

# *The Friendly Companion*



“Oh that my words were now written! ...  
That they were graven ... in the rock for ever.”  
(Job 19. 23, 24)

---

*January 2007*

Editor: Mr. G.D. Buss, "Bethany", 7 Laines Head, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 1PH.

Tel: 01249 656910 Email: [gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk)

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, Kingston Langley, Chippenham, Wilts. SN15 5QF.

Volume 133

January 2007

## CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	3
Our Front Cover Picture	4
Weighed In The Balances	5
For The Very Little Ones: One Thing Needful	6
Colouring Text: John 6. 68	7
Bible Lessons: The Calling Of Matthew The Publican	8
Letters To A Young Girl: Letter 1	10
Mercies Remembered	11
A Short Sermon	12
The Sailor's Bible	13
The Book Of Judges	14
Cromwell, No Hypocrite, But A Man Of Prayer	15
Poor Donald And His Landlord	16
"Wicked Will"	17
Bible Truths Learned And Remembered	18
The Curse Of Meroz	19
Fall Of Adam	19
Sands Of Time	20
William Clarke	20
Bible Study For The Older Ones: Practical Godliness	21
Bible Questions: John The Baptist	23
Poetry: "Thy Will Be Done"	24

## OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

I wonder how many of you could tell, without looking in your Bible, what are the first four words in the Bible?

These four words form the key to all that follows in God's Holy Book. Also, as we start another year it would be good for us if these should be in our thoughts this year, God helping us. The four words are, of course: *"In the beginning God..."* (Genesis 1. 1).

They tell us first of all that before anything was ever created, or made, God was. Or, as the Psalmist says: *"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God"* (Psalm 90. 2).

Secondly, they tell us that all that has ever been formed, God created it. This, of course, is contradicted by those who believe in the false doctrine of evolution, but again, what does God's word tell us? *"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear"* (Hebrews 11. 3).

Thirdly, these words tell us that since God was in the beginning of our creation, we are accountable to Him for our lives and actions whilst we are on His earth: *"For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; ... He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained..."* (Acts 17. 28, 31).

Fourthly, these words tell us that unless God is in the beginning of our thoughts, words and actions, we are not pleasing Him. *"For whatsoever is not of faith is sin"* (Romans 14. 23).

This brings us to our last thought, as we live each day of the year ahead. If God spares our life, may we ask for help to put Christ first, in the beginning, of everything. Paul tells us: *"And He is the head of the body, ... who is the beginning, ... that in all things He might have the pre-eminence"* (Colossians 1. 18). (Pre-eminence means that Christ must be first in our lives.)

This is explained well in another verse, this time from the Old Testament: *"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths"* (Proverbs 3. 6).

This verse would do well as a motto for 2007!

With every best wish for a happy New Year.

Your sincere friend and Editor.

---

### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Our picture this month has been sent in by Cody and Dylan White of Australia. It is a text that is to be found at Wollongong near where they live. What a comforting message there is for those who read its words with believing hearts; to know that, as the words that are paraphrased from Psalm 93 say, the LORD on high is mightier than all the noise, power and confusion of the sea.

Not only that, but to know also that over all the waters of sin, strife, temptation and sorrow, there is One above it all, who has control. We cannot control the waves, but God can. Did not the Lord Jesus Himself command the waves and winds on the Sea of Galilee into a calm?

It is a great mercy to be taught these things and to be able to look above all the disturbances of our lives to the unchanging, unchangeable God. Even the rocks on which the waves pound are being worn down gradually, but God remains the same: unmoved and undiminished by their power and noise.

There is one more lesson about the noise of many waters, which comes from another part of the world: the U.S.A. and Canada.

One day, a man was in an area not far from the Niagara Falls. It is said that in certain conditions the noise of that mighty waterfall can be heard up to ten miles away. Hearing the sound of the falls, he asked a local man what it was. The man told him that it was the Niagara Falls. He then asked him what the falls were like. To his amazement, the local man told him

that he had never seen them, although he had lived within the sound of them for many years!

Pondering this, it seems to be a sad picture of many of those who sit under the sound of the truth and the gospel for many years, they hear its sound, but its voice never allures them. But how different were the words of the woman of Samaria, which drew her fellow-citizens: "Come, see a Man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto Him ... And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (John 4. 29, 30, 42).

Here we see the power of sovereign grace. Oh, may it be a concern to us, lest we be as ignorant of the power of the gospel as the man was of the Niagara Falls, although he heard them every day. To have a hearing ear and an understanding heart from God, is a mercy of invaluable price.

---

### WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES

During the reign of King Charles I, the goldsmiths of London had a custom of weighing several of their precious metals before the court. On one occasion when making use of the scales, the master goldsmith said that the beam of the scale would show the two-hundredth part of a grain, which would be a very minute particle. The attorney general, standing by and hearing this, said: "I would be loath then to have all my actions weighed in these scales." Of this, a minister named James Hervey said: "With him I heartily concur in relation to myself. And since the balances of the sanctuary, the balances in God's hand, are infinitely exact, oh, what need we have of the merit and righteousness of Christ to make us acceptable in *His* sight and passable in *His* esteem!"

*J. Whitecross*

*FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES***ONE THING NEEDFUL**

Jesus was welcomed into a home in Bethany. It was the home of Martha and her sister Mary. Martha was eager to serve Jesus a very special meal. She wanted everything to be just right for this important Guest.

While Martha was working so hard, Mary was sitting *"at Jesus' feet."* Jesus spoke the *"words of eternal life."* How eager Mary was to listen! She wanted to hear every word.

Martha thought Mary ought to help her with serving. Jesus answered: *"Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: **but one thing is needful:** and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."*

The need of the soul to be saved is more important than anything else. The Bible tells us the words of Jesus and the way of salvation.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where was Mary sitting?
2. What did Jesus speak? (four words)
3. How many things are needful?

*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. Prayed and gave thanks.
2. A den of lions.
3. Shut the lions' mouths.

*“... Thou  
hast the  
words of  
eternal  
life.”*

*John 6. 68*

**BIBLE LESSONS****THE CALLING OF MATTHEW THE PUBLICAN**

Because they wanted their independence, many of the Jews hated and despised the Roman government. The Jews were hoping that a Jewish leader would be raised up to rule over them like David and Solomon, their great kings of old.

A few of the Jews became friends of the Roman government and were hired by them to collect taxes from their brethren. These people were called “publicans” or tax gatherers. They were despised by their brethren, the Jews, because they often charged the people more taxes than the Roman ruler called for. Many of them were so greedy of gain, that they used their authority (position of power) to rob the people. Not all of the publicans robbed the people by demanding more tax money than was fair, yet because many did, the people thought they were all guilty.

One day as Jesus was walking out of Capernaum, He saw a publican, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom, collecting taxes from the people.

Jesus went up to the table where Matthew sat. Was He going to pay a tax? No. His business with Matthew was not about taxes. He called to Matthew saying: *“FOLLOW ME.”* What would Matthew do now? Would he reason with the Lord, saying, ‘I need some time to think about it,’ or, ‘How can I leave my position to which Cæsar has appointed me?’

Jesus didn’t ask Matthew to follow Him; He commanded him to follow. The Bible tells us: *“Where the word of a King is, there is power.”* We are told in the Psalms: *“Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power.”*

Immediately Matthew “left all, rose up, and followed Him.” Matthew’s heart was full of love and thanksgiving to the Lord for all the mercy shown to him. Then he prepared a great feast and invited his publican friends to the dinner. He invited other people too, who were called *“sinners.”* The whole house was filled with publicans and sinners.



Soon the scribes and Pharisees came near to Matthew's house. They considered themselves too good to enter the house. They murmured against Jesus and His disciples, wondering how they could eat with such wicked people as publicans and sinners were.

Jesus answered with such wisdom that His enemies were rebuked, and so that poor, fearing, trembling souls would be encouraged. He reminded them that people who are feeling well do not seek the help of a doctor but those who are sick. Also He reminded them that He had come to call "*sinners to repentance*." It is a great thing to know that we are "sick" because of sin; that we are such sinners who need repentance.

When Jesus called Matthew to follow Him, He knew what a great work Matthew would be appointed to do. He must write one of the Gospels. It was the Gospel bearing his name and the first book of the New Testament.

Sometimes Matthew is called Levi. It was common for the Jews to have two names. If you read the Gospels of Mark and Luke, you will find he is called Levi.

*You can read about this in Matthew chapter 9 verses 9 to 13; Mark chapter 2 verses 14 to 17; and Luke chapter 5 verses 27 to 31.*

#### QUESTIONS:

1. What were the tax collectors called?
2. What did Jesus tell Matthew to do?
3. What is joined to the word of a King?
4. What two types of people did Matthew invite to his feast?
5. Who did Jesus call to repentance?

*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. Palsy.                     | 2. Four friends. |
| 3. Through the roof.          | 4. Son.          |
| 5. Thy sins be forgiven thee. |                  |

**LETTERS TO A YOUNG GIRL***John Newton's Letters to Betsy*

In 1775, John and Mary Newton welcomed Betsy to the vicarage at Olney. Betsy was the daughter of George Catlett, Mrs. Newton's brother. He had recently died and his young wife had passed away several years earlier. Betsy was about six years old when she was adopted by Mr. and Mrs. Newton.

Before Newton left Olney for London, Betsy had been sent to a boarding school in Northampton. She remained there for some time after Newton moved to London in 1779. Several of the letters we hope to reprint were sent to her while at Northampton, the others after she had moved to a school in London.

These letters have been somewhat condensed. They were written over 200 years ago, but we believe that many parents will have similar desires for their children as Newton expresses for his dear child, Betsy.

*T.E. Saxby*

**Letter 1**

Olney, September 8, 1779

My dear Child,

I was glad of your letter, for we were just thinking of you, as it seems you were of us. When you want a letter from me, you must write. If I send you one for one, I think it will be pretty well.

R—— died about a fortnight ago, and I buried him and three others within a week. All four were rather young people. Last Sunday evening I preached a funeral sermon for Richard; the text was Genesis 49. 19: "Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last." That short verse contained his history, and I hope it contained yours likewise. The first part is sure to you if you live; you will meet with many troops, sins, fears, cares and troubles, which will fight against you; yea, overcome you they certainly would, if you were to fight them in your own strength. If you should not seek and love the Lord Jesus, you would be destroyed by them.

But I cannot bear to entertain such a thought. You hear a great deal of His beauty and goodness; believe it, for it is true. But pray Him to show Himself and His own love to your heart; then you will love Him indeed. Well, if you love the Lord Jesus, you will certainly overcome at last; and then you shall have the crown of life, and all the happiness which is contained in the promises made to them who overcome, in the second and third chapters of Revelation.

My dear child, pray to Him, and never be content or satisfied till you feel your desire and love fixed upon Him. Nothing less will content me for you. If you should behave to me and your mamma with the greatest tenderness, affection and attention as you grow up, still I should weep over you if I saw you negligent and ungrateful towards the Lord. We love you, but we could not, we dare not, be crucified for you. This was such love as He only could show; judge what a return it calls for from those for whom He died.

Believe me to be yours.

---

### MERCIES REMEMBERED

Many years ago a minister was once travelling between Wensleydale and Ingleton, when he suddenly dismounted, delivered his horse to the care of one of his servants, and retired to a particular spot at some distance from the highway, where he knelt down and continued for some time in prayer.

On his return, one of his attendants took the liberty of asking the reason for this singular act. The minister informed him that when he was a poor boy, he travelled over that cold and bleak country without shoes or stockings, and that he remembered disturbing a cow on the identical spot where he prayed, that he might warm his feet and legs on the place where she had lain.

His feelings of gratitude would not allow him to pass the place without presenting his thanksgiving to God for His later mercies to him.

*J. Whitecross*

### A SHORT SERMON

In the British Army discipline has to be very strict, and one of the first lessons a would-be soldier has to learn is unquestioning obedience. Many years ago a young recruit found this lesson very difficult. He just would not learn to obey, always wanting his own way. He caused his commander many problems. Whatever means he used to try and train him, he resisted. In the end the soldier was put into solitary confinement: that is a small room where he was left totally alone all day, except when he was fed.

Usually this lad was full of life and never was short of an answer, but the silence and the total darkness at night were torture for him. For the first two weeks he spent the long hours swearing bitterly against God.

The commander sent the chaplain (army minister) in to speak to him. He tried several times to reason with him, but was always met with stubborn resistance and rudeness. He gave up and the task was left to an older minister. He tried to pray with him, but the soldier shouted so loud that neither could hear each other. As the minister prepared to leave he opened the door of the cell and the light from the corridor shone into the cell and upon the minister's face. The soldier stopped swearing for a second, and the minister, seizing his opportunity said: "Young man, the wages of sin is death," and slammed the door.

The minister went on his way, but his words left a mark as the Holy Spirit applied them to the soldier's heart. Over and over again the words burnt into his conscience: "The wages of sin is death; the wages of sin is death."

For some time a severe struggle went on deep in the heart of the awakened lad. At last, in desperation, he dropped to his knees to pray for the first time in his life. The well-known words of the publican welled up in his heart: "God be merciful to me a sinner." Over and over again he repeated from the depths of his sorrowing heart, these words.

But there was another part of the verse he did not yet know.

He needed a Bible, and eventually was able to obtain one and to find the words of the whole verse in Romans 6. 23: "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." What wonderful tidings these words were to him; that a sinner, even as great as he was, could plead for mercy through the Lord Jesus Christ. Guided by the Holy Spirit, he was led to prove that the whole text was indeed a message of God to him. The change was for the better in every way. Soon he was released from his cell and was not ashamed to tell of the wonderful way God had led him to know the Way of Salvation.

Later in life, he became a minister of the gospel to other poor sinners. His great theme was the grace of God for unworthy sinners.

*Adapted*

---

### THE SAILOR'S BIBLE

The following transcript from the fly-leaf of a brave officer's Bible tells of a simple tale of the dangers of a seaman's life, and the source of his confidence in the hour of the greatest trial, whether battling with the elements or his country's foe. It is as follows:

"This Bible was presented to me by Mr. Raikes, at the town of Hertford, January 1781, as a reward for my punctual attendance at the Sunday School, and good behaviour when there; and, after being my companion fifty-three years, forty-one of which I spent in the sea service – during which time I was in forty-five engagements, received thirteen wounds, was three times shipwrecked, once burned out, twice capsized in a boat, and had fevers of different sorts fifteen times – this Bible was my consolation. It was newly-bound for me by James Bishop, of Edinburgh, the 26th of October 1834, the day I completed the sixtieth year of my age, and can say from my heart: 'What a rich gift God's Word has been to me!'"

*Friendly Companion 1906*

### THE BOOK OF JUDGES

The Book of Judges has often been called “The Book of the Sword” because there is so much bloodshed recorded in it. You have only to think of men like Gideon and Samson, for example, to see that they became famous for their victory over Israel’s enemies in battle, and also that other nations often shed much blood in the promised land.

If you take the letters of the word “**SWORD**” you will see a pattern which was repeated time and time again in the history of the children of Israel:

Sin  
Wrath  
Oppressor  
Repentance  
Deliverer

They **sinned** usually by falling into idolatry. This was followed by the inevitable **wrath** of God in which he sent them **oppressors**, such as the Midianites or Edom. Soon, or sometimes after many years, they **repented**. This was seen in their crying for deliverance and the forsaking of their idols. Finally, God, time and time again, raised up for them **deliverers**, such as Samson, Gideon, Deborah and Barak, Ehud and others, who in the hand of God were given victory over their enemies.

We might marvel how often Israel sinned, and then repented, and then God forgave them! How kind and forgiving God was to His chosen people!

The Lord Jesus was once asked a question by Peter: “How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?” Jesus’ answer was: “I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but Until seventy times seven” (Matthew 18. 21-22).

We might also wonder why they sinned so often? The reason was that most of the people, sadly, lacked a new heart. After many years of living in this way, the Lord sent His servant Jeremiah with a wonderful message that there was a better way

which God would make for His children: "I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me" (Jeremiah 32. 40).

The great difference is in "the fear of the Lord" which is really the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of God's children.

If we take the word "**SWORD**" again, you will see the first letter **S** teaches us the need of the Holy Spirit's power with the **WORD**. Without that the word is lifeless because our hearts are dead without the Spirit. In the Book of the Judges, the children of Israel had the Word of God, but were largely strangers to the power of it, and so they often sinned against God.

May the Lord give you what Solomon tells us is the secret of a real Christian life:-

"The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death" (Proverbs 14. 27). Then you will know that the Word of God is the *SWORD OF THE SPIRIT* by knowing its power in your heart and life.

*Editor*

---

### **CROMWELL, NO HYPOCRITE, BUT A MAN OF PRAYER**

The Earl of Rosebery, in his excellent address at the unveiling of the Cromwell statue, in defending the Protector from the charge of hypocrisy, related how the day before the battle of Marston Moor, Cromwell rode in with his staff to Knaresborough to dine, and while there he disappeared, and they searched for him for two hours. Failing to find him, a little girl who was there, remembered a lonely room at the top of the tower, which no one ever went to; and it was there, looking through the keyhole (for the door was locked), they saw him on his knees before his Bible, wrestling in prayer, as he had already done for the two hours he had spent in Knaresborough.

*The Protestant Echo*

### POOR DONALD AND HIS LANDLORD

A Scottish nobleman, a Roman Catholic, lived a very retired life and left his affairs very much in the hands of others. One of his tenants rented a farm upon which his forefathers had lived for about 200 years. The lease which he held was on the point of expiring and the steward refused to allow Donald a renewal, wishing to put the farm into the hands of a friend of his own. Poor Donald tried every argument in his power, but in vain: the steward was stubborn. At length Donald bent his steps to the castle, determined to make known his case to his lordship. Here again he was repulsed; the porter had received orders from the steward and refused him admittance. Donald turned away almost in despair, and resolved on a bold measure as his only chance of success. He climbed the garden wall in an unfrequented part, and entered the house by a private door. It so happened that no one was in that part of the building, and Donald wandered on, fearful lest he met a repulse, but determined to persevere.

At length he reached the nobleman's private apartments, and hearing a voice he drew near. It was the voice of his lordship engaged in prayer. Retiring a short distance, he waited until the prayer ended. He could not but hear his lordship earnestly pleading with the virgin Mary and St. Francis for their intercession on his behalf. At length, his lordship ceased. Donald, who had stood trembling because of his exposed situation, the fear of interruption, and anxiety for the result, now gently knocked at the door. "Come in," was his lordship's reply; and Donald entered. "Who are you, man? What do you want?" were his enquiries. Donald stated his case – the steward's harsh conduct, and the certain ruin of himself and his children, after his ancestors had so long occupied that portion of the family estate. The peer listened, was touched with the account, and, having heard something of Donald, assured him of his protection, and that his lease would be renewed.

Many artless but earnest thanks followed, and Donald was departing, when a thought of anxiety for his noble master



occurred to his mind. He returned and spoke thus: "My lord, I was a bold man, and you forgave me, and have saved my family from ruin. Many blessings attend you! I would again be a bold man, if I might say something further to your lordship." "Well, man, speak out." "Why, my lord, I was a well-nigh ruined man; so I was bold, and came to your lordship's door; and as I stood there, I could not but hear your lordship praying to the virgin Mary and St. Francis, and you seemed unhappy. Now, my lord, forgive me, but I cannot help thinking the virgin Mary and St. Francis will do you no good, any more than your lordship's steward and porter did for me. I had been a ruined man if I had trusted to them; but I came direct to your lordship, and you heard me. Now, if your lordship would leave the virgin Mary and St. Francis, who will do you no more good than your lordship's steward and porter would do for me, and just go direct to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and pray to Him for what you need, He may hear you, for He has said: "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Will your lordship forgive me, and just try for yourself?"

It is recorded that his lordship was very struck with this simple argument, and afterwards found pardon, peace, and salvation in the blood of the cross.

*Friendly Companion 1906*

---

### **"WICKED WILL"**

There are some sinners of the baser sort who are bold in sin, and who glory in their shame. This was the case with a young man in Plymouth, who was such a heaven-daring sinner; so bold a transgressor, that he was called "Wicked Will."

Having heard of Whitefield as the man who was "turning the world upside down," he went to hear him, not merely out of curiosity to hear what the babbler would say, but to persecute him. Whitefield rolled Mount Sinai's thunders over sinners' heads, and flashed its vivid lightnings around them till tremblings seized them as it did Belshazzar when he read the handwriting.

“Wicked Will” felt the power of the truth, and he cried out: “What must I do to be saved?” His sins may have been crimson and scarlet, but they were made white as snow. His character and conduct were so wholly changed that it was no longer “Wicked Will,” but “Pious Will,” a child of God, and an heir of immortality. He related his experience with the utmost simplicity, and said: “I came to pick a hole in the preacher’s coat, but the Holy Ghost picked a hole in my heart.”

*Anecdotes of Whitefield.  
The Protestant Echo*

---

### **BIBLE TRUTHS LEARNED AND REMEMBERED**

Chapters of the Bible (says J. H. Wilson), which I learned when a boy, are as fresh on the mind as when I first learned them; hymns committed to memory when a Sabbath-scholar, are always coming up again. As an encouragement to learn in early life that long Psalm, the 119th, I may mention the following. I lately visited an old lady of ninety-one, who had come from the country. “Sometimes at night,” she said, “I canna sleep, but I never weary, for I just gang back on the 119th Psalm.” To my question: “Can you remember the whole Psalm?” she replied: “Ou yes, I learnt it when I was a lassie, ten years auld, and I hae ne’er forgot it since. Had I been as active as I was able, I might have had them all.”

This curious thing she also told me. Her sight was very bad, so that while she could knit, she could do little in the way of reading. But often overnight, she dreamed that she was reading passages of Scripture, and when morning came they were vividly impressed on her mind that she could quite easily call them up, and thus her thoughts for the day were supplied. I suppose these must have been passages with which she became familiar in her youth.

*Friendly Companion 1973  
J.H. Wilson*

### THE CURSE OF MEROZ

*"Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty" (Judges 5. 23).*

"Curse ye Meroz," said the LORD.

"What has Meroz done?"

"Nothing."

"Why then is Meroz to be cursed?"

"Because Meroz did *nothing!*"

"What ought Meroz to have done?"

"Gone to the help of the LORD."

"Could not the LORD do without Meroz?"

"The LORD did do without Meroz."

"Did the LORD sustain any loss?"

"No, but Meroz did."

"Is then Meroz to be cursed?"

"Yes, and that bitterly."

"Is it right that a man should be cursed for doing nothing?"

"Yes, when he with the Lord's help ought to be doing something."

*Anon.*

---

### FALL OF ADAM

Adam by one transgression lost  
 God's gifts and favours too.  
 By him came death with all its woes,  
 Entailed on me and you.  
 But O how gracious and how kind  
 Was our Creator, God!  
 To give His dear His only Son,  
 To bear sin's heavy load.  
 To Adam was God's grace foretold:  
 The woman's promised seed.  
 And all who in Emmanuel trust,  
 Are from destruction freed.

*Fanny Humber, Aged 8 years, 1862*

### SANDS OF TIME

The following recently appeared in a secular magazine:

“If you had a bank that credited your account each morning with £86,400, that carried over no balance from day to day – allowed you to keep no cash in your account – and every evening cancelled whatever part of the amount you had failed to use during the day, what would you do? Draw out every penny every day, of course, and use it to your advantage!

Well, you have such a bank – and its name is Time. Every morning it credits you with 86,400 seconds. Every night, it rules off as lost whatever of this you have failed to invest to good purpose. It carries over no balances. It allows no overdrafts. If you fail to use the day’s deposits, the loss is yours. There is no going back. There is no drawing against ‘tomorrow.’”

In the light of Scripture we may say: “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

*Selected*

---

### WILLIAM CLARKE

To a young minister, who went to see him on Wednesday, he said: “I know not what the Lord is about to do; but He will do all things well.” A few minutes after, with much seriousness and affection, he took him by the hand and said: “My dear brother, I now see and feel the importance of those things that I have so much insisted on in my preaching, respecting the nature of *true* religion, and which has occasioned me some enemies. I hope the Lord will bless you, and help you to go forward in your work as you have begun: but be sure you must meet with enemies, for as there are so many refuges of lies, in which multitudes put their confidence, when you insist on the nature of *genuine* religion, they will be offended. Numbers wish to be made happy *by* God, but the truly religious wish to be made happy *in* God.”

*John Rippon*

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***PRACTICAL GODLINESS**

My dear young friends, seeking the Lord's gracious help I would like to address you on various practical Biblical subjects this year. John Bunyan said: "The practik part is the hardest part." How true. Do *we* live our religion? The Apostle John emphasises this in his first epistle: "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him" (1 John 3. 17-19). Also, the Holy Spirit by James speaks to us: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2. 14-17).

The Pharisees were continually trying to stop the Lord Jesus doing acts of mercy and love on the Sabbath day, but the Lord Jesus exposed their hypocrisy: "And it came to pass, as He went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath day, that they watched Him, and, behold, there was a certain man before Him which had the dropsy. And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day? And they held their peace. And He took him, and healed him, and let him go; and answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day? And they could not answer Him again to these things" (Luke 14. 1-6).

The Lord Jesus clearly defines true believers by the fruits they bring forth in their lives: "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done

unto you. Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples. As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love. If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love. These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is My commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15. 7-14).

The Lord Jesus also teaches us what the spirit of a true believer is: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13. 34-35). If we have the Spirit of Christ we shall bring forth the fruits of righteousness and truth and when the spirit of our old nature shows itself we shall be ashamed. Always remember, 'Unless we do all things in love, then we do all things in vain.'

As we seek to look at practical godliness we wish to do so in a right, gracious, New Testament way: not in a legal way, laying down things by way of duty. This is why we have commenced our subject in this way. What motivates us? Is it the filial fear of the Lord? That works by love. Or is it a slavish fear? If I do not do all these things by way of my duty the Lord will punish me. If our heart is right with God it will be from a spirit of love. I want to do this because I love the Lord.

(To be continued)

*J.R. Rutt*

---

QUESTION: Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?

ANSWER: The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.

Genesis 3. 7-24; Jeremiah 17. 9; Romans 3. 10-12 & 8. 22

**BIBLE QUESTIONS**

*This month the questions are about JOHN THE BAPTIST. 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 kind of food did John the Baptist eat? (Matthew 3. 4)
2. Which Old Testament prophet was John like? (Luke 1. 17)
3. When John was born, what did his father prophesy would be his life's work? (Luke 1. 76-77)
4. John said, "I have need to be baptised of Thee, and comest Thou to me." What did the Lord Jesus reply? (Matthew 3. 15)
5. What title did John give to the Lord Jesus? (John 1. 29, 36)
6. Who put John in prison and why? (Mark 6)
7. Why did John baptise in Ænon? Where else are we told he baptised? (John 3, Mark 1, John 1)
8. When John was in prison and very troubled, what message did Jesus give to two of his disciples to take back to him? (Luke 7)
9. Which Old Testament prophet spoke of John the Baptist and what did the prophet say? (John 1, but give the Old Testament reference)
10. John spoke a solemn warning to the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matthew 3. 7). Find two texts where the Lord Jesus used the same expression in describing the Pharisees.

**ANSWERS TO DECEMBER QUESTIONS**

1. Hannah.
2. Solomon.
3. "A little that a righteous man hath."
4. Zacchæus.
5. "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."
6. A little book. (Revelation 10. 9)
7. Ants, conies, locusts, spiders. (Proverbs 30. 24)
8. A sluggard. (Proverbs 6. 9,10)
9. Rehoboam. (1 Kings 12. 10)
10. The tongue. (James 3. 5)

*Contributed*

**“THY WILL BE DONE”**

My God, my Father, while I stray  
Far from my home in life's rough way,  
O teach me from my heart to say –  
Thy will be done.

If Thou should'st call me to resign  
What most I prize, it ne'er was mine,  
I only yield Thee what is Thine:  
Thy will be done.

Let but my fainting heart be blest  
With Thy sweet Spirit for its guest,  
My God, to Thee I leave the rest –  
Thy will be done.

Renew my will from day to day,  
Blend it with Thine, and take away  
All that now makes it hard to say –  
Thy will be done.

Then when on earth I breath no more,  
The prayer oft mixed with tears before  
I'll sing upon a happier shore –  
Thy will be done.

*Charlotte Elliott*

---

**HARD QUESTIONS**

It has been suggested that perhaps there should be occasional articles in the magazine explaining seeming contradictions in the Scriptures, or texts which seem hard to understand and which might perplex young people. If any of our readers have any thoughts on this, or questions they would like answers to, the editor would be pleased to hear from them.



# *The Friendly Companion*



“Is not My Word ... like a hammer that breaketh the rock  
in pieces?” (Jeremiah 23. 29)

---

*February 2007*

Editor: Mr. G.D. Buss, "Bethany", 7 Laines Head, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 1PH.

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: [gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk)

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.

Volume 133

February 2007

## CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	27
Our Front Cover Picture	28
The Other Side Of The Hill	29
For The Very Little Ones: A Touch	30
Colouring Text: Matthew 14. 36.	31
Bible Lessons: The Pool Of Bethesda	32
Letters To A Young Girl: Letter 2	34
The Advocate	35
"Did Animals Speak?"	38
Editor's Postbag	39
"Go Again Seven Times"	40
Short Memories	41
Designing A Quiet Fan	41
Anecdote Of Richard Baxter	42
Bible Study For The Older Ones:	
Practical Godliness: Keeping The Lord's Day (I)	44
Bible Questions: Hezekiah	46
Poetry: The Drawing Pin	48

**OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE**

Dear Children and Young People,

A good many years ago, a young girl of about twelve years of age was attending the Sunday school at Gower Street Memorial Chapel, later to become Shaftesbury Avenue Chapel (where the Annual Meetings were held for so many years). On that Sunday Mr. John Green was preaching, and had been asked to address the Bible Class. On his way through to the room where the older people were waiting, he had to pass through the room where this young girl was also waiting for her teacher. To her surprise he stopped and briefly spoke to them in the following way:

"I want you all to know what the Bible has to say about *Watching*." Taking the five letters of the word "*watch*," he listed five things that we all ought to be watching. These are:

Our *Words*

Our *Actions*

Our *Thoughts*

Our *Companions*

Our *Habits*

If the fear of the Lord dwells in our hearts, we will be mindful of this wholesome advice. The young girl who heard this brief address to this day, remembers the points he made. Later, Mr. Green was to become the much-loved pastor of the church at Gower Street Memorial Chapel. The simple way he had of expressing deep gospel truths, was a feature loved by many younger hearers in his day, including the Editor. How different our lives would be if we could be watching in this way. For this we need to be asking continually for grace so to do. That is why the Lord Jesus said to His disciples: "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation."

I wonder if any of you could find a text for each of the five things we are to watch? I would be glad to hear from those of you who can do so. May the fear of the Lord so teach us to live.

With every best wish from your sincere friend and Editor.

### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

In the Bible, the Word of God is likened to many things. For example: a seed, a lamp, a light, dew, rain, small rain (drizzle), snow, a sword, a fire; are all used in various places to describe God's Word.

On our front cover this month you will see a hammer. In Jeremiah 23. 29, we read: "Is not My Word ... like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" God uses the hammer of His Word in three ways:

Firstly: to break up the stony ground of our hearts. In days gone by, before the introduction of tar on our roads, men were employed as stonebreakers to smash the stones into a smooth surface for the horse-drawn vehicles to go over. Nowadays, of course, a roller would be used. The rock had to be hewn out of a quarry first and then taken to the roadside to be broken down: it was hard work. However, the power needed to break our hearts, is even greater than that. It needs the Holy Spirit to use God's Word as a hammer to break up the unbelief and resistance to the truth which is in all of us by nature.

Secondly: to fasten as a nail. In Ecclesiastes 12. 11 we read: "The words of the wise are as ... nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd." When God uses His Word in this way, He penetrates the heart and fixes the Word so that it remains. So much of what we hear of God's Word is sinfully forgotten, as other matters crowd it out. However, when the Holy Spirit uses God's Word as a nail, it is fixed and fastened so that it cannot be forgotten.

Thirdly: to fashion in the way a stonemason sculptures out a shape. So God uses His Word to form His children. The Bible uses the word "conformed." Sadly, worldly company and principles conform sinners to its ways of deceit. But God's Word conforms His children to His ways, by using His Word as a hammer and chisel to bring forth praise to Himself in their lives. Just as no sound of a hammer or any other tool was to be heard as Solomon's Temple was to be built: all preparation was to be done in the quarries, so it is in this life that God prepares His people for His heavenly building above.

May it be our prayer that God will not leave us untouched by the hammer of His Word. To be so is to be lost eternally; but to be taken in hand by His Word is salvation.

---

### THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HILL

There is a high hill, some miles in length, on the borders of Devon and Cornwall. Towards Devonshire, it presents a fine rounded summit; but looking into Cornwall, the other end of it rises to a sharp peak. A Devonshire man, who had never been about in Cornwall, meeting a Cornishman, who had never been out of his own county, remarked what a fine round hill they had on the confines of the two counties.

"Sir," replied the Cornishman, "you are quite wrong, there: why it is as sharp as a pyramid."

"Quite wrong!" replied the other, "I have known the hill all my life, and it is as round as an apple!"

"I must really contradict you," replied the Cornishman. "I know I am right, for I live near to it, and it is as I assert."

Upon this, they both got very angry and parted, not at all in an amiable frame of mind.

If you ever have a difference with anyone on some matter of opinion, don't believe yourself infallible, for we are all erring mortals; and don't lose your temper, and call hard names, for that never did any good; but first of all **take the trouble to go round to the other side of the hill.**

*The Gospel Echo 1898*

---

One evening a little boy, who was still a toddler, was determined to touch the teapot which had just been filled with boiling water. His mother told him not to touch it, but he was determined to have his freedom, come what may. So he touched it! The man was John Ruskin, who later confessed that this lesson was later used of God to remind him of the danger of the false liberty of yielding to our fallen will.

*FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES***A TOUCH**

*"Who touched Me?"* asked Jesus. The disciples thought it was a strange question. A large crowd was following Jesus and pressing against Him. But Jesus knew that someone had been healed by a touch, and He turned around to see her.

Fearing and trembling, a woman *"fell down before Him, and told Him **all the truth**."* For twelve years she had suffered from a bleeding sickness. All her money had been spent on doctors, but she only grew worse. Hearing about Jesus, she believed He could heal her. She had pressed through the crowd, saying within herself: *"If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be whole."*

Before all the people, she told how she had touched the hem of His garment and was healed immediately. How kindly Jesus spoke to her! *"Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What question did Jesus ask?
2. What did the woman tell Him? (3 words)
3. What did she say she had touched?

*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. At Jesus' feet.
2. Words of eternal life.
3. One thing.

“... and as  
many as  
touched  
were made  
perfectly  
whole.”

Matthew 14. 36.

## BIBLE LESSONS

## THE POOL OF BETHESDA

Once again, a yearly feast of the Jews drew near. All the males in the land were required to keep this feast. Jesus began to make His way from Capernaum to Jerusalem to keep the feast and thus fulfil the ceremonial law.

While He was in Jerusalem, Jesus passed a pool called Bethesda. What a beautiful name! It meant "House of pity" or "House of mercy." Around this pool were five porches, where all sorts of afflicted people were gathered. Some of these people were blind, others were lame, and still others had withered arms and hands, which made them helpless.

The porches provided shade for the people as they lay, *"waiting for the moving of the water."* At a certain season, an angel went into the pool and stirred up the water. Whoever was first to step into the water after it was stirred by the angel, was healed of whatever disease he had.

How earnestly they must have watched the water for movement! The hope of being healed kept them waiting near the pool. Yet how many were disappointed to see another step in before them. What a picture this is of gospel churches, where poor sinners with various needs gather to hear the good news of salvation!

As Jesus approached the pool, He saw a man who had been afflicted for thirty-eight years. What a pitiful sight he was! Knowing he had been afflicted for a long time, Jesus asked: *"Wilt thou be made whole?"* The poor cripple, like the woman at Jacob's well, did not know who Jesus was. He answered: *"Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me."*

Then Jesus said: *"Rise, take up thy bed, and walk."* At the words of Jesus, the cripple felt a strange, yet wonderful, power strengthening his weakened body. Oh the wonder of it! After so long a time, he was able to stand and walk. With joy he folded up his bed and walked away, carrying his bed. This was done on the Sabbath day.



As he walked, the Jews stopped him, saying: *"It is the Sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed."* The man answered: *"He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk."* The Jews were furious and demanded to know who had told the cripple to break their law. However, the man could not tell who had healed him, as Jesus had passed on and was lost in the crowd of people.

Not long afterward, Jesus met the man in the temple, worshipping God. He said unto him: *"Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee."* Now the man knew that it was Jesus who had healed him. Quickly he went out and told the Jews.

The Jews began to persecute Jesus for healing on the Sabbath day. Jesus answered them: *"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."* By this saying, Jesus made it known that His work was to do the will of His Father. Now the Jews were filled with rage and sought to kill Him for making Himself equal with God.

*You can read about this in John chapter 5 verses 1 to 18.*

#### QUESTIONS:

1. What was the name of the pool?
2. How many porches did it have?
3. What were the people waiting for?
4. How long had the cripple been afflicted?
5. Why did the Jews try to kill Jesus? (6 words)

*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. Publicans.
2. "Follow Me."
3. Power.
4. Publicans and sinners.
5. Sinners.

**LETTERS TO A YOUNG GIRL***John Newton's Letters to Betsy***Letter 2**

Old Jewry, October 22, 1779

My dear Child,

We have been in London a fortnight and upwards; the Lord gave us a pleasant and safe journey. But here I can have no garden; no pretty walks among trees and fields; no birds but such as are prisoners in iron cages, so that I pity them for all their singing.

But the same sun that shines at Northampton is often to be seen in London, and the Lord Jesus, like the sun, is in all places at once. Go where we will, we are not far from Him, if we have but eyes to see Him and hearts to perceive Him. My dear child, when you look at the sun, I wish it may lead your thoughts to Him who made it, and who placed it in the firmament, not only to give us light but to be the brightest, noblest emblem of Himself. There is but one sun, and there needs not another. So there is but one Saviour, but He is complete and all sufficient, the Sun of Righteousness, the Fountain of life and comfort. His beams, wherever they reach, bring healing, strength, peace and joy to the soul. Pray to Him, my dear, to shine forth and reveal Himself to you.

I entreat you to ask Him every day to show Himself to you. Think of Him as being always with you; about your path by day, about your bed by night, nearer to you than any object you can see, though you see Him not. People often consider God as if He saw them from a great distance; but this is wrong. For, though He is in heaven, the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him; in Him we live, and move, and have our being. And whatever thoughts you can obtain of God from the Scripture, as great, holy, wise and good, endeavour to apply them all to Jesus Christ, who once died upon the cross, for He is the true God; and though He be the King of kings and Lord of lords, and rules over all, He is so condescending and compassionate that He will hear and answer the prayer of a child. Seek Him and you shall find Him. He is never sought in vain.

Your very affectionate ...

### THE ADVOCATE

Some while ago, we were called to give evidence as a witness against somebody who had been driving whilst under the influence of alcohol. The trial at a Magistrates Court recently was delayed for almost four hours during which time we were able to sit in Court and listen to other cases. We hope the Lord kindly used that delay to kindle a few thoughts which we now venture to put to paper.

Those of you who may have sat in the public gallery of a Magistrates Court will know that there are usually three Magistrates who sit on a higher level behind a bench that stretches across the Courtroom. A Clerk to the Magistrates will sit in front of them to oversee proceedings and give guidance on points of law. Before the Crown will sit two solicitors. The Crown Prosecution solicitor will seek to pursue and prove the charge against the defendant. The solicitor for the defence will strenuously endeavour to rebut that charge. To one side of the Magistrates stand Court Ushers, police officers and witnesses, when called.

The defendant will be called into the Courtroom to stand before the Magistrates. He may have seemed a very jovial and carefree character outside the Courtroom with his friends, but his countenance is rather more solemn now. He is asked to state his name, address and date of birth. The Clerk reads out the charges set against him and the defendant is asked to pronounce whether, in his own estimation, he is guilty or not guilty.

A plea of guilty will normally invite sentence immediately. Severe crimes merit severe sentences and those that profess to have come in liberty may often be led away to be detained.

Those that plead "Not Guilty," are then tried to prove their guilt or innocence. The prosecution case is outlined and witnesses are called who may be cross-examined (or questioned) by the defence. The defendant is then asked to give an account of the deeds done and is again cross-examined by the prosecution. After cross-examination and closing

submissions by the solicitors, the Magistrates retire to consider their verdict.

On their return, the defendant is asked to stand. The carefree smile is gone and an anxious frown appears. The Chairman of the Magistrates pronounces that the defendant is found "Guilty as charged," or "Not Guilty as charged."

Now, my dear reader, the points I would have you consider are these:

*"Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."*

If we were left to rest on our own defence, we should have no defence at all. The Law as given through Moses, pronounces us "guilty of all." No work or wit of sinful man shall alter that solemn fact.

*"And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."*

If this truth is graciously sealed home to the heart of one who feels his need and knows his solemn state, what a blessed relief it will bring. You cannot appreciate the relief that this poor writer felt when his solicitor stood up to protect him from the questioning and cross-examination. It came in a timely way as we were tired, confused and perhaps ready to give up, but the important matter is that it came.

"What voice is that which speaks for me  
In heaven's high court for good,  
And from the curse has set me free?  
'Tis Jesus' precious blood."

The evidence to justify the relief is found in the death and resurrection of the dear Lord Jesus as revealed unto us by the Holy Spirit. "And He bearing His cross went forth." Here is the humility and obedience unto death that Paul speaks of. Oh, that *we* might know Him and the power of His resurrection.

There is a sufficiency in this evidence, dear friend, so that it is all that is needed to rebut the charge and the verdict is assured: "Not Guilty as charged."

*“For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.”*

We can say through felt experience that “our best is stained and dyed with sin, our all is nothing worth.” There is a daily proving of this, a gradual emptying of the scales on one side and a recognition of the weight of the other. Seek no other Counsel, poor sinner, for there is one God.

“When thou canst no deliverance see  
Yet still this Man thy Peace shall be.”

Now, my friend, how stands the case with thee? For heaven are thy credentials clear? It is not only how you plead to the charge, but when you plead, and it is the desire of one who holds this pen that you may be helped to come boldly to the throne of grace and seek forgiveness there, pleading no other name than that which is above every name, Jesus Christ the righteous.

“He saw me distressed, and He said,  
‘Fear not, I procured thy discharge;  
I’m Jesus, who lives, and was dead,  
And now will I set thee at large.’  
Not one in the court did object,  
But all gave a smile when He spoke;  
He then took the yoke off my neck,  
And ravished my soul with His look.”

*Contributed*

---

QUESTION: Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

ANSWER: The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell consists in the guilt of Adam’s first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin; together with all the actual transgressions which proceed from it.

(Psalm 51. 5 & 58. 3; Isaiah 1. 6 & 6. 5 & 64. 6; Jeremiah 17. 9;  
Matthew 15. 19; Romans 3. 10 & 7. 14)

**“DID ANIMALS SPEAK?”**

The following question has been asked.

***“Did animals speak before sin entered the world? How was it that Eve did not appear astonished when the serpent spoke to her?”***

When answering any question about the Word of God, we have only one Book to consult for the answer, with God’s help, and that is the Word of God itself. So in this case we must not speculate, but keep close to what the Bible tells us.

We know very little, apart from what we are told in Genesis, about the wonderful place, the Garden of Eden, in which Adam and Eve were placed.

We are, however, told two important things which tell us about man’s relationship with the animals in particular.

Firstly, we are told that God made man in His own image. This was never said of the rest of God’s creation.

Secondly, we are told that God gave Adam dominion over all living things. You can read about this in Genesis 1. 28.

But there is yet one more important distinction between man and the rest of creation. Man was given a living soul, which will return to God when life ends. This was not said of any other part of God’s creation. You can read about this in Genesis 2. 7.

So man was not only unique in having a soul, but in God’s providence was given, by the gifts of intelligence, authority over the rest of God’s creation.

These facts lead us to believe that almost certainly the inferior creation was never able to speak in the same way as we do. They are able to communicate with their own species, as, for example, in the case of birds, but not able to communicate with man in the way of speech.

If it had been otherwise, then the entry of sin into the world silenced any language that there might have been between the species, as part of the curse. The Bible gives no hint of this, however.

We do not know whether Eve was astonished to hear the serpent speak. It may be that the very fact that it was unique, made her all the more ready to listen to his lies and deception.

In this we should remember Paul's words to the Galatians: "But though we, or an angel from heaven (or serpent!), preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1. 8).

It is a solemn reminder to us of the power of Satan, that he could so influence the serpent to speak in a language understood by Eve. How we need "to be not ignorant of his devices"! (See 2 Corinthians 2. 11)

The only other case of an animal speaking is, of course, when the angel of God caused the ass to reprove Balaam. In this case it would have been well for Balaam to have taken warning from the miracle of the ass speaking to him and to have turned from his evil designs!

How solemn it was that on one occasion, Satan even spoke through the mouth of one of the Lord's own beloved disciples, Peter. You can read about this in Matthew 16. 21-23. How we need to be KEPT!

May God give us an ear to hear His voice in His Word, and like Samuel say: "Speak, for Thy servant heareth."

"Oh, give me Samuel's ear,  
The open ear, O Lord!  
Alive and quick to hear  
Each whisper of Thy Word:  
Like him to answer at Thy call,  
And to obey Thee first of all."

*Editor*

---

#### EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from ADAM GREEN and JESSICA SEYMOUR.*

**“GO AGAIN SEVEN TIMES”**

It all began with a young man being sent out to preach. The church had given him their blessing. The news spread quickly, and the invitations came in. It was the end of October, and within a week he was booked up until the end of the year and for the next year, too. He was engaged to preach at a certain place, which we will call “A,” on the fourth Lord’s Day in December.

The congregation began to gather. People parked their cars on the car park and went into the chapel. As a woman who was to be in the congregation, left the car, it seemed to her that she heard a voice say: “Go again seven times.”

She looked about her to see who had spoken, but no one was near. She had applied for a transfer of membership to this chapel, and therefore was sure this word was nothing to do with that. The minister she had never met, but since she had heard of him going out to preach, she felt she must pray for him. She sat in her seat, bowed her head in prayer for a few moments, after which she waited for the service to begin.

Just before the service commenced, the minister appeared, and she felt immediately that he would be her husband and that: “Go again seven times,” was to do with this future happening.

Over two years passed. The minister was preaching at “A” for his seventh time. He did not know about the word the woman had received on that first occasion, neither had he any ideas of her feelings. In the prayer during the evening service, the minister prayed these words: “Lord, if there be anybody here with a ‘Go again seven times’ prayer, hear and answer it.” During that week the woman received a letter from that minister – the first of many – which resulted in their marriage some months later.

*Contributed*

---

If you would form a true estimate of sin, do not weigh it in the light balance of public opinion.



### SHORT MEMORIES

A gentleman was going along a country road one Sunday. A person came up to him, and bowing politely, said: "Sir, did you pass three men driving a flock of sheep along this road?"

"Yes, sir," replied the gentleman, "and I noticed that one of them had a blue jacket on, and that they all had short memories."

"Short memories!" said the stranger. "I don't see how you could tell what sort of memories they had."

"Certainly I could," said the gentleman, "for you know that God has said: 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.' But those men had all forgotten it. They had short memories."

*From: The Biblical Treasury.*

---

### DESIGNING A QUIET FAN

Examples abound of engineers having been inspired by design seen in God's creation. The quest to make portable computers even more compact has presented a number of design challenges, for example: preventing the components from overheating in such a confined space.

In an interview with *PC Authority* magazine, Lenovo's Arimasa Naitoh relates how, during the development of their Thinkpad computer, a young designer overcame the problem of excessive noise from the internal fans used to cool the processor and graphics chips. Inspired by the near-silent flight of owls, he incorporated the owl-wing shape into each of the fan's blades, greatly reducing the noise.

*Adapted from PC Authority, October 2006*

---

We ought not to look for that in the law which can only be found in the gospel;

Not to look for that in ourselves which can only be found in Christ;

Not to look for that in the creature which can only be found in the Creator;

Not to look for that on earth which can only be found in heaven.

**ANECDOTE OF RICHARD BAXTER**

Several of the ministers, ejected by the Act of Uniformity, united with Mr. Baxter in establishing a lecture in a private house. The time of worship being at a very early hour, Mr. Baxter one evening left home with a view of being there ready for the morning. The night, however, being dark, he lost his way, and after wandering for a long time, he came to a gentleman's house where he asked direction.

The servant informed his master of this fact, who, thinking it unsafe that so respectable a looking man should be wandering on the common at so late an hour, invited him in. Mr. Baxter readily accepted the proposal, and was treated with great hospitality. His conversation gave his host a high opinion of his good sense and extensive knowledge.

The gentleman, wishing to know the quality of his guest, said after supper: "As most persons have some employment or profession in life, I have no doubt, sir, but you have yours." Mr. Baxter replied with a smile: "Yes, sir; I am a man-catcher." "A man-catcher, are you?" said the gentleman; "I am very glad to hear you say so, for you are the very person I want. I am a Justice of the Peace in this district, and am commissioned to secure the person of Dick Baxter, who is expected to preach at a conventicle in this neighbourhood early tomorrow morning. You shall go with me, and I doubt not we shall easily apprehend the rogue." Mr. Baxter very prudently consented to accompany him.

Accordingly the gentleman, the following morning, took Mr. Baxter to the place where the meeting was to be held. When they arrived there, a considerable number of people were hovering about, but on seeing the justice, they suspected his intentions, and were afraid to enter the house. The justice now intimated to Mr. Baxter his fears that Baxter had been informed of his intentions and would disappoint them, and proposed extending their ride that the people might be encouraged to assemble and give them an opportunity of fulfilling their commission. They did so, but on their return

they still found the people unwilling to assemble.

The magistrate, now supposing that he should be disappointed of his object, said to Mr. Baxter, that, as these people were much disaffected to the Government, he would feel obliged to him if he would address them on the subject of loyalty and good behaviour. Mr. Baxter replied, that as they met for worship, it was probable that such an address would not satisfy the people: but that, if the justice would engage in prayer, he would endeavour to say something to them. The gentleman replied that he had not his prayer-book with him or he would readily comply with the proposal; but expressed his persuasion that Mr. Baxter was able to pray with them as well as to talk to them, and requested him to begin with prayer.

They entered the house, followed by the people. Mr. Baxter prayed with great devotion and fervour; the magistrate, standing by, was soon melted into tears. The good divine then preached in his usual zealous manner; and when he had concluded he turned to the justice and said: "Sir, I am the very Dick Baxter of whom you are in pursuit. I am entirely at your disposal." The magistrate, however, had felt so much during the service, and saw things so different to what he had before done, that his enmity was changed into love, and ever afterwards became the friend and advocate of the persecuted, and, it is believed, also a sincere Christian.

*Selected*

---

When Alexander the Great was rebuilding the temple of the heathen god, Belus, he ordered the Jewish soldiers in his army to work as the rest were doing. They refused on the grounds that they would be aiding and abetting idolatry by assisting in rebuilding the temple. No amount of punishment or reward would turn them from this noble resolve and in the end Alexander discharged them from his army, secretly admiring their courage in sticking to the principles of God's Holy Law.

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***PRACTICAL GODLINESS****Keeping the Lord's Day (I)**

The keeping of one day in seven as a day of rest is taught in God's holy Word right from the beginning of creation. It is, in fact, what we call a creation ordinance. Let us look at the first reference. When we study the holy Word of God it is very instructive to find the first reference to something in Holy Scripture and follow our study through from there. We have our first reference in Genesis 2 1-3: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made." This ordinance is then confirmed in the holy law given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai, being one of the Ten Commandments: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Exodus 20: 8-11).

This is confirmed in Exodus 31. 15-17, and again refers us back to creation and God resting from His work of creation: "Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed."

Many Christians refer to Sunday as the Sabbath. Strictly speaking, however, the term "Sabbath" belongs to the Law and Old Testament worship; the Jewish Sabbath was on the seventh day of the week, our Saturday. Sunday is the first day of the week. The correct New Testament name for the first day of the week is "the Lord's day." It is called the Lord's day because the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week. Let us look at some of the Scriptures which prove that the practice of the apostles and the early New Testament church was to keep the Lord's day.

***The resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ***

Let us notice that this is emphasised in all four Gospels.

"In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre" (Matthew 28: 1).

"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils" (Mark 16: 9).

"Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them" (Luke 24: 1).

"The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre" (John 20: 1).

The Lord Jesus after His resurrection appeared to the disciples on the first day of the week.

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when He had so said, He shewed unto them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord" (John 20: 19-20).

***The Apostolic practice for keeping the Lord's Supper***

"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7).

***Apostle Paul's instructions to the early church***

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (1 Corinthians 16: 2).

It is so obvious from this last Scripture that the normal practice in the early church was to meet on the first day of the week.

***Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos***

Then we have the witness of the Apostle John when the Lord Jesus visited him on the Isle of Patmos: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet" (Revelation 1: 10). This is why we call the first day of the week, "the Lord's day": we have a Scriptural warrant for it.

(To be continued)

*J.R. Rutt*

---

**BIBLE QUESTIONS**

*This month the questions are about HEZEKIAH, who you can read about in 2 Kings 18-20, 2 Chronicles 29-32 and Isaiah 36-39. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 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. What did Hezekiah do when he received a letter despising the God of Israel? (Isaiah 37. 14)
2. What did he do in the first month of his reign? (2 Chronicles 29. 3)
3. Why did "Hezekiah rejoice, and all the people"? (2 Chronicles 29. 36)

4. Why did Hezekiah send and write letters to Israel, Judah, Ephraim and Manasseh? (2 Chronicles 30. 1)
5. What do you think the “posts” were and what happened to them? (2 Chronicles 30. 10)
6. What happened to many of those who refused to hear the words of Hezekiah, only a few years later? (2 Kings 18)
7. Which two heavy troubles came upon Hezekiah in the fourteenth year of his reign? (Isaiah 36-38; 2 Kings 18)
8. “The people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah.” What had he encouraged them to do? (2 Chronicles 32)
9. What remedy did Isaiah prescribe as the means to cure Hezekiah’s illness? (2 Kings 20)
10. Apart from Isaiah, which two prophets prophesied during Hezekiah’s reign?

#### ANSWERS TO JANUARY QUESTIONS

1. Locusts and wild honey.
2. Elias (Elijah).
3. “Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins.”
4. “Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.”
5. The Lamb of God.
6. Herod, because John had said it was unlawful for him to have his brother Philip’s wife. (Mark 6. 17, 18)
7. “Because there was much water there.” In Jordan and “Bethabara beyond Jordan.” (John 3. 23, Mark 1. 9, John 1. 28)
8. “Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me.” (Luke 7. 22, 23)
9. “The voice of Him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.” (Isaiah 40. 3)
10. Matthew 12. 34. Matthew 23. 33.

*Contributed*

**THE DRAWING PIN**

My father, when a boy at school  
Met other lads who played the fool.  
Once, when he sat upon his chair,  
A drawing pin had been left there.

Though placed by a mischievous hand,  
That drawing pin Jehovah planned  
To be the means, at least in part,  
Of working in my father's heart.

A wound he felt, which made him squeal,  
And, strange to say, it did not heal.  
He had a deeper wound within,  
As he was made to feel his sin.

In pain he walked the house at night,  
And Satan would his soul affright:  
He said to him: "You'll surely die;  
And then your soul in hell will lie."

In his distress, he cried to God:  
The path of prayer his soul now trod  
And Jesus spoke, to comfort give,  
The words: "I shall not die, but live."

So, Jesus used a drawing pin  
To be the means of drawing him:  
No longer Satan's lies could scare,  
For God had heard and answered prayer.

Praise God, who used a drawing pin  
To make a sinner feel his sin.  
He knows if one who placed it there,  
For his own soul was made to care.

*T.F.F. December 1988*



# *The Friendly Companion*



“And a certain man drew a bow at a venture...”  
(1 Kings 22. 34)

---

*March 2007*

Editor: Mr. G.D. Buss, "Bethany", 7 Laines Head, Chippenham,  
Wiltshire, SN15 1PH.

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: [gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk)

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.

Volume 133

March 2007

## CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	51
Our Front Cover Picture	52
For The Very Little Ones: "Believe Only"	54
Colouring Text: Mark 9. 23.	55
Bible Lessons: Lessons Of The Sabbath Day	56
Letters To A Young Girl: Letter 3	58
A Little Maid	59
Four Little Words: "Thou God Seest Me"	61
The Elder's Dream	64
Bible Study For The Older Ones:	
Practical Godliness:	
Keeping The Lord's Day (II)	66
Editor's Postbag	67
Bible Questions: Elisha	68
Poetry: Left Alone Of God	69
List Of Names	71

### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

There are some names in the Bible with which we are all very familiar. For example: David, Elijah, Paul and Peter, to name but a few. There are, however, some very important lessons to be learned from the lives and examples of some of the lesser-known people mentioned in the Bible.

One such man is Obed-edom. We read of him in 2 Samuel 6. King David, who had a great love for God, had a deep desire that the ark of the covenant should be brought up to Jerusalem from the house of Abinadab, where it had been for many years. He took thirty thousand men with him, and they set the ark on a new cart pulled by oxen. As it was being carried in this way, the oxen stumbled, and a man named Uzzah put out his hand to steady the ark, and the Lord smote him and he died. This may seem harsh to us, but David and the priests were not bringing the ark according to God's order. The priests should have carried the ark on their shoulders; the cart was an innovation not approved by the Lord.

What was now to be done with the ark? David was afraid to go any further, but where was it to be taken? Nearby was the house of Obed-edom, and this godly man willingly received it into his house and the priests, who alone were permitted to serve before it. For three months the ark stayed in Obed-edom's house. Some might have thought, what an inconvenience. Its presence must have dominated the whole house, and disrupted the normal family routine, as well as taking up room otherwise available for his household to use.

But Obed-edom had such a love for the Lord that he counted it a great privilege to have the ark in his house. Far from being an inconvenience, it proved a great blessing, for we read: "...the LORD blessed Obed-edom, and all his household" (2 Samuel 6. 11).

We learn several important lessons from this account.

Firstly, how we should always follow God's order in our lives, as shown in His Word. We cannot expect His blessing if we act otherwise.

Secondly, how rightly jealous God is of His honour and glory. "Hallowed be Thy name," is the prayer the Lord Jesus taught His disciples.

Thirdly, whatever the Lord's people do for love's sake in the Lord's cause, they will never have cause to regret. God is no man's debtor, and like Obed-edom, such will prove that God pays good interest!

Finally, we should count it a privilege indeed to have the ark of God's presence in our hearts, homes and lives. In all things He must have the pre-eminence, and those who fear God do not wish it otherwise, whatever changes that will mean in our conversation, life and example.

Above all, may we know: "The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it" (Proverbs 10. 22).

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

---

### **OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE**

The picture shown this month on our front cover is of a bow and arrow. In former days, a bow and arrow was a formidable weapon, and the art of archery was one of the most important disciplines a soldier had to learn.

William the Conqueror is said to have overcome Harold at the Battle of Hastings by shooting his arrows in such a way that they came down upon the English from above. Many were blinded and it is thought that this contributed greatly to the victory of the Norman Conquest.

The Bible makes frequent mention in the Old Testament of bows and arrows. For example, we are told that Joseph's bow abode in strength because his arms were strengthened by the mighty God of Jacob. Though Joseph had many arrows shot at him, he shot these arrows up to his God to deal with and did not seek revenge upon his brethren.

One most remarkable incident we read of is when Ahab went out to battle disguised as an ordinary soldier, in the hope

of escaping unharmed in a battle. However, the Lord had decreed through His prophet Micaiah that Ahab would not survive the battle. We are told of a soldier who drew a bow at a venture and the arrow, no doubt directed by God, penetrated a weak spot in Ahab's armour, and he was fatally wounded. How true it is that God's words are always fulfilled, although sometimes through the most unlikely of means.

In English history it is recorded that Richard the Lion-heart was besieging a French castle. The occupants, realising their perilous position, offered to surrender unconditionally. This Richard would not accept, upon which it is recorded that a man who was manning the ramparts, praying that God would direct his arrow, aimed at the king and fatally wounded him and so delivered the besieged inhabitants.

Sometimes we sing:

"Not a single shaft can hit,  
"Till the God of love sees fit."

Above all this, we read in Psalm 45 of the King's arrows. These are the convictions of sin which the Holy Ghost wounds the consciences of sinners with. How vital it is that we receive these wounds, and just as important it is, that being wounded, we are led to the precious blood of Christ which heals the festering sores of sin.

---

QUESTION: What is the misery of that estate whereunto man fell?

ANSWER: All mankind, by their fall, lost communion with God, incurred the curse of the law, and so were made liable to all the miseries of this life, and to death itself; and all who die in sin must endure the pains of hell for ever.

(Genesis 3. 16-24; Job 5. 7 & 14. 1-2; Isaiah 64. 6; Matthew 22. 13 & 25. 41; Romans 3. 23 & 8. 7; 1 Corinthians 2. 14)

**FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES****“BELIEVE ONLY”**

A little girl, about twelve years of age, lay dying. She was the only daughter of Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue. He fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come and heal his daughter. *“And Jesus went with him.”* But a great crowd of people followed and delayed Jesus as He went to Jairus' home.

At last a messenger came, saying Jairus' daughter had died: it was no use to trouble Jesus further. When Jesus heard this, He said: *“Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.”*

When they came to the house, many people were gathered to mourn and weep. Jesus put them all out, except the father and mother of the little girl. Then He took her by the hand, saying: *“Maid, arise.”* Immediately she arose and walked. How happy and thankful her parents must have been!

As with Jairus, an answer to prayer may be delayed or come in an unexpected way; but Jesus is never too late to help those whom He teaches to believe in Him.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who lay dying?
2. What did Jesus say when He heard the messenger?  
(4 words)
3. What did Jesus say to the little girl?

*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. Who touched Me?
2. All the truth.
3. The hem of His garment.

*“If thou  
canst  
believe, all  
things are  
possible to  
him that  
believeth.”  
Mark 9. 23.*

## BIBLE LESSONS

## LESSONS OF THE SABBATH DAY

What Nicodemus said of Jesus was very true: "...*thou art a teacher come from God.*" Besides teaching the people about Himself, His Father, and the kingdom of God, He instructed them on the true meaning of the Law of God. One commandment especially seemed to be more abused, neglected, and misapplied than any other. It was the fourth commandment respecting the Sabbath day.

Many of the people made light of it, misused it, and even hated it, because it kept them from following their worldly pursuits. Others, like the Pharisees, added to the commandment of the Sabbath day, preventing good and necessary deeds from being done.

On one Sabbath day, Jesus and His disciples were making their way to the synagogue to worship. It was early in the morning and the disciples were hungry. Their path went right through the fields of grain. As they walked, the disciples picked the ripe grain, rubbing it in their hands to separate the sweet kernels from the husks.

The Pharisees, who were always following the Lord Jesus to find some fault to accuse Him, became angry and said: "*Behold, Thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day.*" Were they stealing? No: the Law of Moses allowed for a person to take grain and eat it as he walked through a field. The Pharisees believed that a hungry man gathering a few grains to eat was guilty of working on the Sabbath, just as a farmer reaping his harvest on the Sabbath, to sell it.

Jesus reminded the Pharisees what David did when he and his men fled from Saul the king. Being very hungry, they went to the high priest, who gave them the shewbread which was hallowed and to be eaten only by the priests of the Lord. By this Jesus taught them that what ordinarily should not be done, was allowed in certain circumstances.

On another Sabbath day, Jesus entered into the synagogue where many people were gathered. Many of them had come



hoping to hear the Lord Jesus preach the gospel. They loved to hear the Prophet from Nazareth, who spoke of the mercy of God and showed such compassion to poor and afflicted souls. As Jesus looked around, he saw a man whose right hand was withered. He told the man to rise and stand forth. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were strained to see what was taking place. Perhaps the man was wondering why he was singled out.

The Pharisees, who had also gathered, were watching to see whether Jesus would heal the man on the Sabbath day. No doubt, they were hoping that He would, not because they cared for the poor man, but rather so they could finally accuse Jesus of breaking the Law of God. However, Jesus knew their thoughts and asked them: *“Is it lawful on the Sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?”* Everyone was very quiet as Jesus looked upon each of them, to see if any would answer Him.

Jesus reminded them that if a sheep fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, they would immediately go and lift it out. They all knew that Jesus spoke the truth in this assertion. Jesus asked: *“How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days.”*

Then Jesus told the man: *“Stretch forth thine hand.”* As Jesus spoke the words, power attended them, and the man stretched it out just like his other hand. How his heart rejoiced, and the people marvelled.

However, the Pharisees were filled with rage and quickly held a meeting to discuss how they might destroy Jesus.

*You can read about this in Matthew chapter 12 verses 1 to 14, Mark chapter 3 verses 1 to 6, and Luke chapter 6 verses 1 to 11.*

#### QUESTIONS:

1. What did the Pharisees do to the commandment of the Sabbath Day?
2. What did the Pharisees think the disciples were guilty of? (4 words)
3. What bread did David and his men eat?

4. On what day did Jesus heal the man with a withered hand?
5. What did Jesus say was lawful on the Sabbath day?

*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. Bethesda.                          | 2. Five.               |
| 3. The moving of the water.           | 4. Thirty-eight years. |
| 5. For making Himself equal with God. |                        |

---

### LETTERS TO A YOUNG GIRL

*John Newton's Letters to Betsy*

#### Letter 3

Charles Square, Hoxton. April 8, 1780

My dear Child,

I would be thankful that you are well, and I hope you are happy, that is, in the common sense of the word; for strictly speaking, happiness is not to be found here. I hope, however, you are cheerful and thankful; and in order to this, I would wish you to look around you and see how many children are sick, while you are well; poor and destitute, while you are provided, not only with the necessities, but the comforts of life. How many, again, are exposed to hard and unkind treatment, whereas you are noticed and caressed, and have kind friends. Once more, consider how many are brought up in ignorance and wickedness, have nothing but evil examples and, it is to be feared, will go from bad to worse as they grow up; while you have the advantage of good education and good examples, and are placed where you can hear the precious gospel, by which the Lord gives faith and salvation to them that seek Him.

Then ask yourself how it is, or why you are better off than they? And I hope there is something within you that will tell you, whatever the reason may be, it is not because you are better in yourself, or deserve better things than others. Your heart is no better; you likewise are a sinner; you were born with a sinful disposition and, though you are a child, you have sinned against

the Lord: so that, had He been strict to mark what is amiss, He might justly have cut you off long ago. The reason why you are so favoured must be the Lord's mercy and goodness.

Look at all that appears good and pleasant in this world; could you call it all your own, it would last but a little while. But it is not so, my dear child, with respect to that feast which Jesus prepares for poor sinners. In the other world, when earthly pleasures will be quite ended, they that love Him shall have pleasure without interruption and without end, rivers of pleasure at His right hand for evermore. The Lord bless you and keep you.

Your affectionate father.

---

#### A LITTLE MAID

It is remarkable that we have several examples in the Bible of children who were called by God's grace early in their days. Abijah, the son of ungodly Jeroboam (1 Kings 14), and Samuel (1 Samuel 2. 3), come quickly to mind. One child un-named in the Bible, however, should never be forgotten: the little maid who waited on Naaman's wife, in 2 Kings 5.

Probably only nine or ten years old, this young girl was forcibly taken from her parents, and her homeland, Israel, and carried to Syria, an idolatrous nation, to be a servant-girl to Naaman's wife.

We can hardly imagine how homesick the young girl must have felt at being separated from her mother and father at such an early age. But there is no hint of resentment in her behaviour in her new home. How often young people show their resentment at unwelcome situations by taking it out on those with whom they live. This young girl did not.

Then we notice that, although now surrounded by idolaters, she did not relinquish the religion in which her parents had, no doubt, brought her up diligently. She had every opportunity to do so had she wished. It would have been the easiest way to live a quiet life. None of her family would know

what was happening all those many miles away. But her love for the God of Israel was so deep that wherever she went she was not ashamed of Him or His people. Evidently, God had used her upbringing to implant His fear into her heart. What a blessing a good home can be, but how sad and solemn to despise the teachings of godly and praying parents. Remember, God is not mocked.

Then further, we notice that although she had been so cruelly treated by the Syrians in that they stole her from her family, yet when they were in trouble she was concerned that help should be found. So Naaman's leprosy was not something she was glad about with malicious vengeance, but rather she saw it as an opportunity for the God of Israel to work. Paul tells us in Romans 12. 20: "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." This little girl had this gospel spirit.

Then, what faith she had in the God of Israel who had wrought such wonderful miracles through His servant, Elisha. She had no doubt either about the willingness or the ability of her God in this matter.

We read no more about this little girl, but in the plan of God's purposes she was a vital link in the chain which led to Naaman's healing. Amazingly we find in the first recorded sermon of the Lord Jesus in Luke 4. 27, that Naaman was referred to as an example of God's sovereign right to deal with whom He will. Sadly, those who heard that sermon were strangers to the grace which was so evidenced in the little maid. This showed in their bitter enmity to the teachings of the Lord Jesus.

May the example of this little maid be one we seek to follow. She would have said, had we had opportunity to speak to her: "By the grace of God I am what I am." May we seek and find the grace which bears the same rich fruit in our lives and which brings honour to the One whom we should profess to serve.

**FOUR LITTLE WORDS****“Thou God Seest Me”**

“Four little words did me more good when I was a boy, than almost anything else,” said a man the other day. “I cannot reckon up all the good they have done me; they were the first words which my mother taught me.”

“Indeed, what were the four little words?” I asked. He answered me by telling me the following story:

“My father grafted a pear tree; it was a very choice graft, and he watched it with great care. The second year it blossomed, but it bore only one pear. They were said to be a very nice kind of pear, and my father was quite anxious to see if they came up to his expectations. This single pear, then, was an object of some concern to my father. He wanted it to become fully ripe, and he gave express directions to all the children on no account to touch it. The graft was low, and easily reached by us. It grew nicely: ‘I think the graft will meet my expectations,’ said my father many times to my mother. ‘I hope there is some prospect of having good pears.’

“Everybody who came to the garden he took to the graft, and everybody said: ‘It will prove to be an excellent pear.’

“It began to look very beautiful; it was full and round; a rich, red glow was gradually dyeing its cheeks, and its grain was clear and healthy.

“‘Is it not almost ripe? I long for a bite,’ I cried, as I followed my father one day down the alley to the pear tree.

“‘Wait patiently, my child; it will not be fully ripe for a week,’ said my father.

“I thought I loved pears better than anything else! Often I used to stop and look longingly up to this one. ‘Oh, how good it looks,’ I used to think, smacking my lips; ‘I wish it was all mine.’

“The early apples did not taste as good as usual; the currants were not as nice, and I thought nothing of the damsons in comparison with this pear. The longer I stopped alone under the pear tree, the greater my longing for it, until I was seized

with the idea of getting it. 'O, I wish I had it!' was the selfish thought that gradually got uppermost in my mind.

"One night after we were in bed, my brothers fell asleep long before I did. I tossed about and could not get to sleep. I crept up and went to the window. It was a warm, still, summer night; there was no moon; no noise except the hum of numberless insects. My father and mother had gone away. I put my head out of the window and peeped into the garden. I traced the dark outlines of the trees. I glanced in the direction of the pear tree. The pear tree – then the pear! My mouth was parched; I was tempted.

"A few moments found me creeping down the back stairs, with neither shoes, nor socks, nor trousers on. The slightest creaking frightened me. I stopped on every stair to listen. At last I felt my way to the garden door. It was fastened. It seemed to take me ages to unlock it, so fearful was I of making a noise, and the bolt grated. I got it open, went out, and latched it after me.

"It was good to get out into the cool night air. I ran down the walk. The patting of my feet made no noise on the moist earth. I stopped a moment and looked all around, then turned in the direction of the pear tree. Soon I was beneath its branches.

"Father will think the wind has knocked it off; but there was not a breath of air stirring. Father will think somebody has stolen it – some boys came in the night and robbed the garden – he'll never know. I trembled at the thought of what I was about to do.

"I leaned against the trunk of the tree and raised my hand to find it, and to snatch it. On tiptoe, with my hand uplifted, and my head turned upward, I saw a star looking down upon me through the leaves. 'Thou God seest me!' escaped from my lips.

"The star seemed like the eye of God spying me out under the pear tree. I was so frightened I did not know what to do.

“Thou God seest me!” I could not help saying it over and over again. God seemed on every side. He was looking me through and through. I was afraid to look, and hid my face. It seemed as if father and mother and all the boys and everybody in town would take me for a thief. It appeared as though all my conduct had been seen as by the light of day. It was some time before I dared to move, so vivid was the impression made upon my mind by the awful truth in these four words: ‘Thou God seest me.’ I felt that He saw me. I knew He saw me.

“I hurried away from the pear tree; nothing on earth would at that moment have tempted me to touch the pear. With very different feelings I crept back to my bed again. I lay down beside my brother, feeling more like a condemned criminal than anything else. No one in the house had seen me; but it seemed as if everybody knew it and I should never dare meet my father’s face again. It was a long time before I went to sleep. I heard my parents come home, and I involuntarily hid my face under the sheet. But I could not hide myself from a sense of God’s presence. His eyes seemed everywhere, diving into the depths of my heart. That was the beginning of a train of influences which, God be praised, I never got over. If ever I was tempted to any secret sin, the words: ‘Thou God seest me’ stared me in the face, and I stood back restrained and awed.”

The man finished; his story interested me greatly. I think it will interest many children. I hope it will do more than interest them; I hope it may do them much good.

“Thou God seest me.” These four little words are from the Bible. Hagar uttered them. She fled in anger from her mistress, Sarah, and went into the wilderness. An angel met her by a fountain of water. The angel directed her to return to her mistress and told her some things in her life which she thought nobody knew but herself. “Thou God seest me!” Hagar exclaimed. Then she knew it was the angel of God, for nobody but God could look into the most secret things.

Children, learn these four small words. Impress them upon your heart. Think of them when you lie down, when you get

up, and when you go by the way. When you are alone or with your companions, both at home and abroad, remember: "Thou God seest me."

*Selected from Mount Zion*

---

### THE ELDER'S DREAM

In one of Scotland's northern towns, a family was seated around the breakfast table, waiting for father and wondering why he had not come, as he was later than usual. At length he appeared; his step was heavy, and his brow cloudy. Having asked the blessing, he sat with his head resting on his hand, evidently wrapped in thought.

This unhappy-looking man was one of the elders in the neighbouring chapel. He possessed much energy and zeal, and, it was hoped, real grace; but, alas, he was too much governed by a bad temper, and too often forgot the words of the wise man: "... and he that ruleth his spirit (is better) than he that taketh a city." As a result of this, the meetings for the chapel business were the frequent scenes of anger and noisy strife. The minister, being a true disciple of the Prince of Peace, deeply lamented his elder's unchristian spirit. On the previous day, a meeting had been held, which was even more contentious than usual.

The good minister's heart sank within him while he sat amidst the strife of tongues, and most thankful was he that evening to retire to a friend's house some miles from the town; for the peace and quiet of the country is soothing to a wounded spirit.

It was on the following morning that the elder came down to breakfast in so melancholy a mood. His wife, after looking at him anxiously for some minutes, said: "Are you ill, my dear?" "No," was the reply. "Then what has happened to make you look so sad?" He slowly raised himself up, and looking earnestly at her, said: "I have had a most unusual dream."

The look of anxiety vanished from his wife's face as she said with a smile: "Why? You always laugh at my dreams" "Yes, but



mine was so remarkable. I dreamt I was at the bottom of a steep hill, and when I looked up, I saw the gate of heaven at the top; it was bright and glorious, and many saints and angels stood there. Just as I reached the top of the hill, who should come out to meet me but our old minister, and he held out his hand, crying: 'Come away, John; come away, come away; there's no strife here.' And now I cannot help thinking of the grief my contentious spirit has caused the dear old man."

Husband and wife sat for some time in mournful silence, which was broken by the entrance of a servant with a letter. The elder hastily read it, whilst an expression of deep grief overspread his face; then, dropping it from his hand he covered his face, as if to hide from them around, the bitter anguish of his soul. His wife took up the letter which was from the minister's host; its contents were as follows:

"My dear Sir, – We had the great pleasure yesterday of receiving our dear minister, little thinking it would be the last time we should welcome him to what he called his peaceful retreat. When we sat talking together in the evening, he spoke with much grief of the chapel meeting. 'Indeed,' he added, 'I am so tired of all this strife and turmoil, that I wish my dear Lord would take me home.' In the morning, as he did not come down to breakfast, I ran up and knocked at his door, but receiving no answer, I went downstairs again, thinking a longer rest than usual would do him good. After returning to his door once or twice, I went in. He was in bed, apparently asleep. I spoke to him, but received no answer. Yet it was long, very long, before we believed it to be the sleep of death, for a happy smile rested on his face, and his snowy locks rested on the pillow; but he slept in Jesus, for his dear Lord had taken him."

The elder never recovered from the shock. He sorrowed for his minister, but still more for his sin. He gradually sank, and in three weeks was laid by the side of his aged minister.

*The Sower 1892*

## BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

**PRACTICAL GODLINESS****Keeping the Lord's Day (II)**

It is called: "the Lord's day":

Because it refers to the Person of our **Lord** Jesus Christ;

Because He rose from the dead on that day;

Because Christian believers are delivered from the law, they no longer keep the seventh day Sabbath of the law, but in newness of life in Christ Jesus, they keep the Lord's day.

Now that we have established that this is a New Testament church order and practice, we need to look at how we keep this day. There is a beautiful Scripture in Isaiah: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it" (Isaiah 58. 13-14).

This is how we would keep the Lord's day, because we love the Lord.

Nothing should be done on the Lord's day that is not necessary. It is a day set apart for divine worship. We should take heed to the exhortation: "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10. 24-25).

I remember as a child (I was, thankfully, brought up in a godly home), all newspapers and secular books were put away and the only reading allowed was from the Holy Bible and religious books. All toys were put away on Saturday night and were not touched again until Monday morning. My mother would prepare all the food on Saturday for Sunday. We always had a roast dinner on Saturday and cold meat and potatoes on

Sunday. The potatoes were always prepared on Saturday night. After the Sunday evening service we would sometimes sing hymns together. Saturday night was bath night for the whole family; there were eleven of us; this was never done on a Sunday. I can see my father now on a Saturday night with all the family shoes, from the smallest to the largest, lined up on the kitchen table to be cleaned and polished; this was never done on a Sunday. I cannot remember there being any legal bondage in this; it was clear that my parents loved the Lord; therefore in love to their Redeemer they honoured Him by keeping the Lord's day.

It gives me great sadness to observe that the Lord's day is not observed so strictly in our day. As I have been going to preach around the churches for the past twenty-one years, I have noticed that many of the younger families allow children to have toys on a Sunday; many families cook a full roast dinner on Sunday. I have even seen children with secular books to read in chapel, something not seen years ago. My dear young friends, may you be given grace to rightly keep the Lord's day out of a deep sense of love and respect to the Lord, and may parents be given grace to observe the Lord's day, not slavishly, but in love and affection to the Lord. Remember the words of the dear Apostle to both parents and children: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6. 1-4).

*J.R. Rutt*

---

#### EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from HEIDI HICKMAN, ALBERT HOPE, MATTHEW RAYMOND and BETH TOPPING.*

**BIBLE QUESTIONS**

*This month the questions are about ELISHA. 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 was Elisha doing when Elijah came and threw his mantle over him? (1 Kings 19. 19-20)
2. What did Elisha ask Elijah for, just before Elijah was taken up into heaven? (2 Kings 2. 9)
3. What did Elisha tell a widow woman to borrow from her neighbours? (2 Kings 4. 3)
4. "And the iron did swim." What was the "iron"? (2 Kings 6. 6)
5. Which miracle concerning Elisha happened after his death? (2 Kings 13. 21)
6. Why was Elisha not afraid when the Syrian army surrounded Dothan? (2 Kings 6)
7. Which miracle of Elisha was referred to by the Lord Jesus? (Luke 4)
8. What happened to a man who scorned Elisha's prophecy of a wonderful deliverance from a famine? (2 Kings 7)
9. Which question of Elisha to his servant Gehazi was answered with a lie, and what happened to Gehazi? (2 Kings 5)
10. Which two instructions that God gave to Elijah at Horeb were fulfilled under Elisha's ministry?

**ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY QUESTIONS**

1. Hezekiah spread the letter before the LORD.
2. He opened the doors of the house of the LORD and repaired them.
3. Hezekiah rejoiced that "God had prepared the people."
4. To ask them to come to Jerusalem to keep the Passover.
5. The posts were messengers who carry letters; they were laughed to scorn and mocked.
6. They were taken into captivity in Assyria. (2 Kings 18. 9-12)
7. The Assyrian army came against Jerusalem and Hezekiah was "sick unto death." (2 Kings 18. 13; 20. 1; Isaiah 38. 1)
8. To trust in the Lord to help them and to fight their battles. (2 Chronicles 32. 8)

9. A lump of figs laid as a plaster upon the boil. (2 Kings 20. 7)
10. Micah and Hosea. (Jeremiah 26. 18, Hosea 1. 1)

*Contributed*

---

**LEFT ALONE OF GOD**

One pleasant day in early spring  
Two friends stood side by side;  
Viewing a noble field of wheat  
That stretched out far and wide.

Thus said the one: "How promising  
These fresh green blades appear!  
Doubtless in autumn you will reap  
A goodly harvest here!"

Then from the worldly owner's lips  
This impious answer fell:  
"If God will leave my field alone  
The crop will flourish well!"

In fearless and unfaltering tones,  
The awful words were said:  
God heard in heaven, yet did not strike  
The sinful utterer dead.

No frost or blight destroyed the wheat,  
But, as the weeks rolled on,  
On that as well as other fields  
The summer sunbeams shone.

The dews of heaven descended there,  
And soft refreshing rain;  
But ah! God's blessing was withheld,  
And all the rest was vain.

The crops around grew fast and fair,  
And doffed their robes of green;  
But in that field all summer through  
No change of growth was seen.

In time, the reaper's joyful song  
Was heard o'er hill and plain:  
The harvest moon in splendour shone  
On sheaves of golden grain.

But as in spring and summer time,  
So e'en in autumn late,  
The field that God had left alone  
Retained its green-blade state.

God granted thus the farmer's wish –  
Avenge His holy Name,  
And wrote upon that field of wheat  
The bold blasphemer's shame.

*Friendly Companion 1905*

[“Lord! What this wretched man desired,  
Has been my fear and dread:  
Lest Thou should'st such sad woe pronounce  
Upon my guilty head.

“Lest I, to sins and idols joined,  
Should so offend 'gainst Thee;  
That Thou should Ephraim's doom repeat –  
'He's chose them, let him be!' (*Hosea 4. 17*)

“What worse estate could me befall,  
Or how a heavier rod,  
Than Thou be deaf to every call –  
Be – 'left alone of God!'”

“No, Lord! Whate'er Thy love ordain,  
Whate'er my portion be,  
Let not that awful state be mine –  
*One left alone of Thee!*”]

*Charles Jefferies*  
(*Editor of Friendly Companion 1882 – 1919*)

# LIST OF NAMES

*The following young people have answered questions during the months July to December 2006. The total number is 305, for which we would thank God.*

Maia Aldridge; Anthony and Fiona Ashby; Daniel and Naomi Aston; Matthew Aston.

Alasdair Bailey; Sarah Ball; Joseph, Mary and Samuel Banfield; Benjamin and William Bos; Joseph and Samuel Boulton; Abigail, Daniel, Joanna and Nathan Broome; Fiona 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; Annie, Lucy and Miriam Cottingham; Michael Cottingham; 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.

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

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

Jacqueline and James Hallier; Edward Hanks; Eleanor, George and Jonathan Hare; Mary Hart; Benjamin, Suzanna and Thomas Hayden; Joseph, Joshua, Luke and Nathanael Hayden; Andrew, Marcus and Susanna Hickman; Bethan and Rosalind Hickman; George Hickman; Thomas Hickman; Henry Hook; Eleanor and Esther Hope.

Abigail Izzard.

Henry Johnson.

Emma, Helen, Joanna, Joshua and Marianne Kerley; James, Rebecca, Susanna and William 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 and Philip Main; Hannah McNaughten; Claudia and Florence Mercer; James and Julia Mercer; Andrew, Edward, Elizabeth, Henry, Samuel and William Munns.

Anna, Jonathan, Rebekah and Simeon Pack; Helen, Matthew, Priscilla, Rebecca, Robert, Samuel and Sarah Parish; Anna, Chloe and

Phoebe Parsons; Ruth and Sarah Payne; Elisabeth, 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; Freddie and Harry Rokison.

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; Jessica Seymour; Emma, Kate and Matthew Stearn; Alexander, Emma and Jessica Stevens; Ellen and Rebekah Suckling.

James Tarbin; Abigail Thorne; James and Paul Topping; Alison and Andrew Tugwell.

Gilbert, Marlene, Henry, Joanna, Peter, Jonathan and Nicholas de Vogel.

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; Benjamin, Jessica, Louise and Timothy Woodhams; Edwin, Hannah, Joseph, Kate and Lucy Woodhams; Chloe and Lucy Woods.

*Overseas Names:*

Miriam Aitch; Thomas Casper; 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; Kyle Springhart; Nathaniel TenBroeke; Bethany, Kaitlyn and Michaela Teunissen; Jessie, Mariah and Matthew Toogood; Marilene Van de Munt; Dena, Fred, Jacob and Julie Van Gemert; Evangeline and Savannah Van Oort; Benjamin and John Van Vugt; Cody and Dylan White; Aaron, Andrew, 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*



“The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.”  
(John 10. 11)

---

*April 2007*

Editor: Mr. G.D. Buss, "Bethany", 7 Laines Head, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 1PH.

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: [gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk)

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.

Volume 133

April 2007

## CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	75
Our Front Cover Picture	76
A Dying Desire	77
Editor's Postbag	77
For The Very Little Ones: "Follow Me"	78
Colouring Text: Luke 5.11.	79
Bible Lessons: Twelve Apostles	80
Letters To A Young Girl: Letter 4	82
"Is God In This Town?"	83
"I Forgot"	85
Difficult Questions (I)	86
Watch!	87
God's Thoughts Not As Man's Thoughts	87
The Love Of God	91
Bible Study For The Older Ones:	
Practical Godliness: Dress (I)	93
Bible Questions: God's Leading	94
Poetry: The Crown Of Thorns	96

### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

Many of you will remember the name of a man in John chapter 3, who came to the Lord Jesus by night to ask Him important questions which were puzzling him. This man was Nicodemus. Although we are not told the reason why he came by night, it would seem likely that, being a ruler of the Jews, he did not yet want it known that he was drawn to the Person and teaching of the Lord Jesus. The fear of man was probably a great snare to him. However, it was evidently the work of the Holy Spirit which gave him this enquiring mind. How surprised he was to learn that, with all his knowledge as a teacher, he had not yet learned the first step in the way of salvation. This step the Lord Jesus twice told him was the new birth: "Ye must be born again." This was not to start his life all over again as a baby in the hope that he would not sin, with a second opportunity to serve God, but rather that if he was to serve God aright he needed from God a completely new heart and a nature which, with the Holy Spirit's power, he could serve God aright. How many people say: "If only I had my time over again, I would be different." Sadly, unless we are "born again" we would be no different.

We hear no more of Nicodemus until not long before the Lord Jesus was crucified. Then we hear of him defending the Lord Jesus in the Sanhedrin (the council of the Jews), and being scorned for it.

But then at the crucifixion we hear of him boldly confessing the Lord Jesus Christ when with Joseph of Arimathea, who took the body of the Lord down from the cross, he lovingly buried it in Joseph's tomb. Where were the other disciples, we might ask? However, God is never at a loss, even when men fail, to provide for Himself a means if need be. Nicodemus and Joseph were God's instruments when the disciples were nowhere to be seen.

In this open act we may rightly infer that Nicodemus confessed that he believed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God

and that he believed in Him for salvation. See how gradually, and yet surely, the Lord's work went on in his heart and life, beginning with his question to the Lord Jesus, until he unashamedly confessed, by his actions, his belief in the Saviour. So the Lord often gradually leads those whom He is teaching. Isaiah says that He carries the lambs in His bosom and gently leads those that are with young.

We read of those who will "ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward." Nicodemus was just such a person. I wonder how many of our readers are too?

With best wishes from your friend and Editor.

---

### **OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE**

The flock of sheep shown on our front cover this month comes from Idaho in the USA. The sheep look to be in fine health and, no doubt, proudly owned by their shepherd.

Imagine yourselves, for a moment, as one of the Israelites of whom we read in the Book of the Exodus at the time of the first Passover. The head of the house was to go out to his flock and look for a male lamb, one year old and without any blemish on it. In other words it had to be his best lamb. He was not to look for the one he could most easily spare, a weak one or one which was less perfect, but he was to take the one which he could least spare! He was to separate this lamb from the flock for fourteen days, and then he was to kill it: the blood being gathered in a basin and then sprinkled on the doorposts and lintel of his house, but not the threshold, not to be trodden under foot, showing how precious it was to be! The roasted meat was to be eaten by the family, all standing around a table, ready to depart from Egypt as soon as the signal was given by Moses. Obedience to these commands was vital, because the Destroying Angel was to pass over Egypt that night killing all the firstborn in every house. But where the blood had been sprinkled on the doorposts and lintel, God had promised: "When I see the blood, I will pass over you."

The Bible tells us clearly that these events pointed to the

Lord Jesus Christ, God's dearly beloved Son, whom John the Baptist called "the Lamb of God." He, the Son of God, came as the perfect Man, without blemish in His Person or life. Like the lamb of the Passover night, He was separated out from the rest of humanity, as we are told: "... holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners ..." and His life was laid down on behalf of sinners that they might escape the devouring sword of divine justice which their sins deserved. Just as in Egypt, it was the Israelites for whom the blood was sprinkled and shed and not the Egyptians, so the Lord Jesus Christ laid down His life for His sheep. These are they, who, according to His own testimony in John 10, hear His voice and follow Him as their Shepherd in the ways of repentance and faith, learning of His faithfulness as their guardian and of His love in laying down His life for them. It is the Holy Spirit who gives the hearing ear for the Good Shepherd, and the willingness to follow Him in His footsteps. May we, by the grace of the Good Shepherd, be found amongst His flock for whom He laid down His lovely life.

---

### A DYING DESIRE

"At our Sunday School Anniversary, Mr. Hayler gave an address. He said that he was not going to give out a text, but would tell us of young people who had died and gone to heaven. He spoke of a young girl who was dying, and he asked her what was her request and desire. She replied:

'To creep beside Him as a worm  
And see Him bleed for me.'

It broke my heart to pieces and I wept and wept. Gadsby's 950 became my favourite hymn."

What a wonderful desire from a dying child.

*Contributed*

---

### EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from **OLIVER HAMILTON; EMILY JANES; JOSEPH PARISH; SAM SAUNDERS and EMMA WIGLEY.***

**FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES****“FOLLOW ME”**

Two brothers, Peter and Andrew, were fishing in the Sea of Galilee. As they were casting a net into the sea, Jesus walked by the shore. He called out to them: *“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”* Did they hesitate or ask questions first? No; they simply left their nets and followed Jesus. The words of Jesus were spoken with power. They quickly and gladly obeyed.

A little farther along, James and his brother John were mending their nets in a ship. Jesus called unto them. *“And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed Him.”*

Peter, Andrew, James, and John became disciples of Jesus. Others were also called to follow after Jesus and became disciples. They learned from Jesus, as He taught the people and preached the gospel. Later, they were sent to preach about Jesus and how people might be saved by being taught to believe in Him. In this way, they were *“fishers of men.”*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What did Jesus call out to Peter and Andrew? (2 words)
2. What did they quickly and gladly do?
3. What did Peter, Andrew, James, and John become?

*Contributed*

*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.*

**ANSWERS TO MARCH QUESTIONS**

1. A little girl.
2. Fear not: believe only.
3. Maid, arise.

*“... they  
forsook  
all, and  
followed  
Him.”*

*Luke 5. 11.*

## BIBLE LESSONS

## TWELVE APOSTLES

Because of the miracles Jesus performed and the words which He spoke, multitudes of people followed Him from place to place. As Jesus looked on the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them. He saw them as sheep scattered abroad because they had no shepherd. Their religious leaders were not really concerned about their sad afflictions and cared still less about their souls.

While His disciples stood around Him, Jesus pointed out that the multitudes were like a great field of grain ripened for harvest. But sadly, there were so few labourers to gather in the harvest. What could be done? Was the harvest to perish?

The Lord Jesus gave the answer. He told His disciples to: *"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."* What a great mercy it is when the Lord raises up a labourer, a pastor, a minister, to teach the people the WORD of GOD. He labours in prayer and in preaching the gospel.

After the long day of teaching the people and healing their diseases, the multitudes had gone to their homes to sleep; but Jesus went up alone into a mountain. What would He do there in the dark of night? Did He go into some cave to sleep? No, indeed not! He went to pray and continued all night in prayer to God. Earlier in the day, He had told the disciples to pray that labourers might be sent of God into the harvest. Although He was God, yet in His flesh, He would follow His own word of counsel.

When the morning came, He called His disciples unto Him. He was going to appoint twelve of them to be called apostles. The first apostle named was Simon, whom Jesus called Peter: then James and John, the sons of Zebedee. Then He named Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. Next, He named Philip and Bartholomew (also known as Nathanael). They were followed by Matthew (also called Levi, the publican), Thomas, and James (the son of Alphæus, sometimes called James the less and



writer of the Epistle of James). The last three were Simon (also called Zelotes or Simon the Canaanite), Judas (sometimes called Lebbæus or Thaddæus), and Judas Iscariot, who would later betray the Lord Jesus.

Jesus gave them power to cast out unclean spirits and to heal all manner of sickness. By these things, they would witness to the people that they were sent of God. Whenever they performed such a miracle, they would testify that it was done in Jesus' name.

Jesus also told them to go and preach the Word of God to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. What compassion He had for those who were as sheep without a shepherd!

Many of the apostles were poor fishermen. One was a publican. One was even a thief, namely Judas Iscariot. The Bible tells us that: *"God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence."*

To be named an apostle was a very great honour and a very great responsibility. They were followers of Jesus from early on in His public ministry. They were to establish the New Testament church in all the doctrines of grace. Some were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write books of the New Testament.

*You can read about this in Matthew 9 verse 35 through to chapter 10 verse 6, Mark 3 verses 13 to 19, and Luke 6 verses 12 to 16.*

#### QUESTIONS:

1. What did Jesus tell the disciples to pray God to send into the harvest?
2. What two things does a pastor or minister labour in?
3. How many apostles did Jesus appoint?
4. In whose name did they cast out unclean spirits and heal sickness?
5. To whom were they to preach the Word of God? (7 words)

*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. Added to it.   | 2. Working on the Sabbath. |
| 3. The shewbread. | 4. The Sabbath day.        |
| 5. To do well.    |                            |

---

### LETTERS TO A YOUNG GIRL

*John Newton's Letters to Betsy*

#### Letter 4

August 3, 1780

My dear Child,

You may be sure your mamma and I were very glad to hear that the Lord preserved you from harm. I wish you to have a deep impression on your mind that your safety, or the continuance of your health from one hour to another, is not a matter of course, but the effect of the care and goodness of Him who knows we are as helpless as sheep, and condescends to act the part of a Shepherd towards us.

May you learn to acknowledge Him in all your ways, to pray to Him for His blessing, and to praise Him daily for His mercies. This is a great privilege which distinguishes us from the beasts of the field; they likewise owe their preservation to His providence, but then they are not capable of knowing Him or thanking Him.

There are many young people who are contented to live without God in the world; but this is not only their sin, but also their shame. But let it not be so with you. Pray to the Lord to teach you to love Him; and, when you think of Him, fix your thoughts upon Jesus Christ, upon Him who conversed on earth as a man. The great God has manifested Himself in a way suited to us as weak creatures and poor sinners. God is everywhere present; but only those who look to Him in Christ can attain to love, trust, or serve Him aright. When you read our Saviour's discourses, recorded by the evangelists, attend as

if you saw Him with your own eyes standing before you; and, when you try to pray, assure yourself, before you begin, that He is actually in the room with you, and that His ear is open to every word you say. This will make you serious, and it will likewise encourage you, when you consider that you are not speaking into the air, or to One who is a great way off, but to One who is very near you, to your best Friend.

It is now your turn to write, and I shall be glad of a long letter from you soon, in which I wish you to open your mind with the same freedom as if you were writing to your schoolfellows. The Lord bless you, my dear child, and give you to increase in wisdom and grace, as you increase in years. Always think of me as

Your very affectionate father

---

#### **“IS GOD IN THIS TOWN?”**

There was a little girl on the Isle of Skye, Mary Bethune, about eleven years old, who heard a minister preach from Psalm 68, verses 19 and 20: “Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah. He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord belong the issues from death.” The minister, who preached to her conscience, soon after left the Island. Wherever she turned, no one could help her, not even her minister, he agreeing she was beginning to be deranged. Finally, in her childish mind, she concluded that she must go to Inverness, where she had heard that extraordinary things were to be found.

What time it took for Mary Bethune to accomplish her weary task is not known, but the Lord, whom she sought after, had His blessed eye upon her, ignorant as she still was of Him. She walked barefooted and washed in the streams, and people were kind. She found herself eventually at Loch Ness, by the side of which she walked until she arrived at Inverness. The time was that of the administration of the Lord’s Supper in that town. She spoke in her usual strain to those she met, but

encountered many strange rebuffs on putting her questions. At last, she was led to address one who at once felt a deep interest in the barefooted, bareheaded girl, who had accosted her just as Mary had many others before.

Mary Bethune observed a person, having the appearance and bearing of a lady, walking along the bridge on her way to the place of worship which she usually attended. Mary approached this lady. Repeated disappointments having intensified her earnestness, she called out: "O lady! Is God in this town? And if so, where shall I find Him?" The lady looked at first with amazement, as many others had done on similar occasions, just because an all-important question of this kind is so seldom put. She hesitated a while before replying; and then, on Mary reiterating the question with still great earnestness, she replied: "Yes, God is in this town. Come with me, and perhaps you may find Him." She then took the girl by the hand, walked with her to the church, and led her to the seat which she herself occupied.

The services of the day having begun, Mary was all attention; and we may suppose her kind friend to have been deeply exercised in prayer for the salvation of the poor friendless child, thus providentially thrown on her for protection. The minister, who was engaged to preach that day, is said to have been Mr. James Calder of Croy, a true man of God. He seemed that day to find the declaration of the whole truth an easy matter, and he had one hearer at least, who drank in every word he uttered concerning God, concerning the sinner, and concerning the Saviour. And as he became more and more earnest, and more than ordinarily simple and clear while enlarging on the subject in hand, Mary was enabled clearly to apprehend the truth proclaimed. She could contain herself no longer. She started up, and, clapping her hands, exclaimed: "I see Him now; I understand it all now. I have found Him! I have found Him! I have found Him!"

Many may regard all this as rhapsody. In Mary's case,

however, that moment proved to be the moment of her deliverance and salvation.

*Gospel Gleanings for Young People 1961*  
*Adapted for the readers of the Friendly Companion*

---

### **“I FORGOT”**

There was a boy named Charlie, who wished to be good, but he was thoughtless and did wrong very often; and when he was asked about it would say: “Oh, I forgot!”

His father one day told him that he had read of a way to make him remember. Out in the yard was a tall white post, and he intended to keep an account there. Every time Charlie did wrong, his father would drive in a nail, so the big black nails would show him how often he had forgotten. In a few weeks there were many nails driven in the post, and Charlie seemed sadly troubled to see so many, and was really trying to improve.

Then his father told him that he would still drive in one for every bad action, but for a good action he would pull one out. Well, for a time there seemed to be about the same number – some pulled out and some driven in; but after a few months, there was not one nail left in the post.

One day his father went out and found Charlie sitting on the grass at the side of the post, looking very sad.

“My son, what is the matter?” Charlie only pointed to the post. “But, my son, the nails are all drawn out.”

“Yes, Father,” cried Charlie, “but the marks are all there.” Yes, there were the great black holes in the white post, to remind Charlie of all his faults. His father told him it was so with his heart.

“And,” said his father, “if this marked post distresses you, what would you feel if you could see your heart as God sees it, all stained and marked and spotted with sin? And oh, may the Spirit of God so teach my dear boy that he may not forget to offer often this prayer: ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.’”

*From the Little Gleaner 1869*

**DIFFICULT QUESTIONS (I)****2 Samuel 24. 13 with 1 Chronicles 21. 12.**

The seeming discrepancy that arrests attention between these two verses is, that the one threatened a famine of three years, and the other of seven years.

There are two simple answers to this difficulty. 2 Samuel 21 records a three years' famine as a judgment from God upon the nation because of its conduct toward the Gibeonites. When God offered three additional years of famine to David, He did so in the year intervening between these two periods, so that there would be seven years threatened. And if David had elected these three years, there would, therefore, have been, in fact, seven such years. There is no difficulty in believing that the prophet mentioned both periods to the king. The accuracy of Scripture is here demonstrated in that it is 2 Samuel which mentions the three years of famine that preceded David's numbering of the people, and that it is the same book which threatens the larger number of years of famine. On the other hand 1 Chronicles, not relating the three years of famine in connection with the Gibeonites, appropriately, therefore, records the shorter period. Further, the actual wording of the two passages is interesting. 2 Samuel reads: "Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land?" but 1 Chronicles 21 reads: "Choose thee either three years' famine." The expression therefore: "come unto thee in thy land," harmonizes with the foregoing argument; for it asks David if the country is to suffer such a lengthy period of famine, whilst the wording in 1 Chronicles accords with the suggestion that the king was to "choose" three additional years of misery to the wretchedness already suffered.

The second answer is that the number "seven" in the Scriptures expresses intensity, and that, therefore, what the prophet threatened was "a seven years' famine" to last for three years. That is, the three years famine was not to be a partial or light famine, but a very dreadful and intense one.

*Selected*

**WATCH!**

You will remember that in the February magazine I asked if anyone could find texts to illustrate the five things we are exhorted to watch. Thank you to those of you who have answered. Below we have the texts that Andrew Tugwell, who was the first, has sent in. Well done, Andrew!

**OUR WORDS:** "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my Redeemer" (Psalm 19. 14).

**OUR ACTIONS:** "Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed" (1 Samuel 2. 3).

**OUR THOUGHTS:** "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts" (Psalm 139. 23).

**OUR COMPANIONS:** "Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to Thy voice: cause me to hear it" (Song of Solomon 8. 13).

**OUR HABITS:** "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55. 9).

---

**GOD'S THOUGHTS NOT AS MAN'S THOUGHTS**

One evening in the month of July 1536, a carriage from France arrived at Geneva. A man, still young, alighted from it. He was short, thin, and pale. His expressive features were indications of a profound spirit, an elevated soul, and an indomitable character. His intention was to pass through Geneva hastily, without stopping more than one night in the city. Scarcely a carriage arrived from France without being surrounded by Genevese and French refugees, in order to see if it brought anybody whom they knew. A young Frenchman, who had gone to the place where the carriage put up, recognized in the traveller his friend and teacher, John Calvin.

The joy of meeting was mutual, and Calvin, who had come to Geneva without a plan, and even against his will, learned

from his friend, Du Tillet, that popery had been driven out of Geneva shortly before; that the zeal, struggles, trials, and evangelical labours of William Farel were incessant; and that Farel was contending almost alone for the triumph of the gospel. Calvin had long respected Farel as a most zealous evangelist, and Du Tillet could not keep from Farel the news of his friend's arrival.

The thought that this extraordinary man was now in Geneva, delighted Farel. He went with all haste to the inn, and entered into conversation with Calvin. He had long been looking for a servant of God to help him, yet had never thought of Calvin. Now a flash of light shone into his soul. An inward voice said to him: "This is the man you are seeking." From that moment Farel's heart glowed with a marvellous zeal for promoting the gospel. "Stay with me," said Farel, "and help me. There is a work to be done in this city." Calvin replied, with astonishment: "Excuse me, I cannot stop here more than one night." "Why do you seek elsewhere for what is now offered you?" replied Farel. "Why refuse to edify the church of Geneva by your faith, zeal, and knowledge?"

The appeal was fruitless. To undertake so great a task seemed to Calvin impossible. But Farel would not be discouraged. He pointed out that, as the Reformation had been miraculously established in Geneva, it ought not to be abandoned in a cowardly manner – that, if he did not take the post offered to him in this task, the work might probably perish. Calvin could not make up his mind. He did not want to bind himself to a particular church. He preferred travelling in search of knowledge, and making himself useful in the places where he chanced to halt.

"Look first at the place where you are now," answered Farel. "Popery has been driven out, and tradition abolished; and now the doctrine of the Scriptures must be taught here." "I cannot *teach*," exclaimed Calvin. "On the contrary, I have need to *learn*. There are special labours for which I wish to reserve



myself. This city cannot afford me the leisure I require." "Study! leisure! knowledge!" answered Farel. "What! Must we never *practise*? I am sinking under my task. Pray help me!"

The young doctor had still other reasons. His constitution was weak. "The frail state of my health needs rest," he said. "Rest!" exclaimed Farel. "Death alone permits the soldiers of Christ to rest from their labours." The Reformer had not expressed his whole thought. He shrank from appearing before the assemblies of Geneva. The tumults, the indomitable temper of the Genevese, intimidated him. To this Farel replied: "The severer the disease, the stronger the measures to be employed to cure it. I entreat you to take your share. These matters are harder than death."

The burden was too heavy for his shoulders; he wanted a younger man to help him. But the young Calvin still could not yield. "I am timid," he said. "How can I withstand such roaring waves?" At this Farel could not restrain a feeling of anger. "Ought the servants of Jesus Christ to be so delicate," he said, "as to be frightened at warfare?" These words touched the young Reformer to the heart. His conscience was troubled, but his great humility held him back. "I beg of you, in God's name," he said, "to have pity on me! Leave me to serve Him in another way than what you desire."

Farel, seeing that neither prayers nor exhortations could avail with Calvin, reminded him of a frightful example of disobedience similar to his own. "Jonah, also," he said, "wanted to flee from performing the Lord's work, but the Lord cast him into the sea."

The struggle in the young doctor's heart became more keen. He was violently shaken. He bent before the blast, and rose up again; but a last gust, more impetuous than all the others, was shortly about to uproot him. Farel's heart was hot within him. At that supreme moment, feeling as if inspired by the Spirit of God, he raised his hand towards heaven and exclaimed: "You are thinking only of your tranquillity. You care for nothing but

your studies. Be it so. In the name of Almighty God I declare that, if you do not answer to His summons, He will not bless your plans." Then, perceiving that the critical moment had come, he added an alarming adjuration to this declaration – he even ventured on an imprecation. Fixing his eyes of fire on the young man, he exclaimed: "May God curse your repose! May God curse your studies if, in such a great necessity as ours, you withdraw, and refuse to give us help and support!"

At these words Calvin trembled. He felt that Farel's words did not proceed from himself. It appeared to him that the hand of God was stretched down from heaven. He could not free himself from that powerful grasp. He was powerless to move. At last he raised his head. He had yielded. He had sacrificed the studies he loved so well. His conscience now convinced, made him surmount every obstacle in order that he might obey.

The call of Calvin in Geneva is perhaps, after that of the Apostle Paul, the most remarkable to be found in the history of the church. It was not miraculous, like that of the Apostle on the road to Damascus; and yet, in the chamber of that inn, there was the flash of light and the voice which the Lord made to sound in Calvin's heart, and which broke down his obstinacy and prostrated him as if a thunder-bolt from heaven had struck him. At the same time, confidence in God filled his soul. He desired no longer to run counter to the call, but to permit himself to be guided by the hand of his Master.

From that hour the propagation and defence of the truth became the sole passion of his life. He never forgot the fearful adjuration which Farel had employed; and whenever he met with obstacles, he called to mind "the Hand stretched down from heaven," and, knowing its sovereign power, he took courage.

Calvin, coming after Luther and Farel, was called to complete the work of both. Possessed of an organising genius, he undertook to form a church, placed under the direction of

the Word of God and the discipline of the Holy Ghost. Spiritual powers must act in the midst of the flock of Jesus Christ. "In the kingdom of Christ," he said, "all that we need to care for is the life – the *new man*."

*D'Aubigné's "Reformation"*

---

### THE LOVE OF GOD

When angels sinned and became devils, God left them all to suffer for ever for their sins, and God would have been just if He had left all mankind to suffer for ever for its sins; but instead of this He, from all eternity, set His free, everlasting love upon a number of mankind that no man can number out of every nation, kindred, people and tongue.

That God has a chosen people, is plainly taught in many passages of the Bible, such as these: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" (1 Peter 1. 2); "He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1. 4); "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8. 29). God did not set His love upon His people because they were better than others, for there is no difference; but from His own free will (Romans 3. 22). Those whom God has loved, are loved with an everlasting love, and nothing shall be able to separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus (Jeremiah 31. 3; Romans 8. 39).

It is well for us to know every truth that is in the Bible, and this truth of God's free love to His people from everlasting to everlasting is plainly set down in many parts of the Bible. But we should beware of making a wrong use of this, or of any other truth. They make a wrong use of this who neglect all means, saying, as an excuse: "If I am to be saved, I shall be saved; it is of no use to try to seek, or to use means." They also who, without true repentance towards God and true faith in Jesus Christ think that they have some sign that they are God's elect. No one has a right to think himself one of God's elect if

he does not come to Jesus, for Jesus says: "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." If any one forsakes his sins, returns to the Lord, and simply trusts in Jesus and loves and serves Jesus, he has scriptural proof that he is one of God's elect. Let us ever remember that secret things belong unto God. May we be truly led to obey the gospel, and this will make it manifest that God loves us.

The great truth of God's love to His people is food for believers, and it will be wrong if we make the food of the people of God our stumbling block. We should not pry into God's secret purposes, but ponder well His revealed mind about us. Let us think of the evil of sin, the threats of God, and the great truth that through the Lord Jesus is preached unto us the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things. Let us be concerned about being called, as our being called will prove we are elected (Romans 8. 30).

#### ANECDOTE

A Christian, whose preaching and writings have been made a blessing to many, once dreadfully feared that he was not one of the elect, and therefore should never find mercy. He was led in his despairing feelings, to search and ponder the Scriptures, and he there found that God does not refer to the people that He invites to come to Jesus, as "His *elect*." He does not say: "Come unto Me, all ye that *are elected*," but "all ye that are weary and heavy-laden." He does not say: "Whosoever *is elected*," but "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." He does not say: "Let the *elect*," but "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts." This so encouraged him that he was led to go to Jesus as a *sinner*, and found Jesus true to His Word: "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise case out." Moreover, he found that his coming to Jesus was proof of his election. He says that we are not first to make our election sure, but first to make our calling, and then our election sure.

*J.K. Popham*

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***PRACTICAL GODLINESS****Dress (I)**

As Christians we should always dress modestly. Consider the Word of God on this subject: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands" (1Peter 3. 3-5). "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (1 Timothy 2. 9-10).

Young men should not run around half dressed with no top on: unless they are on the beach, it is not appropriate dress. It is not becoming for young women to wear short skirts or see-through clothing. The only object of dressing in this way is to attract the opposite sex. When underwear can be seen through clothing it is not modest or becoming dress. A young lady does not have to dress in old-fashioned clothes: she can be modern but should not dress provocatively to allure.

The Word of God teaches us very clearly that men and women should dress differently. When the Apostle Paul was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write his Epistle to the Corinthians, he addressed them, and us, very clearly on the issue of dress. We must remember that Corinth was a heathen city, with heathen pagan practices. In the Law it is clearly stated that men and women are to dress differently. In heathen pagan practice, homosexuality was often practised. With the practice of homosexuality, men dress as women and women dress as men. We see this today with transsexuals. In the city of Brighton, which has a large homosexual population,

it is not unusual to see men in dresses and skirts. Generally in this country it has become acceptable for women to wear trousers. Traditionally, because of our strong Christian culture based on Biblical values, the accepted dress for a woman was a dress or a skirt. Up until the 1920's it was not considered acceptable for women to wear trousers. During the Second World War, women were conscripted to work on the land producing food: the Land Army. It was through this that women began to wear trousers more generally and the practice became more acceptable.

Let us look at what the Word of God teaches us, both in the Old and New Testaments. "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man; neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God" (Deuteronomy 22. 5).

One objection that has been used against this Scripture is that in the same chapter it teaches that the Hebrews were not to wear garments made of wool and linen. There are two things to notice here. Firstly, when the law pronounces on a moral issue we still follow it (but not on ceremonial issues). Secondly, this is the only thing in this chapter that the Lord calls an abomination (hateful). If it was hateful to God then, it is still hateful to Him now. My dear young friends, we are not to follow the practices of this wicked world. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2. 15-17).

(To be continued)

J. R. Rutt

---

### BIBLE QUESTIONS

*This month the questions are about GOD'S LEADING. 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 did the Lord Jesus say we should pray *not* to be led into? (Matthew 6. 13)
2. What did God use to lead the children of Israel in the wilderness? (Exodus 13. 21)
3. What two things did David pray for to lead him? (Psalm 43. 3)
4. When David was in trouble and felt overwhelmed, where did he want to be led to? (Psalm 61. 2)
5. God promises to lead the blind in unfamiliar paths. What else does He promise to do for them? (Isaiah 42. 16)
6. God led the children of Israel forty years in the wilderness. What was the purpose of that leading? (Deuteronomy 8)
7. Who said: "I being in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren"? (Genesis 24)
8. "Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost ... was led by the Spirit." Where, and for what purpose? (Matthew 4; Luke 4)
9. Where did David, thinking of the LORD as his Shepherd, say he was led (two answers)? (Psalm 23)
10. Of whom was it said: "I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways"? (Isaiah 45)

#### **ANSWERS TO MARCH QUESTIONS**

1. Ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen.
2. A double portion of Elijah's spirit to be upon him.
3. Empty vessels.
4. An axe head.
5. A dead man let down into Elisha's grave came to life again when the body touched Elisha's bones.
6. Because the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. (2 Kings 6. 16-17)
7. The healing of Naaman's leprosy. (Luke 4. 27)
8. He was trampled to death in the gate of the city. (2 Kings 7. 20)
9. "Whence comest thou, Gehazi." He became a leper. (2 Kings 5. 25-27)
10. The anointing of Jehu and Hazael to be kings over Israel and Syria. (1 Kings 19. 15-16; 2 Kings 9. 1-10; 8. 7-15)

*Contributed*

**THE CROWN OF THORNS**

My Saviour wore a crown of thorns  
Upon His bleeding brow,  
A royal diadem adorns  
The Man of Sorrows now.

A lonely thorn bush slowly grew  
Upon the stony plain.  
It drank His sunbeams and His dew,  
And fed upon His rain.

He knew that it was growing there,  
Oft doubtless passed it by.  
He knew each thorn that He would wear,  
When He went forth to die.

My life I draw from His own air,  
Yet with that very breath,  
I've uttered words that pierced Him there  
And stung Him in His death.

'Tis here that sin and pardon meet,  
In which I'd share a part.  
They pierced His head, His hands, His feet,  
But I have pierced His heart.

Praise Him who wore the crown of thorns  
Upon His sacred head.  
A royal crown of grace adorns  
The King of Glory now.

*Author unknown*

---

"I did not want to love God, but He loved me, and I had to love Him."

*John Bradford – Martyr.*



# *The Friendly Companion*



William Wilberforce (1759 – 1833)

“If the Son therefore shall make you free,  
ye shall be free indeed.” (John 8. 36)

---

*May 2007*

Editor: Mr. G.D. Buss, "Bethany", 7 Laines Head, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 1PH.

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: [gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk)

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.

Volume 133

May 2007

## CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	99
Our Front Cover Picture	100
An Epitaph From Cranbrook Churchyard	101
For The Very Little Ones: "It Is Written"	102
Colouring Text: James 4. 7.	103
Bible Lessons: Sermon On The Mount: The Beatitudes	104
Letters To A Young Girl: Letter 5	106
Competitive Sports	107
A Sheep In Trouble	110
Difficult Questions (II)	111
Genesis 1	112
Editor's Postbag	113
Watch!	113
"In The Shadow Of Thy Wings" (I)	114
Bible Study For The Older Ones:	
Practical Godliness: Dress (II)	116
Bible Questions:	
The Gospel As The Rule Of Life For A Christian	118
Poetry: Trust In God	120

### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

Did you know that if you blindfolded someone and asked that person to walk in a straight line, he or she would almost invariably actually walk in a circle? It has been said that people lost in a forest, who thought they were walking in a straight line, have found themselves back where they began some time later. The reason for this is that usually one of our legs is fractionally shorter than the other so the natural tendency is for one to walk in a large arc of a circle.

There is an important lesson for us each in this. If we are spiritually blind then like the blindfolded man we go round in circles never really making any progress in the important matters of the soul. With some, it is the circle of a routine of worship; with others, the routine of a secular calling; with some, the opinions of others; with some, it is the opinion of others of themselves; whilst it is the continual pursuit of some idol or sinful lust that holds others in this fruitless orbit of “having no hope, and without God in the world” (Ephesians 2. 12).

It is something we should be concerned about: that God would be pleased to break this cycle for us, which holds sinners from Christ.

The Word of God exhorts us to “make straight [not round] paths for our feet.” It tells us: “Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee” (Proverbs 4. 25). When it pleases God to open the eyes of a sinner to see the true light, he realises that he needs God’s help to keep him in the straight path, as it is so natural to slip back into the old circle which pleases our flesh. Peter speaks about a dog returning to its vomit, or a sow to its wallowing in the mire after it has been washed. One of our hymns says:

“In darkness born I went astray,  
And wandered from the gospel way;  
And since the Saviour gave me sight,  
I cannot see without His light.”

and

“I cannot walk without His might.”

May the prayer of David be ours: “Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.”

With every best wish from your friend and Editor.

---

### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The portrait on the front cover this month is of William Wilberforce. In 1807, two hundred years ago, his campaign in the British Parliament to ban the slave trade, succeeded.

William was appalled at the terrible sufferings inflicted on the black races of Africa as they were bought and sold like animals by white men, who then transported them in horrendous conditions across the Atlantic to the sugar plantations in the Deep South of America. Once there, unless their owner was more humane than the general practice, many would be worked and sometimes flogged to death by their persecutors. Some of you may have read the account of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Many of these slaves, like Uncle Tom, were most gracious and godly people. Amidst all their sufferings many were able to pray for their persecutors. There is no doubt that just as in Exodus 2. 24, where we read that God heard the groaning of the Israelite slaves in Egypt and raised up Moses to deliver them, so William Wilberforce, with others, was used by God to bring to an end this blot on the history of mankind's cruel dealings with each other.

William sought to cut this trade off at its source by banning the slave trade throughout the British Empire, which at that time stretched right around the globe. It was said that the sun never set on it.

Why was William so concerned about this slave trade? He had been brought up in very comfortable circumstances himself and in his early days lived a very indolent and selfish life. That was until he was called by God's grace. Having tasted that God was gracious in his own soul, being by now a

Member of Parliament, he sought to use his influence for good. There is no doubt, that rather like Esther the queen who was raised up by God to be on the throne just at the time God's ancient people needed her, so William Wilberforce was placed in Parliament at this crucial time when at last the conscience of the nation was beginning to be stirred up against the cruelties of the slave trade.

He met with tremendous opposition from those, who like the silversmiths of Ephesus, could see that their livelihood was threatened if this trade ceased. However, God gave William the grace of perseverance. "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again," the saying goes. This is just what he did by God's gracious help. He was a man who would not take "no" for an answer.

Eventually in 1807, the House of Commons passed the law abolishing the slave trade. It took many more years for the slaves in the Deep South to obtain their freedom, but it was the work of William Wilberforce, among others, which stirred the consciences of the world leaders of that generation and eventually led to the freedom to which the black man is just as entitled as the white man.

We admire the grace given to William, but horrendous though the slave trade was, it would be a mercy if men and women, boys and girls, were even more concerned about the slavery of sin. No Act of Parliament, or efforts of politicians, can break that slavery. Only the grace of God in the gospel has the power to break that chain which drags sinners to eternal misery. May we be taught by God to recognise the slavery that sin is and to know what Jesus meant when He said: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

---

#### **AN EPITAPH FROM CRANBROOK CHURCHYARD**

"Stop traveller and cast an eye,  
As you are now, so once was I:  
As I am now, so you must be,  
Therefore prepare to follow me."

**FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES****“IT IS WRITTEN”**

Jesus was alone in the wilderness for forty days and nights. During that time, He was tempted of Satan (the devil) and had nothing to eat. Afterwards, when He was very hungry, the devil came to Him, saying: *“If Thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.”*

Jesus was indeed the beloved Son of God and able to do so; but He would not perform a miracle to satisfy His own hunger. He trusted in God to provide for the needs of His body. He answered: *“It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.”*

Two more times, Satan came to Jesus with his terrible temptations, beginning with the little word “if”. Each time Jesus answered: *“It is written...”* He resisted the temptations and did not sin. Then the devil departed for a while, and *“angels came and ministered unto Him.”*

The Bible is the written Word of God. By His Word, God gives help and comfort to those who are tempted.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where was Jesus alone for forty days and nights?
2. With what little word did Satan begin his temptations?
3. With what three words did Jesus begin his answers?

*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. Follow Me.
2. Obeyed.
3. Disciples of Jesus.

*“Resist  
the devil,  
and he  
will flee  
from you.”  
James 4. 7.*

**BIBLE LESSONS****SERMON ON THE MOUNT – THE BEATITUDES**

Once, when Jesus saw a great company of people coming, He went up into a mountain. Was He trying to get away from them? No, for the people followed Him up the side of the mountain. At a certain place Jesus sat down, and His disciples came and sat down before Him. Then the rest of the people gathered around them. What were they expecting? Perhaps no one knew for sure.

When it was very quiet and all eyes were fastened on Him, Jesus began to preach unto them. It was a very special sermon. Firstly, it was spoken by the best Preacher, Jesus Himself. Also, many great and wonderful truths were taught in it. Thirdly, the Holy Spirit has caused the whole of it to be written in the Bible. You can read the entire sermon in Matthew's Gospel, chapters five, six, and seven. It is often called the **SERMON ON THE MOUNT**.

Jesus began the sermon by pronouncing certain people blessed. Firstly, He said: *"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* They have been convinced of their sin and guilt before God. Thus, their hearts are broken, contrite, and humbled. Next, Jesus said: *"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."* Being convinced of their sin, they are made to grieve and to be truly sorry for all their sins. The comfort they want is the pardon of their sins.

Then, Jesus said: *"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."* The meek do not seek revenge but patiently bear the evil deeds or words of others. Again, He said: *"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."* Perhaps Jesus was thinking of the proud Pharisees, who thought they were righteous and without sin before God. But those who know they are sinful and unclean, will hunger and thirst for righteousness, just as those who are hungry, have an appetite for natural food.

*"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."* The merciful sympathize with and help those in need. They pray



for those who have wronged them and seek grace to forgive them, for no man can do this without God's help.

*"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."* Such must have the "new heart" that the Lord gives His people. It was what David wanted when he prayed: *"Create in me a clean heart."*

*"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."* This does not mean they are able to make peace between God and men. Only the dear Lord Jesus can do that. But they do endeavour to live peaceably with all men, especially with the people of God.

*"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."* How strange these words must have sounded in their ears! Who would esteem persecuted people to be blessed? They suffer pain and they seem forsaken. Their lives may be miserable. Although they are persecuted for Jesus' sake, they feel themselves unworthy to suffer for His name. Jesus reminded them that all the godly prophets, whom they loved to read about, suffered the same.

This first part of the Sermon on the Mount is sometimes called the Beatitudes.

*You can read about this in Matthew chapters 5, 6, and 7.*

#### QUESTIONS:

1. What is this sermon of Jesus called?
2. What did Jesus pronounce certain people to be?
3. What is the comfort those that mourn want? (5 words)
4. What do they hunger and thirst for?
5. For whose sake are they persecuted?

*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. Labourers.
2. Prayer and preaching.
3. Twelve.
4. Jesus.
5. Lost sheep of the house of Israel.

*G.L. Tenbroeke*

---

**LETTERS TO A YOUNG GIRL**

*John Newton's Letters to Betsy*

**Letter 5**

November 1, 1780

My dear Child,

I congratulate you that you are now within a month of December, when you will begin to count the days, and to see the vacation peeping over the head of a short interval. We long to see you, and have done so every day since you left us.

Your mamma is often indisposed, but seldom very ill, at least not long together; but both she and I have many feelings with which we were not acquainted when we were young like you. The advantages of youth and health are seldom rightly known at the right time. It is indeed a mercy if, when we are growing old, we have some proper sense of the folly and vanity in which we indulged in early life, and can be ashamed as we ought, to think how many opportunities we neglected, how many talents we misimproved. Yet repentance cannot recall the day that is past. It is my frequent prayer that you may have grace to remember your Creator and Redeemer while you are yet young. Depend upon it, my dear, whenever you really know the Lord: you will be sorry you did not know Him sooner; whenever you experience that pleasure which is only to be found in loving and serving Him, you will wish you had loved and served Him (if possible) from your very cradle.

I have no news to tell you; but one thing I can assure you, which, though you have often heard, I hope the repetition will be always pleasing to you, I mean, that I am your very affectionate friend, and feel for you as if I was really and truly your father.

Believe me to be yours.

### COMPETITIVE SPORTS

When we think of the customs and mannerisms of people round about us, we certainly see a variety of ways in which people conduct themselves. We profess to be "Reformed," which means "changed for the better" but, are we truly "reformed"? "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate" (2 Corinthians 6. 17), is the calling laid upon every one of us who professes to be a Christian.

Competitive sports are a nationwide idol and a time-consuming sin which surely is a tool of the devil. I think you may want to respond with: "Are all sports wrong? What can we do in our leisure time?" Healthful and beneficial games for children and young people are good exercise for the development of mind and body. It is good that parents take time to exercise and have a game with their children. It is also good that young people come together to have an informal, friendly game during a social or family outing. We do not despise physical activity done in our schools which is part of physical education. These things are all good for the well being of our bodies.

Then you say: "What then is wrong with sports?"

Competitive sports are a way Satan draws our attention away from the real reason we are here upon the earth. In the United States of America you have baseball, football, basketball, boxing, etc. In Canada there is hockey, football, curling, etc. and in Latin America, soccer. These sports begin on a small scale with groups of youth just playing; soon teams need to be formed and competition begins. As they continue, they need uniforms, certain shoes, caps, gear to protect their bodies while playing and yes, we must also form leagues to make this interesting. "No, Mum and Dad, we will not make ourselves too busy because we only have a game once a month." "Really!" "Yes, but we do need to practise several nights a week so we can win the games, or we will look bad." Then the call comes: "We need better players and equipment," and the money keeps rolling out. So the youth study the history, and

past or present players of games, and they look up to and esteem them as great people. Ask the same people basic questions regarding Scripture, and there is no answer.

Let's go together to a professional game: watch and listen to what takes place. Thousands of people are driving to the game, there are traffic jams, but, of course, there are no complaints and the people pay a large sum to enter and wait in line, be it cold or hot weather. Thousands upon thousands of people are in the stands, they seem so interested and filled with enjoyment; the teams come on the playing field and the roar of the people is ferocious. Minds are occupied days and hours before the game and so much concern is given as to what team will win. Betting takes place, the game begins, excitement is great, the teams begin to play as if their lives depend upon it; they finally score and the crowd becomes hysterical, the people act as if they have lost their minds. Listen to the language; it is evil. God's name is taken in vain, people curse the team that is losing, the players are idolised and God is dishonoured.

Let us take a look at professional, competitive sports:

**Salaries:** Why must professional players make millions of dollars, when Presidents and Prime Ministers are paid so much less and their responsibility is enormous? The care of the people of the land lies upon them; sports last only an evening.

**Competition:** Competition in sports has one sole purpose which is to glorify man, not God. Competing to out-do one another is directly opposed to the Bible: "... in honour preferring one another" (Romans 12. 10). Have a game with your children, parents, but do not bring them to these places of evil.

**Publicity:** What gets more publicity today than sports? What event draws bigger crowds than the worshipping of these players, which is idolatry? "Flee idolatry"! What receives more free space in local newspapers than sports and especially on Monday after they desecrated the Lord's Day in playing?

Only certain good players are qualified to play: they get the

praises, cheers, are publicised and idolised. "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate" (Romans 12. 16).

Physical power and strength is shown: when a man displays his body in such a way before an audience, it has a demoralising effect. There are emotional stirrings in sports events, immorality and other sensual sins which result in the lust of the flesh.

What does history teach us of competitive sports? The Roman Empire was one of the strongest and richest ever recorded in history. It did not fall because of its strength, but because of its wickedness. The people lived an extravagant life, obsessed with sports. Is this not what is happening today: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6. 7).

Young people, listen to what I say to you. If we give our time and energy for the fever of sports, our desire for God and His Word will become less. Sports-minded people often become less church-minded. We need to be a praying church and school, not a playing church and school.

My dear young friends, I still have a few comments to share with you. Tens of thousands attend sports events and maybe a few hundred meet in God's house to hear His Word. Crowds wait in line to attend a sports event, but complain if a sermon is ten minutes too long. Great numbers of people are more interested in the outcome of a sports event than the outcome of their soul for eternity. How sad!

Young people: have you forgotten that you have a soul for eternity? Do you not remember you were taught that if your soul is lost, all is lost for a never-ending eternity? Let not Satan drag you into the places of evil, but seek the Lord who can give you a peace that passes all understanding. "Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2. 11). Seek the greatest warrior, the King of Zion who bruised the head of Satan. His Word calls: "My son [daughter], give me thine heart." (*May God give you such grace. Ed.*)

*P. Bazen (Insight Magazine) Adapted*

### A SHEEP IN TROUBLE

Australia is one of the most important parts of the world for sheep rearing. Wherever sheep are reared, there are always dangers for them, and in Australia a form of wild dog, a dingo, can attack and kill sheep for food.

One day, a sheep farmer was riding through his sheep ranch checking his fences, when he heard the bleating of a sheep. He stopped his horse and listened, and when he heard the bleat again, he could soon tell where it was coming from. A sheep had fallen down a large hole and was stranded. The farmer knew that unless he did something soon the sheep would die, and even though it was not his own sheep he didn't think twice about it; it must be helped!

The hole was a deep one and too big to jump into, and anyway it was too far down for him to lift it out. So what was he to do? He fetched a shovel that he had been using whilst he was checking his fences, and he carefully began to fill the hole with soil, trying at the same time not to frighten the sheep any more. As he put more and more soil into the hole, so the sheep kept moving up until it was high enough to be hauled out. With a thankful bleat it ran off to join the rest of the flock.

This true story reminds us of the Good Samaritan who, unlike the priest and the Levite who passed by on the other side, went to the aid of the poor Jewish man who had fallen among thieves and was left half dead.

God's Word tells His children that they are to do good to all men, even if they have wrongfully treated us, but especially those who are the Lord's people. When Saul of Tarsus persecuted the people of God, the Lord Jesus took it so personally as if it was He that was being persecuted. Likewise, when we do good to the Lord's people then He looks upon as if it were being done to Him. *Adapted*

---

Three things cannot be recalled: a spent arrow, a spoken word, and a lost opportunity.

## DIFFICULT QUESTIONS (II)

### The Kingdom of Heaven

The Kingdom of Heaven is not heaven itself, but is the Gospel dispensation on earth. Several Scriptures illustrate this: 1. Matthew 11. 11: "... there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Clearly from other Scriptures we know that John the Baptist was a child of God. But he died before Christ suffered, died and rose again. No doubt, like the patriarchs, he "died in faith, not having received the promises," (that is, their fulfilment) Hebrews 11. 13, but he was not as favoured as we are to live after the fulfilment of the promises.

2. Matthew 16. 19: "... I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." The Roman Catholics erroneously teach that Peter stands at the gate of heaven admitting some and turning away others. Peter and the other apostles were given the keys of the gospel dispensation, to unlock and bring forth Christ and the types and shadows of the Old Testament. To a lesser extent, ministers of the gospel are also given these keys.

"The New is in the Old concealed; The Old is in the New revealed."

3. Many parables commence with the expression: "The kingdom of heaven": for example, in Matthew 13. But there will be no tares in heaven, no bad to be cast away, for "there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth ... or maketh a lie."

*R.C.T. Warboys*

---

QUESTION: Did God leave all mankind to perish in that estate of sin and misery?

ANSWER: No; God, having out of His own good pleasure from eternity elected some of them to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace to deliver them out of that estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into a state of salvation by a Redeemer.

*(Romans 3. 21-25 & 9. 6-24; Ephesians 1. 4-7;*

*1 Thessalonians 5. 9; 2 Thessalonians 2. 13; 1 Peter 1. 2)*

### GENESIS 1

When a man builds a house, he makes sure that he has a good and sure foundation. In some parts of the country there is what is called subsidence: that is, the earth moves and the foundation slips and, of course, large cracks appear in the house. Just recently a picture was shown of a house built on the edge of a cliff which was slipping into the sea. Of course, the parable of the man who built his house upon the sand, is a telling example of this.

Now Genesis 1 is like the foundation of a house. All of the rest of the Bible truths are built on this chapter. If it be wrong, then so is the rest of the Bible. But we are told by God that it is inspired by the Holy Spirit, as is the rest of the Bible. Those who have felt the power of the Holy Spirit in their hearts will know how convincing the Word of God is of the truth. It is supported by an unmoveable truth. That is, that God cannot lie. In our generation there are many people, probably most of the people we have to do with, who do not believe Genesis 1. With some it is like a parable, with others a theory, and other people think it is just a legend or a myth handed down through the ages.

As soon as men deny the early chapters of Genesis, we find they question whether they have a soul, although we are plainly told that God breathed into Adam and he became a living soul. Then, of course, they wrongly deduce that if we have no soul, then we have no eternity to face either. Also, the two pillars of a stable society, marriage and the Sabbath day (now the Lord's Day), are instituted in Genesis. As soon as Genesis 1 is denied, then these are counted as optional best.

We see the terrible effect of this unbelief in our society. Satan never shot a more powerful arrow than the one: "Hath God said?" This corrupt seed of unbelief has brought untold misery into this world.

Sadly, many who profess to be Christians are aiding and abetting this atheism by pandering to unreliable translations of the Holy Scriptures, so that no-one according to them can say



with a certainty: "This is truth." That is what Pilate said: "What is truth?" The crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ followed that atheism! This is the same spirit abroad in our day.

Young friends, it is most important that we are kept faithful to the truth. The well worn, yet not worn out, pages of the Authorised Version of the Holy Scriptures are the safest guide we have in our time as to what God's truth is. May God speak to you in such a way through His Word that you have the witness in your own heart that: "That is truth." Then we will avoid the profane and vain babblings that Paul warned Timothy against, and the opposition of science, falsely so called.

*Editor*

---

### EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from BENJAMIN and THOMAS HICKMAN; JOSEPH LOCKEY; CALEB OUDSHOORN; HARRY TARBIN; HENRY TOWNSEND.*

### WATCH!

*Below we have the texts that Naomi and Robert Pocock have sent in. Well done!*

WORDS: "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" James 3. 5.

ACTIONS: "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." Luke 6. 31.

THOUGHTS: "... Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on." Luke 12. 22.

COMPANIONS: "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Proverbs 13. 20.

HABITS: "The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat." Proverbs 13. 4.

**“IN THE SHADOW OF THY WINGS” (I)**

“Wim! Wim, you must get out of here! At one o’clock they are going to start bombing the city! I just met a soldier, who said that we must get out as quickly as possible!” Uncle Jacob stands in the room, panting. “I came straight here when I heard it. It really is war now you know! Get ready quickly. I am off!”

Uncle Jacob has disappeared so quickly that it is almost as if he had never been, as though it was just a dream – bombs on the city? War? It had seemed so distant....

Little Janna stands in her playpen and surveys the room with big eyes. She is too small to understand it all, but she realises that something is brewing. Hendrik and Pieter are sitting on the sofa quietly. Helena stands, duster in hand, and looks enquiringly at her father. But he says nothing. He stands rooted to the floor. It is very quiet in the room. Mother comes out of the kitchen and walks slowly to her chair. With a pained face she sits down. Then her quiet voice is heard: “We are staying here. It is written in the Bible: ‘For my soul trusteth in Thee: yea, in the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.’”

Father says nothing. He just nods and walks to the window and stares outside.

A strange monotonous sound is heard in the distance. It is a frightening noise, even when heard through closed windows. Then all of a sudden ... a whistling sound, a loud explosion. The ground trembles ... “It is the chemist,” cries Father. “A bomb has hit the chemist’s shop over the road. Oh, my boys, we really must go now! The next one may fall on our house! Hendrik, Pieter, get the bicycle from the back garden and take Mother to the air raid shelter. Helena, you take Janna and come along with me!”

Helena looks in alarm from her father to her mother. Mother had said, after all....

“Helena, come, we must go!”

Helena picks up Janna and looks at her mother, who now nods assent: "Go, Helena, go."

It has been so quiet in the room, and now it is as full of turmoil and agitation. Hendrik and Pieter are helping Mother, who cannot walk so well. Carefully they bring her outside and sit her on the bicycle. Hendrik holds the machine steady and Pieter walks alongside his mother to support her.

Helena takes Janna with a sigh and follows her father. Once outside she sees that they are not the only ones who are fleeing from their home. There are many more on their way to the shelter.

With a pounding heart Helena crosses the road with Janna. The drone of aeroplanes still fills the air, and people are still screaming in the street. The continuous wail of the air raid sirens makes everything even more threatening....

It is awful in the shelter: much too small and far too full. People are packed in close together. Anxiety and despair can be seen in their faces. Helena notices their neighbour, who is holding his arm comfortingly about his sobbing little daughter. Next to her sits a boy, whom she has more than once seen cycling. She looks ahead in silence. She knows a few people by sight, but most of them she has never seen before. She observes the lady opposite her. She is screaming loudly, but Helena cannot understand what she is saying. Janna looks at her anxiously and her little mouth begins to quiver. She is not at all happy about all those strange people and all that noise! Helena hugs Janna tightly. She should really be comforting her sister, but she herself finds it frightening here, too. She closes her eyes briefly. Her heart is full of questions. Did not mother say that they must stay at home, that they should wait until everything was over? And now look where they are! No, she cannot understand it at all!

She looks in amazement at some men, who have tied the big lids of wash boilers to their chests and backs – a sort of homemade armour....

A wave of anxiety pervades the shelter when another loud explosion is heard. People exchange glances. Whose house will now be hit?

Helena has no idea how long she has been in the shelter. When she comes out she blinks, relieved to be in the fresh air once more. And yet – the smell of burning is becoming more and more persistent. The smoke clouds are getting thicker. No, this is no longer her old, reliable city....

Father, who had promptly gone to look at their house, is back already. “Well now children, we cannot go back home. We are not even allowed into the street. I have been told that we must go to the Kralingse Plas. Give Janna to me.” Father takes Janna from Helena. “She is much too heavy for you to carry such a distance. And boys, you will look after Mother again, won’t you?”

So off they go. They walk together with a long line of other people, all driven out from hearth and home. Many have no idea where they have to go. Helena can see that the doors to many houses stand wide open as they pass – if any debris should start falling, you can quickly run indoors....

*(To be concluded)*

*Translated from the Dutch by M. Banfield*

---

## BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

### PRACTICAL GODLINESS

#### **Dress (II)**

The Word of God clearly teaches us that we are to make a clear distinction between men and women, not only with dress but also with hair. A Christian woman is to have her hair long. A Christian man is to have his hair short. When we go to the House of God a woman is to have her head covered, a man is to have his head uncovered. If these things were not important, the Lord would not have written to us in His Word to instruct us in this way. Who are we to choose the parts of the Word of God that we want, and ignore the parts that we do not like?

The Christian believer is called by Almighty God to separate from the world and its practices: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Corinthians 6. 17-18). What a sacred promise is attached to this exhortation.

Please turn to 1 Corinthians 11. 1-15, to read the Apostle Paul's teaching on the subject of head covering in God's House. Note the first and most important thing in following these things; we are following Christ. Note the clear distinction between men and women. My dear young friends, we lovingly exhort you to forsake worldly sinful practices and keep close to God's own precious Word.

We are told today that we have been liberated from these things, therefore we are free to do as we like: we do not need this straight jacket. The true believer declares with the sweet Psalmist of Israel: "Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them. The entrance of Thy Words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple. I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for Thy commandments. Look Thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as Thou usest to do unto those that love Thy name. Order my steps in Thy Word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me" (Psalm 119. 129-133).

Dress for the House of God. Firstly, remember the Scriptures we have just referred to concerning a head covering for a woman in God's House. Then we must remember who it is we come to worship; the eternal God. "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him" (Psalm 89. 7). "He sent redemption unto His people: He hath commanded His covenant for ever: holy and reverend is His name" (Psalm 111. 9). *(This is the only place in Scripture that we have the word, "reverend" and it refers to Almighty God, therefore our*

*ministers do not use the title "Reverend."*) "Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh Thine House, O LORD, for ever" (Psalm 93. 5). "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isaiah 57:15).

If we were invited to Buckingham Palace for an audience with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth; firstly, we would count it a great honour; secondly, we would dress appropriately. We would not wear casual clothes. If we honour an earthly monarch in this way how much more should we honour the King of kings and Lord of lords. We should dress in our best clothes for the House of God; we should never dress casually with an open neck shirt or no jacket. Equally, it should not be a fashion parade with fancy hats and expensive clothing. "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (1 Timothy 2. 9-10).

My dear young friends, dress soberly and smart for the House of God, having due thought of who it is you profess to be meeting with.

We are not to honour the rich more than the poor in the House of God – see James 2. 1-9. "... If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors."

J.R. Rutt

---

### BIBLE QUESTIONS

*This month the questions are about THE GOSPEL AS THE RULE OF LIFE FOR A CHRISTIAN. 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.*

### BIBLE QUESTIONS

1. What "new commandment" did Jesus give to His disciples? (John 13. 34)
2. What rule should govern all our behaviour toward others? (Luke 6. 31)
3. What does the Gospel say about revenge? (Romans 12. 19)
4. If a friend should do something wrong, how should we act? (Galatians 6. 1)
5. What should be the motive for all we do? (1 Corinthians 10. 31)
6. Of which six things does the Apostle Paul say: "Let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints"? (Ephesians 5)
7. Give three words which describe how we should live. (Titus 2)
8. How should a minister (the "servant of the Lord") live? (2 Timothy 2)
9. Why should Christians be kind, tender-hearted, and forgiving? (Ephesians 4)
10. How many times can you find where the Bible tells us not to return evil for evil? What should we do instead?

### ANSWERS TO APRIL QUESTIONS

1. Temptation.
2. A pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.
3. God's light and His truth.
4. "The Rock that is higher than I."
5. To make darkness light before them and crooked things straight.
6. "To humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments, or no." (Deuteronomy 8. 2)
7. Abraham's servant. (Genesis 24. 27)
8. Into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. (Luke 4. 1,2; Matthew 4. 1)
9. "Beside the still waters." "In the paths of righteousness." (Psalm 23. 2, 3)
10. Cyrus. (Isaiah 45. 1, 13)

*Contributed*

**TRUST IN GOD**

*"Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust."*

*Psalm 40. 4.*

Who in the Lord confide  
Have never cause to fear:  
For God is ever by their side,  
To comfort and to cheer.

What profit canst thou gain  
By self-consuming grief?  
Thy sighs and tears will all be vain –  
They cannot bring relief.

Put thou in God thy trust,  
And patiently be still:  
The Lord Himself protects the just,  
But sovereign is His will.

We may approach His throne  
With cares and griefs distressed:  
But the time must be His own  
To answer our request.

God heareth every cry  
In every land and clime;  
He never missed a tear or sigh,  
Then let us wait His time.

Oh! Let us all be still,  
And place in Him our trust:  
And when He works His sovereign will,  
Then shall we own it just.

*Martin Luther*

---

In prayer, it is better to have a heart without words, than words without a heart.



# *The Friendly Companion*



“Consider the ravens: ... God feedeth them.”  
(Luke 12. 24)

---

*June 2007*

Editor: Mr. G.D. Buss, "Bethany", 7 Laines Head, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 1PH.

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: [gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk)

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.

Volume 133

June 2007

## CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	123
Our Front Cover Picture	124
Mercy	125
For The Very Little Ones: A Visitor At Night	126
Colouring Text: John 3. 7.	127
Bible Lessons: Sermon On The Mount – Part Two	128
Letters To A Young Girl: Letter 6	130
"And"	131
Some New Testament Words And Their Meaning	132
Bible Places	133
The Supreme Sacrifice	134
Editor's Postbag	134
"In The Shadow Of Thy Wings" (Conclusion)	135
Difficult Questions (III): The Unjust Steward	138
Bible Study For The Older Ones:	
Practical Godliness: Friends	140
Bible Questions: The Faith Of Abraham	143
Poetry: An Evening Prayer	144

### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

I wonder how many of you pray to God for help in your daily lives? None is too young to pray. The Bible tells us of more than one young child who feared God. All God-fearing children will pray to Him for help. Such young people as Abijah and Samuel, for example, were amongst those who began to pray early in their lives. In Abijah, we are told, there was some good thing in his heart toward the Lord God of Israel. That good thing went up from his heart God-ward, no doubt in prayer. How did Abijah come by this good thing? His father was the ungodly Jeroboam and his mother was no less evil, so they would not have taught him to fear God. The Word of God also seems to suggest that no one else in his family feared God either. So this good thing must have come from God Himself. He taught this young boy his need, and he taught him, no doubt, to look up to Him for help.

Many of us have had God-fearing parents who taught us a prayer to say at the end of each day. For many of us that was all it was, "saying our prayers." But then there came a day when it was different. Our heart went with the words, and more than that, desires were added which we had not learned from our parents. We then began to pray in our prayers. This was exactly the change Saul of Tarsus knew. No man had "said his prayers" more than he had in his life as a Pharisee. But now it was different. Prayer was not just a routine in which he thought he pleased God, but now he wanted something. He began to ask for himself those things he felt to need. He needed forgiveness for all his sins. He now needed the very Jesus, God's Son, whom he had hated so much. How wonderful that this same Jesus did not turn him away as being too bad! Saul, who became Paul, said later: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

May we learn from the words of the children's hymn:

"I often say my prayers,  
But do I ever pray?  
And do the wishes of my heart  
Go with the words I say?

I may as well kneel down  
And worship gods of stone  
As offer to the living God  
A prayer of words alone.

For words without the heart  
The Lord will never hear:  
Nor will He to those lips attend  
Whose heart is not sincere.

Lord teach me what I need,  
And teach me how to pray:  
Nor let me ask Thee for Thy grace  
Not feeling what I say."

With every best wish from your sincere friend and Editor.

---

### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The magnificent bird shown on our front cover this month is a raven. This picture was taken by one of our young readers at the Tower of London where a colony of ravens has lived for centuries. In the wild, these impressive birds are to be found in upland areas well away from human habitation. They live on dead animals known as carrion. That was why the raven did not return to Noah in Genesis 8, when it was loosed from the ark. It could feed on the carrion that was, no doubt, floating on the flood waters as they receded. Because it feeds on carrion, it was considered an unclean bird in the Old Testament, not to be eaten nor offered as a sacrifice.

The Bible has quite a lot more to say about ravens. The Lord Jesus exhorted His disciples to consider the ravens which do not sow, nor reap, nor store up their food, yet they are fed by God. In the Book of Job (38. 41), God asked Job who feeds the young ravens when they cry. Apparently, it is quite

common for young ravens to be left very young to fend for themselves, but their Creator sees that they do not starve. If God is so kind to His dumb creatures, how much more ready He is, as the Heavenly Father, to provide all that His children need both for their life here below and more importantly for their souls. "How much more are ye better than the fowls?" (Luke 12. 24)

Very wonderfully, God sent the ravens with bread and flesh to Elijah all the while he lived by the brook Cherith. This was against their natural instinct, but God, who holds all nature in His hand, constrained them to do His bidding.

But we also read of a very sad verse to disobedient children. "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it" (Proverbs 30. 17). May all young readers remember this solemn warning. God has a right to deal with those who rebel against Him in not obeying His command to honour father and mother. It reminds us that even children are accountable to God for their actions and need forgiveness of sins.

---

### MERCY

There was once an old gentleman in Scotland who was very ill. His lawyer came to see him, and after doing a little business was just going to leave when the old gentleman said: "Have you not got a word for a poor old sinner?" The lawyer was very surprised, for his friend was thought much of as a real, godly Christian. He was quite taken aback, but it suddenly came to him what to say, and he simply said: 'The Lord delighteth in mercy,' and he left.

Next day the lawyer had a letter from the daughter saying that her father had passed away, and how happy he was; and that those few words from Micah 7. 18 that had been quoted, came to him with such power and sweetness and blessing.

*Selected*

**FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES****A VISITOR AT NIGHT**

Nicodemus, an important man among the Jews, came secretly to Jesus at night. He had seen or heard of the miracles of Jesus and wanted to know more about Him. Surely, he thought, He must be a “*teacher come from God*” to do these great miracles.

Jesus replied in a way that amazed Nicodemus: “*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*” Must he be born a second time as a little baby? No. Jesus said that one must be “*born of the Spirit*” to enter heaven. A new heart must be given from above.

Jesus compared this work of the Spirit to the wind blowing. It cannot be seen where the wind comes from or goes to, but the sound is heard and the breeze felt. In the same secret way, a new heart is given by the Holy Spirit of God. Where this new birth has taken place, there is a change felt in the heart.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. When did Nicodemus come to Jesus?
2. What must be given from above?
3. What did Jesus compare the work of the Spirit to?  
(one word)

*Send your answers to the Editor. (See page 122 for the address.) Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.*

**ANSWERS TO MAY QUESTIONS**

1. In the wilderness.
2. If.
3. It is written.

*Contributed*

“...Ye  
must  
be born  
again.”  
John 3. 7.

## BIBLE LESSONS

**SERMON ON THE MOUNT – PART TWO**

As Jesus continued the Sermon on the Mount, He told the people how they ought to live. He also told them how they were to treat their enemies. Were they to treat their enemies in the same way their enemies had treated them? No, indeed not. They were told to love them, to do good unto them, and to pray for them. No one is able to do this without the help of God.

Then He told them how they were to pray. They must not pray so as to attract the notice of men, as the Pharisees did. Instead, they were to go into their houses and pray to God in secret. They were not to use many words or repetitions to make their prayers long, thinking they would be heard because of their long prayers.

Jesus knew how often His people feel unable to pray aright. He taught the proper manner or pattern of prayer, saying: *“Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”* We now call this prayer, the Lord’s Prayer.

Jesus also said: *“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”* What encouraging words to praying souls! To those who ask, seek, and knock, the Lord promises: **“IT SHALL BE GIVEN – YE SHALL FIND – IT SHALL BE OPENED.”**

What are they to ask and seek for? The Lord does not leave them to guess what it is. No, He tells them plainly: *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”* Such needful things as food, clothing, and homes, would all be given to those that seek His kingdom first. What a beautiful way Jesus sums up this point: *“... for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.”*



How faithful Jesus was to the souls of the people! He warned them that there were only two ways: the broad way and the narrow way: "... *for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*" Later, Jesus would say unto His disciples: "I AM THE WAY." So, the narrow way is Jesus only.

As He neared the end of His sermon, Jesus spoke of two types of hearers into which the people were divided: those that heard His words and obeyed them, and those that heard but did not obey.

Those that obeyed were like a WISE man who built his house upon a rock. He must work hard and dig down to the rock before he began to build. Those that did not obey or believe, were compared to a FOOLISH man who built his house upon the sand. Not taking the trouble to dig down, he quickly built his house. However, it did not have a firm foundation.

When the houses were finished, no one could see any difference; but the Lord revealed the solemn difference. When "*the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew,*" they beat upon each house. The house of the wise man stood firm, because it was founded upon a rock. Sadly, the house of the foolish man fell and was swept away.

*You can read about this in Matthew chapters 5, 6, and 7.*

#### QUESTIONS:

1. Where were they to pray to God in secret?
2. What did Jesus say they were to seek first? (seven words)
3. Who is the narrow way?
4. Upon what did the wise man build his house?
5. Upon what did the foolish man build his house?

*Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on page 122). Please mark the envelope: ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.*

G.L. TenBroeke

**ANSWERS TO MAY QUESTIONS**

1. The Sermon on the Mount.
  2. Blessed.
  3. The pardon of their sins.
  4. Righteousness.
  5. Jesus' sake.
- 

**LETTERS TO A YOUNG GIRL***John Newton's Letters to Betsy***Letter 6**

January 10, 1781

My dear Child,

I thank you for your letter of yesterday. It encourages me to hope that the gracious Saviour is dealing with you.

I doubt not but you write what you think and feel, yet there is more meaning in your expression than either you or I can fully comprehend. You are, as you say, a sinner: a young sinner, and yet a great sinner. It is not your case alone; we are all born in sin; but to be sensible that you are a sinner is a mercy afforded but to few children at your age. May the Lord keep the persuasion alive in your heart.

But the word "sinner" includes so much that a whole long life will hardly suffice to give you a full sense of it. Thus much I hope you know already, that a sinner needs a Saviour; and that Jesus is the Saviour of all sinners that seek Him. I commend you to Him: if He has taught you a little, He will teach you more. Put yourself simply into His hand, and wait patiently His time. He works powerfully, but for the most part gently and gradually. You know the sun does not break out upon us all at once in the dark night; there is first a glimmering dawn in the sky, which gives us notice that it is coming, and prepares us for its appearance. By degrees that faint light grows brighter; we see clearer and farther; it becomes broad day, and after that the sun rises.

Your part is to pray to Him, to hear His Word, and to listen with attention when you hear it preached. I trust you will find your light increases, and your difficulties abate.

I am, my dear child,

Your affectionate father.

**“AND”**

I was directed to this one simple word in reading a magazine called “The Bible League Quarterly”: an article written by one of our dear ministers, speaking of the beauties and wonders of God’s Word. He made a very brief reference to Genesis chapter 24, pointing out that the chapter has 67 verses, and 57 of them begin with this little word: “And.” I have never noticed that! Have *you*? So, *that* made me think, and it also made me pray. And it has led me, I trust, to a spiritual meditation on this little word: “And.”

What does the little word really mean? What does it do? It is a copulative word that joins words and sentences together. As I tried to pray over this little word, I saw that it is just like a link in a chain – “And.” It leads from, and joins together, what has gone before and what follows on.

Now, let us look at the “And” of everybody in our chapels. Let me explain. There are little babies. Then, if all goes well, and their lives are spared, we think of another “And” – “And” school, Infant School; “And” – Senior School; – “And.” Then the next “And” may be college or further instruction. The next “And” is that first day at work. The next “And” may be a day of marriage. The next “And” may be a day of promotion at work, and then the next “And” may be, as we go on, linking the chain together, the day of retirement from work. What is the next “And” after that? Have you thought about it? What *is* the next “And”? It is the end, is it not? It is *death*.

Then there is another “And” after that, is there not? The Judgment and then Eternity! Where will that never-ending eternity be spent? These links! “And”!

Are all these “Ands” without God? Or as you look back, and as you look forward, in faith and in the fear of God, can you truly say: “Yes, God is with me. God is helping me. I seek God to direct all my steps”? – “And”!

*Slightly adapted. C.A. Wood*

---

Honesty is the best policy.

**SOME NEW TESTAMENT WORDS AND THEIR MEANING**

Much of the beauty and instruction of the Scriptures may be lost by not fully understanding the meaning of all the words you read. Many of the words in our Bible are no longer in current use; and others are now used in a somewhat different sense from that originally intended. A good dictionary, when properly used, is by no means an unprofitable book; and it is hoped that the following definitions of some important words may be made really helpful.

*Adopt, adoption.* Take a person into a relationship he did not previously occupy.

*Atone, atonement.* Make satisfaction for an offender.

AT + ONE = set at one; unite.

*Baptise.* Comes from Greek, baptizo, to bathe: bapto, to dip.

*Concupiscence.* Desire after worldly things and lusts.

*Elect, election.* Chosen out, chosen by God.

*Goodwill.* Kindly feeling. Favour.

*Grace.* Free favour. Unmerited favour of God.

*Intercede, intercession.* Plead with one person on behalf of another. Interpose.

*Justify, justification.* Declare a person free from penalty of sin on ground of Christ's righteousness.

*Lasciviousness.* Wantonness. Lustfulness.

*Mediate, mediator.* Form connecting link between. Intervene between two persons for purpose of reconciling them.

*Ordinance.* Authoritative direction or decree.

*Predestinate.* Determine beforehand.

*Predestination.* God's appointment from eternity of some of mankind to salvation and eternal life.

*Propitiate.* Appease offended person.

*Propitiation.* Appeasement. Atonement.

*Ransom.* Liberation of prisoner in consideration of value paid for release.

*Redeem.* Buy back. Purchase the freedom of another. Save by ransom.

*Redemption.* Deliverance from sin and damnation wrought

by Christ's atonement.

*Remission.* Forgiving of sins. Remitting of debt or penalty.

*Sanctify, Sanctification.* Set apart as holy. Purify or free from sin.

*Vicarious.* Done for another. From vicaire, deputy.

V.G.W.

### BIBLE PLACES

A is for ANTIOCH, where Christians had their name.

B is for BETHLEHEM, from whence the Saviour came.

C is for CALVARY, where, for sin, Jesus died:

D the plain of DURA, where loud a herald cried.

E is for EDEN, where Eve's obedience failed.

F is for FAIR HAVENS, where Paul's ship once sailed.

G is for GETHSEMANE, where Jesus was betrayed.

H is for HEBRON, where David, king was made.

I is for ICONIUM, where Paul preached the Word.

J is for JERUSALEM, the city of the LORD.

K is for KIRJATH-ARBA, where Isaac's mother died.

L is for LEBANON, whence cedars were supplied.

M is for MAMRE, where Abram pitched his tent.

N is for NAZARETH, where Christ's youth was spent.

O is for OPHIR, from whence much gold was brought.

P is for PHILIPPI, where Paul and Silas taught.

For Q: if you seek a place, not one can be found.

R is for RED SEA, where Pharaoh's host was drowned.

S is for SAMARIA, where Philip taught them all.

T is for TARSUS, the city of St. Paul.

U is for the land of UZ, where patient Job once dwelt.

With V beginning *names* we find, but *places* none so spelt.

W: there is no place, but WILDERNESS begins

Where thousands wandered many years, then perished for their sins.

For X and for Y we find no city, place or town

But X may remind you – no cross, we have no crown.

Z is for Mount ZION where Christ the Lord will reign

From sea to sea most gloriously, when He comes again.

*Contributed*

### THE SUPREME SACRIFICE

If you look at the War Memorials in our towns and villages you will often see the words which say that the people whose names are recorded on the memorial, made *the supreme sacrifice*. What the words mean is that these brave people laid down their lives that others might have the freedom which we enjoy.

Many years ago, long before the time of tanks and missiles, a war was being fought in Russia and the battle raged around one city in particular which the enemy found great difficulty in taking. Many soldiers of this city had been slain outside the walls, but as yet no inroad could be made within the gates. The enemies decided to use a cruel stratagem. (Sadly war is very cruel in every way, even in just conflicts.) They dressed themselves in the uniforms of those whom they had killed, and marched on the city, forcing one man whom they had spared to beat the drum before them in such a way as to suggest friendship. This the poor man did, but when he got to the gate of the city he suddenly changed the tune to one which was well-known as a warning. Just in time the men of the city shut the gates and kept the enemy at bay and the city was saved. The poor drummer however was hewn to death by the angry men who had been thwarted by his brave action. Here was a man who made the supreme sacrifice.

Brave as this man was, it is but small in comparison to that Sacrifice made by the Lord Jesus Christ, who on the cross at Calvary, laid down His life for His friends, whilst many of them were yet enemies to Him. The sacrifice of the drummer boy spared the lives of the citizens for a season, but that of Christ saves the souls of His children to all eternity. Was ever love like this?"

*Editor*

---

### EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from AMY TOWNSEND and BETHANY WILTSHIRE.*

**“IN THE SHADOW OF THY WINGS” (Conclusion)**

At the Kralingse Plas there is enormous activity. Hundreds of people have gathered here. Helena can scarcely believe her eyes, there is so much to see. Many have tried to bring some belongings with them. She sees some with fully loaded handcarts. Over there is someone with a pram full of stuff ... Helena even sees someone sitting on an armchair, which makes her think of her own home. What will be left of that? She has brought nothing away – she is even wearing her oldest dress.

All at once a loud voice cries: “Take cover!” Helena drops down as quickly as she can. She lies flat on the ground with her hands over her head. In the distance there is a drone ... More ‘planes are coming! Helena’s heart palpitates. What is going to happen? Are they going to drop bombs here? Is there nowhere safe? She hears the ‘planes get nearer. She looks about carefully for her father. Happily he is next to her with Janna under him. In front lie Pieter and Hendrik with Mother between them. She sees people all around her. Great and small, young and old, all lie flat on the ground, waiting to know what will happen....

There is a sigh of great relief when it appears that the ‘planes are just flying over. Helena gets up slowly and brushes the grass from her dress. She looks about. Close by are some soldiers with sombre faces. What must they be thinking? Perhaps for them, too, it is the first time they have experienced such things. This then is war ... and what can they do? Who can be a match for this? Who can hold back the bombs?

Helena and her family walk on a little further. At the end of Kralingse Plas there is a long queue. Helena observes that soldiers are distributing water. Only then does she realise how thirsty she is. She has had no thought of thirst all this time. No, there were so many other things to think about! She joins the queue. Meanwhile she looks about and listens to tales people have to tell. She hears that the whole city is ablaze, that

it is life-threatening to go back. Houses could collapse. Fire can sometimes rush through the streets ... She sees people pointing. She follows with her eyes and can see great grey clouds hanging over the city.

What now? What are they to do? They must find somewhere to go and sleep tonight, surely? "Pa," says Hendrik, "can't we go to Uncle Pieter and Aunt Geertje's? Perhaps they can find us a place?" "Yes, my boy," says Father, "that is a good idea. Come along, not much further to go!"

They walk the length of the Kralingseweg and at the end stands Uncle Pieter's and Aunt Geertje's house. They are not a bit surprised to see the whole family at the door. "I heard the 'planes, too," says Uncle Pieter, "but happily nothing has happened here. Come along in quickly!"

It is now evening. Everything is dark and quiet. Helena strains her eyes in the darkness. What a lot has happened today! It is strange to think that this morning she was still at home.

This morning she was about with a duster in her hand. And now....

She still cannot understand it properly. Why did Mother say this morning that they must stay at home? And why has all this happened to them today? She tries to settle down. Ouch, the ground is a bit hard, and how tightly they are packed together! But, of course, there was no more room indoors and now they are all together in the chicken house. Whoever would have thought that they would be sleeping in a chicken shed? It was a good thing that Uncle Pieter had only just given it a good clean.

Helena smiles as she thinks of what Pieter had said: "Now we are really going to roost like the chickens!" Oh, its not exactly comfortable, but they are thankful if they can sleep a little! And here at least they are safe. Next morning they are all awake early, at least insofar as any of them were able to sleep. Helena can see her father standing at the end of the garden.



He is sunk in thought, looking towards the city. Then she realises what holds his attention – the sky above the city is blood red! The place is still like an inferno.

Helena sees her father's face. How tired he looks! He has almost certainly not slept the whole night long. All at once he turns. "I am going into the city to see what has happened to our house."

Mother looks anxious. "Do be careful, it is very dangerous there."

The day is almost over before Father gets back. His face shows great concern. "My dear, there is nothing left of our home. Everything is burned! Wait, just one thing I have found." Father feels in his trouser pocket. "Here, look. This was under the window where the organ was." He hands a piece of paper to Mother. Helena looks over her shoulder. It is a page from the Psalm book which stood on the organ. Helena sees that it is Psalm 25.

Mother looks at the page in silence. Then she looks up with tears in her eyes. "Here it is:

‘Lord O make Thy ways unto me  
Through Thy Word and Spirit known.’

The Lord's way is often so different from ours. Yesterday, we were at home. Now we are here, but we are still alive. The Lord has spared us."

Helena looks enquiringly at her mother. "Mother, why did you say yesterday that we had to stay at home? Now our house is not there. We had to leave, surely, or we should have all perished?"

Mother pauses, and then replies: "Yes, Helena, you are quite right. I thought, too, that it would be a different outcome. Yet it is true you are only safe under the shadow of His wings. But, you know, Helena, that applies not only in our house. It must be everywhere, it must be always."

*Translated from the Dutch by M. Banfield*

### DIFFICULT QUESTIONS (III)

#### **The Unjust Steward**

In the parable of the unjust steward, the Lord Jesus commented: (Luke 16. 9) "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." How do we understand this? Was Jesus not commending the unjust steward?

One mark of a person under the teaching of the Holy Spirit is this, that they love the truth and would lose everything rather than deny it. Indeed the Apostle Paul, in writing to the Thessalonians (2 Thessalonians 2. 10) speaks of those who perish "because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." Yet there are many who seem to hold the truth of God's Word, but when the testing time comes, choose any way to escape trouble, rather than suffer for the truth's sake.

In the parable of the unjust steward, the Lord Jesus was talking to His disciples, yet in the hearing of the Pharisees. It is evident that His words were directed against them. They appeared upright before men, but their attachment to God's Word was more through policy than because of any love to it, and they were quite happy to "bend the rules" to suit their own purpose. The words of the Lord Jesus to them in this chapter are most solemn. "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16. 15).

In the parable, the Lord Jesus speaks of a steward placed in a position of trust, who was accused of wasting his master's goods. When called to account, instead of being faithful and honest, he misused his master's property to gain favour in the eyes of those who owed money to his master, so that if he were deposed from his stewardship, they would think well of him and receive him. He sought his own welfare rather than be scrupulously honest. He was astute in looking after himself,

and even his master when he found out, commended him for this, because, as the Lord Jesus said, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

The wisdom of this world, which may be very good as far as it goes, can only judge by the things of time and sense. The Lord's people with the fear of God in their heart seek God's honour and glory before everything else. The wisdom of this world is quite happy to "mould" the Word of God to suit its own end, rather than suffer for being faithful.

Then we have the statement of the Lord Jesus: "And I say unto you, make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." The Lord Jesus often spoke in parables and here He uses a figure of speech (irony) in which a person says the opposite of what he means, to emphasise his point, although it is evident from both the way it is said, and the context in which it is said, what the real meaning is. Micaiah spoke in this way to Ahab (1 Kings 22. 15) and Solomon did too when he said, "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). Perhaps a mother might be telling her children of the dangers of fire and to be careful of it. A little while later she sees her boy idly pick up a box of matches and says: "Go on, strike a match and burn your fingers to see if it hurts!" She does not literally mean what she says, but speaks in this way to emphasise her previous warnings. In the text here, it is as though the Lord Jesus says: "Go on and do like this unjust steward. Act dishonestly like he did, so as to gain the favour of like-minded friends who have no love to the truth, and then they will receive you." Where? Into their houses here? Not that only, but into "everlasting habitations." Just as with Solomon's use of irony, where there is a solemn warning: "God will bring thee into judgment," so

with the way the Lord Jesus spoke here. He leaves us in no doubt what the “everlasting habitations” are of those who love the mammon of this world, those who “will be rich,” for He proceeded to speak another parable about the rich man and Lazarus, and showed the awful end of the rich man: “And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments” (Luke 16. 23).

Following this verse, the Lord Jesus shows plainly that if we are unfaithful in small things, we soon become so in greater things. It is a great mercy to be made honest in the sight of God, and if we are made to feel our sin and confess it before God, that same guileless spirit will be evident in all our dealings with others. We may have to suffer for our faithfulness, but God’s Word will always remain true: “Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed” (1 Samuel 2. 30).

*Contributed*

---

#### *BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES*

#### **PRACTICAL GODLINESS**

#### **Friends**

An old proverb states: “If you want to know what a person’s character is like, then look at his friends.” This is very true. What do your friends say about your character? Are your friends of good character? Are your friends Christian people? The Word of God is very searching on this point. “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?” (James 4. 4-5). If we have a right relationship with God, as Abraham did, this will dictate our friends.

If we have worldly friends we shall be found in worldly places, but if we are friends of God we do not feel comfortable in places such as the public house, the cinema, the theatre, the amusement arcade, the football match. The reasons we feel uncomfortable are because of the bad language and especially

when the Lord's name is taken in vain. If we have the fear of the Lord in our hearts we shall be like fish out of water in worldly company.

The most important question is, am I the friend of God? Abraham was: "But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend" (Isaiah 41. 8). Also in the New Testament the Apostle James speaks of how Abraham was the friend of God, by faith. "And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God" (James 2. 23).

The Lord Jesus Christ is a Friend of poor needy sinners. In the Book of Proverbs He is described as: "... there is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Proverbs 18. 24). He is an unchangeable Friend: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Hebrews 13. 8). In the Song of Solomon chapter 5, the bride of Christ, that is the true believer, gives a most beautiful description of her Beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ, and closes that description as follows: "His mouth is most sweet: yea, He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem" (Song of Solomon 5. 16). The great and most important thing is, do we have a relationship with God? Have we been born again of the Holy Spirit? Is the Lord Jesus Christ our Friend?

Apart from a friendship with Jesus Christ, the closest friendship we can know on this earth is that between a husband and wife. Therefore we need to be of one mind in the things of God. The Scriptures teach us: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3. 3). Also the Holy Spirit instructs us: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man

doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6. 15-20).

We have the beautiful narrative in Scripture of how Isaac and Rebekah were brought together as man and wife in Genesis chapter 24. One verse stands out in that chapter as I write to you and that is verse 58: "And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go." My dear young friends, let us look at this in a spiritual way; Isaac as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. Wilt thou go with this man? Leave everything here below to follow the Lord Jesus. It is not an easy path. "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it." (Matthew 16. 24-25). If by grace we follow the Lord Jesus we have to leave all worldly friends, and the life that we did live we lose, but find a new and living way in Jesus Christ.

We have the exhortation given us by the Holy Spirit: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Corinthians 6. 14-18).

*J.R. Rutt*

**BIBLE QUESTIONS**

*This month the questions are about THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM (or Abram as he was first called), whom you can read about in Genesis 11-25. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to The Editor (see page 122 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.*

1. What was the first promise we read of, that God gave to Abram? (Genesis 12. 2)
2. Why did this promise seem impossible? (Genesis 11. 30; 16. 1)
3. Which two comparisons did God use in describing the number of Abram's children (seed)? (Genesis 13. 16; 15. 5)
4. How long did Abram have to wait before God began to fulfil His promise in giving him a son, Isaac? (Genesis 12. 4; 21. 5)
5. What did both Abraham (Genesis 17. 17) and Sarah (Genesis 18. 12) do, and what did God reply in Genesis 18. 14?
6. Which verse in Genesis 15 that refers to Abram's faith is quoted in Romans 4, Galatians 3 and James 2?
7. What did Abraham call the place where he was called upon to offer up his only son Isaac and a ram was offered instead, and what does the name mean? (Genesis 22, see margin)
8. The Lord Jesus referred to how Abraham rejoiced on this occasion. What did He say? (John 8)
9. What honourable title does the Word of God give to Abraham? (James 2; also in 2 Chronicles 20 and Isaiah 41)
10. Genesis 15. 8-18 gives an account of the way God solemnly confirmed His covenant to Abraham. Where in Jeremiah is the confirmation of a covenant in this way described?

**ANSWERS TO MAY QUESTIONS**

1. "That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."
2. "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."
3. "Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

4. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."
5. The glory of God.
6. Fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, filthiness, foolish talking and jesting. (Ephesians 5. 3-4)
7. Soberly, righteously, godly. (Titus 2. 12)
8. "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves." (2 Timothy 2. 24-25)
9. Because God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven them. (Ephesians 4. 32)
10. Matthew 5. 39, Romans 12. 17, 1 Thessalonians 5. 15, 1 Peter 3. 9. "Overcome evil with good." (Romans 12. 21)

*Contributed*

---

### AN EVENING PRAYER

Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me:

Bless a little child tonight:

Through the darkness be Thou near me;

Keep me safe till morning light.

All this day Thy hand has led me,

And I thank Thee for Thy care:

Thou hast clothed me, warmed and fed me:

Listen to my evening prayer.

Let my sins be all forgiven;

Bless the friends I love so well:

Take me, when I die to heaven,

Happy there with Thee to dwell.

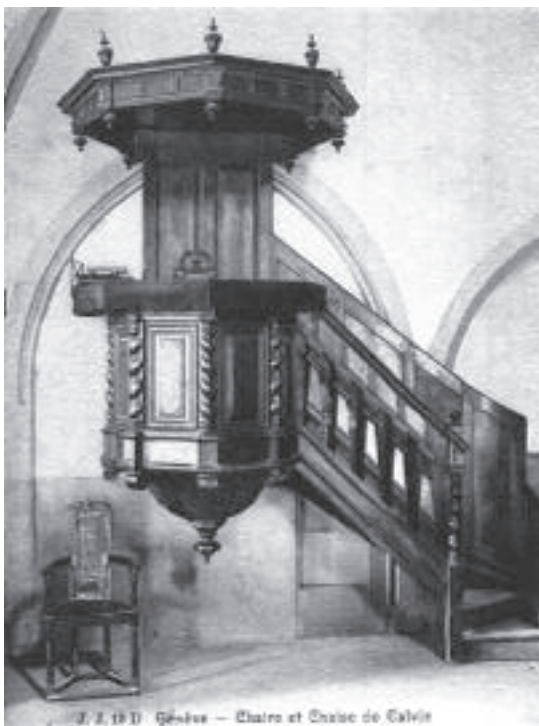
*Mary Duncan*

---

The side God is on is sure to conquer.



# *The Friendly Companion*



“For from you sounded out the Word of the Lord ....”  
(1 Thessalonians 1. 8)

---

*July 2007*

Editor: Mr. G.D. Buss, "Bethany", 7 Laines Head, Chippenham,  
Wiltshire, SN15 1PH.

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: [gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk)

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, Kingston Langley, Chippenham, Wilts. SN15 5QF.

Volume 133

July 2007

## CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	147
Our Front Cover Picture	148
"Love As Brethren"	149
Editor's Postbag	149
For The Very Little Ones: Jesus Calms The Storm	150
Colouring Text: Psalm 107.29	151
Bible Lessons: The Centurion's Servant	152
A Shepherd's Prayers Answered	154
Warning! "The New King James Version Of The Bible"	156
"I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes Unto The Hills"	159
Difficult Questions (IV)	161
Always A "But"	161
The Kind Of Priest Required	163
Bible Study For The Older Ones:	
Practical Godliness: The Doctrine Of Marriage (I)	164
Bible Questions: The Heart	167
Poetry: When All Seems Wrong	168

### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

It is a well-known fact of English history that William Wilberforce, the great anti-slavery campaigner, was also a bosom friend of William Pitt the Younger who became Prime Minister at the age of twenty-four, the youngest ever to hold that post. Wilberforce was a godly man, who longed to see grace change the life of his brilliant, though godless, friend.

To this end, he repeatedly pressed him to go with him to hear the gospel preached. Eventually, not wishing to offend his close friend, Pitt agreed to go. The preacher was The Honourable Richard Cecil, a well-known evangelical preacher of his day. (He was the author of a famous biography of John Newton.) To Wilberforce's delight he preached a plain, yet faithful, sermon, simply setting forth the doctrines of grace and the way of salvation. His text was Ephesians 1. 17: "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him." Wilberforce was sure as he sat and listened that his friend would be affected for good.

When they left the church, Pitt turned to his friend and said: "William, I came to church tonight just to please you. But I have to say that I could not understand a word of what the man was saying."

What an astonishing thing this was to Wilberforce. His friend, William Pitt, was one of the greatest brains of his generation. Yet the simple message of sin and salvation was beyond his comprehension. How true are our Lord's words: "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (Matthew 11. 25).

May the prayer of the hymn be ours:

"Make me like a little child, Of my strength and wisdom spoiled,  
Seeing only in Thy light, Walking only in Thy might." *J. Berridge*

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

One of the features of our chapels is the prominent place given to the pulpit from where the sermons are preached by God's servants. We only read of one actual pulpit in the Bible: that is in Nehemiah 8. 4, where we read of Ezra standing in one surrounded by no less than thirteen other men! It must have been a large pulpit! Of course the Lord Jesus Christ used a mountain and also a boat as a pulpit whilst He was here on earth. From his pulpit Ezra read the Book of the Law of God, which had been sadly neglected for many years. His reading of it was used of God to bring about a revival of true religion in his day.

Before the English Reformation, very few churches or chapels had a pulpit, the reason being that very little prominence was given to the Word of God or preaching, most attention being given to the altar (so called) where the Mass (the idolatrous Roman Catholic form of the communion service) was enacted. However Edward VI ordered that every parish was to provide a "comely and honest pulpit". This was reinforced by Elizabeth I when she came to the throne. This emphasised the great Reformation doctrine that the Word of God was to be central to worship. How sad these two monarchs would be if they were to see the reversal of this reformation in our day.

Sadly, in some evangelical churches, pulpits are being removed as other forms of worship (so called) take pre-eminence over the preaching of the Word. This is always a sign of spiritual decay when this happens.

A few weeks ago, two young girls were attending the early morning prayer meeting at their chapel. Their father was one of those who was called to pray in public. To their amazement they heard him use the term "the foolishness of preaching." When they got into their car at the end of the morning service, they whispered to their mother that "Daddy" had made a big blunder in his prayer. He had said that the pastor's preaching was foolishness. When they got home their Daddy explained

to them that he had used a verse that is in the Bible (1 Corinthians 1. 21). He explained that preachers in the pulpit, whom God has sent to preach, have a good gospel to preach, but they feel weak, and in themselves are unable to make the Word fasten home in the hearts of their hearers. Like Joseph they have to say: "It is not in me: God shall give ... an answer...."

But though ministers feel foolish very often, it does not mean that the hearers are to despise them, but rather they should seek to be as Ezra's congregation was: "because they had understood the words that were declared unto them." You can read in Nehemiah 8 how the word made them weep, rejoice and obey. May we also know the power of the Word of God in like manner.

---

### **"LOVE AS BRETHREN"**

Some years ago, two young brothers were playing in a park in the large town where they lived. The younger of the two had no shoes on his feet, but to reach the part of the park where they wished to play, they had to walk along a gravel path that had only just been re-surfaced, so the stones were extra sharp. What did the older brother do? He picked up his younger brother and carried him over the stony part.

A man was watching with great approval from a seat nearby. But what struck him most was that the older brother did not expect any thanks from his brother. He just did what was right for him to do. So when we try to help someone, we should not do it for praise or reward but as Paul tells us: "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." But mind: I do hope the younger brother was thankful in his heart even if he didn't say it, and didn't just take for granted the kindness shown!

*Editor*

---

### **EDITOR'S POSTBAG**

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from **JOSIAH BARKER; SOPHIE HOOK and JOEL LOCKEY.***

*FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES***JESUS CALMS THE STORM**

One evening Jesus and His disciples were crossing over the Sea of Galilee in a little ship. As they sailed, Jesus fell asleep on a pillow in the back of the boat.

Suddenly a great storm of wind came. Waves beat into the ship, until it seemed likely to sink. How frightened the disciples were! They awoke Jesus, saying: "*Lord, save us: we perish.*" Jesus spoke to the wind and raging water, saying: "*Peace, be still.*" At once they obeyed Him, "*and there was a great calm.*"

Jesus asked the disciples why they had been so fearful. Where was their faith in God? How safe they really were with Jesus in the ship!

When storms of trouble come, the Lord's people often feel ready to perish and cry unto Him. The Lord Jesus is able to calm stormy winds and seas by His word.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What did Jesus do as they sailed over the Sea of Galilee?
2. What suddenly came?
3. What did Jesus say to the wind and water? (3 words)

*Contributed*

*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.*

**ANSWERS TO JUNE QUESTIONS**

1. At night.
2. A new heart.
3. Wind.

*“He maketh  
the storm  
a calm,  
so that  
the waves  
thereof  
are still.”*

*Psalm 107. 29.*

**BIBLE LESSONS****THE CENTURION'S SERVANT**

After Jesus had finished the Sermon on the Mount, He returned to Capernaum. The news of this soon spread around the city. One day, a group of distinguished people came to Jesus. They were the elders of the Jews, who usually were trying to find fault with Him. However, the elders had another reason for this visit to Jesus. They had been sent by the Roman centurion in their city.

A centurion was a captain of one hundred soldiers. All over the land of Israel, the Roman Emperor had placed centurions, with their hundred soldiers, to keep the peace. The Jews normally despised these foreigners and often resisted their authority. They failed to realize that, because they had rejected Him, God had permitted the Romans to rule over them.

What a strange sight to see the Jewish leaders now asking Jesus to help this centurion! Unlike most of the centurions, this one showed kindness to the Jews and built a synagogue for them to worship in. For this reason, the Jews were happy to assist him.

But what did he want from Jesus? Being in such a position of power, wasn't he able to obtain anything he wanted? No. Neither money nor power could help him in this trouble. One of his servants was so sick that he was at the point of death. Most centurions were harsh and cruel and would have left the servant to die. This centurion loved his servant, just as he did the Jews. He had heard so much about Jesus of Nazareth and was sure He could help his servant. But would Jesus come to the house of a despised Roman? He hoped the elders of the Jews could persuade Jesus to come and heal his servant.

How pleased he was when he heard that Jesus had agreed to come and was nearing his house! Quickly he sent a message to Jesus, saying: *"Lord, trouble not Thyself: for I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof: ... neither thought I myself worthy to come unto Thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed."*



He thought of his own authority and how he said to one soldier: *“Go, and be goeth; and to another, Come, and be cometh; and to [his] servant, Do this, and be doeth it.”* If such obedience was yielded to him because of his position, how much more must all things be subject to Jesus, who is God as well as man. By faith, he saw that sickness and death were servants to Jesus Christ. They must do His bidding and perform His will. They were both at His control.

When Jesus heard this confession of the centurion, He marvelled at such faith. He turned and said to those following Him: *“I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.”* What a rebuke this was to the elders of the Jews, who, though they came to Jesus on behalf of the centurion, yet believed not!

Jesus warned the Jews that many Gentiles, whom the Jews hated, would sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while many Jews would be cast out into outer darkness.

When the elders, who had been sent, returned to the centurion's house, they found the servant completely healed.

*You can read about this in Luke chapter 7 verses 1 to 10 and Matthew chapter 8 verses 5 to 13.*

#### QUESTIONS:

1. What had the centurion done for the Jews?
2. Why did he say Jesus should not enter under his roof?
3. What did the centurion say Jesus needed to do to heal his servant?
4. What did the centurion see as servants to Jesus?
5. What did Jesus say He had not found in Israel? (3 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.*

#### ANSWERS TO JUNE QUESTIONS

1. In their house.
2. The kingdom of God and His righteousness.
3. Jesus.
4. A rock.
5. The sand.

*G. TenBroeke*

### A SHEPHERD'S PRAYERS ANSWERED

Many years ago, when in a time of deep distress, I was pouring out my heart to the Lord, seeking from Him some word of comfort. I felt the third verse of Hymn 277 very powerfully impressed upon my mind:

“‘Cast,’ He said, ‘on Me thy care;  
’Tis enough that I am nigh;  
I will all thy burdens bear;  
I will all thy needs supply.’”

This was a wonderful help to me as I faced the unknown future which looked very dark.

Also about this time, the third line of the fourth verse of Hymn 70 was impressed upon my mind:

“My life’s minutest circumstance  
Is subject to His eye.”

About two years after this, I was very hungry for the Word of God, and longed to get to the services of His house. I was a shepherd at that time, and one afternoon when I went to the farm at the close of my day’s work, my employer told me that he had received a ‘phone call saying that some of his sheep were on the road instead of in the field, and instructed me to go and find them and return them to the field, and also to repair the fence through which they had escaped. The road, on to which they had escaped, ran through a one-hundred-acre wood. As I also had to make a personal call before going to chapel, a great cloud came upon me as I could not see how I would be able to get to the House of God in time for the service.

I first had to count the flock to see how many sheep were missing, and soon found that I had to find two ewes and three lambs, which had by then wandered into the large wood. As the sheep had recently been shorn, I knew I would be unable to follow their tracks by their wool being caught on twigs.

As I went along the road and into the wood, I cried unto the

Lord, pleading that He would guide me to the sheep, but also pleading the promise of the hymn that He would supply my need and enable me to get to chapel. I soon found the sheep but could not get them out of the undergrowth and ditch where they were. I had to go to the farm for another employee. We went back to the wood to get them out, but they had moved. I asked the other man to go one way to look for them, and as soon as he was out of sight, I went down on my knees beside the trunk of a tree and begged the Lord to lead me to the sheep. I arose from my knees and the dear Lord guided me straight to where the sheep were in that large wood. We were able to get them back into the field and repair the fence. I went home, and without having anything to eat I was able to make my call and arrived at chapel as the first hymn was being sung.

I have never forgotten the Lord's goodness and mercy to me in this incident in answering my prayer. About ten years later it was brought vividly to my mind, when on another farm I lost a key to one of the farm buildings. This key was only about two inches (5 centimetres) long, so I knew it could be very difficult to find. Losing this key was quite serious, and for three days I unsuccessfully looked for it, continually praying that God would show me where it was. I knew God could, because He had shown me where the sheep were. With the encouraging remembrance of those two portions of hymns which were impressed upon my mind years before, I pleaded them in my prayers night and day. On the Sunday morning, as I went into the field to check the sheep, I noticed that one was lying by itself away from the others. I knew that this probably meant that it was ill, or injured, as sheep normally get up and come toward the shepherd when he calls them. So I went to see what was wrong with it. As I was getting it up on its feet, I saw that there in the flattened grass, where the sheep had been lying, was the lost key. Oh, how I did thank the Lord for hearing and answering my prayer in such a wonderful way.

Like Elijah (Hymn 276 verse 3) I proved that all creatures obey His commands. God even uses the animals to answer the prayers of His people. How many people, as well as myself, have proved that:

“But when the Lord’s people have need,  
His goodness will find out a way”?

Also, these experiences have made the following hymn very precious to me, and it is my prayer that whoever reads this little account of the Lord’s goodness and mercy to me, may prove that Jesus is your Friend as well.

“What a Friend we have in Jesus,  
All our sins and griefs to bear!  
What a privilege to carry  
Everything to God in prayer!  
Oh, what peace we often forfeit!  
Oh, what needless pain we bear!  
All because we do not carry  
Everything to God in prayer.”

Whatever your need or trouble is: “Take it to the Lord in prayer.”

*Contributed*

---

#### **WARNING! “THE NEW KING JAMES VERSION OF THE BIBLE”**

Whilst the NKJV is the least worse of the modern translations, *it is actually more dangerous* because people are being deceived into thinking that it is an updated Authorised King James Bible (AV) with just a few archaic words modernised. *This is not the case* – the NKJV is a new Bible but having a similar name.

The publishers, Thomas Nelson, are a commercial company rather than a non-profit-making Bible society. Nothing wrong with that in principle, but to give sales-boosting authenticity with the Christian public, they have cleverly hijacked the name “King James” and at the same time made over 100,000 alterations in order to achieve copyright status for their new

Bible. (Rights for the AV are vested in the Crown under Royal Letters Patent.)

Apparently 20,066 words have been removed from the AV Bible (not checked). If this is so, then this is the equivalent in volume terms of removing Obadiah, Haggai, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John and Jude COMBINED!

Revelation 22. 18-19 has very serious things to say to those who add to, or subtract from, God's written Word: "... And if any man shall take away from the words of the book ... 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."

The Jewish scribes were absolutely meticulous in their copying of the Scriptures and Jesus Himself referred to the jots and tittles being important. Much safer to trust the giant translators like Wycliffe and Tyndale, with their vast understanding of all the nuances of the Greek and Hebrew texts, than the modern pygmies born after the damaging effects of what is called the "High Criticism Movement" of past centuries. Many of those involved in the new translations do not uphold the full authority, infallibility and inspiration of Holy Scripture.

Although claiming to keep to the reliable underlying Hebrew Masoretic and the Greek text known as the Received Text or Textus Receptus, the NKJV translators copied wording from texts used for some of the other modern versions, notably the Critical Text and the corrupted Westcott-Hort Text. There are approximately 1,200 departures from the Received Text.

The NKJV translation committee included nine men who were involved in the NIV translation. This should ring alarm bells because the NIV is a product of a different and dangerous method of translation called "dynamic equivalence" whereby the translator tries to put into our words what he thinks God means, rather than the word for word literal translation

method known as “formal equivalence.”

The constant hearing of Scripture quoted from the pulpit, in prayer, by friends or the reading of texts on cards, calendars, posters etc. is an unconscious reinforcement of memory. Once these mediums become confused by alternative versions, then gradually the memory becomes less reinforced. “For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?”

If you received a love letter from your fiancé written in a foreign language, you would be very upset to find that the person who you trusted to translate it for you, had patronisingly tried to make it easier for you to understand by editing out, adding to, or altering the sequence of your fiancé’s words.

Dignified language actually aids the memory because it is unusual and the AV is written in Biblical English in a style that makes memorising easy. It is the unusual words in a text that we remember and use for looking up in the concordance to locate the verse. The NKJV removes a lot of the unusual words and alters the poetic flow.

Unlike the AV which has had only four minor revisions since 1611 (the last being in 1769), the NKJV has had many revisions and changes made since 1982. Thus members of a congregation having purchased their NKJV Bibles at different times, will find inconsistencies between them when comparing Scripture. Common sense realises the need for a common language. Without a common language, communications break up, communities break down and the unity part of community is lost. Christians need a common Bible.

In these days of religious tolerance, Satan is attacking the church from within by casting doubts upon the traditional text of the Authorised Version by bringing about a multitude of different versions, thus sowing confusion amongst the churches. Satan is repeating his question to Eve in Eden – “Hath God said?”

Remember – The Bible does not contain the words of God, the Bible *is* the Word of God! Jesus said: “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.” We need to be confident that we have got the actual words of God in our hands. The AV has stood the test of time and has been mightily blessed in our land. Yes, some of the language is archaic, but it is accurate, beautiful and easy to memorise.

The serious textural errors of the NKJV are too numerous to include in this article; one recommended book on this subject is: “Three Modern Versions” by Alan J. MacGregor, available from The Bible League, 46, Bulbridge Road, Wilton, Salisbury, Wiltshire. SP2 OLE.

*Contributed by A.W.*

---

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

*A little while back, we published a series of articles on Bible Mountains and Hills. We have not, as present, been able to publish all of them, but the following summary is an excellent guide to this interesting and sacred subject.*

*Editor*

**HILLS OF SCRIPTURE**

1. **Ararat**
  - (a) Covenant
2. **Moriah**
  - (a) Provision
  - (b) Substitution
  - (c) Ornan's threshing floor
3. **Sinai and Horeb**
  - (a) Law, holiness, schoolmaster to bring us to Christ
4. **Pisgah**
5. **Carmel**
6. **Mount of Temptation**
  - (a) Jesus suffered being tempted, able to succour
7. **Sermon on the mount**
  - (a) Words of Jesus, blessings, exhortations,  
e.g. very hairs all numbered

8. **Mount of transfiguration**
  - (a) Jesus glorified, revealed as the Son of God
  - (b) Pre-eminence
9. **Mount of Olives, Gethsemane**
  - (a) Began to bear the load of sin
  - (b) Submission to His Father's will
10. **Calvary**
  - (a) Christ lifted up, mediation between heaven and earth
  - (b) Atonement, blood shed
  - (c) It is finished, end of sin, way made
  - (d) Forgiveness
11. **Mount of Olives (ascension)**
  - (a) Lifted up His hands and blessed them
  - (b) Commission
  - (c) Ascension, this same Jesus
12. **Heaven**
  - (a) That great mountain, Lamb in the midst of the throne
  - (b) Hope beyond the grave, heavenly Jerusalem
13. **Mount Zion**
  - (a) Sanctuary, God placed His name, temple, house of the Lord, provision
  - (b) Help from the sanctuary, look again unto Thy holy temple (Moriah?)
  - (c) How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of them...
14. **Mountains made a plain**
  - (a) Encouragement for the future
  - (b) Mizar's hill and Hermon's mount (the Lord's dealings greater and smaller; all things work together for good; thanksgiving and trust)

## CONCLUSION

Let us be encouraged in prayer.

"As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about His people" (Psalm 125).

*Contributed*



**DIFFICULT QUESTIONS (IV)**

We have been asked by Kelsey Oudshoorn from Alberta, Canada, the following question: "Why is Jesus' genealogy traced from Joseph in Matthew 1. 16, yet he is not Jesus' true father?"

To answer this difficult question, it helps to understand the following points:

- a) Matthew traces the lineage of Jesus from Abraham in a descending line to Joseph the husband of Mary the mother of Jesus, giving the regal line, showing Him to be the Heir to His forefather, David; whereas Luke traces it in an ascending line from Mary by Joseph to Adam to whom the Messiah was first promised.
- b) Heli was the father of Mary, and the father-in-law by marriage of Joseph. It does not say that Heli begat Joseph, but that Joseph was his son. (Godly scholars say that the Greek in this text does not necessarily mean that Heli was the natural father of Joseph.) Joseph was, however, the one who brought up the Lord Jesus Christ from His birth.
- c) Interestingly, according to John Gill, the Jews had a rule that the family of the mother is not called a family, which is perhaps another reason for this seeming anomaly. This explains the fact that in the taxing, which Cyrenius introduced mentioned in Luke 2, it was Joseph's lineage from David which determined where he and Mary should go, that is, to Bethlehem, David's city.

*Editor*

---

**ALWAYS A "BUT"**

My neighbour, Mr. Cross, is very fond of writing the affirmative: "Yes," with the disjunctive "But." He never assents to anything without immediately filing a protest. If you say to him: "This is a fine day," he replies: "Yes, *but* it's a little too warm, or a little too windy." He has formed this habit, and does not realise how disagreeable it is.

As we were going home together last Sunday, I said:

"Well, neighbour, that was an excellent sermon Dr. A. preached this morning."

"Yes, *but* he ought to have made the application more direct, and personal."

"For my part, I thought he was quite personal enough. I know that he hit me pretty hard in what he said about formalism – doing Christian duties from habit, without any heart in the service."

"Well, he hit me there, too; *but* then he ought to have dealt with those who don't have even a form of godliness."

"Perhaps their turn will come next Sunday. A minister can't crowd everything into one sermon. It was quite long enough as it was."

"Yes, quite long enough – indeed, too long. *But* –."

"Look here, Mr. Cross, you have been *butting* at me ever since we started. You remind me of a pet that I had when I was a boy. My father brought home a little kid, and gave it to me for a playmate, as I had no brothers. The kid became very fond of me. *But* the kid grew to be a goat, and his nature grew with his growth. If we were playing, he would suddenly turn and *butt* me off. And so he became a nuisance. If visitors came, he would rush round to the front door and *butt* them. It was all in fun, and I did not blame Billy – he was born a '*butter*'; but I don't think that *we* ought to imitate him. We ought to be able to talk with each other without incessant *butting*."

Mr. Cross did not relish my story, but I hope that it will do him good. I have no patience with people who are continually finding fault. Large natures are generous. It is only little souls that watch for and see little things. The habit of finding fault on all occasions is a very bad one. Let us leave *butting* to the goats, and try to appreciate and enjoy what good there is in the world, not expecting to find perfection in anything or anybody – *but* we do not object to all aiming at it! That effort would result in universal humility.

*Nemo*

**THE KIND OF PRIEST REQUIRED**

*"In him there is found some good thing toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam." 1 Kings 14. 13.*

A little boy, who was educated in one of the London Irish Schools, in the county of Roscommon, was seized by sickness, and confined to his bed. In a few days his death seemed to be near. The parents of the boy, being Roman Catholics, sent immediately for the priest, to have the rites of their church administered, which in their estimation was the only preparation for heaven. On the arrival of the priest, the boy seemed much confused, and astonished why he came. "Your visit," said the boy, "was altogether unnecessary: I have no need of your help or assistance: I have a great High Priest on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him: He lives for evermore, to make intercession; and it is such a priest as I require."

The priest, perceiving it to be in vain to reason at such a time, and knowing the boy to have been made acquainted with the Bible, went off.

The child requested his parents to send for his schoolmaster, who stated that he never witnessed such a scene – it was altogether unexpected. The boy was always silent; though he was attentive to the instructions given at school, he never once hinted a change in his sentiments. In the course of conversation, he was asked, was he afraid to die? "No," replied the boy, "my Redeemer is Lord of the dead and living; I love Him for His love to me, and soon I hope to be with Him, to see His glory."

*Selected*

---

There is an overruling providence,  
That wisely marshals every circumstance;  
Heaven, air, and seas, and this terrestrial ball,  
With their contents, are all at His control.

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***PRACTICAL GODLINESS****The Doctrine of Marriage (1)**

Apart from a friendship with Jesus Christ, the closest friendship we can know on this earth is that between a husband and wife. Therefore we need to be of one mind in the things of God. The Scriptures teach us: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3. 3) This is true of any friendship, not just marriage. Also, the Holy Spirit instructs us: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6. 15-20).

We have the beautiful narrative in Scripture (Genesis 24) of how Isaac and Rebekah were brought together as man and wife. One verse stands out in that chapter as I write to you and that is verse 58: "And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go." My dear young friends, let us look at this in a spiritual way: Isaac as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. Wilt thou go with this Man? Leave everything here below to follow the Lord Jesus? It is not an easy path. "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it" (Matthew 16. 24-25). If, by grace, we follow the Lord Jesus, we have to leave all worldly friends, and the life that we did live we lose, but find a new and living way in Jesus Christ.

We have the exhortation given us by the Holy Spirit: “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6. 14-18).

We are instructed in Holy Scripture that marriage was instituted by God to show forth the sacred spiritual union between Christ and the church. The whole of Solomon’s Song is a spiritual dialogue between Christ and the church. The Lord Jesus Christ is referred to by the church as her Beloved, the church is referred to by Christ as His sister or My spouse. In Ephesians, the Holy Spirit clearly teaches us that marriage is a holy institution representing the sacred intimate union between Christ and His church: “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the church: and He is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members

of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband" (Ephesians 5. 22-33).

In Psalm 45 the believer is called the King's daughter and just as the man and woman leave their parents to start their own family, so the believer leaves all for Christ's sake: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for He is thy Lord; and worship thou Him" (Psalm 45. 10-11).

Let us look at the institution of marriage in the Garden of Eden, before Adam fell into sin and thereby ruined all his posterity. Remember, Adam was created first and then we read: "And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.... And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed" (Genesis 2. 18-25).

(To be continued)

*J.R. Rutt*

---

When a Christian is poor, his Heavenly Father keeps the purse; but the rich keep the purse for themselves. It often falls out that it is often better to have the purse in our Father's hands than our own.

**BIBLE QUESTIONS**

*This month the questions are about THE HEART. 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.*

1. What description does the Word of God give of our hearts by nature? (Jeremiah 17. 9)
2. How does Isaiah 57. 15 describe the spirit or heart of the man in whom God dwells?
3. Write out Ezekiel 36. 26 which tells how the difference between those in the first two questions comes about.
4. Of which king was it written: "Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the LORD..."? (2 Kings 22. 19)
5. Who in Scripture is so often remembered for the opposite – a hardened heart? (Exodus 9. 34-35)
6. Of whom did the Lord Jesus say: "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts"? (Luke 16)
7. Write out the verse from Isaiah that the Lord Jesus quoted in describing the religion of these same people. (Matthew 15)
8. When Samuel was sent by the LORD to anoint a king among the sons of Jesse, what mistake did he make in his judgment of Eliab? (1 Samuel 16)
9. We cannot look at the heart as God does, but what can be seen which shows what a person is like? (Matthew 7)
10. Read 1 Samuel 17. 26-29 and explain in your own words why you think Eliab would not have made a good king.

**ANSWERS TO JUNE QUESTIONS**

1. "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing."
2. Because Abraham had no children and Sarah was barren.
3. The dust of the earth; the stars in the sky.
4. 25 years.
5. Abraham and Sarah both laughed; God said, "Is anything too hard for the LORD?"

6. "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness." (Genesis 15. 6)
7. Jehovah-jireh. The Lord will provide. (Genesis 22. 14)
8. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; he saw it and was glad." (John 8. 56)
9. The Friend of God. (2 Chronicles 20. 7; Isaiah 41. 8; James 2. 23.)
10. Jeremiah 34. 18-19.

*Contributed*

---

### WHEN ALL SEEMS WRONG

When sunbeams fade and shadows fall,  
And every gate is barred:  
God's providence can open all  
The locks that go so hard.

*See Revelation 3. 8.*

When all that once was right seems wrong,  
Yet hold this comfort fast  
There never yet was night so long,  
But morning dawned at last!

*See Psalm 139. 11.*

Minute by minute, hour by hour,  
Endure, and hope, and wait:  
Who knows what moment heavenly power  
Shall set the crooked straight.

*See Isaiah 40. 4.*

*Revelation 3. 8:* "I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it."

*Psalm 139. 11:* "Even the night shall be light about me."

*Isaiah 40. 4:* "And the crooked shall be made straight,  
and the rough places plain."



# *The Friendly Companion*



“Be not deceived; God is not mocked.  
(Galatians 6. 7)

---

*August 2007*

Editor: Mr. G.D. Buss, "Bethany", 7 Laines Head, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 1PH.

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: [gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk)

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.

Volume 133

August 2007

## CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	171
Our Front Cover Picture	172
More About Ravens	173
For The Very Little Ones: "Go And Tell"	174
Colouring Text: Mark 5. 19.	175
Bible Lessons: The Widow's Son Raised	176
The Orphan Lamb	178
God The Son	180
When The Clock Struck Thirteen	182
Editor's Postbag	183
The Reviving Hand Of God	184
"Overcome Evil With Good"	185
Difficult Questions (V)	186
Bible Study For The Older Ones:	
Practical Godliness: The Doctrine of Marriage (II)	188
Bible Questions:	
The Miracles of Jesus as Recorded by John	191
Poetry: The Leaning Tree	192

**OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE**

Dear Children and Young People,

Some time ago, a God-fearing man was at work and it came to lunchtime. That morning he had left home quickly and had forgotten to take his lunch. At his office there was a machine which dispensed snacks and sandwiches. When he came to the machine to get something, he found he had only twenty-six pence in his pocket. After he had put his money in, he found that the cost of the cheapest snack was twenty-seven pence. Foolishly he thought that perhaps the machine would accept twenty-six pence; after all it is only one penny short! He waited for his snack, but he waited in vain. He banged the machine, hoping it would respond to him, but it remained stubbornly unresponsive! So he had to walk away without any food. There was nothing wrong with the machine, but there was something wrong with the payment.

What a simple, yet profound, lesson this is of God's holy Law. It must have a perfect and complete payment! Even one penny less will not do. Of course, we cannot produce the payment of a perfect obedience, nor a perfect atonement to satisfy God's perfect Law. There is nothing wrong with the Law, but there is something solemnly wrong with the sinner's attempts at payment. They all come short.

But there is One who both can and has provided that perfect demand which the Law, justly is owed. He is the Lord Jesus Christ. On behalf of all who are taught to come to God by Him, He has perfectly satisfied the Law and set His people free.

If the man who wanted his lunch had put in twenty-seven pence and the machine had not responded, then the machine would have been at fault.

The Law has received its payment, and it is not at fault, because it sets the sinner free who is led to plead the payment Christ has made.

“Payment God cannot twice demand,  
First at my bleeding Surety's hand,  
And then again at mine.”

The Law is well pleased for Jesus' sake with this sinner, and may we know the same blessing by the Holy Ghost's vital teaching for ourselves.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

---

### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

In Tewin churchyard, a short distance from Welwyn Garden City in Hertfordshire, stands a grave with four sycamore tree trunks growing out of it which have fused together at the base. The grave from which they grow is that of Lady Ann Grimston, who lived at Gorhambury, near St. Albans and who died about 1715.

Lady Ann Grimston did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. When she lay dying in her palatial home, she said to a friend: "If, indeed, there is life hereafter, trees will render asunder my tomb." Some reports say that she said that seven trees would grow from the grave. She was buried in a marble tomb. The grave was marked by a large marble slab, and surrounded by an iron railing. All was done to make the tomb secure. But later, the marble slab was found to have moved a little. Then it cracked, and through the cracks small trees grew.

The trees continued to grow, tilting the stone and breaking the marble masonry and today, nearly 300 years later, the trees surround the tomb with their roots lifting the gravestone partially out of the ground. Part of the iron railing is embedded in the tree trunks, the rest has gone and a newer iron railing has been built to surround the grave and trees.

This story was disputed by the curate of Tewin in 1843 who pointed out that written records exist which show that Lady Ann had travelled on Sundays from home to worship at the church, the implication being that she must have believed in the resurrection. In those days, however, it was customary for the nobility to go to church every Sunday, even if they professed no religion at all. The grave itself tells a very different story to that of the curate, for on the end of the

gravestone is carved a skull and crossbones. There could hardly be a symbol more defiant of God and His Word than this, and one utterly incompatible with any Christian profession. Moreover, an engraving of the grave which is about 150 years old and a postcard about 100 years old both show a further three trees growing out of the front of the grave, which would account for the seven trees which Lady Ann is said to have mentioned. It would seem that these were at some time removed together with the iron railing at the front of the grave.

One thing is certain. God may sometimes take unbelievers at their word to their eternal condemnation and make their case a warning to all around. "Stand in awe and sin not."

*Contributed*

---

### **MORE ABOUT RAVENS**

Further to the article in June about ravens, new fascinating information about these birds has recently come to light.

Researchers recently dangled lumps of meat from a string in such a way that to reach them the birds would have to perform a series of complex actions. In an incredibly short time, ravens were found to reach the prey. Other observations have shown that ravens will make special calls to attract predators, such as wolves and foxes, to dead carcasses. After watching the animals break up the carcasses for them, the animals are then dive-bombed by the ravens to make them flee, leaving the meat for these cunning birds.

It has been suggested that they are one of the few birds that can actually count, and that they can even fashion tools out of leaves to extract grubs and insects from the bark of trees.

All of these special talents are given by God to these birds, "He giveth ... to the young ravens which cry" (Psalm 147. 9). The same God says in His Word: "Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them ...." (Luke 12. 24).

*Editor*

*FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES***“GO AND TELL”**

A wild man lived in the country of the Gadarenes. His name was called Legion, for many evil spirits (or devils) had power over him. He wandered about crying and cutting himself with stones. People had tried to bind him with chains, but he broke them off. Neither could they keep clothing on him.

When Jesus came into that country, He commanded the evil spirits to go out of Legion. They went into a great herd of swine (pigs) feeding on the mountain. The swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea and were drowned. The keepers of the swine fled and told others what had happened.

People hurried out of the city to see. They found Legion *“sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind.”* This made them afraid, and they begged Jesus to depart from them. The man out of whom the devils had departed wanted to stay with Jesus. But Jesus told him to **go and tell** *“how great things the Lord hath done for thee.”*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where did the people find Legion sitting?
2. What did they beg Jesus to do?
3. What did Jesus tell Legion to do? (first 3 words)

*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. Fell asleep.
2. A great storm.
3. Peace, be still.

*“Go home to  
thy friends,  
and tell them  
how great  
things the  
Lord hath  
done for thee.”  
Mark 5. 19.*

*BIBLE LESSONS***THE WIDOW'S SON RAISED**

Every day Jesus was confronted with human woe. He met people who were diseased, lame, blind, or devil-possessed: all the effects of sin. How His tender heart was touched by their conditions!

The day after He had healed the centurion's servant, Jesus left Capernaum and journeyed to another city of Galilee called Nain. The journey would have taken a few hours, as it was about twenty miles. Many of Jesus' disciples, along with a great multitude of people, went with Him. What a sight it must have been to see such a great multitude walking along to Nain.

But look! There is another multitude of people coming out of the city of Nain. If we could listen to them, we would find they were not talking together, but rather sorrowing and weeping. In front of the multitude, men were carrying a bier (coffin). Someone had died, and they were carrying the body to the grave. Was it an old person? No, it was a very young man, an only son. Thus, the loss was felt so keenly. His mother was a widow and thus depended upon him for her daily living. We do not know if he was ill for a long time and slowly breathed his last or if he had died suddenly. But we can imagine the distress of his poor mother. First her husband was taken from her and now her son. How her heart must have ached! Oh the questions that must have filled her mind! Why has this come upon me? How can I go on? Who will provide for me? Everything seemed so dark and dreary and even hopeless.

As the funeral procession leaves the city, the heart of the widow is filled with grief. She had walked this path before when she buried her husband; but then, she still had her son to comfort her. Now she is left alone. While they are making their way to the grave, they are approached by a large group of people coming down the road towards Nain. It is the very multitude that left Capernaum that morning. Jesus and His disciples are at the front.



Suddenly, those following the bier stopped. What was happening? Jesus approached the weeping widow and was moved with compassion for her. He spoke so kindly to her, saying: "*Weep not.*" Oh what power attended His word!

Next, He stepped up to the bier on which the dead man lay. The eyes of all were fixed on Him. They could hardly believe what their ears heard! Jesus spoke to the dead man, saying: "*Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.*"

In a moment, the lifeless body was made alive and sat up. The tongue that was silenced by death began to speak. What a change had taken place! No more lamentation and weeping and wailing could be heard. Tears of sorrow were turned to tears of joy.

Great fear came on all the people "*and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited His people.*"

*You can read about this in Luke chapter 7 verses 11 to 17.*

#### QUESTIONS:

1. How far was the journey from Capernaum to Nain?
2. What did Jesus say to the widow?
3. What did Jesus say to the dead man? (7 words)
4. What did the people say was risen up among them?
5. Who had God visited?

*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. Built a synagogue.
2. I am not worthy.
3. Say in a word.
4. Sickness and death.
5. So great faith.

### THE ORPHAN LAMB

At 4.00 a.m. one spring morning in March, the shepherd delivered a set of triplets to a ewe in his care. As they all lay, being cleaned by their mother in the straw pen, he realised all was not well. The weakest of the three had been born with a condition which he had seen before, and knew would take some time to recover from. This little ewe lamb was unable to stand and could only lie on her side with her neck arched back over her shoulder.

As the ewe has only two teats to feed her lambs, "Shep" took the decision to orphan this weak lamb from her mother and place her in a heat box which he had prepared earlier, leaving the ewe to rear the two strongest lambs.

With this little lamb in the warmth and safety of his heat box, "Shep" then set about trying to help her regain her balance and strength so that she could begin to walk for the first time. Immediately he warmed up some colostrum (first milk) and fed her by stomach tube as she was unable to suckle on a bottle at first. He then proceeded to massage her legs and neck muscles before standing her on her feet for the first time. She was so weak she could not stand unaided, but he persevered, knowing that if she was to stand up he must help her.

The next morning, as he sat on a straw bale next to the heat box feeding the orphan on his lap, he realised that every single ewe and lamb under his care had been placed there by God, and that during this busy lambing period, each had received his attention according to its need; each had been checked daily, and those with ailments had been treated and cared for; yet at this time, this weakest lamb of the flock needed, and was given much more help, care and attention than all the others. She was totally dependant on her master for everything. Every four hours he would massage her muscles, help her stand upright, and satisfy her appetite with a bottle of ewe's milk, taken from another ewe. For three days she received his undivided attention, day and night, until on the third day she

was able to stand unaided for the first time and feed normally. Gradually she gained her strength and by the end of the next week she was strong enough to stand up and lie down on her own. "Shep" then knew he must find a "foster mum" for his little lamb; so when one of his older ewes produced only a single lamb at birth, he took his little orphan and adopted her on to his freshly lambed ewe, giving her two lambs to rear, and the little orphan a "foster mum" to raise and care for her.

How precious to consider the care of One far greater than this earthly shepherd, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose love and compassion over His spiritual flock is complete and free. Surely, each one of the flock of God receives daily care and attention. Yes, He will begin with a separating work, an orphaning from sin and the world, yet how His special care is reserved for those young of the flock who feel to be the weakest; how mindful He is of those young in the way, those new born of the Holy Spirit, who feel their faith to be so weak. Does He not gather them up in His arms and gently lead those that are with young? How lovingly does He tend to their cries day and night. How He nurses them, and holds them up, supports them with His strong arm and feeds them from His Word until their faith is increased and they stand in the way everlasting: the Way, Christ Jesus, adopted by Him into the family of God.

S.D.H.

---

QUESTION: What is meant by the covenant of grace?

ANSWER: The covenant engagement entered into, in the counsels of eternity, by the Triune God in behalf of the elect; in which covenant the elect were given to the Person of the Son, and made His care and charge, and all spiritual blessings were treasured up and secured in Him, and so made sure to all the seed of promise.

*2 Samuel 23. 5; Psalm 89. 27-37; Isaiah 55. 3; Hosea 2. 23; John 17. 2; Hebrews 2. 13; and 8. 10.*

### GOD THE SON

A few years ago, we were stopped by a most unusually dressed man. His head was shaven and he wore a long gown. He requested money and wished to sell literature.

On being asked who he was and what he believed, he spoke of “re-incarnation.” His sect believed that after death we come back to earth in a different form. If a person chooses to live like a pig, he may come back to earth as a pig.

Immediately we pressed the claims of the Lord Jesus on him – that He is true, Almighty God.

“Oh, no!” said the stranger politely. “He never said He was God. He only said that He was ‘the Son of God.’”

This made us think. The Bible does clearly teach that Jesus is the “Son of God.” What does it mean? And does it mean in any way that He is less than Almighty God?

#### 1. *The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus is God.*

Apart from anything else we have very clear proof texts. To mention three:

Romans 9. 5: “... Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.” What could be clearer?

Hebrews 1. 8: “But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” (We have found that the Jehovah’s Witnesses are confounded by this text.)

1 John 5. 20 (speaking of “His Son Jesus Christ”): “This is the true God, and eternal life.”

Years ago, an enemy of the truth was debating about the Person of the Lord Jesus. He exclaimed: “If Jesus is really God, why doesn’t the Bible say so simply?”

He was asked: “Well, what would you like it to say?”

After pondering a moment or two, he replied: “Something like this: ‘This is the true God.’”

He was immediately pointed to 1 John 5. 20.

But apart from the various texts which may be quoted, there are so many other things. The Lord Jesus is to be prayed to. He is to be worshipped. These two acts would be blasphemy if He were any other than God. His miracles were proofs that He

is what He claimed to be. Especially His resurrection from the dead is evidence of His being God – i.e. The Lord Jesus said He was God. He said He would die and rise again. And He did.

How important it is that we have clear views of who Jesus is! John Newton says:

“So guilty, so helpless am I,  
I durst not confide in His blood,  
Nor on His protection rely,  
*Unless I were sure He is God.*”

*2. When the Bible says that Jesus is “the Son of God,” it does not mean anything less than true, Almighty God.*

In the Trinity, no Person is greater or less than another. The second Person is related to the first as a Son to His Father, begotten by Him, yet He is in no way inferior or less. He is eternally His Son. (We do need to watch that we do not try to use our human reason here.)

One thing is very clear. When the Lord Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, the Jews knew what He meant!

Matthew 26. 63-65: after the Lord Jesus had said that He is “the Christ, the Son of God,” the high priest “rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy ....”

John 5. 17, 18: “Jesus answered them, My Father .... Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He ... said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.”

John 10. 36: “Say ye of Him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?”

The Jews were in no doubt at all that when Jesus said He was the Son of God, He meant that He *is* God.

A member of one of the sects was asked:

“Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God?”

He readily agreed.

“Do you believe that He is God the Son?”

What a different answer!

May you each be blessed with that vital, personal knowledge of the eternal Son of God and be able to say:

“That Christ is God I can avouch,  
And for His people cares,  
Since I have prayed to Him as such,  
And He has heard my prayers.”

*B. A. Ramsbottom*

---

### WHEN THE CLOCK STRUCK THIRTEEN

Soon after I retired from active service, said Colonel E—, I went to reside in an old-fashioned house within easy reach of a quaint Devonshire village. One evening, in the summer of 1885, I attended a public meeting in the village, and being delayed after the meeting with some friends, it was late when I started for home. The night was extremely dull, and I had not proceeded far before a very heavy shower of rain compelled me to seek shelter. I was quite near to the little village church, so I ran into the covered porch, and sat down on one of the seats to await the passing of the storm. Almost at the same moment a man, coming from the opposite direction, rushed into the porch beside me, to escape the downpour. While we sat waiting, the church clock began to strike the midnight hour. I began to count the strokes, and, to my amazement, counted thirteen! The man beside me started to his feet, exclaiming: “Why, sir, that clock struck thirteen!” “So it did,” I replied; “how strange it is that we should both have counted the strokes.” We chatted together till the rain stopped, then I went my way, and he went his.

Some months afterwards, I was awakened one night out of a sound sleep by a voice calling: “Go to Bodmin!” I jumped out of bed and opened the room door, expecting to find someone in the lobby. But no; all was still there, and I crept back to bed, and towards morning fell asleep.

Again, I was roused up with a penetrating cry: “Go to Bodmin!” What could it mean? I knew no one in Bodmin –

had never even seen the town. The more I thought, the more puzzled I became. Some unseen power impelled me to get up and call the servants to get breakfast ready, so that I might start for Bodmin by the early train.

On reaching Bodmin, I wandered along one of the streets in an aimless fashion, wondering where I should go. By-and-by, I came to the County Buildings; a Circuit Court was being held, and I walked in to see what was going on. Just as I was entering, I heard the Judge say to the prisoner who stood in the dock: "The evidence against you is so strong that the jury find you guilty of this terrible crime. Have you anything to say for yourself before I pass sentence? The poor man gasped out: "Oh, my Lord! I am innocent; I was miles away from this place on the night of the murder. There is one man who could prove my innocence, but I neither know his name nor where to find him." "Explain your meaning," said the Judge. "You seem to be talking nonsense." "No, my Lord; this is the truth I am going to tell you. About midnight on July 9, I was sheltering from a thunderstorm in a church porch near the village of L—. A gentleman was sheltering there, too; and while we sat, the church clock struck thirteen. We had both counted the strokes, and remarked on the strange circumstance. That gentleman could prove my innocence, and I prayed often in my cell last night that God would send him to my help."

As the prisoner finished speaking, I stepped forward, and said: "My Lord, the prisoner's story is perfectly true. I am the man who sat beside him in the church porch on the night of July 9." Then, while the Judge and jury listened, spellbound, I related what had happened to me during the past night, and how I had been impelled to come to Bodmin that day.

*Little Gleaner 1905 (Weekly Scotsman)*

---

#### EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from TIMOTHY SALKELD; PHILOMENA VAN OORT and CAROLYN YMKER.*

### THE REVIVING HAND OF GOD

On Monday 21st June 1630, a famous revival took place at the Kirk of Shotts in Scotland. The young Mr. John Livingstone preached in the churchyard that morning after a communion weekend. He preached for two and a half hours from Ezekiel 36. 25-26. Upwards of 500 souls were awakened by the Holy Spirit. He preached for many years after but said that he never again felt the same power nor witnessed such melting of hearts as he did that day at Shotts. Nor was all this accomplished in the flesh, because that morning he tried to run away fearing his own unworthiness and unfitness. As he was nearly out of sight of Shotts those words came to his heart with an overcoming power to constrain him to return and preach: "Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness?" (Jeremiah 2. 31).

One remarkable case that morning concerned three men who were on their way to Edinburgh to enjoy its worldly delights. They stopped at Shotts for breakfast and decided to stay to hear the young minister preach. They wanted to leave at the end of the sermon before the prayer but the power of God was so great that they were compelled to stay until it was all over. When they returned to the hotel to get their horses, they asked for some food. When it was set before them, they all looked at each other and dared not touch it till a blessing was asked, which was not their former habit. "I think we should ask a blessing on our food," said one. And they all readily agreed. When they had finished, they could not rise from the table until they had given thanks. They went on their way more sober and sedate than they were used to, but none mentioned the inward concern, except now and again: "Was it not a great sermon we heard?" In Edinburgh, instead of worldly delights, they went to their rooms and stayed there most of the time. At last they returned to Glasgow without a word between them of what was happening in their souls. Finally, all three came together and made known what God had done for them at Shotts. Their lives after this were according to the way of the Gospel.

*A.G. Randalls*



**“OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD”**

There was once a godly man, who helped another man who had been cruel to him. The kind man was a tanner by trade and a lay preacher. One night, a quantity of animal hides was stolen from his tannery, and he had reason to believe that the thief was a quarrelsome, drunken neighbour, whom we may call John Smith.

The next week the following advertisement appeared in the county newspaper: *“Whoever stole a quantity of hides on the fifth of the present month, is hereby informed that the owner has a sincere wish to be his friend. If poverty tempted him to this false step, the owner will keep the whole transaction secret, and will gladly put him in the way of obtaining money by means more likely to bring him peace of mind.”*

When the thief read this advertisement, his heart was ashamed, and he felt very sorrowful. A few nights afterwards, as the tanner’s family was about retiring to rest, a timid knock was heard, and when the door was opened, there stood John Smith with a load of hides on his shoulder. Without looking up, he said: “I have brought these back, where shall I put them?”

“Wait till I can get a lantern, and I will go to the barn with you,” he replied; “then, perhaps you will come in and tell me how this happened. We will see what can be done for you.”

While they were gone, his wife prepared some tea, and placed food on the table.

When they returned from the barn, she said: “Neighbour Smith, I thought some hot supper would be good for you.”

He turned his back towards her and did not speak. After a few moments, he said in a choked voice: “It is the first time I ever stole anything, and I have felt very bad about it. I am sure I didn’t think once that I should ever come to what I am. But I took to drinking – then to quarrelling. Since I began to go down hill, everybody gives me a kick. You are the first man that has offered me a helping hand. My wife is sick and my children are starving. You have sent them many a meal – God bless you – and yet I stole the hides. But I tell you the truth

when I say it is the first time I was ever a thief.”

“Let it be the last,” replied the tanner; “the secret still remains between ourselves. You are still young, and it is in your power to make up lost time. Promise me that you will not drink any alcohol for a year, and I will employ you tomorrow on good wages. But eat a bit now, and drink some tea. Perhaps it will keep you from craving anything stronger tonight. Doubtless you will find it hard at first; but keep up a brave heart for the sake of your wife and children, and it will soon become easy. When you have need of tea, tell Mary, and she will always give it to you.

The poor fellow tried to eat and drink, but the food seemed to choke him. After vainly trying to compose his feelings, he bowed his head on the table and wept. After a while, he ate and drank, and his host parted with him for the night with the friendly words: “Try to do well, John, and you will always find a friend in me.”

He entered into his employment the next day, and remained with him many years, a sober, honest, and faithful man.

Now this is an instance of help rendered with great kindness and if we desire to help any one, we must always try to do it in a kind way. This is what Jesus does. He is always kind even “unto the unthankful and to the evil.”

*Selected from “The Explorer”*

---

### DIFFICULT QUESTIONS (V)

#### **How could Noah get all the animals into the Ark?**

Sceptics often toss this challenge out, thinking there is no answer, but there is, and a simple one at that. There are two parts to the question – the number of animals, and the size of the Ark.

Every species of living creature did not need to go on board. Only the animals that were air breathing (‘all flesh in which there is the *breath of life*.’ Genesis 7. 15) and land dwelling (‘all flesh died that moved *upon the earth*,’ Genesis 7 21).

So fish did not go in; they are not air-breathing. Whales and dolphins did not go in either. Although they breathe air, they

are not land-dwelling. Fish and whales survive under water, although some die during floods when sediment and other debris contaminate the water. We find many marine fossils that were buried during the Flood.

Insects were probably not collected and housed in the Ark. They do not have nostrils (Genesis 7. 22) to breathe air, and can survive floods on floating debris such as vegetation mats. No doubt, many insects hopped on board, anyway.

So, that reduces the number of species. But how many animals? Take dogs, for example – would Noah have taken two Alsations, two cocker spaniels, two collies, two red setters, etc.? No, he would have needed just one pair of dogs, like the wolf kind, with much genetic variation, somewhat like mongrels today. We know that the different breeds of dogs have been produced from a wolf-like dog, and this only took a few thousand years. That is not evolution; that's just variation within the original created kind. [Note: the phrase “after their (or his) kind” occurs ten times in Genesis 1.]

So we have many more different kinds of animals today than Noah took in the Ark. They have diversified in the 4,500 years since the Flood. The actual number of animals Noah put on board depends on what a biblical “kind” is.

Woodmorappe in his book “*Noah's Ark: A Feasibility Study*” calculated that the number of animals would have been less than 16,000 *assuming* that a biblical kind is roughly equivalent to the group of animals we call a genus today. However, if the biblical kind is equivalent to the ‘family’ grouping, then there would have only been 2,000 animals. Probably it was somewhere in between.

The animals would have been easily housed in small enclosures because most animals are small, on average the size of a rabbit. Even large animals, such as the biggest dinosaurs, began their lives small. In selecting creatures to repopulate the earth, it would make more sense to choose those that were young and healthy, rather than the older, mature ones.

And the size of the Ark? It was huge. It had a capacity of over 500 railroad stock cars, enough to carry more than 120,000 sheep. So there was plenty of room in the Ark for the animals, for their food and water, and for Noah and his family.

*Creation Magazine*

---

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES*

**PRACTICAL GODLINESS**

**The Doctrine of Marriage (II)**

The Holy Spirit has instructed us as to why the woman is to be subject unto her husband and also to the men in the church. "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety" (1 Timothy 2. 9-15).

This truth is reinforced by the Holy Spirit in Peter's first epistle: "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord:

whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered" (1 Peter 3. 1-7).

The sacred institution of marriage is between one man and one woman. This was the original institution. When man fell into sin, his behaviour deteriorated in every way and no more so than in the marriage relationship. Men began to have more than one wife and God was offended by man's behaviour. "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years" (Genesis 6. 1-3). God shortened man's life because of this sin. Up until this time, many men lived eight or nine hundred years: Methuselah 969 years (Genesis 5. 27).

In the holy law of God, the sanctity of the marriage state is enshrined in the ten commandments: "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Exodus 20. 14). The Holy Spirit, through the Apostle Paul, confirms this in Romans 7. 1-3: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man."

Even the godly patriarchs sinned in this way by taking more than one wife, and they were followed in the same sin by the kings of Israel and Judah. But if we look at the teachings of

our Lord Jesus Christ, He takes us back to the original institution in the Garden of Eden. He tells us that under the Law, even Moses allowed a bill of divorcement. Let us look at the Scripture: "And the Pharisees came to Him, and asked Him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting Him. And He answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. And in the house His disciples asked Him again of the same matter. And He saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery" (Mark 10. 2-12).

Nothing could be clearer here in that the Lord Jesus takes us back to the original institution and reasserts it. Hence in the New Testament, polygamy (more than one wife) is not allowed, but a monogamous (only one wife) relationship is the only one known under New Testament teaching. This is reinforced by the Holy Spirit in the epistles of the New Testament: "A bishop then must be blameless, **the husband of one wife**, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach" (1 Timothy 3. 2). "**Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife**, ruling their children and their own houses well" (1 Timothy 3. 12). "If any be blameless, **the husband of one wife**, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly." (Titus 1. 6). These Scriptures establish that this is correct New Testament practice for the Christian church.

(to be continued)

*J.R. Rutt*

# **BIBLE QUESTIONS**

*This month the questions are about THE MIRACLES OF JESUS AS RECORDED BY JOHN. 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. What was the first miracle Jesus performed and where was He? (John 2. 1-11)
2. What did the nobleman say to the Lord Jesus concerning his dying son? (John 4. 46-54)
3. What exhortation did Jesus give to the people following the feeding of the five thousand? (John 6. 27)
4. At which miracle did Jesus say: "I am the Resurrection, and the Life"? (John 11. 25)
5. What did the Pharisees especially find fault with Jesus for in the miracles we read of in John 5. 9-10 and John 9. 14-16?
6. Jesus performed miracles at which two pools in Jerusalem? (John 5 & 9)
7. What argument did the man who was born blind use to show that Jesus was sent of God? (John 9)
8. In two miracles already mentioned, Jesus afterwards found the person healed in another place. Which two miracles were they and what did Jesus say to each of them?
9. With which miracle is the number 153 associated?
10. Only two of the miracles recorded in John, both in one chapter, are mentioned in other gospels. Which are they?

## **ANSWERS TO JULY QUESTIONS**

1. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"
2. Contrite and humble.
3. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."
4. Josiah.
5. Pharaoh.
6. The Pharisees. (Luke 16. 15)
7. "Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw

near Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour Me, but have removed their heart far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the precept of men.” (Isaiah 29. 13)

8. Samuel looked at the outward appearance; the LORD looks on the heart. (1 Samuel 16. 7)
9. Fruit, or how they act and speak. (Matthew 7. 15-20)
10. Eliab was headstrong, jealous, ready to judge by appearances without examining a matter and indifferent to the feelings of others.

*Contributed*

---

### THE LEANING TREE

The preacher – a wayworn man – gave vent  
To a thought which carried a sweet content;  
He was tenderly speaking of God’s great care  
For His vessels of mercy here and there.

“To the penitent soul who fears the Lord,  
Whose ways lie straight with His Holy Word.  
The fear of death is a needless fear,  
Though many suffer it year by year.

So do they see their native sin,  
So do they fail in the fight within,  
That the common cry as the days fly past,  
Is, ‘Will it be right with my soul at last’?

My friend, do you know of a wayside tree,  
Which has grown with you from infancy,  
The which, in the breeze or in the squall,  
Has leaned to the quarter in which it will fall?

’Twould be strange indeed if a tempest rent  
An old tree backwards from where it leant;  
So you, my friend, in life’s closing scene,  
Shall go to the God towards whom you lean.”

*M.A. Chaplin*



# *The Friendly Companion*



“The LORD hath made all things for Himself.”  
(Proverbs 16. 4)

---

*September 2007*

Editor: Mr. G.D. Buss, "Bethany", 7 Laines Head, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 1PH.

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: [gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk)

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.

Volume 133

September 2007

## CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	195
Our Front Cover Picture	196
God's Last Word	198
For The Very Little Ones: Carried to Jesus	200
Colouring Text: Matthew 1. 21.	201
Bible Lessons: A Sinful Woman In The Pharisee's House	202
Pleading The Cause Of The Widow	204
Difficult Questions (VI)	206
Swear Not At All	207
Museum's Tablet Lends New Weight To Biblical Truth	208
Bible Study For The Older Ones:	
Practical Godliness: The Doctrine Of Marriage (III)	210
Bible Questions:	
Questions Asked By Or About The Lord Jesus	212
Poetry: The Sower	214
List Of Names	215

*Cover Picture © Tom Lindroos*

### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

It is a wonderful privilege, which not all Christians enjoy, to have a chapel or church to attend every Lord's Day and in the week also. We should never take this for granted because there may come a day when this blessing may not be ours as freely as we have it now.

You will often hear ministers speak about the House of the Lord, meaning the place where we worship. Of course, in Old Testament times the House of the Lord was primarily the Tabernacle and later the Temple. Here God revealed His glory in a very marked way from time to time.

Now that the Lord Jesus has come, we do not need a temple such as they needed in the Old Testament, because the body of Jesus Himself is the Temple, wherein the glory of God dwells permanently and where the Holy Law of God has been completely fulfilled in obedience and sacrifice.

The bodies of believers are also said to be the temple of God, because God has put His Holy Spirit in them and dwells in them.

So wherever God's people meet for worship, in a special sense there is a temple for the Lord. We do not worship the building, but on the other hand, we should highly esteem the places that have been set apart for worship. We should seek to dress in a sober manner, not casually as if we were going to the beach, nor as if competing in a fashion parade. To draw attention to ourselves in either way is displeasing to God. Of course, those who may come to the House of God for the first time can not be expected to understand these things. But most of you have been brought up to respect the House of God in this way and it is sad when we see a falling away from those standards of behaviour and dress which are to show our respect for the One whom we seek to worship. Aaron's sons were suddenly slain for not giving the due respect to God's House, when they knew what should be their behaviour.

But there is an even more important aspect to consider. The Word of God says "Holiness becometh Thine house, O

LORD, for ever.” Holiness was the great theme of the Tabernacle and Temple. That is why there was such an emphasis on sacrifice and atonement in their worship. The holiness spoken of is primarily that of the heart which shows itself by fruits in the life of a child of God.

The Temple of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ was a holy temple in every way. It is holy by its nature and holy because no sin has ever entered His holy person.

A child of God is said to be a holy temple, but whilst we are in our natural bodies, sin will cling to us. However a believer will long to be holy, and grieve because he is not yet what he would be. He remembers what the Word of God says: “Be ye holy for I am holy.” He needs the Lord Jesus Christ by His Spirit to impart such a grace daily and especially in the Lord’s House.

May we lay these things to heart.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

---

### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

#### **Swifts: lessons on the wing (1)**

Each April, many people look out for the arrival of the swallow from Africa. It is often seen as heralding the beginning of summer and departure of the darker winter months. It is an established bird of the British summer, skimming across fields as it catches flies to feed its young, perhaps in a nearby farm building. In late summer we see swallows congregating on telegraph wires as they prepare to head back south again to Africa.

Between the swallows’ arrival and departure from our land, there is another bird that both comes from and returns to Africa. It is often described as “the last to come and the first to go.” Out of the migrant birds such as swallows and martins, this is indeed true. It is the swift.

All of God’s creation has lessons to teach us. Wherever we are, whatever nation we live in or language is spoken, creation speaks to us. Speaking of creation, Psalm 19 says: “There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line

is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.” It is sad to see how many people, including the young, have no regard or interest in the natural world about them. Satan will do all he can to make people follow after other pleasures and entertainments so that they forget, and perhaps do not even know, God to whom we are all accountable.

The swift is a remarkable bird. More importantly it has lessons to teach us and these are displayed each year it returns.

Its arrival is usually announced in mid-May, as it heads north across our towns and cities, with its shrill screams. Unlike the red, white and blue of the swallow, the swift is slightly larger, dark in colour but with very distinctive sickle shaped wings. Its aerobatics, as they catch insects or chase each other noisily amongst the rooftops, are spectacular. They have wide mouths to help them catch their food which consists mainly of young spiders floating in the air on threads of web but they will also take moths and mosquitoes.

The swift has an amazing ability to detect bad weather. A cold weather front might be five hundred miles away when the swift becomes aware of it and it will fly literally thousands of miles to avoid it, even spending several days away from its young to do so. During this time, the young birds in the nest are able to become torpid, which is like hibernation, to slow their body rate down so that they burn less fat if there is little food about. When the weather is good and insects are plentiful, the young are brought up to forty meals a day and each one can contain up to one thousand insects. The parents carry them in 'boluses' (balls) in their throat.

The swift spends more time in the air than any other bird and will rarely, if ever, land other than to breed. The rest of its life is spent in the air where it eats, sleeps and drinks. At night it goes up to about 6,000 ft (1,850 metres) and circles round and round in big circles taking short periods of sleep as it does so. During its lifetime, a swift may fly several million miles.

These facts alone are wonders of creation and speak clearly

to us of a Creator. The transition of the swift from chick to fledgling is also equally amazing. Being fed with up to forty meals a day, the young birds, a few days before they are due to take to the air, are too heavy to fly and their wings have too much moisture in them. So for their last few days in the nest, the parent birds do not feed them so that the fledglings lose weight and the wings dry.

Unlike many birds, the maiden flight of the swift is huge. When it leaves the nest, its wings, which have never been used before, won't stop until it lands again to breed itself, but that might be two years or more away. In this time it may fly up to 300,000 miles – further than the distance between the earth and moon. It has never flown before; it has never caught food before; it has never been to Africa before; and yet, before eight a.m. in the morning, when the parents are away, off it goes, heading south almost immediately. Within two days it can be hundreds of miles away from the nest and completely independent.

Next month we will look at a few of the lessons that the swift has to teach us.

*J.P.S.*

---

### **GOD'S LAST WORD**

Gerald B. Winrod, who was editor of an American magazine, *"The Defender,"* related a remarkable story about an atheist who had been very bold, blatant and outspoken against God and the Bible. He had defied God by saying: "If there is a God, my grave will be infested with snakes." At the funeral it was necessary to remove a snake from the grave before the coffin could be lowered, the sexton saying that he had killed four big snakes at one time, yet never saw a snake at any other grave.

Mr. Winrod's informant said he would ask a gentleman in Ohio to give him more details, and in due course he received a further word, together with a picture of the bronze monument of the atheist, Chester Beddell, who had died in 1908 at the age of 82. The letter said: "Mr. Beddell said, while living, there was no God, and he never did believe in one. He did not

hesitate to speak of these things ... He built the monument years before his death. His statue is of bronze, and in his uplifted right hand there is a scroll with this inscription: 'Universal Mental Liberty.' Under his left foot is a scroll representing the Bible, with the inscription: 'Superstition.' Before his death he made this remark: 'If there is a God, or any truth in the Bible, let my body be infested with snakes.' Since his burial, the family plot has been full of snake holes around the kerbing. Snakes can be seen any day you visit the graveyard. Last year twenty of us went out on 30th October, and saw three snakes. The neighbours there say the more they kill, the thicker they seem to be."

Later, the opportunity came to Mr. Winrod to make an observation of his own. Whilst engaged in a conference in Youngstown, he was taken by car to North Benton. He asked an old man if he could tell him where the Beddell grave was. "Sure, everybody around here knows where Chet Beddell was buried," said the old-timer. "You can't miss it – big monument in the graveyard. Looking for snakes?"

Later, another man said: "Well, if Beddell did ask for snakes, he sure got'em!" He and his companions came to the place in question where they saw the monument, the uplifted scroll, the other scroll under his foot, the stern bronze countenance. They approached the grave, camera in hand. Was it a hoax, or was it true? One of his companions was the first to see a snake. "Look there," he shouted. Yes! There it was. They walked around the grave and counted six snakes. His companion killed one. He photographed one. They also took other photographs. The sexton told them that he had killed four that morning – he had killed as many as twenty snakes in a single day. Finally he said: "I don't know, maybe the Lord did have something to do with it." It is a remarkable story, and only one of the many others that could be related of the danger of putting God out of the life.

*E. Matheson in Gathered Gems. (Psalm 14.1; 53. 1.)*

*FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES***CARRIED TO JESUS**

As Jesus taught the people, He also healed many who were sick. One man was carried to Jesus by four kind friends. He was sick with a palsy and lay on a bed which was like a mat. He was unable to walk or move by himself.

When they came to the house where Jesus was preaching, they could not get near the door because of the crowd. But these four friends did not give up. They carried him up onto the flat housetop and removed the tiles of the roof to make an opening. Then they let down his bed before Jesus.

*"When Jesus saw their faith, He said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee."* Oh how happy he must have been! This was a greater blessing than having his body healed. It was the gift of salvation; one day he would go to heaven. Then, to show that He had *"power on earth to forgive sins,"* Jesus said: *"Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house."* Immediately the man with the palsy stood on his feet. He took up his bed and returned home: *"glorifying God."*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who carried the man with the palsy to Jesus?
2. What did Jesus first say to him? (six words)
3. How did he return home? (two words)

*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.*

*Contributed*

**ANSWERS TO AUGUST QUESTIONS**

1. At the feet of Jesus.
2. Depart from them.
3. Go and tell.



*“... Thou  
shalt call  
His name  
JESUS: for  
He shall  
save His  
people from  
their sins.”  
Matthew 1. 21.*

*BIBLE LESSONS***A SINFUL WOMAN IN THE PHARISEE'S HOUSE**

While Jesus was in one of the cities of Galilee, He was invited to dinner at a certain house. What an honour to be thus invited! But who was this kind friend? His name was Simon, and he was one of the Pharisees. Was he different to other Pharisees in his feelings toward Jesus? Not really: he only disguised it by a kind deed.

In the hot climate of Judea, when guests arrived, they would be greeted with a kiss, not a hand shake like we do. Then a servant would take a bowl of water to wash the dust off the guests' feet. This must have felt very refreshing and cooling after the hot journey. Lastly, the head would be anointed with a sweet-smelling oil to ease the stench of sweat.

When all the guests had arrived, they would gather around the table. They did not sit on chairs, as we do; instead, they lay on couches with their heads near the table and their feet away from it.

While Jesus sat at meat with the Pharisee and his guests, there was a great commotion. An uninvited guest entered the room. It was a woman who was known for her great sins. However did she dare to enter the Pharisee's house? She must have felt the scorn of their looks as she entered. Yet, she had something in her heart that was stronger than the fear of man, and that was LOVE to Jesus. Seeing Jesus, she hastened to Him and stood at His feet weeping. As she wept, her tears fell on Jesus feet. Then she knelt down and began to wash His feet with her tears. Soon His feet were wet from all her tears, and she began to wipe them with her long hair. Next she kissed His feet and broke open a beautiful box of ointment that was very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus.

As Simon watched the scene unfold, he became disgusted with the woman and with the Lord Jesus. He knew this woman and what a sinful life she lived. He was ashamed to have her come into his house. How could Jesus allow her to touch Him? He thought this was proof that Jesus was not a prophet,

much less God. If He were really a prophet, He would have known what a great sinner she was.

However, Jesus did know what a sinner the woman had been; but He also knew the thoughts of Simon. He said to Simon: *"I have somewhat to say unto thee."* Simon answered: *"Master, say on."* Jesus answered: *"A certain creditor ... had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he, ... forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?"* Simon knew the answer to this; it was the one that was forgiven most.

Then Jesus showed to Simon what was lacking in his heart. Though he had shown kindness by inviting Jesus to his dinner, yet he lacked LOVE. He had not given water to wash His feet, but the woman washed them by her tears of repentance. He did not give Jesus the kiss of friendship, but the woman had kissed His feet many times. Simon would not spare his oil to anoint the head of Jesus, but the woman sacrificed her most costly ointment in anointing His feet.

What wonderful words the Lord then spoke: *"Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much."*

*You can read about this in Luke chapter 7 verses 36 to 50.*

#### QUESTIONS:

1. Who invited Jesus to dinner in his house?
2. What was the uninvited guest known for?
3. What did she wash the feet of Jesus with?
4. What did she have that was stronger than the fear of man?
5. What did Simon lack?

*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. About twenty miles.
2. "Weep not."
3. "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise."
4. A great prophet.
5. His people.

### PLEADING THE CAUSE OF THE WIDOW

The following anecdote shows how a Scotsman, Mr. MacPherson, reached the hearts and pockets of his congregation. It would sound strange from our pulpits, we expect; nor might it be entirely desirable. We, however, hope the cause of our own poor friends, widows and others, may be as effectually pleaded by One in the hearts of many, and move them to subscribe freely to the "Gadsby Memorial Christmas Fund" in connection with our Societies.

"The congregation will now be seated, and give their undivided attention to the following case," said Mr. MacPherson, as he finished addressing the Throne of Grace. He was nearly in his eightieth year, and had worn, to the point of being no longer usable, five Bibles in the pulpit desk of Auchterbirnie Kirk during fifty-five years. His parishioners esteemed him very highly for his work's sake, and although practically penniless, for he gave most of his large income to the poor, they saw to it that the minister lacked for nothing.

The old man read the announcements in the "good old mother Scotch," and then after a pause, said: "I hear that Widow Tamson is in destitute circumstances. This must not be. None of God's heritage must suffer in the midst of the kind folks of Auchterbirnie. Think of this on the way to your homes. We have it in the Word of God that never fails, that: 'He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD.' This is a blessed privilege. Think of the farmers of Auchterbirnie being lenders, and having the Lord for a customer. He will not default, for it will be returned, twenty, thirty, fifty, and one-hundred-fold. Now, you can produce fine crops of wheat and corn and potatoes, as I can testify; for the Lord has moved your hearts and you have been most generous to me. Then see if you can produce good crops of brother compassion, and bring the first fruits of the harvest to poor Widow Tamson. Sanders Grant will send her a load of firewood. Fine logs, I know that: I see it in Sanders' generous eye; and fine kindling he keeps too; and I well know, for I'm burning some myself, thanks to Sanders' kindness."

Sanders, sitting in his pew, the observed of all observers, was by this time completely won over, and would gladly have given Widow Tamson anything he owned at that minute, so much had the minister's diplomatic words moved his heart.

"And Peter Michie will send her a little tea. O, but it will not be missed out of Peter's abundant store. Peter is beholden to the Lord for many things, and is a living example of the never-failing truth of God's Word: 'The hand of the diligent maketh rich.' Peter's a hard-working man, to which we can testify." Peter, too, fell in line. Like Sanders, he had been quite won by the minister's words.

"Jimmy Grant was telling me the other day," continued Mr. MacPherson, "that he was milling some fine meal. Now, I quite believe it. He is the only miller in Auchterbirnie, and there's never a miller from Maiden Kirk to John o'Groats that can compare with him. Better send a little to the widow, Jimmy, and keep up your account with the Master." And after so powerful an advertisement, how could Jimmy refuse? He, too, made up his mind to help the poor. "Beaton Scott will send the widow some of the fine potatoes I saw in his barn last Tuesday. I needn't ask Beaton, for I know full well he wouldn't want to be backward in doing a kind act for a deserving widow in Auchterbirnie. And our good friend, Will Chapman, who by the looks of him can scarcely keep his seat, so anxious is he to do something, can throw in a chicken and a rabbit to fill the widow's pot. There is no fear of the widow starving when the Lord has put the salt of the earth in the parish Kirk of Auchterbirnie. The Lord has promised to be 'a husband to the widow,' and he wants you to be brothers-in-law, and I'm glad you respond so nobly. You're a gallant-looking lot of Christians with big hearts. The Lord reward your work of love. Now let's praise His name for raising up in Auchterbirnie so many who honour the faith," and Mr. MacPherson once more approached the Throne of Grace.

*Adapted – Friendly Companion 1906*

## DIFFICULT QUESTIONS (VI)

### **Are stars born naturally?**

It depends on quite what is meant by the question. When God created the world, everything was very good and in perfect order. If someone were to ask: “Can new breeds of dogs develop naturally?” or “Can new variants of flowers come about naturally?” the answer is “Yes,” because of naturally occurring genetic changes through cross-breeding or mutations. No new genetic information is gained in these changes, but much can be lost which prevents certain traits being recovered. All natural processes tend towards a state of greater entropy or disorder – this is the second law of thermodynamics.

It is similar with the creation of the heavens. Since the creation, many changes in the stars have happened, and still do. Stars can change their characteristics, may even explode, and there is evidence to suggest that new stars are being created from clouds of gas in space. But all this must have a beginning, and the overall natural tendency is for the universe to be “winding down.”

I must confess that I feel reluctant to say much on questions of this kind, because the theories behind star formation and space science generally are subjective and constantly changing, as so many of the processes going on in space cannot be directly observed and are inferred from other observations. I well remember in my earlier days one occasion when one of my uncles started talking about “black holes,” their effects and the implications of the received science about them. It troubled me, till I believe the Lord quietened my spirit with these two lines:

“Suffice for us, that God we know,  
Our God was manifest below.”

I felt then, I could willingly leave all the “scientific knowledge” – I had an infinitely greater privilege of being brought to know the Lord Jesus, who created all things by the

word of His mouth and who governs all things. Our wisdom is not to know how or why, but to know Him, whom to know is life eternal. Oh, to be among those of whom it is said: "For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." It is a mercy too that this knowledge is revealed to babes, and solemnly hidden from the wise.

*Contributed*

---

**"SWEAR NOT AT ALL"**

(Matthew 5. 34)

Swear not by the creatures: that in effect is swearing by their Maker. Neither swear by thy Maker, unless called to it by authority for the putting an end to strife: swear not falsely, that is, calling the God of truth to witness a lie: swear not needlessly or rashly, as Saul did (1 Samuel 14. 39). Such oaths or vows are ensnaring; better broken than kept; but best not made at all. Swear not idle, common oaths, such as, O Christ! O God! By my soul! As I live! God bless me! If we must give account for every idle word, much more for every idle oath, and most of all for horrible cursing and blasphemy, that profanes God's name, and is the very language of hell. He that is guilty of perjury, not only is destroying his own soul, but is seeking to ruin his neighbour, by perverting justice and robbing the innocent of his right. Yea, sometimes God takes a false-swearer and self-curser at his word, and strikes him dead on the spot. Lord, help the guilty to repent of their sin, and help all to watch and pray against it.

"From false and rash and idle oaths,  
Defend my tongue, O Lord:  
Let salt of grace hang on my lips,  
To season every word."

*C.H.V. Bogatzky (Golden Treasury Daily Readings)*

### **MUSEUM'S TABLET LENDS NEW WEIGHT TO BIBLICAL TRUTH**

The British Museum recently hailed a discovery within a modest clay tablet in its collection as a breakthrough for Biblical archaeology – dramatic proof of the accuracy of the Old Testament.

The cuneiform inscription in a tablet dating from 595 BC has been deciphered for the first time – revealing a reference to an official at the court of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, that proves the historical existence of a figure mentioned in the Book of Jeremiah.

This is rare evidence in a non-Biblical source of a real person, other than kings, featured in the Bible.

The tablet names a Babylonian officer called Sarsechim, who according to Jeremiah 39 was present in 587 BC when Nebuchadnezzar came “and all his army against Jerusalem, and they besieged it.”

The cuneiform inscription records how Sarsechim lavished a gift of gold on the Temple of Esangila in the fabled city of Babylon, where, at least in folk tradition, Nebuchadnezzar is credited with building the Hanging Gardens, one of the Seven Wonders of the World. British Museum staff are excited by the discovery. Irving Finkel, assistant keeper in the Department of the Middle East, said: “A mundane commercial transaction takes its place as a primary witness to one of the turning points in Old Testament history. This is a tablet that deserves to be famous.”

The discovery was made by Michael Jursa, associate professor at the University of Vienna, on a routine research trip to the museum. “It’s very exciting and very surprising,” he said. “Finding something like this tablet, where we see a person mentioned in the Bible, making an everyday payment to the temple in Babylon and quoting the exact date, is quite extraordinary.”

Since 1991, Dr. Jursa has been visiting the museum to study a collection of more than 100,000 inscribed tablets – the world’s



largest holding. Although they are examined by international scholars daily, reading and piecing together fragments is painstaking work and more than half are yet to be published.

Cuneiform is the oldest known form of writing. During its 3,000-year history, it was used to write about fifteen languages, including Babylonian, Assyrian, Hittite and Urartian. A wedged instrument – usually a cut reed – was used to press the signs into clay. This gave the writing system its name, “cuneiform,” or wedge-shaped.

There are only a small number of scholars worldwide who can read cuneiform script. One of them is Dr. Jursa, who told “*The Times*” yesterday that the British Museum tablet was so well preserved that it took him just a couple of minutes to decipher.

This one – which is 2.13 inches (5.5 cm) wide – was acquired by the British Museum in 1920. Dr. Jursa said: “But no one realised the connection. They didn’t really read it.”

It was unearthed from the ancient city of Sippar, where there was a huge sun temple, just over a mile from modern-day Baghdad. It was part of a large temple archive excavated for the British Museum in the 1870s.

Dr. Jursa, who made the discovery while conducting research into officials at the Babylonian court, said that the tablet recorded Sarsechim’s gift of gold to the temple – a gift so large that it would be comparable in value today to the cost of a large townhouse.

On hearing of the discovery, Geza Vermes, the eminent emeritus professor of Jewish studies at the University of Oxford, said that such a discovery revealed that “the Biblical story is not altogether invented.” He added: “This will be interesting for religious people as much as historians.”

*Dalya Alberge, Arts Correspondent, The Times*

*To those who believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God and true in its entirety, such discoveries are of no surprise, although greatly interesting. What a mercy it would*

*be if these things caused sinners to ask the question: "If this be true, then what about all the other truths in the Bible, concerning sin and salvation and the Lord Jesus Christ?" Perhaps the jailor's question might then be asked also: "What must I do to be saved?"*

*Editor*

---

**BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**

**PRACTICAL GODLINESS**

**The Doctrine of Marriage (III)**

Let us look at the case of the woman of Samaria, who the Lord Jesus met by Jacob's well: "Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said: I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that thou saidst truly. The woman saith unto Him, Sir, I perceive that Thou art a prophet" (John 4. 16-19). It is very clear that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, did not recognise living together as being married. My dear young friends may the Lord keep you from this sinful practice of living together when not married. (The Scriptures call this fornication. Adultery is unfaithfulness by a married person.) The Scriptures do not recognise what are sometimes called common law marriages. There must be a formal commitment with vows taken before Almighty God, until death us do part. "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13. 4). Notice the solemn admonition of Almighty God: "Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

Much is made of what is often called the exceptive clause in the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. "It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: but I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery" (Matthew 5. 31-32). Some gracious people feel that this Scripture gives an exception to

the law, and that a person whose husband or wife has entered into a relationship with another person, is free to marry again. Others feel that the opposite is stated and that such persons are free to separate but not to remarry whilst their husband or wife is still alive. The present writer feels strongly that the latter is the true position.

The Apostle, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, states most clearly: "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife" (1 Corinthians 7. 10-11). With great clarity the Scriptures teach us that the foundation of Christian marriage is that the Lord God only recognises one man with one wife and the only thing which dissolves the marriage bond is death.

Hebrews 13. 4 tells us that the marriage bond is for the mutual good of the husband and wife and for the procreation of children. The natural fruit of marriage is children and the father and the mother are to raise their family within this sacred union ordained by God. "Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is His reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate" (Psalm 127. 3-5). Also, "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table" (Psalm 128. 3).

We are given instruction regarding the marriage relationship in Holy Scripture concerning the duty of mothers to guide the house and look after the family. "That ... the young women ... be sober, ... love their husbands, ... love their children, ... discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Titus 2. 4-6). Historically, in our country the usual practice has been for the father to go out to work and the mother to look after

the children. This is because we were a Christian country and our traditions were based on Holy Scripture, such as the one just quoted. We see how bad it is for the family when mothers go out to work leaving their young children to be cared for by others. In Christian teaching, the wife and mother is given a very central role in the life of the family. It brings harm to the unity of the family when Holy Scripture is ignored in this regard. Past generations who kept to this principle, proved that the Lord supplied all their needs even though their faith was often tried: yet the Lord did provide.

My dear young friends, only enter into marriage if you are absolutely sure. It is for life, and "be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Corinthians 6. 14).

*J. R. Rutt*

---

QUESTION: On whom did the condition of the covenant fall?

ANSWER: The Second Person in the Trinity, who, knowing the elect would destroy themselves by sin, engaged to be accountable for them, and to take all the consequences connected therewith upon Himself, and in His own time to send them the Holy Spirit, who should teach them all truth; and, at last, present them to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

*Isaiah 9. 6-7; John 16. 7-14 & 17. 8-15; Ephesians 5. 25-27;  
Hebrews 9. 28.*

---

### BIBLE QUESTIONS

*This month the questions are about QUESTIONS ASKED BY OR ABOUT THE LORD JESUS. 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. What was the first question we read of being asked about the Lord Jesus? (Matthew 2. 2)
2. Which two solemn questions did Jesus ask in Mark 8. 36-37?

3. What had Jesus just said which caused the disciples to ask: "Who then can be saved?" (Matthew 19. 25)
4. What was the answer given to the question of Jesus: "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" (John 9. 35)
5. "Art thou a master in Israel and knowest not these things?" To whom was Jesus speaking? (John 3. 10)
6. What were the first questions we read of that Jesus asked? (Luke 2)
7. The Pharisees asked the disciples: "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" What did Jesus reply? (Matthew 9)
8. When Jesus asked, "Woman, why weepest thou, Whom seekest thou?" to whom was He speaking and what were the answers to the questions? (John 20)
9. Which three questions did Jesus say we should "take no thought" to ask? (Matthew 6)
10. Write out a question that the Lord Jesus asked the Pharisees which they were either unable or unwilling to answer (Matthew 21).

#### **ANSWERS TO AUGUST QUESTIONS**

1. Jesus turned the water into wine at Cana in Galilee.
2. "Sir, come down ere my child die."
3. "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life."
4. The raising of Lazarus from the dead.
5. The Pharisees found fault with Jesus because He had healed on the Sabbath Day.
6. Bethesda (John 5. 2) and Siloam (John 9. 7).
7. "Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing." (John 9. 32-33)
8. The impotent man. "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." (John 5. 14). The man born blind. "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" (John 9. 35)
9. The miraculous draught of fishes. (John 21. 11)
10. The feeding of the five thousand, and Jesus walking on the water, both in John 6.

*Contributed*

**THE SOWER**

Ye sons of earth prepare the plough,  
Break up your fallow ground:  
The sower is gone forth to sow,  
And scatter blessings round.

The seed that finds a stony soil  
Shoots forth a hasty blade:  
But ill repays the sower's toil,  
Soon withered, scorched, and dead.

The thorny ground is sure to baulk  
All hopes of harvest there:  
We find a tall and sickly stalk,  
But not the fruitful ear.

The beaten path and highway side  
Receive the trust in vain;  
The watchful birds the spoil divide,  
And pick up all the grain.

But where the Lord of grace and power  
Has blessed the happy field,  
How plenteous is the golden store  
The deep-wrought furrows yield.

Father of mercies, we have need  
Of Thy preparing grace;  
Let the same Hand that gives the seed  
Provide a fruitful place.

*William Cowper*

---

Of Julian, the apostate, it is said that in the days of his prosperity, he pointed his dagger to heaven in defiance of the Son of God, whom he commonly called the Galilean. But when he was fatally wounded in battle, he is alleged to have cried out: "Thou hast conquered, O Thou Galilean."

# LIST OF NAMES

*The following young people have answered questions during the months January to June 2007. The total number is 312, for which we would thank God.*

Maia Aldridge; Anthony and Fiona Ashby; Daniel and Naomi Aston; Matthew Aston.

Alasdair Bailey; Sarah Ball; Joseph, Mary and Samuel Banfield; Josiah Barker; Benjamin and William Bos; Joseph and Samuel Boulton; Abigail, Daniel, Joanna and Nathan Broome; Jonathan and Nicolas Burton; Sophie Buss.

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

Christine, Esther and Louise Dadswell.

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

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

Jacqueline and James Hallier; Oliver Hamilton; Edward Hanks; James Hanks; Eleanor, George and Jonathan Hare; Emily and Thomas Hart; Mary Hart; Benjamin and Suzanna Hayden; Joseph, Joshua, Luke and Nathanael Hayden; Andrew, Marcus and Susanna Hickman; Benjamin, Heidi and Thomas Hickman; Bethan and Rosalind Hickman; George Hickman; Thomas Hickman; Henry and Sophie Hook; Albert and Emily Hope; Eleanor and Esther Hope.

Abigail Izzard.

Emily Janes; Henry Johnson.

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

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

Deborah, Jason and Pauline Main; Hannah McNaughten; Claudia and Florence Mercer; James and Julia Mercer; Andrew, Henry and Samuel Munns.

Anna, Jonathan, Rebekah and Simeon Pack; Helen, Joseph, Matthew, Priscilla, Rebecca, Robert, Samuel and Sarah Parish; Anna, Chloe and Phoebe Parsons; Ruth and Sarah Payne; Elisabeth, 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 and Matthew Raymond; Joshua, Oliver and William Rayner; Matthew Rayner; James Rice; Susanna Risbridger; Freddie and Harry Rokison.

Chloe and John Sadler; Jessica, Rosanna and Timothy Salkeld; Charles, Emily and Rosaleen Saunders; Ethan and Samuel Saunders; Jasmine, Joseph and Timothy Saunders; Emily and Philippa Sayers; Hannah and Thomas Sebaduka; Jessica Seymour; Emma, Kate and Matthew Stearn; Alexander, Emma and Jessica Stevens; Ellen and Rebekah Suckling.

Harry and James Tarbin; Abigail Thorne; Bethany, James and Paul Topping; Amy and Henry Townsend; Alison and Andrew Tugwell.

Joanna, Natalie and Thomas Warboys; Esther and Thomas Wheatley; Ben and Beth Wigley; Emma Wigley; Abigail, Bethany and Charlotte Wilderspin; Bethany, Cordelia, Francesca, Gad, Jemima and Kitty Wiltshire; Joanna Wiltshire; Benjamin, Jessica, Louise and Timothy Woodhams; Edwin, Hannah, Joseph, Kate and Lucy Woodhams.

#### *Overseas Names:*

Miriam Aitch; 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; Heather and Heidi Neels; Paul Nowlan; Caleb, Danielle, Kelsey, Kendrick and Megan Oudshoorn; Emily and Jonathan Quist; John, Luke and Sandra Seymour; Andre, John and Valentina Sweetman; Nathaniel TenBroeke; Bethany, Kaitlyn and Michaela Teunissen; Jessie, Mariah and Matthew Toogood; Marilene Van de Munt; Evangeline, Philomena and Savannah Van Oort; Benjamin and John Van Vugt; Cody and Dylan White; Aaron, Andrew, Carolyn, 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*



“It is time to seek the LORD.”  
(Hosea 10. 12)

---

*October 2007*

Editor: Mr. G.D. Buss, "Bethany", 7 Laines Head, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 1PH.

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: [gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk)

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.

Volume 133

October 2007

## CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	219
Our Front Cover Picture	220
Difficult Questions (VII)	221
Editor's Postbag	221
For The Very Little Ones: "Now I See"	222
Colouring Text: John 9. 25.	223
Bible Lessons: The Strong Man Armed: Cast Out	224
Swifts: Lessons On The Wing (II)	226
Looking Around Us. Common Ancestors?	227
"This Poor Man Cried, And The Lord Heard Him"	228
"Feed My Lambs" (John 21. 15)	230
Some Interesting Facts from Arabia	233
God's Wonderful World – The Camel	234
The Number Seven In The Scriptures	235
Bible Study For The Older Ones:	
Practical Godliness: Covetousness	236
J. C. Philpot on New Versions of the Holy Scriptures	237
Bible Questions: Water	238
Poetry: All Important Question	239

### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

When I was at school, the autumn term was the time when we had to do cross-country running. Usually a run of between two or three miles was chosen, deliberately going through streams and other obstacles to make it more interesting or more exhausting, depending on which way you looked at it!

I wonder if you have noticed that there are three places in the Scriptures where we read of two men in a race and the winner has a lesson for us in each case?

Firstly, we have two men running to tell news of the death of Absalom to his father, David. Joab commanded Cushie to run, and he set off, taking the direct route which was, however, more hilly, and so more wearisome. Ahimaaz pleaded to be allowed to run, even though he had not the authority to tell the news to David. After much pleading, he persuaded Joab to let him go. He ran by the way of the flat plain, and outran his fellow-runner, Cushie. But when he arrived, he had no definite news to convey to David. They had to wait until Cushie arrived before the real message could be given. This is a lesson to us in that the easiest way is rarely the most profitable. The right way is a testing way and needs much patience, but in the end it is most profitable to faith.

Secondly, we have two disciples running to see the empty tomb of the Saviour. We might have thought that Peter, who was naturally a leader, would have beaten his fellow-disciple, John, to the sepulchre. But Peter had had a "fall" and in a sense was like a lame man, which hindered his running. He had denied the Saviour and, no doubt, the remembrance of the bitterness of that dreadful denial was much in his thoughts. However, John, the loving disciple, outran Peter, perhaps a wonderful lesson of the power of the constraining love of Christ. "I will run in the way of Thy commandments, when Thou shalt enlarge my heart," says the Psalmist.

Finally, we have a most amazing race! Elijah running in front of Ahab's chariot seventeen miles from Carmel to Jezreel.

It is said that to outrun the chariot he would have had to run at least forty miles an hour. We are told that "the hand of the LORD was on Elijah." This was the secret of his victory in this race. He, no doubt, knew what the Psalmist meant when he said: "I will go in the strength of the Lord."

In these three races we learn: firstly, that the right way is not usually the easiest path to our flesh; secondly, that when we sin our running in the race of faith is hindered; and that thirdly, without the hand of the Lord on us we could not run and win the race set before us.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

---

### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

October is the month when, in England, we change our clocks by moving them back one hour to what is called Greenwich Mean Time. (In the Summer we call it British Summer Time or BST. Then the time is one hour ahead of GMT.) If you see a map of the world with lines of longitude on it (the lines which go down the page of the map), you will see that the line 0 degrees goes through Greenwich near London. This has been the focal point for the calculation of time in the world for many generations.

Our picture this month is of what is arguably the most famous clock in the world: Big Ben. This can be seen towering over the Houses of Parliament in London close to the River Thames which flows nearby. What a message its booming bell tells out as the hours pass! It tells us not only the time at that moment but that time itself is passing. As Isaac Watts said:

"The present moments just appear,  
Then slide away in haste,  
That we can never say, "They're here,"  
But only say, "They're past."

How careful we should also be of what standard we use to regulate our clocks!

Many years ago there was a clock over a shop in a market-

town in England. Every day a business man walked past at precisely 8.00 am on his way to work. He was so regular that the shop owner regulated his clock by this man's time-keeping. One day he was in conversation with him. The business man said: "You know your clock is so accurate that I regulate my time exactly by its time-keeping."

"Oh," said the man, "I thought you were so regular that I adjust my clock to your passing each day!"

However well meaning these two men were, you can see the danger. They were comparing themselves with themselves and coming to what was, in all probability, an inaccurate conclusion. The Bible tells us that those who compare themselves in this manner are not wise. There is only one true standard of comparison for our behaviour, and that is the unerring Word of God. This is like our Greenwich Mean Time, and even more accurate than that, for even that precision needs minute adjustment every so often, whereas the Word of God needs no such amendment.

---

### DIFFICULT QUESTIONS (VII)

#### **2 Samuel 24.24 with 1 Chronicles 21.25.**

The former passage states that David bought the threshing-floor for fifty shekels of silver; the latter, as inattentive readers assume, for 600 shekels of gold.

The passages are harmonised by observing that the smaller sum was paid for the "threshing-floor and the oxen," the larger sum for the "place" upon which the threshing-floor stood. The total price paid, therefore, for the whole piece of ground, with the threshing-floor and the oxen, was 600 shekels of gold and fifty shekels of silver.

*Selected*

---

### EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from HARRY ALDRIDGE; CORNELIA HAYDEN; KATIE MACPHERSON; NATHAN RAYNER; ELISABETH TOPPING.*

**FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES****“NOW I SEE”**

A man had been born blind, but now he could see. He used to sit and beg. Now people were amazed to find him walking around without a guide. They wanted to know how his eyes were opened. He told them a Man called Jesus made clay and put it on his eyes and asked him to wash in the pool of Siloam. He told them: *“I went and washed, and I received sight.”*

Never before had one who was born blind received sight! They asked his parents if he was really born blind. Then they asked many more questions of this man who had been blind. He answered: *“One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.”*

All people are born with blind hearts. When the Lord begins to teach His people, their eyes are opened to see themselves as sinners and Jesus as their Saviour. There are many things they do not know or understand, but they can say one thing: *“whereas I was blind, now I see.”*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What did Jesus put on the blind man's eyes?
2. What was he told to do in the pool of Siloam?
3. What one thing did he know? (last 3 words)

*Please send your answers to the Editor (address on page 218). Remember to give your name and address.*

**ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS**

1. Four (kind) friends.
2. Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.
3. Glorifying God.

*Contributed*

*“One thing  
I know,  
that,  
whereas  
I was  
blind, now  
I see.”  
John 9. 25.*

**BIBLE LESSONS****THE STRONG MAN ARMED: CAST OUT**

Do you wonder why so many of the Jews, especially the Pharisees, hated the Lord Jesus? How could anyone be upset when He healed poor, afflicted people? The Pharisees were proud leaders who were unhappy when people began to follow Jesus instead of themselves. The main reason, however, was due to Satan's enmity and hatred of Jesus for delivering souls from his power and dominion. Thus, he stirred up the people against Jesus.

Wherever Jesus went, people followed Him. On one occasion when He entered a home, the people gathered around, and they brought a man unto Him who was greatly afflicted. The man was possessed with a devil. Satan had complete dominion over him. Besides this, the man was blind and dumb. The word dumb means he was unable to speak.

What a sad and solemn state; yet what a mercy to be brought to Jesus. Immediately, Jesus cast the devil out of the man. He also opened his eyes and loosed his tongue so that he saw and spoke: A THREEFOLD MIRACLE!

When the people saw the change, they were filled with wonder. They began to reason among themselves: "*Is not this the Son of David?*" By this they meant: "Could this Jesus be the Messiah?" This three-fold miracle could not be performed by a man; it must be the work of God.

Upon hearing the people reason that Jesus must be the Messiah that was to come, the Pharisees became enraged and full of envy. They could not let the people continue with these exalted thoughts of Jesus. But what could they do?

What an evil scheme they came up with. They told the people that Jesus cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. How daring and bold are proud ignorant sinners! They asserted that Jesus Himself had a devil. They could not see how they were the instruments of Satan in making such accusations. What an evil thing to call the work of God the devil's work!



Jesus knew all their thoughts and the words they were saying. He reminded them that if a nation or a house was divided, it would become weak and could not stand. Likewise: *“...if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself.”*

Then Jesus explained just what had happened. He, by the power of God, had entered and taken possession of the heart of this man, where once Satan ruled. He asked the question: *“How can one enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.”* The strong man the Lord refers to is the devil. His house is the heart of man: your heart and my heart.

What a solemn truth, that Satan’s goods are blindness and speechlessness. He blinds our eyes to God and His glory and stops our mouths from speaking His praise.

*You can read about this in Matthew chapter 12 verses 22 to 30.*

#### QUESTIONS:

1. Who did the people begin to reason that Jesus was?
2. What did this mean?
3. Who did Jesus refer to as the “strong man”?
4. What is the house of Satan?
5. What does Satan stop our mouths from speaking?

*Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on page 218). Please mark the envelope: ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.*

#### ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS

1. Simon (the Pharisee).
2. Her great sins.
3. Her tears.
4. Love to Jesus.
5. Love.

*G. L. TenBroeke*

**SWIFTS: LESSONS ON THE WING (II)**

Last month, we looked at the remarkable abilities of the swift. We shall now look at a few lessons that the swift has for us.

Of our summer visitors, the swift is known as “the last to come and the first to go.” It is only here for a short time. It is often gone before we realise it. It teaches us to remember that we are only here on the earth for a short time. Time is limited. Moses, the man of God, spoke much of this in Psalm 90: “For all our days are passed away in Thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.” Moses knew that he needed to be prepared for his end and prayed to be prepared for it: “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”

The swift is a fast flyer. Time is like that. It is continually passing away just like the sand in an egg timer. Each of us has a certain amount allotted. Some may have more, some less, but for each person, the sand is flowing away and one day it will be gone. The older we grow, the faster time feels to go just like in this poem.

“When I was a babe I laughed and wept: time crept.  
When I was a child, I played and talked: time walked.  
When I became a full-grown man: time ran.  
As older then I daily grew: time flew.  
Now I shall find in passing on: time's gone.”

The swift has wings shaped like a sickle. The sickle was used in years gone by to reap the harvest. Jesus often spoke of this event to illustrate what will happen at the end of time. There is coming a day that will be the last. Jesus said this of that last day: “But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.” What Jesus is saying here is that when a farmer sees that the crop he has sown is fully ripe, he will harvest it; so God, when His purposes on the earth are completed, will bring an end to time.

In the 14th chapter of Revelation we read of this again. John saw Jesus as the One with the sickle: "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud One sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in Thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for Thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped."

You may think that time is going very slowly. We are very time-bound on earth. Everything we do is tied to time. May you seek to use your time wisely as Moses prayed, and who in answer to those prayers, was helped to do so. You need God to teach you of Himself and the Lord Jesus that you may spend eternity, where there is no time, with Him. *J.P.S.*

---

#### **LOOKING AROUND US. Common Ancestors?**

"Scientists have finally proved," a newspaper report tells us, "the generations-old theory that all humans can claim a single set of common ancestors." Scientists had never been able to satisfy themselves that Australia's Aborigines came from the same stock as the rest of mankind. Now two scientists from Cambridge University have "found common DNA between peoples of Australasia and Melanesia and nearby New Guinea." So, they conclude, these peoples are all part of the one human family.

In fact, there ought never to have been any doubt that all human beings have the same ancestors. The Bible even tells us their names: Adam and Eve. And this is a matter of fundamental importance. You cannot throw away the Bible's teaching about mankind's beginnings without interfering with its teaching about the salvation God has provided. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15. 22). All of the Bible's teachings hang together; we dare not reject any of them.

*Young People's Magazine*

**“THIS POOR MAN CRIED, AND THE LORD HEARD HIM”**

John and Tom were in bed as I wearily looked in on them before entering my bedroom. Poor John was feeling quite ill. I went close to him and touched his arm. I said to him: “There is a little prayer that has helped me many times when in trouble, for God can make you feel better if you pray to Him for help. I have prayed this prayer many times, more than any other prayer.”

“What is it, Dad?” the boys said.

“LORD, HELP ME.”

“Will you tell us how the Lord has helped you when you prayed that prayer?” asked Tom.

“Well, about fifteen years ago, I used to graze our sheep on cabbages in the autumn and winter months. It was the outer leaves after the cabbages had been harvested. I used to pay the farmer ten pence per sheep per week. At the end of the winter I paid the farmer £130.

The next winter, there was hard frost for three weeks in December, which spoilt all the farmer’s cabbages. He said: ‘You will have to graze all the fields with sheep.’ There was much good feed for the sheep because all the cabbage hearts had not been harvested. I had nearly a thousand sheep on the cabbages. At the end of the winter, I reckoned up what I owed for the cabbages, and it was £1,130, exactly £1,000 more than the year before; but, oh dear, I had a problem.

It had been a hard winter. I had many bills to pay on the farm and I did not have any money left. The price for sheep had been very low and the cabbage farmer needed paying. He had been pushing me to pay a higher rate for the cabbages, and I knew that tomorrow he was coming to collect the money for the sheep grazing. I could, maybe, pay him £130 by the end of the month, but oh dear, not £1,130. Whatever shall I do?

All night I stayed awake, and all I could cry was: ‘Lord, help me; Lord, help me.’ All the next morning, while working with the sheep: ‘Lord, help me; Lord, help me.’ By the afternoon, I

was at my wits' end. The man was coming to collect the money at five o'clock. Wherever can the money come from? It is impossible. What shall I do? 'Lord, help me; Lord, help me.'

It was four o'clock. I was in my field by the pond. I fell down, and there was none to help. I cried: 'Lord, help me,' for an hour.

Five o'clock came, and I saw the man's car arrive in the gateway, about three hundred metres away. I was beyond all help now. I stood up. I staggered across the field like a drunken man. Every step: 'Lord, help me; Lord, help me; Lord, help me; Lord, help me.' I arrived at the gate, and lifted my downcast head to look at him, for I could not speak.

He said: 'I've been thinking, coming along: just pay me the same amount as you did last year, and send it to me by the end of the month,' and he went back to his car and drove off.

I turned around and walked back towards the pond. I ran; I skipped: £130 to pay instead of £1,130! I stopped and shouted out, for all the animals in the field to hear: 'The Lord has paid £1,000 for me!'

I fell on my knees by the pond.

'Oh, praise Him; praise Him.'

'Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name.'

'Oh give thanks unto the LORD, for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever.'

'The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?'

'He raiseth up the poor out of the dust and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill.'

'He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.'"

Tom said: "I like that prayer, I have learnt it already. It is: 'LORD, HELP ME.'"

*Contributed*

**“FEED MY LAMBS” (JOHN 21. 15)**

Your letter, dear friend, was suggestive of thought<sup>1</sup>,  
 And help from the Shepherd was earnestly sought,  
 In trying to answer well-founded complaint  
 That few under-shepherds consider the faint,  
 The small and the feeble, the backward and lame,  
 Although the Redeemer to ransom them came.  
 There is hardly a book in the whole Word of God  
 But speaks of the little ones under His rod –  
 The rod of direction, of comfort, and strength  
 To guide, to support, and to bless them at length  
 With fulness of joy in that beautiful land  
 Where children, newborn by His Spirit, shall stand.

God early called Jacob – man hates to be told;	Genesis 25. 23
E'en Moses could plead both for young and	
for old.	Exodus 10. 9.
The children must share in the great jubilee,	Leviticus 25. 41.
And cities for little ones Israel shall see.	Numbers 32.16.
The feeble, the hindmost, protection shall	Deuteronomy
share,	25. 18.
And young ones receive what the Scriptures	
declare.	Joshua 8. 35.
Manoah asked: “How shall we order the child?”	Judges 13. 12.
Naomi nursed Obed – how tender and mild!	Ruth 4. 16.
Young Samuel worshipped in quite early days,	1 Samuel 1. 28.
And David's lost infant now joins him in praise.	2 Samuel 12. 23.
Some good thing is found in a wicked king's	
son;	1 Kings 14. 13.
Josiah recalls a boy king of our own <sup>2</sup> .	2 Kings 22. 19.
Young Solomon tender was raised above all;	1 Chronicles 29. 1.
Jehovah shows mercy to great and to small.	2 Chronicles 31. 15.
How sweet to hear Ezra for little ones plead,	Ezra 8. 21.
And find that the young on God's promise can	
feed.	Nehemiah 8. 3.
Queen Esther forsook not the guide of her	
youth;	Esther 2. 20.



But Philip received him, though weak in the faith.	Romans 14. 1.
A babe must be nourished with milk from the breast;	1 Corinthians 3.2.
And the chiefest Apostle his weakness confessed.	2 Corinthians 11.29.
The child differs nought from a servant, though Lord,	Galatians 4. 1.
But, knit to the body by love's golden cord,	Ephesians 4.14-16
And, following after, shall yet apprehend	Philippians 3. 12.
The fulness that dwells in his bountiful Friend.	Colossians 1. 19.
The gentle Apostle resembled a nurse,	1 Thessalonians 2. 7.
Beseeching, entreating, not threatening a curse.	2 Thessalonians 2. 1.
God's children shall surely be brought up and fed;	1 Timothy 5. 10.
So Timothy e'en from his childhood was led.	2 Timothy 3. 15.
Where mothers loved thus, the Apostle approved	Titus 2. 4.
And a child newly born was a brother beloved.	Philemon 10,16.
A babe is unskilful, yet milk should be given;	Hebrews 5. 13.
If low his degree, he shall not fail of heaven;	James 1. 9.
For babes who have milk 'till their souls are sufficed,	1 Peter 2. 2.
Shall grow in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.	2 Peter 3. 18.
If children from idols are kept in their youth,	1 John 5. 21.
The elders will bless them as walking in truth;	2 John 4.
No joy can be greater, saith John the Divine –	3 John 4.
O may such rejoicing henceforward be mine!	
From falling preserved, may we pass through the gate,	Jude 24.
With God's redeemed people, the small and the great.	Revelation 20. 12.

<sup>1</sup>. Quotation from the letter: “I can see evidence of grace in the Bible which I think some would despise.”

2. Edward VI.



### **SOME INTERESTING FACTS FROM ARABIA**

One of our readers, who was stationed in Southern Arabia during the war, has kindly sent the following interesting details he has since picked up about the area in which he was stationed. These facts have been gleaned from a book by Daniel Foster, who lived in South Arabia as an official in the Colonial Service from 1952-1966.

Firstly, there is a reference to the place where the descendents of Shem, Noah's son, settled. This place is named Hadhramaut, and is to be found in Genesis 10. 26 as Hazarmaveth (which is the name of a person and not a place). Apparently, Arab scholars would immediately see the connection between the two words.

Later in the book, there is a reference to the Queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10) who would have been from this part of Arabia. The Shebans, or Sabeans, were a people of several small kingdoms to be found along what is commonly known as the incense route (no doubt the trade route for the exporting of incense). There are further references to Sheba in Isaiah 45. 14; 60. 6 and Jeremiah 6. 20. It was these people, the Sabeans, who fell upon the servants of Job, slaying them and driving off their oxen and asses (Job 1. 15).

The port of Aden, where our reader was stationed, is possibly mentioned in Ezekiel 27. 22-24, where Eden is referred to. It is surmised that the blue clothes were a reference to the indigo-stained robes still worn by tribesmen at the time the writer was there. It is interesting to notice that a form of Christianity came to the area before Islam, being brought there by the Emperor Constantine, whose embassy built churches there in AD 342.

An interesting footnote states that the average temperature is 36° centigrade (98° Fahrenheit). Daytime temperatures are normally up to 43° centigrade (110° Fahrenheit). These are comparable to those of Iraq, a near neighbour of this part of the world. Many of the Arabs still live in tents, without even a fridge to keep drinks cool. A 100-mile journey by camel would have taken two days to complete.

*Adapted*

### **GOD'S WONDERFUL WORLD – THE CAMEL**

If someone mentions the word “desert” you may well think of the camel, for these tough animals have been used to carry people and goods across deserts for several thousand years. This very useful animal is sometimes called “the ship of the desert,” and it is perfectly designed for living and travelling in the desert.

In deserts, there are often terrible sandstorms, so the camel has extra-long eyelashes to keep sand out of its eyes, and also has special muscles to close its nostrils to stop sand getting into its nose! Special pads on the bottom of its feet make walking on the sand much easier than if it had hard hooves like a horse, and a thick coat of hair protects the camel both from the hot midday sun and the cold desert nights.

The most wonderful thing about the camel, though, is that it can live for many days without a drink, and even for several weeks, if it can find some leafy plants to eat. It can lose up to one quarter of its body water and still keep going as strongly as ever, even though it may look very thin and starved. If we lost only half that amount we would feel very ill, because our blood would become thick and sticky and our heart would find it harder to pump the blood around our bodies. But the camel does not lose any water from its blood, so its heart still works normally. After a long time without a drink, a thirsty camel can drink twenty-seven gallons (one hundred and twenty litres) of water in ten minutes!

Some people think that camels store water in the humps on their backs – there are one-humped and two-humped camels – but these humps really contain stores of fat, which provide the camels with extra energy when they are feeling weak after a long journey without water. There may be as much as one hundred pounds (50 kilograms) of fat in a camel's hump. Another thing which helps the camel to live in the desert is that its body temperature drops at night, and rises slowly during the day, so that it does not start to feel very hot until the afternoon. Our temperature varies very little between night

and day (unless we are ill) so we start to feel hot quite early in the day.

What a wonderful animal the camel is! Everything about it is just right for living and travelling in the desert! Do you think the camel could have *evolved* to be the way it is, or was it designed and created by God? It was created by God!

*The Discoverer*

---

### THE NUMBER SEVEN IN THE SCRIPTURES

The number seven has an important place in the Holy Word of God.

On the seventh day of Creation, God rested. The children of Israel rested on the seventh day of the seventh month; feasted seven days, and remained seven days in tents. The seventh year was the Sabbath of rest for all things, for the land lying fallow, and for release of debts.

Jacob served seven years for Rachel; seven years of plenty preceded seven years of famine in Egypt.

The days of unleavened bread were seven days, for feasts of tabernacles, for Joseph's mourning; for the number of churches in Asia, of stars and candlesticks.

Elijah's servant went again seven times up the mount; Joshua encompassed Jericho for seven days before the great shout.

The Saviour spoke seven times from the cross, remained seven hours on it, and appeared after His resurrection seven times.

*Selected*

---

QUESTION: Is there anything in the covenant of grace of a precarious or uncertain nature?

ANSWER: No, for it is ordered in all things and sure, and is confirmed by the promise and oath of God.

*2 Samuel 23. 5; Psalm 89. 33-37; Jeremiab 33. 20-21;*

*Matthew 24. 35; John 17. 12, 24; Romans 11. 29.*

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***PRACTICAL GODLINESS****Covetousness**

We are clearly instructed in God's Holy Word that one of the root evils of our fallen nature is the spirit of covetousness. Covetousness is an inordinate desire to have something that does not belong to us.

This sin is clearly illustrated in the fall of man into sin: it was rooted in covetousness. God commanded Adam and Eve that they should not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and of evil; then Satan came and tempted Eve, and just look at the result: "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (Genesis 3. 6). She acted directly against the commandment of God in coveting that which God denied.

We are instructed concerning the holy law of God: "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions...." (Galatians 3. 19). The word "transgression" means, "to break out of a boundary." God sets the boundaries in His holy law. When we do not do the things that the law requires or when we do those things that it forbids, then we transgress God's holy law. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3. 4). The last commandment is: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's" (Exodus 20. 17).

Let us look at what the Apostle says to his young son in the faith, Timothy. Firstly, he instructs him in true Christian contentment and then warns him against the spirit of covetousness, which is the root of all evil. "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having

food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Timothy 6. 6-10). Notice, how he does not say: 'money is the root of all evil,' but: "the love of money is the root of all evil." In other words, the spirit of covetousness. Also, please note, he does not say: 'they that are rich,' but: "they that will be rich." The main focus of their lives is to get rich. "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live." (Proverbs 15. 27). This spirit is rooted in lotteries and raffles, something for nothing. "Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase" (Proverbs 13. 11).

My dear young friends, may the Lord deliver us each from this spirit that is rooted in our fallen nature and give us each the grace of contentment. The Lord Jesus warns us against being over anxious concerning material things and gives an exhortation: "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matthew 6. 31-34).

*J.R. Rutt*

---

### **J.C. Philpot on new versions of the Holy Scriptures**

We have no opinion of any fresh translation of the Scriptures; for ... if once men were allowed to translate the Scriptures according to their views of doctrine, where would be the security for the truth of God as we have it now?"

**BIBLE QUESTIONS**

*This month the questions are about WATER. 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. "For we must needs die and are as..." What? (2 Samuel 14. 14)
2. Who is described as "unstable as water"? (Genesis 49. 3-4)
3. What did Jesus turn water into, and where was He at the time? (John 2. 1-11)
4. What did God command Moses to do in Horeb to provide water for the children of Israel? (Exodus 17. 6)
5. What did Elisha cast into the undrinkable waters of Jericho to heal them? (2 Kings 2. 19-22)
6. At which place did God command a tree to be cast into bitter waters to make them sweet? (Exodus 15)
7. Whose prayer was answered when a woman gave him water to drink and offered to draw water for his camels? (Genesis 24)
8. Who was given springs of water as a wedding gift by her father? (Judges 1)
9. Where is God described as the "fountain of living waters" and to whom was Jesus speaking when He referred to this verse? (Jeremiah 2; John 4)
10. We use the proverbial expression "weak as water." Where is this found in the Bible and what is spoken of as being weak?

**ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS**

1. "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?"
2. "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"
3. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."
4. "Who is He Lord, that I might believe on Him?"
5. Nicodemus.
6. "How is it that ye sought Me? Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2. 49)

7. "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." (Matthew 9. 12)
8. Mary Magdalene, who was weeping because Jesus had died and His body was not in the grave where she was looking for Him. (John 20. 15)
9. What shall we eat? What shall we drink? Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (Matthew 6. 31)
10. Matthew 21. 25.

*Contributed*

---

**ALL-IMPORTANT QUESTION**

Dear Lord, when earth shall pass away,  
And time her chariot wheels shall stay,  
Where shall I be?

And when the great Archangel stands,  
One foot on sea and one on land,  
Where shall I be?

When earth and sea, and death and hell,  
Give up the dead that in them dwell,  
Where shall I be?

When all mankind before Thee stand,  
From every shore and every land,  
Where shall I be?

And when the Judge shall draw the line,  
And say: "These sheep, these saints, are Mine,"  
Where shall I be?

Shall I with joy lift up my head,  
Or hear Thee say: "Depart!" with dread?  
Where shall I be?

When myriad hosts, redeemed from sin,  
Are shut with God and glory in,  
Where shall I be?

And when Thy sheep are gathered home,  
On mountains dark no more to roam,  
Where shall I be?

And when a thousand years are gone,  
And I'm forgotten and unknown,  
Where shall I be?

When wicked men have sunk to hell,  
And saints with Christ in glory dwell,  
Where shall I be?

Shall I be counted Zion's dust,  
Or swept away among the lost?  
Where shall I be?

I love Thy people and Thy cause,  
Thy purpose, covenant, and laws;  
Where shall I be?

I love Thee for Thy love to me,  
Through Him who died upon the tree;  
Where shall I be?

'Twas Thou the work began in me,  
That makes me hope to dwell with Thee,  
When life is past.

This question answer to my heart,  
Show me my potion, place, and part,  
My all in Thee.

*Friendly Companion 1960*

---

**Found written in the inside cover of an old Bible:**

“This Book will keep you from sin – or sin will keep you  
from this Book.”



# *The Friendly Companion*



“Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship,  
Him declare I unto you.”  
(Acts 17. 23)

---

*November 2007*

Editor: Mr. G.D. Buss, "Bethany", 7 Laines Head, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 1PH.

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: [gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk)

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, Kingston Langley, Chippenham, Wilts. SN15 5QF.

Volume 133

November 2007

## CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	243
Our Front Cover Picture	244
Prince Albert's Grace	245
Editor's Postbag	245
For The Very Little Ones:	
The Hungry Filled	246
Colouring Text: Matthew 5. 6.	247
Bible Lessons: The Parable Of The Sower	248
The Story of Gerhardt	250
A Divine Appointment	251
A Child's Testimony	252
Difficult Questions (VIII)	254
A Wedding Address	256
A Timely Meeting	259
A Protest Against Rock Music	260
Bible Study For The Older Ones:	
Man's Days Upon Earth	260
Bible Questions: Thieves and Robbers	263
Poetry: "I Wish You'd Mend My Bible For Me."	264

### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

We have now reached the eleventh month of the year, and how quickly does time pass! When I was at school, the end of November was the time for mock-examinations for those who were expecting to take state examinations the next year. The early weeks of the month were taken up with revision, as the teachers tried to remind their classes of all that they were supposed to have learned in the course, so far.

It is very interesting to note that in the eleventh month of the Jewish year, on the first day, Moses began to remind the children of Israel of all the way God had led them; of His laws, and also of their wanderings and sins. You can read all of this in the Book of Deuteronomy. The title of this fifth Book of Moses, means, "Second Law." That is, God reminded Israel of His laws by commanding Moses to tell the people again all that had been commanded before. In one sense, it was like revision, which is one way of stirring up memories.

Now we cannot learn God's laws as we do other knowledge. We need God to write them in our hearts so that we do not forget them. It is a sad thing that it is so natural for us to remember silly things and even wrong things, but for good and profitable things we seem to have such short memories!

However, one of the names which the Holy Ghost has is the Remembrancer. The Lord Jesus promised His disciples that because there were so many things they could not remember or retain of His teaching whilst He was with them, He would give them the Holy Spirit who would bring all things to their remembrance which He had told them. That is how the gospels were written: not by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John just relying on their memories, or those of others who were present during the life of Jesus, but by the leadings and teaching of the Holy Spirit of truth. He reminded them and others of the true record of the life of Jesus, so we have the confidence that what they wrote is God's own record infallibly given us. I am sure these gracious men who wrote the gospels

would have been on their knees asking the Holy Spirit to bring to their remembrance the things of the life of Jesus He would have them record. This is something to be greatly longed for, to have the Holy Spirit bring to our memories those things that are vital to salvation.

On a much lower plane, many a gracious child or teenager has asked God to stir up their memory and help them in examinations, and they have proved that God answers prayers in that respect too.

May God be pleased to give us good memories in the best sense!

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

---

### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

#### **Mars Hill, Athens**

On a recent visit to Athens, the opportunity was taken to search out Mars Hill. This was the place where, at the time of Paul's visit, the highest court in Athens sat. It was the place where Paul was brought by the philosophers, after they had heard him preaching in the market place which, now in ruins, is overlooked by the hill. Mars Hill is now known as the Areopagus Rock, after the Areopagites who used to meet and debate there. It is indeed more of a rock than a hill. It is roughly flat-topped and bare, measuring about 30 metres x 60 metres. It is about ten metres high on one side, where ancient steps to the top are located. The hill slopes away ever more gently on the other side for about 75 metres towards the ruins of the ancient forum. It is on this side that there were once buildings, but just rough vegetation grows now. The Rock is actually set on the side of the larger and famous Acropolis, upon which the ruined remains of the Parthenon and other heathen temples sit.

Near to the steps on the steep side, is engraved, in Greek, the passage from Acts 17. 16-34, which describes the conversion of Dionysius, one of the Areopagites, and the beginning of Christianity in Athens.

It is a striking feature at Athens and elsewhere in Greece, that all the heathen temples lie in ruins, whilst the Christian churches remain; though largely corrupted in their worship, differing from the pure gospel that Paul brought to Athens. Nevertheless, a solemn reminder that man-made religion will in the end come to nothing – ruins, whilst that which is born of God will stand every storm and live at last.

So when Paul was contending with the Areopagites, it is clear that his natural feet were on a rock: and, from the outcome, it is also clear that spiritually his feet were on the Rock, Christ Jesus. That Rock, which so evidently, in time, ground to powder the false religions with which he was surrounded, yet also proved to be a hiding place for Dionysius, Damaris and others.

*M. Lee*

---

### PRINCE ALBERT'S GRACE

Prince Albert, the husband of Queen Victoria, set a good example in the Royal Household when he married, by insisting that thanks be given to God at the meal table.

The words he used himself and taught his family, were these:

“God bless our going out, nor less  
Our coming in, and make them sure.  
God bless our daily bread, and bless  
Whate’er we do, whate’er endure;  
In death unto His peace awake us,  
And heirs of His salvation make us.”

*Selected*

---

### EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received FROM JOSEPH SAUNDERS, WILL SPORTE, BRIE ANNE SWEETMAN and MATTHIAS WOODHAMS.*

*FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES***THE HUNGRY FILLED**

About four thousand men, women, and children had been with Jesus for three days, and they had *"nothing to eat."* Many had come from far to hear Jesus, and He would not send them away hungry. But where could the disciples find food in the wilderness to fill all these people? They had only seven loaves and a few small fishes.

Jesus told the people to sit on the ground. Then He took the seven loaves and little fishes and gave thanks to God. He broke them into pieces and gave to the disciples to set before the people. *"And they did all eat, and were filled."* They gathered up all the food that was left over, and it filled seven baskets. Nothing was to be wasted!

What compassion Jesus had for His hungry followers! He has even greater care for hungry souls: *"For He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How long had the large crowd of people been with Jesus?
2. What did Jesus do first after taking the loaves and fishes?
3. What did they do with the food that was left over?

*Contributed*

*Please 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. Clay.
2. Wash.
3. Now I see.

*“Blessed are  
they which do  
hunger and  
thirst after  
righteousness:  
for they shall  
be filled.”  
Matthew 5. 6.*

## BIBLE LESSONS

## THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Great multitudes of people followed Jesus for various reasons. Some followed, hoping to be cured of their afflictions. Others followed just to see some miracle performed by Him. Many followed to hear His teaching. He was different from all the other teachers. He spoke so simply that even the children could understand.

One day, as Jesus walked along the seashore with many people thronging Him, He entered into a ship and sat down, while the multitude gathered around on the shore. He began to speak many things unto them in parables. Parables were stories about everyday life, with a much deeper meaning. Divine truth was hidden in them.

The first parable Jesus spoke is called the parable of the sower. Jesus said: *"HEARKEN; BEHOLD, there went out a sower to sow."* As he sowed the seed, some fell by the way side. Birds of the air soon came and ate it up. Some seed fell on rocky ground; as soon as it had sprung up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. Some seed fell among thorns; the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But some fell on good ground; it sprang up and bore an abundance of fruit. *"And when He had said these things, He cried, HE THAT HATH EARS TO HEAR, LET HIM HEAR."*

The disciples were puzzled as to why their Master was now speaking to the people by parables. They also came and asked Him what the parable of the sower meant. Jesus told them: *"it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given."* It did not trouble most of the people whether they knew the meaning or not.

Then Jesus explained the parable to them. The sower is one who preaches the Word of God. The seed which he sows is the Word of God. Just as in former days, when a sower (farmer) cast his seed, some of it fell by the way side. The wayside ground was very hard due to people walking on it (like our hearts through sin). Thus, the seed lay upon the surface, and the birds would swoop down to eat it. This seed never took root.



Other seed, as it was cast, fell on the rocks. In the crevices between the stones, there was just enough soil for the seed to take root. However, in the time of drought, it dried up quickly for lack of moisture. Jesus compared this to those who receive the Word of God for a time, but in times of trouble or persecution, fall away.

Still other seed fell in thorny places. It sprang forth and seemed to be growing well, but soon the thorns and thistles grew faster and choked the Word. Jesus said that many hear the Word, but it is quickly lost because: *"the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in (the heart), choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful."*

But is all the seed lost? No, indeed not! Some seed falls into good ground that is prepared to receive the seed. It has been plowed and opened up, so the seed can enter and take deep root and bear much fruit. Jesus said that such are they: *"which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, KEEP IT, and bring forth fruit with patience."* It is the work of the Holy Spirit alone to make such a heart.

*You can read about this in Matthew chapter 13, Mark chapter 4, and Luke chapter 8.*

#### QUESTIONS:

1. Who is the sower who sows the seed?
2. What is the seed?
3. Which ground in the parable was very hard?
4. What do the good ground hearers do with the Word? (8 words)
5. Who only can make such a heart?

*Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on page 242). Please mark the envelope: ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.*

*G. L. TenBroeke*

---

#### ANSWERS TO OCTOBER QUESTIONS

1. The Son of David.
2. He could be the Messiah.
3. The devil.
4. The heart of man.
5. The praise of God.

**THE STORY OF GERHARDT**

“Give to the wind thy fears;  
Hope, and be undismayed:  
God hears thy sighs and counts thy tears:  
God shall lift up thy head.  
Through waves, through clouds and storms,  
He gently clears thy way:  
Wait thou His time; so shall the night  
Soon end in joyous day.”

In the year 1659, the Grand Elector of Brandenburg said that he wished to “tune his pulpits.” By that he meant to expel from them all who preached the gospel and to make the preachers tune their doctrines to suit the wishes of the world. Among those who were exiled was a man named Gerhardt.

“No,” he replied, “I cannot preach what is not found in God’s Word. That Word, and that Word alone, will I proclaim.”

He received notice that he had to leave his home and country immediately, so he started on his journey with his wife and children. They stopped the first night in a small inn. They were worn out, and the children were crying. Unable to sleep, Gerhardt walked out to the neighbouring wood and prayed.

“Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass,” sounded in his ears. The words came to him so often that he composed a hymn, one verse of which is printed above. Comforted, he returned to the inn.

“Wife,” he said, “God has given me a message of comfort this night; listen.” He then told her the verse and repeated the hymn he had composed. They went to bed confident that God would not desert them. They had hardly retired when there was a loud knocking on the door of the inn.

“Is Dr. Gerhardt lodging with you?” sounded a loud voice.

The innkeeper leaned out of his window to examine the horseman who had arrived so late. “Yes,” he replied. “Dr. Gerhardt is here.”

“I bear a message from Duke Christian of Meresberg, and I must see him at once,” stated the horseman.

The messenger was covered with mud, for he had ridden very fast. Dr. Gerhardt hurried to the door of the inn, wondering what Duke Christian wanted with him. The messenger handed him a sealed packet. When the doctor opened it, he read the following: "Come to me, and I will give you a church, people, home and livelihood, and liberty to preach the gospel as your heart may prompt you."

*H.D. Lampen (The Banner of Truth)*

---

### A DIVINE APPOINTMENT

I think over the years I have told you the story of James Hervey of Weston Favell (part of Northampton now). In the church of God, he has been accounted the great writer on imputed righteousness. As a young vicar at Weston Favell, he was quite happy and comfortable in his own righteousness. James Hervey died young. He had that incurable disease – they called it consumption, though we call it T.B. today. They thought the best remedy then was to breathe in the scent of upturned earth. So James Hervey, morning by morning, went out into the fields with a poor old ploughman, and as the ploughman ploughed and the earth was upturned, Hervey breathed in the smell. It did not really do him any good, because he died young, but spiritually it did him good. This old ploughman was a godly man. He did not go to church; he went to chapel. James Hervey thought it would be good to have some religious conversation and put the question: "What is the hardest thing in real religion?" The ploughman said: "Sir, I am a poor man; you are the vicar; you tell me." Hervey said: "It is to deny our sins." The ploughman said: "Sir, I beg to differ. There is one thing that is harder than to deny your own sins: it is to deny your own righteousness." That was like an arrow from heaven in the poor vicar's heart.

Oh, but to be brought to deny our own righteousness! You know what the Word of God calls your supposed goodness and my supposed goodness, your righteousness and mine. It calls

them *filthy rags*. “All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags,” the point, the analogy, being this. You are going to an important place to meet an important person. You must be suitably attired; you must be well dressed. In modern parlance, you must be smart. It is a terrible thing to find what you are wearing is filthy, and not just filthy, but rags. What would a person do if he realised he was wearing filthy rags? Well, as soon as possible, he would seek to get rid of them, have a bath, and then, and only then, could he come to his appointment. It is a simple analogy and it is one from Scripture. You and I have an appointment and it is an appointment you cannot cancel. We often have appointments and then there is something important, and we cancel it. “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” That appointment must be kept. We must meet our Maker. Oh, how solemn to go in the filthy rags of our own righteousness! Oh, but to be led and taught by the Holy Spirit really to feel: “My best is stained and dyed with sin; my all is nothing worth.” Then I renounce it for ever as my hope and I flee to the righteousness of Jesus.

*B.A. Ramsbottom*

---

### A CHILD'S TESTIMONY

Andrew and Patrick were brothers who lived out in the country not far from Nutley. One day, their mother went into town, shopping, leaving the little boys alone to play while she was gone, instructing them to lock the front door, as usual, if they went out into the meadow to play.

After a while, they decided to go out, and so, putting on their wellingtons, they went off: Andrew having first locked the front door, thrusting the key deep into his pocket. Down into the field they went and played for a while until it began to rain very hard; so they ran back quickly to the house, Andrew's hand plunging deeply into his pocket as they ran, to find the

key. Imagine his dismay when he discovered that it wasn't there! Anxiously they ran back down to the meadow to search for it, but try as they might, they just *could not* find that key. Feeling very wet and miserable, they made their way to a shed nearby to shelter from the rain.

"Oh dear," said Andrew, bursting into tears, "whatever shall we do, and what will Dad say when he finds out?" he said fearfully. They stood there forlornly for a minute or two, wondering what to do next. Then Andrew had an idea. "I know what I'm going to do," he said, "I'm going to ask Jesus to help us." "That's a good idea, Andrew, why ever didn't we think of it before?" said Patrick. Together they bowed their heads. "Please, Jesus, help us to find the key," said Andrew, and then, taking his brother by the hand, he said: "Come on, I'm going out to have another look," and together they went out again into the meadow. Suddenly Patrick's hand tightened in his brother's. "Look, look, there it is," he said with his voice shrill with excitement. Sure enough, there was the key, half concealed by the grass! Andrew stood and looked at it, relief flooding over him. Then gratefully he said: "Oh, thank you, Jesus, thank you *very* much."

Together they returned to the house, just as mother, her shopping completed, came up the drive. How nice it was to be able to go into the warm and have a nice hot cup of tea and put on some dry clothes. Of course, they tumbled over each other to tell mother about it, and when Dad came home that night and heard how they had lost the key and how Jesus had found it for them, he was very happy indeed. So remember, children, ask God to help you to lift up your hearts in a little prayer to Jesus sometimes, not just when you need something – though He'll always help you when you're in trouble if you'll be truthful with Him – but in the everyday moments, so that by learning how to talk with Him, you'll find out how very near He is to each one of us.

R.G.

**DIFFICULT QUESTIONS (VIII)**

*How can we explain to people who do not believe in God, the difference between the law and the gospel? They often say: "How can God be a God who changes not if in one place in the Bible it says "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" and in another place Jesus teaches us that we should "turn the other cheek"?"*

God's law in the Ten Commandments shows the standard that He requires in our relationship to Him and to one another. It is a perfectly honourable and just standard of what is right and what is wrong, and one by which all men out of Christ will be judged. Yet there are other laws which God gave to the Jews to govern them as a nation. Consider this commandment for example: "Thou shalt not steal." If this law was perfectly obeyed by everyone and no one ever broke it, what need would there be for other laws which say how thieves were to be treated when they were found out? If no one ever committed murder and broke the sixth commandment, what need would there be for laws which say how murderers should be dealt with? So many of these other laws which God gave have one sad thing about them. They are there because God knew that even though He had given a perfect law in the Ten Commandments, man would sin against that law and break it. These other laws have perhaps two purposes. One is to vindicate God's honour in His perfect law. The other is to limit the damage suffered by innocent people when someone else breaks one of the Ten Commandments. It is in this context that the law says: "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." In other words, no one could say that it is wrong for a person who has suffered in property or person to be compensated for that loss by the person causing it. And neither can anyone deny that it is wrong that a person who has committed a crime should be made to suffer for it. The whole fabric of civilised society would break down if it were not so.

We are all guilty of breaking God's holy law and our very nature as sinners in thought or deed is to transgress against

that law. The Lord Jesus came to earth to render perfect obedience to the law that we have broken, and to give His life as a sacrifice to pay the demands of that law, so that for His people, the law can have no more claim upon them. Yet such are no different from anyone else; it is only God's free and undeserved mercy that has made the difference. And the Lord Jesus gave many gracious precepts for those that love Him to walk by. They are not a legal standard of what is right and what is wrong like the Ten Commandments, but they are called in Scripture a law of liberty, a law of faith, a law of love. When Jesus said: "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," it is as if He was saying: 'You have been freely forgiven, undeserved. Now because you love Me, show that same forgiving, tender spirit to others who wrong you.' Let us emphasize this – these gracious precepts cannot be enforced as a legal standard. Suppose we had a law which said something like this: "Everyone who is attacked in the street and has his coat stolen must immediately turn to his assailant and give him his cloak as well. Anyone who does not will be fined £200." Why, this would make the person who suffers at the hand of a criminal, to be the guilty one who has to pay the fine, and the criminal would go free. Our society would be in complete confusion if this happened.

So there is no contradiction at all between the law and the gracious precepts of the Lord Jesus and the Apostles in the New Testament. One is a perfect standard of what is right and what is wrong. The others are a gracious standard for God's people in love to show by their conduct and their spirit whose they are, and whom they serve.

*Contributed*

---

We have some very solemn illustrations of divine judgment against covetousness: the cases of Achan in Joshua 7 and Ananias and Sapphira his wife, in Acts 5.

*J.R. Rutt*

### A WEDDING ADDRESS

*"As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."*

*(Joshua 24. 15)*

Joshua was near to the end of his long and honourable life, and it was not the first time that grace had enabled him to make this commitment to serve the LORD. Over forty years before, he, with Caleb, had stood alone against the other ten spies who had searched the land of Canaan and protested that with the Lord's help the children of Israel were well able to overcome their enemies in the Promised Land. Now all these years later, he is still of the same mind that the surest way to prosperity is to serve the LORD. This morning, I commend Joshua's example to you, as you set out on the journey of life together.

There are just four points I want to bring before you:

1. A gracious resolve.
2. A personal example.
3. A humble dependence.
4. A sacred type.

#### **1. A gracious resolve:**

Joshua was not ashamed of the LORD, and if he and his house were to be the only ones who followed Him, so be it, he would be prepared for such a lonely path. Paul says: *"Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come"* (Hebrews 13. 13-14). Let it be seen that in your home and life, God is first. Let the Word of God be seen by all as they enter your home: not shut away out of sight or hidden on the bookshelf, but in a place where it is clearly seen. Start this very night, and each succeeding day, with reading and prayer together. By fulfilling the command of Joshua 1. 8. you will enjoy the same security that Joshua had: *"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt*



*make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*" There is everything in this sacred volume to guide, direct and correct in the way of life. Many times my dear wife and I, in our many years of married life, have found a word in season for the present need, as night and morning we have read and prayed over the sacred Word.

## **2. A Personal Example:**

Joshua was a man to lead from the front. He did not expect others to do what he was not prepared to do himself. This is a special word to the husband. You, as the husband, are the head of the house and responsible for all that goes on in your home. This is not popular theology, but it is entirely consistent with the Word of God, which is to be your guide. We read in Ephesians 5. 23 that "*The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church.*" But then, it is a word to the wife as it says: "... *me and my house ....*" Joshua's household walked in unity and now you are, too, called to walk in unity together in serving the Lord.

## **3. A Humble Dependence:**

Joshua made what seemed a very strange statement in verse 19 of chapter 24. After having exhorted the people to serve God, he said: "*Ye cannot serve the LORD :...*" What was he saying? Joshua was saying what he himself had learned over many years of experience, that without the LORD's help it is impossible to serve God aright. We need the same grace that Joshua had learned; the very necessary lesson of dependence. But how encouraging it is, that even though such a high standard is rightly set up by Joshua here, yet there is grace to be had to walk in this way. Paul says: "*Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear*" (Hebrews 12. 28). "*Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*" (Hebrews 4. 16). Paul also said: "*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me*" (Philippians 4. 13).

#### 4. A Sacred Type:

As we read in Ephesians, marriage is a sacred type of the union between Christ and His church. Also in our text we see another type. Christ is the Head of His house. Hebrews 3. 6 says: *"But Christ as a Son over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."* How may we know whether we are Christ's? If the Holy Spirit dwells in us, making our bodies and lives His temple: then it is said: *"Ye are not your own ... for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's"* (1 Corinthians 6. 19,20). This is the mark of being in Christ's house. Joshua was a type of Christ. Christ has said that His house will serve the Lord and His words must be fulfilled. He was a perfect Servant to His Father and His children are to serve Him by grace. Now it is my desire that you will be manifest as God's children, and of Christ's house; that it may be seen whose you are and whom you serve as you go on together.

Now two last things I must say. It is on my mind to quote a word from Isaiah 50. 10: *"Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of His Servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God."* The future is wisely hidden from you. However, it is certain that you will come at times into perplexity and uncertainty as to the way ahead. May this verse be your guide and a direction to trust the future to Him who holds all things in His hand.

Finally, I can do no better than wish you the same blessing that Solomon wished in Proverbs 10. 22: *"The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it."* May you ever seek those paths which have the Lord's blessing upon them, and avoid those which do not. Then you will know the true happiness of a union which is a three-fold cord, (God, and both of you together) which can never be broken.

May the Lord abundantly bless and be with you both. Amen.

G.D.B.

### A TIMELY MEETING

It happened that, one Saturday afternoon, two of the Lord's servants met at a railway junction, on their way to preach the Gospel the following day at a certain town in Bedfordshire.

One of them was under severe temptation, and was thinking of taking a ticket to return home, feeling that he was doing wrong in attempting to preach. The tempter suggested to him that he had not been called to preach the Word, and that this would be made manifest to the people. His brother minister, little knowing what was passing in his mind, began to talk to him about the pilgrims in Giant Despair's dungeon, how they lay there from Wednesday to Saturday, and how on the Saturday night Christian said: "What a fool I am, to lie in a stinking dungeon, when I have a key in my bosom, which will turn any lock in Doubting Castle."

This conversation so encouraged the doubting minister, that he continued his journey in his friend's company.

As they went on, the friend, whom we may call Hopeful, talked to him of the way in which Christ talked to Philip: "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat? And this He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what He would do" (John 6. 5-6). This again, was a bow drawn at a venture, but the arrow hit the mark, the tried minister was brought out of the dungeon by the help of the golden key, "Promise," and he was provided with a text; for the next day he was helped to speak from the words: "And this He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what He would do."

Hopeful has since heard his friend Christian say, that that was a meeting never to be forgotten.

"Fear Him, ye saints, and you will then  
Have nothing else to fear:  
Make but His service your delight,  
Your wants shall be His care."

*Little Gleaner 1906*

### **A PROTEST AGAINST ROCK MUSIC**

Two Russian pastors have written to a Canadian magazine protesting against rock musicians visiting their country in company with so-called evangelists. Among other things, they write: "Rock music has nothing in common with ministry or service to God. We were in prison for fifteen and eleven years for Christ's sake. We were not allowed to have Christian music, but rock music was used as a weapon against us day and night to destroy our souls. Even unbelievers recognize it as unholy music and cannot understand how American Christians can be so much like the world. After Russian unbelievers attended rock concerts where Christ's Word was preached, the people were very confused and disillusioned with Christianity. We call this music, 'music from hell.' Our young people do not attend these meetings because we are all committed to not participate in secular entertainment."

It is interesting to read this faithful testimony. Young people, we hope and pray that you will not be tempted to be taken up with this kind of music which will cause spiritual harm.

*From the Kerkblad of the Old Reformed Congregations in the Netherlands. (The Banner of Truth)*

---

### **BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**

#### **MAN'S DAYS UPON EARTH**

In a previous Bible study we looked at the Biblical doctrine of marriage. In our study we noticed in Genesis chapter 6 how God's judgment came upon mankind because man began to take more than one wife: "That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years" (Genesis 6. 2-3). We stated that man's days were shortened because of his continual sinning and rebelling against God.

A friend has written stating that man's days were not shortened but the one hundred and twenty years refers to the period that Noah was building the ark. The Scriptures clearly state that Noah was building the ark for one hundred years. In the last verse of Genesis 5 we read that Noah was five hundred years old and then in Genesis 7 we read that when Noah entered the ark because of the flood he was six hundred years old. Is this discrepancy because Noah waited twenty years before starting to build the ark, or, as many of our godly forefathers thought, that this discrepancy of twenty years is because man's sin became so awful and great that God shortened those days by twenty years, the same as He will shorten the days of man on earth at the end of time? "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matthew 24. 22).

We feel that the point raised is very valid and these one hundred and twenty years could refer to Noah building the ark, especially if we compare it with the 1 Peter chapter 3: "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." Does this Scripture refer to the above Scripture from Genesis? "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." We believe it does. In 2 Peter we read that Noah was "a preacher of righteousness." There is no doubt that Noah spent that one hundred years warning men and women of the awful wrath of God that was coming on the earth and exhorting sinful men and women to repent of their sins. He did this under the divine power and teaching of the Holy Spirit hence, we have the statement: "My spirit shall not always strive with man." Men and women laughed and scoffed at Noah and probably thought he was quite mad to build an ark. My dear, dear young friends may you not be left to laugh and scoff at the

Lord's servants when they warn you of the wrath to come and the Day of Judgment and the solemn need of repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Consider the solemn words of the Lord Jesus Christ: "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matthew 24. 36-39).

However, from the clear records of Holy Scripture, man's life was dramatically shortened after the flood and as with many other Scriptures there is often more than one application of it. So we stand by our original thoughts and believe the above statement is consistent with them. An old preacher used to liken Holy Scripture to a diamond: if you lift it up to the light and turn it around, every facet of the diamond glints with different coloured light, adding to its beauty. So it is with Scripture: we look at it from different angles and see a greater depth and beauty in it. Moses states very categorically in Psalm 90: "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away" (Psalm 90. 10). May it be our chief concern:

"And now my God prepare  
My soul for that great day  
And wash me in Thy precious blood:  
Take all my sins away."

*J.R. Rutt*

---

"Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him." In Hebrew: "Be silent to God, and let Him mould thee." "Keep still, and He will mould thee to the right shape."

*Martin Luther*

**BIBLE QUESTIONS**

*This month the questions are about THIEVES AND ROBBERS. 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 that shows how wrong it is to be a thief or robber. (Exodus 20. 15)
2. What does a thief come to do? (John 10. 10)
3. Which of Jesus' disciples was a thief? (John 12. 6)
4. What was the name of the robber whom Pilate set free instead of Jesus? (John 18. 40)
5. Which building did Jesus say had become "a den of thieves"? (Matthew 21. 13)
6. What will come as a thief in the night? (1 Thessalonians 5; 2 Peter 3)
7. "For ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation." How had the children of Israel robbed God? (Malachi 3)
8. Where do thieves "not break through nor steal" and what did Jesus exhort us to do in reference to this? (Matthew 6)
9. What word does Paul use in Titus 2 which means stealing, especially taking little things belonging to others and using them as our own?
10. In ancient Israel, thieves were not sent to prison. What were the punishments for stealing a sheep, and a man (kidnapping)? (Exodus 21; 22; Deuteronomy 24)

---

**ANSWERS TO OCTOBER QUESTIONS**

1. Water spilt on the ground.
2. Reuben.
3. Wine; He was in Cana of Galilee.
4. Smite the rock.
5. Salt.
6. Marah. (Exodus 15. 23-25)
7. Abraham's servant. (Genesis 24. 10-20)
8. Achsah. (Judges 1. 12-15)

9. Jeremiah 2. 13; The Woman of Samaria. (John 4. 10)  
10. Knees. (Ezekiel 7. 17; 21. 7)

*Contributed*

---

**ON HEARING A FRIEND SAY,  
“I WISH YOU’D MEND MY BIBLE FOR ME.”**

I mend your Bible? What a thought!  
As if your Bible needed ought  
    To mend or make it better;  
Or such a sinful worm as I  
Could add unto divinity,  
    Inspired in word and letter!

I mend your Bible? What a task!  
For a believer, too, to ask,  
    And of a sinful creature!  
Since heaven and earth must both decay,  
But not one tittle pass away  
    From God’s most holy Scriptures.

I mend your Bible? No, not I!  
Nor holy angels, did they try;  
    Yea, could its Author do it?  
So perfect is His Word of grace,  
Wherein Himself to us displays,  
    That none can add unto it.

Who dares this holy Book to mend,  
Must first mend God, beloved friend;  
    Then who’s that bold pretender?  
Not I; for, though I should replace  
Some leaves in that blest Book of grace,  
    I am no Bible mender.

*W. H. Colyer.*



# *The Friendly Companion*



“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today,  
and for ever.” (Hebrews 13. 8)

---

*December 2007*

Editor: Mr. G.D. Buss, "Bethany", 7 Laines Head, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 1PH.

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: [gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk)

All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Price 50 pence monthly, plus postage.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A. & Canada	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£11.00	\$31	A\$38	€27.00

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

Volume 133

December 2007

## CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	267
Our Front Cover Picture	268
The Weather Vane	269
For The Very Little Ones: Two Important Questions	270
Colouring Text: Psalm 35. 3.	271
Bible Lessons: The Tares Among Wheat	272
The Message Of The Angels	274
A Letter Written To A Friend Serving In The Army	276
The Stableman	277
Sukey Harley's Last Christmas	278
The King's Birthday	278
How Vast God's Universe Is!	279
Beyond The Fence	280
Editor's Postbag	283
Bible Study For The Older Ones:	
Practical Godliness: Redeeming The Time	284
A Little Talk With Jesus	286
Bible Questions: Proverbs	287
Poetry: Jesus Only	288

### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

At this time of the year, it is the custom of many of God's people to remember the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ into this world. Not that we can be sure of the date of His birth, but we do remember that He was born to Mary as we read in the gospels, especially those of Matthew and Luke.

The word *gospel* means *good tidings*. These good tidings are that "... God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3. 16). In this wonderful verse we see the work of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. It is God the Father who sent His Son to suffer and bleed and die for sinners; it is God the Son who came into the world as a real Man, yet still Almighty God, to lay down the life He had taken; and it is God the Holy Spirit who opens the eyes of sinners, for whom Christ died, that they should believe on Him for salvation. These are wonderful tidings to those who feel what sinners they are, because all is done for sinners which they could never do for themselves.

Those who valued the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ were those who felt to need Him as their Saviour. Zacharias and Elisabeth, Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the wise men, Simeon and Anna all rejoiced at His birth. Whereas Herod viewed Christ as a threat, while his supposedly wise men never stirred from Jerusalem to find the wondrous Babe. They felt no need of a Saviour and so His birth to them was nothing to rejoice over.

Jeremiah once put a question which asked: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by...?" He was looking to the sufferings of the coming Messiah, but the question could equally be asked of those at His birth. There was no room for Him in the inn, because it was nothing to them. If, however, the Holy Spirit has begun to show us our need of the Saviour, it will be *something* to us that He has come into this world.

To be able to say, as Isaiah did, is the greatest joy of God's children at this and other times of the year: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given ...."

May it be the desired possession of us each at this time of the year, and may nothing that we may do in remembrance of this sacred event be grieving to Him whom we would remember.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

---

### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Our front cover picture shows a rock jutting up out of the sea off the coastline of Jersey in the Channel Islands. As we look at this rock may we think for a few moments of the Lord Jesus Christ, who should be in our thoughts every day of the year, not just at this season.

One of the many names the Lord Jesus bears is the *Rock*. David said in Psalm 62. 2: "He only is my Rock."

Firstly, Jesus is a Rock to stand on and build on. He is the foundation of all the hopes and prayers of those who believe in Him. On the life He lived and the death He died believers build their hopes for heaven: not like the sand which shifts and moves, the rock stands firm whatever the weather or time of year. Even though sometimes the waves might roll right over, yet when they recede there is the rock the same as ever. The Lord Jesus went through tremendous storms of trouble and temptation, and endured the wrathful anger of God against the sinners He lived and died for. But through it all He remained the same, holy, undefiled Son of God.

Secondly, Jesus is a Rock to hide in. There are clefts and fissures in the rock in our picture where a marooned sailor could hide from the storm in a time of danger. So much more is Christ a shelter from the storms of life and death and the dreadful tempest of eternal wrath. "The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."

Thirdly, we read in the Old Testament of the rock that was smitten by Moses, from which God supplied the Israelites in their wilderness journey. Paul tells us “that Rock was Christ.” It was a sermon to the believing Israelites of the coming Saviour. He would be smitten by the holy anger of God against sinners, that they might drink the forgiving love that flows from the blood He shed on the cross.

I wonder how many of our readers have proved Jesus Christ to be their Rock in these ways and can say with David: “He is my Rock.” Peter tells us of those who find this Rock an offence. Such are those who, having not felt their need of such a Rock, through pride, self righteousness, and the blindness of their unconverted minds and hearts, despise Him. They stumble at the thought that He who laid in Bethlehem’s manger as a Babe, is also truly Almighty God. May we be amongst those who have proved by God’s grace: “The Stone which the builders refused is become the head Stone of the corner. This is the LORD’S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.”

---

### THE WEATHER VANE

Almost every church in our country has a weather vane, and often one can be seen on other tall buildings as well. One day, a minister was visiting a farmer-friend who had installed a vane on his barn roof. This vane was not a cock, as is often the case, but had the words **GOD IS LOVE** cut out of the metal.

The minister was puzzled. He questioned the farmer: “Do you mean that God’s love is as changeable as the wind?”

“No,” replied the farmer immediately. “I mean to say that God is love which ever way the wind blows.”

This was the lesson that God taught Job in chapters one and two of the book that bears his name.

*Selected*

**FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES****TWO IMPORTANT QUESTIONS**

The Lord Jesus was the greatest Teacher of all. Every word He spoke was very important. He listened to the people and also asked questions.

Jesus asked two questions that could not be answered. The first was: *"What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"* The second was: *"What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"* These two questions are just as important now as when Jesus asked them.

Every person is born with a soul that will live for ever. The soul is of more value than anything else. When the body dies, the soul will go on living either in heaven or hell. Then how great is the need to be made ready! *"...O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for Thy mercies' sake" (Psalm 6. 4).*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What is every person born with?
2. How long will it live?
3. Where will it go on living when the body dies?

*Please 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. Three days.
2. Gave thanks.
3. Gathered it up.

*Contributed*

*“Say  
unto my  
soul,  
I am thy  
salvation.”*

*Psalm 35. 3.*

## BIBLE LESSONS

**THE TARES AMONG WHEAT**

When Jesus had finished telling the parable of the sower, He immediately began to tell another parable. *"The kingdom of heaven,"* He began. The people and the disciples too, were continually thinking about an earthly kingdom. They thought Jesus was going to set up His kingdom on earth. Over and over the Lord Jesus pointed out another kingdom, the heavenly kingdom.

*"The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares (weeds) among the wheat, and went his way."* Soon the blades of wheat began to spring up. How promising everything looked! After a while the fruit appeared, and a glaring difference was revealed. Not all that was growing was wheat. So much that had first appeared to be wheat brought forth no fruit. This reminds us of the words of Jesus: *"wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."*

The servants of the householder were greatly dismayed that there now appeared so many tares among the wheat. Jesus went on in the parable, saying that the servants came to the householder asking: *"Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then bath it tares?"* He answered: *"An enemy bath done this."* At night when men were sleeping, he came into the field and sowed tares among the wheat.

What must be done? The servants asked if they should go and pull up the tares. Surely it would be better to get the tares out of the way. Their master answered: "No": *"Let both grow together until the harvest."* In gathering the tares now, they might also pull up the wheat by mistake.

In the harvest He would command the reapers: *"Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."*

Later in the day, after Jesus had sent the multitudes to their homes, His disciples came to Him and asked what the parable of the tares of the field meant. All day long they were troubled



by this parable. It so rested upon their hearts, as there was such a fearfulness and awfulness about it.

Jesus told them very plainly: *"He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man."* What a very humbling, yet beautiful term for the Lord Jesus! Do you remember what He said another time? *"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."*

Then Jesus went on to tell them: *"The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels."* Do you remember what God said to the devil in the garden, after he had tempted Adam and Eve to disobey God? *"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed (which is Christ); It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel."*

Well might the disciples find this parable troubling. There are only two types of people in the world: the children of God (who are the wheat) and the children of the devil (called the tares).

In the end of this world: *"The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: ...Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."*

*You can read about this in Matthew chapter 13 verses 24 to 43.*

#### QUESTIONS:

1. Who sowed the good seed?
2. Who are the good seed?
3. Who sowed the tares?
4. Where will the tares be cast?
5. What shall the righteous shine forth as?

*Please send your answers to the Editor (see address on page 266). Please mark the envelope: ANSWERS. Remember to give your name and address.*

G.L. Tenbroeke

**ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS**

1. One who preaches the Word of God.
2. The Word of God.
3. The wayside ground.
4. Keep it and bring forth fruit with patience.
5. The Holy Spirit.

---

**THE MESSAGE OF THE ANGELS**

You will remember that at the birth of the Lord Jesus, the angel of the Lord was sent from heaven to shepherds abiding in the field. Perhaps we are so used to the words that we miss the important message that the angel brought. Last year, I was caused to look more closely at the message. We received a card which included the following words: "There is born this day ... a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." I don't know which version of the Bible this came from (it is not the King James Authorised Version), but you will notice it is not correct. Some very important words are missing.

The word "angel" means "messenger." The angel was sent from God to bring the gospel to the shepherds. The "gospel" means "a good message." A message is always sent to some person or some persons in particular. The gospel is a good message, which brings Jesus Christ to the person to whom it is sent.

God sent the angel especially to the shepherds. The messenger was not sent to Bethlehem Town Square, to see who might hear the message. No, the gospel is not haphazard. God sent him to precisely where the shepherds were at that time: in the field.

The messenger told the shepherds: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." Others, in all nations, as well as the shepherds, were to receive these good tidings of the gospel. It does not mean that the gospel is sent to every person who ever lived. No, as we have seen, the message is sent to particular people; it is sent to all kinds of people, Jew and Gentile, bond and free, male and female, etc. Nor is the joy they spoke of for everyone on earth. As Paul writes about the preaching of the gospel: "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are

saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life.”

The messenger continued: “Unto you,” – that is, to you, the shepherds, to whom the message is sent – “is born this day in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” It would not be enough for the shepherds to know that there *is* a Saviour. That would not save them. No, they needed to know that the Saviour came for them in particular – the message was “unto you,” and these are the very important words. Now, do we know this? Many people are happy to accept that there was a Babe called Jesus who was born in Bethlehem and was laid in a manger there. We should not be content merely to know that Jesus was born in Bethlehem: may we be given grace to seek to know Him as our Saviour. May we be helped to pray that God would send His good message, the gospel, right to where we are.

It is often thought that after the angel of the Lord delivered the message, angels were singing in heaven. Careful reading shows that the multitude of the heavenly host were on earth, since we are told that they returned from the shepherds into heaven. Nor does it say that they sung, although the words are exceedingly sweet to the Lord’s people, and are like a song to their heart.

The angels proclaimed “on earth peace.” Their message was not “peace to the earth.” This earth will never know peace. It is cursed; there shall be “wars and rumours of wars,” and “evil men shall wax worse and worse.” One day, it shall be completely burnt up. But while they are on this earth, those to whom this good message is sent, will know peace. Jesus Christ: “this Man shall be the peace.” He came to make peace between a just, holy and sin-hating God and sinful man. That peace was made when the Lord Jesus shed His precious blood on the cross at Calvary for His people. True peace is to be found there and nowhere else. The Lord grant that we may know that peace, “which passeth all understanding.”

*Contributed*

**A LETTER WRITTEN TO A FRIEND SERVING  
IN THE ARMY IN ADEN**

Clapham, London S.W.4.

18th December, 1960

Dear Friend,

We think of those known to us who are away from home at this season, realising from our own experience the difference and the difficulties that present themselves in the army, when Christmas is celebrated. No doubt, it still is made an excuse for drunkenness and revelry of every description and it is a mercy indeed to feel a loathing and hatred to it, and yet one could not help but feel sorry to see one's fellow men thus abuse themselves. I used to feel: "If only they knew something of what this season really should mean." What a difference it would make. No doubt, you have to see much that has surprised and shocked you, and we need to be kept from becoming hardened in spirit, so that sin, because of familiarity with it, ceases to be sin to us, or at least, becomes light in our estimation.

When away from home and chapel and all our "spiritual props," we tend to find our weakness and indeed can only stand as help is given, and we are exhorted to "seek the Lord while He may be found," and that means He may be sought in Aden as well as Littleport. Hymn 1023 in Gadsby's says:

"For Thou, within no walls confined,  
Inhabitest the humble mind."

You have had quite a long spell abroad and we wonder when you will be returning to England. If opportunity arises, perhaps you could write and tell us a little of your movements and prospects.

We wish you the season's greetings and every blessing, particularly that which maketh rich, in the New Year.

Yours very sincerely,

*S.A.J. Collins*

*(Adapted)*

### THE STABLEMAN

Some years ago, a gentleman from New Zealand paid us a visit. He had retired from business, having been a partner in a large firm of ironmongers at Wellington, the capital city. He told us that before cars and lorries came into use, his firm had a small number of horse-drawn vans for delivering goods in Wellington and the surrounding district. This meant the use of a stable for the horses, and in consequence, a man was required on regular duty to look after both the horses and stable. He became known as "the stableman."

Our New Zealand friend said that on one occasion he decided to pay a surprise visit to the stable, just to see for himself how the man in charge was fulfilling his duty. The stableman was from Ulster in Ireland, and our friend said he was a true Ulster Protestant.

He showed his master all over the stable premises, and at the end our friend said he warmly congratulated his servant, the Irishman, for the excellent way he was doing his job. The stableman expressed his thanks, and then said quietly, but with evident feeling: "Well, Sir, when I think that my dear Lord and Saviour left His heavenly glory to come down to this sin-stained earth, and condescended to be born in that lowly stable at Bethlehem, and was laid in that humble manger – and all for such sinners as I am – then surely the least I can do is to honour Him as I can in this work, which so reminds me day by day of how He came, and what He came to do."

Our New Zealand friend said: "When I heard this, I was deeply touched, and it is something I shall never forget."

*H. Salkeld*

---

We live in a society when the whole emphasis is on get, get, get. May the Lord deliver us from the spirit of the age and grant us godliness with contentment. May you remember: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" (1 Timothy 6. 6-7).

*J. R. Rutt*

**SUKEY HARLEY'S LAST CHRISTMAS**

*(From the well-loved "Memoir of Sukey Harley")*

On the last Christmas day of her life, 1852, she spoke as she always did, especially at that season, of being most earnest in prayer for a week before, that the Lord would visit her soul upon that day; and after describing a time of darkness in the forepart of the day, in which she feared her prayer would not be answered, she said: "But afterwards He came in that verse of Hart's Christmas hymn:

'Go and find the royal stranger,  
By these signs: a Babe you'll see,  
Weak and lying in a manger,  
Wrapped and swaddled, – that is He.'

The last words broke my heart, *'that is He'*; and afterwards He directed me to read the 10th chapter of Hebrews; and I was able to draw near again, and found *redemption*, full, perfect and complete, in that verse: 'This Man, after He offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.' I was given faith and thought, 'What good would this be to me if I had not faith?' but I was enabled to see the Son, 'and believe on Him to life everlasting.' I don't know what a contented state is without Christ; for ever since He called me at the first, I have been *discontented* without Him." *Selected*

---

**THE KING'S BIRTHDAY**

During his last illness, the well-known Scottish minister, John Brown of Haddington, heard the church bells ringing. He was told that it was to celebrate the king's birthday.

He replied: "O, blessed be God, however worthy our king is, we have a better King's birthday to celebrate. Unto us was born in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord!

On account of that event the gospel bells have been sounding for ages past, and they will ring louder and louder still. O the Saviour! the Son of God our Saviour! O His kindness, His kindness! A Saviour to sinners, to me!" *Selected*

**HOW VAST GOD'S UNIVERSE IS!**

*"When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; What is man, that Thou are mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" (Psalm 8. 3-4)*

- If the Earth were 1cm across, then the sun would be 118m away and 1m wide.
- If the distance between the sun and Earth were 1cm, then Pluto would be 39cm away and Alpha Centauri 3km away.
- If the distance between the Earth and Alpha Centauri were 1cm, then the centre of our galaxy would be 100m away and the diameter of the galaxy 250m.
- If the diameter of the galaxy were 1cm, then Andromeda would be 30cm away and the furthest galaxy 1km away.
- Or to summarize, if the Earth were 1cm across, then the furthest galaxy would be further than Alpha Centauri is at our own scale.

*Creation Magazine*

---

And now, my dear friends, I wish you the enjoyment of all those blessings which are connected with the season of the year – assuming that it was the season in which the Lord came into the world; and may we never forget why He came, for it is most suitable to us. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation," and therefore of yours and mine, "that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;" and can we not add – I am sure I can, and that with great reason – "of whom I am chief." And again: "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost." And were we not lost, to all intents and purposes, completely ruined without hope of help? And have we not a thousand times over destroyed ourselves so as to need, above most, Him in whom is all our help? I am well satisfied that a knowledge of sin and of the depths of the Fall is necessary to any right view or feeling of salvation by the blood of the Lamb.

*J.C. Philpot, December 22nd, 1868*

### BEYOND THE FENCE

The Lord Jesus, in His infinite wisdom, often used to speak about familiar occurrences as He went about teaching and preaching, when here on earth. We might perhaps be tempted to think that it would have been better if the Lord had spoken directly and distinctly concerning spiritual matters, as perhaps there are some parables, or parts of parables, that we do not understand. But when this is so, may we be given the prayerful, inquiring spirit, which was so evident in the disciples, a spirit which acknowledges its ignorance and yet longs to be enlightened: for the promise ever stands: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

Now I believe that the Lord still uses parables to teach His people.

I hope it will not be out of place to try and share with you something that struck me as a great warning, recently. I had just opened a gate to allow a herd of cattle into a fresh field, and, thinking they would be hungry, had quite expected them to eat quietly, but did they? No. They went straight to the boundaries of that field and started to eat the grass and hedge which I had tried to keep them from by having put up barbed wire fences; and they did so with so much determination, that the fences were slackened and needed to be repaired.

As I was doing this, it struck me that here was a picture of fallen mankind. Yes, the Lord has opened for us each the gate of our lives. He has given us a "field" in providence. He has provided for our food, for our rest and for our rightful recreation and exercise, just as a farmer tries to do for his stock; but He has also put up "fences," boundaries that He has seen fit we should not pass.

Of course, essentially we are all answerable to God's holy law: the moral law which was instituted to warn against idolatry and the perverting of our relationships with our fellow men, women and children from anything which is pure and just and of good report. Then, also, He has given clear



guidance as to how those who profess to be His people should conduct their affairs as they seek to worship Him. But alas, can we see a picture of ourselves as we think of those cattle straining on the fences? Oh yes, they knew the fences were there alright, and they knew they would get pricked by the barbs if they pushed against them (a simile of conscience), but that didn't seem to really concern them. Such action made me cross, but did I go and shoot all those wayward animals? Of course I didn't! They were mine; they had cost me much money, and I had cared for them since they were baby calves. However, I did need them to stay where I wanted them to be, and so, sometimes I've had to put up an additional fence, an electric fence, which when pressed against, gives such a shock that it is quickly respected.

I couldn't help thinking how the Lord must be grieved if we display an unthankful, discontented or rebellious spirit; but have we received the punishment we deserve? Thankfully: no! Oh, how the psalmist could exclaim, and I hope some of us can join in: "For Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Thee." But, sometimes, He does see fit that we should have severe shocks in our lives to bring us to hearken to His word, especially when we have ignored the pricks of conscience.

Now, those cattle didn't know why the fences were there. They didn't know that the pond was deep and muddy; or about the danger of being hit by cars or lorries on the road; or of the poisonous weeds by the roadside; or of the fact that unless I kept back some food for the winter, many hungry months lay before them – or even the simple fact that the next field was not mine to give them. But I am quite sure they did know they were not supposed to go beyond that fence.

How is it spiritually? Perhaps we do not completely understand why some boundaries are in place, but surely we are aware of the dangers of breaking God's holy law? Have we not read of them, or been warned of them from the pulpit or

by parents? Oh, then how solemn it is if we have not taken heed to the things we have heard.

Remember that it would have been possible for one of those animals to have completely broken down that fence, and then the others could have followed it without being scratched at all. But the Word of God will ever stand, and cannot be broken down, even though it is often trodden under foot. We shall never excuse our sinful actions before the Judgment Seat of Christ, by foolishly saying we were but following other people. The warning of Scripture is: "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil."

But there is another lesson we can learn from the cattle. Now I am thinking about when young calves, that have been reared indoors, are let out to grass for the first time. Imagine these little creatures, fed by hand, friendly, quiet and placid, *but* open the gate to the field, and what happens? Presented with the great unknown and sudden freedom, they just "run blind," sometimes even smashing through thick hedges, let alone observing fences – but the fences must be observed; and so all the family is involved and stationed around the field, so that when the calves run at the fences, they can be intercepted and driven back with shouting and the waving of sticks and bags. Some might laugh at us, and say we go over the top, but the point is, our efforts are effective, and the calves soon learn that their freedom has its limits.

Lovingly, we think of young friends, leaving home for further education, or perhaps a year out travelling, with freedom from parental or pastoral constraint, and temptations abounding around you. Oh, the especial need of grace to keep you from bursting through the Lord's boundaries: but may those who desire to be loving, faithful friends to our dear young people, not be slack in pointing out the perils in life. Surely there is a time to speak – as much as there is a time to be silent; and wrestle in secret prayer for the Lord to implant His fear and His love in each of our hearts.

One thing is certain, the Lord's commandments are given to us for our good as well as for His glory. Oh, may it be our favoured lot to be enabled to walk humbly in His fear at all times, that we may be preserved from bringing a reproach upon His name.

*Contributed*

---

### EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from ELSIE CROWTER and JOSEPH HYDON.*

#### **An Amendment**

The contributor of the article *Some Interesting Facts From Saudi Arabia* (October *Friendly Companion*, page 233) wishes to say that he was sorry that he did not make it clear that it was not during the Second World War that he was stationed in Aden, Southern Arabia, but during the conflicts that followed in the aftermath of that war in the Middle East during the 1950's; also that he personally did not see tents used by the local people although the soldiers were at one time billeted in such accommodation. The journey he referred to was in an army convoy and not by camel, although it is true that camels would have travelled such a distance in two days. He looks back with thankfulness to God that despite his reckless behaviour he was preserved to return safely to family and friends.

---

The shortest, surest way to all happiness is this: make it a rule to seek grace to thank and praise God for everything that happens to you, for it is certain that whatever seeming calamity comes to you, if you are enabled to thank and praise God for it, you turn it into a blessing. Could you, therefore, work miracles, you could not do more for yourself than by this thankful spirit; for it needs not a word spoken, and turns all that it touches into happiness.

*William Law (slightly amended)*

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***PRACTICAL GODLINESS****Redeeming The Time**

Many of you dear young friends will be giving much thought to what you are going to study for your GCSE's or your A levels. These may lead on to university and, hopefully, employment. Others will be looking at a trade, and college perhaps one day a week. If you live in the USA, Canada, or Australia you will have a different system but the same principles will apply.

When considering your education and what subjects to take obviously you must study those things most useful to what you would like to be employed in. You firstly need to pray about it, like the apostle Paul: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

We live in a day when sport seems to be the god of this world and many young people get very taken up with it. Sport is an excellent thing to do at school for your physical development and fitness, and is also good for developing a competitive edge in young people, but, remember the Word of God: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (1 Corinthians 13. 11). There is nothing wrong with a game of cricket in the park or on the beach when we have a day out with our families or young friends getting together and having games in an informal way. I think, however, that a Christian should avoid football clubs etc. I believe my godly parents were right not to let us join organised clubs for sport, believing it would be detrimental to our spiritual welfare. I used to live in a very nice little village and often was walking my dog past the playing fields when the football was being played and training sessions. The language was appalling, continual swearing, the Lord's holy name constantly being taken in vain. This is a good opportunity to mention here how uncomfortable I feel with the concept of cricket or football matches between different chapels. Over the past few years some young friends, sometimes encouraged by their parents, have arranged matches with youngsters from

another part of the country. This is a very worldly thing to do, not something we should be involved in as churches. Such behaviour is not redeeming the time.

We would be redeeming the time helping other people, giving our time to help an aged friend from chapel or a neighbour needing the garden kept tidy. We could mention many things here that could be usefully done for friends or neighbours who cannot do it for themselves any more. We should of course do it for no reward. We live in a day when people always expect something for helping, and sadly I have noticed this spirit has crept in among the churches. My father used to send us to help friends in need and we were told not to take any money for it. This is true Christian charity and not just to chapel people but any of your neighbours in need. This is redeeming the time. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5. 16).

I sincerely hope you do not spend time watching the television: this is certainly not redeeming the time. The reading of good books will profit you, but the reading of novels will hinder you. If we feed our flesh with novel reading and television, we will strengthen our flesh and weaken our spirit. If we spend our time reading the Word of God and good sound books, by God's grace, it will strengthen our spirit. Think of the exhortation to young Timothy: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3 14-17).

My dear young friends, there are many professions today that have very questionable ethics, and some, such as acting,

that a Christian should never even consider entering into. This applies to the things that you intend to study. I have been quite astounded when preaching around the churches to hear what some young friends are studying. Always bear in mind this word: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5. 15-17).

*J. R. Rutt*

---

### A LITTLE TALK WITH JESUS

A little talk with Jesus,  
How it smooths life's rugged way.  
How it cheers and helps me onward,  
When I faint beneath my load.  
When my heart is crushed with sorrow,  
And my eyes with tears are dim.  
There's nought can yield me comfort,  
Like a little talk with Him.

I cannot live without Him,  
Nor would I if I could.  
He is my daily portion,  
My medicine and my food.  
He is altogether lovely,  
None can with Him compare;  
The chief among ten thousand;  
The fairest of the fair.

*Herbert Dawson*

---

QUESTION: Are the called according to God's purpose to take any consolation from the glory and stability of the covenant of grace?

ANSWER: Yes: for it contains all their salvation, and all their desire.

2 Samuel 23. 5; Isaiah 54. 10; John 10. 28-29; Hebrews 6. 17-20

**BIBLE QUESTIONS**

*This month the questions are about PROVERBS. 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 wrote the Book of Proverbs? (Proverbs 1. 1)
2. What does the Book of Proverbs call a man who trusts in his own heart? (Proverbs 28. 26) What should we do instead? (Proverbs 3. 5)
3. What does a talebearer do? (Proverbs 11. 13) and what happens when there is no talebearer? (Proverbs 26. 20)
4. Which proverb about a proud and haughty spirit is still in common use today? (Proverbs 16. 18)
5. "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom:" (Proverbs 4. 7). What is the beginning of wisdom? (Proverbs 9. 10)
6. Which two proverbs in consecutive verses of Proverbs 26 seem to contradict each other?
7. What three things about the wicked in Proverbs 15 are an abomination to the Lord?
8. Who is like "one that taketh a dog by the ears"? (Proverbs 26)
9. Which saying in Proverbs 26 is quoted by Peter in 2 Peter 2?
10. Write out three proverbs which Ezekiel records as being in common use among the Jews. (Ezekiel 12, 16 and 18)

**ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS**

1. Thou shalt not steal.
2. To steal, to kill and to destroy.
3. Judas Iscariot.
4. Barabbas.
5. The Temple or the House of God.
6. The Day of the Lord. (1 Thessalonians 5. 2, 2 Peter 3. 10)
7. In tithes and offerings. (Malachi 3. 8)
8. Heaven. Lay up treasure in heaven. (Matthew 6. 19-21)
9. Purloining. (Titus 2. 10)
10. The thief should restore four sheep for each one stolen; death. (Exodus 21. 16; 22.1. Deuteronomy 24. 7)

*Contributed*

**JESUS ONLY**

Only a little Babe,  
    Low in a manger laid,  
As helpless and as weak  
    As other infants made;  
But faith, with reverent, bended knee,  
    In Him can God's salvation see.

Only a patient Man,  
    Treading this earth below,  
In poverty and pain,  
    In weariness and woe;  
But faith beholds God's law revealed,  
    By His obedience fulfilled.

Only a suffering One  
    On an accursèd tree;  
His enemies deride  
    His dying agony:  
Faith, gazing with adoring eyes,  
    Beholds death conquered as He dies.

Only an empty tomb,  
    The place where Jesus lay;  
Say, who has dared to come  
    And take my Lord away?  
Faith stoops to view the place, and cries,  
    "Since He is risen, I too shall rise!"

Jesus, Thy life and death  
    Are all in all to me!  
Through these my soul shall stand  
    Accepted, pardoned, free:  
Saved by Thy righteousness and blood,  
    Faultless before the throne of God.

*E.C.*



# THE FRIENDLY COMPANION

*A Monthly Magazine for Children  
and Young People*

Editor: G.D. Buss

---

2007  
Volume 133

---

GOSPEL STANDARD PUBLICATIONS  
12(b) ROUNDWOOD LANE, HARPENDEN,  
HERTS. AL5 3DD

# INDEX

## EDITOR'S PIECES

Our Monthly Message, 3, 27, 51, 75, 99, 123, 147, 171, 195, 219, 243, 267; Our Front Cover Picture, 4, 28, 52, 76, 100, 124, 148, 172, 196, 220, 244, 268; A Little Maid, 59; A Wedding Address, 256; "Did Animals Speak?", 38; Difficult Questions (IV), 161; Genesis 1, 112; "Love As Brethren", 149; More About Ravens, 173; The Book Of Judges, 14; The Supreme Sacrifice, 134; Watch!, 87, 113.

## EDITOR'S POSTBAG

39, 67, 77, 113, 134, 149, 183, 221, 245, 283.

## BIBLE LESSONS (G.L. TenBroeke)

A Sinful Woman In The Pharisee's House, 202; Lessons Of The Sabbath Day, 56; Sermon On The Mount, 104, 128; The Calling Of Matthew The Publican, 8; The Centurion's Servant, 152; The Parable Of The Sower, 248; The Pool Of Bethesda, 32; The Strong Man Armed: Cast Out, 224; The Tares Among Wheat, 272; The Widow's Son Raised, 176; Twelve Apostles, 80.

## BIBLE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Elisha, 68; God's Leading, 94; Hezekiah, 46; John The Baptist, 23; Proverbs, 287; Questions Asked By Or About The Lord Jesus, 212; The Faith Of Abraham, 143; The Gospel As The Rule Of Life For A Christian, 118; The Heart, 167; The Miracles Of Jesus As Recorded By John, 191; Thieves And Robbers, 263; Water, 238.

## BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

Practical Godliness, 21; Covetousness, 236; Dress, 93, 116; Friends, 140; Keeping The Lord's Day, 44, 66; Man's Days Upon Earth, 260; Redeeming The Time, 284; The Doctrine Of Marriage, 164, 188, 210.

## COLOURING TEXTS

James 4. 7, 103; John 3. 7, 127; John 6. 68, 7; John 9. 25, 223; Luke 5. 11, 79; Mark 5. 19, 175; Mark 9. 23, 55; Matthew 1. 21, 201; Matthew 5. 6, 247; Matthew 14. 36, 31; Psalm 35. 3, 271; Psalm 107. 29, 151.

## CONTRIBUTED AND SELECTED PIECES

Anonymous      A Dying Desire, 77; A Sheep In Trouble, 110; A Shepherd's Prayers Answered, 154; A Short Sermon, 12; Anecdote Of Richard Baxter, 42; Beyond The Fence, 280; Bible Places, 133; Difficult Questions, (I) 86, (II) 111, (III) 138, (VI) 206, (VII) 221, (VIII) 254; "Go Again Seven Times", 40; "I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes Unto The Hills", 159; Mercy, 125; Prince Albert's Grace, 245; Sands Of Time, 20; Some Interesting Facts From Arabia, 233; Sukey Harley's Last Christmas, 278; The Advocate, 35; The Curse Of Meroz, 19; The Kind Of Priest Required, 163; The King's Birthday, 278; The Message Of The Angels, 274; The Number Seven In The Scriptures, 235; The Weather Vane, 269; "This Poor Man Cried, And The Lord Heard Him", 228.

A.W.	Warning! "The New King James Version Of The Bible", 156.
Pieces by a Dutch Author, translated by M. Banfield	"In The Shadow Of Thy Wings", 114, 135.
Bazen, P.	Competitive Sports, 107.
Collins, S.A.J.	A Letter Written To A Friend Serving In The Army, 276.
Creation Magazine	Difficult Questions (V), 186. How Vast God's Universe Is!, 279. God's Thoughts Not As Man's Thoughts, 87.
D'Aubigne	A Little Talk With Jesus, 286.
Dawson, H.	Bible Truths Learned And Remembered, 18.
Friendly Companion	Pleading The Cause Of The Widow, 204. Poor Donald And His Landlord, 16. The Sailor's Bible, 13. God's Last Word, 198.
Gathered Gems	"Swear Not At All", 207.
Golden Treasury	"Is God In This Town?", 83.
Gospel Gleanings	Fall Of Adam, 19.
Humber, F.	Swifts: Lessons On The Wing, 196, 226.
J.P.S.	"I Forgot", 85.
Little Gleaner 1869	When The Clock Struck Thirteen, 182.
Little Gleaner 1905	A Timely Meeting, 259.
Little Gleaner 1906	Four Little Words: "Thou God Seest Me", 61.
Mount Zion	Always A "But", 161.
Nemo	Letters To A Young Girl, 10, 34, 58, 82, 106, 130.
Newton, J.	Designing A Quiet Fan, 41.
PC Authority	On New Versions Of The Holy Scriptures, 237.
Philpot, J.C.	The Love Of God, 91.
Popham, J.K.	A Divine Appointment, 251.
Ramsbottom, B.A.	God The Son, 180.
Randalls, A.G.	The Reviving Hand Of God, 184.
R.G.	A Child's Testimony, 252.
Rippon, J.	William Clarke, 20.
Salkeld, H.	The Stableman, 277.
Saxby, T.E.	Letters Written By John Newton, 10.
S.D.H.	The Orphan Lamb, 178.
The Banner of Truth	A Protest Against Rock Music, 260. The Story of Gerhardt, 250.
The Biblical Treasury	Short Memories, 41.
The Discoverer	God's Wonderful World – The Camel, 234.
"The Explorer"	"Overcome Evil With Good", 185.
The Gospel Echo	The Other Side Of The Hill, 29.
The Protestant Echo	Cromwell, No Hypocrite, But A Man Of Prayer, 15. "Wicked Will", 17.
The Sower	The Elder's Dream, 64.
The Times	Museum's Tablet Lends New Weight To Biblical Truth, 208.

V.G.W.	Some New Testament Words And Their Meaning, 132.
Whitecross J.	Mercies Remembered, 11.
	Weighed In The Balances, 5.
Windridge, F.	"Feed My Lambs" (John 21. 15), 230.
Wood, C.A.	"And", 131.
Young People's Magazine	Looking Around Us. Common Ancestors?, 227.

#### **FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES (Contributed)**

A Touch, 30; A Visitor At Night, 126; "Believe Only", 54; Carried to Jesus, 200; "Follow Me", 78; "Go And Tell", 174; "It Is Written", 102; Jesus Calms The Storm, 150; "Now I See", 222; One Thing Needful, 6; The Hungry Filled, 246; Two Important Questions, 270.

#### **FRONT COVER PICTURE**

A Bow And Arrows, March; A Flock Of Sheep, April; A Grave With Four Sycamore Trees, August; A Hammer, February; A Pulpit, July; A Raven, June; A Rock, December; A Swift, September; Big Ben, October; Mars Hill, Athens, November; Text At Wollongong, Australia, January; William Wilberforce, May.

#### **LIST OF NAMES**

71, 215.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS PIECES**

An Epitaph From Cranbrook Churchyard, 101.

#### **POETRY**

All Important Question, 239; An Evening Prayer, 144; "I Wish You'd Mend My Bible For Me", 264; Jesus Only, 288; Left Alone Of God, 69; The Crown Of Thorns, 96; The Drawing Pin, 48; The Leaning Tree, 192; The Sower, 214; "Thy Will Be Done", 24; Trust In God, 120; When All Seems Wrong, 168.

#### **OUR MAGAZINES**

It is with a deep sense of gratitude to the Lord, that we record His goodness and mercy in maintaining *The Friendly Companion* through another year of its long history. We trust that bread cast upon the waters will be found after many days. For this, we need long patience, remembering that the work is the Lord's and not our own. Our grateful thanks also go to the typist, proof readers and the regular and occasional contributors without whom the task of bringing out the magazine would be much more onerous to the editor. Also the letters of encouragement and counsel from our readers are greatly prized.

There is a slight upward adjustment of prices for the magazine for 2008. These may be seen on the inside of the front cover. We would encourage friends to make *The Gospel Standard* and *The Friendly Companion* more widely known. Above all we do pray that the truths which we endeavour to set forth each month will be prized by many more, young and old, and that we may experience a true revival of interest in the faith of the gospel.

"Brethren, pray for us!"

G D Buss, December 2007