

The Friendly Companion



“Thou God seest me.” (Genesis 16. 13)

January 2006

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All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Price 50 pence monthly, plus postage.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A.	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£10.00	\$42	A\$55	€27.00

All correspondence concerning subscriptions should be addressed to Mr. H. Mercer, 8 Fairleigh Rise, Kington Langley, Chippenham, Wilts. SN15 5QF.

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

January is the month when we most expect there to be snow. Although our winters have been much warmer than they used to be when some of us were younger, still God's promise remains, that while the earth remains, winter as well as summer, cold as well as heat, will occur.

The Bible tells us of a man who lived during the reign of King David, who killed a lion on a snowy day. His name was Benaiah and he was one of David's bravest men.

Many years ago in the United States of America before the days of cars, one particular winter was very cold and snowy. One Lord's Day a minister, called Dr. Lynn Beecher, was expected to preach at a country chapel quite a long way from the town where he lived. He carefully guided his horse along the slippery road, through the snowdrifts, and at last reached the chapel only to find that he was the only worshipper who had braved the elements!

He went and sat in the pulpit until the time the service should start, when, just as the clock turned the hour appointed, a solitary worshipper, a young man, walked up the aisle and sat in a seat. Lynn Beecher now faced the question as to whether he should proceed with the service with just one hearer? No doubt remembering that the Saviour preached on two occasions to a congregation of only one (do you know to whom?), he decided quickly that he must carry on. So he rose, gave out the first hymn, and followed the usual order of the service right through to the end. As he opened his eyes after pronouncing the benediction, he was about to go down and speak with his only hearer, when he noticed that he had vanished! So, leaving the chapel, he went to the barn, saddled his horse, and made his way carefully back home through the snow and ice. As he went, he wondered whether any good had come from these unusual circumstances. He felt rather depressed and tempted that it had all been a waste of time and effort. To my mind this man was as brave in his way, as

Benaiah was! It was the same God who helped him to preach, who had helped Benaiah to slay the lion.

Many years later, the minister, now an old man, was travelling in the state of Ohio. He came to a small settlement and was passing through when he was greeted by name, by a man who was, as he thought, a complete stranger to him. "How do you know my name?" he asked of the stranger. "I don't remember ever meeting you." "No, perhaps you don't," was the reply. "But do you remember preaching one snowy day to just one man?" "Yes, I do," replied Lynn Beecher. "Are you the man? I have been wanting to speak to you ever since that day." "Well," was the reply, "it was during that sermon I was led to see and to embrace the way of salvation, and now I myself am a minister, and the Lord has been pleased to call many by grace under my ministry." What a lesson this should be to us, firstly, not to despise small congregations, and secondly, if at all possible, to let nothing hinder us from attending the House of God, for who can tell what good God may have in store!

With best wishes from your friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The picture on our front cover this month, for the beginning of the year, shows a well. In Bible times, because of the scarcity of water, wells were very important; settlements were built near them, wars were fought over them. Often these wells had names given to them of significance.

In Genesis 16. 13-14, we read of a well called "Beerlahairoi," which means, "Thou God seest me." Hagar had fled from Sarai, but God, who was watching over the sad events in Abram's family, sent her back. She felt, no doubt, the solemnity of being in the presence of Almighty God, and perhaps also felt some comfort that whatever difficulties there might be as she returned to her mistress, the Lord was watching over them each.

It is our wisdom to always remember that whatever we are about, wherever we may be, the eyes of the Lord are always there. "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Proverbs 15. 3). What a restraining influence this should be on us, even when no other eye can see us! As children, you may feel that you are free to do what you wish when your parents cannot see what you are about, but there is an eye that is watching. If your conscience is healthy, it will be monitoring your actions and thoughts continually.

It would be good for us if, in a spiritual sense, we all lived every day by the same well that Hagar named.

Anne Steele said: "What harm can ever reach my soul beneath my Father's eye?"

May we be led to prove that sacred truth this New Year.

GOOD WISHES

The present season prompts my mind to send these kind wishes to my Christian friend, and Pastor.

I wish you much increase of every grace, also strength to run your Christian race.

I wish you patience under every rod, and also much sweet fellowship with God.

I wish you joy and comforts all divine.

I wish your evidences bright may shine.

I wish you very strong in precious faith.

I wish you well through life and well in death.

I wish you safe on the celestial shore and there I wish you well for evermore.

Selected

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from HEATHER NEELS.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**FIRST**

A wicked king, Ahaz, closed the House of the LORD and worshipped idols. *"But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel."* Hezekiah, his son, became the next king. Did he follow the evil ways of his father? No! In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he *"opened the doors of the House of the LORD, and repaired them."* King Hezekiah called the priests and the Levites to clean the house of the LORD. They began their work *"on the first day of the first month."*

Then Hezekiah rose early and gathered the rulers of the city to worship in the house of the LORD. The priests offered sacrifices according to the commandment of the LORD. *"So the service of the House of the LORD was set in order."*

King Hezekiah set a good example in doing the most important things first. The things that concern our souls are more important than anything else. The Lord Jesus said: *"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness."*

QUESTIONS:

1. Which king opened the doors of the House of the LORD?
2. On which day did the priests begin their work?
3. What did the Lord Jesus say to seek first? (first 4 words)

Contributed

Send your answers to the Editor (see page 2 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

ANSWERS TO DECEMBER QUESTIONS

1. A special star.
2. Wise men.
3. No.

*“But seek ye
first the
kingdom
of God,
and His
righteousness.”
Matthew 6. 33.*

BIBLE LESSONS**THE FIRST FOLLOWERS OF JESUS**

As John continued telling the people that their King was coming, many believed John and began to look for Him. How eagerly they waited, thinking that He would set up the Kingdom in Judæa and deliver them from the power of the Romans. They had been under the authority of enemies for so long, that their hearts filled with joy at the thought of being ruled by their own King.

One day after Jesus returned from the wilderness, John saw Him walking and pointed Him out, saying: "*Behold the Lamb of God!*" Two of John's disciples, who had followed him to learn about the kingdom of God, turned from John and began to follow Jesus. What a wonder it is when a soul is constrained to follow Jesus! Perhaps they wondered what John meant, when he called Him "*the Lamb of God.*"

As they followed, Jesus turned and asked them: "*What seek ye?*" They answered: "*Master, where dwellest Thou?*" They wanted to know where He lived, so that they could come and talk with Him. Jesus invited them to: "*Come and see.*" We are not told what else Jesus said to them, but we know that His words convinced them that He was the Christ.

One of these young men was named Andrew. He quickly went to tell his brother, Simon Peter, that they had found the promised Messiah, and brought him to Jesus. When Jesus looked upon him, He said: "*Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas*" (which means "A stone").

How different from the first brothers we read of in the Old Testament! Do you remember what happened between them? Cain became angry and slew his brother, Abel. Of these first brothers in the New Testament, we read of Andrew bringing his brother to Jesus.

The next day Jesus went into Galilee and found a young man named Philip and said to him: "*Follow Me.*" In the Old Testament, people were told to "*Fear God, and keep His commandments*" (Ecclesiastes 12. 13). The New Testament

command is: *"Follow Me."* The Lord goes before His people, not in the cloudy pillar or pillar of fire, but in the Person of the Saviour. How Philip delighted to hear Jesus open the Scriptures and speak of the kingdom of God!

Philip quickly went out to find his friend, Nathanael. He knew that Nathanael was also looking for the coming Messiah. He told him they had found the One whom Moses and all the prophets had written about: *"Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph."*

Nathanael thought Philip must be mistaken. Surely nothing good could come out of the despised city of Nazareth, certainly not the promised Messiah. Philip knew better than to reason or argue with Nathanael. Instead, he simply answered: *"Come and see."* He was sure that if Nathanael met Jesus and heard His words with the same power as he had, then he would believe in Him. We wonder if Nathanael went a little reluctantly.

However, when Jesus saw Nathanael coming, He said of him, *"Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!"* Nathanael was astonished and asked: *"Whence knowest Thou me?"* The next words that Jesus spoke to him were even more humbling: *"Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee."* Was he kneeling down and praying or perhaps reading the Scriptures? Not only did the Lord see him, but He knew what he was doing. Nathanael was sure that no one but God could see him under the fig tree. He answered: *"Rabbi (Master), Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel."*

These young men became the first followers of Jesus.

You can read about this in John chapter 1 verses 35 to 51.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did John call Jesus when he pointed Him out? (4 words)
2. What was the name of one of John's disciples who followed Jesus?
3. Who did he bring to Jesus?

4. What did Jesus tell Philip to do?
5. Who did Philip bring to Jesus?

G. L. TenBroeke

Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on Page 2). Please mark the envelope: ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.

ANSWERS TO DECEMBER QUESTIONS

1. The Spirit of God.
2. "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
3. Sin.
4. Forty.
5. "It is written."

COURAGE TO PRAY

Many years ago, a boy named Jamie took on his first job on a wooden ship from the Nith to Calcutta. He kept up his regular habit of kneeling for prayer before turning into his hammock for the night, not knowing he was doing anything unusual. An experienced sailor, Bob Shearer, who knew Jamie's parents, was watching the boy to protect him from the rude comments of the other sailors. At Calcutta, some additional sailors boarded the ship, one of them a mean, foul-mouthed villain, named George. Bob was especially concerned about George, for he seemed to have no morals whatsoever.

Sure enough, the homeward voyage had scarcely begun when George, seeing young Jamie kneeling by his hammock, swore and shouted: "Lookee here! A youngster at his prayers!" Laughing raucously, he threw a shoe with excellent aim at Jamie's head. With lightning speed, Bob grabbed George, hauled him up on to the deck, and thrashed him thoroughly. His lip and nose bleeding, George slunk away, muttering oaths under his breath.

The next night, Jamie, who had not thought his prayers would cause so much trouble, decided to get into his hammock without kneeling. But Bob took Jamie by the heels and dragged him to his knees, saying: "Say your prayers like a man! Do you think I'm going to fight for a coward? Pray, or I'll need to thrash you next!"

This young boy was Sir James Anderson, commander of the *Great Eastern*, who laid the first Atlantic cable. In this rough manner he learned a lesson he never forgot: that no boy or man should under any circumstances be ashamed of his colours, his conscience, or his God. *Selected*

“HE WHO OUR LIVES IN MERCY SPARED”

“My dear, come what may, I must preach Sunday morning from Psalm 58. I cannot get the last verses out of my head. I believe that the Lord has laid those words upon my mind. I have tried to find another text, but without success.”

Mrs. Lamain looks at her husband anxiously. “Be careful, though,” she says hesitantly. “You know that very often there are people from the Secret Police in the church?”

“Certainly, my dear, I realise the great danger, too, but from the moment that I started preparing from the text it was just as though all fear of enemies, of prisons, and of concentration camps, was taken from me. The Lord has shown me that He will accomplish His just will, not only in the life of His children, but also in relation to lands and people who afflict God’s children and who have no regard for the King of kings. The Lord reigneth!”

Mrs. Lamain leaves the study full of thoughts. She well knows that if her husband has received this charge from the Lord, she must not keep him back from it. But her heart is filled with fear and anxiety. Things are getting more difficult. The Germans are becoming more and more strict and fanatical. Only this week the newspaper reported that they had suffered losses in Sicily and in Russia. Stalingrad is back in the hands of the Russians. What does the future hold? Will the Netherlands ever be freed from the German yoke?

It is Sunday morning, 7th February 1943. The church at Rotterdam South is filled almost to the last seat. There are even extra chairs in the aisles. In the back seat near the corner sit two men. Now and then they whisper to each other. They look around for a while and there is more whispering. Both

men have raised the collars of their jackets. They are not known to the members of the congregation.

Jaap de Koning has already taken a furtive look behind but the two men glared at him with such contempt that he was quite frightened. As long as they are not ... Oh, he shudders to think of it. Just suppose those men are spies! But he doesn't dare to look again.

During the singing and the prayer he feels a little calmer. Perhaps he is worrying for nothing. They could after all be people from the surrounding district who wanted to hear Mr. Lamain.

As the last notes of the organ die away, the voice of the minister is heard saying: "Friends, this morning I want to draw your attention to the last words of Psalm 58." Jaap quickly looks it up in his little Bible. He finds it in time to read the very last words with the minister: "Verily He is a God that judgeth in the earth."

"This Psalm was much on David's mind when he was surrounded by enemies, my friends. Psalm 57 is a prayer of David, but in Psalm 58 his heart is otherwise engaged. He is now no longer fearful but is filled with holy indignation. How dare those wicked foes deal thus with him! David is able to pour out his heart before the righteous God of heaven and earth. He pleads that the Lord will pour out His judgments upon these evil men. And have we not been able to read of such things in the newspaper last week?

"Truly there is a God who lives
And on this earth his judgment gives."

The sweat breaks out on Jaap's forehead. If ... if they are spies, then they have heard what the minister is saying about the Germans! Carefully he tries to peep from the corner of his eyes over his shoulder. He catches his breath One of the men has a note pad! He dares not look again – now he knows for certain – his pastor is in danger!

When the service is over he runs to the pastor's house and

tells Mrs. Lamain what he has seen. "Thank you, Jaap," she says anxiously, "I will tell the pastor what you have said."

It is Tuesday morning. At nine-o'clock two uniformed men stand at the door of the pastor's house. They are from the Gestapo! They ring the bell loud and long. In fear, Mrs. Lamain opens the door.

"Where is your husband?" is the curt question.

"I will call him for you," she replies with trembling voice, and she hurries to the study.

"There is danger, my dear. Two men from the Gestapo are at the door. Oh, it must be about Sunday morning's sermon."

Now it is the pastor who gets a sudden shock. What now? And today he has to go to Zeeland to preach.

"What sort of gossip was that on Sunday morning during the sermon?" hisses one of the men. "Tell us, what have you got to say about our Fuhrer? Did you need to repeat the lies which were in the newspaper?"

White with shock the pastor stands in the door opening. "But gentlemen," he stammers, "I have said nothing new. I have indeed said only what was in the papers."

"What is that to us? Just hold your tongue with your fine stories. We have come to tell you that you are to report to the Police Station for a hearing. Then we shall see what is left of all that gossip," grumbles the older man.

"Sir, I will be pleased to obey you, but for today and for the rest of the week I have several engagements in Zeeland, where I am to preach," Mr. Lamain remarks with some trepidation. "Give me consent to do so, please, and then I promise to come next week to your office." The two men look at each other with knowing glances. One of them shrugs his shoulders. "Agreed," says the other. "On Monday afternoon next week you will be at the Head Office on the Haagseveer at 3.30 – understood?"

"That is agreed then, sir. I shall keep my word," promises Mr. Lamain.

"You had better do so," hisses the Gestapo man. They click their heels, walk from the door and depart.

That evening, Mr. Lamain is sitting in a little attic room in Terneuzen. The people with whom he is lodging this night have gone to bed. But he cannot sleep. His heart is filled with so much fear and trepidation. How will it all end? Perhaps he will be arrested. Perhaps he will be imprisoned or taken to a concentration camp! It feels as though his mouth is sealed. He has bowed his knees but no prayer comes from his lips. Everything is dark. The devil sets upon him fearfully: "This is going to cost you your life, man. Where is that God in whom you trust? Do you really think that you will get out of this alive? Just think of all those people who have been shot for no good reason!"

The pastor takes a pen and notepaper from his case, and by the light of a feeble lamp he writes a letter to the elders and deacons at Rotterdam South.

"Beloved brethren,

This morning I had a visit from two members of the Gestapo. They have accused me about Sunday morning's sermon. I should have gone today to the Head Office for a hearing, but because of my engagements in Zeeland, it is postponed until Monday afternoon.

Brethren, pray for me. It is dark in my heart. The devil is so active. I scarce know what to do. It seems as though my prayers go no further than the roof of this cottage. Everything seems shut up. I repeat; will you storm the Throne of Grace with your prayers. Ask others of God's children if they will remember me in their petitions – for with the Lord there is deliverance, even from death. And ... if it be God's will that it cost me my life, if it means death, then will you care for my dear wife and children? I commend you to God.

Your sorrowing pastor."

(to be continued)

Translated from the Dutch by M. Banfield

COMPARISONS

Our Saviour borroweth His comparisons from easy and familiar things, such as the sower, the seed, the ground, the growth, the withering, the answering or failing of the sower's expectations, all of them things well known, and by all these would teach us some spiritual instruction. For there is no earthly thing, which is not fitted to put us in mind of some heavenly. Christ cannot look upon the sun, the wind, fire, water, a hen, a little grain of mustard seed, – nor upon ordinary occasions, as the penny given for the day's work, the wedding garment and ceremonies of the Jews about it, nor the waiting of servants at their master's table, or children asking bread and fish at their father's table, but He applies all to some special use of edification in grace.

Earthly things must remind us of heavenly. We must translate the book of nature into the book of grace."

Thomas Taylor on the Parable of the Sower. 1634

"I WILL LIFT UP MINE EYES UNTO THE HILLS FROM WHENCE COMETH MY HELP" (PSALM 121)

6. The mount of temptation

After Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the River Jordan, we read He was "led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil" (Luke 4. 1-2). We are not told in full detail what the temptations were, but we have three particular temptations on record.

One of these temptations was: "the devil, taking Him up into an high mountain, shewed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto Him, All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If Thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be Thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind Me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (Luke 4. 5-8). This was not the only time

when Jesus was tempted by Satan. Luke tells us Satan “departed from Him for a season.”

We do not know on which mountain the devil tempted the Lord Jesus. The location is not important; it has not been revealed in Scripture. The account of the temptation is important, and the fact that in forty days of temptation, the devil could not cause the Lord Jesus to sin. More than this, since the Lord’s people are found in Christ, they can never be finally overcome by the devil. What an encouragement for the poor, tempted child of God!

Remember, the devil has been a liar from the beginning; he was not telling the truth in this temptation, for “the earth is the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein” (Psalm 24. 1).

All of the Lord’s people will be subject to the temptations of Satan. In particular, the devil makes the things of this world very attractive to us and would have us devote ourselves wholly to them and to seek our pleasure in them; our own sinful selves love to have the things of this world.

When we stand on a high mountain, we may look on things below us and admire their beauty, but we don’t see the faults and blemishes. From a high mountain we may see a river, looking so still and clean, yet if we were to stand beside the river we would see its current and the pollution in it. So the devil will lift us up so that all looks attractive, but our natural eyes do not see the pollution of this world, or consider that it is swiftly passing away.

The devil may raise us up, as if on a high mountain, to think well of ourselves, or of the achievements we can make in this life. When we feel proud of ourselves, then we are liable to fall, for “pride goeth before destruction.”

It is significant to notice when this temptation took place. Jesus had just been baptized; and as He came up from immersion in the River Jordan, the heavens opened, revealing Him as the beloved Son of God. His baptism showed His

death, resurrection and ascension in conquest over sin, Satan and the grave. Then – Mark says “immediately” – He was tempted of the devil. The Lord’s people often find that after a time of the Lord’s appearing and blessing, they go into the wilderness and are tempted of the devil. When the Lord’s work is being revealed, Satan will not be far away, to resist if he could.

We do not fully realise the power of the devil, but he knows our weaknesses, and will tempt us there. We have no strength of ourselves to resist the devil, when he comes with his powerful temptations, but thanks be to God, there is One who is more powerful. That One is the Lord Jesus, who endured temptation. Although we may fall in the hour of temptation, He cannot let His people fall from grace, for He “is able to keep you from falling.”

The title of this series of articles is taken from Psalm 121. What a support and how comforting are the words of the Psalm: “He will not suffer thy foot to be moved ... the LORD is thy keeper ... the LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: He shall preserve thy soul!” But let us not be presumptuous, or the Lord will deal solemnly with us; the writer remembers when the Lord powerfully spake these words in reproof to him: “He will not suffer thy foot to be moved.”

James writes: “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation,” but if we feel that we can withstand temptation, we don’t know our own weakness. The Apostle Paul warns the church at Corinth: “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Corinthians 10. 12). But for the comfort of the Lord’s weak ones, he went on to write, by the Holy Spirit, of the way of help and deliverance in the hour of temptation: “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10. 13). The way of escape is none other than the Lord Jesus

Himself, who endured temptation. His sin-atonng sacrifice has secured eternal salvation for all His dear people.

“Though Satan will seek the sheep to annoy,
The helpless and weak he ne’er will destroy,
Christ is their salvation, and strength He will give;
There’s no condemnation to them that believe.”

The apostle reminds the Church of God that the Lord Jesus “also Himself likewise took part of (flesh and blood); that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted” (Hebrews 2. 14-18).

The apostle goes on to say in Hebrews 4: “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

Contributed

TIME AND ETERNITY

A lady once looked into a book and saw a word which made her much afraid. She could not sleep that night. She loved life. She loved this world. She did not wish to leave it. The word she saw in the book was “ETERNITY.” It is a solemn word. I do not wonder that it fills the minds of sinners with fear.

But what is eternity? It is like a sea which has no shore; a race that is never all run; a river that has no spring and no mouth, yet always flows. It is for ever and ever. None but God

fully knows what it is. We know it is not time told by hours, days, months, years, and ages. We speak of an eternity past and of an eternity to come. Yet there are not two eternities. But we so speak, because we are at a loss for words. We go back, back, back, until our minds tire; but we come not to any point where eternity began. We go on, on, on, until we can go no further, and yet there is no end.

A teacher in a blind school once gave this sum to one of the boys. He was to work it out in his mind. "A pile of sand is ten feet high, ten feet wide, and seventy feet long. Each square solid inch contains ten thousand grains. (1 inch = 2.54 cm; 1 foot = 30.48 cm). A bird comes every thousand years and takes away one grain at a time. How long would it take to carry away all the sand?" The boy soon gave the answer, which was, that it would take 120,960,000,000,000 years. What a long row of figures! It means one hundred and twenty trillions, and nine hundred and sixty billions. Now put all the sand on the seashore into one heap, and let a bird take away one grain every thousand years till all is gone, and yet that would not be the end of eternity. Eternity has no end.

Some of the ancients tried to give some idea of eternity by drawing a circle. A circle has no end. In that it is like eternity, but in no other respect. We can measure all circles, but we cannot measure eternity. None but God knows what it is.

Men's bodies may die, but shall live again. Their souls live on, and on, and on, for ever. Nor do angels ever cease to live. All angels and all men shall live as long as God lives.

Time is very short. It is like a narrow strip of land. On one side is the sea; and on the other side is the sea. It lies between an eternity past and an eternity to come.

"Lo! on a narrow neck of land,
"Twixt two unbounded seas I stand,
Yet how insensible!
A point of time, a moment's space,
Removes me to yon heavenly place,
Or shuts me up in hell."

Time will soon all be gone. It is like a cloud or a vapour that vanishes away. It is a little moment. It is like a weaver's shuttle. It flies so fast you cannot see it. It is like a man riding past. It stops for nobody. Time will soon all be gone, and gone for ever. A mighty angel will stand upon the land and the sea, and lift his hand to heaven, and declare that time shall be no more. Yet, long before he shall do so, time to you and to me will be no more. Death is the end of time to men. You need not *kill* time, as people foolishly speak. It will soon be gone without such folly. Some sleep too much, some play too much, some spend their days in trifles. O what folly!

If man is to live for ever, how much is his soul worth? Who can tell? Man cannot. Angels cannot. None but God knows the worth of a soul. It is worth more than all the houses, and lands, and gold, and silver on earth. Yet how little do some think of their souls!

Those who live in sin and laugh at holy things will not laugh long. All agree that it is a solemn thing to die; but it is also a solemn thing to live. Oh, that our dear young people would think of these things, and lay them to heart!

Selected

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

THE DOCTRINE OF TRUTH

My dear young friends, as the Lord may help us, I want to look at some of the precious doctrines that we believe; as Luke the beloved physician said: "... a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us" (Luke 1. 1). I understand that Martin Luther, the great German reformer, sometimes said: "Doctrine is heaven." I agree with Martin Luther. Any doctrine that we teach or hold to must be from the Word of God. It is, of course, essential that we have a personal experience of the doctrine of truth in our hearts. It is a very solemn thing to know all about faith in an intellectual way and yet not possess it. You have probably heard some of

our ministers speak about making a profession of faith without the possession of faith; this is what they mean. The Word of God instructs us: "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10. 10). The head is the seat of our intellect, the heart is the seat of our affections. The Holy Spirit dwells in the hearts of true believers, directing and affecting their minds, affections and desires. Does the Holy Spirit dwell in our hearts? If He does not, we are not true Christians. We have clear instruction in the Holy Scriptures of truth: "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, (the Holy Spirit) he is none of His" (Romans 8. 9); also, "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost (1 Corinthians 12. 3).

The Being of God

We will start with the foundation, 'God.' When God revealed Himself to man, after the fall of Adam, one of the names given is 'Jehovah.' In our Authorised Version of the Holy Scriptures, this name is translated 'LORD.' So, when we find the word 'LORD,' all in capital letters, in the original language it was 'Jehovah.' This name has a deep profound meaning: it gives us a little insight into the Being of God. Let us break it into three parts: JE – HO – VAH. JE – means all eternity to come, HO – means the present, VAH – means all eternity that is past. This glorious, incommunicable name reveals to us the eternity of God. It is called the incommunicable name because it cannot be given to any other than the eternal God. This name also refers to the self-existence of God.

In the New Testament this name is paraphrased and it gives us more light on its meaning. Notice in these following Scriptures the three tenses, past, present and future. "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us" (2 Corinthians 1. 10). "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever"

(Hebrews 13. 8). In the following Scripture it is the Lord Jesus Himself who is speaking to John on the Isle of Patmos: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (Revelation 1. 8). Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet. What God is, He is, infinitely so. Thus when it speaks of God's past, it is eternal, then of the future, it is eternal, and the present, he fills it. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy" (Isaiah 57. 15). This may be difficult to comprehend, but with God there is neither past, present or future. The Holy Spirit in Scripture uses these terms because of our limited comprehension of the eternal. God lives in one eternal NOW.

Theologians use a scriptural term concerning the Being of God: this is, 'omni.' This term prefixes other words: it means universal or complete. Let us look at the following scripture reference. "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God **omnipotent** reigneth" (Revelation 19. 6). The word 'potent' means power, so 'omnipotent' means complete, universal power. Look at the words of the Psalmist: "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God" (Psalm 62. 11). God has all knowledge, He knows all things. The word we use to express this is **omniscience**. Science means knowledge; God has a complete, universal knowledge. God is in all places at all times. The term we use for this is **omnipresent**, God has a complete, universal presence. In Psalm 139, the Holy Spirit gives David a little understanding of these truths. What God is, He is so infinitely. The word 'infinite' means without measure. In one sense, that is what these words express: infinite power, infinite knowledge, infinite presence.

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about DOCTORS AND NURSES. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor (see page 2 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. What was the name of the baby to whom Naomi became nurse? (Ruth 4. 16-17)
2. What word is usually used in the Bible that means a doctor? (Jeremiah 8. 22)
3. Which person became lame when his nurse fled with him and he fell? (2 Samuel 4. 4)
4. Which godly man likened himself to a "nursing father"? (Numbers 11. 12)
5. Who did Jesus say needed a doctor? (Mark 2. 17)
6. What proverb about doctors was used tauntingly against the Lord Jesus? (Luke 4)
7. Who said: "Take this child away and nurse it for me"? (Exodus 2)
8. In which verse does the Apostle Paul liken himself to a nurse? (1 Thessalonians 2)
9. Which of the four gospels was written by a doctor? (Colossians 4)
10. Genesis 24. 59 mentions Rebekah's nurse, but does not give her name. What was her name and where is it recorded?

ANSWERS TO DECEMBER QUESTIONS

1. Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.
2. Solomon.
3. Babel.
4. An enlightened understanding.
5. "Having the understanding darkened."
6. Ed. (Joshua 22. 34)
7. Moses. (Acts 7. 25)
8. The peace of God. (Philippians 4. 7)
9. "How can I, except some man should guide me?" (Acts 8. 31)
10. "The entrance of Thy words." (Psalm 119. 130)

Contributed

“THOU GOD SEEST ME” (GENESIS 16. 13.)

Three small boys in a country town
Passed a house where the blinds were down,
And over the wall, where a ladder stood,
A man was stripping the fruitful wood.

“Throw us an apple,” the children cried;
“There’s somebody *looking*,” the man replied.
“No,” said one, “there’s nobody here;
You can throw us an apple, and never fear.”

But the honest old man in the apple tree
Looked kindly down on those children three,
And, pointing solemnly overhead,
“There’s somebody *looking*,” again he said.

Fifty years have rolled away,
And one of these boys said yesterday,
He had all along his life been glad
Of the good man’s words to the thoughtless lad.

Comfort, as well as caution, grew:
“There’s somebody *looking*,” helped him through.
When the right was rough and the wrong was sweet,
“There’s somebody *looking*,” held his feet.

And *still*, as the fogs of sin and fear
Thicken his Christian atmosphere,
When Satan rages and foes molest,
“There’s somebody *looking*,” bids him rest.

So, speak to the children when you can, —
God often uses the words of man;
Who knows but *your* words may as fruitful be
As those of the man in the apple tree.

Mrs. M.A. Chaplin

The Friendly Companion



“Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee.”
(Psalm 60. 4)

February 2006

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All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Price 50 pence monthly, plus postage.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A.	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£10.00	\$42	A\$55	€27.00

All correspondence concerning subscriptions should be addressed to Mr. H. Mercer, 8 Fairleigh Rise, Kington Langley, Chippenham, Wilts. SN15 5QF.

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

It was a cruel custom in Bible days, whereby a victorious nation would take into captivity as slaves, young people as young as nine or ten, to serve masters and mistresses far away from their native land. We read of one such little girl who had been captured by the Syrians and taken from her home in Israel to serve the wife of Naaman, the chief of the Syrian army. How homesick this little girl must have felt and how different from the worship of the one and true God to which she had been accustomed, was that of the false god, Rimmon, which in all probability her owners worshipped.

Yet the faith and example of this little girl stands out on the page of Scripture as an example to us all.

Firstly, although she must have felt very sad at being deprived of her parents and the comforts of her own home, yet we do not read of any resentment or rebellion. It appears that she served her new mistress well, without bitterness.

Secondly, although now in a heathen home, she did not abandon the worship of the true God, and was not ashamed to mention it openly to her mistress.

Thirdly, she had a simple faith in the God of Israel. She knew what great things had been done by God through His servant, Elisha, and she fully believed that help would be forthcoming for her heathen master in his leprosy, if only he could see the prophet. She had a great view of the power and compassion of the God of Israel to the needy.

Finally, what an example of Christian charity this little maid showed. She desired that her master, even though she must have felt grieved at being in captivity to him, should be healed.

“Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

When God puts us at any post we need fear nothing.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The flag shown on the front cover of our magazine this month is, of course, that of the United States of America. For obvious reasons it is often called the 'Stars and Stripes'. Another popular name for it is 'Old Glory.'

This particular flag is unique in that it is on the tallest flagpole, and is the largest in the U.S.A. It is 7,200 square feet (668.88 square metres), and the pole is 338 feet high (103.02 metres). Each star is 4 feet high (1.22 metres), and each stripe is 4½ feet wide (1.37 metres). It weighs 300 pounds (136.08 kilos), and is to be found at Sheboygan, Wisconsin, where, of course, we have a church and minister, our friend Mr. G. TenBroeke. The Americans are very proud of their flag, and are much more conscious of it than we are of our own 'Union Jack' in this country. A sense of nationhood keeps a country together in many ways, something which we have very sadly lost in a great measure in this land.

It was not always so. Many of our fellow-countrymen, who were detained as prisoners of war in the two great wars of the last century, have related how moving it was on the day of their freedom, to come once more under the 'Union Jack.'

However proud each nation might be of its national flag, we must never forget that there is a banner, or flag, which in the eyes of God flies higher than any other, to which all of His people owe their first allegiance.

This banner is the Truth. Three verses in the Bible, in particular, speak of it.

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the Truth" (Psalm 60. 4).

"We will rejoice in Thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions" (Psalm 20. 5).

"When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him" (Isaiah 59. 19).

All other flags, banners and standards will fade with the nations that glory in them, but the banner of Truth is the

standard of an everlasting kingdom. This is the only banner that will be hoisted on the great Day of Judgment. Will it be to our eternal safety or our everlasting misery?

“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (2 Timothy 2. 19).

EVOLUTION CONFOUNDED BY THE BIBLE

Evolution Teaches	The Bible Teaches
that man has come from the sea	from the dust of the ground
early man had a short life; about 40 years	long life; about 900 years
early man was not very intelligent	early men: inventors, farmers, metal workers and musicians
everything began simple and became complex	everything began complex
new kinds of creatures emerge over time	only variants of the original kinds occur
it took over 13 billions of years to get life from the big bang	6 days
all creatures related to each other and to man	man not derived from creatures
Earth is about 4.5 billion years old	Earth is about 6,000 years old
people originally emerged out of Africa	they came out of Middle East (after the Flood)
cultivation of crops took a million years	the first generation practised cultivation
iron and bronze discovery took millions of years	iron and bronze by the 8th generation
man is a product of evolution, lasting no longer than his body does	man has a soul that will live for ever and is accountable to God, his Creator.

Adapted

*FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES***THE CAPTAIN**

The people of Israel had crossed the River Jordan into Canaan, the land of promise. Their great leader Moses had died and Joshua was the new leader. The LORD had told him: *"Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid."* Yet there were many strong enemies to drive out of the land.

Joshua was by Jericho, the first city they must fight against. As he looked up, he saw a Man *"with His sword drawn in His hand."* Was He a friend or an enemy? The Man said: *"... as Captain of the host of the LORD am I now come."* Joshua fell on his face and worshipped. He knew the LORD was in control of all things, and He would fight the battles for them. At the word of this Captain, he took off his shoes, for it was a holy place.

There are many strong enemies in this world, but the Lord Jesus is still in control. He has obtained the victory over sin and death for His people. He is called the *"Captain of their salvation."*

QUESTION:

1. Who was the new leader after Moses?
2. What did the Man tell Joshua He had come as? (one word)
3. What has the Lord Jesus obtained the victory over?

Contributed

Send your answers to the Editor (see page 26 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

ANSWERS TO JANUARY QUESTIONS

1. Hezekiah.
2. The first day.
3. The kingdom of God.

*“The LORD
your God
He shall
fight
for you.”*

*Deuteronomy
3. 22.*

BIBLE LESSONS**THE FIRST MIRACLE OF JESUS**

A few days after the first disciples began to follow Jesus, a marriage feast was held in Cana. Cana was a village in Galilee, not far from His home in Nazareth.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, was invited to the marriage, along with Jesus and His disciples. Perhaps it was a relative or close friend of His family, who was being married.

What a wonderful thing that Jesus honoured the institution of marriage in one of His first public acts.

As the marriage feast continued, they soon ran out of wine. Perhaps the family was poor and unable to supply for all the guests. This would have brought shame upon the family. When Mary saw that the wine was gone, she was concerned lest the family should be disgraced. She knew that Jesus had power to help those in need. She said to Him: *"They have no wine."*

Jesus answered her: *"Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come."* Perhaps by these reproving words to His mother, He would instruct her that it was not her bidding He must be concerned about but that of His Father in heaven.

Even though reproved by His words, Mary believed that He would help the family in this time of need. She said to the servants: *"Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."*

Because the Jews were very strict about cleanliness in every home, there were waterpots, so they could wash their hands and feet when entering the house. Jesus told the servants to fill the six waterpots with water. Carnal reason would have said that it was no use to bother with water, since it was wine that was needed. Nevertheless, the servants obeyed and filled the six waterpots to the brim. What an important lesson to learn: to obey every commandment of the Lord Jesus.

Next, Jesus told them to fill their wine pitchers from the waterpots, and bring them to the governor of the feast. The governor was the ruler over the feast. It was his duty to taste the food and wine before it was presented to the guests.

The governor did not know what Jesus had done. When he tasted the wine which Jesus had made from water, he was surprised because it tasted so much better than the wine that had been first served. He told the bridegroom that at other feasts the best wine was served first, but he had saved the best until last.

This was the first time that Jesus used His power to do what no other man could do. Such works were called "miracles." By them He showed how willing He was to help people in time of need. Also it showed His disciples that He was God, for no man could turn water into wine.

You can read about this in John chapter 2 verses 1 to 11.

QUESTIONS:

1. What was Jesus invited to?
2. What did they run out of?
3. What did Mary tell the servants? (7 words)
4. What did Jesus turn the water into?
5. What were such works called?

G. L. TenBroeke

Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on page 26). Please mark the envelope: ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.

ANSWERS TO JANUARY QUESTIONS

1. The Lamb of God.
2. Andrew.
3. Simon Peter (his brother).
4. Follow me.
5. Nathanael.

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from: NICOLAS BURTON, KATIE PLAYFOOT, JESSICA RAYMOND, SUSANNA RISBRIDGER, MATTHEW STEARN, EDWARD STEVENS, CORDELIA, GAD, FRANCESCA, JEMIMA AND KITTY WILTSHIRE, EVANGELINE VAN OORT.

“HE WHO OUR LIVES IN MERCY SPARED”*(Concluded)*

A few days later, on Sunday afternoon, Mr. Lamain is preaching in Gravenpolder. It is still so dark in his heart. This morning, after the service, he told the elder, Mr. Hoekman, something of the trouble in which he was involved. They prayed together, but the anxiety is not lifted.

Perhaps this is the last time that he will preach here!

At the opening of the service he lets the congregation sing the first verse of Psalm 54:

“O God redeem me from my thrall
And save my life for Thy name’s sake
Do Thou my judgment undertake
Oh, be Thine arm my might, my all.”

For this service, the subject for meditation is based upon the tenth Sunday in the Heidelberg Catechism, and while the minister is reading out those words: “... Since all creatures are so in His hand that without His will they cannot so much as turn ...” the burden falls from his heart. He has been looking at the circumstances and at men. But the Lord reigns! All creatures, including the German officers with whom he must meet on Monday, cannot do nor undo what they themselves desire. Oh, Mr. Lamain knows those words so well; he has read them so often, but now the Holy Spirit grants faith in his heart as well. Oh, he could shout for joy. What can man do unto me?

The congregation notice that the minister has had something special. He was so low and sad at the start of the service, and now he is magnifying God!

A little smile lights up the face of elder Hoekman. Yes, when the Lord appears who would not skip for joy? Then all the trouble and anguish must flee away.

After the service, as they walk home, Hoekman asks: “Mr. Lamain, did I rightly observe that your burden was lifted when you read those words: “Since all creatures are so in His

hand...”? “Yes, my good man, that was so indeed,” replies the minister, much moved. “Precisely at that moment it was light in my soul.” “What a wonder,” says the elder, “what a wonder. I don’t mind telling you that I have been sighing continually that the Lord would appear, that He would break your bonds and bands. And now the Lord has been pleased to hear my stammering prayer!”

Monday afternoon at three o’clock precisely, Mr. Lamain stands at the door of the head office of the German police in the Haagseveer. The door is opened roughly. The porter snarls that he must go to the top floor and the front door slams shut behind him. There he stands then. Accompanied by two armed soldiers he goes upstairs. “Lord,” he pleads, “wilt thou show that it was Thy word – that creatures can neither stir nor move without thy consent?”

He is brought into a large room. Behind an imposing desk sits the judge. Beside him stands an officer. Both men look at him aggressively.

“Stand there!” is the curt command. Mr. Lamain stands in front of the huge desk. The two soldiers stand guard at the door. “Now tell us, where is that sermon that you preached last Sunday?”

“I do not have it, sir,” replies Mr. Lamain. “I never write my sermons – I have only a few lines on notepaper, nothing more.”

“No problem,” growls the officer in triumph. “Look what we have here!”

From the drawer of the immense desk comes a stencilled sermon.

“So it was true ...” is the minister’s fleeting thought, “... so Jaap was right indeed.”

“Here we have the precise words which you spoke on Sunday morning,” persists the threatening voice. The officer reads a few sentences and snaps: “Now, what is your response? Did you say this?”

"Yes," the minister cannot deny it.

"Do you realise that our Fuhrer has command over your little land? How dare you speak so insultingly about him?" All sorts of questions are fired at the accused.

The judge leans forward a little and adds: "And remember that for me it is quite simple to send you to a work-camp or even to a concentration camp."

A shudder runs down the pastor's back. But at the same moment he sees, as it were, how the Lord Jesus once stood before Pilate and Pilate asked Him: "Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee?" To which the Lord Jesus had answered: "Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above." A wondrous calm fills his heart. He knows that at this moment prayer is being made for him at home and among the congregation. He straightens his back and speaks with great liberty: "You think you can do as you like with me, but you can only do that which the Lord permits. He is the Judge of heaven and earth. Without His will we can neither stir nor move. You, too, must one day give an account before this heavenly Judge!"

For a while there is a deathly hush in the room. The tension is palpable. Suddenly, the man behind the desk shuts his file with a clap. Without looking up or glancing around, he leaves the room. The officer, who at first had looked at the minister so contemptuously, lowers his eyes. Again, there is silence.

Then, with a hesitant voice: "We shall be proceeding no further. I advise you, however, to be more careful with your expressions. So far as I am concerned, you may leave."

Mr. Lamain looks around him, speechless. Is this really happening?

"You may go," repeats the officer.

The soldiers open the door and bring the minister to the front door. Full of amazement, he is soon walking through the

streets of Rotterdam. He is free! He can go home again! Tears trickle down his cheeks as he sings in his heart:

“Praise, praise the God of hosts, the Lord
Oh people lift your song on high
He who our lives in mercy spared
In danger’s path was ever nigh.”

Translated from the Dutch by M. Banfield

THE DESIRABILITY OF KEEPING TO THE AUTHORISED VERSION OF THE BIBLE

Written by J. C. Philpot in 1857 when the Revised Version was contemplated. There have been many translations since that date but the dangers outlined by Philpot are just as real.

We take this opportunity to express our opinion upon a question much agitated of late – whether it would be desirable to have a new (or at least a revised) translation of the Scriptures. We fully admit that there are here and there passages of which the translation might be improved, as, for instance, “love” for “charity” all through 1 Corinthians 13; but we deprecate any alteration as a measure that, for the smallest sprinkling of good, would deluge us with a flood of evil. The following are our reasons:

1. *Who are to undertake it?* Into whose hands would the revision fall? What an opportunity for the enemies of truth to give us a mutilated, false Bible! Of course, they must be learned men, great critics, scholars and divines. But often these are notorious men, deeply tainted with either *popery* or *infidelity*. Where are there learned men sound in the truth, not to say alive unto God, who possess the necessary qualifications for so important a work? And can erroneous men, men dead in trespasses and sins, carnal, worldly, ungodly persons, spiritually translate a Book written by the blessed Spirit? We have not the slightest ground for hope that they would be godly men, such as we have reason to believe translated the Scriptures into our present version.

2. Again, *it would unsettle the minds of thousands* as to which was the Word of God, the old translation or the new. What a door it would open for the workings of infidelity, or the temptations of Satan! What a gloom, too, it would cast over the minds of many of God's saints, to have those passages which had been applied to their souls translated in a different way, and how it would seem to shake all their experience of the power and preciousness of God's Word!

3. But besides this, *there would be two Bibles spread through the land*, the old and the new, and what confusion would this create in almost every place! At present, all sects and denominations agree in acknowledging our present version as the standard of appeal. Nothing settles disputes so soon as when the contending parties have confidence in the same umpire and are willing to abide by his decision. But this judge of all disputes, this umpire of all controversy, would cease to be an end of strife, if the present acknowledged authority were put an end to by a rival.

4. Again, *if the revision and re-translation were once to begin, where would it end?* It is good to let well alone, as it is easier to mar than mend. Some would blot out "God" in 1 Timothy 3. 16, and strike out 1 John 5. 7, 8, as an interpolation. Another would mend it to suit high church views. He would read "priest" where we now read "elder," and put "penance" in the place of "repentance." Once set up a notice, "The old Bible to be mended," and there would be plenty of workmen, who, trying to mend the cover, would pull the pages to pieces. The Arminian would soften down the words "election" and "predestination" into some term less displeasing to Pharisaic ears. "Righteousness" would be turned into "justice," and "reprobate" into "undiscerning." All our good Bible terms would be so mutilated that they would cease to convey the Spirit's meaning, and instead of the noble simplicity, faithfulness, and truth of our present version, we should have a Bible that nobody would accept as the Word of

God, to which none could safely appeal, and on which none could implicitly rely.

5. Instead of our good old Saxon Bible, simple and solid, with few words really obsolete, and alike majestic and beautiful, *we should have a modern English translation in the pert and flippant language of the day*. Besides the authority as the Word of God, our present version is the great English classic – generally accepted as the standard of the English language. The great classics of a language cannot be modernised. What an outcry there would be against modernising Shakespeare, or making Hooker, Bacon, or Milton talk the English of the newspapers or of the House of Commons!

6. *The present English Bible has been blessed to thousands of the saints of God*; and not only so, it has become part of our national inheritance which we have received unimpaired from our fathers, and are bound to hand down unimpaired to our children. It is, we believe, the grand bulwark of Protestantism, the safeguard of the gospel, and the treasure of the church; and we should be traitors in every sense of the word if we consented to give it up to be rifled by the sacrilegious hands of infidel divines, the whole tribe of the enemies of God and godliness.

Abridged

AN APPOINTMENT WITH GOD

Arguably Southern England's mightiest tempest struck just after midnight on November 26, 1703. The builder of the first Eddystone lighthouse, Henry Winstanley, was in the building and had boasted it could survive the greatest storm the Lord could throw at it. Soon after, not a stanchion remained. Daniel Defoe, looking out from London at dawn, said he could not believe a hundredth part of what he saw. The storm inspired him to write Robinson Crusoe. At least 400 windmills were blown down and 8,000 to 15,000 people perished, many at sea – including Winstanley.

Ian Currie

THE OLD BLACK BULL

Many years ago, a church near Colchester in Essex became the unhappy scene of many divisions amongst its members. So much so, it seemed that whatever course was taken, peace could not be restored. It was resolved at length to seek the aid of a local minister, Mr. Bulkely, whose wisdom and prudent advice was esteemed by all.

One of the members was deputed to go to Mr. Bulkely with a request that when he had considered the matter he would communicate with them in writing.

After a little while and much prayerful consideration, the minister put his advice on paper and put the envelope ready to send. It so happened that he was also the owner of a farm in the country, which he had entrusted to a tenant, to whom he also had to write detailing some of the work he wanted doing on the farm.

In writing the envelopes, Mr. Bulkely inadvertently addressed the one he wished to go to his tenant, to the church, and sent it off.

Having received the letter, the church gathered together to hear what wisdom the minister had for their case. The deacon read out the following advice: "You will see to the repair of the fences that they be built high and strong, and you will take special care of the old black bull."

This strange advice puzzled the church at first, but soon one of the more discerning members became the interpreter: "Brethren," he said, "this is the very advice we most need. The direction to mend our fences is to warn us to take good heed to the government of our members; we must guard the church by our Master's laws and keep out strange cattle from the fold; and we must in a particular manner set a watchful guard over the devil, the old 'black bull' who has done so much hurt of late."

All realised the wisdom and suitability of this advice and resolved to be governed by it. The consequence was that

peace and harmony was restored to the church after many months of bitterness.

What the tenant made of his letter, we do not know!

Selected F.C. 1893

**“I WILL LIFT UP MINE EYES UNTO THE HILLS FROM
WHENCE COMETH MY HELP” (PSALM 121)**

7. The Sermon on the Mount (I)

The next significant mountain mentioned in the Scriptures is that on which the Lord Jesus preached what is known as “the sermon on the mount.” The account is in Matthew 5 to 7, and is one of the earliest records of His ministry. He had previously taught in the synagogues in Galilee, and healed many sick. Now multitudes followed Him, and “seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain.” We are not told which mountain this was, but it seems to be in Galilee. What gracious words He spoke! What help and comfort is here for the Lord’s people!

We read the Lord Jesus spoke similar truths in Luke 6, but this appears to be a different occasion. Luke 6. 17 says: “He stood in the plain,” and it is clear that the healing of the sick of the palsy (Matthew 9 and Luke 5) was after the sermon on the mount, but before the sermon on the plain.

Let us notice first, that although the multitude heard Him, Jesus is actually teaching His disciples (Matthew 5. 1-2). The words spoken are full of natural truth, but how few see the spiritual teaching here! This reminds us of when the disciples asked Jesus concerning the parable of the sower. Jesus said: “Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand” (Luke 8. 10). The Apostle Paul explains: “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2. 14). May we be given spiritual eyes to “behold wondrous things out of Thy Law.”

There is a great deep here in the sermon on the mount; countless sermons could be preached and books written concerning its blessed truths. We hope in this article to draw out briefly a few things of help to the Lord's people and commend Matthew 5 to 7 to your prayerful meditation. Notice that throughout this sermon, Jesus "takes forth the precious from the vile," clearly distinguishing between those who are His and those who are not.

The sermon begins with the Beatitudes, where the Lord Jesus pronounces blessing on His people. Are we described here? Are we poor in spirit? Do we mourn, especially over our sins? Do we hunger and thirst after righteousness? Are we persecuted and spoken against for righteousness' sake? The Lord Jesus says that blessings are theirs, though they may not feel it now: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." May we be enabled to seek earnestly for the Spirit's witness within that we are among these poor, mourning, hungering and thirsting ones, and for Him to reveal the blessings that are theirs, for "happy is that people, that is in such a case."

The Lord Jesus then went on to speak of righteousness. He explains that the righteousness of God does not come from the law. "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." They thought that righteousness was in that they kept the law, but we need a better righteousness than that if we are to get to heaven. Jesus shows that the law is spiritual, and the transgression of the law is not only by the outward actions of the body but also of the thoughts and intents of the heart. For example: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." The Lord's people are taught that they are guilty in every point, however upright they are kept outwardly. May we be brought to pray with the Psalmist: "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults." How then does a sinner

become righteous? The Lord Jesus goes on to speak of love. The Apostle Paul tells us that “love is the fulfilling of the law” (Romans 13. 10). This is supremely so in Christ Jesus, who loved His people from all eternity, when they were yet enemies and loved Him not. He fulfilled the law on their behalf in His life and in His death. He gave not only His eye and His hand for them, but Himself for love’s sake. “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” Here is help for the needy, unrighteous sinner, feeling condemned under the holy law of God! “Turn thy eyes another way to Jesus and His blood.”

(To be continued)

Contributed

POLISHED BOOTS

“I was in Egypt some years ago,” wrote J. Stuart Holden, “and held some services for the soldiers. One evening I had a conversation with a sergeant in a Highland regiment. He was just as bright and shining for the Lord as it is possible for a saved soldier to be. I asked him: ‘How were you brought to Christ?’ This is his story:

“There is a private in the same company who had been converted in Malta before the regiment continued on to Egypt. We gave that fellow an awful time. The devil had a willing accomplice in me, and I made that man’s life a terrible burden for him. Of course, I did not realise then, as I know now, that I was in the devil’s service as I persecuted that poor man. One wet and rainy night, he came in from his turn at sentry duty. He was very tired and very wet, but before getting into bed he got on his knees to pray. My boots were heavy with mud, and I hit him on one side of the head with my left boot, and on the other side of his head with the right one, but he simply continued with his prayers. The next morning I found my boots beautifully cleaned and polished by my bedside! This was his reply to me, and it broke my hard heart. That day I was brought to repentance.”

Instead of becoming angry, this meek soldier had responded with compassion to his persecutor, and in so doing, won him to Christ. He had learned to recognize an opportunity to be Christ-like to his enemy. This is godly living: looking for opportunities not to hurt, but to love our neighbours. What do you think might have happened, had this soldier responded with angry words? What might have happened if this young private had thrown back those dirty boots? There would certainly have been trouble. Solomon said: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Proverbs 16. 32). Often our actions speak louder than our words. Sometimes we may not have the opportunity to speak, but rather to keep silent, and to act in love. Jesus said: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matthew 5. 38, 39).

Selected

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES
THE DOCTRINE OF TRUTH

The Trinity

Another deep message concerning God, is the doctrine of the Trinity, which means tri – unity. Three divine Persons, ONE blessed God. In the first chapter of Genesis, when God was to create man and place him in the garden of Eden, we read: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1. 26). Notice: "And God" in the singular, then: "Let us" in the plural. This is the first scripture reference to the plurality of persons in the Godhead.

Again, when man built the tower of Babel we read: "And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, **let us** go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech" (Genesis 11. 6-7).

Again, in that beautiful Messianic Psalm 110, David speaks prophetically concerning the ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven: "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool" (Psalm 110. 1). This is the eternal Father speaking of His eternal, incarnate Son.

The Lord Jesus speaks to us through the prophet Isaiah concerning His becoming Man and thereby is revealed this sacred doctrine of the Trinity: "Come ye near unto Me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: **and now the Lord God, and His Spirit, hath sent Me**" (Isaiah 48. 16). "Lord God," the Father, "His Spirit," the Holy Ghost, "Me," the Son of God. Yet the Scriptures clearly maintain that there is only one God. "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD" (Deuteronomy 6. 4).

We have a much clearer revelation of this sacred doctrine in the New Testament, when the Lord Jesus Christ was to be baptized in the river Jordan, by John the Baptist. "And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered Him. And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3. 15-17). Carefully re-read this passage, and you will notice Jesus, the incarnate '**Son of God,**' the '**Holy Spirit,**' in the form of a dove, and the '**Eternal Father,**' speaking from heaven.

The Lord Jesus, when He commissioned His disciples to go forth and preach the gospel, declared: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in **the name** of the **Father**, and of the **Son**, and of the **Holy Ghost**" (Matthew 28. 19). What I will point out here is, 'the name.' We never read 'the names,' in the plural. This maintains the sacred truth of One God.

Listen to the prophet: "Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? **And there is no God else beside Me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside Me.** Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: **for I am God, and there is none else**" (Isaiah 45. 21-22).

Again, in the benediction: "The grace of the **Lord Jesus Christ**, and the love of **God**, and the communion of the **Holy Ghost**, be with you all. Amen (2 Corinthians 13. 14). In Colossians we read: "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of **God**, and of the **Father**, and of **Christ**; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2. 2-3). Notice in this reference that the Holy Spirit is put first. This is to show us that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are co-equal and co-eternal.

Finally we read: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one" (1 John 5. 7).

J.R. Rutt

We are like William of Orange, with a few followers and an empty purse, making war against the master of half the world, with the mines of Peru for a treasury. But like William, too, when questioned concerning our resources, we can reply: "Before we took up this cause we entered into a close alliance with the King of kings."

David Gracey

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about BUILDING. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 5 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor (see page

26 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. Every building needs a good foundation. What kind of ground would provide a good foundation? (Luke 6. 48)
2. What foundation did the Apostle Paul lay in his preaching? (1 Corinthians 3. 10, 11)
3. What safety feature did God command the children of Israel to build in a new house? (Deuteronomy 22. 8)
4. Which two kinds of wood (timber) were used in the building of the temple by Solomon? (1 Kings 5. 10)
5. Complete the verse: "Except the LORD build the house ..." (Psalm 127)
6. How long did it take to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, despite all the opposition against it? (Nehemiah 6)
7. Which famous city described by its king as built "by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty," was afterwards destroyed, never to be rebuilt again? (Daniel 4, Isaiah 13)
8. Why was King David not permitted to build a "house unto the Lord"? (1 Chronicles 22)
9. Where in the Bible do we first read of bricks being used for building?
10. When Joshua destroyed Jericho, he pronounced a curse upon any that should rebuild it. (Joshua 6. 26). In which king's reign was Jericho rebuilt?

ANSWERS TO JANUARY QUESTIONS

1. Obed.
2. Physician.
3. Mephibosheth.
4. Moses.
5. They that are sick.
6. "Physician, heal Thyself." (Luke 4. 23)
7. Pharaoh's daughter. (Exodus 2. 9)
8. "But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children." (1 Thessalonians 2. 7)
9. Luke. (Colossians 4. 14)
10. Deborah. (Genesis 35. 8)

Contributed

"WITHOUT ME YE CAN DO NOTHING"

"A man can receive nothing, (margin: 'take unto himself nothing') except it be given him from heaven" (John 3. 27).

"Believe and have salvation," I heard Arminius say,
"Accept Christ as your Saviour! Decide while 'tis today!"
A burdened sinner listened, and in his grief he sighed;
He knew *he* could not do it, however much he tried.

Go tell the shipwrecked sailor, when sinking 'neath the wave –
"You need in no-wise perish, for you yourself can save;
Just swim to yonder lighthouse and climb on to the rock,
The door will soon be opened, if you will only knock."

'Tis those who know no shipwreck, who preach such words as
these,
Who always have fine weather, and sail before the breeze,
The tempest-tossed, the sinking, like Peter was of yore,
Need some strong arm thrown round them to bring them safe
to shore.

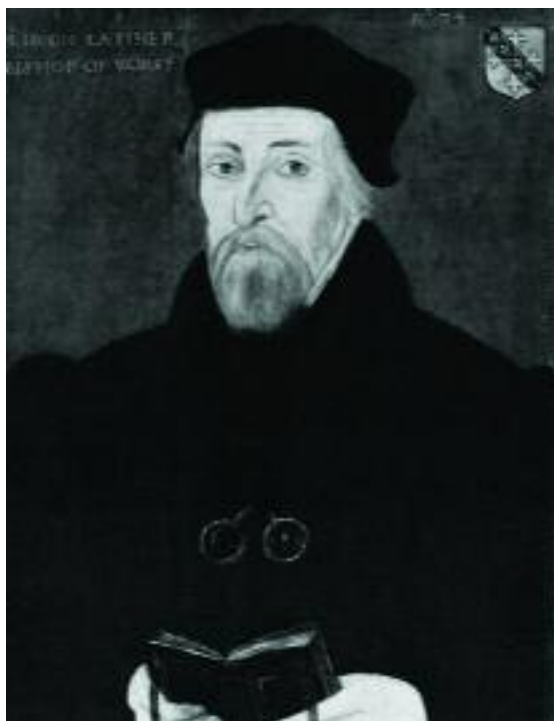
Can dead men set off walking without their having breath?
'Tis not one whit more easy for *souls* to shake off death;
For He who spoke to Lazarus, commanding him: "Come forth!"
Must speak to each dead sinner before there is "new birth."

If faith *procures* salvation, and sinners bring forth faith,
A work this of the creature – "'Tis not of works," Paul saith;
"No! 'tis the Holy Spirit convicts the soul of sin,
And *at the time appointed* brings peace and pardon in."

Some may be long in bondage, and sigh for their release,
They want to *feel* that Jesus hath brought to them His peace;
To see Him walk the billows, and hear His word: "Be still!"
To quiet all their doubtings, their hearts with joy to fill.

Selected

The Friendly Companion



“I will speak of Thy testimonies also before kings,
and will not be ashamed.”
(Psalm 119.46)

March 2006

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All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Price 50 pence monthly, plus postage.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A.	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£10.00	\$42	A\$55	€27.00

All correspondence concerning subscriptions should be addressed to Mr. H. Mercer, 8 Fairleigh Rise, Kington Langley, Chippenham, Wilts. SN15 5QF.

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

When the Second World War ended, the soldiers who had survived the horrors of that conflict came back to their homes, families and jobs. It was a time of settling in again, and there was much work to be done to start up the routine of life once more. In one of our Kent chapels, the pastor was so pleased to see his young men back in the chapel on the Lord's Day, but he noticed that the attendance at the prayer meeting was very poor in the week. The men were so busy that they said they had no time left to do anything else than try and catch up with the affairs that had been neglected during the war. Time and time again the pastor spoke about the poor attendance at the weeknight meetings. But all to no avail. He was so despondent.

Then the pastor was suddenly taken very ill and for several weeks was unable to preach. Overnight the scene changed. Now the pews were filled for the prayer meetings as the church wrestled for the recovery of their dear pastor. Eventually he recovered and how glad they were to see him back.

Seizing his opportunity, the pastor made the following remark: "It seems to me that an empty pulpit can sometimes preach a more eloquent sermon than an occupied one!"

What does this true incident teach us?

Firstly, the Lord will not have us take for granted the gift of a pastor or minister.

Secondly, if the voice of the Lord through His servants is despised or ignored, God does take notice of it and reproves.

Thirdly, we should always seek God's help to put Him first. "Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed."

Finally, how wonderful is God's gift of prayer. What answers it has wrought when the Holy Spirit teaches and helps in prayer.

May the Lord help us to lay these things to heart.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The man shown on our front cover for March is Hugh Latimer, the reformer and martyr. He was given exceptional courage by God to defend the gospel in the days of severe persecution. Eventually he was burned at the stake in Oxford with his fellow-martyr, Nicolas Ridley. He is reputed to have said as the fire was being lit: "Play the man, Master Ridley, for today we shall light such a candle in England as shall never be put out."

During the reign of Henry VIII, for a time Latimer was chaplain to the king. One day, as Latimer was about to start his sermon, the king cried out: "Latimer, Latimer, thou art going to speak before the high and mighty Henry VIII, who is able to take thy life away. Be careful what thou sayest. But Latimer, Latimer, remember also thou art about to speak before the King of kings and Lord of lords. Take heed that thou dost not displease Him."

Once, for a New Year's gift, Latimer presented the king with a New Testament with the leaves folded and turned down at Hebrews 13. 4: "Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." He was the only man who would stand up to the tyrant, Henry VIII. We owe the freedom of worship we enjoy today to such men as these, and it is a freedom that we should jealously guard and use, whilst we have it. Sadly, there are those abroad in our day who would take this precious heritage from us.

THE WRITING ON THE WALL

When going through my University course, I lodged some time at a boarding house outside the college precincts. My bedroom was a good-sized and very comfortable room, with walls covered with bright-coloured and flowery-patterned paper. I knew the pattern well from constantly observing it, and I especially noticed in it some small circular scrolls, which occurred at regular intervals. One of the scrolls was particularly noticeable, because it was situated close to the spot where I usually sat reading, and several times, as I looked at it,

I thought it slightly differed from the others, but some months elapsed before I discovered what the difference was.

Looking at it one day, during an interval in my reading, I suddenly thought that I saw some resemblance to writing in it. Was the thought correct? Yes: a close examination revealed the fact that there was some writing there, but it was so small, and so incorporated with the lines of the scroll, that it was almost illegible. A little effort, however, made it out, and soon I could distinctly see these words:

“SEPARATE YOURSELF FROM THAT WHICH
SEPARATES YOU FROM YOUR GOD.”

Who wrote them I never found out. One thing was clear, namely, they had not been recently written there; they had been there for a long time. I knew that the house had changed hands just before I went there, and hence I could not find out who occupied the room before me. But what an important statement they expressed! “Separate yourself from that which separates you from your God.” Was this a message from some unknown friend to me? I regarded it as such. How often since have I thought of this message! Would that I had always obeyed it! The child of God has many privileges: one is that, by the Holy Spirit’s aid, he may live very near to his Father, experiencing the sunshine of His countenance, and rejoicing in the realisation of His love. But how many things are apt to intervene: the world with its engagements and cares – the flesh with its temptations and snares – how often they come – like the clouds which hide the sun, and cast gloom upon the earth.

It is not always sin – something which is clearly unlawful – which thus separates, but something which, though perfectly lawful in itself, engrosses the heart too much. An old divine in one of his letters says: “Satan often harasses the child of God about things which are perfectly legitimate, and tries to make them a source of temptation, weakness and peril to him.” “Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.”

D.A. Doudney, Jnr.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**CITY OF REFUGE**

The Law of God to Israel commanded that if a man killed or murdered another person, he must be put to death. The nearest relative of the slain person was to avenge his blood. But what if he had not killed on purpose, but it was an error? Six cities in the land of Israel were chosen as cities of refuge: *“That the slayer might flee thither, which should kill his neighbour unawares, and bated him not in times past; and that fleeing unto one of these cities he might live.”* How fast he would run! Perhaps the pursuer was close behind him.

As soon as the slayer entered the city of refuge, he was safe. The congregation would judge between the slayer and the avenger of blood. If he had killed without intending to, he might live safely inside the city of refuge. Only after the death of the high priest could he return to his own home in peace.

The Lord Jesus is a refuge for sinners. Those who flee to Him for safety shall find mercy through His blood.

QUESTIONS:

1. Where must the slayer enter to be safe?
2. After whose death could he return home in peace?
3. For whom is the Lord Jesus a refuge?

Contributed

Send your answers to the Editor (see page 50 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY QUESTIONS

1. Joshua.
2. Captain.
3. Sin and death

*“The LORD
also will be
a refuge
for the
oppressed.”
Psalm 9. 9.*

BIBLE LESSONS**THE ZEAL OF JESUS IN THE TEMPLE**

Do you remember the name of the feast that Jesus and His parents went to when He was twelve years old? It was the Passover feast. Many years later, the time for this yearly feast had come. From every part of the country people made their way to Jerusalem. In one of these groups, Jesus, His mother, and His followers were journeying together. A follower of Jesus was called a disciple, which means “a learner.” The disciples followed Jesus from place to place to learn more about Him and His teachings.

When they arrived at Jerusalem and went up to the temple, what a sight met their eyes! Instead of the priests and the people prayerfully preparing for the Passover feast, there was noisy and greedy buying and selling taking place. What ought to have been a house of prayer, was a busy market place. Merchantmen were selling oxen, sheep and doves.

Other men, who were called money-changers, sat at tables exchanging the money which people brought from other lands, into the money of Judæa. Much like today, when people from other countries visit England, they exchange their euros or dollars for British pounds.

You might wonder what was so bad about this? After all, the oxen, sheep, and doves were needed for the sacrifices at the feast. The merchantmen only made it convenient for the people.

However, Jesus knew what was in their hearts. He knew very well that they were not concerned about the worship of God, but rather the increase of their own wealth.

Jesus was very grieved to see the worship of His Father so abused. Having found some small pieces of cord, He made a whip, perhaps something like that which was used on the animals. Whatever was Jesus going to do with a whip? He began to drive the merchants, along with the sheep and oxen, away from the temple. He turned over the tables where the money-changers sat and threw their money on to the floor. He told those who sold doves: *“Take these things hence; make not*

My Father's house an house of merchandise."

When His disciples saw the zeal of Jesus, they remembered what was written of Him in the Psalms: *"The zeal of Thine house hath eaten Me up."*

Though some of the people were pleased with what Jesus had done, the rulers of the Jews were not. They were getting rich by these things, and they demanded of Him a sign to show that God had given Him authority to do such things.

Jesus knew they would not accept Him, even if He showed them a sign. Instead, He answered: *"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."* The Jews began to mock Him. It had taken forty-six years to build their beautiful temple. How could Jesus raise it up in three days? However, Jesus was speaking about the temple of His body. The Jews would crucify Him, and He would rise again on the third day.

You can read about this in John chapter 2 verses 13 to 22.

QUESTIONS:

1. What feast was taking place at Jerusalem?
2. What were merchantmen selling?
3. What did the Bible say had eaten Him (Jesus) up? 5 words
4. In how many days would Jesus raise up the temple?
5. What temple was Jesus speaking of?

G.L. TenBroeke

Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on page 50). Please mark the envelope: ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.

ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY QUESTIONS

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. A marriage. | 2. Wine. |
| 3. "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." | |
| 4. Wine. | 5. Miracles. |

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from MARY BANFIELD and WILLIAM LARGE.

THE PREACHING AT 'HOPE' CHAPEL

Lydia Pedley (later Lydia Barker) was brought up at Baldock in Hertfordshire by her parents, who attended the Wesleyan chapel. (Wesleyans follow the teachings of John Wesley, who taught that sinners are saved by their own free will and not by the operation of grace.) Her parents were very strict in insisting that she attend chapel and she grew up thinking that because she did her best to follow the Bible and was regular at her chapel, she was a true Christian.

Her parents, being bakers, had their own business in Baldock, in which Lydia worked. One day, a new assistant was employed, and being very eager that he should be a Christian as she thought she was, Lydia urged him to come to her chapel.

"No," he said, "I shall not go there because there is no food for the sheep."

"What do you mean," asked Lydia, "by no food for the sheep?"

"I mean what I say, that there is no food there for the sheep."

"Where will you go then?" asked Lydia.

"Why, to 'Hope' Chapel, Stotfold, where the sheep are fed."

This strange conversation set Lydia thinking. Each Monday morning she would ask the assistant about what he had heard from the Scriptures the previous day. He would say: "Go yourself, and you will hear about the new birth and the wonders of grace." These were things Lydia never heard about at her chapel and it created fresh thoughts and fresh questions in her mind, which would not go away. Her assistant said: "You read your Bible, and you will see it speaks of two classes only: the sheep and the goats; the saved and the lost." This solemn, but certain fact, came home to Lydia's anxious heart: "What if I am a goat, and should be lost at last?"

Filled with perplexity, she enquired of her Wesleyan friends what sort of people went to 'Hope' Chapel. The reply she received was: "They are dreadful people; they only believe the

Epistle of Paul to the Romans and talk much about grace.” However, such reasoning could not satisfy her awakened heart, and the breath of quickening grace within drove her to read the Word of God in a way she had never done before. In it she read of her need as a sinner before a holy God. All her supposed goodness evaporated and she felt a deep emptiness which only increased as she went with her Wesleyan friends to her own chapel, where her case was never met. All this made her want to know more about ‘Hope’ Chapel. Telling her assistant of what had been said by her friends about his chapel, he replied: “They tell lies, and they believe lies in religion; live and die in them, and so are lost for ever.” All this faithful dealing made Lydia tremble and increased her desire to go to ‘Hope’ Chapel, and hear for herself what was taught there.

Her mother and her friends began to think she was losing her reason and it was determined to get rid of the assistant who had sowed the seeds of doubt about the Wesleyans in her mind. This they did at the first opportunity. Her mother forbade her to go the three miles to ‘Hope’ Chapel, but Lydia said to her mother: “Let me go just once, and if they only believe the Epistle to the Romans, I will never go again.”

So a few days later, on the Lord’s Day, rather nervously but none-the-less determined, Lydia set out to walk the three miles to ‘Hope’ Chapel, and for the first time sat down amongst the congregation there. The preacher was Mr. Grey Hazlerigg from Leicester. To her astonishment he gave out a text from Romans 8. “Ah,” said Lydia, “it is true what they say.” However, when Mr. Hazlerigg began to preach, the Bible seemed to her to be another Book to the one she had been used to reading. The preaching gripped her and the question: “Shall I be lost?” was even more deeply engraved on her heart. When she came home, she told her mother that the minister had seemed like an angel from heaven to her, for the wonderful things he showed from the sacred pages. But poor Lydia felt out of the secret and she wanted to hear more.

Her mother, seeing the intensity of her mind, determined to send her away to drown out these new feelings. So, within a few days, Lydia found herself travelling to Hastings with a young niece for company. With more time on her hands, Lydia read the Bible even more and as she did so, her condemnation increased as its truths sunk into her heart.

As she sat one day on the beach at Hastings, reading the Bible, three ladies came up to her and began to speak to her about being saved. One of them said: "Do you want to be saved?" Lydia replied: "I long to be saved, but I am lost." The lady replied that her husband was having a meeting at a local hall that night, and that as he had saved a lot of people by his preaching she was sure that he would save Lydia as well. "Come and get saved," they urged her.

That night Lydia went to the hall and heard what was being said. She only felt worse, and though they brought her to the front and told her to give her heart to the Lord Jesus, she said: "I can't do it, I am too bad."

The next day the ladies found her again on the beach and they plied her with questions as to why she was lost. Lydia replied: "I read of two characters in the Bible, saved and lost; and what does this mean: 'The election have obtained it, and the rest were blinded'?" The ladies were shocked, and said that if she puzzled her head with such things, she would never be saved. They tried unsuccessfully for two nights to convert her, but they gave up, saying that it was impossible whilst she harboured such things as election. But electing love had found Lydia, and she could not rest until she had found electing love for herself.

In the goodness of God, someone had put into Lydia's hand a *Little Gleaner* which she also read on the beach. It seemed to speak to her of the same things as those she heard at 'Hope' Chapel. So she resolved to go out on the Lord's Day morning and see if there were any dressed like those who went to 'Hope' Chapel. Walking along the street she saw two elderly

people who were soberly dressed, and following them she came to a place called *The Tabernacle*. The minister that Sabbath was a man called Mr. Keevil. To her amazement and joy the preaching was just like 'Hope' Chapel preaching. Lydia was greatly encouraged as he unfolded the desires of the sheep to know the love of God in election and to feel it. She felt such a love to Mr. Keevil that she determined to speak to him when he came out of the chapel, even if she should die for it! So Lydia placed herself in front of his carriage, but when Mr. Keevil came out, she was too full to say anything.

On her return home, her mother began to insist that she attend her usual place of worship, saying that she should obey her parents. "Mother," Lydia replied, "I must go to 'Hope' Chapel"; so she did. One Lord's Day, Mr. W.S. Cooper of Lakenheath was preaching about God raising His people out of their graves. As he spoke of both sides of this matter, hope was raised up in her heart that she was indeed a child of God. From that time onwards, 'Hope' Chapel was the place for her to worship in on the Lord's Day. This brought floods and flames of persecution from her loved ones, especially when the love of Christ moved Lydia to be baptized. But the preaching at 'Hope' Chapel was used of God to give her many sips of His love, which gave her strength to endure the reproach.

In later years, Lydia married, but right to the end 'Hope' Chapel remained a sacred spot to her.

Adapted from the *Gospel Standard* 1926

**"I WILL LIFT UP MINE EYES UNTO THE HILLS, FROM
WHENCE COMETH MY HELP" (PSALM 121)**

7. The Sermon on the Mount (II)

Next, Jesus shows what godliness is. He exposes the vanity of temporal things, and shows the care God takes of His people. By nature, all of us seek prosperity on this earth, but Jesus tells His people: "... be ye not like unto them." He teaches how we should handle our earthly possessions, with

the overriding principle that we should look to Him alone in prayer. He says: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness;" followed by a gracious promise, which is a help and comfort to His people: "and all these things shall be added unto you." (We see this set forth in the pattern of prayer given by Jesus which seeks the glory of God before anything else for the one who prays.) The Lord Jesus, the Creator, provides for the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field. Their heavenly Master and Creator, has promised to provide for all their needs – what a comfort! When Jesus speaks of feeding the fowls and clothing the lilies, it does not only refer to provisions for our bodies, it also points to that which Christ provides for His people spiritually! He is the heavenly Bread to feed His people, and He clothes them in His righteousness. May we be thus fed and clothed!

The last part of the Sermon on the Mount concerns gracious discernment. Later, Jesus told His disciples that in the last days "there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets ... insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24. 24). We see here that it is not possible that the elect shall be eternally deceived, though they often fear that they are deceived in many things. The Lord Jesus encourages His people; they shall be able to "discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not." They are not to judge unrighteously, for they will be painfully conscious of their own sins, but they will know false prophets "by their fruits"; the Lord Jesus tells the Pharisees in John 10: "... a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." They will not give "that which is holy unto the dogs," and will "enter in at the strait gate."

Jesus speaks of those who build their hopes for heaven on their own works and not on the finished work of Christ. There is a day coming – the hymnwriter calls it "the storm of death" – when such hopes will be exposed as being built upon the sand,

and the Lord will say: "I never knew you." How solemn! If we are brought to see by the conviction of the Holy Spirit that we have nothing of our own, that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, then we will be brought "out of the miry clay" and have our feet "set upon a Rock." That Rock is Christ Jesus, the one Foundation, on which He (and not man) will build His church. The gates of hell will seek to prevail against it, and fiercely too at times, but His church is eternally secure through the finished work of Christ. So Christ assures His people that they shall endure to the end. What eternal blessings are in store for them!

Well might we conclude that "never man spake like this Man," "for He taught them as One having authority, and not as the scribes."

Contributed

THE LEOPARD'S FRIEND

A cow in a village in Gujarat, India, gets visited regularly ... by a leopard! Wildlife warden, Rohit Vyas, said: "It was unbelievable ... they approached each other at very close proximity and the fearless cow would lick the leopard on its head and neck." Another witness described a similar encounter: "... the cat ducked under the cow's neck, stretched out lazily and began to purr. At first the cow ignored its companion, but eventually gave into the feline's playful nudges and started licking its fur as if it was one of its calves."

Some suggest that when the wild leopard was born, it saw the cow and became 'imprinted' on it.

A previous report has been made of a lioness that adopted a baby oryx (type of antelope) and even guarded it against predators. These intriguing reports hark back to God's "very good" creation (Genesis 1. 31) before death had intruded and when all creatures were herbivores (Genesis 1. 30).

Creation Magazine

SQUEAKERS

This word will probably puzzle you unless you associate it with the sound made by pressing teddy bears or some dolls, thus making a squeaking sound. No, they had nothing to do with toys, but were lifesavers to our airmen in World War 2.

Squeakers were transmitters attached to barrage balloons which were flown over some important industrial areas in the Midlands and North of England where arms were being manufactured. These barrage balloons, which looked like huge sausages, were inflated with a gas and held in place by a cable. They flew as high as ten thousand feet – nearly two miles – and were flown to deter enemy aircraft from venturing near them. If they hit the cable or the balloon itself, they crashed: cables and balloons were invisible in the dark.

But what about our own aircraft which flew in hundreds around Britain every night? Were they not vulnerable? No, because of those squeakers. All the balloons were fitted with transmitters which had a maximum range of nine miles and sent out a signal which sounded like a squeak, hence their name. These strange sounds were transmitted on a special frequency and received by the pilot's headphones in his helmet as he "listened out." He then knew that danger lay ahead and only a few minutes away, so he either turned back or checked to see that he was over the ten thousand feet. Yes, the squeaker was a lifesaver.

There is a close analogy between that squeaker and the little small voice of God within us which we know as our conscience. Those of us who have been brought up in the fear, nurture and admonition of the Lord, will have tender consciences. Our conscience is there to direct us in the right way, and to warn us of danger if we disobey it. We are not only disobedient but also very foolish if we choose to ignore it, but to do so is to add to the danger. God's Word warns us that His Holy Spirit will not always "strive," and to continue to disobey is also to weaken our conscience. It can be killed, and that is the most fearful and dreaded of all consequences:

apostasy is the result.

The squeakers became louder as you became closer and closer to them, but all of us who flew in those days did not wait for that – we knew that death lay ahead unless we did what we were told. And so it is with that God-given little squeaker which is within us and powered by the Holy Spirit.

I am well over my four-score years and I only hear the squeakers in my memory, but the little voice within me is as clear as ever: I dare not disobey but I have no desire to do so. His Word “is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.”

Boys and girls, you have been blessed with godly parents and faithful teachers of the Word of God. That heritage is worth more than the crown jewels, so thank Almighty God for it right now, and never betray it!

Contributed

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

THE DOCTRINE OF TRUTH

The Incarnation of the Son of God

This is another great mystery of our faith, as Paul wrote to Timothy: “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory” (1 Timothy 3. 16). Also: “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. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved” (John 3. 16-17).

The Person and work of Jesus Christ form the foundation of the living church of God. In the well-known exchange between Peter and the Lord Jesus, we read: “And Simon Peter answered and said, **“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”** And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven. And I say also

unto thee, That thou art Peter, and **upon this Rock I will build My church**; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16. 16-18). Satan will always be trying to destroy this glorious foundation, but, blessed be God, he never can. When the Lord Jesus commenced this conversation He said: "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" Peter answered: "the Son of the living God." Jesus answered him: "and upon this Rock I will build My church."

We have two expressions here: 'the Son of man' and 'the Son of God.' They both refer to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1. 14). The word 'flesh' here is human nature. The great, deep, sacred mystery is, that the eternal, infinite, omnipotent God was made flesh, or became a finite Man, whilst remaining infinite. God the Son took into union with Himself a holy human nature. These two expressions refer to these two inseparable though distinct natures in Jesus Christ, 'the Son of God,' His divine nature as truly God, 'the Son of man,' His holy human nature as truly Man.

There are not two Persons in Jesus Christ, a divine Person and a human Person. There is one Person, 'the Son of God' who took into union with His divine nature a holy human nature. His holy human nature was formed by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary. Immediately it was formed by the Holy Spirit, the Son of God assumed it into union with His divine nature. It never ever had a separate existence of its own. In Jesus Christ we see a most glorious mystery, one Person with two natures. (Read Luke 1. 26-38.)

The hymnwriter puts it well:

"Almighty God sighed human breath!
The Lord of life experienced death!
How it was done we can't discuss,
But this we know, 'twas done for us."

What is human nature? We are not left in the dark about this question in Holy Scripture. "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2. 7). Here is the clear teaching of Holy Scripture, that the physical body of Adam was formed by God from the dust of the ground, then God breathed the breath of life into that body, and man became a living soul. The term 'human nature' means just this; a human body animated by a living soul, from God. We are instructed in Holy Scripture that: "For as the body without the spirit is dead..." (James 2. 26).

We read of the Lord Jesus Christ: "For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren ..." (Hebrews 2. 16-17). The Son of God became a real Man with a body and soul, a real true human nature. The whole human nature of Him, who is the Son of God, was offered as a sacrifice for the sins of His people (Hebrews 9. 14). The sufferings of His holy soul were far greater than the sufferings of His body.

Let us look at one or two Scriptures on this precious truth. Isaiah 53 reveals the sufferings of Jesus Christ: "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when Thou **shalt make His soul an offering for sin**, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand" (Isaiah 53. 10). Also in the last verse: "Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; **because He hath poured out His soul unto death**: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isaiah 53. 12). Let us look at the words of the Lord Jesus in Gethsemane: "Then saith He unto them, **My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death**: tarry ye here, and watch with me" (Matthew 26. 38). Also, on the cross: "Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud

voice, **yielded up the ghost**" (Matthew 27. 50). 'Ghost' means 'spirit' or 'soul.' This is opened in Luke's gospel: "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said: **Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit: and having said thus, He gave up the ghost**" (Luke 23. 46).

We notice in these Scriptures that the soul of Jesus Christ was an integral part of His holy sacrifice and importantly, He laid down His life, voluntarily. "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father" (John 10. 17-18). The life He lay down was His holy human life.

It was a voluntary act of the Son of God to give up His holy soul into the hands of His Father, and by this act He entered into death. As we quoted before: "...the body without the spirit is dead...."

J.R. Rutt

"THOU SHALT KNOW HEREAFTER"

"What I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." (John 13. 7)

I know not now why schemes were spoiled,
And lofty aspirations foiled.

I know not now why briar and thorn,
Should mar ambitions nobly born.
Hereafter, I shall know, shall see,
These very things were best for me.

I know not now why, needing aid,
It did not come, or was delayed;
I know not now why burning tears,
Should fall so often through the years.
Hereafter, I shall know, shall see,
These very things were best for me.

I know not now why friends should fail,
And enemies my faith assail;
I know not now why clouds should burst,
And flood and tempest do their worst.
Hereafter, I shall know, shall see,
These very things were best for me.

I know not now why came that loss,
And why I needed such a cross;
I know not now the need of pain,
Nor why the weakness should remain.
Hereafter, I shall know, shall see,
These very things were best for me.

I know not now why sorrow's dart,
Should penetrate and wound my heart;
I know not now why death drew near,
And led away my loved ones dear.
Hereafter, I shall know, shall see,
These very things were best for me.

O Master, I believe Thy Word,
Hereafter, I shall know, O Lord,
Shall fully see Thy plan, Thy care,
Thy skill, Thy love beyond compare;
Hereafter, I shall know, shall see,
These very things were best for me.

A.G.

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about WRONG THOUGHTS. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor (see page 50 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. What does God's Word call "the thought of foolishness"? (Proverbs 24. 9)

2. "Eli thought she had been drunken." Of whom was this written and what was the woman actually doing? (1 Samuel 1. 13)
3. Who thought that the gift of God could be bought with money? (Acts 8. 18, 20)
4. What is a "discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart"? (Hebrews 4. 12)
5. What did Haman wrongly think when King Ahasuerus asked: "What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour"? (Esther 6. 6)
6. Who said: "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good," and to whom was he speaking? (Genesis 50)
7. "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to ..." What wrong thought did Paul have for which he afterwards grieved? (Acts 26)
8. "Thou thoughtest that ..." What wrong thought did God reprove? (Psalm 50)
9. What wrong thought did Naaman's faithful servants kindly rebuke him for? (2 Kings 5)
10. Find at least two texts which plainly declare that Jesus knew all the wrong thoughts of those around Him, which was a proof of His Godhead.

ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY QUESTIONS

1. A rock.
2. Jesus Christ.
3. A "battlement" (a parapet wall or balustrade) for the roof, to prevent people falling off.
4. Cedar and fir.
5. "... they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." (Psalm 127. 1)
6. Fifty-two days. (Nehemiah 6. 15)
7. Babylon. (Daniel 4. 30, Isaiah 13. 19-22)
8. David was not permitted to build a "house for God" because he had shed much blood upon the earth. (1 Chronicles 22. 8)
9. Bricks are first mentioned at the building of the tower of Babel. (Genesis 11. 3)
10. Jericho was rebuilt in the days of Ahab, king of Israel. (1 Kings 16. 34)

Contributed

LIST OF NAMES

The following young people have answered questions during the months July to December 2005. The total number is 327, which is most encouraging, and for which we would thank God.

Maia Aldridge; Anthony and Fiona Ashby; Daniel and Naomi Aston; Emma, George and Thomas Aston; Matthew Aston.

Alasdair and Alexander Bailey; Kathryn and Sarah Ball; Joseph and Samuel Banfield; Benjamin, Rachel and William Bos; Joseph and Samuel Boulton; Abigail, Daniel, Joanna and Nathan Broome; Eleanor and Fiona Burgess; Lois and Lucy Burgess; Jonathan and Nicolas Burton; Sophie Buss.

Christopher, Natalie and Nathan Christie; Harriet, Jacob and Martha Collins; Karen, Matthew, and Sarah Cooper; Lucy, Ruth and Samuel Cooper; Alice, Charlotte and William Cottingham; Gillian and Victoria Cottingham; Michael Cottingham; Annie, Lucy and Miriam Cottingham; Philip Cottingham; Emma and Jessica Cottingham; Jacob Cottingham; Joanna and Philip Cottingham; Abigail, Hannah, James and Sarah Crowter; Annabel and Kate Crowter; Jonathan and Victoria Crowter.

Christine, Esther and Louise Dadswell.

Adam and Bethan Field; Esther, Naomi and Rebekah Field; Benjamin and Oliver Funnell; Joseph and Timothy Funnell.

Oliver and William Green; Edward, Stephen and Thomas Green.

Jacqueline, James and Richard Hallier; Edward Hanks; James Hanks; Eleanor and Jonathan Hare; Benjamin, Charlotte, Emily and Thomas Hart; Joseph, Joshua, Luke and Nathanael Hayden; Benjamin and Suzanna Hayden; Andrew, Marcus and Susanna Hickman; Bethan and Rosalind Hickman; Joanna and Thomas Hickman; Peter Hills; Emily Hope; Eleanor and Esther Hope; Jeremy Hyde.

Abigail Izzard.

Elisabeth, James, Jonathan, Rebecca, Susanna and William Kerley; Emma, Joanna, Joshua and Marianne Kerley; John and Thomas Kerley; Elizabeth and Harriett Kinderman; Edward, Matthew, Naomi, Richard, Samuel and Timothy Kingham; Elizabeth, Jennifer and Stephen Kingham.

Christopher, Edward, Thomas and William Large; Edward and Joshua Locky; Megan Lucas; Chloe and James de Lullington.

Abigail, Martha and Philip Main; Claudia and Florence Mercer; James and Julia Mercer; Andrew, Edward, Elizabeth, Rebecca, Samuel and William Munns.

Emily Northern.

Anna, Jonathan and Rebekah Pack; Thomas and Victoria Palmer; Helen, Matthew, Priscilla, Rebecca, Robert, Samuel and Sarah Parish; Anna, Chloe and Phoebe Parsons; Ruth and Sarah Payne; Elizabeth, John, Mary and Philip Pickles; Heidi and James Playfoot; Naomi and Robert Pocock; Esther, Lukas and Martine Pont; Nathan Pont.

Bethany and Katie Ramsbottom; Jessica Raymond; Joshua, Oliver and William Rayner; Matthew Rayner; James Rice; Freddie and Harry Rokison; Susanna Risbridger.

Chloe and John Sadler; Jessica and Rosanna Salkeld; Charles, Edward, Emily and Rosaleen Saunders; Ethan Saunders; Jasmine, Joseph and Timothy Saunders; Emily and Philippa Sayers; Hannah and Thomas Sebaduka; Bryony Skelton; Clare, Penny and William Smith; Emma, Kate and Matthew Stearn; Emma and Sarah Stephens; Alexander, Edward, Emma and Jessica Stevens; Ellen and Rebekah Suckling.

Abigail Thorne; James and Paul Topping; Alison and Andrew Tugwell; Helen Turner.

Joanna, Natalie and Thomas Warboys; Esther and Thomas Wheatley; Ben and Beth Wigley; Abigail, Bethany and Charlotte Wilderspin; Joanna, Matthew, Susie and Timothy Wiltshire; Edwin, Hannah, Joseph, Kate and Lucy Woodhams; Benjamin, Jessica, Louise and Timothy Woodhams; Rebecca Woodhams; Kelvin Woodhams; Chloe and Lucy Woods.

Overseas Names:

Miriam Aitch; Karina Baum; Lydia Bleeker; Thomas Casper; Jennifer, Marie and Melissa DeVries; Calvin, Dennis and Kira Glass; Sharlene Greyn; Katelyn Kamp; Caleb, Elisabeth and Isaac Knol; Cori and Jeff Legemaat; Hannah Linna; Kyle and Thomas Marion; Kelly, Matthew and Thomas Mills; Heidi and Heather Neels; Danielle, Kelsey, Kendrick, Lindsay and Megan Oudshoorn; Henry Pocock; Emily and Jonathan Quist; John, Luke and Sandra Seymour; Andre and Valentina Sweetman; Nathaniel TenBroeke; Bethany, Kaitlyn and Michaela Teunissen; Jessie, Mariah and Matthew Toogood; Marilene Van de Munt; Aaron and Calvin Van Dyke; Amanda, Dena, Fred, Jacob and Julie Van Gemert; Evangeline Van Oort; Benjamin and John Van Vugt; Cody and Dylan White; Joel, Jonathan, Kristina, Lydia, Natalie and Nathan Ymker.

May the Lord bless you each with the saving knowledge of the truths you have searched.

The Friendly Companion



“And He led them forth by the right way, that they might
go to a city of habitation.”
(Psalm 107. 7.)

April 2006

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All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Price 50 pence monthly, plus postage.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A.	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£10.00	\$42	A\$55	€27.00

All correspondence concerning subscriptions should be addressed to Mr. H. Mercer, 8 Fairleigh Rise, Kington Langley, Chippenham, Wilts. SN15 5QF.

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

There once was a man who said that he did not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and denied that He rose from the dead on the third day, after His death on the cross. To convince himself absolutely, and others, so he thought, he set himself the task of investigating all that the four gospels said about the subject, in order to prove that this event could not have happened.

Strangely, the more closely he examined and compared the facts, the more his mind was changed, and he became firmly convinced that the resurrection accounts and the appearances of the risen Jesus are accurate, and that He did indeed rise from the dead. All this he set down in a book called "*Who moved the stone?*" referring, of course, to the lie that the Jews circulated, that the disciples had come and moved the stone themselves and stolen the body of the Saviour.

How may we know for ourselves that Christ is risen? It is one thing to prove it from an intellectual point of view, but altogether another thing to know what Paul prayed: "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection." It is an important fact to note that the Lord Jesus only appeared to believers after His resurrection.

Just as the angel of the Lord rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, that the women and disciples could look in and see the empty tomb and believe in Christ's resurrection, so we need the Holy Spirit to roll away the stone of unbelief from our hearts. We read that the Lord Jesus opened the understanding of the disciples, and in the Acts of the Apostles we read of the door of faith being opened in the hearts of the Gentiles.

May it be our daily prayer that the Holy Spirit will do this in our hearts, for without this stone rolled away from our heart, the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ will mean nothing to us and be of no benefit but rather for condemnation.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Queen Elizabeth II Bridge

The Queen Elizabeth II Bridge is a vital link in the M25 London Orbital Motorway spanning the River Thames between Dartford and Thurrock. Its opening in 1991 was the culmination of a "design and construct" contract undertaken by Cleveland Bridge and Cementation Construction – building what was then one of the world's longest cable-stayed spans.

The steel bridge carries four lanes of traffic in one direction over a main span of 450m with 181m backspans; approach viaducts of 20 and 21 composite spans each make up an overall length of 2872 metres.

A few times, when trying to speak of faith and its exercise, I have used an illustration of my own experience when driving to places of worship north of the Thames. The two tunnels at Dartford were no longer adequate for the traffic, and work on the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge was started. When queueing for the toll at the tunnel, it was interesting to watch the bridge begin to grow. How high it was! Rather thin-looking girders began to reach out over the river, appearing to be altogether insufficient for the burden they were to bear. I thought I preferred the tunnel, yet had to admit inconsistency, as having experienced submarine and air travel, I much preferred the latter! I still could not anticipate with pleasure using the bridge.

I used the crossing once a month, and for a year I watched the bridge growing and tried to analyse my feelings. I was sure that the structural engineers would carefully calculate stresses; much thought would be given to weight to be carried: 40-ton trucks, etc. Could not I trust the engineers? It occurred to me that I had crossed innumerable bridges without a thought – even the Severn Bridge – although that one did cause slight uncertainty at first. It was a matter of trust. My thoughts looked to other bridges and rivers to cross: the Israelites, leaving Egypt, had to venture by faith across the Red Sea, and 40 years later across Jordan, each time by the word of the Lord

– not to weigh up the tangible evidence, but to trust in the Word of the Lord.

The time came when returning to Kent one Lord's Day evening there was only one way home – Q.E.II Bridge; “willy nilly” – whether I wanted to or not – the only way home. I inwardly laughed at my hesitation: all manner of vehicles were crossing; they trusted it, why shouldn't I? “Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us,” (surely our unbelief) “and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith” Hebrews 12. 1,2. So, over I went. I thought about ventures of faith: “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding”; Abraham: his faith “was counted unto him for righteousness”; “Believest thou that I am able to do this?”; “According to your faith be it unto you”; “If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth”; “Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.”

The time comes when we are taught by the Holy Spirit that there is only one way, the Way, Christ Jesus. We are brought to see there is no other crossing-place from death unto life, from darkness to light. Grace constrains us to take it, to venture by faith, realising it is the gift of God, not of works. We need to get home; we are shown and enabled to take the only way.

A.P. Dawson

They forsook all, and followed Him. Luke 5. 11.

A missionary party was bound for a cannibal island. The captain of the ship tried to persuade them not to land. “You will risk your life and all those with you if you go among the savages,” he said. The missionary's magnificent reply was: “We died before we came.”

Selected

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**JESUS WENT WITH THEM**

Two followers of Jesus were walking sadly from Jerusalem to a village called Emmaus. Jesus had been crucified and laid in a tomb. All their hopes of Him were gone. But certain women came early that morning to the tomb and found it empty. They saw a vision of angels, saying that Jesus was alive.

As the two were talking together of these things: *“Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them.”* But they did not know it was Jesus. He explained to them all the Scriptures about Himself: that Christ, the Saviour, must suffer and die and rise again. What a wonderful sermon it was! How eagerly they listened, as He helped them to understand! When they reached Emmaus, they begged Jesus to stay with them. *“He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and He vanished out of their sight.”*

Though not in a bodily form, the Lord Jesus still draws near to His people and goes with them. He said: *“... I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”*

QUESTIONS:

1. Who drew near and went with the two walking to Emmaus?
2. What did they beg Him to do?
3. Jesus said: *“I am with you ____.”* (First word).

Send your answers to the Editor (see page 74 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

Contributed

ANSWERS TO MARCH QUESTIONS

1. The city of refuge.
2. The high priest.
3. Sinners

*“... Jesus
Himself
drew near,
and went
with them.”
Luke 24. 15.*

BIBLE LESSONS**NICODEMUS COMES TO JESUS**

It seemed all Jerusalem was stirred by the miracles and actions of Jesus. Although some of the people believed the words of Jesus, others strongly opposed Him and spoke evil of Him. One of those who heard of His miracles was a man named Nicodemus.

Nicodemus was a very well-known leader of the Pharisees, which was the strictest sect of religious people. He was also a member of the great council called the Sanhedrin, whose members were esteemed the wisest and most godly men in the land. When the people began to attend the teaching of Jesus, the council was afraid of losing its influence over them. It was not concerned for the souls of the people or God's glory, but for its own position of authority.

One night, after Jesus had finished teaching the people and they had gone to their homes, Nicodemus came to Jesus. Why in the night? Was he afraid of what the other religious leaders would say? Was he ashamed of Jesus? Or perhaps it was the first opportunity he had to come. The wonderful thing is that the Lord did not reprove him for coming at such an inconvenient time. The Lord still receives sinners by day or night. There is never an inconvenient time with Him.

Nicodemus spoke very respectfully, saying: "*Rabbi (Master), we know that Thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him.*" Although Nicodemus did not ask any question, no doubt he had many thoughts about the kingdom of God; perhaps he even wondered if Jesus had come to establish it.

Jesus knew all that Nicodemus was pondering in his heart. He gave an answer Nicodemus never expected to hear: "*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" Nicodemus thought that because he could trace his ancestors back to Abraham, he must be part of the kingdom of God. He had to learn, as you and I have to learn, that the only way into the kingdom of God is by the NEW BIRTH.

Nicodemus wondered how this could be possible. He asked Jesus: *"How can a man be born when he is old?"* He was trying to reason with his carnal, natural mind. Jesus answered him: *"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."* What did Jesus mean: *"born of water"*? Surely He did not mean baptism, for that can never save a soul. Sometimes the Word of God is compared to water. On one occasion Jesus said to His disciples: *"Now are ye clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you."* Peter also writes in his Epistle: *"Being born again, ... by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."*

To explain the work of the Spirit, Jesus used a very simple illustration, comparing the Spirit to the wind: *"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."* By this, He taught that the new birth is something very secret, and no one can command it or stop it.

To show Nicodemus where this new life came from, He reminded him of an account he knew very well. When the ancient Israelites had sinned, God sent fiery serpents among them. The people, who were bitten and about to die, were healed by looking to the serpent of brass, which Moses had made and lifted up on a pole. Even so, Jesus must be lifted up on the cross, that souls who feel the guilt and burden of sin may look to Him who gives life by His death.

You can read about this in John chapter 3 verses 1 to 16.

QUESTIONS:

1. When did Nicodemus come to Jesus?
2. What did Jesus say must happen before a man could see the kingdom of God?
3. What two things did Jesus say a man must be born of?
4. On what must Jesus be lifted up?
5. What does Jesus give by His death?

Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on page 74). Please mark the envelope: ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.

G.L. TenBroeke

ANSWERS TO MARCH QUESTIONS

1. The Passover Feast.
2. Oxen, sheep and doves.
3. The zeal of Thine house.
4. Three days.
5. His body.

MANNA FROM HEAVEN

It is Sunday afternoon, 29th April 1945. Mrs. De Groot is tidying the room. "Mother, Mother, food is coming!" Kees rushes into the kitchen noisily. "They are really coming!" he continues in the same breath, stumbling over his words.

His mother looks at her eldest boy in amazement. The agitation with which he almost screams his words, alarms her. So much has happened of late. It is war time and the Germans are in command. Five years back they invaded the Netherlands and since then ... everyone has had to obey the dictates of the rigid occupier.

Many men and boys had soon been sent to work for the enemy.

The Jews were transported to Germany and shut up there in concentration camps. It is an anxious time and it is lasting so long. April 1945 is nearly gone and still there is no peace. The Americans are pushing on to liberate the land, but how will it all end?

Mrs. de Groot sighs: if only her husband was home. Then she asks: "Who are coming, and what do you mean about food?"

"Aeroplanes, Ma, they are throwing out food parcels! ..." Kees explains his meaning with much gesticulation. "Auntie Marie's Jan told me. Someone had been listening to the radio and the English transmitter reported it. The Germans have agreed and the 'planes are coming this afternoon over Waalhaven airfield. They are coming over other aerodromes, too. Honestly, it's really true – you will see it."

"That would be a miracle, my boy," says Mother with tears in her eyes.

There is really hunger in the land and many are dying from distress, from cold and from deprivation.

“Yes, that would be a miracle, Kees,” she says again. “The sugar beet has nearly all gone, my boy, and I have only a small loaf of bread – which is all we have for the whole week.” Kees nods. He knows that they have very little left to eat. He has already been with his brother Dirk to see the farmer. With great difficulty they managed to buy a few beet and some brown beans. When they went the same way a few days later, they got nothing, because most farmers would not sell to children ten or twelve years old. Father had gone, too, on such an errand when he was still at home, and had met with much more success. Kees gulps hard ... Father was taken off to Germany in November after the ‘Razzia’ by the Germans. So far they have heard nothing from him. Is he still alive? ...

The room door opens unexpectedly. Dirk, Maartje and Jopie have heard the loud voices. They listen inquisitively to what Mother and Kees have to tell. They look at their older brother in disbelief. “Wonderful ... food!” they cry with joy, their little faces showing obvious signs of malnutrition. They skip and dance and run at once to the side window which looks out over Waalhaven. But there is nothing particular to see in the air. There is not a sound to indicate the drone of aeroplanes. The little ones press their noses to the window-pane. Kees and Mother come also to see if there is anything happening.

“Where’s the food coming from?” Mother enquires of Kees. “Who is giving it?”

Oh yes, he had almost forgotten to mention it. “The bread comes from Sweden, from the Red Cross.” Mother nods. “That could well be so. But let us above all remember that God will help us, children,” she replies thankfully.

The children know this and they have prayed much, together with Mother, about it.

Soon they return to what they were doing. Kees helps his mother look for firewood for the stove. It is very cold indoors, but when the wood is gone they keep finding something else

to burn. What else can they stoke to get a bit of warmth in the house? Must they start on the shelves in the cupboards? Kees is on the point of asking, but he stands stock still, listening: "What is that? ... Are they aeroplanes? Can it be? ..."

The throb of engines gets louder – it comes closer. Mother looks at the kitchen clock and says aloud that it is a quarter to two. Then they rush outside. All five of them gaze into the sky. By the garden gate they can look in the direction of Waalhaven.

"Put a jacket on at once," warns Mother. "It is much too cold to stand outside without a coat."

They get no further, for all at once in the distance they see 'planes diving. They fly low over Rotterdam's airfield and then – square boxes come tumbling down. The drop has begun! It looks rather like loaves which fall from the heavens. The street is crowded and people are rejoicing exuberantly.

The little group by the gate stands close together. Mother doesn't want them to go along with the crowd in the direction of the airfield. The little ones press around Mother's skirts. They look up at her and see that she is quietly weeping. "Manna from heaven," she says, her voice barely audible, but Kees and Dirk have caught the words. So they stand together there for a little while and then go indoors quietly.

Manna came from heaven, this time on a Sunday

Translated from the Dutch by M. Banfield

Question: What are God's works of grace?

Answer: God's works of grace are the rich displays of His everlasting love in redemption, regeneration and the glorious works connected therewith.

Jeremiah 31. 3; Ephesians 2; Philippians 2. 13; Revelation 1. 5-6

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from PENNY DEAN, MARIA SAYERS and MATTHEW TURNER.

THE WIDOW'S MITE

When I was a boy, a minister named William Cooper, Pastor at Lakenheath, used to preach occasionally at our chapel. He was a venerable-looking man with a very long, flowing white beard, and as a boy I used to look forward to his visits as he would sometimes tell us little things which he remembered in his life, in order to illustrate his sermon. I remember once he told us that he and his wife went by train to a preaching service in a chapel some miles from their home. The sermon was made such a blessing to Mr. Cooper that as he came out he put all the money he had in the collection. He said to his wife when he got outside: "Well, my dear, you will have to pay the fares home tonight, because I have put all my money in the collection." She said: "My dear, I have had such a blessed time this evening that I, too, felt I must put all I have in the collection." So they walked all the way home together, arm in arm, and had sweet conversation on the things of God.

I do not know how much either Mr. or Mrs. Cooper put in the collection, but I know that in the sight of God it was the same as was cast into the treasury by a certain widow mentioned in the Bible. Do you remember how Jesus sat at the door of the temple and saw her cast in two mites which make a farthing? We do not even have farthings in our money now – they are too small – but Jesus knew that it was all she possessed. So Mr. and Mrs. Cooper and the widow gave the same – all they had – out of love to God.

It grieves us when we sometimes see young people passing by the box or plate without ever putting anything in the collection. It makes us wonder whether they have any love towards God or His house or His Word. We do not want to make a show of giving, but it is as well to remember that as "Jesus sat over against the treasury," so He sees us as we pass the place where we should put in our offering, even if it is but a 'widow's mite.'

You can find this account in Mark 12. 41-44.

Selected from Cheering Words

THE SEVEN SAYINGS OF THE SAVIOUR ON THE CROSS**1. The Word of Forgiveness** (Luke 23. 34)

"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

2. The Word of Salvation (Luke 23. 42, 43)

"And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest unto Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with Me in paradise."

3. The Word of Affection (John 19. 25-27)

"Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother!"

4. The Word of Anguish (Matthew 27. 46)

"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

5. The Word of Suffering (John 19. 28)

"Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst."

6. The Word of Victory (John 19. 30)

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished."

7. The Word of Contentment (Luke 23. 46)

"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit: and having said thus, He gave up the ghost."

Contributed

OUR DRESS

There is a verse in the Bible which says: "Remove not the ancient landmark." A landmark was often the only means of showing where one man's land ended, and another's began. If a man removed or moved these stones, he would be stealing

his neighbour's land.

Now God has given us in the Bible a landmark for all our conduct, with both instruction and warning. We remove it at the peril of our own souls.

One landmark in particular, which God has left us, is that ever since the Fall, man has needed to be clothed. When God clothed Adam and Eve, it was as if He gave a commandment that our bodies should be suitably covered from the eyes of those around us. Also remembering that God is everywhere present, it is dishonouring to Him if we forget what He did for Adam and Eve when He made them coats of skins.

Sadly, one of the features of our present generation, is the increasing tendency, especially in the summer months, to wear scanty clothing, revealing the body in a way which God never intended should be seen in the public view. This brazen attempt to defy God's wise command has led to all sorts of sinful excesses in this world, and at the same time is a form of rebellion against God who first clothed Adam and Eve. It is no secret that crimes of immorality are at an all-time high in our nation. Should we be surprised, when the body is temptingly displayed so openly in advertisements and in the prevailing fashions? Not that that is an excuse for those who fall a victim to the lust of the eyes. The psalmist said: "I will set no evil thing before mine eyes."

It is in the House of God where it is most grievous to see this landmark being removed. We do not go into His presence to be seen of others, but rather to be seen of Him. We should not dress in such a way as to attract the attention of others. That is a form of idolatry. If we had a clearer view, as Isaiah did in Isaiah 6, of what God sees in our hearts and in our lives we would be solemnly conscious that His eye is upon us. This would make us sober in our dress outwardly and more importantly, we would be seeking that covering of the obedience of Christ to cover our souls.

Editor

ONLY A READING SERVICE!

"Then read Baruch in the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD." (Jeremiah 36. 10)

"It's only a reading service!" How many people say this every Sunday! It is an expression we should never use. It is true, a reading service is an expediency for the extension of God's kingdom, and the lively ministration of God's Word is a great good as the preferred Scripture order. However, the Lord will nevertheless maintain His church under reading services, will cause His voice to be heard, and will bestow His favour.

God's Word directs us to a special reading service. The Lord had commanded Jeremiah to write in a roll all the words which He had spoken to him since the time of his calling. Baruch, Jeremiah's faithful secretary, had done this while the prophet dictated to him.

At the moment there was a day of fasting in Jerusalem. The political circumstances were very sombre, for the dark clouds had gathered together above Judah. It was the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and young Nebuchadnezzar, the Chaldean oppressor, was advancing upon and threatening to lay hands upon Jerusalem. Therefore there was much reason to hold a day of fasting.

So there is also for our poor country. It was not so long ago that our government would proclaim a day of prayer and would urge the churches to supplicate for country and people. Should this continue to take place? A day of fasting is of itself a good thing, for the people are then called to humble themselves before God with weeping and supplication. However, if behind the form there is hiding no humbled heart, then the Lord loathes the form without substance. This is the way it was in Jerusalem.

Baruch read aloud the prophecies of Jeremiah. For one reason or another the prophet was hindered from doing so himself. Therefore it was "a reading service" for the people who were gathered in the temple at Jerusalem.

And what would the fruit be? That was the purpose of it! Alas, the fruit was disappointingly scanty. We read of only one young man, Michaiah, the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, who was alarmed. We read nothing of all the other people. There was neither voice nor attention given. There was no opposition, but also no humbling. There was nothing of all this.

The people listened to it. Is this not the disheartening experience of many of God's servants – sermons without response, reading services without fruit? Only one young man put the congregation to shame.

*A. Moerkerken
(slightly amended)*

NEED SUPPLIED

A well-loved minister in his secular calling, had an agricultural implement business which he and his father worked. Through difficult times when money was short, a court order was issued against them by one of their suppliers, to be paid by a certain date. They scratched and scraped, went without, but at last the day arrived – they were half-a-crown (12½p) short of the sum wanted. There was nothing to do but to carry on working; there was not enough to go to pay the court. As they took a plough to bits that morning, half-a-crown fell out of a joint and rolled down at the father's feet – it had evidently been used like a washer by the farmer to make up the needed thickness. "There's the Lord," said Dad, "I'll go and pay up." He arrived in time, the debt was paid, 2/6d (12½p) was knocked off the farmer's bill, and the Lord had all the praise. He did, for they both blessed His great and holy Name together.

Selected

Why follow the fashions of the ungodly? Look at the judgments which came upon Jerusalem for Jezebel's sins.

THE FOOL

There was once a rich nobleman who kept a fool. This was a person whose job it was to do and say funny things, so as to make those about him laugh and be happy. The nobleman gave the fool a wooden staff as a sign of his office, telling him to keep it until he found someone else who was a greater fool than himself. Not many years after, the nobleman became sick, and was going to die. The fool went to see him.

"I must soon leave you," said the nobleman.

"And where are you going?"

"Into the other world," said his lordship.

"And when will you return again? – within a month?"

"No."

"When, then?"

"Never."

"Never?" said the fool: "and what preparation and provision have you made for so long a journey and for being happy there?"

"None at all," said the nobleman.

"Here, then, take my staff," said the fool, "for with all my nonsense I am not guilty of such folly as this."

To be going into eternity without preparation is the greatest of folly.

Selected from The Explorer

"AROUND THE THRONE OF GOD IN HEAVEN"

"Around the throne of God in heaven,
Thousands of children stand,
Children whose sins are all forgiven,
A holy, happy band."

Where did they stand before they stood there? They stood around the throne of grace, as needy sinners, begging for mercy, and they found it, and, oh, may you realise your need of this Refuge. The Word of God speaks also about a "refuge of lies," and what is that? There are many to be found who think

they can get to heaven by what they can do. And you might think if you are a good boy or girl, that will do, and you will go to heaven on account of it. If you think this, you will be putting your trust in what the Word of God speaks of as a refuge of lies. The Word of God tells us that "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." There is but one Refuge, and that is Jesus Christ; His righteousness alone can clothe you aright; His blood alone can cleanse.

Young and old can only escape the fire of divine wrath by standing in that place where the fire has already been, and where is this? Calvary's cross; and when poor sinners are brought to stand there, whether young or old, and there sigh and cry for mercy, they stand in that place where the fire has already been, and they are indeed in a place of refuge.

"They that in the Lord confide,
And shelter in His wounded side,
Shall see all danger overpast,
Stand every storm and live at last."

May many of you experience this.

H. Dawson

POOL OF SILOAM FOUND

Archaeologists have uncovered in the Old City of Jerusalem the place where Jesus cured a man blind from birth (John 9. 7). The pool of Siloam was fed by the renowned Hezekiah's Tunnel (2 Kings 20. 20; 2 Chronicles 32. 30) and is a much grander affair than archaeologists had thought, with three tiers of stone stairs allowing access to the water.

In the soil in one corner of the pool, archaeologists found coins dating from around AD66 to AD70, indicating the pool had begun to be filled in by that time. Because the pool sits at one of the lowest spots in Jerusalem, winter rains flowing down the valley deposited mud into it. If it was no longer being cleaned out, the pool would have quickly silted up and become hidden under sediment.

“Scholars have said that there wasn’t a pool of Siloam and that John was using a religious conceit,” (to illustrate a point) said James H. Charlesworth of Princetown Theological Seminary. “Now we have found the pool of Siloam – exactly where John said it was.” A gospel that was thought to be “pure theology is now shown to be grounded in history,” he said.

Creation Magazine

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

THE DOCTRINE OF TRUTH

The Atonement

The awful sufferings and death of Jesus Christ the Son of God were to pay the redemption price demanded by God’s holy, righteous law for His people. The law demanded death and eternal punishment: “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” My dear young friends, have you considered: “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3. 23)? We are born in sin and cannot keep God’s holy law. This is a sinful inability, the result of Adam’s fall. He is the father of us all. The Lord Jesus Christ is called the second Adam in Holy Scripture. “And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit” (1 Corinthians 15. 45). The hymnwriter puts it well:

“When Adam by transgression fell,
And conscious, fled his Maker’s face,
Linked in clandestine league with hell,
He ruined all his future race:
The seeds of evil once brought in,
Increased and filled the world with sin.

But lo! The Second Adam came
The serpent’s subtle head to bruise;
He cancels his malicious claim,
And disappoints his devilish views;
Ransoms poor prisoners with His blood,
And brings the sinner back to God.”

We read in Scripture of the precious blood of Jesus: “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1. 18-19). Also, “But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1. 7). We read of it in the types of the Old Testament: “And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: **and when I see the blood, I will pass over you**, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt” (Exodus 12. 13).

The blood of the passover lamb foreshadowed or typified the blood of Jesus Christ. My dear young friends, there is only one thing that can take the stain of sin away, that is the blood of Jesus Christ and the wonderful glory is, it cleanseth from **all** sin. I love the beautiful hymn:

“Just as I am, without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed so free,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come.”

The Apostle Peter puts it this way: “To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious” (1 Peter 2. 4). It is our desire that each one of you may know the divine drawings of God the Father, the divine leading of the Holy Spirit which will bring you as a poor sinner to the feet of Jesus Christ and there to behold the beauty of the LORD.

Consider these following scriptures: “No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6. 44). Also, “... no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost” (1 Corinthians 12. 3). Finally, “And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now

received the atonement” (Romans 5. 11). The effect of the atonement is to reconcile us to God. Let us break up the word to give us the meaning: at – one – ment. “That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me” (John 17. 21).

J.R. Rutt

“ROCK OF AGES”

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,”
Thoughtlessly the maiden sung.
Fell the words, unconsciously,
From her girlish, guileless tongue;
Felt her soul no need to hide:
Sweet the song as song could be,
And she had no thought beside.
All the words unheedingly
Fell from lips untouched by care,
Dreaming not that each might be
On some other lips a prayer –
“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.”

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,”
'Twas a woman sung them now;
Sung them slow and heavily –
Wan hand on her aching brow,
Rose the hymn as storm-tossed bird
Beats with weary wing the air:
Every note with sorrow stirred,
Every syllable a prayer –
“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.”

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,"
 Aged lips now sung the hymn,
 Trustingly and tenderly;
 Voice grown weak, and eyes grown dim –
"Let me hide myself in Thee."
 Trembling though the voice and low,
 Ran the sweet strains peacefully,
 Like a river in its flow,
 Sung as only they can sing
 Who life's thorny path have press'd:
 Sung as only faith can sing
 When it views the promised rest –
"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me"
 Sung above the coffin lid:
 Underneath lies restfully
 All life's joy and sorrow hid.
 Never more, O storm-tossed soul,
 Never more from wind and tide,
 Never more from billows' roll
 Wilt thou ever need to hide.
 "Black" thou wast, but not so now
 Sacred hymn to show you how,
"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,"
 Hidden now thou art in Me.

F.C.

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about STRIFE AND CONTENTION. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor (see page 74 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. What was the cause of the separation between Abram and Lot?
 (Genesis 13. 6-11)

2. List the descriptions of those who cause contention and strife in the following verses: (Proverbs 15. 18; 22. 10; 28. 25; 29. 22).
3. "Whispering" is often associated with strife. What does a whisperer do? (Proverbs 16. 28)
4. We even read of strife among the disciples of the Lord Jesus. What was it about? (Luke 22. 24)
5. Envy and strife are often joined together in the New Testament. What does James say accompanies envying and strife? (James 3. 16)
6. What two other sad things are mentioned in 1 Timothy 6?
7. Partiality to close relations often causes contention. What relation was Barnabas to Mark (Marcus), which was the cause of his contention with the Apostle Paul? (Acts 15. 39, Colossians 4.)
8. "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but ..." Complete the text. (Philippians 2)
9. Jude uses the word "contend" in a good sense. What should we earnestly contend for? (Jude)
10. "Where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth." (Proverbs 26. 20). Where does God's Word condemn talebearers? (Leviticus)

ANSWERS TO MARCH QUESTIONS

1. Sin.
2. Hannah, who was praying in the temple.
3. Simon the sorcerer.
4. The Word of God.
5. "To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself?"
6. Joseph was speaking to his brothers. (Genesis 50. 20)
7. Paul thought he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. (Acts 26. 9)
8. "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself." (Psalm 50. 21)
9. "He [Elisha] will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper." (2 Kings 5. 11)
10. Matthew 9. 4; 12. 25; Luke 9. 47; 11. 17.

Contributed

The *Friendly Companion*



“Consider the lilies how they grow: ...”
(Luke 12. 27)

May 2006

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All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Price 50 pence monthly, plus postage.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A.	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£10.00	\$42	A\$55	€27.00

All correspondence concerning subscriptions should be addressed to Mr. H. Mercer, 8 Fairleigh Rise, Kington Langley, Chippenham, Wilts. SN15 5QF.

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

It is recorded that many years ago, an Italian painter wanted to paint the face of an angel. He hunted throughout Italy for a child with, what he thought, was a truly angelic face. At last he found a young boy whose face did indeed look the picture of innocence, and he sat for the painter. The picture was the subject of much admiration by all who looked at it.

Quite a few years later the same painter wanted to paint the face of a fiend. Again he hunted high and low throughout the land for such a face. Eventually he went into a local prison and there he saw a haggard-looking man with staring eyes, his face marked with scars.

With the governor's permission, he painted this man's portrait. Whilst he was painting, he enquired into the history of the man. You can imagine the surprise when he turned out to be the grown-up man of the boy whose angelic face had brought such admiration!

However had this great change come about?

The heart of the child, though so outwardly innocent, like all children's hearts was full of the seeds of sin. Unchecked by grace these seeds had now brought a terrible harvest of sin, shame and degradation.

What a lesson this is for us each!

Firstly, we should beware of being deceived by outward appearances. Samuel made this mistake when he was sent to anoint the future king of Israel. He would have anointed Jesse's eldest son. After all, he was strong and handsome: surely just the man to be king! But he lacked the one thing needful. God's eye was upon David, because He knew that His grace was reigning there, over the sins of his old nature.

Secondly, we should remember that we too have a heart, by nature, as sinful as the man who turned out such a slave of Satan. Without grace in our hearts we will be slaves to sin and ruin our souls eternally, as this man seemed to be doing.

How true are the words of the hymn:

“Myself I cannot save;
Myself I cannot keep;
But strength in Thee I fain would have,
Whose eyelids never sleep.”

There is much more in the word “kept” than we can fully understand. Only God fully knows the depth of sin in our hearts. Only He can save us from it.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

*“Nature with open volume stands,
To spread her Maker’s praise abroad,
And every labour of His hands,
Shows something worthy of a God.”*

Isaac Watts

It should not surprise us, that the created world around us preaches a sermon to us about the Creator. How true this is of the beautiful flower on our front cover this month. It shows the lily of the valley. You will remember that the Word of God compares the Lord Jesus Christ to the lily of the valley.

The beautiful white colour is a picture to us of the purity of the Lord Jesus Christ, both in His nature and in His life. In contrast, neither our nature nor our life is pure.

Next we notice that they are found in the valley. This reminds us of the humility of Christ in coming down to the earth: His humble home, His meek and longsuffering life, and of His humiliation at being crucified between two thieves.

The Bible tells us that the lily is often found among thorns. So the Lord Jesus was surrounded by sinners, many of whom hated Him. His whole life was one of sorrow, culminating in the thorny crown that pierced His lovely head on the cross.

But the Bible tells us that the Lord’s people are also called lilies. This tells us that they are made white by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that, like Him, they have to walk in thorny paths in the valleys of life.

Finally, we are told by the Lord Jesus that just as the lilies neither toil nor spin to look as beautiful as they do, so all the loveliness of God's people is not produced by something they have done for themselves. Furthermore, if God clothes the field with such loveliness, how much more will He care and watch over His children.

May God give us open eyes to see the innumerable sermons preached to us by the creation all around us.

*"But in the grace that rescued man,
His brightest form of glory shines;
Here on the cross 'tis fairest drawn,
In precious blood, and crimson lines."*

Isaac Watts

LED BY EXAMPLE

During the American Revolution, it is said, the commander of a little squad was giving orders to those under him concerning a stick of timber that they were endeavouring to raise up to the top of some military works they were repairing. The timber went up with difficulty, and on this account, the voice of the little-great man was often heard, in regular vociferations of: "Heave away! There she goes! Heave ho!"

An officer, not in military costume, was passing, and asked the commander why he did not take hold and render a little aid. The latter, astonished, turning round with all the pomp of an emperor, said: "Sir, I am a corporal!"

"You are, are you?" replied the officer. "I was not aware of that." And taking off his hat and bowing, the officer said: "I ask your pardon, Mr. Corporal," and then dismounted, and lifted till the sweat stood in drops on his forehead. When the work was finished, turning to the commander he said: "Mr. Corporal, when you have another such job, and have not men enough, send for your commander-in-chief, and I will come and help you a second time." The corporal was thunderstruck! It was George Washington who thus addressed him!

N. Macleod

*FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES***STRENGTH**

Do you know which man in the Bible is remembered for having great strength? It was Samson. He was set apart from birth to serve the LORD. As a sign of this, his hair was never to be cut off.

As Samson grew, "... *the LORD blessed him. And the Spirit of the LORD began to move him at times*" Once he met a young roaring lion, and "*the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him.*" He killed the lion with only his hands. Another time he was bound with new ropes. The ropes were broken off by Samson as easily as a thread. Many times Samson was given great strength to fight against the Philistines, the enemy of Israel.

When Samson's hair was shaved off, the LORD departed from him. He lost his great strength and became as other men. At his end, the LORD heard his prayer and gave Samson strength one more time to destroy his enemies.

God gave Samson his great strength, and He is still able to give needed strength. God "*giveth strength and power unto His people.*"

QUESTIONS:

1. Who is remembered for having great strength?
2. Who came mightily upon him? (5 words)
3. What does the LORD give to His people? (3 words)

Contributed

Send your answers to the Editor (see page 98 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

ANSWERS TO APRIL QUESTIONS

1. Jesus.
2. Stay with them.
3. Alway.

*“The LORD
will give
strength
unto His
people.”*

Psalm 29. 11.

BIBLE LESSONS

THE DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

After the Lord Jesus went forth publicly in the land of Israel, the ministry of John the Baptist was drawing to a close. Although he lived in the New Testament period, he was still called a prophet. At his birth, his father said that he would be called *"the prophet of the Highest."* On one occasion Jesus said of him: *"Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist."* Jesus also said of him: *"He was a burning and a shining light."*

John was no longer in the wilderness but was preaching and baptizing at Aenon, because there was much water there. As John kept pointing out the Lord Jesus, his followers gradually left him and followed after Jesus.

One day the people told John how many followers Jesus had, compared to himself. What a temptation! Would John be jealous? How careful we should be, lest we fall into this snare.

With what humility John answered the people! First, he said: *"A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven."* John knew that he could not even preach except help was given from the Lord. Next, John pointed out that Jesus was the Bridegroom and His people were the bride. He was only the friend of the Bridegroom and rejoiced greatly to hear the Bridegroom's voice.

John knew that he had come from earthly parents, but Jesus had come from heaven. Thus Jesus was far above him. John declared a great truth that every sinner saved by grace will be brought to know: *"He must increase, but I must decrease."*

Very shortly after this, John was put in prison. Herod, the governor of the land, had taken Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. John reproved him, saying: *"It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife."* Herodias hated John for this *"and would have killed him, but she could not."* However, Herod sent his soldiers to take John and put him in prison. Do you remember what other godly men were put into prison? Joseph was in prison in Egypt; Jeremiah, the godly prophet, was put in

prison; the Apostles Peter and Paul were later put in prison. Thus, many of God's dear people have been put in prison for the truth.

Herod wanted to kill John, but he feared the people, because they counted John as a prophet.

On Herod's birthday, the daughter of Herodias danced before him and pleased him. He promised to give her whatever she asked. I'm sure if you were told you could have anything you wanted, you would think of many nice things. Sadly, this young girl was instructed by her mother to ask for the head of John the Baptist. Herod commanded his soldiers to behead John. What a sad end for the dear man of God! Out of love, his disciples came and took up his body and buried it. Then they *"went and told Jesus."* What a good example for us: in all our needs, in all our sorrows, to go and tell Jesus.

You can read about this in Matthew 14. 3-12; Mark 6. 16-29 and John 3. 23-31.

QUESTIONS:

1. Although he lived in the New Testament period, what was John called?
2. Who did John point out that Jesus was?
3. What great truth did John declare?
4. Where did Herod put John after he was reproved by him?
5. What did John's disciples do after they buried him? (4 words)

G.L. TenBroeke

Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on page 98). Please mark the envelope: ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.

ANSWERS TO APRIL QUESTIONS

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. At night. | 2. He must be born again. |
| 3. Water and the Spirit. | 4. A cross. |
| | 5. Life. |

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from SAVANNAH VAN OORT.

“THY EVERY WORD OF PROMISE SHALL PREVAIL”

Pfff! How warm it is in the classroom. The sun shines hot on the windows. Mr. Fisher, the teacher, has closed the windows partially, but it still seems to get warmer. The children are bent diligently over their written work. Josh still has two lines of words to write and then his lesson will be finished. But it is just as though he cannot think straight. Frowning, he looks around the class. He cannot think of the word he needs. He keeps thinking of that letter to father. He looks across to his friend Karel. They have had a letter, too. Karel is chewing the end of his pen. They give each other a quick nod and bend once more over their work. “Just two minutes left, boys,” says the master’s voice all of a sudden. Oh, then he must hurry up!

As the master stops by his desk Josh gets the last word down. “That was a close thing, Josh – that’s not like you.”

“No, Sir, but my father has had a letter.”

“Yes, and my father, too.”

“And Peter’s brother has to report at the Grebbeberg with the man who lives opposite,” cries Willie.

It is not long before the whole class is in great commotion.

Yesterday, 29th August 1939, many men and boys between the ages of 18 and 40 received such a letter. They were called up, because the government wants the army to be alerted in case there is a war with Germany. In 1933 Adolph Hitler came to power there, and from then on there has been so much unrest in Europe. Hitler wants every land to submit to him. And ... he has such a fearful hatred towards the Jews. Last year he annexed Austria and everyone fears that he is going to wage war with other lands, too, until at last all Europe is under his sway!

“My daddy has got to become a soldier, too,” sobs Marieke.

“Yes, children,” says the master, “we live in a difficult time. We do not know how it will fall out in the world. Adolph Hitler is a dangerous man.”

In a city square a few men stand with sombre faces in deep conversation.

"Jan, my lad, have you got to go to Rhenen, too? Then perhaps we can go together."

Yes, Gerard. I dread the whole thought of it. How will it be with our parents and the little brothers and sisters? What is going to happen?"

"If only I knew that we would come home again safely," sighs an older man. "The future looks so dark."

"How right you are," remarks Gerard, "but shall we go and ring the Pastor's doorbell? I have already seen several going in there."

They walk with heavy hearts to the door of their pastor's house. They have scarcely rung when Mrs. Lamain opens the door.

"Come in, come in," she says kindly.

The room is crowded with men. Seventy-nine men from the Rotterdam South congregation have been called up and many of them have made their way to the "pastorie" this evening. They all want to say farewell to their beloved pastor, before leaving for the barracks.

As soon as they have all found somewhere to sit, Mr. Lamain takes a place in the middle of the room. He looks around the circle of faces and says: "Dear Friends, my wife and I are pleased that you have come to visit us before you depart. What a lot will be going on in your hearts. The future is uncertain. We may indeed fear that the Lord is coming with His judgments! And, be honest, would the Lord be unjust?"

Lovingly, he refers to the words in the ninety-first Psalm: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty," and he adds, with feeling: "And that is my heartfelt wish for all of you. That is the only Refuge where we are safe, for time and for eternity."

Gerard looks around him. How good it is to be here together. It is almost as though none of it is true. The threat of war seems for the moment less serious If only they could stay here! He listens attentively to the warnings and to

the encouragements of the minister.

Before they know it, the clock shows half-past-nine. Rev. Lamain suggests that they pray together and the men bow their heads reverently. Some of them cannot restrain their tears as their minister lays their needs earnestly and lovingly before the Lord. He pleads that He will keep them in the dangers which now threaten. He supplicates, too, for God's protecting hand over the families and all those they are leaving behind. "And, Lord," he prays, "it is undeserved, but wilt Thou have mercy upon our land and people?"

When the guests shortly afterwards depart, the minister stands in the hall to give each one a hand. He has a personal word for each. In silence they walk home through the darkness – to meet an unknown future. Each has his own thoughts, but they all take the memory of this evening to the war front.

It is Tuesday, 14th May 1940. At half-past two in the night, Rev. Lamain is sitting behind his desk. He cannot sleep. What a lot has happened in the past few days! It seems as though a week has gone by since he preached in Goudswaard on Thursday evening, 9th May. The Elder, Mr. Schelling, had strongly advised him to stay the night, but it was just as though a voice within him had said that he must go back to his wife and children in Rotterdam ... That night it had begun. At five minutes to four, the drone of hundreds of aeroplanes was heard above, and shortly afterwards the Germans dropped the first bombs on Waalhaven Airport. It was fearful. It seemed like the end of the world. The children sprang, crying, from their beds; neighbours were screaming in the street; clouds of smoke rose above the city and sirens howled. At five o'clock, Rev. Kersten telephoned. "Brother," he said curtly, "Nederland is at war."

(to be continued)

Translated from the Dutch by M. Banfield

**“I WILL LIFT UP MINE EYES UNTO THE HILLS FROM
WHENCE COMETH MY HELP” (PSALM 121)**

8. The Mount of Transfiguration

We read of the Mount of Transfiguration in Matthew, Mark and Luke. The gospels do not tell us which mountain it was, only that it was a high mountain. The Lord Jesus was in the north of the land of Israel at this time, and some think that the transfiguration was on Mount Hermon. Hermon is situated about 20 miles north of the Sea of Galilee, and marks the northern boundary of Israel (Deuteronomy 3.8 and 4.48, and Joshua 13. 11). Hermon has three peaks which are about 9,200 feet (2,800 metres) above sea level and can be seen from many miles away. The Sidonians called it “Sirion” and the Amorites “Shenir” (Deuteronomy 3. 9).

Others think that the mountain was Mount Meron, which is about 10 miles northwest of the Sea of Galilee and is 3,926 feet (1,200 metres) above sea level. Mount Meron is nearer to Galilee than Hermon, and possibly the multitude waiting for Jesus would not have travelled to Hermon which was then largely Gentile territory.

The exact location is not important, but the fact of the revelation of Jesus Christ on the mountain is a very precious one to His people. Jesus took Peter, James and John with Him, leaving the other nine disciples behind. These three were particularly favoured, and were with Jesus at the raising of Jairus’ daughter and in the Garden of Gethsemane. We are told: Jesus “bringeth them,” “leadeth them,” or “took them.” They did not bring, lead or take themselves; only God can bring His people to the place where Jesus is revealed to them. “No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.”

Jesus revealed something of His glory to the three disciples on the mountain. Peter writes of it in his second epistle: “We ... were eyewitnesses of His majesty” (2 Peter 1. 16). Jesus was transfigured before them: His face shone as the sun and his clothes shone whiter than any white of this earth.

The disciples also saw Moses and Elias (Elijah) talking with

Jesus. What did they speak about? "His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." That is the death of Christ and its precious effects. The word "should" confirms that it had been decreed from all eternity that the Lord Jesus should die at Jerusalem. We have to confess how little our conversation is on this most important and blessed subject!

Moses was the inspired writer of the first five books of the Bible. Right from the very beginning, God gave the promise of the Saviour and His redeeming death. This can be seen even before the Fall. Adam was caused to fall into a deep sleep and Eve was made from one of his ribs, that is, out of his side. This is a picture of Christ, who died and His side was pierced that the Church (His bride) should be brought forth and married unto Him. Then we think of the promise after the Fall, that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. We have Abel offering a lamb. Then there is the ram slain instead of Isaac on Mount Moriah. We also have the Passover lamb slain and the blood sprinkled to save those in the house. There is the ceremonial law given by Moses, with the appointed sacrifices and feasts all pointing to Jesus and His redeeming work. There is the brazen serpent as a type of Christ. And so we could go on.

Elijah is a representative of the prophets. What wonderful truths are proclaimed by the prophets! We have many prophecies of the death of Christ and what it has accomplished. This is supremely so in Isaiah 53, but in many other places, too. Peter, in preaching before the assembly at Cornelius's house says: "To Him give all the prophets witness" (Acts 10). Notice, he does not say: "gave," but "give;" and even today they still give witness. Do not neglect the prophecies; as we read them, may we pray that Christ will be revealed to us there, and if that prayer is answered, what help we will receive!

The sight of Jesus in His glory made the three disciples fear; they fell on their faces. So it was when Isaiah, Daniel and John the Apostle, saw the Lord. And so it will be if we are favoured

to see the Lord by faith. It will cause us to fear and tremble before His holy majesty.

Peter suggested that three tabernacles be made for Jesus, Moses and Elijah, and it is clear he did not know what he was saying. Three tabernacles were not necessary, for Christ, the law and the prophets all agree; as we may say “these three agree in one.”

But we soon see that a cloud comes and Moses and Elijah fade away, and only Christ is seen. Jesus Christ is infinitely superior: “that in all things He might have the pre-eminence.” The law and prophets are all superseded by Christ: “The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ”; “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” By faith the prophets saw the things of Jesus afar off and were persuaded of them, but God has provided some better thing in this gospel day for the help and comfort of His people.

We may be tempted to think that the three disciples were favoured above all and that no one else could be given a greater evidence and a more sure proof that this was indeed the Christ, the Son of God, who should come into the world to save sinners. Peter, writing his second epistle to “them that have obtained like precious faith,” says: “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place.” What does he mean? Firstly, he shows that it is more blessed to see Jesus by faith, which is life everlasting, than to see Him with the natural eyes and understanding, as many did, which is not saving. May our religion be of faith and not of the intellect!

Secondly, there is comfort that all God’s promises shall surely be fulfilled. The great promise of God was the sending of the Messiah. It was first given in the Garden of Eden, that dark place when sin entered into the world, and death by sin. Further intimations were given as time went on, and at the appointed time, Christ came. But consider the lineage of

Christ – how strange it is! How it seemed at times as if the line would be broken! For example, Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born. We read of Rahab and Ruth in the lineage, too – they were not of Israel but were mysteriously brought into the Lord's living family. Hezekiah's life was spared 15 years, and during this time his heir, Manasseh, was born. Satan tried many times to destroy the royal line, but God's promises are sure and were fulfilled in Christ's coming, and in His life, death, resurrection and ascension for His people, though at times it seemed almost impossible. Then consider, shall not God fulfil *all* His promises to His people? If He has graciously given us a promise, then may we be given grace to trust Him to bring it to pass in His way and time.

Contributed

AN ANSWER TO PRAYER

A little while ago, a lady (whom I shall call 'Phoebe'; a succourer of many) was shopping for friends who live in one of our Bethesda Homes. She had been given £15 to buy various things, which in fact cost between £3 and £4. Having finished the shopping, she found to her dismay that the change of over £11 had been mislaid. She enquired at the supermarket, but nothing could be found of the money at the Customer Service Department, although the assistant remembered that some money had been handed in. The security guard, a young man, had witnessed it. 'Phoebe' went home, and made it a matter of prayer, that the Lord would recover the lost money.

In the afternoon she met a friend who advised her to contact the office of the supermarket. When she phoned the office, the man who answered said he would make enquiries for her. But as he was away for a long time, the manager saw the phone off the hook and spoke to the lady who explained the situation. Upon making enquiries, still the money could not be found. 'Phoebe' was ready to dismiss the matter from her mind and give up praying about it.

However, the next morning she went into the supermarket to do her own shopping and the young security guard approached her. He said: "The money you lost was handed in to me, but I went outside for a smoke, put the money on the wall and forgot it!" He handed her an envelope with £15 in it which he insisted that she took. His conscience was working!

How amazed 'Phoebe' was that she had recovered even more than she lost, but even more wonderful was the answer to her prayers. How true it is that: "men ought always to pray and not to faint."

But there is a deeper lesson for us. When Adam fell, man lost his innocence and his relationship with the Creator. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Second Adam, has recovered for His people, what they lost in Adam, and has restored them to a relationship much better than the one Adam lost. May it be our prayer day by day to know what David knew: "He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

Editor

WHITEFIELD AND THE ROBBER

On one of his journeys in Scotland, Whitefield was told of a widow with a large family, whose landlord had seized her furniture and was about to sell it unless her rent was paid. Whitefield's purse was never large, but his sympathy was great, and he immediately gave the five guineas which the helpless woman needed. A friend, who was travelling with him, hinted that the sum was more than he could reasonably afford, to which he replied: "When God brings a case of distress before us, it is that we may relieve it."

The two travellers proceeded on their journeys and, before long, encountered a highwayman who demanded their money, which they gave. Whitefield now turned the tables on his friend and reminded him how much better it was for the poor widow to have the five guineas than the thief who had just robbed them. They had not long resumed their travel, before the man returned and demanded Whitefield's coat, which was

much more respectable than his own. This request was also granted, Whitefield accepting the robber's ragged coat, until he could procure a better.

Presently they perceived the marauder again galloping towards them most furiously, and now, fearing that their lives were threatened, they also spurred their horses, and arrived at some cottages before the highwayman could stop them. The thief was baulked, and no doubt was immensely mortified, for when Whitefield took off the man's tattered coat, he found in one of its pockets a carefully wrapped parcel containing one hundred guineas.

Extracted. The Protestant Echo 1895.

THE BAIRNS

In the time of the Covenanters a group of children was ordered to be shot. A little girl of eight looked up into the face of one of the soldiers, and said: "Sodger man, will ye let me take me wee brither by the hand and die that way?" "Bonny Whigs ye are," cried Westerha, "to die without a prayer." "If it please ye, sir," said the little girl, "me and Alec canna pray, but we can sing 'The Lord's my shepherd.' My mother learned it us afore she gaed awa." Then all the bairns stood up, and from their lips rose the quivering strains: "The Lord's my shepherd: I'll not want." As they sang, trooper after trooper turned away. Man after man fell out, and the tears rained down their cheeks. At last even Westerha turned and rode away, for the victory was to the bairns through the singing of the Twenty-third Psalm.

Selected

QUESTION: What special act of providence did God exercise towards man in the estate wherein He created him?

ANSWER: When God created man He gave him a law, promising him a continuance of the life and blessings which he then possessed on condition of his perfect obedience; forbidding him to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil upon pain of death. (Genesis 2. 15-17)

“FRET NOT THYSELF”

I was in business in the retail trade. One Saturday, in conversation with a fellow-trader, he told me of a pair of shops being built in a neighbouring village; that he was going to take one of them, and suggested that the other one would be very suitable for the trade in which I was engaged. I was very interested, being young and desiring to prosper in business, and the opportunity was very suitable to my thoughts and ambitions, so he gave me the telephone number to contact for particulars of the property.

However, the Lord God had not long before laid upon my heart the exercise of the ministry, and as I walked home thinking about this unexpected development, I thought to myself: “I will wait until Monday before I telephone, and tomorrow see if our pastor says anything about it in his sermons.” In like manner as the Shunammite woman did with her son who had died, I laid my case on the bed of the man of God.

Our pastor knew nothing of the circumstances of the Saturday, or of my exercise, and yet if he had known all about them, he could not have described them better. I do not remember his text, but in his sermon he said that there may be a person in the congregation who has had an earthly prospect put before him which is very pleasing to his earthly ambitions and looks to be most suitable and lawful; and then said: “If you have an exercise from the Lord, you will not do it.” Who could have directed the minister to say those things, but God? There was no more thought of making the phone call on the Monday.

Dear young reader: “Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.” Or as is written in the Young People’s Hymnal, Number 390: “Take it to the Lord in prayer.” May you, by God’s grace, be enabled to live as the Apostle Paul exhorts in Philippians 4. 6, and you will have much cause for thanksgiving.

At another time, as I sat in my office discussing business with a wholesaler’s agent, he suggested to me that there was an

opening for my trade in a certain place in a nearby town, and asked me to consider it. I replied that I did not have the finance. He answered: "You have the expertise, and I can supply the money." Immediately the Scripture came: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." And so I was again "kept by the power of God" and declined the offer.

Again, in an entirely different way and in different circumstances, I was kept from harbouring for long a rebellious spirit. One day, going to the nearby town in the firm's delivery van, which was the only vehicle I had, I saw two of my fellow-traders driving their Jaguar cars. Oh, how a spirit of envy rose up in my heart and remained all day, until "I went into the House of the LORD." There was an evening service that night and our pastor spoke from: "Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass." It was as an arrow striking my conscience, and I went home in a very different spirit to the one in which I entered the chapel, thankful for a hope of eternal life in Jesus Christ. This was not the first time in my life when I could say: "They can have the world, I have my God."

It was later found that one man I was envying as he apparently prospered, was falsifying his Value Added Tax returns, and when it was discovered by the authorities, his Jaguar car had to be sold, also the large house which he had with a swimming pool in the grounds; after that I would see him driving a Mini, and his home was not as nice as my own. How thankful I have been to the Lord for the teaching I have received through these providential experiences.

If you are one of God's chosen people, you will not be able to separate providence and grace, but will find that the Lord will sanctify the path of providence to the eternal good of your never-dying soul.

Contributed

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***THE DOCTRINE OF TRUTH****The Righteousness of Jesus Christ**

When Adam fell into sin we read: "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons (Genesis 3.7).

The hymnwriter says:

"Of all the creatures God has made,
There is but man alone
That stands in need to be arrayed
In coverings not his own."

The Son of God not only became a Man to suffer, bleed and die, but also to make His people righteous. The Word of God is very clear concerning fallen man: "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Romans 3. 10-12). What makes man unrighteous is sin, as we read: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3. 4).

We read of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law" (Galatians 4. 4). The law was made for man, so when the Son of God was made Man, He came under the holy law of God. He lived under that law for thirty-three years, in perfect obedience to it. This perfect obedience of the Man Christ Jesus is called the righteousness of Christ. The Lord Jesus said Himself: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil" (Matthew 5. 17).

In Scripture, this righteousness of Jesus Christ is likened to a robe to clothe His people: "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with

the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels" (Isaiah 61. 10).

Also, the sweet psalmist of Israel, speaking prophetically of the bride of Christ (the church), speaks of her clothing, which is the righteousness of Christ: "The King's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto Thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the King's palace" (Psalm 45. 13-15).

Also the Holy Spirit reveals to us in the Epistle to the Romans the clear distinction between the law, that is the ten commandments, and the gospel of Christ: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference" (Romans 3. 20-22). One of the sacred names given to Jesus Christ in Scripture is Jehovah Tsidkenu. This means: the LORD our righteousness. This is what the believer receives by faith in Christ Jesus, an everlasting righteousness. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, therefore His righteousness is an everlasting righteousness. "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is the truth" (Psalm 119. 142).

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about TOMORROW. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor (see page 98 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. "Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath." What did the children of Israel have to do so they could rest? (Exodus 16. 23)
2. "Boast not thyself of tomorrow." Why not? (Proverbs 27. 1)
3. What seeming impossibility did God promise to a besieged city, "tomorrow, about this time"? (2 Kings 7. 1)
4. "Tomorrow the LORD will show who are His." What solemn judgment followed? (Numbers 16. 5, 31-35)
5. "Tomorrow the LORD will do wonders." What miracle did God perform the next day for Israel? (Joshua 3. 5, 14-17)
6. Haman's wife said: "Tomorrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged." Who was hanged the next day? (Esther 5 & 7)
7. God gave Jehoshaphat a wonderful deliverance from his enemies. What was he instructed to do? (2 Chronicles 20)
8. "Sanctify yourselves against tomorrow." Who was solemnly judged for his sin the next day? (Joshua 7)
9. What gracious precept did Jesus speak about tomorrow's cares? (Matthew 6)
10. In four of the ten plagues that came upon Egypt, God said they would come "tomorrow." Which were they?

ANSWERS TO APRIL QUESTIONS

1. Strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle.
2. A wrathful man, a scorner, he that is of a proud heart, an angry man.
3. A whisperer separates chief friends.
4. Who should be the greatest.
5. Confusion and every evil work.
6. Railings, evil surmisings. (1 Timothy 6. 4)
7. Uncle. (Colossians 4. 10)
8. "In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." (Philippians 2. 3)
9. "The faith once delivered to the saints." (Jude 1. 3)
10. "Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people." (Leviticus 19. 16)

THE GOSPEL RULE

Have I ought against my brother; any angry feeling?
Any passion hard to smother; any wound unhealing?
Has he dealt me any blow? Any sorrow given?
Then unto him *I* should go, he must be forgiven.

Though the fault be *his* alone, *his* all the wrongdoing;
I must make his trespass known, with a kindly suing.
I the wrong to him must tell; tell the grief he's given;
If he hears me, then, 'tis well. *I* have him forgiven.

Thus it was that Jesus taught; thus He set example;
Need we more to be besought, than by His ensample?
Jesus did His foes forgive, e'en some who did slay Him;
Let us then unto Him live, and in this obey Him!

Why should anger only bask, pent up 'gainst each other?
Should it be so hard a task to forgive a brother?
Bound with more than fleshly ties, more than earthly union,
Heirs of everlasting bliss, heavenly communion;

With one God, one Saviour dear; one hope of salvation;
Treading in one pathway here, through much tribulation:
Such should rather live in love, each with one another:
Each kind and forgiving prove to a wronging brother.

Then let each hard thought be crush'd, quell'd each
sinful passion;
Let each angry word be hush'd, ere it cause division.
"Jesus! Give us grace to live more like Thee, our Saviour:
Always ready to forgive, till jars cease for ever!"

B.A.W.

The Friendly Companion



“Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”
(Ephesians 5. 16)

August 2006

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All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Price 50 pence monthly, plus postage.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A.	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£10.00	\$42	A\$55	€27.00

All correspondence concerning subscriptions should be addressed to Mr. H. Mercer, 8 Fairleigh Rise, Kington Langley, Chippenham, Wilts. SN15 5QF.

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

You will all be familiar with the account of David and Goliath. Have you ever wondered how Goliath could hold a spear, a sword and a shield with just two hands? The answer is, of course, that Goliath had an armour-bearer. This man would carry the shield in front of his master to wield off any stones, spears or arrows which might be directed at him. I expect he had become very skilled at this and, no doubt, Goliath owed his life more than once to the skill of his armour-bearer, as well as to his own prowess. It was this which made him so confident that young David would not be a match for him. After all, where were David's sword, spear and shield? All that he had was a sling and five smooth stones.

But David had an unseen Shield – the Name of the Lord God of Hosts. Not only that, David's God directed the one stone that David slung: right past the armour-bearer to the only weak spot in Goliath's armour, between his eyes. We all know the outcome. Goliath falls, and David gains the victory for Israel through His God. God gave Goliath into David's hands.

These events teach us how we are to deal with the giants that come against us, the greatest of whom is Giant Self! How we need the power of God to overcome self. Martin Luther once said: "Oh, that I had not a myself." We can read in Romans 7 of the battle that Paul had with himself, but we also read of the victory "through Jesus Christ our Lord."

I wonder if the verse below describes any of our readers?

"The more I strove against sin's power,
I sinned and stumbled but the more;
Till late I heard my Saviour say,
Come hither, soul, I am the Way."

You will find the complete hymn on page 192. Read it through, and may the Holy Spirit reveal to you the way of salvation as He did to the hymn writer.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The unusual clock shown on our front cover picture this month is of the cathedral clock at Exeter. It has been there since 1484, placed in the transept of the north tower. Underneath the clock, a door into the tower is to be seen, which has a hole in it for a cat to pass through to catch the mice and rats in the tower! In the fifteenth century one penny a week was given to feed the cat.

However, of much more important interest to us is the Latin inscription which is found at the base of the clock. This reads:

PEREUNT ET IMPUTANTUR

Which words I understand to mean:

"They (the hours) perish and are reckoned to our account."

What an important lesson this is to us! It reminds us of what the Bible tells us: *"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14. 12).*

The Bible tells us of this solemn event: *"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works... And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20, 12, 15).*

Those names which are found in the Book of Life, are of those who have been given divine life by the Holy Spirit in their souls. This life opened their eyes to see, whilst they were on earth, that if they had to give their own account of their days on earth they would be lost. Sin is mixed with all they have ever thought, said or done. Having learned this solemn lesson, they were led to the perfect life of the Lord Jesus Christ, God's own dear Son, and laying aside any hope in themselves, they have laid hold on Christ's blood and righteousness as their only hope of heaven. So His perfect obedience is imputed to them, (notice the word *imputantur*,

which means to account to). Their sins, which He bore away to Calvary and atoned for them there, have been accounted to Him.

What a wonderful mercy it is to be led of the Holy Spirit in this way. None other than those in the Book of Life will be able to give a satisfying account to God in that great day. May it be our prayer, as it is in the hymn of Isaac Watts:

“In Thy fair Book of life and grace,
O may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord the Lamb.”

Now, those whose hope is in the Lord Jesus Christ, desire to live the rest of their days in gratitude to Him to whom they owe so much. This is what the Word of God means when it says: *“Redeeming the time, because the days are evil”* (Ephesians 5. 16).

“IF ANY MAN WILL COME AFTER ME”

Once an Indian lived alone, hunting and trapping in the Selkirk Mountains. His family had all been killed by a band of white hunters, and he grew up a wild young man. After a while, another white man came to the mountains to live. He was kind and patient, and gradually the young Indian came to trust him, and to love him. The white man taught him about Jesus, and slowly he received the knowledge of Him as the sinner's Friend. After many months of seeking, one moonlit night on a mountain peak, the young Indian dressed himself in all his heathen finery, took his white friend's hand, knelt and prayed. Then he rose, and made his confession of his new purpose in life, suiting the action to the word:

“Indian lay down blanket,
Indian lay down pipe,
Indian lay down tomahawk,
Indian lay down Indian.”

Henceforth he desired to live in newness of life unto God.

H. Dawson

*FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES***KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL**

The king of Babylon took men, women and children from Israel as prisoners to his own land far away. Some boys were chosen to learn at the king's palace. After three years they would be brought before the king. Among these boys were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. Every day they were to have wine and meat from the king's table.

The laws of God to Israel forbade them to eat certain meats. Did they forget about God and what they had been taught in Israel? No! These four children wanted to obey God even in this far-off land. Daniel bravely asked if they might be given water and pulse (vegetables) to eat instead. After a trial of ten days, they appeared healthier than all the other boys.

*"As for these four children, God gave them **knowledge and skill** in all learning and wisdom."* After three years, the king found them to be wiser than everyone else. *"Therefore stood they before the king."*

QUESTIONS:

1. Who wanted to obey God in a far off land? (2 words)
2. What did God give them?
3. Who did they stand before?

Contributed

*Send your answers to the Editor (see page 170 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word **ANSWERS** on the envelope.*

ANSWERS TO JULY QUESTIONS

1. A great storm.
2. A great fish.
3. Three.

“ ... for
them that
honour

Me

I will
honour.”

1 Samuel 2. 30.

BIBLE LESSONS**JESUS HEALS THE NOBLEMAN'S SON**

Having passed through Samaria, Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee. You may remember that it was here He performed His first miracle of turning water into wine.

Having seen all that Jesus did in Jerusalem at the feast, the Galileans were pleased to receive Him. The news of His coming passed rapidly from one city to another. The people wanted to see the Prophet who had done such wonderful things and hoped He would come to their cities and perform miracles among them.

One man did not wait for Jesus to come to his city. He lived in Capernaum, a city beside the Sea of Galilee. Having heard that Jesus was come to Cana, he left his home with haste to go to Jesus. This man was a nobleman. A nobleman was of high rank and a ruler in the city. Being a man of wealth and honour, why was he so eager to see Jesus?

Great sorrow had come into the home of this nobleman. His little son was at the point of death. What a trial! The doctors, no doubt, had done all they could, but the little boy grew worse. Thus, the nobleman decided to seek the help of Jesus. All that he heard of Jesus stirred up hope that He would do great things for them.

When he found Jesus, he told Him all about his son and asked Jesus to come down to his house and heal him.

Jesus answered him: *"Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe."* Jesus knew that in spite of the wonders He had already done and would yet do, many of the people would not believe that He was sent of God.

The nobleman was in great distress and pleaded more urgently: *"Sir, come down ere my child die."* He knew that only this Jesus could help.

Although Jesus would not go with him, He did not send him away empty. He gave him a word to hope upon. Jesus answered him: *"Go thy way; thy son liveth."* The faith that brought him to Jesus must now believe the word of Jesus. This

is the trial of faith! He must return to his house, leaning upon the word of Jesus.

As he was going home, he was met by his servants, who told him the wonderful news that his son was completely recovered. The nobleman quickly asked the servants at what time his son began to recover. They answered: "*Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.*"

The nobleman knew that it was at the very hour when Jesus said unto him: "*Thy son liveth.*" How his heart must have run over with joy and praise to God for His mercy and kindness to them!

You can read about this in John chapter 4 verses 43 to 54.

QUESTIONS:

1. What man came to Jesus from Capernaum?
2. What sorrow had come into his home?
3. What did Jesus say the people must see before they would believe?
4. What answer did Jesus give the nobleman? (six words)
5. At what hour did the son recover?

G.L. TenBroeke

Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on page 170). Please mark the envelope: ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.

ANSWERS TO JULY QUESTIONS

1. A Spirit.
 2. In spirit and in truth.
 3. Tell us all things.
 4. Her waterpot.
 5. All things that ever I did.
-

QUESTION: What is sin?

ANSWER: Sin is the transgression of the law of God.

1 John 3. 4.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Those of you who are interested in languages will know that different languages have differing structures of sentences. Those who translate the Word of God into other languages have to understand these differences if they are to give a faithful version of the truth.

One of the examples below is a simple illustration of this point, taken from the very first verse of the Bible. We owe, under God's goodness, a great debt to those who, like William Tyndale for example, have laboured in the painstaking work of translation. He did not have the modern technology of our day, which makes his work in this field all the more remarkable for its accuracy.

Some examples of different grammatical patterns:

English:	My son (Subject)	Loves (Verb)	your daughter (Object)
Latin:	Filius meus <i>son my</i> (Subject)	filiam tuam <i>daughter your</i> (Object)	amat <i>loves</i> (Verb)

These two sentences say the same thing, but their patterns are different.

- English generally puts the object after the verb; Latin usually, but not always, puts the verb last.
- English puts the possessors 'my' and 'your' before the noun, Latin puts possessors after the noun.
- Latin uses different word endings that show whether a word is subject or object, masculine or feminine.

Hebrew is different from both of the above, putting the verb before the subject, and using a prefix to mark the object of the verb:

Bara	Elohim	eth-hash-shamayim	w-eth-ha-arets
<i>made</i>	<i>God</i>	<i>OBJ-the-heavens</i>	<i>and-OBJ-the-earth</i>

"God made the heavens and the earth."

Have languages evolved?

Evolutionists claim that languages evolved from animal grunts. Some even claim that the continuing change of languages is just like biological evolution. However, actual observations of language present a very different picture.

Firstly, ancient languages were actually extremely complex with many different inflections. There is no hint of any build-up from simpler languages. For example: in the Indo-European family, Sanskrit, Classical Greek and Latin had many different noun inflections for different case, gender and number, whilst verbs were inflected for tense, voice, number and person. Modern descendants of these languages have greatly *reduced* the number of inflections, i.e. the trend is from complex to simpler, the *opposite* of evolution. English has almost completely lost inflections, retaining just a few like the possessive “-’s.”

English has also lost 65-85% of the Old English vocabulary, and many Classical Latin words have also been lost from its descendants, the Romance languages (Spanish, French, Italian, etc.).

Secondly, most of the changes were *not* random, but the result of *intelligence*. For example: borrowing words from other languages including calques (a borrowed compound word where each component is translated and then joined).

Creation Magazine (A.K. Steel)

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

The Editor values the loving interest and concern of younger and older readers alike who have written encouraging letters in recent months. We would thank the Lord for any good done through our efforts, as it is His work alone which will prosper.

Answers for the first time have been received over the past few months from BETHANY and VICTORIA CHAPMAN; THOMAS HAYDEN; SIMEON PACK; AARON and ANDREW YMKER.

“A DYING TESTIMONY”

A touching story is told concerning the singing of part of that well-known hymn by Cowper: “There is a fountain filled with blood.” A young man, suffering from cancer, was about to undergo an operation in one of the large hospitals in Scotland.

When the surgeon had made a careful examination, he discovered that the only hope of saving the life of the patient was the removal of his tongue. The young man was already in the operating room when the surgeon, in a tender and sympathetic way, explained to the sufferer that, even though the operation should be successful, he would never again be able to speak and was asked whether there was anything he wished to say before the operation commenced.

For a moment a shadow crossed the brow of the young man at the thought that he would never again be able to testify in song or word for the Master whom he loved. But soon, the shadow passed and a smile lighted up his face. He sat up, lifting up his voice, and sang the hymn: “There is a Fountain filled with blood.”

Before the third verse was reached, not an eye of those who stood around the bed was dry. How he sang! For his heart was in the song. Then came the last verse:

“Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I’ll sing Thy power to save,
When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave.”

Anaesthetic was administered, the operation performed, but alas! the patient never regained consciousness. Thus his last song on earth would be his first in heaven.

“Happy, if with my last breath,
I may but gasp His name:
Preach Him to all, and cry in death
Behold, ‘Behold the Lamb!’”

May the possession of that hope which this young man possessed, so sanctify and consecrate the lives of those who may read this touching story, that, as you pass from time to eternity, your living witness may be crowned with your dying witness – both consisting in lifting up the Son of Man.

Selected

THE LORD, THE GOD OF ELIJAH

Nel and Arie look at each other excitedly. Then they look at their sacks. So full! Hard to believe! Could a train have lost some of its load during the night? Quite possible! But it was as well that they went searching so early this morning. They picked up every bit of wood, but now the two bags are full. There are lots of people about, including children, searching for firewood – of course, everyone needs wood to heat the stove. There is no gas and no electricity – all because the Germans are now in control of the land and they grab everything for themselves.

The children look again at their full sacks. How pleased Mother will be. Now she will be able to get the stove nice and warm, and perhaps this evening there will be a lovely pan of hot food! Nel tries to lift her sack. Oh, that is heavy! Arie has a try. He flexes his muscles, but it is not easy. “We’ll drag them,” says Nel. Arie nods and starts pulling at once. Then he sees some big boys looking their way – it is as well that his big sister, Nel, is with him or they might try to grab his wood.

They pull the sacks from the rail track. It is a long way to home, but they have the time. They cross a main road. It is not busy, for cars are seldom seen – only Germans and their friends are allowed to drive. There is the harbour – it is very busy there.

Nel and Arie take a rest. They are panting. It is quite heavy pulling two fully-laden sacks behind you. “Look at all those boats,” says Nel: “all those long low ships.”

“What do you think is in them?” asks Arie, peering about inquisitively.

"Oh, probably tanks and bullets," suggests Nel: "all for the Germans."

"Will they use them to fight against England?" asks Arie, with a grimace.

"No, no, the English are in the south of our land already. No, the Germans want to be strong here, of course. They are scared that the English will come this way. Be sure, there are lots of bullets in there."

"We must move on," says Nel, and starts pulling again. Arie does his best, too, but he is puffing and panting; and his tummy begins to rumble. He is always hungry, and when the pangs begin he rubs his fist over it, which warms it up and helps a bit. Everybody in Rotterdam is hungry; he knows that. There is hardly anything in the shops. Will Mother have anything this evening? If so, at least she will be able to cook, and it will be nice and warm in the room. That will be fine! Here is their street – almost home!

One morning Arie is rudely awakened. What is that? He can hear a very loud voice which reverberates against the closed window. The voice gets louder, crackles really hard and then re-echoes along the high gables of the houses. Arie leaps out of bed. He hears that Father and Mother are up, too. His eldest sister, Wil, stands white-faced on the landing.

"What is it?"

"Hushhhh," says Father, "the little ones are asleep. That is a German loudspeaker van. They are ordering all men between the ages of 17 and 40 to come outside. A round up. They have done this in other places, too."

He takes a peep through a gap in the curtains. These have to be kept tightly closed because not one ray of light is allowed to shine outside. The Germans are afraid that the English 'planes will find their way to Germany.

"I believe the street corners are blocked," mutters Father with a frown. "I think the whole city is closed." He shakes his

head. "Let us try to get a little more sleep." Arie lies awake in the darkness. Sleep? No, that is no longer possible.

Soon he hears Mother busy in the kitchen and then Father going downstairs. Of course, who can sleep now? As he creeps down in his socks he sees Father with a paper in his hand. "They have pushed this through the door," he says, and shrugs his shoulders. "Well, there is no-one here."

Arie sees Mother open the curtain. It is getting light outside. She looks up the street. "They are working their way along the street," she whispers to Father. He nods and says calmly, "We will start breakfast. Come to the table all of you."

After grace Mother serves the porridge. They sit very quietly eating. Arie spoons it slowly into his mouth. It is warm and tasty. Mother must have been able to obtain some oatmeal. He looks around the table. They are now rather a small group – there is Wil, his big sister, and his two small sisters, Annie and Corry. But Koos, his big 17-year-old brother, now works in Germany. That was sad – would he ever come back? And what about Frans? That was even worse; they have put him in a camp! But it is as well that those two are not at home now, or they would be carried off by the Germans. Oh, he hates those "Huns." What are they doing here? They always used to have enough to eat, but now ... he sighs. It's not good. He always used to do everything with his youngest brother, Walter, but he isn't here any more. That is through the kindness of Rev. Lamain, who had long been their pastor here in Rotterdam South, but about eighteen months back he had accepted a call to Rijssen. But he had not forgotten his old congregation. He must have heard that they were all suffering from hunger here. And then he said that lots of children from the church in Rotterdam could come to Rijssen, where there was food enough. The people in Rijssen just sent an enormous lorry – and it was gigantic! The name Baan & Ten Bolscher was painted in big letters on it. This vehicle brought the children to Rijssen. Walter was among them. It must have

been a pleasant ride, but dangerous too, for aeroplanes often shot at road vehicles. Horrible!

Nel is now in Rijssen, too, but she didn't go in the lorry. She walked all the way with Gerrit. How many hours that must have taken! Certainly lots more than with that super lorry!

Arie sighs. Now he cannot go gathering wood with Nel. Those people in Rijssen must have lots of food, if all those children from Rotterdam can be looked after. Now Gerrit and Walter can renew their strength. They, and he, were no longer able to run down the street. Of course it's fine if you get enough to eat. Then you don't get breathless when you exert yourself. But no, he would rather stay at home!

Suddenly they hear a big noise below. "They are at the Van der Poels', Pa," says Wil, afraid. Father nods. "It sounds as though they are making a big stir over there. But we will carry on eating. We cannot help the Van der Poels now."

They sit there quietly eating and listening ... will they soon be coming up here? Arie looks at his plate, his heart beating wildly. It is so strange, he is so hungry, yet he can hardly eat any more. He looks at Mother. She sits with her eyes closed, and with a start he realises; Mother is praying. She is asking the Lord to watch over them. He sighs again.

"Pass me the Bible, Wil," says Father. Calmly he begins to read, just as always. It all sounds so familiar. But that noise is still persisting below. And then ... they all jump. The door is hammered with a rifle butt. Father stops reading.

"Arie ...," says Father. Arie stands up. His legs begin to tremble – that is horrible – and now he must open the door Look now ... a German soldier!

Quickly he regains his chair, and, as though nothing had happened, Father resumes his reading.

The soldier stands still. He looks around the table and sees the big Bible there. He stays where he is. Arie takes a quick glance sideways. The soldier listens reverently and waits until Father has finished the portion. And then ... when he sees that

Father folds his hands, the soldier politely removes his helmet!

Arie hears nothing of Father's prayer. He can only think of that German soldier, who stands there so reverently by the door When Father has said, "Amen," Arie dares to look again. The soldier is still there by the door standing stiffly to attention. Now he puts his helmet back on, but Arie sees that he has tears in his eyes.

"Are there men here between the ages of 17 and 40?" he asks politely. Arie shivers a bit. Frans ... Koos, they have gone, happily!

"No, there are none," says Father.

The soldier nods. "Good day to you all," says he in a friendly voice, and turns at the door. They hear him clumping down the stairs.

(To be continued)

Translated from the Dutch by M. Banfield

"THE PROPER BIBLE"

(First published in The Friendly Companion October 1975)

At the age of eleven years the time had come for one of our young readers (so we have been told) to leave the infant school in the village and go to a Comprehensive school. It was a Church of England School, where it had long been the custom for the vicar to present each child with a Bible as he or she left the village school. It appears that, in later years at least, the more modern versions had been presented, but being aware of this, and knowing that at the end of term his turn would come, this reader of ours, without any prompting, went to the vicar and said that he would like a "Proper Bible, please – the King James Version." The very happy result was one which reflected great credit on the vicar and the boy – a "Proper Bible" was bought, especially for him.

But then there are already so many even "Proper Bibles" in our land, that have been put on one side, and their teachings called out of date and old-fashioned. God's holy moral law has been amended to fit in with the thoughts of those in high

places who, not believing that man's heart (including their own) is deceitful (Jeremiah 17. 9), have toned it down to what they think it ought to be, and now the "Proper Bible" is proving to them that what it says is still true, and they are caught up in the "whirlwind." So it was foretold of Israel: "They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind" (Hosea 8. 7).

A whirlwind is a very strong and terrible thing. It does not blow directly but in a circular motion, going round and round, and leaving a trail of damage behind it. What a trail of damage is now left in our land, and once started (as it was with the Israelites in their land) none can stop it, until God raises up and sends His deliverance as He did in those days by the hands of the Judges. Even then there were left traces of these whirlwinds, in the lives of such men as Gideon, Samson and Jephthah. We have to be thankful that the "Proper Bible" gives us the full and true picture of the one great blessing these men, and so many more, possessed and that was faith. See Hebrews 11.

When, in days gone by, the mariner could see bad weather approaching, everything moveable was lashed, or tied down, as firmly as it could be, in case it should be blown away by the storm, or "carried about." Paul, who was shipwrecked three times, may have had this in mind when he desired that the Ephesians might not be "carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Ephesians 4. 14 and Hebrews 13. 9). It is true he did not say "whirlwind of doctrine," none-the-less he does refer to two men who came to shipwreck "concerning faith" (1 Timothy 1. 19).

It is very strange that when God would speak to His servant Elijah, at a time when things were going hard with him, that before He spoke He sent three mighty elements before him: a strong wind, so strong that it broke off pieces of the mountain; then an earthquake; then a fire. If you can stop and think how much this must have impressed Elijah, (a heavy thunderstorm

impresses a good many) and then, when it was all over, how great the calm must have been, you will see how fitting was that still small voice with which God spoke to His servant (1 Kings 19. 11,12). The contrast between the storm and the calm made a deep impression outwardly, whilst the “quiet” voice did so inwardly. So did the disciples find the difference after the storm on the lake, when there was a *great calm* (Matthew 8. 26).

God thunders mightily in our “Proper Bible.” He thunders against sin and sinners. No man has ever yet, as far as we know, tried to lessen the noise of the heavy peals of thunder, or the sharp “crack” they make when they are directly overhead. But many are the attempts made in “modern” versions of the Bible to lessen God’s voice when He says: “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God” (Psalm 9. 17). But what a quiet voice it is in the next verse! “The needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever.” What a *great calm* this verse brings. Yet the very Person by whom and through whom this promise is fulfilled is the One that “modern” versions of the Bible try to remove from His place of authority at God’s right hand. But it was a day of triumph for Jesus when He took His disciples through “... Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures” (Luke 24. 44, 45). And it was a day of blessing when it was revealed to one of them, namely Peter, that those same prophets knew that they were not writing for or about themselves: “But unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into” (1 Peter 1. 12)

We also desire to do the same and therefore, like our young reader, ask for a “Proper Bible please, the King James Version.”

The late L.R. Broome (Abridged)

MATHEMATICS (I)

At school, we learn the four basic principles of mathematics: adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing. Did you know that the Bible mentions all of these? It may be interesting and profitable to consider some examples from the Scriptures.

Addition

When we add two things together, there is an increase. I wonder if you know which Bible name means “adding?” The name is Joseph. You will remember that his mother, Rachel, could not have children. Her sister, Leah, had six sons and a daughter, but Rachel had none. Rachel envied her sister – how sad! But “God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb. And she conceived, and bare a son And she called his name Joseph; and said, The LORD shall **add** to me another son.” She believed she would have another, and in due time Benjamin was born, but sadly Rachel died giving birth to him.

The Lord Jesus spoke to His disciples of the importance of spiritual things above the things of this life. He reminded them: “Which of you with taking thought can **add** to his stature one cubit?” It is impossible for man to do, but Jesus called it “that thing which is least.” He exhorted them not to seek after what to eat or drink. For their comfort, Jesus went on to say: “Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be **added** unto you.” (See Luke 12. 25-34)

Jesus gives blessings to His people. He says: “Not as the world giveth, give I unto you.” No. “The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and He **addeth** no sorrow with it” (Proverbs 10. 22). May that blessing be ours!

We read a number of times in the Acts of the Apostles that the blessing of the Lord was upon the preaching of the gospel. “Then they that gladly received His word were baptized: and the same day there were **added** unto them about three thousand souls” (2. 41). “And the Lord **added** to the church daily such as should be saved” (2. 47). “And believers were the

more **added** to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (5. 14). "And much people was **added** unto the Lord" (11. 24). Oh, for these blessings in our day!

There are a number of other scriptures that mention adding, which you may like to find. The last reference to adding is a very solemn one in the last chapter of the Bible. "If any man shall **add** unto these things, God shall **add** unto him the plagues that are written in this Book" (Revelation 22. 18). We would not include more in the written Scripture, but we can add to Scripture in other ways: for instance, by using it to fit our own thoughts. The Pharisees did this by requiring the keeping of their tradition. The false preachers at Galatia required the Galatians to be circumcised under the law. Others use the Word of God to promote social and political ends; but the Lord Jesus says: "My kingdom is not of this world." May we be kept from such solemn things.

Contributed

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

THE DOCTRINE OF TRUTH

The Covenant of Grace

The word 'covenant' means an agreement. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost agreed before the foundation of the world, to save some of the human race from their sins. They agreed that God the Son would become a Man, and as a Man would live in this world and suffer, bleed and die on the cross of Calvary. On the third day He would rise from the dead and then ascend bodily into heaven. All this He has done for His people. It was agreed that the holy obedience of the Man Christ Jesus would be their righteousness; His sufferings and death were in their room, for their sakes; He rose from the grave to destroy death for them; He ascended bodily into heaven to open the gates of heaven for them. All this was decreed and purposed by the Almighty Lord God before the world was made.

The word 'grace' means the free, unmerited favour of God. We do not and cannot deserve or work for God's favour: it is freely given. It was also agreed that the Holy Spirit would sanctify all that the Father had chosen in Christ. The word 'sanctify' means to separate. The Lord's people were sanctified in Christ by the Father and they are sanctified by the Holy Spirit when He calls them by grace and gives them spiritual life.

Let us look at some of the scriptures regarding this covenant. King David said: "Although my house be not so with God; yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although He make it not to grow" (2 Samuel 23. 5); "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and My covenant shall stand fast with him" (Psalm 89. 28). "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant" (Hebrews 13. 20). This is the glory of the New Testament.

There is the covenant of the law, the Old Testament, then the covenant of the gospel. The Apostle refers to this in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in My covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people" (Hebrews 8. 9-10).

J.R. Rutt

"The compassion of Christ inclines Him to save sinners; the power of Christ enables Him to save sinners; the promise of Christ binds Him to save sinners."

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about the PEACE WHICH THE LORD JESUS GIVES. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor (see page 170 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace." Who proclaimed this and when? (Luke 2. 14)
2. Who said concerning the Lord Jesus: "Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest"? (Luke 19. 37-38)
3. What three words did Jesus speak to the storm, which showed His divine authority? (Mark 4. 39)
4. Which name or title of the Lord Jesus refers to His ability to make peace? (Isaiah 9. 6)
5. Several times the Lord Jesus said to those whom He had healed, words such as: "Thy faith hath saved thee." What three words did He often join with it? (Mark 5. 34, Luke 7. 50, 8. 48)
6. How does God's Word describe "the peace of God" and its gracious effect? (Philippians 4)
7. Which words in John 20 did the Lord Jesus speak three times to His troubled disciples?
8. How can man be at peace with God? (Romans 5, Colossians 1)
9. Write out the verse in which Jesus declares that the peace He gives is very different from that which the world gives. (John 14)
10. Where in the Bible do we read of war in heaven? What was the result of the war?

ANSWERS TO JULY QUESTIONS

1. "Lord, that I may receive my sight."
2. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."
3. "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me."
4. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent."
5. "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

6. "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (Luke 10. 25)
7. The mariners were speaking to Jonah. (Jonah 1. 11)
8. "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." (Luke 12. 20)
9. "How can I go?" (1 Samuel 16. 2)
10. John the Baptist. (Luke 3. 10-14)

Contributed

"I AM THE WAY"

Jesus , my All, to heaven is gone,
He whom I fix my hopes upon;
His track I see, and I'll pursue
The narrow way, till Him I view.

The way the holy prophets went,
The road that leads from banishment,
The King's highway of holiness
I'll go, for all His paths are peace.

This is the way I long have sought,
And mourned because I found it not;
My grief and burden long has been,
Because I could not cease from sin.

The more I strove against its power,
I sinned and stumbled but the more:
Till late I heard my Saviour say,
"Come hither, soul, I am the Way!"

Lo! glad I come; and Thou, blest Lamb,
Shalt take me to Thee as I am!
Nothing but sin I Thee can give;
Nothing but love shall I receive.

Then will I tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour I have found!
I'll point to Thy redeeming blood,
And say, "Behold the way to God."

J. Cennick

The Friendly Companion



Bill the Diver (William Walker)

“And let us not be weary in well doing:
for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”
(Galatians 6. 9.)

July 2006

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All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Price 50 pence monthly, plus postage.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A.	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£10.00	\$42	A\$55	€27.00

All correspondence concerning subscriptions should be
addressed to Mr. H. Mercer, 8 Fairleigh Rise, Kington Langley,
Chippenham, Wilts. SN15 5QF.

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

As I sit down to write to you again, I realise that unless the Lord helps me to write, then whatever appears on this page will be of no help to you nor of honour to the Lord. Often we feel as Elijah must have done when he was on Mount Carmel and the servant came back from the top of the mountain with the news that “there is nothing.” Of course, the “nothing” referred to the lack of clouds which would give the hope of rain. The Lord had said to Elijah that He would send rain on the earth after Elijah had showed himself to King Ahab. This was done, but where was the rain?

Not deterred by “nothing,” Elijah carried on praying, whilst he sent his servant to return up the mountain with the command: “Go again seven times.” We admire the perseverance of Elijah in prayer, and the servant in obeying.

At the seventh time, God’s perfect time, a little cloud appeared like a man’s hand. Was this enough for Elijah’s faith as an answer? Yes! He knew that His God was the Creator of “all things great and small” and that it was nothing to Him to fill the sky with clouds and bring the promised rain, which in a short space of time He did.

This instance is a lesson to us in several ways:

Firstly, Elijah obeyed the command of the Lord in showing himself to Ahab, a potentially dangerous course, believing that God would take care of him.

Secondly, although the Lord had promised rain, Elijah did not neglect to pray for it. One of the best witnesses that a promise is from the Lord, is if it makes us pray.

Thirdly, Elijah was not deterred by the word “nothing.” It made him pray all the more for the blessing God had promised until that little cloud appeared.

Finally, Elijah did not despise the little cloud, as he knew that there was more to follow.

Speaking of this incident, James says: “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5. 16).

It may be with you as with Elijah. The promise has been given, but as yet “there is nothing” to suggest that God is fulfilling it. Then may you seek grace to heed the command given to Elijah’s servant: “Go again seven times.”

“He Himself has bid thee pray, therefore will not say thee, nay.”

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Some of our readers will know that the magnificent cathedral at Winchester is built on marshland. In the early years of the nineteenth century the weight of the huge edifice caused the foundations to begin to sink and urgent action was needed. In the space of five years a local diver, by the name of William Walker, worked in the cramped and flooded spaces under the foundations, single-handedly lifting into place some one million bricks and concrete blocks, in total darkness under the sinking building. It is his statue which is to be found in the cathedral precincts, that appears on our front cover.

This was, of course, not only a dangerous undertaking for William, but one which required incredible patience and perseverance. It would be nice to think that he was a man of prayer but we are not told this.

It reminds us of another builder, whom the Bible calls “a wise masterbuilder.” He was the Apostle Paul, who warned the church at Corinth to be careful how they built the spiritual church of God. He said: “According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 3. 10-11).

That foundation will never sink under the weight of the church of Christ built upon it. It needs no efforts of man to support it. It is supported by the eternal Rock of the covenant of grace which will stand when time shall be no more.

EXPERIENCE MORE VALUABLE THAN THEORY!

Many years ago a Chief Justice of England was staying at the stately home of a nobleman in Essex. Going out for a walk with the gentleman from the house, they came across the village stocks. (You will remember that criminals were “put in the stocks,” their arms fastened through two holes and their legs through two holes.)

The Chief Justice was interested and felt that he would like to know from experience what it felt like to be “put in the stocks.” So he asked his companion to unfasten them and then put him in – which was done.

Sadly, his friend was a man noted for absent-mindedness – and taking a book from his pocket he wandered off by himself, forgetting completely about the Chief Justice, and returning to the nobleman’s home.

After a time the Chief Justice found it very uncomfortable and tried to get free, but in vain. At last, seeing an old countryman passing by, he begged him to let him out.

“No, old man,” said the countryman, “you were not put there for nothing!”

At length a servant was sent out in search of him, and set him free.

Some time later the Chief Justice was presiding at a trial when the stocks were mentioned, the point being that it was no punishment at all to be put in the stocks. Leaning over the bench he asked the one who had so spoken: “Have you ever been in the stocks?” Of course, the reply was a surprised, “No.” “But I have,” ruefully said the Justice, “and I can assure you it is not as easy as you think!”

How helpful is a little experience!

Selected

QUESTION: Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?

ANSWER: Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created by sinning against God.

(Genesis 3; Ecclesiastes 7. 29)

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**JONAH CRIES AND THE LORD HEARS**

The prophet Jonah was in great trouble. He had disobeyed the LORD. Instead of going to preach to the people of Nineveh, he went into a ship to flee from the presence of the LORD. The LORD sent a great storm upon the sea, and the ship was likely to be broken in pieces. Jonah told the men to throw him into the sea: *"for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you."*

Did the LORD allow Jonah to drown in the sea? No. He *"had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah."* For three days and nights Jonah was in the belly of the fish. How dark and hopeless it must have seemed! Jonah said: *"When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto Thee."* The LORD heard Jonah's cries, and He *"spoke unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land."*

There is never a place that is too far off for the Lord to hear. *"For Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Thee."*

QUESTIONS:

1. What did the LORD send upon the sea?
2. What did the LORD prepare to swallow up Jonah?
3. How many days and nights was Jonah there?

Send your answers to the Editor (see page 146 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

Contributed

ANSWERS TO JUNE QUESTIONS

1. The altar of the LORD.
2. Hear me, O LORD.
3. Fire.

*“Out
of the
depths
have I
cried
unto Thee,
O LORD.”
Psalm 130. 1.*

BIBLE LESSONS

THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA (II)

When Jesus told the woman that He would give her *“living water,”* she wondered where He could get such water. She answered: *“Sir, Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast Thou that living water?”*

She asked if He was greater than Jacob, who had dug this well that was still supplying water for the people so many hundreds of years later. The woman began to realize there was something different about the Lord Jesus from other Jews.

Again Jesus said: *“Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”*

The woman thought it would be nice to have such water: then she would no longer have to come and haul water back to her house. She quickly answered: *“Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.”*

However, Jesus was not talking about any earthly water. The water He spoke of was that grace which the Spirit works in the heart. In times of trouble and sorrow, grace refreshes, comforts, and revives the soul like a drink of cool water to natural thirst.

The very purpose of Jesus in meeting her at the well, was to give her this water (grace). First, He would show her all her sins. He told her to go home and get her husband. *“I have no husband,”* answered the woman. The Lord told her that in this she had spoken the truth. He then added: *“Thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband.”* She was living in sin. The woman wondered how He knew so much about her. She answered: *“Sir, I perceive that Thou art a prophet.”*

She began to reason with Him, whether the Jews at Jerusalem or the Samaritans in their mountain, worshipped God aright. Jesus answered that neither in that mountain nor

in Jerusalem would the people worship God. But the hour was come: "... *when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for ... God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.*"

Again, the woman answered: "*I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things.*" What surprise and wonder overcame her when Jesus answered: "*I that speak unto thee am He.*"

At that moment His disciples returned from the village. They were all amazed that Jesus would speak to a Samaritan. The woman quickly departed, leaving her waterpot. The words of Jesus made her forget what she came for. When the woman returned to the city, she began to tell the people all about the wonderful stranger she had met. She said to them: "*Come, see a Man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?*"

Many of the Samaritans believed the woman's words. They went out to see Jesus and asked Him to stay with them. They too, were amazed by His words. After two days of hearing Jesus teach, they confessed: "... *this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.*"

Whilst the woman was away in the city, the disciples urged Jesus to eat of the food they had brought. However, Jesus told them He had meat to eat which they knew not of. The disciples were perplexed, wondering if anybody had brought Him food. Jesus told them: "*My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.*"

You can read about this in John chapter 4 verses 11 to 42.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Jesus tell the woman that God is?
2. How did He say the people must worship Him? (5 words)
3. What did the woman say Messias would do when He came? (4 words)
4. What did the woman leave behind when she left Jesus?
5. What did the woman say Jesus had told her? (6 words)

Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on page 146). Please mark the envelope ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.

G.L. TenBroeke

ANSWERS TO JUNE QUESTIONS

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| 1. To save a poor sinner. | 4. "I thirst." |
| 2. Jacob. | 5. Living Water. |
| 3. A drink of water. | |
-

ON HOLIDAY BY THE SEA

As holiday time draws near once more, we are glad to publish the following, which appeared in the Tamworth Road, Croydon, monthly Sunday School letter in 1983. It was written by the late Mr. D.F. Dickinson.

I wonder how many of you while on holiday will think of the wonders of creation as you look at the hills, trees and sea, and thank God for His kindness in enabling you to enjoy the time spent on holiday?

Recently I was favoured to spend some time in the south of Cornwall and learned many lessons from the scenery of that rugged coast and the mighty breakers rolling in from the Atlantic Ocean.

One day, sitting on the sands watching those breakers and the incoming tide, I saw some boys and girls building a huge sand castle with a wall of sand around it to try to keep the sea from washing over it. In the distance I also saw some rocks on which the waves broke with a mighty spray. Eventually the tide started to come in and the rocks gradually disappeared under the mighty waves. Soon the sea was up to the wall of sand, but you know the wall of sand could not stop it. The wall was soon covered and the sand castle soon under the water. In time the tide went out and I looked for our sand castle but could not see it. The sand was flat and if I had not seen that castle before, I would never have known it had been there. I

then looked for the rocks. Yes! They were still there; as firm as ever they had been. I walked over to look at them and found that with the continual pounding of the sea most of their sharp edges had been made smooth. What did I think about?

I thought first of our sand castle. It reminded me of all of us as we are born into this world, dead in sins, without God. Although we might have learned about God in our heads (and this is right to do), without a saving knowledge of Him in our hearts and a trust in Him in times of trouble, our religion will be like our sand castle. It will all disappear.

I then thought of those rocks. They reminded me of those who know God in their hearts and who can say with the Psalmist: "But I have trusted in Thy mercy," even when trials and sorrows like those mighty breakers have come into their lives and they may feel that all is too much for them to endure:

"But here's our point of rest:
Though hard the battle seem,
Our Captain stood the fiery test,
And we shall stand through Him."

But what had the constant breaking of the waves over those rocks done to them? They had worn away some of those rough edges. So it is with God's people. They had "sharp edges" once, but by the dealings of God with them in their souls, most of those "sharp edges" have been made smooth. Perhaps this is something you do not at present understand, but may God teach you by His Spirit to know these things in your hearts.

One more thought about those rocks, which our older friends may consider. The thought was of the Rock, Christ Jesus. All the billows of God's wrath for the sins of His people passed over Him, submerging Him, yet He endured all for His people's sake and is now exalted at the right hand of God in heaven. Mr. Hart so clearly describes with deep reverence what I cannot, in Hymn 153.

May the Lord bless you each and teach you your need of Him.

“YON LOVELY MAN”**The story of simple Yeddie**

How often God chooses “the foolish things of the world to confound the wise”! Many years ago there lived in a Highland village a young lad whom the folk in that neighbourhood knew as “Yeddie.”

Yeddie was supported by the “Parish” as he was incapable of performing any real work, and he would spend his day in wandering from one croft to another to listen to the folks discuss the news of the day. He had little power of conversation, and would sometimes take to whispering to himself as he passed along the little tracks, or through the fields. One day he was overheard by one of his own age group, who thought that he would poke some fun at the harmless lad. “What ghost or goblin are you begging favours of now, Yeddie?” he asked. “Neither the one nor the other, laddie,” Yeddie replied, “but I was just having a few words with Him that neither yourself nor I can see, but who sees both of us!”

One day just prior to the communion season, Yeddie called on the minister of the church. “Please, minister,” he said, screwing his coarse cap in his hands, “let poor Yeddie eat supper on the coming day with the Lord Jesus.” The minister was busy preparing for the coming communion, and tried to put Yeddie off in as gentle a way as possible; but Yeddie pleaded with him ... “Oh minister, if ye but kened how I love Him, ye wud let me go when He is to sit at the table.” This touched the minister so much that Yeddie was told to come and take his place on the following Lord’s Day.

During the first part of the service, tears flowed freely down poor Yeddie’s face, and he was heard to repeat: “But I dinna see Him, I dinna see Him.” Soon the bread and the wine were passed around, and, as Yeddie partook of the “elements” in remembrance of the death of the Saviour, the tears fell away from his face, and he nodded his head and smiled.

As Yeddie made his way from the “Feast,” one after another

spoke to him and greeted him, but Yeddie had no word for any of them.

Presently, some of the boys from the village cornered him and forced him to say something. "Ah, lads," he said, "dinna bid Yeddie talk today! He's seen the face o' the Lord Jesus among His ain ones. He got a smile from His eyes and a word frae His tongue; and he's afeard to speak lest he lose the memory of it, for it's but a bad memory that he has at the best. Ah lads, I hae seen Him this day that I never see'd before. I hae seen Him with these dull eyes, YON LOVELY MAN. Dinna speak, but just leave poor Yeddie to His company."

Soon Yeddie reached the humble croft that he shared with his aged grandmother. "No meat for me today, granny," he told the old lady. "I hae had a feast that I will feel within me for as long as I live." He climbed the ladder into the loft which was the only bedroom that he had ever known, and throughout the night, until she fell asleep, the old woman heard Yeddie speak with "yon lovely Man." ... "Lord, it's poor me that has been sae long seeking Ye; and now we'll bide thegither and never part more! Oh, but this bonny loft, all gold and precious stones. The hall o' the castle is a poor place to my loft this bonny night!"

Next morning, the old lady was up and about her chores. She set her humble table and made the porridge that was to be Yeddie's breakfast. She remembered that he had no meal going to bed, so she went to the foot of the ladder and called him to come and eat. The loft was still; she called again but there was no answer. Venturing up the steps to the loft that she had not been in for years, she pushed her head and shoulders through the trap door. There, in one corner of the room, before a rough stool, she saw Yeddie. He was half kneeling, half crouching with his head resting on his folded arms. "He must have fallen asleep at his prayers," the old woman thought; but, as she went over and touched the still form, she recoiled in horror. Yeddie would never need to seek

the face of Jesus among his fellows any more. As he had supped at the table, so he has slept – with “yon lovely Man.”

A deep impression was made on the neighbourhood by the death of Yeddie. Jesus had, of a truth, visited that place and was made known to “the foolish,” although missed the “wise” and “rich” and “great.” From the day of his funeral many laid aside their vain attempts to “know Christ” through worldly wisdom and learning, and were taught to rest in the faith of the poor lad who had seen “yon lovely Man.”

The Wicket Gate Magazine

ANNE OF BOHEMIA, QUEEN OF RICHARD II (1367-1394)

Anne of Bohemia lived in the time of John Wycliffe, and was a help to him and to the Reformation. She was the eldest daughter of the Emperor Charles IV, and the sister of King Wenceslaus, King of Bohemia and Emperor of Germany. Her mother was the fourth wife of Charles IV, and the daughter of Beleslaus, Duke of Pomerania, and the granddaughter of Cassimir the Great, King of Poland. Anne was born in Prague, in Bohemia, around the year 1367.

Anne was taught the truths of Scripture from her youth. In Bohemia, at that time, there were several ministers to whom the people listened eagerly. Their names were John Melice, Conrad Strickna, and Matthias Janovius. Anne was an intelligent young lady, and asked many questions about the Scriptures and the truths in its pages. The Lord blessed her studies, and she not only learned much about the Scriptures and the errors of the church, but she loved the Author of the Scriptures.

Richard II was the son of Edward, Prince of Wales. Sometimes he was called the Black Prince because he wore dark-coloured armour. His mother's name was Joan, a brave woman who defended Wycliffe, and the truth. Richard was born at Bourdeaux in 1367. His father died in 1376, and his grandfather the following year, so Richard became King at the young age of ten.

When he was thirteen years old, he heard about Anne of Bohemia, and thought she would be a good wife for him. When they were fifteen years old, on January 14, 1382, Anne became the wife of Richard. Although she had never met Richard, Anne had heard that the writings of John Wycliffe had begun a revival in England, so she was happy to go to that country to marry King Richard.

Anne took friends and servants who were sound in their beliefs, with her to England. The people of England loved her immediately. She was gentle and kind. She tried to help the poor, the orphans, and widows. It is said that as many as six thousand people ate from the royal table every day, most of whom were poor. She thought about how Jesus had compassion on the crowds, and fed them miraculously, so that they wouldn't be hungry. Christians should be like their Master and that is why Anne wanted to help the needy. It is no wonder the people called her "good Queen Anne." King Richard was pleased with this kind Queen, and he loved her very much.

In England, Anne continued to read and study the Scriptures. She had copies of the gospels in three languages: Bohemian, English, and Latin. In those days, even a page of Scripture was a treasure. Few people had ever seen a page or a book of the Bible. The young Queen was happy to have the gospels in these three languages.

Queen Anne was not afraid to talk about the Bible. She once spoke with Arundel, the Archbishop of York, and told him how she loved to read the Bible. Arundel, like most Roman Catholics in those days, did not appreciate the Bible, and did not want people to read it. He was alarmed to hear that the Queen had copies of the gospels, and that she was reading them. But he could say nothing, since she was the Queen of England.

Wycliffe was delighted to hear that the Queen loved to read and study the Scriptures. He compared her to Mary, who sat at

Jesus' feet to listen to what He had to say. Wycliffe was encouraged that she was reading an English translation of the gospels.

Queen Anne gave her protection to Wycliffe, since he had many enemies. Often she would go to her husband and gently plead with him on his behalf. She would read passages of Scripture to him, such as Matthew 23. 34, 35: "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." King Richard did not want to be guilty of killing one of God's prophets, so he listened to the words of his loving wife. Sadly, Wycliffe lived only three years more after Queen Anne came to live in England.

In the spring of 1394, Queen Anne became ill. She weakened rapidly, and, on June 7, she died. She was only twenty-seven years old. The King was devastated, and the people mourned deeply.

The Lord had His divine purpose in Queen Anne's life as well as in her death. After the young Queen's death, many of her friends and servants returned to Bohemia. They took with them the translations of the gospels and some of the writings of Wycliffe, which had been so treasured by Queen Anne. Some of these friends and servants had known the Queen since she was a child, and had learned many things about the Bible from her. Some of her friends remained in England to attend the university of Oxford, telling others what they had heard and learned from Queen Anne, while the friends who returned to Bohemia told people there about their beloved Queen and what she had taught them from Scripture. So the seeds of the Reformation were spread throughout Bohemia and England with the blessing of the Lord.

(Bohemia is present-day Czechoslovakia.)

Selected

THE OLD SOLDIER

In Vienna, some years ago, an old soldier used to stand in the cool of the evening in one of the public resorts, playing on his violin, hoping to attract the sympathy of passers-by, and thereby obtain alms from them. A dog, his faithful companion, was always with him and held his cap to receive the pence which might be given.

One evening, tired and sad, the old soldier stood at his corner and played as usual. He was very hungry, but no one seemed to notice him, and not a single copper found its way to his possession. At last, overcome with want and disappointment, the poor old man stopped his music, and burying his face in his hands, sobbed like a child.

Just then, a gentleman passed and noticed his distress, and, guessing the reason, was about to drop a coin into the old man's hand, but a second thought struck him and he paused, and kindly said: "Give me the violin and let me play a little." Then, telling the soldier to take all the money that might be given, he began to play. A crowd soon gathered around, both to watch the strange sight of the old soldier and his dog, and the gentleman in wig and silk stockings, standing together; but also to listen to the sweet music the stranger fetched from the violin, and not only copper, but silver, was showered into the old man's cap.

Thus, having made glad a poor distressed heart, the stranger went his way, glad also himself. He was one of the great violinists of the day who had thus so nobly lent his talent to perform a deed of kindness – beautiful as well as noble; and the poor fiddler was thus relieved of a heavy load, as he counted the money received, and found it sufficient to provide for his wants for many a day to come. "The LORD is good (or kind) to all," says the Psalmist, but what a mercy if we know something of His *loving* kindness, which, says one: "is better than life."

Henry R. Knight
Protestant Echo

"IS IT WELL WITH THE CHILD?"

This is a word for children. "Is it well with the child?" Not somebody else's child, but you personally. When I was young, they used to call people "a child" a lot longer than they do today. We did not have expressions like *teenager*. When I was a boy, I suppose a thirteen or fourteen-year-old then was called a child. But taking this in a more large, general sense, whatever you call a child – an infant, a little one, a boy, a girl, a teenager, a young person – we will comprehend it all here: "Is it well with the child?"

There is a word which says this: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Sooner or later the evil day will come in which you will say: "I have no pleasure in them." But, "Remember *now*," and that is a word a lot of boys and girls do not like. They like to come to chapel; they are happy to come to chapel; but it is that *now*. When I am older, later on in life, before I die. "*Now*," says the Lord. "*Now*." "Remember *now* thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Remember that God is your Creator. Remember that because God created you He gave you a holy law to obey. Remember that you have broken that holy law, you have sinned against it. Remember that though you have not the ability to obey the Creator's law, He still has the right to demand obedience and still has the authority to condemn those who have disobeyed His holy law. "Remember now thy Creator."

"Is it well with the child?" But remember that the Creator Himself left heaven for earth and went to Calvary that there might be a way of salvation, a way of hope. One could say: "'Twas our Creator for us bled, the Lord of life and power." Remember this. "Remember now thy Creator" in Gethsemane and on the cross, and remember this is the only way of salvation, the only way to heaven. Remember this, that if you are to be right at last, if you are to be manifest as one of God's people, if you are to be saved in the Lord, you must be born

again. And the effect of the new birth will be this: that you as a sinner will be brought to the cross of Christ to seek salvation only there.

“Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well” (2 Kings 4. 26). There is another word, a word of warning, in Ecclesiastes as well as, “Remember thy Creator,” and it is this: “Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth.” This is almost being spoken, shall we say, ironically. Go on, young man, go on, girl and boy, go on your own ways. Go on doing what you want. Go on forgetting about God. Go on taking things for granted. “Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: *but know thou*, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment” (Ecclesiastes 11. 9). So go on, follow your own ways, seek your own desires, enjoy yourself, forget God, have a good time – “*But know thou*, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.”

B.A.R

GEORGE WASHINGTON

General Washington, when quite young, was about to go to sea as a midshipman; everything was arranged, the vessel lay opposite his father's house, the little boat had come to shore to take him off, and his whole heart was bent on going. After his trunk had been carried down to the boat, he went to bid his mother farewell, and saw the tears bursting from her eyes. However, he said nothing to her; but he saw that his mother would be distressed if he went, and perhaps never be happy again. He just turned to the servant and said: “Go and tell them to fetch my trunk back. I will not go away to break my mother's heart.” His mother was struck with his decision, and she said to him: “George, God has promised to bless the children that honour their parents, and I believe He will bless *you*.”

Protestant Echo

THE WILL OF GOD

The deep and mysterious subject of the will of God has exercised the hearts of many who fear His holy name. The following thoughts from the pen of J. C. Philpot may be helpful to understand this great deep.

There are three distinct words rendered *will* in the New Testament. One means the *wish* of God: that is what God wishes or desires to be done; the second, the *counsel* of God, that is: what God has deliberated upon in His own eternal mind as fit to be done; the third, the *purpose* of God, that is: what God has decreed to be done.

The first is used most frequently, as in Matthew 6. 10, Matthew 18. 14, and John 4. 34.

The second occurs in Acts 13. 36 and Romans 9. 19, for example, but is generally translated “counsel” or “purpose” as in Luke 7. 30 and Acts 2. 23.

The third is rendered “will” in Revelation 17. 17, but elsewhere is translated “mind,” “judgment” or “purpose” as in Acts 20. 3; 1 Corinthians 1. 10, and Philemon 14.

So, in Revelation 17. 17 the words: “For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will, and to agree ...” is literally rendered: “For God hath given into their hearts to do His purpose, and to do one purpose.” In this verse then, the word rendered the *will* of God means rather “the *mind*” or “*purpose*” of God; and is generally so rendered in our translation (Authorised Version).

J. C. Philpot

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

“In going to and coming from chapel, I had to pass by my landlord’s house. As I returned home one Sabbath, he was working in his garden, and as I passed he looked up and said: ‘Good morning C—. I suppose you think I am a very wicked man working in my garden on a Sunday.’

I gave no immediate answer, knowing that I had to be very careful, for in those days he could have given me short notice

to quit my farm. I went on some few steps, begging the Lord to help me and give me wisdom, and then returned and said: 'Sir, don't take any notice of what poor old S.C. has to say, for he is an ignorant, foolish sinner, but if you have a Bible, you go and see what it says, and if it gives you permission to do as you are doing, then you carry on, but if it forbids you, then remember that one day you and I have to give an account to a Holy God.' He looked hard at me with open mouth, and could not reply.

Thereafter I never saw him in his garden on a Lord's Day, but could see what he had been doing whilst I was at chapel."

Contributed

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

THE DOCTRINE OF TRUTH

The Doctrine of Election

This sacred fundamental doctrine teaches believers that they were chosen in Christ before the world was created. The eternal Father chose a people from the ruins of the fall of Adam; a number that no man can number from every nation, kindred, tongue and people. The eternal Father loves them in Christ, chose them in Christ, redeemed them in Christ, and sanctifies them in Christ. At the appointed time He sends the Holy Spirit into their hearts, because they were redeemed in Christ; the Holy Spirit gives them spiritual life; they begin to feel, to hunger, to thirst. They feel a spiritual need, hence these terms "hunger," "thirst."

The only real evidence we can ever have that we are one of God's chosen, is the new birth. This is why it is recorded of Nicodemus: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God " (John 3. 3).

One of the most beautiful passages of Scripture on this doctrine is in Ephesians 1: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual

blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; Wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself ” (Ephesians 1. 3-9).

Also in Romans 8: “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? ” (Romans 8. 28-32).

Let us look at the beautiful prayer of the Lord Jesus: “I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy word ” (John 17. 6). Also the Lord Jesus said: “All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day ” (John 6. 37-39).

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are based around the question: "WHAT SHALL I DO?" Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor (see page 146 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

What answer was given to the following questions (1-5)?

1. "What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?" (Luke 18. 41)
2. "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16. 30)
3. "Lord, and what shall this man do?" (John 21. 21)
4. "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" (John 6. 28)
5. "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" (Acts 9. 6)
6. Jesus asked: "What is written in the Law? how readest thou?" in response to a previous question. What was it? (Luke 10)
7. Who said: "What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us?" and to whom were they speaking? (Jonah 1)
8. "What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?" What did God reply to the answer given to this? (Luke 12)
9. To which question did God give the answer: "I will shew thee what thou shalt do"? (1 Samuel 16)
10. Who was asked three times in succession: "What shall we do?" (Luke)

ANSWERS TO JUNE QUESTIONS

1. An understanding heart.
2. Enoch, faith.
3. "They that are in the flesh."
4. "Obey your parents in all things."
5. "Them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy."
6. The foolishness of preaching. (1 Corinthians 1. 21)
7. "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12. 32)
8. Lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness. (Jeremiah 9. 24)
9. "To do good and to communicate." (Hebrews 13. 16)
10. At the baptism of the Lord Jesus. On the mount of transfiguration. (Matthew 3. 17; 17. 5)

Contributed

GOD

Who gave the sun its warmth and light?
Who made the moon that shines so bright,
And all the stars that glow at night? – GOD!

Who made the earth that gives us grain?
Who feeds it both with dew and rain?
Who made each beast that treads the plain? – GOD!

Who by His will in bounds doth keep
The great and wild waves of the deep?
Who made all things that swim or creep? – GOD!

Who gave the air we breathe, or die?
Who made the bird that soars on high?
Who taught its wings the way to fly? – GOD!

Who gave us life, and all we prize?
Who shields us when we close our eyes?
Who guards us when at morn we rise? – GOD!

Who sends the sweet sleep to my bed?
By whom are all the wild birds fed?
Who gives to me each day my bread? – GOD!

Who knows each thing that, night or day,
I dream or think, or do or say?
Who hears His children when they pray? – GOD!

Selected

Hugh Miller, a famous stonemason, tells of the man with whom he served his apprenticeship. “He put his conscience into every stone that he laid.” What an example for us each in whatever sphere of life we may be called to serve.

The Friendly Companion



“Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”
(Ephesians 5. 16)

August 2006

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All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Price 50 pence monthly, plus postage.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A.	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£10.00	\$42	A\$55	€27.00

All correspondence concerning subscriptions should be addressed to Mr. H. Mercer, 8 Fairleigh Rise, Kington Langley, Chippenham, Wilts. SN15 5QF.

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

You will all be familiar with the account of David and Goliath. Have you ever wondered how Goliath could hold a spear, a sword and a shield with just two hands? The answer is, of course, that Goliath had an armour-bearer. This man would carry the shield in front of his master to wield off any stones, spears or arrows which might be directed at him. I expect he had become very skilled at this and, no doubt, Goliath owed his life more than once to the skill of his armour-bearer, as well as to his own prowess. It was this which made him so confident that young David would not be a match for him. After all, where were David's sword, spear and shield? All that he had was a sling and five smooth stones.

But David had an unseen Shield – the Name of the Lord God of Hosts. Not only that, David's God directed the one stone that David slung: right past the armour-bearer to the only weak spot in Goliath's armour, between his eyes. We all know the outcome. Goliath falls, and David gains the victory for Israel through His God. God gave Goliath into David's hands.

These events teach us how we are to deal with the giants that come against us, the greatest of whom is Giant Self! How we need the power of God to overcome self. Martin Luther once said: "Oh, that I had not a myself." We can read in Romans 7 of the battle that Paul had with himself, but we also read of the victory "through Jesus Christ our Lord."

I wonder if the verse below describes any of our readers?

"The more I strove against sin's power,
I sinned and stumbled but the more;
Till late I heard my Saviour say,
Come hither, soul, I am the Way."

You will find the complete hymn on page 192. Read it through, and may the Holy Spirit reveal to you the way of salvation as He did to the hymn writer.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The unusual clock shown on our front cover picture this month, is of the cathedral clock at Exeter. It has been there since 1484, placed in the transept of the north tower. Underneath the clock, a door into the tower is to be seen, which has a hole in it for a cat to pass through to catch the mice and rats in the tower! In the fifteenth century one penny a week was given to feed the cat.

However, of much more important interest to us is the Latin inscription which is found at the base of the clock. This reads:

PEREUNT ET IMPUTANTUR

Which words I understand to mean:

"They (the hours) perish and are reckoned to our account."

What an important lesson this is to us! It reminds us of what the Bible tells us: *"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14. 12).*

The Bible tells us of this solemn event: *"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works... And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20, 12, 15).*

Those names which are found in the Book of Life, are of those who have been given divine life by the Holy Spirit in their souls. This life opened their eyes to see, whilst they were on earth, that if they had to give their own account of their days on earth they would be lost. Sin is mixed with all they have ever thought, said or done. Having learned this solemn lesson, they were led to the perfect life of the Lord Jesus Christ, God's own dear Son, and laying aside any hope in themselves, they have laid hold on Christ's blood and righteousness as their only hope of heaven. So His perfect obedience is imputed to them, (notice the word *imputantur*,

which means to account to). Their sins, which He bore away to Calvary and atoned for them there, have been accounted to Him.

What a wonderful mercy it is to be led of the Holy Spirit in this way. None other than those in the Book of Life will be able to give a satisfying account to God in that great day. May it be our prayer, as it is in the hymn of Isaac Watts:

“In Thy fair Book of life and grace,
O may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord the Lamb.”

Now, those whose hope is in the Lord Jesus Christ, desire to live the rest of their days in gratitude to Him to whom they owe so much. This is what the Word of God means when it says: *“Redeeming the time, because the days are evil”* (Ephesians 5. 16).

“IF ANY MAN WILL COME AFTER ME”

Once an Indian lived alone, hunting and trapping in the Selkirk Mountains. His family had all been killed by a band of white hunters, and he grew up a wild young man. After a while, another white man came to the mountains to live. He was kind and patient, and gradually the young Indian came to trust him, and to love him. The white man taught him about Jesus, and slowly he received the knowledge of Him as the sinner's Friend. After many months of seeking, one moonlit night on a mountain peak, the young Indian dressed himself in all his heathen finery, took his white friend's hand, knelt and prayed. Then he rose, and made his confession of his new purpose in life, suiting the action to the word:

“Indian lay down blanket,
Indian lay down pipe,
Indian lay down tomahawk,
Indian lay down Indian.”

Henceforth he desired to live in newness of life unto God.

H. Dawson

*FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES***KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL**

The king of Babylon took men, women and children from Israel as prisoners to his own land far away. Some boys were chosen to learn at the king's palace. After three years they would be brought before the king. Among these boys were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. Every day they were to have wine and meat from the king's table.

The laws of God to Israel forbade them to eat certain meats. Did they forget about God and what they had been taught in Israel? No! These four children wanted to obey God even in this far-off land. Daniel bravely asked if they might be given water and pulse (vegetables) to eat instead. After a trial of ten days, they appeared healthier than all the other boys.

*"As for these four children, God gave them **knowledge and skill** in all learning and wisdom."* After three years, the king found them to be wiser than everyone else. *"Therefore stood they before the king."*

QUESTIONS:

1. Who wanted to obey God in a far off land? (2 words)
2. What did God give them?
3. Who did they stand before?

Contributed

*Send your answers to the Editor (see page 170 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word **ANSWERS** on the envelope.*

ANSWERS TO JULY QUESTIONS

1. A great storm.
2. A great fish.
3. Three.

“ ... for
them that
honour

Me

I will
honour.”

1 Samuel 2. 30.

BIBLE LESSONS**JESUS HEALS THE NOBLEMAN'S SON**

Having passed through Samaria, Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee. You may remember that it was here He performed His first miracle of turning water into wine.

Having seen all that Jesus did in Jerusalem at the feast, the Galileans were pleased to receive Him. The news of His coming passed rapidly from one city to another. The people wanted to see the Prophet who had done such wonderful things and hoped He would come to their cities and perform miracles among them.

One man did not wait for Jesus to come to his city. He lived in Capernaum, a city beside the Sea of Galilee. Having heard that Jesus was come to Cana, he left his home with haste to go to Jesus. This man was a nobleman. A nobleman was of high rank and a ruler in the city. Being a man of wealth and honour, why was he so eager to see Jesus?

Great sorrow had come into the home of this nobleman. His little son was at the point of death. What a trial! The doctors, no doubt, had done all they could, but the little boy grew worse. Thus, the nobleman decided to seek the help of Jesus. All that he heard of Jesus stirred up hope that He would do great things for them.

When he found Jesus, he told Him all about his son and asked Jesus to come down to his house and heal him.

Jesus answered him: *"Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe."* Jesus knew that in spite of the wonders He had already done and would yet do, many of the people would not believe that He was sent of God.

The nobleman was in great distress and pleaded more urgently: *"Sir, come down ere my child die."* He knew that only this Jesus could help.

Although Jesus would not go with him, He did not send him away empty. He gave him a word to hope upon. Jesus answered him: *"Go thy way; thy son liveth."* The faith that brought him to Jesus must now believe the word of Jesus. This

is the trial of faith! He must return to his house, leaning upon the word of Jesus.

As he was going home, he was met by his servants, who told him the wonderful news that his son was completely recovered. The nobleman quickly asked the servants at what time his son began to recover. They answered: "*Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.*"

The nobleman knew that it was at the very hour when Jesus said unto him: "*Thy son liveth.*" How his heart must have run over with joy and praise to God for His mercy and kindness to them!

You can read about this in John chapter 4 verses 43 to 54.

QUESTIONS:

1. What man came to Jesus from Capernaum?
2. What sorrow had come into his home?
3. What did Jesus say the people must see before they would believe?
4. What answer did Jesus give the nobleman? (six words)
5. At what hour did the son recover?

G.L. TenBroeke

Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on page 170). Please mark the envelope: ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.

ANSWERS TO JULY QUESTIONS

1. A Spirit.
 2. In spirit and in truth.
 3. Tell us all things.
 4. Her waterpot.
 5. All things that ever I did.
-

QUESTION: What is sin?

ANSWER: Sin is the transgression of the law of God.

1 John 3. 4.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Those of you who are interested in languages will know that different languages have differing structures of sentences. Those who translate the Word of God into other languages have to understand these differences if they are to give a faithful version of the truth.

One of the examples below is a simple illustration of this point, taken from the very first verse of the Bible. We owe, under God's goodness, a great debt to those who, like William Tyndale for example, have laboured in the painstaking work of translation. He did not have the modern technology of our day, which makes his work in this field all the more remarkable for its accuracy.

Some examples of different grammatical patterns:

English:	My son (Subject)	Loves (Verb)	your daughter (Object)
Latin:	Filius meus <i>son my</i> (Subject)	filiam tuam <i>daughter your</i> (Object)	amat <i>loves</i> (Verb)

These two sentences say the same thing, but their patterns are different.

- English generally puts the object after the verb; Latin usually, but not always, puts the verb last.
- English puts the possessors 'my' and 'your' before the noun, Latin puts possessors after the noun.
- Latin uses different word endings that show whether a word is subject or object, masculine or feminine.

Hebrew is different from both of the above, putting the verb before the subject, and using a prefix to mark the object of the verb:

Bara	Elohim	eth-hash-shamayim	w-eth-ha-arets
<i>made</i>	<i>God</i>	<i>OBJ-the-heavens</i>	<i>and-OBJ-the-earth</i>

"God made the heavens and the earth."

Have languages evolved?

Evolutionists claim that languages evolved from animal grunts. Some even claim that the continuing change of languages is just like biological evolution. However, actual observations of language present a very different picture.

Firstly, ancient languages were actually extremely complex with many different inflections. There is no hint of any build-up from simpler languages. For example: in the Indo-European family, Sanskrit, Classical Greek and Latin had many different noun inflections for different case, gender and number, whilst verbs were inflected for tense, voice, number and person. Modern descendants of these languages have greatly *reduced* the number of inflections, i.e. the trend is from complex to simpler, the *opposite* of evolution. English has almost completely lost inflections, retaining just a few like the possessive “-’s.”

English has also lost 65-85% of the Old English vocabulary, and many Classical Latin words have also been lost from its descendants, the Romance languages (Spanish, French, Italian, etc.).

Secondly, most of the changes were *not* random, but the result of *intelligence*. For example: borrowing words from other languages including calques (a borrowed compound word where each component is translated and then joined).

Creation Magazine (A.K. Steel)

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

The Editor values the loving interest and concern of younger and older readers alike who have written encouraging letters in recent months. We would thank the Lord for any good done through our efforts, as it is His work alone which will prosper.

Answers for the first time have been received over the past few months from BETHANY and VICTORIA CHAPMAN; THOMAS HAYDEN; SIMEON PACK; AARON and ANDREW YMKER.

“A DYING TESTIMONY”

A touching story is told concerning the singing of part of that well-known hymn by Cowper: “There is a fountain filled with blood.” A young man, suffering from cancer, was about to undergo an operation in one of the large hospitals in Scotland.

When the surgeon had made a careful examination, he discovered that the only hope of saving the life of the patient was the removal of his tongue. The young man was already in the operating room when the surgeon, in a tender and sympathetic way, explained to the sufferer that, even though the operation should be successful, he would never again be able to speak and was asked whether there was anything he wished to say before the operation commenced.

For a moment a shadow crossed the brow of the young man at the thought that he would never again be able to testify in song or word for the Master whom he loved. But soon, the shadow passed and a smile lighted up his face. He sat up, lifting up his voice, and sang the hymn: “There is a Fountain filled with blood.”

Before the third verse was reached, not an eye of those who stood around the bed was dry. How he sang! For his heart was in the song. Then came the last verse:

“Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I’ll sing Thy power to save,
When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave.”

Anaesthetic was administered, the operation performed, but alas! the patient never regained consciousness. Thus his last song on earth would be his first in heaven.

“Happy, if with my last breath,
I may but gasp His name:
Preach Him to all, and cry in death
Behold, ‘Behold the Lamb!’”

May the possession of that hope which this young man possessed, so sanctify and consecrate the lives of those who may read this touching story, that, as you pass from time to eternity, your living witness may be crowned with your dying witness – both consisting in lifting up the Son of Man.

Selected

THE LORD, THE GOD OF ELIJAH

Nel and Arie look at each other excitedly. Then they look at their sacks. So full! Hard to believe! Could a train have lost some of its load during the night? Quite possible! But it was as well that they went searching so early this morning. They picked up every bit of wood, but now the two bags are full. There are lots of people about, including children, searching for firewood – of course, everyone needs wood to heat the stove. There is no gas and no electricity – all because the Germans are now in control of the land and they grab everything for themselves.

The children look again at their full sacks. How pleased Mother will be. Now she will be able to get the stove nice and warm, and perhaps this evening there will be a lovely pan of hot food! Nel tries to lift her sack. Oh, that is heavy! Arie has a try. He flexes his muscles, but it is not easy. “We’ll drag them,” says Nel. Arie nods and starts pulling at once. Then he sees some big boys looking their way – it is as well that his big sister, Nel, is with him or they might try to grab his wood.

They pull the sacks from the rail track. It is a long way to home, but they have the time. They cross a main road. It is not busy, for cars are seldom seen – only Germans and their friends are allowed to drive. There is the harbour – it is very busy there.

Nel and Arie take a rest. They are panting. It is quite heavy pulling two fully-laden sacks behind you. “Look at all those boats,” says Nel: “all those long low ships.”

“What do you think is in them?” asks Arie, peering about inquisitively.

"Oh, probably tanks and bullets," suggests Nel: "all for the Germans."

"Will they use them to fight against England?" asks Arie, with a grimace.

"No, no, the English are in the south of our land already. No, the Germans want to be strong here, of course. They are scared that the English will come this way. Be sure, there are lots of bullets in there."

"We must move on," says Nel, and starts pulling again. Arie does his best, too, but he is puffing and panting; and his tummy begins to rumble. He is always hungry, and when the pangs begin he rubs his fist over it, which warms it up and helps a bit. Everybody in Rotterdam is hungry; he knows that. There is hardly anything in the shops. Will Mother have anything this evening? If so, at least she will be able to cook, and it will be nice and warm in the room. That will be fine! Here is their street – almost home!

One morning Arie is rudely awakened. What is that? He can hear a very loud voice which reverberates against the closed window. The voice gets louder, crackles really hard and then re-echoes along the high gables of the houses. Arie leaps out of bed. He hears that Father and Mother are up, too. His eldest sister, Wil, stands white-faced on the landing.

"What is it?"

"Hushhhh," says Father, "the little ones are asleep. That is a German loudspeaker van. They are ordering all men between the ages of 17 and 40 to come outside. A round up. They have done this in other places, too."

He takes a peep through a gap in the curtains. These have to be kept tightly closed because not one ray of light is allowed to shine outside. The Germans are afraid that the English 'planes will find their way to Germany.

"I believe the street corners are blocked," mutters Father with a frown. "I think the whole city is closed." He shakes his

head. "Let us try to get a little more sleep." Arie lies awake in the darkness. Sleep? No, that is no longer possible.

Soon he hears Mother busy in the kitchen and then Father going downstairs. Of course, who can sleep now? As he creeps down in his socks he sees Father with a paper in his hand. "They have pushed this through the door," he says, and shrugs his shoulders. "Well, there is no-one here."

Arie sees Mother open the curtain. It is getting light outside. She looks up the street. "They are working their way along the street," she whispers to Father. He nods and says calmly, "We will start breakfast. Come to the table all of you."

After grace Mother serves the porridge. They sit very quietly eating. Arie spoons it slowly into his mouth. It is warm and tasty. Mother must have been able to obtain some oatmeal. He looks around the table. They are now rather a small group – there is Wil, his big sister, and his two small sisters, Annie and Corry. But Koos, his big 17-year-old brother, now works in Germany. That was sad – would he ever come back? And what about Frans? That was even worse; they have put him in a camp! But it is as well that those two are not at home now, or they would be carried off by the Germans. Oh, he hates those "Huns." What are they doing here? They always used to have enough to eat, but now ... he sighs. It's not good. He always used to do everything with his youngest brother, Walter, but he isn't here any more. That is through the kindness of Rev. Lamain, who had long been their pastor here in Rotterdam South, but about eighteen months back he had accepted a call to Rijssen. But he had not forgotten his old congregation. He must have heard that they were all suffering from hunger here. And then he said that lots of children from the church in Rotterdam could come to Rijssen, where there was food enough. The people in Rijssen just sent an enormous lorry – and it was gigantic! The name Baan & Ten Bolscher was painted in big letters on it. This vehicle brought the children to Rijssen. Walter was among them. It must have

been a pleasant ride, but dangerous too, for aeroplanes often shot at road vehicles. Horrible!

Nel is now in Rijssen, too, but she didn't go in the lorry. She walked all the way with Gerrit. How many hours that must have taken! Certainly lots more than with that super lorry!

Arie sighs. Now he cannot go gathering wood with Nel. Those people in Rijssen must have lots of food, if all those children from Rotterdam can be looked after. Now Gerrit and Walter can renew their strength. They, and he, were no longer able to run down the street. Of course it's fine if you get enough to eat. Then you don't get breathless when you exert yourself. But no, he would rather stay at home!

Suddenly they hear a big noise below. "They are at the Van der Poels', Pa," says Wil, afraid. Father nods. "It sounds as though they are making a big stir over there. But we will carry on eating. We cannot help the Van der Poels now."

They sit there quietly eating and listening ... will they soon be coming up here? Arie looks at his plate, his heart beating wildly. It is so strange, he is so hungry, yet he can hardly eat any more. He looks at Mother. She sits with her eyes closed, and with a start he realises; Mother is praying. She is asking the Lord to watch over them. He sighs again.

"Pass me the Bible, Wil," says Father. Calmly he begins to read, just as always. It all sounds so familiar. But that noise is still persisting below. And then ... they all jump. The door is hammered with a rifle butt. Father stops reading.

"Arie ...," says Father. Arie stands up. His legs begin to tremble – that is horrible – and now he must open the door Look now ... a German soldier!

Quickly he regains his chair, and, as though nothing had happened, Father resumes his reading.

The soldier stands still. He looks around the table and sees the big Bible there. He stays where he is. Arie takes a quick glance sideways. The soldier listens reverently and waits until Father has finished the portion. And then ... when he sees that

Father folds his hands, the soldier politely removes his helmet!

Arie hears nothing of Father's prayer. He can only think of that German soldier, who stands there so reverently by the door When Father has said, "Amen," Arie dares to look again. The soldier is still there by the door standing stiffly to attention. Now he puts his helmet back on, but Arie sees that he has tears in his eyes.

"Are there men here between the ages of 17 and 40?" he asks politely. Arie shivers a bit. Frans ... Koos, they have gone, happily!

"No, there are none," says Father.

The soldier nods. "Good day to you all," says he in a friendly voice, and turns at the door. They hear him clumping down the stairs.

(To be continued)

Translated from the Dutch by M. Banfield

"THE PROPER BIBLE"

(First published in The Friendly Companion October 1975)

At the age of eleven years the time had come for one of our young readers (so we have been told) to leave the infant school in the village and go to a Comprehensive school. It was a Church of England School, where it had long been the custom for the vicar to present each child with a Bible as he or she left the village school. It appears that, in later years at least, the more modern versions had been presented, but being aware of this, and knowing that at the end of term his turn would come, this reader of ours, without any prompting, went to the vicar and said that he would like a "Proper Bible, please – the King James Version." The very happy result was one which reflected great credit on the vicar and the boy – a "Proper Bible" was bought, especially for him.

But then there are already so many even "Proper Bibles" in our land, that have been put on one side, and their teachings called out of date and old-fashioned. God's holy moral law has been amended to fit in with the thoughts of those in high

places who, not believing that man's heart (including their own) is deceitful (Jeremiah 17. 9), have toned it down to what they think it ought to be, and now the "Proper Bible" is proving to them that what it says is still true, and they are caught up in the "whirlwind." So it was foretold of Israel: "They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind" (Hosea 8. 7).

A whirlwind is a very strong and terrible thing. It does not blow directly but in a circular motion, going round and round, and leaving a trail of damage behind it. What a trail of damage is now left in our land, and once started (as it was with the Israelites in their land) none can stop it, until God raises up and sends His deliverance as He did in those days by the hands of the Judges. Even then there were left traces of these whirlwinds, in the lives of such men as Gideon, Samson and Jephthah. We have to be thankful that the "Proper Bible" gives us the full and true picture of the one great blessing these men, and so many more, possessed and that was faith. See Hebrews 11.

When, in days gone by, the mariner could see bad weather approaching, everything moveable was lashed, or tied down, as firmly as it could be, in case it should be blown away by the storm, or "carried about." Paul, who was shipwrecked three times, may have had this in mind when he desired that the Ephesians might not be "carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Ephesians 4. 14 and Hebrews 13. 9). It is true he did not say "whirlwind of doctrine," none-the-less he does refer to two men who came to shipwreck "concerning faith" (1 Timothy 1. 19).

It is very strange that when God would speak to His servant Elijah, at a time when things were going hard with him, that before He spoke He sent three mighty elements before him: a strong wind, so strong that it broke off pieces of the mountain; then an earthquake; then a fire. If you can stop and think how much this must have impressed Elijah, (a heavy thunderstorm

impresses a good many) and then, when it was all over, how great the calm must have been, you will see how fitting was that still small voice with which God spoke to His servant (1 Kings 19. 11,12). The contrast between the storm and the calm made a deep impression outwardly, whilst the “quiet” voice did so inwardly. So did the disciples find the difference after the storm on the lake, when there was a *great calm* (Matthew 8. 26).

God thunders mightily in our “Proper Bible.” He thunders against sin and sinners. No man has ever yet, as far as we know, tried to lessen the noise of the heavy peals of thunder, or the sharp “crack” they make when they are directly overhead. But many are the attempts made in “modern” versions of the Bible to lessen God’s voice when He says: “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God” (Psalm 9. 17). But what a quiet voice it is in the next verse! “The needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever.” What a *great calm* this verse brings. Yet the very Person by whom and through whom this promise is fulfilled is the One that “modern” versions of the Bible try to remove from His place of authority at God’s right hand. But it was a day of triumph for Jesus when He took His disciples through “... Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures” (Luke 24. 44, 45). And it was a day of blessing when it was revealed to one of them, namely Peter, that those same prophets knew that they were not writing for or about themselves: “But unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into” (1 Peter 1. 12)

We also desire to do the same and therefore, like our young reader, ask for a “Proper Bible please, the King James Version.”

The late L.R. Broome (Abridged)

MATHEMATICS (I)

At school, we learn the four basic principles of mathematics: adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing. Did you know that the Bible mentions all of these? It may be interesting and profitable to consider some examples from the Scriptures.

Addition

When we add two things together, there is an increase. I wonder if you know which Bible name means “adding?” The name is Joseph. You will remember that his mother, Rachel, could not have children. Her sister, Leah, had six sons and a daughter, but Rachel had none. Rachel envied her sister – how sad! But “God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb. And she conceived, and bare a son And she called his name Joseph; and said, The LORD shall **add** to me another son.” She believed she would have another, and in due time Benjamin was born, but sadly Rachel died giving birth to him.

The Lord Jesus spoke to His disciples of the importance of spiritual things above the things of this life. He reminded them: “Which of you with taking thought can **add** to his stature one cubit?” It is impossible for man to do, but Jesus called it “that thing which is least.” He exhorted them not to seek after what to eat or drink. For their comfort, Jesus went on to say: “Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be **added** unto you.” (See Luke 12. 25-34)

Jesus gives blessings to His people. He says: “Not as the world giveth, give I unto you.” No. “The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and He **addeth** no sorrow with it” (Proverbs 10. 22). May that blessing be ours!

We read a number of times in the Acts of the Apostles that the blessing of the Lord was upon the preaching of the gospel. “Then they that gladly received His word were baptized: and the same day there were **added** unto them about three thousand souls” (2. 41). “And the Lord **added** to the church daily such as should be saved” (2. 47). “And believers were the

more **added** to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (5. 14). "And much people was **added** unto the Lord" (11. 24). Oh, for these blessings in our day!

There are a number of other scriptures that mention adding, which you may like to find. The last reference to adding is a very solemn one in the last chapter of the Bible. "If any man shall **add** unto these things, God shall **add** unto him the plagues that are written in this Book" (Revelation 22. 18). We would not include more in the written Scripture, but we can add to Scripture in other ways: for instance, by using it to fit our own thoughts. The Pharisees did this by requiring the keeping of their tradition. The false preachers at Galatia required the Galatians to be circumcised under the law. Others use the Word of God to promote social and political ends; but the Lord Jesus says: "My kingdom is not of this world." May we be kept from such solemn things.

Contributed

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

THE DOCTRINE OF TRUTH

The Covenant of Grace

The word 'covenant' means an agreement. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost agreed before the foundation of the world, to save some of the human race from their sins. They agreed that God the Son would become a Man, and as a Man would live in this world and suffer, bleed and die on the cross of Calvary. On the third day He would rise from the dead and then ascend bodily into heaven. All this He has done for His people. It was agreed that the holy obedience of the Man Christ Jesus would be their righteousness; His sufferings and death were in their room, for their sakes; He rose from the grave to destroy death for them; He ascended bodily into heaven to open the gates of heaven for them. All this was decreed and purposed by the Almighty Lord God before the world was made.

The word 'grace' means the free, unmerited favour of God. We do not and cannot deserve or work for God's favour: it is freely given. It was also agreed that the Holy Spirit would sanctify all that the Father had chosen in Christ. The word 'sanctify' means to separate. The Lord's people were sanctified in Christ by the Father and they are sanctified by the Holy Spirit when He calls them by grace and gives them spiritual life.

Let us look at some of the scriptures regarding this covenant. King David said: "Although my house be not so with God; yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although He make it not to grow" (2 Samuel 23. 5); "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and My covenant shall stand fast with him" (Psalm 89. 28). "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant" (Hebrews 13. 20). This is the glory of the New Testament.

There is the covenant of the law, the Old Testament, then the covenant of the gospel. The Apostle refers to this in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in My covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people" (Hebrews 8. 9-10).

J.R. Rutt

"The compassion of Christ inclines Him to save sinners; the power of Christ enables Him to save sinners; the promise of Christ binds Him to save sinners."

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about the PEACE WHICH THE LORD JESUS GIVES. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor (see page 170 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace." Who proclaimed this and when? (Luke 2. 14)
2. Who said concerning the Lord Jesus: "Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest"? (Luke 19. 37-38)
3. What three words did Jesus speak to the storm, which showed His divine authority? (Mark 4. 39)
4. Which name or title of the Lord Jesus refers to His ability to make peace? (Isaiah 9. 6)
5. Several times the Lord Jesus said to those whom He had healed, words such as: "Thy faith hath saved thee." What three words did He often join with it? (Mark 5. 34, Luke 7. 50, 8. 48)
6. How does God's Word describe "the peace of God" and its gracious effect? (Philippians 4)
7. Which words in John 20 did the Lord Jesus speak three times to His troubled disciples?
8. How can man be at peace with God? (Romans 5, Colossians 1)
9. Write out the verse in which Jesus declares that the peace He gives is very different from that which the world gives. (John 14)
10. Where in the Bible do we read of war in heaven? What was the result of the war?

ANSWERS TO JULY QUESTIONS

1. "Lord, that I may receive my sight."
2. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."
3. "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me."
4. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent."
5. "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

6. "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (Luke 10. 25)
7. The mariners were speaking to Jonah. (Jonah 1. 11)
8. "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." (Luke 12. 20)
9. "How can I go?" (1 Samuel 16. 2)
10. John the Baptist. (Luke 3. 10-14)

Contributed

"I AM THE WAY"

Jesus , my All, to heaven is gone,
He whom I fix my hopes upon;
His track I see, and I'll pursue
The narrow way, till Him I view.

The way the holy prophets went,
The road that leads from banishment,
The King's highway of holiness
I'll go, for all His paths are peace.

This is the way I long have sought,
And mourned because I found it not;
My grief and burden long has been,
Because I could not cease from sin.

The more I strove against its power,
I sinned and stumbled but the more:
Till late I heard my Saviour say,
"Come hither, soul, I am the Way!"

Lo! glad I come; and Thou, blest Lamb,
Shalt take me to Thee as I am!
Nothing but sin I Thee can give;
Nothing but love shall I receive.

Then will I tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour I have found!
I'll point to Thy redeeming blood,
And say, "Behold the way to God."

J. Cennick

The Friendly Companion



“But He knoweth the way that I take:”
(Job 23. 10)

September 2006

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All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Price 50 pence monthly, plus postage.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A.	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£10.00	\$42	A\$55	€27.00

All correspondence concerning subscriptions should be addressed to Mr. H. Mercer, 8 Fairleigh Rise, Kingston Langley, Chippenham, Wilts. SN15 5QF.

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Erratum: The copyright notice for the picture of Exeter Cathedral clock on the front cover of the August issue was omitted. It should be: By kind permission. Copyright © Hugh John Griffiths 2004.

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

What a big responsibility it is to be king! Sadly it would seem that most of the kings of whom we read in the Bible, were not good kings. So when we read of a good king we should take special notice to see what made his reign a success.

One such king was Jotham, who was one of the kings of Judah. He had to start reigning when he was young, because his father, Uzziah, became a leper, and so could not mingle with others, even his family. Jotham would have remembered the sad events which led to this tragedy, when his father, although a good man, tried to take the office of a priest, against God's command. (Notice that good men do not always act wisely.) This must have had a deep effect on Jotham when he had to take his father's place. He would, of course, still have the influence, we hope for good, of his mother. What an influence for good or bad a mother can especially have.

The good thing which stands out in Jotham's reign is that he learned from his father's mistake, but followed his good example in other matters. We read: "So Jotham became mighty, because he prepared his ways before the LORD his God." This was the secret of his success.

How different from his ancestor, Rehoboam, of whom we read: "And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD." His reign was a disaster, in which the kingdom of Israel split, never to be reunited again in Bible times. How we need to learn from these examples.

Two verses should be remembered: "The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it" (Proverbs 10. 22). "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3. 6).

May the Lord teach us to live like this.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

In World War 1, many young men in our chapels joined the army to serve King and Country. In the first hour of the Battle of the Somme, six soldiers became casualties every second. The cost to our churches was great. The sad note of Esther Wild, when the effects of her brother Frank (killed 1916) were returned by the War Office, is touching: "The blood-stained Bible and hymn book, and a match case with a little piece of shell still lodged in it." The Moon family from Kent lost four sons in two months, two dying on the same day. The late editor of our magazines, Mr. John Gosden, served in France with the Royal Army Medical Corps, receiving the MM for bravery. Our young men of that generation had a love and loyalty to their country that marked them out.

The remarkable deliverance of Pte Jim Burgess is a special case in point:

One Sabbath morning, during World War 1, Pte Jim Burgess (the late pastor of Bournemouth) went into a cornfield alone before an attack, to beg the Lord that if He preserved his life he would go to preach. His life was preserved. On another occasion, a bullet was coming straight for his heart, when his Bible in his tunic pocket deflected it, saving him from death. (The Bible on the front cover of the magazine is the same Bible with the date of his deliverance from death, 3rd April 1917.) Later that year, he was so severely wounded by a grenade that the medics almost left him for dead. At the dressing station, he was placed among the dead, with a sheet over him. Later, a doctor, walking amongst the dead, noticed a tiny movement from a sheet and drew it back. There lay Pte Burgess, who said faintly: "I shall live and declare the works of the Lord."

He was taken from the front to Abbeville. There in the night the pain was so great that he chewed the end off his pillow and Christ appeared to him in all his sufferings. At Christchurch hospital in England, the doctors were concerned with the level of morphine he was taking, and asked him to stop. In the middle of the night the pain was so unbearable that again he

chewed the end off his pillow. Again, the Lord appeared to him in all His sufferings and he fell fast asleep. In the morning the pain was gone.

A.R.

CALLING

“God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Corinthians 1. 9).

Let me give you a simple illustration of this calling. In the east there was a shepherd who of necessity had to sell almost all his flock; he just retained two favourite sheep. Then the time came when his poverty was so great he even had to get rid of these two favourites.

However, some time afterwards he had the means of buying them back. So he went down to the sheep market and paid his money: paid the price for these two sheep. But he said: “I don’t want any two sheep. I want my own.” Then a strange thing happened. The shepherd walked just a little distance from the sheep market and as he did, he took out his shepherd’s pipe and played a special note on the pipe, and as he played that note, he slowly walked away from the sheep market. From the great mass of those sheep, there was one here and one there, and they irresistibly came out; irresistibly attracted, irresistibly drawn by that alluring call; and as he walked away, they followed after him.

Now you see, that is just a faint picture of calling. They were his; they were redeemed; he had paid the price for them; but there they were with all the rest. Oh, but that special call, and irresistibly they went after him. You see:

“There is a period known to God
When all His sheep, redeemed by blood,
Shall leave the hateful ways of sin,
Turn to the fold, and enter in.

Now, that is effectual calling: “Called.”

B.A. Ramsbottom

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**GOD REVEALS THE SECRET**

The King of Babylon had a dream that troubled him. But when he woke up, he could not remember it. He ordered his servants to tell him what he had dreamed and the meaning of it. No man could do such a thing! The king became very angry and commanded that all the wise men in the land must be killed.

Daniel and his three friends were among the wise men of Babylon, and the king's captain came to slay them. Daniel asked to be given time, and he would show the dream. The four friends prayed to God *"concerning this secret."* *"Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision."* He did not forget to give thanks. *"Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven."*

Daniel was brought before the king in haste and told him what he had dreamed and what the dream meant. The king said: *"Of a truth ... your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets."* He gave Daniel many great gifts and made him a ruler in Babylon.

QUESTIONS:

1. What troubled the King of Babylon?
2. What was revealed unto Daniel in a night vision?
3. What did Daniel not forget to give?

Contributed

Send your answers to the Editor (see page 194 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

ANSWERS TO AUGUST QUESTIONS

1. Four children.
2. Knowledge and skill.
3. The king.

*“But there
is a God
in heaven
that
revealeth
secrets.”*

Daniel 2. 28.

BIBLE LESSONS**AN ANGRY MOB IN NAZARETH**

Having preached and performed miracles in other parts of Israel and in cities of Galilee, Jesus finally returned to Nazareth. Nazareth had been His home while He was growing up.

On the Sabbath day, Jesus went up to the synagogue just as He had done when He was a boy growing up. How different things were now! Then He was known as a common citizen, but now His fame had spread through all the land. Everywhere people were talking about Him and the miracles He had performed.

When it was time for the worship to begin, Jesus stood up to read. This was the custom of the Jews, that if a man wished to read before the people, he would stand up and wait for the minister of the synagogue to bring him one of the Books of the Bible. Usually each Book was on a separate roll. The roll that was handed to Jesus contained the Book of Isaiah. Jesus found the place where Isaiah prophesied of the coming Messiah. Some of the words He read were: *"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me; because the LORD hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD ..." (Isaiah 61. 1, 2).*

When He had finished reading, Jesus closed the Book, and gave it back to the minister and sat down. He told the people that what Isaiah had written was being fulfilled that very day in their midst. He was the promised Messiah. The people listened intently and wondered at the words He spoke. He spoke with such knowledge and authority. His words were full of grace. How pleased the people were to listen to Him!

However, Jesus knew what was in their hearts. He told them that: *"No prophet is accepted in his own country."* He reminded them that many widows were in the land of Israel during the great famine in Elijah's day. Yet, Elijah was sent to a widow of Zidon, for whom God gave a continual supply of

meal in a barrel and oil in a cruse.

Next, He reminded them that in the days of Elisha, there were many lepers in the land of Israel who needed to be cured. Yet, it was Naaman the Syrian who was sent to the prophet and was cured by obeying his word.

Many of those that listened to Him had been His neighbours while He was growing up. They knew Him as Joseph's son and were not willing to listen to the words He spoke against them.

All those in the synagogue were filled with wrath. The calm gathering in the synagogue was soon turned into an angry mob. They took hold of Jesus and led Him out of the city. Leading Him to the brow of the high hill on which their city was built, they intended to throw Him over the edge. What boldness sinners display in their rebellion! But this was not the time, nor the way, that Jesus was to die.

How frustrated they must have been when Jesus, by the power of God, slipped out of their hands and quietly passed through their midst and went down to Capernaum.

You can read about this in Luke chapter 4 verses 16 to 31.

QUESTIONS:

1. Where did Jesus go on the Sabbath day?
2. What Book was given to Jesus to read?
3. What were the words of Jesus full of?
4. Where did Jesus say a prophet is not accepted?
5. Why did they lead Jesus to the brow of the hill?

G. L. TenBroeke

Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on page 194). Please mark the envelope ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.

ANSWERS TO AUGUST QUESTIONS

1. A nobleman.
2. His son was at the point of death.
3. Signs and wonders.
4. Go thy way; thy son liveth.
5. The seventh hour.

A FALSE ACCUSER SILENCED

Mr. George Rose, as an old man, was preaching to his congregation at Kirkland. For some time he had been speaking on John 16. 13: "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth." He was now dealing with the subject as it concerns God's guidance and Christian behaviour, and he told the following story.

In his early days he worked in an iron foundry. One day, as they were having their morning break, a man came up to him and with violent language, mingled with oaths and curses, accused him of taking his sieve. He insisted that the sieve which Mr. Rose had, was his, and demanded it.

Now what could Mr. Rose do? If he refused, there would be a dreadful scene; if he agreed, then it looked as if he was guilty. So he said: "Lord, what shall I do?" and the Lord immediately dropped this word into his heart: "Then I restored that which I took not away." So he gave the man the sieve.

All that day he was blessed with sweet meditation, how the Lord Jesus restored those honours to the holy law, by His obedience and death, which He had not taken away. But still there was the question of his own character as a professing Christian; it appeared that he had acknowledged his guilt.

So he begged the Lord to appear and clear his character. And again the Lord dropped a confirming word into his heart. Now he could leave it.

The very next day it was the morning break once more. The men were gathered together, when a man appeared and, going up to the one who had falsely accused Mr. Rose, said: "Here's your sieve. I forgot to tell you I borrowed it yesterday." So here was his accuser with *two* sieves, having to admit before all that his accusation had been hasty, and to give Mr. Rose his sieve back.

Mr. Rose's comment was: how blessed it is when the Spirit of truth graciously guides us how to act in difficult circumstances!

THE LORD, THE GOD OF ELIJAH*(Concluded)*

Arie has climbed the stairs to the attic bedroom. He lies there, looking and thinking about the German soldier. German soldiers ... they are everywhere, and he always thinks of them as “horrible Huns.” But this one ... this one was different

They had seen from the window the long line of men below leaving the street ... where were they going?

The next day Father can tell them: thousands of men and boys have been taken from Rotterdam and herded together in various places, like cattle. Even in the Feijenoord Stadium thousands had to sit waiting on the grass, watched by armed men and bloodhounds. When it began to rain they were allowed to sleep under the stands. Next morning they were packed into wagons at the station, but thousands, too, had to get into the boats which lay in the harbour. In filthy, smelly Rhine barges – those long, flat boats.

“Nel and I saw them,” says Arie. “They have been waiting there for some time.”

The dark, cold winter of hunger lasts a long time. Occasionally Wil makes a long trip on a rattling bicycle without tyres, outside the city. Perhaps she can find a friendly farmer who can spare a little food. But so many, many people try all these farms and sometimes the farmer can only say: “No.”

They are always so pleased when she returns, even when she does not bring much back. “Aren’t you frightened, cycling so far alone?” Arie once asked.

Wil shakes her head, smiling. “Alone? You should see how many people do the same. The roads are full of bikes and carts. Everybody tries to get something.” But then she sighs. “That is why there is not much left. And if you do procure something, you have to get past the checkpoints on the bridges. I have seen how sometimes they grabbed everything, and people walked home empty-handed.” ... She pauses.

"I have been frightened on one occasion, mind, when I saw the Control standing there and thought – perhaps they will take everything from me. But I have also had this thought – 'I believe Mother is praying for me' – because then they asked no questions and I could pass on."

Arie looks at her, wide-eyed. That is something to think about!

Arie is making for home as quickly as he can. It is nearly dark and Mother does not like him coming in late. But there is always something to see in the harbour. Much has been destroyed by German bombs at the outset of the War. Yet a lot has been repaired. His Father had helped with this work and Arie is proud of that. It was a terrible job, clearing all that debris – of houses, too. It was also a sad job, Father said, because people had lived in those houses, and many had been killed by the bombing.

Arie is thinking of this as he returns along his street. The Germans are getting more and more mean – perhaps they are frightened they are losing! He is out of breath from running. He used to be able to sprint such a distance, but of late he can do it no more. That is because they get less and less to eat. Sometimes it feels as though a knife has been poked into his stomach – it pinches so. No one in Rotterdam has enough. They try all over the place to get food, but there is none. If only those Germans would go ... if only the English and the Americans would come

He pulls the door to behind him, and climbs the stairs. Has Mother waited for him? ... He cannot smell anything. At the top of the stairs he stops suddenly.

"We can't do that." It is the startled voice of his Father.

Then he hears Mother's quiet voice. "Still do it, dear."

"No, I'm not going to pray in front of empty plates, certainly not."

"Elijah's God is still the same, surely?" That is Mother's voice again.

Arie feels a shudder go down his back to his legs, which then begin to tremble.

What is happening? He walks across the little landing to the kitchen. In a corner his two little sisters, Annie and Corry, are playing with empty boxes. His eyes glance along the sink, the stove, the table No, there is nothing ... no pan ... no bowl.

His heart begins to throb.

His Mother enters the kitchen. "Ah, Arie," she says. "You're in good time."

Arie sees her take a pile of plates from the cupboard. "Here, Wil," he hears her say to his big sister, "put these on the table, and I will get the spoons." Soon they are all sitting at the table. Arie sees how Father looks at Mother. He has his hands under the table. Arie looks from the one to the other. He notices Mother's quiet nod.

Plates are on the table, but there is nothing on them. Alongside the plates the spoons lie on the wooden top, but what are they for? There is no pan ... there is nothing. ... It has never been as bad as this.

"This morning we ate our last piece of bread," says Mother softly, "and I don't know how to get any for there is no money. But we can still sit around the table and ask the Lord for His blessing. And the Lord knows that there is nothing left. He can still do wonders, surely?"

And then ... then Father's hands come out from under the table. He folds them together and then with his deep voice he begins to pray. He thanks the Lord, too, that they are spared in safety together. And, of course, he prays for his absent children. After the 'Amen' all remains very quiet. Arie doesn't dare to look around. Then he hears the little voice of Corry. She is pulling on Mother's arm. Her eyes look enquiringly at her empty plate. "Mummy?" ...!

But suddenly ... there is a knock on the door below.

"Arie, go and have a look," says Father. He runs to the stairs, but at once he hears the outer door below clicking shut. There

is no one there, but there is something big and black and round standing in the darkened lobby. With a few leaps he is down the stairs. It is

“Pa, Mum! Come and look.”

There they all stand at the top of the stairs.

“A basket, Pa! With all sorts of food!” cries Arie, and his voice sounds shrill with amazement. Father comes down: “We will carry it up, together,” he says.

Arie looks at him. Father’s voice trembles so, and, yes, he can see big tears coming down his cheeks.

Soon the basket is on the table and Mother can unpack it. Flour, butter, potatoes ... at the sight of each package there is a cry of delight. The two little girls sit clapping their hands in excitement.

Soon Mother is slicing a large loaf. They each have two thick slices and are permitted a little butter on them. What a feast!

“Where can it have come from, Mum?” asks Wil inquisitively.

“From the Lord God of Elijah,” says Mother, with quiet reverence.

Translated from the Dutch by M. Banfield

A GOOD LESSON

Two young boys once went to visit an old, godly man and asked him: “What must we do to overcome our bad habits and desires?” The old man asked one of the boys to pull a little oak tree out of the ground. This the boy tried; he pulled and pulled – yes, finally he got it out of the ground. But it was not easy. What deep roots this little tree had already! Then the old man said: “Now try this one,” pointing to a small oak tree about the height of a man. The two boys pulled and pulled, but could not extract this bigger tree. They stood silently looking at this little oak tree.

Then the old man began to apply his wise lesson: “Do you boys understand this lesson? When you notice that strange,

wrong, bad habits and desires threaten to master you, you must immediately ask God to help you strive against them with all your might before they have a chance to take deep roots in your lives. If that is not done soon enough, then, just like the little oak tree which had such deep roots that you could not pull it out anymore, after a shorter or a longer period of time, it will become impossible, short of a miracle, to overcome your bad habits and desires. Keep this in your mind, and never forget this lesson.”

Selected

BLEATINGS OF THE LAMBS

Once when asked by my mother to go on an errand for her before school, I was delayed and therefore late for school. We had a very stern, though just, schoolmaster. He brought in a rule that every late boy should have the “stick,” and late ones had to wait in the lobby until he came for them, always with the cane in his hand.

This morning, going across the field to school, my frightened heart was up to the Lord, crying as I ran along: “Lord, help me.” On getting to school I found a few other boys in the lobby but they did not seem to mind the cane, but my heart was up to the Lord all the time: “Do help me, Lord.”

Soon we heard the master with his heavy tread come down the schoolroom. He opened the door; he didn’t even look cross. He had no cane in his hand, and he said: “Go to your classes.” I went to mine, but with a full heart and I hope humbled with gratitude that the Lord, who is so great, should look upon and hear a poor boy’s cry, and answer in such a wonderful way.

The next morning the master took his cane as usual. What were the thoughts that restrained him from taking it that special morning?

From F. G. Gurney’s manuscript account of his life

“HOPE THOU IN GOD”

I had more grass to mow than usual, for which I was glad, as the hay was an important part of my yearly income. The field was ready to mow in early June. As I left the field with the mower, it started to rain. It rained nearly continuously for a week and then it was showery for four days, until I was in despair for my field of hay. By now the grass was growing through the swathe and the hay was going black. If it got any worse it would have to be burnt.

In desperation, in great despondency I fell under the hedge on my knees. “O Lord,” I cried, “I am so cast down.” The words fell straight into my heart: “Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him.” My countenance was immediately lifted up and I felt I could press on. Even so, it made me wonder how I was going to praise Him, when my hay was going black and spoilt. My heart is blacker than any hay could ever get, and also deserves the end of very bad, black hay – to be burnt.

The next day or two saw some sunny breaks in the weather with a nice breeze, although storms were about the region. I pressed on and turned the hay and put the baler in the following afternoon. Having become nicely started, the sun went in and black clouds came across the sky. Oh the sinking heart! Oh the cries from that tractor seat! The cloud thickened, the whole sky became black, torrential rain could be seen heading for us. You could see it, as we say, falling out of the sky. We carried on. It lashed with rain on three sides of my ten-acre field. The villages round about were flooded. Everyone spoke of the violence of the storm. We baled the whole field and carted the bales into the shed, dry. It sounds unreal. I have not exaggerated; if anything I cannot tell the ferocity of the storm on all sides as far as could be seen. My mother told me how my father prayed for the rain not to come on my hay. No, it wasn't perfect hay, but it was in the shed.

After a few days the weather changed and came out very hot. I cut the rest of my fields of hay, baled and carted it in ideal conditions. I had the best hay I had ever made. Now I had to sell it!

I entered into the hay auction, locally, not doubting that it would make a good price. Had not I had those words: "Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him"? Surely He helped me to make it well, He will sell it well. After all, it is very good hay!

I put a reserve price of £65 per ton on it, just to make sure, but thinking it would exceed this price. It was in four lots of eighteen tons each. Much to my astonishment, there was not a single bid on my hay. Now what was I to do? "Oh Lord," I said, "I am cast down again. Hast Thou not said: 'Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him'?" Oh my distrustful heart.

Not knowing what to do, I entered it into another sale, and again, no interest at £50 per ton. Now even more it was: "What shall I do?"

One day, with the burden of my hay on my mind, whilst tending the sheep near a racehorse stud, the people who owned the stud came by riding the horses, out training them. The owner, who was riding the front horse, stopped and spoke to me, which was very unusual. I, being very shy, had to make myself ask her whether she needed any hay. She said: "Call at my house later," which I did.

When I reached her house, she said: "It's most strange that you should ask, just at this time. Bring me a couple of bales to test for quality," racehorses being most particular. When she had seen the hay, she said: "I will pay you £100 per ton and will collect all you have."

Now I had the full answer to my promise: "Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, AND MY GOD."

I write this wholly to His praise, and to tell that He still answers cries and groans from desperate sinners.

*Contributed as a tribute to God's goodness
to a self-condemned sinner (1993)*

The better God is known, the more He is trusted. (Henry)

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***THE DOCTRINE OF TRUTH****Law and Gospel**

The Holy Spirit very clearly gives us a distinction between the law and the gospel of Jesus Christ. Some in the Galatian church were mixing up the two things. Let us look at the Epistle to the Galatians. "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Galatians 3. 11-13).

"And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise" (Galatians 3. 17-18).

"But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3. 23-26).

"For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered

so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Galatians 2. 19 – 3. 5). My dear young friends, notice that it does not say: 'the life I now live' is under the law, no, but: "by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

The same distinction is made in the Acts of the Apostles: "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13. 38-39).

Also in the Epistle to the Romans: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference" (Romans 3. 19-22).

And: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8. 1-4).

My dear young friends, ponder these Scriptures and may the Holy Spirit give you an inward experience of the truth; then you will discern the difference between the law and gospel. One is the ministration of death, the other of life. What a

difference! "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory" (2 Corinthians 3. 7-9).

The law of God has not been abrogated or set aside; the Lord Jesus said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matthew 5. 17-18). The Christian believer has been delivered from the law in its condemning sentence: he becomes a follower of Jesus Christ.

"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed" (Romans 10. 4-11).
J.R. Rutt

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from **GEORGE HARE**.*

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about THINGS THAT ARE BROKEN. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor (see page 194 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. Which godly man died from a broken neck? (1 Samuel 4. 18)
2. "The sacrifices of God are..." What? (Psalm 51. 17)
3. What, in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, broke in pieces the image he saw? (Daniel 2. 34)
4. What did Jesus say "cannot be broken"? (John 10. 35)
5. What did God say He would never break, though the children of Israel did? (Judges 2. 1, Jeremiah 31. 32)
6. Why did Hezekiah break in pieces the serpent of brass which Moses made in the wilderness? (2 Kings 18)
7. Of whom was it prophesied: "a bone of Him shall not be broken"? (John 19)
8. Who made ships which were broken, and why were they broken? (2 Chronicles 20)
9. What did Moses break when he saw the golden calf? (Exodus 32)
10. Which treacherous son of a good man died when a woman dropped a piece of millstone on him to break his skull? (Judges)

ANSWERS TO AUGUST QUESTIONS

1. "A multitude of the heavenly host." At the birth of the Lord Jesus.
2. "The whole multitude of the disciples."
3. "Peace, be still."
4. The Prince of Peace.
5. "Go in peace."
6. "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4. 7)
7. "Peace be unto you." (John 20. 19, 21, 26)

8. "Through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 5. 1). "Through the blood of His cross." (Colossians 1. 20)
9. "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14. 27)
10. "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven." (Rev 12. 7-8)

Contributed

"SPEAK TO ME"

For this one favour oft I've prayed,
 Prayed that Thy love might be displayed,
 In one soft word to me conveyed –
 Oh speak to me!

Thou sayest: "My sheep hear My voice,"
 Am I a sheep, Lord, of Thy choice?
 Speak, then, and make my heart rejoice,
 Oh speak to me!

If 'tis Thy will that I should wait
 For many years at mercy's gate,
 For Christ revealed to my poor heart,
 Yet speak to me!

Tell me I shall not wait in vain,
 That I at length the Pearl shall gain,
 Thus help me to my suit maintain,
 Oh speak to me!

E. Jempson

QUESTION: What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?

ANSWER: The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created was their eating of the forbidden fruit.
 (Genesis 3. 6-7)

LIST OF NAMES

The following young people have answered questions during the months January to June 2006. The total number is 322, which is most encouraging, and for which we would thank God.

Maia Aldridge; Anthony and Fiona Ashby; Daniel and Naomi Aston; Matthew Aston.

Alasdair and Alexander Bailey; Sarah Ball; Joseph, Mary and Samuel Banfield; Benjamin and William Bos; Joseph and Samuel Boulton; Abigail, Daniel, Joanna and Nathan Broome; Fiona Burgess; Lois and Lucy Burgess; Jonathan and Nicolas Burton; Sophie Buss.

Bethany and Victoria Chapman; Christopher, Natalie and Nathan Christie; Harriet, Jacob and Martha Collins; Karen, Matthew, and Sarah Cooper; Lucy, Ruth and Samuel Cooper; Alice, Charlotte and William Cottingham; Gillian and Victoria Cottingham; Michael Cottingham; Annie, Lucy and Miriam Cottingham; Philip Cottington; Emma and Jessica Cottington; Jacob Cottington; Joanna and Philip Cottington; Abigail, Hannah, James and Sarah Crowter; Annabel and Kate Crowter; Jonathan Crowter.

Christine, Esther and Louise Dadswell; Penny Dean.

Bethan Field; Esther, Naomi and Rebekah Field; Benjamin and Oliver Funnell; Joseph and Timothy Funnell.

Oliver and William Green; Edward, Stephen and Thomas Green.

Jacqueline and James Hallier; Edward Hanks; James Hanks; Eleanor and Jonathan Hare; Charlotte, Emily and Thomas Hart; Joseph, Joshua, Luke and Nathanael Hayden; Benjamin, Suzanna and Thomas Hayden; Andrew, Marcus and Susanna Hickman; Bethan and Rosalind Hickman; Thomas Hickman; Henry Hook; Emily Hope; Eleanor and Esther Hope; Jeremy Hyde.

Abigail Izzard.

Henry Johnson.

James, Rebecca, Susanna and William Kerley; Emma, Helen, Joanna, Joshua and Marianne Kerley; John and Thomas Kerley; Elizabeth and Harriet Kinderman; Edward, Matthew, Naomi, Samuel and Timothy Kingham; Jennifer and Stephen Kingham.

Christopher, Edward, Thomas and William Large; Edward and Joshua Lockey; Megan Lucas; Chloe and James de Lullington.

Abigail, Martha, Philip and Samuel Main; Deborah, Jason and Pauline Main; Hannah McNaughten; Claudia and Florence Mercer; James and Julia Mercer; Andrew, Edward, Elizabeth, Rebecca, Samuel and William Munns.

Emily Northern.

Anna, Jonathan, Rebekah and Simeon Pack; Annabella, Thomas and Victoria Palmer; Helen, Matthew, Priscilla, Rebecca, Robert, Samuel and Sarah Parish; Anna, Chloe and Phoebe Parsons; Ruth and Sarah Payne; Elizabeth, John, Mary and Philip Pickles; Heidi, James and Katie Playfoot; Naomi and Robert Pocock; Esther, Lukas and Martine Pont; Nathan Pont.

Bethany and Katie Ramsbottom; Jessica Raymond; Joshua, Oliver and William Rayner; Matthew Rayner; James Rice; Susanna Risbridger.

Chloe and John Sadler; Jessica and Rosanna Salkeld; Charles, Edward, Emily and Rosaleen Saunders; Ethan Saunders; Jasmine, Joseph and Timothy Saunders; Emily and Philippa Sayers; Maria Sayers; Hannah and Thomas Sebaduka; Bryony Skelton; Clare, Emma, Kate and Matthew Stearn; Emma and Sarah Stephens; Alexander, Emma and Jessica Stevens; Ellen and Rebekah Suckling.

Abigail Thorne; James and Paul Topping; Alison and Andrew Tugwell; Helen and Matthew Turner.

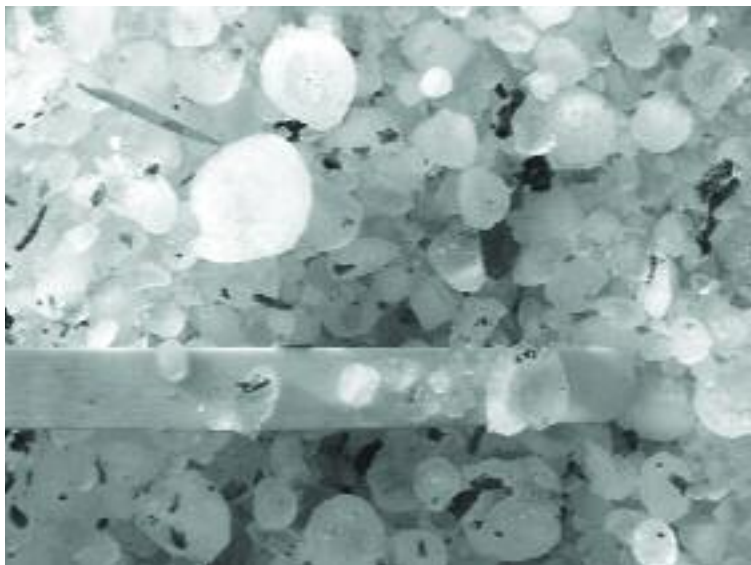
Joanna, Natalie and Thomas Warboys; Esther and Thomas Wheatley; Ben and Beth Wigley; Abigail, Bethany and Charlotte Wilderspin; Cordelia, Francesca, Gad, Jemima and Kitty Wiltshire; Joanna, Matthew, Susie and Timothy Wiltshire; Edwin, Hannah, Joseph, Kate and Lucy Woodhams; Benjamin, Jessica, Louise and Timothy Woodhams; Chloe and Lucy Woods.

Overseas Names:

Miriam Aitch; Lydia Bleeker; Thomas Casper; Jennifer, Marie and Melissa DeVries; Calvin, Dennis and Kira Glass; Katelyn Kamp; Caleb, Elisabeth and Isaac Knol; Cori, Jeff and John Legemaat; Hannah Linna; Kyle and Thomas Marion; Kelly, Matthew and Thomas Mills; Heidi and Heather Neels; Danielle, Kelsey, Kendrick, Lindsay and Megan Oudshoorn; Emily and Jonathan Quist; John, Luke and Sandra Seymour; Andre and Valentina Sweetman; Nathaniel TenBroeke; Bethany, Kaitlyn and Michaela Teunissen; Jessie, Mariah and Matthew Toogood; Marilene Van de Munt; Evangeline and Savannah Van Oort; Benjamin and John Van Vugt; Cody and Dylan White; Aaron, Andrew, Edward, Jonathan, Kristina, Lydia, Natalie and Nathan Ymker.

May the Lord bless you each with the saving knowledge of the truths you have searched.

The Friendly Companion



“Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?
or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail ...?”
(Job 38. 22)

October 2006

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All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Price 50 pence monthly, plus postage.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A.	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£10.00	\$42	A\$55	€27.00

All correspondence concerning subscriptions should be
addressed to Mr. H. Mercer, 8 Fairleigh Rise, Kington Langley,
Chippenham, Wilts. SN15 5QF.

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

At this time of the year, when we see the harvest gathered in, it is right for us to give thanks to Almighty God for once more fulfilling His promise: "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (Genesis 8. 22). Although so many do take these things for granted, or even worse, take the honour to themselves for what God has provided, we should give thanks every day for mercies daily given.

We were once passing through a village where a flower show was being held. In the exhibition tent were displayed all the prize-winning fruits, flowers and vegetables. As we gazed around the tent, a solemn realisation was felt. Nowhere was there any mention of the Great Benefactor who bestowed these fruits. Around the tent should have been displayed in bold letters: "The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Psalm 24. 1).

Some years ago, a godly farmer, who was also a minister, was talking to a neighbouring farmer when the conversation turned to being thankful for God's mercies. The neighbour glibly said: "Oh, I take it all for granted," to which the godly man replied: "That's just what my pigs do."

It is a very solemn thing to leave God out of our thoughts as the wicked do. Keeping to the analogy of sowing and reaping, Paul was inspired to write: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6. 7). It would be foolish for a man who sowed barley to expect a crop of wheat on that land.

Even more foolish would be the man who never sowed any good seed on his land, to go out at harvest time and expect a good crop. Such are those who never give any thought to God or their accountability to Him.

When the "Titanic" was launched, it was said that even God could not sink it. We all know what happened to this famous ship on its maiden voyage. God was not mocked. Again, it was said that when Napoleon was on the brink of success in his

campaign against Russia, he said: "Even God cannot stop me now." His words were heard by a godly woman who prophesied that from that moment onward Napoleon would fail. So it turned out. God was not mocked. How true it is that: "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts" (Psalm 10. 4).

May we then remember God's words through Paul in Galatians: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6. 7,8).

What harvest can we expect? How are we sowing?

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

On the afternoon of Tuesday July 4th this year there was a severe thunderstorm at Luton in Bedfordshire which was accompanied by a severe hailstorm. The picture shows some of the hail which accumulated to over two feet (60 cm) deep in places. Windows were smashed, flowers and branches broken, and fences beaten down with the power of the ice as it fell. (We thank our Luton friends for the picture.)

All this should remind us of the storm of hail that God sent as one of the plagues against the land of Egypt. On that occasion men and animals were harmed, as well as all the trees and herbs. But in Goshen, where the children of Israel lived, there was no hail. Here we see God's sovereignty in causing His judgments to fall on some but not on others.

Also we read of some of the Egyptians who feared the word of the Lord through Moses, and put their cattle in safety before the hail fell. Their obedience was noteworthy.

In Revelation 8. 7, we read of an even worse storm which will come upon the earth in the last times. "The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees

was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.”

Although God's people may not be exempt from these judgments, yet because they fear the Lord they know where to flee from God's wrath. Unrepentant sinners will flee from God at such a time, even calling for the rocks and hills to cover them when the Lord Jesus finally returns at the Day of Judgment. But those who believe in God, flee to Him to hide them from the storm. They believe what the hymn writer had to say:

“Should storms of seven-fold 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 a chosen race,
And thus became their Hiding-place.”

J. Brewer

May God so teach us that we, too, know where to flee at such a time as that.

THE SAME TEXT

The minister had finished his sermon. It was a very practical one concerning Christian behaviour, walking worthy of the Lord.

After the service some of the hearers waited for him and said: “Do you realise that it is the third (or fourth or fifth) time you have preached from that same text?”

Do you know what the minister's reply was? “*Have you put it into practice yet?*”

We are commanded to be doers of the Word, not hearers only.

Selected

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from JAMES TARBIN.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES

GOD IS ABLE TO DELIVER

‘At the sound of music, everyone must fall down and worship the golden image.’ That was the command of the king of Babylon. But three men did not obey. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego worshipped God and would not bow to the graven image. The king said: “... *if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?*” What did they answer him? “*If it be so, our God whom we serve is **able to deliver** us from the burning fiery furnace.*”

In his anger, the king commanded the furnace to be heated seven times hotter. The most mighty men in his army bound Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego and cast them into the fire. Did they die? No! God “... *sent His angel, and delivered His servants that trusted in Him ...*” The king said: “*I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.*”

QUESTIONS:

1. What were the people commanded to worship?
2. Into what would they be cast if they refused?
3. What did three men say their God was able to do?

Contributed

Send your answers to the Editor (see page 218 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS

1. A dream.
2. The secret.
3. Thanks.

*“And call
upon Me in
the day of
trouble: I
will deliver
thee, and
thou shalt
glorify Me.”
Psalm 50. 15.*

BIBLE LESSONS**THE MIRACULOUS CATCH OF FISHES**

Do you remember those young men who followed Jesus in the beginning? Their names were Andrew and Peter his brother; James and John his brother; and Philip, who called Nathanael. These men attended Jesus while He taught around Jerusalem and Samaria; but when He returned to His home in Nazareth, they returned to their homes around Capernaum.

When the men of Nazareth tried to kill Him, Jesus went to Capernaum. As He taught the people, they were filled with wonder and awe. His words were different from those of their teachers, who kept repeating the same words week by week. His words always sounded new and came with great power in their hearts.

As the fame of Jesus drew more people, they pressed upon Him to hear the Word of God. One morning as He stood by the lake of Gennesaret, a multitude of people came to Him. Jesus saw two fishing ships anchored off shore. The fishermen were on the shore washing their nets. Jesus entered into the ship belonging to Simon Peter. He asked Peter to push the ship out a little, so He could preach the Word of God without being so crowded. What a wonderful sight to see Jesus preaching the Word of God from the ship, while the people listened on the shore!

When He had finished, Jesus told Simon Peter to launch out into the deep and let down his nets for a great catch of fishes. Peter was sure it would be of no use to go out now. He reasoned with Jesus, saying: *"Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net."* However, unbelief was still working in Peter's heart. The Lord had told him to let down all the nets. Yet, Peter was sure that one net would be enough.

Very soon their net was filled with so many fishes that it began to break. How they struggled to bring the net loaded with fish into the ship! They signalled for their partners, James and John, to come and help them. They all worked very hard,

and soon both ships were filled, so that they began to sink from the weight of the fishes. How overawed the fishermen were with this success. They had never experienced anything like it before.

Peter thought on all these events: the night in which nothing was taken, not even one; the word of Jesus that there would be a great multitude of fishes; the unbelief of his heart; the goodness of the Lord in such a provision. The Lord had performed a miracle in the exceeding great catch of fishes. Peter was ashamed of himself. He fell down before Jesus saying: *"Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."* He felt so unworthy of the Lord's presence and His care.

What an important lesson for Peter and the others! It was reaffirmed by Jesus at a later time: *"For without Me ye can do nothing."*

Peter, Andrew, James and John were all astonished at the wonderful event. How tenderly the Lord dealt with them. He said: *"Fear not."* ... *"Come ye after Me, and I will make you ... fishers of men."*

"And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed Him."

You can read about this in Luke chapter 5 verses 1 to 11 and Mark chapter 1 verses 16 to 18.

QUESTIONS:

1. How did the words of Jesus come into the hearts of the people? (3 words)
2. How many nets did Peter let down?
3. What were the names of the four fishermen?
4. What did Jesus say He would make them? (3 words)
5. What did they do when they brought their ships to land? (6 words)

Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on page 218). Please mark the envelope: ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.

G.I Tenbroeke

ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS

1. To the synagogue.
2. Isaiah.
3. Grace.
4. In his own country.
5. To throw Him over the edge.

“A BROTHER BELOVED”

Twenty years ago, on October 5th 1986, the Lord took to his eternal home, a young boy, Jonathan Wheeler, only five years old. The following moving account of how he was prepared to die at such a young age, was written by his parents and is re-published with their kind permission.

In our desire to record a few details of the brief life of our dear son, the words of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 6. 4 have been an encouragement to us: “And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” Also, we have felt there are many parents who find the care and responsibility of a family to be a burden, which can only be rightly accomplished as the Lord is pleased to teach us daily our utter dependence upon Him for all our mercies in providence and in grace.

There are many trials with a family which will bring parents very low in their souls’ feelings: nevertheless we have proved that the dear Lord “lends an unseen hand and gives a secret prop” to parents in their deepest trials – it is of our recent experience we desire to write.

When Jonathan was about four and a half years old, he attended a clinic for speech therapy. On one occasion he was shown a picture of clouds, sky and aeroplanes, and was then asked which was above each other. Jonathan, after answering the question added: “And heaven is above that, where God dwells.” The speech therapist was surprised at this remark, and so was his mother. To us this remark has been a great comfort since Jonathan could only have heard and received this and other truths from the words spoken in either the Lord’s House, or at home.

From time to time, Jonathan would ask Mummy or Daddy if he could say “his grace” before meals, and when given permission, would close his eyes and say: “Thank you, God,” several times.

When sitting down at the dining table, Jonathan occasionally would request: “Daddy, could we sing grace?” At his Aunt’s

birthday party, 16th September – three weeks before he died, while singing grace I noticed the rapt attention showing on his face – although unable to attribute at that time any particular reason for this.

Jonathan, on one occasion, asked his mother the question: “What is a sinner?” My wife said: “We will ask Daddy to explain this.” On being told of Jonathan’s question, we desired the Lord to help us to speak as a little child to a little child in this solemn matter, and we feel the Lord gave us all needed wisdom and suitable words on this occasion to answer this all-important question.

During his last few weeks, Jonathan had asked after heaven – sometimes simple, childlike questions as: “How far is heaven?” and, “How do people get to heaven?” Once he asked: “Will I go to heaven?” and we told Jonathan: “Only God knows that.” He replied: “Well, I want to go there.” Jonathan would ask these questions two or three times a day; sometimes at mealtimes; or on the way to school; or, often while he was playing with his toys. We would notice the expression on his face change and he would leave his toys and come to us to ask one of these questions. Jonathan would not be satisfied with anything but a “proper” answer, often verified from the Word of God. We have felt since how Hymn 479 verse 5 (Gadsby’s) describes this experience of the Lord’s people:

“I would not be a stranger still
To that celestial place,
Where I forever hope to dwell
Near my Redeemer’s face.”

Jonathan’s visits to the speech therapist ended when he started school, just before he was five. The only sound he could not pronounce properly was “g” as in “girl,” “good,” “God.” Just one week before Jonathan was taken ill, he came to us and said: “I can say ‘g’ now,” and said several words beginning with “g,” including “God.”

On Jonathan’s last Sabbath in the House of God, as he sat

down, he put his hands together and said: "Please God, help me," several times, carefully pronouncing his "g." His sister smiled at him. Jonathan, perhaps mistaking her smile, said: "It is not funny – it is serious."

On Thursday evening, 2nd October, I was mowing the lawns and Jonathan was taking away the grass cuttings in his trailer, as he said in his childlike way: "For the cows on my farm." As we were finishing, Jonathan said: "Daddy, would you help me to collect all the grass cuttings, because a lot will be needed, so we will not have to work on the farm on Sunday." These were practically his last words to me, which could be remembered, apart from "Goodbye," and the remarks made at bedtime.

Little did we think or realise that Jonathan was to enter that eternal Sabbath of Rest before the coming Sabbath Day had passed.

Jonathan was just a lively little boy at 8.30 p.m. and at 9.30 p.m. when his sister, Hannah, went into the bedroom he was sleeping peacefully in bed. After a short time, Jonathan awoke, apparently dreaming and in distress. On bringing him downstairs at about 9.45 p.m. the doctor was called and he said that Jonathan was semi-comatose, remarking he had never seen anything similar before. Immediately, Jonathan was taken to hospital and after a short stay, transferred to a Neurosurgical Unit.

On Friday morning after Jonathan had had an emergency operation, my wife and I looked on his peaceful face and felt the Lord was taking him Home to Glory. However, maybe a miracle could be wrought on his behalf and restoring mercies bestowed upon him. These were my thoughts until Saturday morning, when, after reading and prayer, the Lord broke into my soul with the sweet assurance that our dear son, Jonathan, was one of that "number which no man can number," and I was able to declare to my family that the Lord was taking him Home to Glory. When moving from the dining table to the lounge, Hymn 967 verse 4 (Gadsby's) followed on from the previous bedewing of my soul, and with such sweetness and

power, that all my troubles were sanctified; the petition on behalf of our dear son, Jonathan, had been heard before the Mercy Seat:

“That were a grief I could not bear,
Didst Thou not hear and answer prayer;
But a prayer-hearing, answering God
Supports me under every load.”

“And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us: And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him” (1 John 5. 14, 15).

Sabbath after Sabbath in the Sunday School, as helped, I have prayed that the dear Lord would bless the dear children, and reveal Himself as their Guide, Saviour, and everlasting All. (We would remark that our five children were the only children that attended the chapel.) In Sunday School, September 28th, I spoke of the miracle of how, in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, the three Hebrew children were preserved when cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace, and also how Daniel was preserved when cast into the den of lions; and was led to remark that it is a miracle when God saves a poor sinner, young or old, and takes them to Glory.

Truly we must confess as the hymn writer says: “We cannot see without His light.” Now the scales fell from my eyes and I could see that the broken words of our dear son, Jonathan, a little lamb in Christ’s fold, had not been so clearly recognised as they should have been: indeed our thoughts were far removed from the possibility that the Lord was about to take Jonathan from us.

However, on visiting the hospital on Saturday morning, it was clear that Jonathan was passing away. Early on Sunday morning, we were told that Jonathan was only being kept alive on the ventilator, which was switched off later, and his spirit returned to be in the presence of God throughout the countless ages of eternity.

On the day of Jonathan's burial, my first thoughts on awaking were very disturbed, and how we were to get through the occasion seemed an insurmountable trial. In the midst of all these fears and thoughts concerning Jonathan, the dear Lord drew near and the words of the Apostle Paul: "A brother beloved," (Philemon v 16) dropped so softly into my soul with dew, unction and power, that every troubled thought and fear was removed from my mind as the spiritual union between my dear son, Jonathan "a brother beloved" in the Lord, was sealed in my soul's experience.

As soon as I was able, I recounted to my wife the details of the Lord's visit, and now we were able to feel a double union "a son" and "a brother beloved," and this proved a gracious help during the day. My wife and I and all our family were supported during the day, far above anything we could have thought or even asked: "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."

The funeral service was conducted by Mr. D. Haddow, who during his remarks quoted from Hymn 62 (Young People's Hymnal):

"There's a Friend for little children
Above the bright blue sky,
A Friend who never changes,
Whose love will never die;"

and at the graveside Hymn 275 (Young People's Hymnal):

"Around the throne of God in heaven,
Thousands of children stand:
Children whose sins are all forgiven
A holy, happy band."

We felt the verses to be very apt, concerning our dear son, and brother, whose spirit is now with those for whom Christ died: "... and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Revelation 5. 9).

W.T. & J. Wheeler

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

Today the boys were playing football. When Tom scored a goal, he shouted: "Hallelujah!" He did not realise that I was behind the hedge. I asked him why he said that, and he said that it is what all the boys at school say when they score. I told John and Tom how solemn it is to take the name of God in vain and reminded them of the third commandment: "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

We looked up "hallelujah" in the dictionary:

Hallelujah: An exclamation of praise to God.

We then looked up "blasphemy."

Blaspheme: To show contempt or disrespect for God, or great irreverence towards God.

This word "blaspheme" has been much in the news recently and the lads were shocked to know its meaning. We then looked up "hallowed" which is just half a dozen words after "hallelujah."

Hallowed: Consecrated, holy, set apart as sacred.

We remembered the first commandment: "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." We then read 1 Kings 18. "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the LORD be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him" (verse 21). The prophets of Baal leaped upon the altar, they cried aloud and cut themselves till the blood gushed out, but there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded. How different when Elijah prayed: "Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that Thou art the LORD God" (verse 37). Then the fire of the LORD fell, and what did all the people say? "The LORD, He is the God; the LORD, He is the God" (verse 39).

This God is our God.

How good if we can say from our hearts: "Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name."

For this God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our Guide, even unto death."

Contributed

MATHEMATICS (II)

Subtraction

Subtraction is when we take one number from another, and the result is a smaller number, or sometimes nothing at all. We may know it as “taking away.” We do not find the word “subtraction” in the Bible, but there are many references to “taking away,” and we shall look at a few of them.

One of the most precious words ever spoken was said by John the Baptist: “Behold the Lamb of God, which **taketh away** the sin of the world.” We read he said this twice, desiring that his disciples should follow Jesus, the Lamb of God. And so, all gospel ministers point out Jesus who “was manifested to **take away** our sins” (1 John 3. 5). It is good to know about Jesus and that He came to take away sin, but it is vital to know it for ourselves. There is a good prayer in Hosea 14 – may we be taught to pray it from our hearts: “Turn to the LORD: say unto Him, **Take away** all iniquity, and receive us graciously.” In Psalm 32, David says that all who are godly will seek the LORD for the forgiveness of their sin. They will know their unworthiness, as Isaiah did when he saw the LORD and His glory. He said: “Woe is me, for I am undone!” But the seraphim was sent to him to say: “Thine iniquity is **taken away**, and thy sin purged” (Isaiah 6. 7). How precious! When the Lord takes away sin, it is all gone for ever, and nothing is left.

Those who are thus blessed, will ever want to be with Jesus who has loved them and saved them. Like Mary they will be found at His dear feet, hearing His word. Like her, they possess “that good part, which shall not be **taken away** from” them.

There are also some very solemn “take aways” in Scripture. Jeremiah was told by the LORD, that because of the rebellion of the people: “I have **taken away** My peace from this people, saith the LORD, even lovingkindness and mercies” (Jeremiah 16. 5). In Ezekiel we read of those who are **taken away** in their own iniquity because they do not heed the warnings of the faithful watchmen (Ezekiel 33. 6).

The last reference is in Revelation 22. 19: “If any man shall

take away from the words of the Book of this prophecy, God shall **take away** his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this Book." Today, perhaps as never before, the holy Word of God is disregarded in whole or in part, even in so-called Christian circles. Every Word of God is pure, including His statutes, precepts and judgments (which are not pleasing to our flesh), as well as words of comfort. May the whole Word of God ever be precious to us.

Contributed

"THE JUDGE STANDETH BEFORE THE DOOR"

"My Dear, while I am in Leiden, I must pay a visit to Mr. Van Reenen." Mr. Lamain puts on his hat and takes his coat from the hook. He really needs it because it is cold outside.

For more than two years now he has been pastor in Rotterdam. This evening he is to preach in Leiden. That was his first congregation. It was from there that he had gone to Rotterdam South.

When he used to live in Leiden, he often visited old Mr. Van Reenen, who now can no longer walk properly but gets about in a wheelchair. Mr. Van Reenen cannot preach at present either. Yet he can still tell people much about Bible truths: not from the pulpit, but through his pen. He writes many interesting pieces. Sometimes he does this in the form of a dialogue. Then he makes Kees ask questions and Bart to reply. People find it good to read and it is very instructive.

Mr. Lamain is also pleased to learn much from Mr. Van Reenen. He himself is still young. He was only twenty-five when he became pastor in Leiden. How small he feels when compared with the older ministers! Mr. Van Reenen is almost exactly forty years older than he.

Mr. Lamain feels often that without the Lord's help he cannot do his work. At times he receives wise counsel from Mr. Van Reenen. So he is always pleased to visit the house in Hoge Rijndijk where the old minister lives with his wife.

After three years Mr. Lamain had moved on to Rotterdam. But if he is ever back in Leiden, he always goes to visit his old friend. He can still do so, but for how long will Mr. Van Reenen be spared? He could perhaps soon die. Only lately he wrote in an article: "My Bridegroom is coming to take me." What a wonderful thing to be able to write, thinks Mr. Lamain. If your heart has been renewed, you need not fear to die. You can rather long to be for ever with the Lord and sin no more. In a letter Mr. Van Reenen had written: "He is my Father and my God and the Father's House is my Home, too. I, too, may come Home."

Mr. Lamain arrives in Leiden and walks towards Mr. Van Reenen's house. He sees him coming and raises his hand in greeting. "How grave Mr. Van Reenen is, sitting there in the room," thinks Mr. Lamain. There is something on his mind, he is sure of it. Abruptly the old minister says: "I cannot preach any more. I feel convinced that I shall never again enter the pulpit."

Mr. Van Reenen sits silently contemplating. "I would that I could warn the people," he continues. "Things are not going well in our land. Twenty years back when the Great War began, people feared that there would be fighting in Holland. But at that time we were spared. The German soldiers did enter Belgium, but they did not attack our country. And how many men fell in Belgium and France then! Young men who never came home again: how terrible is war. It lasted for four years, and what tense years they were. Sometimes it looked as though we would have to fight, but we were not attacked and in 1918 Germany lost the War. It was all over and Holland stayed clear.

"How good the Lord was for us then, and we did not deserve it. And you would have thought that the Dutch would have been so thankful. But have things improved since the end of the War? The majority of our people want nothing to do with the Lord and His service. How His children are sometimes ridiculed, and on Sunday, the Lord's Day, there is so much

done that is not good. The Lord will surely punish these sins. In the last few weeks I have given serious thought to a word in the Epistle of James. If I could still preach it would be on New Year's Eve, from that text in chapter 5 verse 9: 'Behold, the Judge standeth before the door.' That Judge is the Lord. He is going to punish Holland, because our land was so ungrateful when spared the horrors of war. I believe surely that a second War is coming, and that Holland will not then escape."

Mr. Van Reenen looks sorrowful. Mr. Lamain listens quietly. No, things are not good, that he well knows. There was much prayer made during the last War that the Lord would spare Holland. People sometimes came to church who never attended otherwise. But when those prayers were answered and the land **was** spared, people soon forgot the Lord.

"I want to ask you something," says the old minister. "I can no longer warn the people. Will you preach on New Year's Eve from that text: 'Behold, the Judge standeth before the door,' and then on New Year's morning from Matthew 25. 6: 'Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him'? The people must be able to meet the Lord if they are to die, and that can only be when they have a new heart. Then they see how solemn it is that they sin so greatly, because they grieve the Lord. Then, too, they see how needful is the Lord Jesus as their Saviour, to pay for those sins. They begin to pray that the Lord will enter their hearts and forgive their sins. That is what the people need. Will you show it to them?"

Mr. Lamain promises to do so. Deep in thought he is soon walking towards the church where he is to preach that evening.

Not long after this, in 1935, old Mr Van Reenen passed away. So he did not survive to see the advent of war in Holland in 1940. "My Bridegroom is coming to take me," he had written, and it was not long before the Lord took His servant Home, where he can serve the Lord forever. He needs no longer to be saddened by all the sins which were around him in our land, and he needs no longer to grieve over his own sins. For God's

children, too, so often do wrong things and know that they ever need the Lord to pardon their sins and to keep them from evil.

(to be continued)

Translated from the Dutch by M. Banfield

FAILED EXAMINATIONS

Many of our older readers will remember with affection Mr. W. B. Griffiths Vaughan of Bradford, a well-loved minister who died in 1958. Mr. Vaughan was, we believe, senior master at Shipley Grammar School.

When about seventeen, the Lord began to deal with him: "In about my seventeenth year, the sudden affliction of my dear father brought me to my knees for the first time in earnest prayer in felt helplessness."

His father died and Mr. Vaughan went to Liverpool University, but then came a bitter disappointment. At the end of three years he had the grief of failing his exams, despite his prayers that he might pass. Yet he could write: "This bitter disappointment and shame was indeed a precious mercy of the Lord's appointment. My schemes were overturned, projects crossed, gourds blasted. I had tried to ask the Lord for success, but He withheld the favour for seven years."

Soon he was called to join the forces, the Great War having broken out. He was wounded in action, and after many months in hospital, was discharged. This was an added trial, yet during it he was wonderfully favoured spiritually. Many years later he wrote: "I had such a sense of the love of God and the presence of Jesus Christ, as I have never had before nor since."

Of God's dealings with him, he said: "He had weakened my strength in the way. Surely before honour is humility."

After being discharged from the army, he was able to sit his university examinations again and this time he passed. *It was seven years after the time of his failure.* "Thus," he wrote, "we have been taught of the Lord through bitter experience."

Based on an account in the Gospel Standard 1958

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***THE DOCTRINE OF TRUTH****Strict and Particular Baptist (I)**

This title given to our group of churches is a doctrinal statement. We are called Baptists because we believe that when a person is brought to saving faith in Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit, according to New Testament church order, before he can partake of the Lord's Supper he must be baptised by immersion. Only believers were baptised in the New Testament, hence the term "believers' baptism." The word "baptise" is an anglicised form of the original Greek word "baptizo," which means to dip or immerse. The Lord Jesus Christ sets us the example: "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered Him. And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3. 13-17). We should note: Jesus calls baptism a righteous thing. Also, we have a revelation of the glorious Trinity of Persons in the Godhead. The Person being baptised is the **Son of God**, the **Holy Spirit** descends upon Him in the form of a dove and the eternal **Father** speaks from heaven.

The apostles were commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ to perform this sacred rite of believers' baptism. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28. 19-20). In this sacred command we have another revelation of the glorious Trinity.

Baptism represents the grave of the Lord Jesus Christ and as the believer comes up out of the water it represents the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection" (Romans 6. 3-5). John Fawcett wrote the following verse:

"View the rite with understanding;
Jesus' grave before you lies;
Be interred at His commanding;
After His example rise."

Only believers should be baptised, on the confession of their faith; first before the pastor or deacons, and then before the church. This is usually called, giving your testimony. If the church receives your testimony, you are then baptised by the pastor, or if no pastor, another gospel minister of the same faith and order is asked to baptise you.

We do not believe in baptismal regeneration, that is, that baptism confers life or special privileges on the person baptised. The Scriptures teach us: "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3. 21).

(to be continued)

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about HIDDEN THINGS. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor (see page 218 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. People often hide when they have done something wrong. Who first tried to hide from God and why? (Genesis 3. 8-10)
2. Who was hidden for three months when he was born? (Exodus 2. 2; Hebrews 11. 23)
3. What three things did Achan hide in his tent contrary to God's commandment? (Joshua 7. 21)
4. What did David hide in his heart, and why? (Psalm 119. 11)
5. What did a man do who found treasure hidden in a field? (Matthew 13. 44)
6. Who shot arrows as a signal to someone hidden nearby? (1 Samuel 20)
7. From whom are gospel blessings hidden and to whom are they revealed? (Luke 10)
8. What does Peter call "the hidden man of the heart"? (1 Peter 3.)
9. Find two texts which declare the impossibility of hiding ourselves from God. (Amos 9; Jeremiah 23)
10. On two occasions we read of two men being hidden by a woman who then lied about their hiding place. What were the hiding places? (Joshua, 2 Samuel)

ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS

1. Eli.
2. "A broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart."
3. A stone cut without hands.
4. The Scripture.
5. His covenant with the children of Israel.
6. The children of Israel were burning incense to the brazen serpent as if it were an idol. (2 Kings 18. 4)
7. The Lord Jesus. (John 19. 36)
8. Jehoshaphat, because he joined in affinity with ungodly Ahaziah. (2 Chronicles 20. 37)
9. Moses broke the two tables of stone on which were written the law. (Exodus 32. 19)
10. Abimelech. (Judges 9. 53)

Contributed

The Day of Judgment will be a great revealer.

“KEEP ME WHEN I LEAVE THY COURTS”

Oft when one minister has closed in prayer,
When one more Sabbath service ends;
With, stretched before us, one more week of care,
This weighty word his prayer attends:

“Don’t let us leave all that we’ve heard today
Upon the chapel doorstep, Lord;
Don’t let the little foxes come and take away
Ought we have gathered from Thy Word.”

How oft have I – alas with shame I own,
Heard this short prayer; then left God’s house,
And greeting other friends, away has flown
The solemnness that prayer aroused.

The sweetness of his sermon, and the text,
With fleshly conversations fly,
And I’ve been all too eager, with the rest,
In talk that makes his discourse die.

Oh Lord, do keep me from such wayward ways,
From careless talking when I leave!
When service closes on Thy Sabbath days,
Make me, oh Lord, at such things grieve.

Oh Lord, do give the hearing ear, when I attend
Thy courts! Oh Lord, create desires
Which only Thou can’st fill! And oh do send
Longings for Thee in heartfelt fires!

Lord Jesus, keep me when I leave Thy courts:
Let me not lose that precious word,
Nor from its exhortations fall so short,
Which I’ve just from Thy servant heard.

C.J.J.

The Friendly Companion



“Yet surely I know that it shall be well with them
that fear God, which fear before Him.”
(Ecclesiastes 8. 12)

November 2006

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All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Price 50 pence monthly, plus postage.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A.	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£10.00	\$42	A\$55	€27.00

All correspondence concerning subscriptions should be
addressed to Mr. H. Mercer, 8 Fairleigh Rise, Kington Langley,
Chippenham, Wilts. SN15 5QF.

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

In a recent edition of the *Daily Telegraph*, an archive picture from 1940 appeared of a cow called “Jenny” with her forelegs in the arms of a cowman. Apparently the cow had strayed into a neighbouring farmer’s field, which farmer refused to return it, falsely claiming it was his own.

Eventually the case came to the County Court where it seemed impossible to resolve the dispute between the farmers. The judge, who seemed to have something of the wisdom of Solomon in this case, ordered the farmers to bring their cowmen to the field where the strayed animal was, and to see which it would answer to. No sooner had the real owner’s cowman reached the field, than the disputed cow ambled over to him, nuzzled his back and then proceeded to lift its legs into the cowman’s arms!

The judge looking on said: “Jenny gave her evidence as eloquent as any human witness I have ever seen; I accept Jenny’s evidence.” So Jenny was restored to her rightful owner.

This strange, yet true, incident has some important lessons for us.

Firstly: “Be sure your sin will find you out.” The farmer, who tried to pretend that the cow was his, proved to be a liar, just as in the case of Solomon, who found out the true mother of a living child, by threatening to slay it. Her motherly affection rose up in horror, whereas the false parent would have let the sword do its work. How true is the word: “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper.”

Secondly, the affection of the cow for her master, reminds us of Isaiah’s complaint about Israel: “The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider.” Does this cow put us to shame in the same way that the ox did Israel? They had no regard for God, their Creator, even though He had done so much for them. What solemn judgments followed! May we lay these

things to heart lest even the beasts of the field condemn us, even as Balaam's ass did him.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

FRONT COVER PICTURE

The picture on our front cover, kindly sent by an older reader from Bedfordshire, shows the gravestone of a young soldier, who died during the First World War whilst fighting for his country in France. To see the thousands and thousands of graves at the British and Commonwealth war cemeteries, is an awe-inspiring sight, and gives some insight into the untold numbers who laid down their lives on the battlefield. It reminds us of what a debt we owe to those who fought so bravely that we might have the freedom we often so carelessly enjoy.

This gravestone has one or two lessons for us.

Firstly, it reminds us of the certainty of death. Here lies the body of a young lad, who was only nineteen years old when he died. How true it is that 'the old must die and the young may die.' We need to be prepared. Evidently, it was felt by his relatives that this young lad was ready to die. The inscription asks an important question: "Is it well with the lad?" no doubt taking similar language to that asked of the sorrowing mother in 2 Kings 4. Beneath the question we read the answer: "It is well." What a comfort this must have been to the gracious relative or friend, who put the inscription there, to feel that the soul of this young lad was safe. This was, no doubt, because there were the marks of grace in the lad, whilst he lived his short life, that accompany those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly, we should remember that this young lad, along with thousands of others, died that we might enjoy freedom. How much more should we remember One who laid down His life as a ransom price, that those who believe in Him should be free from the curse of sin and its punishment in a lost eternity.

There seemed good reason to believe that H.E. Phipps,

whose gravestone is in the picture, was one who had been taught to flee for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before sinners in Christ Jesus. That was why they could say: "It is well." If that had been your, or my, gravestone, would it have been true to have put that on it?

EPITAPHS FOUND ON TOMBSTONES

Of a boy who died at a very young age in England

When the Archangel's trump doth blow
And souls and bodies join.
Thousands will wish their life below,
Had been as brief as mine.

Found on the stone of a famous warrior

The biggest warfare I ever was in,
Was the battle of self, and the conquest of sin.

Found on a stone somewhere in the Southern States

Behold: all ye that pass me by,
As you are now so once was I.
As I am now ye too shall be,
Prepare for Death and follow me.

From Charles Wesley's dying lips

"In age and feebleness extreme,
Who shall a helpless worm redeem?
Jesus: my only hope Thou art;
Strength of my failing flesh and heart.
O let me catch a smile from Thee,
And drop into eternity."

Zion Baptist Church, Grand Rapids, Mich.

The world and the heavens were the "work of God's fingers"
(Psalm 8. 3).

Conversion is the "work of God's arm" (Luke 1. 51).

Thomas Watson

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**WRITING ON THE WALL**

King Belshazzar made a great feast in Babylon. He commanded to bring the golden vessels that were taken from the house of God at Jerusalem. They drank wine in them and praised gods of gold and silver, brass, iron, wood and stone. They did not praise the most high God, who rules over all men.

Suddenly the king saw *"fingers of a man's hand"* writing on the wall of the palace. He was so frightened that his knees knocked together. He cried aloud for his wise men to come and read the writing. Although he offered them great rewards, none was able to read the words or tell what they meant.

"Then was Daniel brought in before the king." He was able to read the writing. Although the writing was against the king, Daniel faithfully told him the meaning of the words: *"God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it."* *"Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting."* The same night King Belshazzar was slain and his kingdom was given to others.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did the king see fingers writing on?
2. Who was able to read the writing?
3. When was the king slain?

Contributed

Send your answers to the Editor (see page 242 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

ANSWERS TO OCTOBER QUESTIONS

1. A golden image.
2. A burning fiery furnace.
3. To deliver.

*“For in
Him we
live, and
move, and
have our
being.”
Acts 17. 28.*

BIBLE LESSONS

THE LEPER CLEANSED

In the morning, long before daybreak, a figure was walking alone out of the city into the fields. What could anyone do out in the field while it was still dark? If we could have followed Him, we would soon have heard Him praying. What a prayer it must have been! For, it was Jesus Himself who had risen early to pray to His Father. What a gracious example Jesus set! Before He began the day's activities, He prayed. When He prayed, He sought to be alone. Sometimes you may not be able to be alone, such as when you are at school. Yet, you should not neglect or forget to pray. Still, if Jesus sought the quiet solitude for prayer, how much more should poor sinners such as we are.

After a while, His disciples came to Him, saying that the people of Capernaum were looking for Him. Jesus told them He must preach the Gospel in other cities of Galilee as well.

In one of the cities a leper came to Jesus. Leprosy was a terrible disease which required the person to be banished from society. The leper was an object of shame and pity, without hope of being cured by any doctor.

When this poor leper heard of Jesus, he believed that Jesus could cure his leprosy. He fell at Jesus' feet crying: "*Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.*" This is like the experience of a poor sinner, feeling his guilt and wretchedness, in coming to Jesus. He knows the Lord is able to forgive his sins, but oh, is He willing?

How the heart of Jesus was touched! He knew the man was slowly dying from the dreaded disease. He also knew how lonely his life had been. He could not stay in his home with his family, as a leper must stay outside the city.

Because leprosy was so dreaded, no one would dare to touch or come near to the leper. However, Jesus was not afraid to touch him. He, "*moved with compassion, put forth His hand, and touched him,*" saying, "*I WILL; be thou clean.*" Immediately the leprosy left him, and all the effects of leprosy

were gone. What a wonderful thing for the poor leper! When no one else could or would help him, Jesus did not fail him.

In the Law of God given to Moses, a leper was commanded to offer sacrifices of thanksgiving if ever he was cleansed of his leprosy. According to the Law of Moses, he must present himself to the priest, so the priest could declare him clean. Jesus reminded this man to go and show himself to the priest, so he could be pronounced clean from the disease of leprosy.

Jesus also told him not to tell any man who had healed him. What a strange command! When others were healed of their diseases, they were allowed to tell those around them. Why must the leper remain silent? Perhaps if the priest heard that Jesus had healed the leper, the priest would not pronounce him clean because of his hatred to Jesus.

However, the poor leper could not contain himself. His heart was so full of joy and love to Jesus, that he began to tell everyone what Jesus had done.

You can read about this in Matthew 8. 1-4; Mark 1. 35-45; and Luke 5. 12-15.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who went out into the field before daybreak?
2. What did He do in the field?
3. What did the leper say Jesus could do if He would? (3 words)
4. What did Jesus say to the leper when He touched him? (5 words)
5. What must a leper offer if he was cleansed? (3 words)

G. L. TenBroeke

Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on page 242). Please mark the envelope ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.

ANSWERS TO OCTOBER QUESTIONS

1. With great power.
2. One net.
3. Peter, Andrew, James, and John.
4. Fishers of men.
5. They forsook all and followed Him.

“THE JUDGE STANDETH BEFORE THE DOOR”*(Part 2)*

When Christmas is over, Mr. Lamain goes to his study to prepare his sermons for New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. He cannot go unprepared into the pulpit. No, first he must study God's Word and consult books about the Bible. But most important is prayer. Before every sermon he has to ask the Lord to show him a text from which to speak, and if the Lord will, give him to see what he must say to the congregation.

What shall he speak about on New Year's Eve? Mr. Lamain recalls his visit to Mr. Van Reenen. How he misses his old fellow-labourer! He could sometimes give such wise counsel. And then he had asked him to preach from that text: “Behold, the Judge standeth before the door.”

He reads the text again, as he has done so often, but he feels that this is not the text from which he must now speak. Perhaps next year? The Lord now shows him another text.

Does this mean that the punishment for sin is not yet coming in the New Year? Has the Lord yet more patience with the Dutch nation? Mr. Lamain cannot really understand it, and he finds it a wonder that the Lord has so much patience with him. For is he always thankful for what the Lord gives? He has to admit with shame that the Lord has been faithful in the year now almost ended, but that he himself so often has no need of the Lord.

That New Year's Eve, Mr. Lamain does not preach from the text: “Behold, the Judge standeth before the door,” and on New Year's Day, he does not preach from Matthew 25. 6: “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him.” “I got no opening for it,” Mr. Lamain wrote later in a letter. On these texts he may not preach this year. A year later, at the end of 1936 it is the same, and in 1937 and 1938, even so again. From these texts Mr. Lamain may not preach – of that he feels convinced; yet he cannot forget what old Mr. Van Reenen had said, and sometimes when Mr. Lamain is travelling to preach

somewhere else and he meets God's children, he hears that they think exactly as Mr. Van Reenen: war is coming, and this time Holland will not be spared. The Lord is going to punish sin.

Another year has almost gone. It is 1939, more than four years since Mr. Van Reenen has been taken. What a lot has happened! The man who has now been ruling Germany for six years, Adolf Hitler, has made his country strong with a large army. And it is obvious in all manner of ways that he has no good intentions. Last year he simply took possession of two small neighbouring countries: Austria and Czechoslovakia. But it was nothing like enough. Hitler wants the whole of Europe, yes, in fact really the whole world in his power. Germany had lost the last war and the Germans considered that they had been far too severely punished. They had land taken away from them and had also to pay a lot of money to other countries.

Hitler is now taking revenge. He seems to want the whole of Europe. Germany must become the mightiest land in the world. This year, 1939, Hitler has attacked another neighbouring land, Poland. That was in the east. How long will it be before he goes westwards, to Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg and France? Holland hopes again to stay out of the war, like last time. Many soldiers then stood guard along the borders, but they did not have to fight.

The tension rose in the summer of 1939. So the government called up all who had been in the army, to watch the borders again. They had had to take leave of home, look out their uniforms from the attic and now they have already been in the army for almost four months.

It gets more and more tense. Yet, still people hope that Hitler will not attack Holland. "Last time we stayed out of the war, didn't we?" "With many," wrote Mr. Lamain later, "it was peace, peace, and no danger. England will not attack us and Germany will not breach our neutrality. Time and time again it

had been solemnly promised by Germany. ‘Our army,’ cried another, ‘is ready; oh no, there is nothing to fear.’ Thus the vain world cried.”

Many do not see how dangerous the situation is. They will not see it. They want to carry on a quiet life. But Mr. Lamain knows that there is a great danger. Again he is sitting in his study, and again he is considering what he shall speak from on New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day. Just as in previous years he thinks of the texts which Mr. Van Reenen had mentioned. On those occasions he could not speak from them, but now it is different from past years. Now he **must** speak from those texts and from nothing else: of that he feels quite sure.

The message is a solemn one indeed. “Behold, the Judge standeth before the door.” The people may well be frightened, but it is indeed an anxious time. War has broken out in Europe and many have been killed already. And the Judge, that is the Lord, is about to punish the sins of the Dutch nation.

Later Mr. Lamain wrote: “I shall never forget that New Year’s Eve with my never-to-be-forgotten congregation in Rotterdam South. God revealed what was before us as a land and people.”

It was thus that the Lord showed him that there would be war in Holland, too, and on this subject he preaches on New Year’s Eve, 1939, from the words in James 5. 9.

And the following morning, on New Year’s Day, 1940, Mr. Lamain preaches from Matthew 25. 6: “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go yet out to meet Him.” This is part of the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, who had to watch and ensure that they had enough oil in their lamps when the bridegroom came. Which means, they had to be ready to meet the Lord. And for this **all** must be ready, which can only come to pass if one has a new heart.

Mr. Lamain solemnly warns the people sitting in the church that they must seek the Lord. **Now** there is still peace, but when war comes they may have to die suddenly, and how will things stand then?

The people walk home in deeply serious mood. The Rotterdam streets are full of churchgoers. In those days very many in the city still attended church. Mr. Lamain's congregation has become large, for very many who seek work have come to live in the city. So the church is full, and all those people hear Mr. Lamain's words of warning: "The Judge standeth before the door," and "The Bridegroom cometh"! How long will it be?

(To be concluded)

Translated from the Dutch by M. Banfield

THE MUTILATED BIBLE

We have read a story of a young minister who constantly told his congregation that *this* part of the Bible is untrue, or *that* part is unreliable.

One day, in visiting a member of his congregation, he noticed that her Bible was very thin, ragged and torn. He enquired why.

The answer was quickly given: "Why, whenever you say a part of the Bible is not true, I cut it out; or when you say a chapter is unreliable, I get rid of that too. *This is what I have left.*"

The minister was so shocked at the result of his preaching that he was never the same again and, in fact, became a firm advocate of the infallibility of Scripture.

We understand that the minister was Abraham Kuyper, the well-known theologian, who was at one time Prime Minister of the Netherlands.

God Himself has said: "If any man shall take away from the words of the Book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this Book" (Revelation 22. 19).

Selected

“THE DAY WHICH THE LORD HATH MADE”

Why do we keep the first day of the week and not the seventh, as a day of rest now? (The term “Lord’s day” is to be preferred to Sunday, which is pagan in origin, being the day heathens set aside to worship the sun.)

The keeping of the Lord’s day as the Sabbath has been a point of controversy with many erroneous sects over the years, the most well known of these being the Seventh Day Adventists.

The foundation of our observance of the Lord’s day rests on three basic premises:

1. The Sabbath was ordained by God Himself at creation for His glory and man’s spiritual and physical good (Genesis 2. 1-3). The day of rest is binding upon all men but is especially important to those who fear God.

2. This commandment was again enforced at Sinai in the Ten Commandments where God relates this law directly to creation (Exodus 20. 8-11). It is interesting to note that when Moses rehearses the Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy, its force is based on the redeeming of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage (Deuteronomy 5. 12-15).

Thus on the foundation of CREATION and REDEMPTION the keeping of a Sabbath was originally commanded. It can be shown that on the same foundation the Christian Sabbath of the Lord’s day is built.

3. The Lord Jesus Christ, who is “Lord ... of the Sabbath” (Matthew 12. 8) and the great Head of the church, transferred by His example the keeping of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week.

In support of these three premises the following points bear witness:

(a) It has been thought by gracious scholars that the commandment to observe the Sabbath day did not so much relate to the actual day of the week which was to be kept but rather to the principle that one day of rest was to follow six days of work. If God had intended man for all time to keep the seventh day as the Sabbath, He would have commanded us to

keep the seventh day *of the week*. Instead, mention is made only of the seventh day. This indicates that even the Law of Moses foresaw a time when the Sabbath could be changed from the seventh to the first day of the week (Exodus 20. 8-11).

Also Paul, writing in Hebrews 4. 8, speaks of “another day,” which adds weight to the argument that under the gospel dispensation the day should be changed as a type of the believer being no longer under the law for his justification.

It is interesting to note that in both the French and the Russian Revolutions attempts were made to alter the ratio of rest to work days, and more recently in Sri Lanka, but in each case they had to revert to the divine pattern.

(b) As God created light on the first day of the week, so Christ came forth from the darkness of the grave on that day. Similarly, as in Deuteronomy, the children of Israel in remembering the Sabbath day were to remember their redemption from Egyptian bondage, so in observing the Lord's day Christian believers remember the redemption wrought by Christ, “who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Genesis 1. 3-5; Deuteronomy 5. 15; John 20. 1; Romans 4. 25).

(c) Christ clearly referred to the Lord's day when He quoted Psalm 118. 22-24: “This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” It was on the day of His resurrection that, “The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner.” It is evident that the apostles followed the same interpretation in the New Testament church (Matthew 21. 42).

(d) By His own example Christ sanctified this day by appearing to His disciples again and again on the first day of the week (John 20. 19, 26).

(e) The Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out, was on the first day of the week (Leviticus 23. 15, 16; Acts 2. 1).

(f) Thus the Lord's day speaks of the Father (Creation), the

Son (Resurrection) and the Spirit (Pentecost). For all who believe in the Trinity, the Lord's day is deeply significant.

(g) Whilst it is evident that the New Testament church during the early days of its history continued to observe the Sabbath, it is also clear that increasingly they met together for worship and the breaking of bread on the first day of the week, until by the time Paul writes in the Corinthians and John in the Revelation, the term "the Lord's day" had become accepted as a day of worship. Thus the Christian Sabbath became established (1 Corinthians 16. 1,2; Revelation 1. 10).

Remembering that the apostles were given an authority in the church by Christ, it is right to infer that this practice was divinely appointed and almost certainly our Lord would have directed the apostles in this matter before His ascension, if not by His Holy Spirit after Pentecost.

The Apostolic Fathers bear testimony to this transference; for example, Augustine tells us: "The Lord's day was by the resurrection of Christ declared to Christians, and from that time it began to be celebrated as the Christian festival."

It is also very significant that the Christian martyrs were asked: "Do you keep the Lord's day?"

All the Reformers insisted on the keeping of the Lord's day as did the leaders of the Evangelical Revival many years later.

Robert Murray M'Cheyne says, in one of his published sermons, that during a season of revival there was profound conviction of sin. He noted with interest that it was the particular sin of Sabbath breaking that the Holy Ghost fastened upon the consciences of awakened sinners. It is hard to account for this if the Lord's day is *not* the Christian Sabbath.

One godly Scotsman said: "I despair of ever seeing Christianity and reformation considerably advanced in the world till once the Lord's day come to be highly esteemed and strictly observed. For still it is to be seen, wherever religion flourisheth in the power of it, there it is that most conscience is made of the Sabbath" (J. Willison).

Our own testimony must surely be that the Lord has made His day an incalculable blessing in our own lives.

The most important point with us each is to understand the true meaning of the Sabbath. May God give us the same grace as the hymn writer:

“To all God’s people now remains
A Sabbatism, a rest from pains,
And works of slavish kind:
When tired with toil, and faint through fear,
The child of God can enter here,
And sweet refreshment find.

This, and this only, is the way
To rightly keep the Sabbath day,
Which God has holy made.
All keepers that come short of this,
The substance of the Sabbath miss,
And grasp an empty shade.”

“A Sabbath well spent brings a week of content ...
But a Sabbath profaned, whate’er may be gained,
Is certain forerunner of sorrow.”

May the Lord bring us each to that place where
“congregations ne’er break up, and Sabbaths have no end”

G.D.B.

QUESTION: Did all mankind fall in Adam’s transgression?

ANSWER: All mankind, descending from Adam by ordinary generation lay in his loins, sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression.

*(1 Kings 8. 46; Ecclesiastes 7. 20; Romans 3. 9-19, 23
& 5. 12, 19; 1 Corinthians 15. 21-22.)*

EDITOR’S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received
from GEORGE HICKMAN and KYLE SPRINGHART.*

MATHEMATICS (III)

Multiplication

Multiplying is adding a number to itself several times. Usually there is a great increase in number, but as one of our ministers says, you can only multiply something; you can multiply nothing as many times as you like and you will still get nothing!

The word “multiply” appears several times in the Bible, meaning a very large increase. In Creation, God spoke to man and beast alike: “Be fruitful and **multiply**,” – a word of exhortation and of promise which was fulfilled. But it was not long before sin entered the world, and death by sin. God spoke solemnly to Eve of the consequences of sin, which included these words: “I will greatly **multiply** thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children.”

After the flood, God repeated His word to Noah: “Be fruitful, and **multiply**, and replenish the earth.” Later, God gave a particular and gracious promise to Abraham: “In blessing I will bless thee, and in **multiplying** I will **multiply** thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore.”

And so the children of Israel increased. Even in Egypt, when they were oppressed and were slaves to the Egyptians: “The more they afflicted them, the more they **multiplied** and grew.” At length, God fulfilled His promise to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt: He told Moses that He would “harden Pharaoh’s heart, and **multiply** My signs and wonders in the land of Egypt.”

So the children of Israel became a great nation, and God continually reminded them that He had blessed them. “The LORD your God hath **multiplied** you, and, behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude” (Deuteronomy 1.10).

The children of Israel were in many respects typical of the Lord’s people (the church) in New Testament times. We read that “the number of the disciples **multiplied** in Jerusalem greatly” and that “the word of God grew and **multiplied**.” Peter in his epistles writes to those who believe, saying: “Grace and peace be **multiplied** unto you.”

But then there are solemn words which describe our hearts by nature, and our many sins: “Our transgressions are **multiplied** before Thee, and our sins testify against us” (Isaiah 59. 12). “With your mouth ye have boasted against Me, and have **multiplied** your words against Me: I have heard them” (Ezekiel 35. 13). “Their sorrows shall be **multiplied** that hasten after another god” (Psalm 16. 4). “When the wicked are **multiplied**, transgression increaseth” (Proverbs 29. 16). But in spite of the many sins of His people, the Lord is faithful to His word: “I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and **multiply** them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore” (Ezekiel 37. 26).

So we see, throughout the Word of God, the two aspects of multiplying: the multiplying of sin and its consequences and the multiplying of God’s blessing to His people in spite of their sin. The Psalmist, recalling the history of the children of Israel in Psalm 106, comes to this conclusion: “**Many times** did He deliver them; but they provoked Him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity. Nevertheless He regarded their affliction, when He heard their cry; And He remembered for them His covenant, and repented according to the **multitude** of His mercies.”

All the Lord’s people are brought to acknowledge their multiplied sins and the Lord’s multiplied grace. May we be favoured with that blessing; to know in our own case that “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.”

Contributed

If you truly hate sin, you hate it whenever you see it. You hate it in the minister, you hate it in the people, you hate it in an enemy, you hate it in a friend, you hate it in a king, you hate it in a beggar, you hate it in a nation, you hate it in a church, you hate it in a family, you hate it in an individual, you hate it in others, but you hate it most in yourself.

Anon

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***THE DOCTRINE OF TRUTH****Strict and Particular Baptist (II)**

There were no un-baptised persons in New Testament churches. This brings us to the word “**strict.**” We are called Strict Baptists because we uphold the scriptural doctrine of Strict Communion. This was originally called restricted communion, which means that only baptised persons can come and partake of the Lord’s Supper. Some other Baptists allow any believer to come to the Lord’s Table – unrestricted or open table. We believe this is unscriptural.

The word “**particular**” refers to the doctrine of particular redemption: the Lord Jesus Christ redeemed a particular people, a people chosen by the Father before the foundation of the world – this doctrine is commonly called Calvinistic. We believe in free and sovereign grace. Most other Baptists hold to free will or Arminian doctrine. Arminius was a Dutchman who taught that a person could become a Christian by exercising his own free will. Calvin taught (consistent with the scriptures of truth) that only the Holy Spirit could make a man a Christian. Man lost his free will when he fell into sin. (He chose the way of sin and died, spiritually.) Hence the Lord Jesus said in John 3. 3: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto Him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”

My dear young friends, have you been born again by the Holy Spirit? This is absolutely vital. There will be many baptised people in hell, but not one person who has been born again by the Holy Spirit can ever go to hell. They will all be found in heaven.

If you read Ephesians 1, and Romans 9, the doctrine of

particular redemption is clearly taught. The Lord Jesus also said: "I am the Bread of Life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen Me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6. 35-37).

In the sacred prayer of Jesus Christ, we read: "I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever Thou hast given Me are of Thee. For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine" (John 17. 6-9).

The Final Perseverance of the Saints

The Lord Jesus also speaks of that sacred doctrine of **the final perseverance of the saints**, that is: that every true believer will certainly reach heaven at last. "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world" (John 17. 24). Also: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14. 1-3). And: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one" (John 10. 27-30).

J.R. Rutt

'GOLIATH' POTTERY SHARD

Archaeologists have unearthed a shard of pottery in southern Israel bearing an early Semitic-style inscription saying: 'Alwat' and 'Wlt,' likely Philistine renderings of the name Goliath.

Dated to around 900 BC, the shard was found about two metres underground at Tell-es-Shafi – the site of the Biblical city of Gath (1 Samuel 17. 4).

The Guardian, 17 November 2005.

THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS ECHO

True faith produces love to God and man,

Say, Echo, is not this the gospel plan?

The gospel plan.

Must I my faith and love to Jesus show,

By doing good to all, both friend and foe?

Both friend and foe.

But if a brother hates and treats me ill,

Must I return him good, and love him still?

Love him still.

If he my failings watches to reveal,

Must I his faults as carefully conceal?

As carefully conceal.

But if my name and character he blast,

And cruel malice, too, a long time last;

And if I sorrow and affliction know,

He loves to add unto my cup of woe:

In this uncommon, this peculiar case,

Sweet Echo, say, must I still love and bless?

Still love and bless.

Whatever usage ill I may receive,

Must I be patient still, and still forgive?

Still forgive.

Why, Echo, how is this? Thou'rt sure a dove!
Thy voice shall teach me nothing else but love,
Nothing else but love.

Amen! With all my heart, then, be it so;
'Tis all delightful, just, and good, I know.
To practise now shall I directly go?
Directly go.

Things being so, whoever me reject,
My gracious God me surely will protect.
Surely will protect.

Henceforth I'd roll on Him my every care,
And then both friend and foe embrace in prayer.
Embrace in prayer.

But after all the duties I have done,
Must I in point of merit then disown,
And trust for heaven through Jesus' blood alone?
Through Jesus' blood alone.

Echo, enough! Thy counsels to my ear
Are sweeter than to flowers the dewdrop tear.
Thy wise, instructive lessons please me well;
I'll go and practise them. Farewell! Farewell!
Farewell! Farewell!
G.B. (Walcot, Bath)

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about BEARING WITNESS. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor (see page 242 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. Write out the commandment which forbids the bearing of false witness. (Exodus 20. 16)

2. How many witnesses were required under the law before a man could be brought in guilty of any crime? (Deuteronomy 19. 15)
3. Which word, used by Jacob, means “the heap of witness”? (Genesis 31. 44-52)
4. Who was sent to “bear witness of the Light”? (i.e. of the Lord Jesus). (John 1. 7)
5. To whom was it said, “And ye receive not our witness”? (John 3. 11)
6. What did the Lord Jesus say that the works which He did, bore witness of? (John 5)
7. Of what especially did the apostles have to bear witness in their preaching? (Acts 4)
8. To whom did God say, “So must thou bear witness also at Rome”? (Acts 23)
9. What reason did the Lord Jesus give to Pilate as to why He had come into the world? (John 18)
10. Who “bear record” (or witness) in heaven? (1 John)

ANSWERS TO OCTOBER QUESTIONS

1. Adam and Eve, because they had eaten the forbidden fruit.
2. Moses.
3. Silver, gold and a “goodly Babylonish garment”.
4. “Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee.”
5. He sold all that he had and bought the field.
6. Jonathan. (1 Samuel 20. 35-40)
7. They are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. (Luke 10. 21)
8. The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. (1 Peter 3. 4)
9. Amos 9. 3; Jeremiah 23. 24
10. Among the stalks of flax on the roof of the house. (Joshua 2. 1-7). Down a well. (2 Samuel 17. 17-21)

Contributed

The Friendly Companion



“But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.” (Luke 2. 19)

December 2006

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All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Price 50 pence monthly, plus postage.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A.	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£10.00	\$29	A\$38	€25.00

All correspondence concerning subscriptions should be addressed to Mr. H. Mercer, 8 Fairleigh Rise, Kington Langley, Chippenham, Wilts. SN15 5QF.

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

How quickly have we come to the last month of another year and before long the year 2006 will have become a memory only. Like King Canute, who stood on the edge of The Wash (a coastal part of Eastern England for our overseas readers!) and found he could not stop the tide coming in, neither can we hinder the progress of our days. Like a river they carry us on and on until we reach the estuary of eternity.

One of the most important occupations around the thousands of miles of shoreline is that of the Coastguard. He is really a watchman, whose diligence is vital for our security and safety. The Bible has quite a lot to say about watching and watchmen. It was because the wise men were good watchmen that they observed the star and followed its leading light to Christ.

As we come to the end of the year, like true watchmen, may we each be on our guard over four things, all beginning with the letter "T." The following verses are very helpful in reminding us:

There are four "Ts" too apt to run,
'Tis best to set a watch upon.

O watch your *Thoughts* they ramble oft,
They run aground, they soar aloft.
Oft when alone they take them wings,
And light upon forbidden things.

Your *Temper* watch, if one you have,
Think well; speak low, if strife you'd save;
An angry word, a temper lost;
No tongue can tell how great the cost.

O watch your *Tongue* for many tell
Of slips they've had – O learn it well;
Know when to speak, and be content
When silence is most eloquent.

O watch your *Time*, my dear young friends.

Life with its years will soon have fled.

Yea, like the sand runs through the glass,

The moments fly – “All flesh is grass.”

If you who read *would* watch each “T,”

The God of Truth must strengthen thee.

H. Dawson

Looking back over 2006 how we each have to say that one or more of these four “Ts” have often been forgotten. You perhaps will say that if you had your time over again you would not think this or say that again. The sad, but honest, answer is that unless you are kept by God’s power you will do just the same again in another year. So as we close this year and look forward to another (if the Lord will) then may we pray with the Psalmist: “Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.” I should think that was very much the spirit of the wise men. Even they had to learn not to lean unto their own understanding when they went to the palace of King Herod, thinking surely that the King of the Jews would be born there. How mistaken they were! But “when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.” How gracious God was to restore their wandering feet.

May He guide us by His counsel to the true knowledge of Christ as the Saviour of sinners.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Our front cover shows an open Bible. How thankful we should be that we have the freedom to read the Holy Word of God: a privilege which was not always the case in our country; and there are many parts of the world today where to be found reading or possessing a Bible could mean imprisonment or even death. We must prize this freedom whilst we have it.

However, even more precious to those who believe are the

tidings which are conveyed within its sacred pages, to sinners who are seeking a Saviour. The shepherds were the first to hear the wonderful news that God's dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, was born. How they prized this revelation, leaving their sheep and going to Bethlehem to find the newborn king.

One of the many names which God's dear Son has, is The Word. In three ways we read of the Word of God in Scripture.

First of all we read of the written Word: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15. 4).

Secondly, we read of the Incarnate Word: that is a name of the Lord Jesus Christ: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1. 14). He came to fulfil the written word and the written word was written to show sinners Christ.

Thirdly, we read of the applied Word. That is so important, for we will never find the Incarnate Word in the written Word unless we have it applied to our hearts: "... no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Corinthians 12. 3).

At this time of the year, when much is said and sung about the Incarnate Word, may we not be satisfied until we have "Christ formed in our hearts, the hope of glory."

THE HOUSE OF THE LORD

On one occasion, when David Lloyd George was Prime Minister, he visited the House of Lords. The person appointed to escort him around the House was a Strict Baptist preacher, who held a high position in the Government.

As together they went around the House of Lords, the preacher quietly remarked to the Prime Minister: "I much prefer the House of the Lord!"

Selected

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**DANIEL PRAYS AND GIVES THANKS**

Daniel was being watched! King Darius had made Daniel one of the highest officers in Babylon. The other officers were jealous of him and tried to find fault. When they could find no faults, they asked Darius to sign a new law: whoever asked a petition of anyone except the king for thirty days must be cast into a den of lions. Now they watched to see whether Daniel would obey this new law or if he would still pray to his God. What did Daniel do? "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, ... he kneeled upon his knees three times a day and *prayed, and gave thanks* before his God, as he did aforetime."

Those wicked men hurried to accuse Daniel of breaking the law. King Darius was very sorry. He set his heart on delivering Daniel, but the law could not be changed. Daniel was cast into the den of lions. The king told him: "Thy God whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee."

Very early the next morning, King Darius hurried to the den of lions and called unto Daniel. Was he still alive? Yes! Daniel answered: "My God hath sent His angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me." **QUESTIONS:**

1. What did Daniel do three times a day? (4 words)
2. Into what was Daniel cast?
3. What did God send His angel to do? (4 words)

Contributed

Send your answers to the Editor (See page 266 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS

1. The wall.
2. Daniel
3. That same night.

*“Pray
without
ceasing.”*

*1 Thessalonians
5. 17.*

BIBLE LESSONS**A MAN LOWERED THROUGH THE ROOF TO JESUS**

When Jesus returned to Capernaum, He entered into a house. Many people heard of it, and they came in great numbers to see and hear Him. Some of the people were His friends, but others were just curious, hoping to see a miracle. Still others were His enemies who came to find fault. Some of these faultfinders were very religious people, called Pharisees. The Pharisees despised Jesus because the people left them to come and hear Jesus. They were so jealous of Jesus that they came in great numbers, hoping to find something with which to accuse Him.

Many sick people were brought to the crowded house, and Jesus healed them all. One man had a very sad affliction called palsy. He was not able to walk or move his hands and lay upon his bed all day. Although he was in such a pitiful condition, he was favoured with four very kind and faithful friends. Having heard that Jesus was in the city, they carried him in his bed to Jesus. When they arrived at the house, they found the door was blocked by multitudes of people. What a disappointment! They were so near to Jesus and yet unable to reach Him. How could they ever get their friend through all those people? It seemed impossible.

However, they did not give up. They knew that Jesus could heal their friend. They found a stairway leading to the flat roof of the house. They struggled to carry their friend up the stairs and then began to remove the tiles of the roof. All those inside the house looked up, wondering what was happening. What was this object that appeared in the opening? They could hardly believe what they saw, as a bed was lowered down in the midst of them. Through the roof the man in his bed was lowered right before Jesus.

Jesus was not surprised! He was pleased to see the faith of these men. He said to the sick man: "*Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.*" What a blessed man! What a sacred experience; ALL his sins were forgiven.

The enemies of Jesus reacted with scorn. They reasoned among themselves: *"Who can forgive sins, but God alone?"* Jesus asked them which was easier to say: *"Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?"* Neither of these miracles was possible for any man to perform, but Jesus would show the people that they were easy for Him. He could say the one with power to the soul, as well as the other to heal the body.

Then Jesus said to the sick of the palsy: *"... Arise and take up thy couch, and go into thine house."* Immediately he rose up, picked up his bed, and made his way through the crowd, praising God for the double blessing. His sins were forgiven and his body was healed.

The people *"were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day."* The enemies of Jesus could say nothing, but they hated Him even more, because more people believed in Him.

You can read about this in Matthew 9 verses 1 to 8, Mark 2 verses 1 to 12 and Luke chapter 5 verses 18 to 26.

QUESTIONS:

1. What sickness did the man have?
2. Who carried him to Jesus?
3. How did they get him before Jesus?
4. What did Jesus call him?
5. What were the first words Jesus spoke to him?

G. L. TenBroeke

Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on page 266). Please mark the envelope: ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.

ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS

1. Jesus.
2. Pray.
3. Make me clean.
4. I will; be thou clean.
5. Sacrifices of thanksgiving.

“WHERE IS HE THAT IS BORN KING OF THE JEWS?”

We read in the Bible of four occasions when people sought for Jesus when He was born. First of all, the shepherds came and found Jesus wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. They came seeking for Jesus because the angel of the Lord had been sent to them, to tell them good news. The good news was that unto them the Saviour was born. So they said: “Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass.” And they went with haste, and found Him, and worshipped Him. They spoke to others of what they had seen, but it does not appear that anyone else came to worship the Lord Jesus as a result of their words.

The second occasion concerned Simeon, who was waiting for the consolation of Israel. We read that he was led of the Spirit of the Lord into the temple, at the same time as Jesus was brought in when eight days old to be circumcised in accordance with the law. By faith, Simeon saw Jesus as the salvation of God (which is what the name Jesus means – Jehovah Saviour), and spoke of it.

We also read of wise men who came from the east seeking Jesus. They had seen His star in the east, placed in the heavens by God. It seems they had been looking for it, and knew what it meant, so they came to Jerusalem. After learning that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem, they left Jerusalem, and were then guided by the star which came and stood over where the young child was. And they fell down and worshipped Him.

A fourth person sought for Jesus: this was King Herod, who was angered because of the visit of the wise men. He wanted the young child killed, as he did not want a rival in the land. He commanded to be killed all boys under the age of two years in Bethlehem.

We see a difference between those that sought for Jesus. The shepherds, Simeon and the wise men all sought for Jesus because God showed them that Jesus was born. The angel was sent from God to the shepherds; Simeon was led of the Holy

Ghost, and the wise men followed a star put in the heavens by God. They were all shown by God that Jesus is the Saviour who should come, and we believe as their own Saviour. Herod, on the other hand, sought for Jesus for his own motives, and wanted to destroy Him. His seeking for Jesus did not begin with God.

If we are brought to seek Jesus rightly, it is because God has begun a work in us. He will teach us of our need of Jesus, and will lead us to where we shall see Jesus as our Saviour. Solemnly, if we seek Jesus in any other way, it will be beginning the work ourselves. Then we shall be like Herod, and “will not have this man to reign over us.” May the Lord send His good Spirit into our hearts that none of us be left to be like Herod.

Contributed

DEAD WOOD

“What a lovely tree that is,” said one friend to another, speaking about a tree in a garden. “Yes,” was the reply, “but it makes the room dark, and *there’s a lot of dead wood in it!*”

And in starting to write, we ought to say something about Christmas: what a lot of dead wood there is in it, and will be when the time comes. And we are nearly all in it together: the dead wood part, that is. How many of the carols we sing, and hear sung by others, are sung without thought of the great subject of which they treat; and the gracious act of Him who was “born of a woman”? Most of you are too well instructed at home to have anything to do with dressing up a crib, and a doll, and men with long robes, and poorly dressed shepherds with sandals.

Truly the sacred story of the birth of Jesus, the message of the angels, the wise men from a far country, the star they followed, the humble manger, the equally lowly Joseph and Mary, and the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, is a most beautiful tree, and of itself is perfect: perfect too in its simplicity. Untold numbers have “sat down under its shadow

with great delight,” as we hope many of you children will be taught of God to do. When this is done (as it has been already in some of your lives), you, too, will see that the birth of Jesus was one of the greatest things God ever did, and the holy nature of the Bethlehem scene will not want any irreverent introductions. You will be weaned from things you once so freely entered into.

Yet we do not always grow wiser about all this dead wood as we get older. Usually most of the dead wood in a tree, especially in a forest, is at or near the bottom. But we have, right in front of our window here, an oak tree with a dead branch nearly at the top! Sometimes it is necessary to climb up into a tree to find the dead wood; by which we mean that tradition dies hard in some, and goes on a long way in life. Jesus took much care and much time to point out how “dead” a thing certain traditions were in His time: see Mark 7 for instance, and that it was of such a clinging nature that few of the rulers were free from it somewhere or another. Its mark of “death” is that it *“makes the Word of God of none effect”* (Mark 7. 13). When we see all the usual displays of the “nativity” at Christmas time, almost wherever we look, how clearly does this text stand out!

As the person said who lived in the house: “It makes the room dark,” but not always too dark to read or write in! Some light comes in between the live branches as well as the dead ones. And what is one of the brightest rays? Is it not that Jesus was born and that in that little body was the most valuable thing that you could ever need or have; that is, the precious blood which flowed in His infant veins? You know that all these nativity activities are called “Plays,” and such they are indeed: nothing more than idolatry and hateful to the eyes of God. Touch them not, therefore, and if the test comes your way, stand firm against it: don’t hunt around for an excuse to help “just this once.”

It may be that the person who said the dead wood made the

room dark, will one day be able to remove some of the dead branches. But as far as we could see, it was a pretty sturdy tree, and certainly all this tradition at Christmas time has grown into such a mass of wood that only a Mighty Hand and Revival of Truth can remove it. But in this respect a text comes to mind: "Little children keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

L. R. Broome

"THE JUDGE STANDETH BEFORE THE DOOR"

(Conclusion)

Dutch soldiers guard not only the borders, but also the places which can well be defended: for instance, along the rivers. Between Rhenen and Wageningen lies the hill called the Grebbeberg. There the Dutch have dug trenches. If the Germans invade, the Dutch will try to hold them back at the Grebbeberg. There the Germans will have to scramble up the hill and from the woods on the hill the Dutch can shoot at them. Is there any hope of keeping them back? The Dutch army has only old weapons and just **one** tank! In Germany during the past few years, the arms factories have been working full throttle, so the German army has weapons aplenty, and all brand new. Germany has many, many tanks and very many soldiers. How long shall our little country, our tiny army, keep going if this huge neighbour attacks us? The troops are becoming more and more anxious.

On a certain Sunday there are hundreds of men grouped on the Grebbeberg. They cannot attend church for the situation is becoming more and more tense. Sometimes the Dutch government receives a secret warning from within Germany that hostilities are about to commence. So all soldiers have to be ready for action. Nobody may go to church ... and very many soldiers have never yet attended a church. Now they all sit together. Will they very shortly have to fight? And suppose then they were to die – what then? Even those who have never attended church are frightened of death.

The captain comes in, holding a sheaf of papers. Has he had orders to organise an exercise? That does sometimes happen suddenly.

But no, it is something quite different. They all listen when the captain says he has something to read out. It is a sermon which was preached only recently, on New Year's Eve. Mr. Lamain then spoke very solemnly in Rotterdam about what was impending in Holland. Someone in the church had noted it, and that is what the captain wishes to read out. It is the sermon from James 5: "Behold, the Judge standeth before the door."

The soldiers sit listening, all of them, whether or not they attend church every Sunday. And they all hear how Mr. Lamain warns that people must seek the Lord and pray for a new heart. There is safety nowhere else but in Him. All the soldiers hear this message. Perhaps later, when the Germans fell upon our land, they called those words to mind.

Sunday is almost over. The men retire to rest. War is nearly upon them.

Friday, 10th May 1940. In the early morning, many Dutchmen are awoken by the drone of planes flying over. German troops cross the border, airfields are bombed and parachutists land in the environs of the big cities.

In Rotterdam, Mr. Kersten telephones Mr. Lamain with the message: "We are at war."

Mr. Lamain's children have also been awakened. They look out at all those aeroplanes. Bombs fall on Waalhaven airfield, close by. The Minister stands there silently, watching. In his heart the Lord speaks with power from Psalm 68. 34 (verse 16 in the Dutch rhymed version):

"Acknowledge God; in awe behold
His might above the sky and cloud
Doth dwell, and that for ever."

The Judge stood before the door. Now He has come.

Translated from the Dutch by M. Banfield

WEARING THE VEIL

There has been much discussion in the media recently about whether a woman professing the Muslim faith should wear a veil, or not, when seen in public. Leaving aside the important questions surrounding the sinister advance of Islamic culture in this once-Christian land, there are several things we can learn from this issue.

1. Ever since the Fall, it has been God's revealed will that men and women should be clothed. Sadly western culture has increasingly and blatantly disregarded this command, so that modern fashions delight in revealing more and more of the flesh in a public way. The unscriptural way in which women adorn themselves with clothing that is instinctively male, when it is God's will that there should be a clear distinction between the man and woman, has its root in the same rebellion. This is to be abhorred; and whilst we could not endorse the extreme position taken by some Muslim ladies in respect of the veil, this being a deliberate intention to impose "Islamic law," yet it can be seen by some as a protest against the decadent society of which we are a part. It is interesting to note how Rebekah covered herself with a veil when she first met Isaac in Genesis 24.

2. We should notice that even the angels in heaven veil their faces, as in Isaiah 6, when they are in the presence of God. This being the case, how much more should we, who are unworthy sinners, be concerned about how we appear in God's sight. No earthly covering of any part of our body can hide from God's sight our innermost being. The hymn says:

"Great God from Thee there's nought concealed,
Thou seest my inward frame;
To Thee I always stand revealed
Exactly as I am!

Since I can hardly, therefore, bear
What in myself I see;
How vile and black must I appear,
Most holy God to Thee!"

It is a very necessary work of the Spirit which uncovers to the soul its real state in God's sight. This is what is meant in Song of Solomon 5. 7, where we read of the watchmen who take away the veil of the church. God often uses the ministry in this way. He brings sinners into their right mind about their true state before God, by taking away the false coverings behind which we would hide our sins and shame.

3. What a wonderful and precious thing it is to be covered in such a way that a Holy God sees no fault in us. How could this be? The Beloved (Christ) said of the Church in Song of Solomon 4: "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee."

The answer is to be found in the next verse of the hymn already quoted:

"But since my Saviour stands between,
In garments dyed in blood,
'Tis He, instead of me, is seen,
When I approach to God."

So while the arguments rage about the veil, besides seeking to dress soberly whether we be male or female, may it be our chief concern to be clothed in the obedience of Christ. Then we will not be ashamed in His presence, since it is a garment that He has provided to cover sin and shame.

Editor

"HE ... HANGETH THE EARTH UPON NOTHING" (JOB 26. 7)

Do you know what is the force required to keep the earth in its orbit around the sun each year?

It is about 34.5 million, million, million kilonewtons!

This amazing force has been ordained of God to maintain the earth in the course He designed. No wonder Isaiah was led to write of the majesty of God as he did in the closing verses of Isaiah 40, and Isaac Watts penned the well-known words:

"Great God! how infinite art Thou!
What worthless worms are we!"

WAITING FOR SALVATION

In the Bible we read of two people who, with others, waited for God's salvation. In the Old Testament we read of Jacob, right near the end of his long life, saying: "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord." Then in the New Testament we read of a very old man called Simeon who was told by God that he would not die until he had seen, with his natural eyes, the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Both of these men waited ever so many years for the salvation they longed to see.

This reminds us of a little girl, only seven years of age, who had lost her mother by death, and was in the care of her older sisters; who sad to say were not always as kind as they might have been to her.

One Lord's Day morning this little girl, when only seven, woke up with these words: "Who waits for Thy salvation, Lord, shall Thy salvation see."

She thought that if she could reach the big Bible on the top of her wardrobe, where it had lain unused since her mother died, she might find out what salvation was. Being only small, she dropped it with a loud bang on to the floor. This brought one of her sisters to her, who after telling her off, sent her to bed! So her troubles about salvation began early.

The following Lord's Day, this little girl crept out of the house to hear Mr. Philpot who was preaching in the chapel, probably the one her mother used to attend. She arrived there late and was jostled into a seat. But she was not too late to hear Mr. Philpot say: "If God were to say to a child of seven years of age: 'Who waits for Thy salvation, Lord, shall Thy salvation see,' that child would live to see it, even if she lived to be eighty years of age." This little girl grew up and she was nearly eighty years old before she could say with assurance: "God is my salvation."

How true it is that God's children will never lose an ordained blessing, however long they may have to wait for it.

Adapted from the life of W.S. Cooper of Lakenbeath

MATHEMATICS (IV)

Division

Division in mathematics is to separate a number into smaller equal parts. There is a Bible name that means "division." Peleg was so named because "in his days was the earth ***divided***" (Genesis 10. 25). It is possible that the continents were separated at this time, or perhaps it was when the nations were scattered at the tower of Babel.

Dividing or separating is a great Biblical principle, and it is how God works. This is seen throughout the whole Word of God, and we can only mention a few instances here. We see it in Genesis 1, for instance when "God ***divided*** the light from the darkness" and "***divided*** the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament." In Creation the nature of God and His work of salvation are seen, separating light from darkness and things above from things below.

In God's eyes, His people are separate. Moses told Pharaoh God's words: "I will put a ***division*** between My people and thy people" (Exodus 8. 23). Jesus says He came not to give peace on earth, but rather ***division***. He came to save (or separate) His people from their sin, and not to leave them in it. The work of God is to separate His people from this world, from false forms of religion, from Satan, and from eternal death. Jesus went on to say that His work would divide houses and families. We read a number of times that "there was a ***division*** among the people because of Him."

The Word of God is a dividing Word. It is "quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the ***dividing*** asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4. 12). It separates even between those things that man cannot distinguish. We are told that ministers approved unto God, are workmen that need "not to be

ashamed, rightly **dividing** the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2. 15) and who take forth the precious from the vile.

This dividing and separating work of the Holy Spirit will be in each of the Lord's dear people. They will desire to be as the clean beasts, who "**divide** the hoof" and "chew the cud" (see Leviticus 11) by having a separate walk and meditating in the Word of the LORD day and night (Psalm 1).

To such, the Lord will appear for them in their need. We think of the great miracle at the Red Sea where "the waters were **divided**," making a way for the children of Israel where there was no way. But the waters also brought a separation from their enemies.

Although the Lord's people are already a separate people, in the last great day the division will be manifest to all. "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd **divideth** his sheep from the goats" (Matthew 25. 31-32). The Lord's people will be gathered together where there will be no more separation. Oh, to be among that favoured number, now and through eternity!

Contributed

KING EDWARD VI AND THE BIBLE

When Edward was only a boy of about ten years of age, he was playing with some young friends in the library of the palace where he was brought up. Needing to reach a book that was too high for him, he asked for something to stand on. One of his playmates brought a large family Bible which would have raised him high enough to reach the book. Indignantly, the young prince reproved the boy, adding that it was unfit that he should trample under his feet that which he ought to treasure up in his head and heart.

Adapted

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***THE DOCTRINE OF TRUTH****The Day of Judgment**

The Holy Scriptures teach us that God has appointed a day when He will judge the world in righteousness. In Matthew 25 the Lord Jesus Christ very graphically sets before us the Day of Judgment. He likens all unbelievers to goats and all believers to sheep. In the Day of Judgment the Lord Jesus will separate believers from unbelievers. Believers will be on His right hand, unbelievers on His left hand. To believers He will say: "COME, ye blessed of My Father." To unbelievers He will say: "DEPART." There can be a no more blessed and glorious word that the eternal God can speak to a poor sinful worm of the earth, than: "COME." Surely there can be a no more solemn or awful word to hear from the eternal God than: "DEPART." The sentence of the Judge is eternal, it is an eternal 'COME to be with Me for ever, enjoy My love, My grace, My presence, for ever.' Alternatively, it equally is an eternal 'DEPART from Me for ever, to that place of eternal punishment.'

In heaven the joy and peace are incomprehensible; in hell the torments are incomprehensible. My dear young friends, we read in God's Word: "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" (Deuteronomy 32. 29). In the Psalms we read: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psalm 9. 17).

Consider the following Scripture which speaks to us so clearly of the doctrine of man's accountability to God: the Apostle Paul, preaching on Mars' hill, Athens (Acts 17. 22-31) declared: "... but (God) now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: Because He hath appointed a day, in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead."

The following Scriptures teach us what happens after we die: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and

now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5. 25-29). "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day" (2 Thessalonians 1. 7-10).

My dear young friends, we each need to ask the important question:

"How stands the case my soul with thee?

Is Jesus' blood thy only plea?

Is He thy great forerunner there?"

May the Holy Spirit convince you of your need as a poor sinner and lead you to Jesus Christ.

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. 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. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3. 14-18).

J.R. Rutt

THE ANVIL

"The Word of our God shall stand for ever" (Isaiah 40. 8).

One night while we were standing
Beside the village spring,
We heard the blacksmith's anvil
In tones of clearness ring.
And where the smith was working,
The shadows failed to hide
A heap of worn-out hammers,
Which he had cast aside.

We said: "How many anvils
Did it require, we pray,
To wear out all these hammers
Which you have thrown away?"
He said: "This only anvil
Is all I have to show,
For it resists the hammers,
And wears them out, you know."

And, like a solid anvil,
The Sacred Scripture stands;
And fiercely is it beaten
By unbelievers' hands.
With noise, and show of learning,
They make a large display;
But, like the blacksmith's hammer,
They wear themselves away.

That Anvil is for weapons
Whose edge is always keen,
And used for making armour
For ages it has been.
On it are formed the sandals,
By which brave feet are shod;
And heroes shape their helmets
Upon the Word of God.

But some, who once in Scripture
Professed to find their joy,
Today appear to labour
Its message to destroy.
Abortive are their labours,
And fruitless all their pains;
Unmoved by all that threatens,
The Anvil still remains.

With sparks, and smoke, and vapour,
They fashion forms of doubt,
Until, amid the shadows,
The hammers are worn out.
While all the passing ages
Their varied hammers bring,
They always fail to silence
That ancient Anvil's ring.

Above the direful discord,
Which from contention springs,
In measured tones majestic
That Anvil's message rings.
"His light for ever shineth;
Night is to Him as day;
The Word which He hath spoken
Shall never pass away."

Thomas Watson

One very cold day, a minister on his way to his church was overtaken by one of his neighbours who, shivering with the cold, said: "It is very cold today, minister!" "Oh," replied the minister, "then God is as good as His word, still." The neighbour, not understanding what his minister meant, the minister continued: "Why, God promised, thousands of years ago, that while earth remained, there would be seed-time and harvest, as well as cold and heat."

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about LITTLE THINGS. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor (see Page 266 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. Who made "a little coat" every year? (1 Samuel 2. 19)
2. Who said "I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in"? (1 Kings 3. 7)
3. What is "better than the riches of many wicked"? (Psalm 37. 16)
4. Who climbed a tree because he was "little of stature"? (Luke 19. 3)
5. What kind words did Jesus speak about "little children"? (Matthew 19. 14)
6. "Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey." What was it? (Revelation 10)
7. "There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise." What are they? (Proverbs 30)
8. "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep." Who speaks like this? (Proverbs 6)
9. Which king was advised to speak foolishly about his "little finger"? (1 Kings 12)
10. Which "little member" is like a "little fire"? (James)

ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS

1. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."
2. Two or three.
3. Galeed.
4. John the Baptist.
5. Nicodemus.
6. That the Father had sent Him. (John 5. 36)
7. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the dead. (Acts 4. 33)
8. Paul. (Acts 23. 11)
9. To bear witness unto the truth. (John 18. 37)
10. The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. (1 John 5. 7)

Contributed

THE FRIENDLY COMPANION

*A Monthly Magazine for Children
and Young People*

Editor: G.D. Buss

2006
Volume 132

GOSPEL STANDARD PUBLICATIONS
12(b) ROUNDWOOD LANE, HARPENDEN,
HERTS. AL5 3DD

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OUR MAGAZINES

Through the long-suffering goodness of God we are brought to the end of the 132nd Volume of the Friendly Companion. It is no small mercy to be able to record that "having obtained help of God" we have continued through ten years of editorship. Much of that ability to continue has been in the loyal and practical help of our regular contributors, proof readers and typists.

Also the many letters of encouragement, comment and advice are warmly acknowledged. It is our desire that young and old who may read this little magazine may under the Spirit's teaching be led into the saving knowledge of the one true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.

The price for the magazine remains the same for 2007, but there are significant reductions for readers outside of Europe to alleviate the very high postage costs they have suffered in recent years.

"Brethren pray for us, that the word of God may have free course and be glorified."

G. D. Buss (Editor)