:2-3)

**35) P2:** and then Christ will *"rule [the nations] with a rod of iron"* (Revelation 19:15)

**36) P1:** *"And when the thousand years are expired Satan shall be released from his prison and he shall go out to deceive the nations who are in the four quarters of the Earth; Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle – the number of them is like the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the Earth and compassed the camp of the Saints and the beloved city; but fire came down from God out of Heaven and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire where the beast and false prophet are and [they] shall be tormented day and night forever."* (Revelation 20:7-10)

**37) P2:** *"His dominion is an everlasting dominion, [it] shall not pass away and His kingdom will not be destroyed"* (Daniel 7:14b)

**38) All:** [For it will be situated in] *"a new heaven and a new earth"* (Revelation 21:1a)

**39) P1:** Together, let us recall that...

**40) All:** *"Whosoever confesses Jesus as the Son of God, God dwells in him and he in God"* (1 John 4:15)

#### **(D) God the Holy Spirit**

**41) P1:** We [firmly] believe that:

**42) All:** *"The Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13) is the Comforter, whom the Father [has given] in [the] name [of Jesus] to teach [us] all things, (John 14:26) [and to] abide in us forever"* (John 14:16c & 17c)

**43) P1:** *"Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty,* (2 Corinthians 3:17)

**44) All:** Also *"love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control, (Galatians 5:22-23a) power and a sound mind"* (2 Timothy 1:7b)

**45) P1:** [Christ] *"will baptise with the Holy Spirit* (Mark 1:8)

**46) P2:** [While our] *Heavenly Father [will] give the Holy Spirit to those [of His children] who ask Him"* (Luke 11:13b)

**47) P1:** [Let us not be] *"ignorant"* [of the fact that] (1 Corinthians 12:1)

**48) P2:** *"There are diversities of gifts, [but He is] the same Spirit"* [who bestows those gifts] (1 Corinthians 12:4)

**49) P1:** *And...*

**50) P2:** *There are different forms of service, but the same Lord"* [who empowers each form of service] (1 Corinthians 12:5)

**51) P1:** *And He gave;*

**52) P2:** *Some [to be] Apostles, some [to be] Prophets, some [to be] Evangelists and some [to be] Pastor-Teachers;<sup>6</sup> for the maturing of the Saints, for the work of the Saints, and for the edifying of the body of Christ"* (Ephesians 4:11-12)

**53) All:** *until we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"* (Ephesians 4:13)

**54) P1:** Remember...

**55) P2:** [All those] *"who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God"* (Romans 8:14)

**56) All:** *"Whereby, we cry 'Abba, Father'"* (Romans 8:15c)

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<sup>6</sup> In the original Greek, the words *'Pastor* and *'Teacher'* appear to read concurrently as *'Pastor-Teacher'*; with the implication that local Pastors were also expected to be teachers, (1 Timothy 3:2). However, the example of Apollos in Acts 18:24f appears to endorse itinerant ministries, with the emphasis lying mainly with teaching.

## **(E) Human Nature**

**57) P1:** We [firmly] believe [without any sinful secret reservations] that...

**58) All:** *"God created man in His own image"* (Genesis 1:27) [But tragically] *sin entered into the World through one man*" (Romans 5:12)

**59) P1:** So now...

**60) All:**

[We] *"have all become corrupt, [we] have all done abominable works, [we] have all gone astray [we] have all become filthy; none of us does that which is good in God's sight"* (Psalm 14:1-3)

*"We are all as an unclean thing, all our [self-] righteousness [is like] filthy rags; we all fade away as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away"* [from the mercy of the Lord] (Isaiah 64:6)

*We receive not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness to [us],* (1 Corinthians 2:14a)

[Satan], *the god of this world has blinded the minds [of those] who [do not] believe"* (2 Corinthians 4:4a)

**61) P1:** Consequently...

**62) All:** [Our] *"heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked"* (Jeremiah 17:9)

**63) P1:** *"For from within [our] hearts proceed: -*

**64) P1-2: -**

1. *"Evil thoughts,*
2. *Unclean habits,*
3. *Adulteries,*
4. *Idolatry,*
5. *Sexual immorality,*
6. *Witchcraft,*
7. *Murders,*
8. *Hatred,*
9. *Thefts,*
10. *Division,*
11. *Covetousness,<sup>7</sup>*
12. *Rivalry,*
13. *Wickedness,*
14. *Factions,<sup>8</sup>*
15. *Deceits,*
16. *Wrath,*
17. *Licentiousness,<sup>9</sup>*
18. *Strife,*
19. *An evil look,*
20. *Rebellions,*
21. *Blasphemy,*
22. *Heresies,<sup>10</sup>*
23. *Pride,*
24. *Envy,*

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<sup>7</sup> *'Covetousness,'* to crave strongly for what someone else possesses

<sup>8</sup> *'Factions,'* mutually hostile parties or groups contending for power and influence in the same organisation

<sup>9</sup> *'Licentiousness,'* sexual immorality and generally debauched behaviour

<sup>10</sup> *'Heresies'* are divisive and stubbornly held false teachings

**25. Foolishness.**

**26. Drunken orgies"**

(Mark 7:21-22 alternated with Galatians 5:19b-21a)

**65) P1:** [Fellow believers], be warned!

*"The judgement of God is against them who do such things" (Romans 2:2) [and] "The unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9)*

Pause

### **(F) Salvation**

*"Repent and be converted [so] that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19)*

**66) P2:** *"Salvation [belongs] to our God who sits upon the throne and unto" [Jesus] (Revelation 7:10b)*

**67) P1:** *"Believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1:1 & 15)*

This [glorious] Gospel reveals that: -

**68) All:**

*"God so loved the World,*

*That He gave*

*His only begotten Son*

*That whoever believes in Him;*

*Should not perish,*

*But have eternal life" (John 3:16)*

[So] *"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord will be saved" (Joel 2:32b)*

[Whilst] *"The just shall live by faith" (Habakkuk 2:4b)*

**69) P1:** But remember...

**70) P2:** *"Faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead" (James 2:17)*

**71) P1:** If you have not already done so, *"repent and be baptised every one of you for the forgiveness of sins," (Acts 2:38). Let all baptisms be done...*

**72) P2:** *"In the name of the Father, and of the Son (the Lord Jesus Christ) and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38, 10:48 & 19:5)*

**73) P1:** Also, *"receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22c) "Be filled with Him" (Ephesians 5:18b & John 14:17)*

**74) All:** That we may enjoy His *"wisdom understanding, counsel, might, knowledge and reverent fear of the Lord" (Isaiah 11:1)*

**75) P1:** Also, take great care to *"walk in the Spirit [in order that] "you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16 & 25b) nor "blaspheme, (Matthew 12:31) resist (Acts 7:51) quench, [nor] (1 Thessalonians 5:19) grieve (Ephesians 4:30a) the Holy Spirit of God"*

**76) P2:** Who has secured us *"to the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30b)*

### **(G) The Jewish People**

**77) P1:** We [firmly] believe, [without any sinful secret reservations] that: -

**78) All:**

*"Salvation is of the Jews"* (John 4:22b)  
And that *"God has not cast away  
His people whom He foreknew* (Romans 11:2a)  
[Although] *"blindness in part,  
[Has] happened to Israel  
Until the full number of Gentiles has come in,  
[Then] all Israel too will be saved"* (Romans 11:25c-16a)  
When *"they look upon Him  
Whom they have pierced  
They shall mourn for Him  
As one mourns for his only son,  
And [they] shall be in bitterness for Him  
As one is in bitterness for his firstborn"* (Zechariah 12:10)

**79) P1:** However, this recognition of the one true Messiah will happen...

**80) P2:** *"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says The Lord of Hosts"* (Zechariah 4:6)

**81) All:** Moreover, *"If those ordinances depart from before me,' says the Lord, 'then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever. Thus says the Lord; 'If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all [the sins] they have done, says the LORD.'"* (Jeremiah 31:36-37)

**82) P1:** In the meantime, let us remember that, with regard to Israel [as well as to ourselves]; -

**83) P2:** *"The gifts and calling of God are without repentance"*<sup>11</sup> [and are not subject to alteration] (Romans 11:29)

**(H)The Church**

**84) P1:** We [firmly] believe that: -

**85) All:** *"The Church is subject to Christ,"* (Ephesians 5:24) *"As one body; every member one to another"* (Romans 12:5b)

**86) P1:** Its sacred mission is to: -

**87) P2:**

*"Go into the entire world and preach the Gospel to every [nation] (Mark 16:15b)  
Unto the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts 1:8d)  
Teaching all nations  
To observe all things  
[That] have [been] commanded [of] you" (Matthew 28:19b &20a)  
[Let us] "be doers of the word [and] not hearers only" (James 1:22)  
[Eating] 'the bread and [drinking] the cup,'  
[Of Holy Communion]  
"Proclaiming His death until He comes" (1 Corinthians 11:26)*

**88) P1:** *"Therefore brethren, stand fast and hold to the traditions which you have been taught,"* (2 Thessalonians 2:16a). *"Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints,"* (Jude 3b). *"Do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but [go on] exhorting one another: and so much the more, as you see the day [of Christ's return] approaching,"* (Hebrews 10:25).

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<sup>11</sup> Meaning that God doesn't change His mind about the tasks He calls individuals, groups and nation states to perform

At this point the Presiding Participant may read more Bible exhortations as long as they meet definite congregational needs. Ephesians 6:18 James 4:7 & 1 Peter 5:6-8 would be useful in the event of a direct spiritual attack from Satan. The Presiding Participant may introduce these extra readings with the following words: *"Please give your full attention to these additional passages of scripture which refer directly to the affairs of this Congregation [Group]..."*

**89) P2:** *"Let those with ears listen to what the Spirit is saying to" this Church (Revelation 2:7b)*

**90) P1:** As a [small] group of [persecuted] believers (Matthew 5:10-12, 18:20) [a properly constituted congregation of assembled believers, under the bible-based rule of local *Elders and Deacons* (1 Timothy 3:10-13 & Titus 1:5-9)] let us ask ourselves; *"What does the Lord require of" [us]? (Micah 6:8b)*

**91) All:** *"To do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with [our] God" (Micah 6:8c)*

**92) P1:** Let us remember that any true Church, [no matter what its size or location] will continue steadfastly in...

**93) All:** *"The Apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers, praising God" (Acts 2:42 & 47a)*

### ***(I)The Last Things***

**94) P1:** We [firmly] believe that...

**95) All:** *"God will raise us up by His power" (1 Corinthians 6:14) [to] have eternal life, (1 John 5:13) and to be with Christ [forever]" (Philippians 1:23)*

**96) P1:** In the World to come...

**97) All:** *"God shall wipe away all tears from [our] eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:4)*

**98) P1:** *"But the fearful and unbelieving, and the depraved, and murderers, and immoral, and practitioners of magic arts, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone. This is the second death...and they shall be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Revelation 21:8 & 20:10c)*

**99) P2:** *"Their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be abhorred by all flesh" (Isaiah 66:24b)*

**100) All:** *"He that is unjust let him be unjust still and he who is filthy let him be filthy still. He that is righteous let him be righteous still and he that is holy let him be holy still" (Revelation 22:11)*

**101) P1:** *"Being in torment...there shall be weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth [whilst they endure] "The second death [with] "the devil and his angels," (Luke 16:23, Matthew 13:42, Revelation 2:11 & Matthew 25:41)<sup>12</sup>*

Pause

### ***(J)The Scriptures***

**102) P1:** These are the words of God, first entrusted to the nation of Israel (Romans 3:2), but now also delivered to us whose mission is to preach the *"Gospel of the kingdom as a witness for all nations,"* before the end comes (Matthew 24:14)

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<sup>12</sup> These words suggest that the unredeemed will continue being dominated by their sinful urges for all eternity

**103) P2:** This is the word of God, the *"gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God"* (Mark 1:1b)

**104) All:** All glory to *"His Holy Name"* (1 Chronicles 16:10a)

**105) P1:** Hard though some of these words may be, let us accept [in the faith granted to us] that:

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*"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, [so] that the man of God may be [mature], thoroughly furnished unto all good works"* (2 Timothy 3:16f)

*"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. [Rather, we] were eyewitnesses of His majesty. We have also a more sure word of prophecy"* (2 Peter 1:16 & 19a)

*"For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit"* (2 Peter 1:21)

Also, let us recall that, even when His own life was at risk from murderous enemies; our Lord saw Himself actively fulfilling biblical prophecy. With regard to such prophecy He firmly asserted that...

**106) All:** *"The Scriptures cannot be broken"* (John 10:35)

**107) P1:** Consequently, *"You shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall you diminish ought from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord Your God which I command you"* (Deuteronomy 4:2).

**Pause**

**(K) The Grace**

Let us now end this recitation by saying...

**108) All:** *"Even so, come, Lord Jesus"* (Revelation 22:20)

**109) P1:** May *"the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all"*

**110) All:** *"Amen,"* (Revelation 22:21)<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> By now, the Midrash Bible Creed will have provided enough scriptural data to validate all of the statements of faith made throughout the Leeds Liturgy